

the worker

FOR A WORKERS' REPUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

O'Malley's threats



Des O'Malley's threats about harsher treatment for 'troublemakers' should be taken seriously. More than anything else, it reveals the nervousness of the Lynch government about any development which could upset their plans for a cosy deal with Britain. A nervous government may strike out wildly.

It is not as if the Provisionals, or any other movement, were posing a real threat, just because a riot or two took place. The Provos cannot seriously challenge Lynch, as long as their perspectives for the South are limited to persuading people of their 'national duty'.

The situation of the republican prisoners in the South has provided them with a means to boost fading morale even within their own movement.

The prisoners themselves have to be acknowledged and supported. Their courage in taking a hunger-and-thirst strike almost to the very end is enormous.

But is this the way to take the

struggle South? Apparently, the Provos see a campaign in the prisoners' support as a way of breaking the Northern deadlock. That deadlock has come about in large part because of the naivete of Provo politics. They could not build on the achievements of the resistance struggle.

The hope of mobilising large numbers of Southern workers and small farmers on nationalist issues is misplaced. The EEC Referendum and the mid-Cork by-election have shown this clearly enough. Workers and working farmers will not be moved into mass action unless they see their goals as being in their specific interests. Lynch and the class he represents will not be overthrown by appeals to 'national' duty but only by militant class action.

The Republican prisoners are the victims of the hypocrisy and the brutal indifference of the Lynch government, which was apparently prepared to see men die in prison for demands already conceded by the authorities but not put into

effect. Our call is for the unconditional release of the republican prisoners.

The reservations about the Provos' methods for 'taking the Struggle South' should not hide us from the fact that the Southern regime is preparing to use ever harsher methods against opponents. Most of the violence directed against republicans and their supporters by state forces has gone unreported. The press was not there when Gardai punched and kicked demonstrators outside the Donegal court where Francis McGuigan appeared, or they did not care to describe it.

The use of the troops at Dundalk demonstrates clearly the British influence. But mere confrontation for its own sake will not remove the reason for that influence. Republican rhetoric will not change Lynch's interests. Only working class politics provides a real chance of developing the fight against repression in the North to a struggle for a Worker's Republic.



SOARING PRICES

-and discontent grows in unions

The response of trade unionists to the Devlin Report on public sector salaries is just the tip of an iceberg of discontent over the National Wage Agreement. The main reason for the rising anger are prices, now increasing one per cent every month. Food prices have been responsible for half of the total increase in prices, and the worker's wage-package is taking the toll. They are rising now at the rate of 18 per cent per year.

Factories and shops are preparing for the introduction of V.A.T. at the end of the month. This is supposed to 'absorb' the turnover and wholesale taxes, but will certainly be used as a cover for pushing up prices further. ESB have applied for yet another 10 per cent rise in the price of electricity. Rents and house prices are rocketing out of all proportion, now outstripping food prices.

Small wonder, then, that there is more and more dissatisfaction about the National Wage Agreement. The Devlin Report was the last straw, recommending rises of 30 per cent for precisely those people who preside over the 9 per cent inflation and the 9 per cent unemployment. Who are they to urge restraint?

In some areas the battles are continuing about the democratic procedure by which the National Wage Agreement was pushed through. Limerick has been the focus of this opposition. Hundreds are threatening to leave the Irish Transport Union unless they get satisfaction from the officials.

Wage 'Agreement'

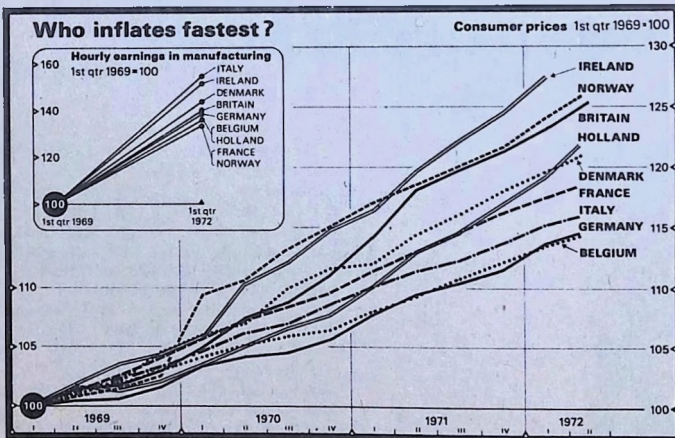
The employers in the furniture trade nearly provoked a major backlash against the National Wage Agreement by threatening not to pay the increases due.

Union Branches planned strike action before the bosses yielded. Some 'national' agreement that, where one party can opt out, and the other is forced to stay in! The bosses and the union leaders have some gall to still teach the message of co-operation.

How can they prattle on about the national interest when the interests of bosses and workers are so clearly opposed? The state and the economic system are designed to boost profits at the expense of wages. This year it has been having some success: the value of stocks and shares on the Irish Stock Exchange has gone up by two-thirds since January. That means that the capital already there has increased in value; nothing more has been added - except the labour of thousands in factories, shops and docks.

There are still some workers who believe that the position of the working class is improving steadily. But a recent study by a state-sponsored institute showed that the share which the workers get of the national income has not altered in 35 years.

Rising prices and the collaboration policies of the union leadership prove clearly as it can be proven the need for a militant opposition to the union chiefs. In the last issue of 'The Worker' we spelt it out, and we will continue to do so in future issues. Organised workers can and must throw off the shackles which the union bureaucracy puts on them.



'Irish prices are rising faster than prices in any other country in Europe.'

This will not be done by leaving the unions, as the Limerick workers have threatened. It will only be done by building militant rank-and-file committees in the unions and, above all, on the shop-floor, to make the collaboration policies redundant.

The answer to rising prices and rising unemployment is not to gird our loins for the sake of the 'national economy' but rather to wage all-out attack for £1 an hour as a minimum basic all round, and an end to National Wage Agreements and for a shorter working week. The fight must be taken up now. We in the Socialist Workers Movement will do everything we can to drive it forward.

DUNLOP STRIKE AGAINST LAY OFFS

Workers at the Waterford factory of the Dunlop company are on strike against redundancies. The management announced that one third of the work-force were to be laid off, but the workers have taken up the fight. A concerted struggle by the trade union movement in the area and in the Dunlop company could stop the sackings.

A special meeting of shop stewards in the Waterford branch of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union has discussed means of helping the strikers. The fight is being taken to other parts of Munster. Trades councils in Clonmel and Cork have passed resolutions of support, and the union may levy all Munster members to support the strike.

Dunlop bought the factory from Irish Rubber Products in the 1960's. They changed production from bedroom slippers to corduroy-type soft shoes - where they have a near-monopoly.

The first signs of trouble came earlier this year when the manager left. However, the Managing Director at the Cork headquarters of Irish Dunlop assured the workers that they had 12 months work on hand. Long before that period was up, the company called in the Waterford shop committee to negotiate redundancies.

The workers voted unanimously to resist the sacking of the twenty workers; they refused to be divided by the management's tactics. The vote for strike action was almost unanimous and the union sanctioned their move.

Both the Dunlop workers and the local ATGWU branch secretary, Shay Geraghty, feel that the unions have not been willing enough to use their industrial strength to enforce the right to work. In Waterford itself one of the oldest and largest firms, Henry Denny, the bacon curers, closed earlier this year without much fight. 78 redundancies are now

'Above: the Republican movement has helped create mass opposition to repression in the North—but can they take the struggle further towards socialism? Read inside, a special feature on the Republican movement. See pages 4 and 5.'

The strike of Britain's car assembly plants in Dublin has highlighted again that car workers can only rely on the strength of shop floor organisation to resist attacks. Britain's workers are looking for an increase in bonus payments which have been unchanged for three years. Inside we carry the first of several articles on problems of the car trade.

The Executive of NATO has recommended a national rent strike throughout the 26 countries. A special delegate conference will be held on 29 October to make a final decision. See page 8 for article on Rents Struggle.

Several of the recent bombings and shootings in the North have been the work of extremist Loyalist groups. The 'mysterious' murders are only mysterious because the forces of law and order will do nothing about them. How far will the UDA take their opposition to Whitelaw? Mike Miller reports from Belfast on page 8.

threatened at Goodbody's jute factory.

At Dunlop's Cork plant, which got a grant of nearly £1 million from the Industrial Development Authority, there are also threats of redundancy since late last year. Dunlop are feeling 'flush' enough to give over £20,000 a year to the British Conservative Party, and the link-up with the Italian tyre firm, Pirelli, has boosted profits further.

It is clear what the workers' answer must be. Earlier this year Dunlop-Pirelli workers in Italy and Britain struck together against loss of jobs. That unity must be the model. A committee must be set up in the Irish Dunlop factories and subsidiaries to co-ordinate the struggle. The demand must be **NO REDUNDANCIES**.

If Dunlop can afford to keep Ted Heath's sinking ship afloat, they can certainly afford to diversify production, if this is what is necessary to keep all the jobs.

RADICAL BEGINNINGS

The germs of many modern socialist ideas were thrown up in the seventeenth and eighteenth century anti-feudal struggles. But the ideas of democracy and equality were advanced by the middle class for the purpose of consolidating their class power. The following three articles show the limits of bourgeois revolutionary thinking and the first signs of independent working-class politics.

The next articles in the series will deal with the period in which the working class emerged as a conscious, collective force. This will take us up to the mid-19th century and the development of Marx's theory of socialist revolution.

Middle class takes power in France

The French Revolution was the central historical experience of the late 18th century. It had its roots in the old order, which was based on feudalism, but on which a twisted form of Roman Law had been superimposed. Such a system could only be ruled and managed by an absolute despot. The absence of a strong monarch since the time of Louis XIV had let power slip from the Crown to the aristocracy.

They vied with each other for powers and privileges. The resulting chaos thwarted the would-be reformers, such as Turgot and Necker. After Necker's departure, the aristocracy enacted laws which excluded all but the nobility and the clergy from power. But the capitalist class, merchants and manufacturers, had begun to expand their economic power and now focussed this politically. More and more they felt the gap between their real political position and what seemed within their grasp.

French workers and peasants were perhaps better off than their counterparts in Germany and England. But they had to pay taxes to the local aristocrats, plus taxes to the church and state. The whole burden of the tax system fell on those who could afford it least.

Industry

In the cities and towns there was dire poverty, as restrictions had been put on industry by the guilds and the aristocracy. In 1786-87 the French economy went through a severe depression. This angered the peasants, workers, and the middle classes, who blamed it on the aristocracy's stupidity. More than anything else, this slump was the spark for the revolution.

Why was the revolution successful in France and not in other countries where the middle classes made similar

Part One in a series on the History of Socialism

attempts to take power? One reason for the greater success of the French Revolution was that the French bourgeoisie was able to mobilise mass support around their demands. Indeed, there was some pressure from the mass of the people, which pushed the middle classes to republicanism, and finally to the Convention and the Committee of Public Safety.

Power

In time, the Committee was to betray the hopes placed in it by the masses, and close the Convention. It became a power on to itself. After the defeat of France's enemies abroad however, there was no reason for the Committee, and Robespierre, who had headed it, fell in the revolve of 1794.

In the following year, the workers and peasants rebelled against the power which was now being exercised over them. The rising was ruthlessly crushed by Napoleon's guns. This military commander was perhaps the fullest embodiment of middle class aspirations. His action brought the revolution to a successful conclusion for the bourgeoisie; at the expense of the working class.

However, in the turmoil of movements and ideas, radicalism had taken root in wide sections of the population. A number of groupings had come up which wished to take the struggle further than re-organisation or private property. These traditions were an inspiration to later working-class movements in France, but also in other countries.

B. O'C.



Pay day for the children of the Industrial Revolution in booming Britain.

The Industrial Revolution

While the effects of the French Revolution reverberated around the world, creating an enormous political impact on the world, another revolution was taking place in England. It was slower-moving, less dramatic politically, but destined to have as great an effect on world economics and politics.

The Industrial Revolution, which spread over three generations from the 1760's to the 1850's created the modern working class, which was to develop the theory and practice of revolutionary socialism. In doing this it totally revolutionised social relations; it caused great misery and it set off revolts.

Risings

Workers and peasants had risen against their rulers in previous centuries in England's history. Some of these risings produced popular heroes, champions of the under-dogs. Workers were often in dispute about payment for their produce. In 1563, the government was petitioned, and the Statute of Artificers then laid down rates for the labour of journey-men workers.

After 1700 the law fell into disuse, as machines became more and more prominent in the production process. Many goods previously turned out by hand were produced much faster by machines than the skilled artisans could do it. The workers did not have the resources to resist the ill-effects of this development. However, they were organising.

As that phrase, 'Liberty' Equality, and Fraternity implies, the radicals of the time found much inspiration in the French Revolution. The international example of the American War of Independence had also been an inspiration for the earlier formation of the Volunteers, a much more reformist movement, which included aristocrats as well as middle class people.

The toast at a meeting of the United Irishmen in 1792, one year after their foundation, was: "The French Republic". "May every United Irishman become a Volunteer, and every Volunteer a United Irishman." "May the world become a republic, and every inhabitant a citizen."

Conspiracy

William Drennan explained what he wanted from the United Irishmen: "A benevolent conspiracy - a plot for the people - no Whig Club - no party title - 'The Brotherhood' its name - the Rights of Man and the greatest happiness of the greatest number its end - its general and real independence to Ireland and republicanism its particular purpose - its business every means to accomplish these ends as speedily as the prejudices and bigotry of the land we live in would permit, as speedily as to give us some enjoyment and not to protract anything too long in the short space of life."

That the organisation failed, despite such admirable objectives, was partly due to its inefficiency, as compared with the massive intelligence system of those in power, and also in part due to the confusion of the bourgeois leadership.

Its popular support was not enough to defend it against the enormous repressive machinery of the Dublin government. A further factor in the defeat of the United Irishmen was growth of the Orange Order, and the deflection of the struggle in some areas into sectarian paths.

The Emmet conspiracy of 1803 "was more of a working class character than its predecessors" (Connolly), but still did not have the firm political guidance which only a stronger working class could give. Workers and peasants had fought in bourgeois movements in an attempt to win Irish independence. At the same time, the twon workers had been organising in unions. But for all their sacrifices, their conditions were little improved at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The trade unions were answered by Westminster in 1803 with an extra dose of repression. The penalties prison sentences and fines for offences against anti-combination laws in Ireland were double what they were in England.

Connolly writes: "For Ireland, as for every other part of Europe, the first quarter of the nineteenth century was a period of political darkness of unbridled despotism and reaction. 'Still, the 1820's were to produce the first Irish socialist, a forerunner of Marx, William Thompson. And the working class was to make a bold show of strength in 1826 when 'Dublin experienced what was undoubtedly the first general strike in Irish history. It was a strike about prices, inflation and the value of Irish money.'" (Connolly). The workers were developing an independent awareness.

F. M.

STRUGGLE AGAINST OPPRESSION IN IRELAND



WOLFE TONE

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, the vast majority of workers and peasants lived in extreme poverty - thousands of them on the verge of starvation. The peasants' only means of subsistence was the potato. Thus, when the crop was hit by blight in 1740, famine struck, and 400,000 died in the country alone, to say nothing of those who died in the coffin ships, or in other means of escape. This was only one of many famines; others took place in 1756, 1757, and 1777.

It was not only the peasantry which relied on potatoes. Many weavers needed potatoes too. They suffered under "two classes of exploiters: the weaving masters, who supplied them with yarn and took away the finished cloth, and the landowner whose piece of ground they rented." (A. Boyd).

But the workers were not to be crushed completely. Their resistance found some expression through the United Irishman, although it was a middle class movement, originally organised for constitutional reforms, and only later turning to revolutionary policies. As the organisation spread through the country, many workers joined it.

The peasants fought the tyrant landlords in secret societies. They used terrorist methods, descending from the hillsides at night to attack the property and persons of the landlords. They thus gave rise to a tradition which has lasted to this day. The Whiteboys and Ribbonmen were among the many under-ground organisations which fought the landlords. These movements also gave the United Irishmen a base when that organisation was developing on a national scale.

Land Struggle

The actions of these peasants were often daring and courageous, but neither in the short term nor the long term did they do much to relieve oppression.

The struggle on the land united Catholic and Protestant tenants for a time. But most of the secret societies were either exclusively Protestant or exclusively Catholic. It is noticeable that even some of the most radical expressions of the time were affected by 'sectarianism', in so far as the 'liberty, equality, and fraternity' were only to apply to one religious denomination.

Already in the 17th century workers had formed themselves into friendly societies. In 1699 the Newcastle keelmen (lightermen in the coal industry) started putting away a portion of their wages for their families' relief and for the old. But the law did not recognise such societies until 1793. Even then, employers refused to recognise the right of workers to 'combine' in pursuit of better wages and conditions. They claimed - with some justification - that the combinations were secret societies, and that they were in collusion with French radical revolutionaries (Jacobins).

In 1800 the Combinations of Workmen Act became law, and remained a barrier to union organisation until its repeal in 1824. However, workers' organisations had taken root - even in the force. In 1797 there was a mutiny in the fleet at Spithead. But once their wages demands had been met, the men clamoured to sail against the French. The political organisations and consciousness of the workers were still weak.

Heritage

There was some heritage of radical and primitive-communist ideas from groupings who had taken part in the 17th century bourgeois revolution in England. The radical ideas of Tom Paine and William Godwin, writers of the late 18th century, also had some popular influence, but did not inspire political organisation other than such small movements as the 'United Englishmen'.

As industry became more mechanised, unemployment increased. The artisans lost their jobs, at the same time as millions were cleared off the land by the Enclosure Acts, 1760-1830. The employers used the surplus of labour to cut wages. The average weekly wage of a handloom weaver in Bolton, Lancashire, fell from 33 shillings in 1795, to 14 shillings in 1815, and then to 5 shillings and sixpence in 1829.

Redundant

About half-a-million handloom weavers became redundant in the years following 1800. Some workers reacted to the introduction of machinery by breaking it up. Nottingham framework knitters issued a declaration over the name of 'Ned Ludd' announcing their intention to break the new machinery. Thus, the anti-machine movement was known as 'Luddism'.

But workers expressed their dissatisfaction at atrocious conditions in other ways too. In 1817, hundreds of Manchester weavers marched to London, carrying blankets, to air their grievances. They were quickly dispersed by police, and the leaders were arrested.

The trade unions began to emerge as mass organisations at this time, particularly among the textile workers. The next article in this series will deal with the Chartists, the first mass democratic workers' movement.

KEN QUINN

Brunswick to close?

Dear Mike,

I am sorry that you are losing your job. I hope that you find a suitable job without too much trouble. All the best for the future.

M. B. Heron.

That was the consoling letter which 170 workers at Brunswick factory in Cabra, Dublin, received with their redundancy notices. The notices were served in September, to take effect from 3rd November. With some trade union officials predicting 100,000 unemployed in the South by Christmas, the Brunswick workers stand little chance of getting new jobs quickly.

Even the skilled wood-machinists among the redundant workers at the bowling equipment factory face a bleak future; the Industrial Development Authority predicts 1,500 jobs will be lost in the furniture and timber trades in the next five years.

PROFITS

Brunswick of Ireland is a subsidiary of the Brunswick Corporation of America. Set up 13 years ago with the help of grants and tax concessions the Irish factory has been an important contributor to the Brunswick Corporation's profit of 9 million dollars last year. The closure of the factory — the remaining 80 workers hold out little hope that they will be there for long — does not stem from financial difficulties. Quite the opposite: the Cabra factory is going because of the American corporation's decision to 'rationalise' its operations internationally.

The Irish subsidiary was established with a view to expanding operations in a number of wood and artificial fibre fields. It was certainly

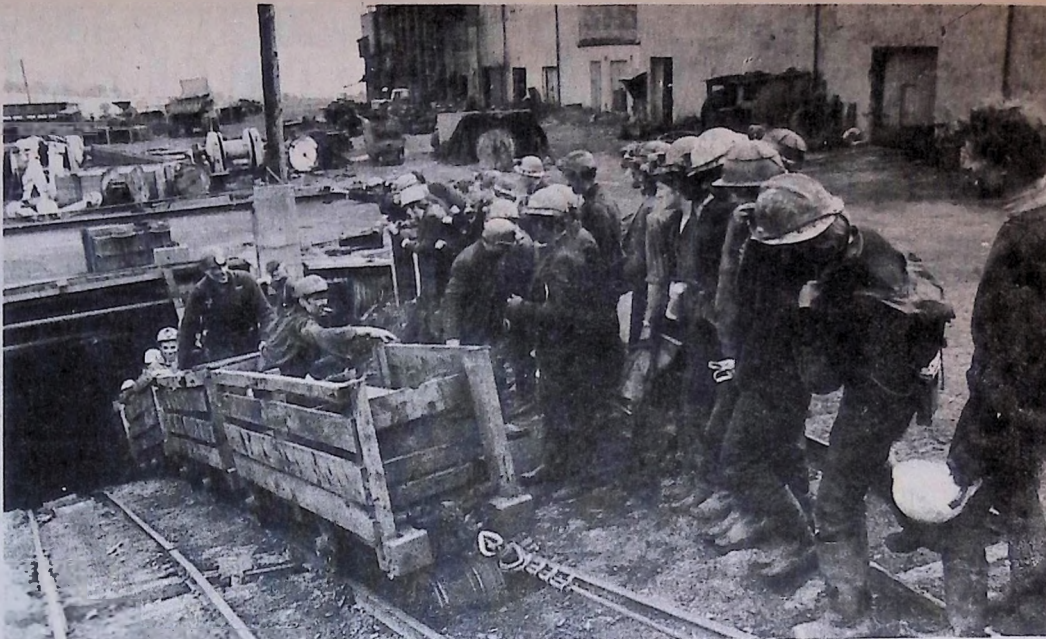
not to provide jobs, as the uncaring attitude of the management now shows clearly. The experiment was only worthwhile as long as the profits justified it.

In a month when there have been several announcements of redundancies, notably 250 at Brooks Thomas, the attitude of the union officials has been deplorable. Their one concern was the size of the redundancy payments; it apparently never occurred to them that they could fight to keep the jobs. Having promised a minimum 'lump sum' of £100 to everybody in the factory, the branch secretary, Tom O'Brien of No. 5 Branch, ITGWU, eventually squeezed payments out of the management of between £16.50 and £46.50 for those with less than two years service. This represents between one and two weeks' wages for most of them. In an attempt to push the sum higher, the union is now taking the matter to the Labour Court.

There has been anger at the closure and at the union official's handling of the affair among some sections of workers. But the pressure was put on even to prevent a mass meeting being held to discuss the situation. Barney Heron, the managing director, has frightened some into accepting that men must 'go out' by threatening a cut in the cash terms. By dividing the workforce the management could prevent united resistance.

Shop stewards who opposed the redundancies in principle produced a leaflet pointing out that while Brunswick and Barney Heron could rely on their extensive business interests for the future, the Brunswick workers had no such security.

Brunswick stewards benefitted from meeting members of the Crannac workers' committee who earlier in the year successfully fought redun-



Ballingarry miners heard shock announcement of closure on the same day as new workers were taken on. There is a smell of corruption around the Tipperary coalfields—but also a will to resist. More next month.

dancies in the Navan furniture factory. Now union officials are making vague noises about industrial action if they don't get satisfaction from the Labour Court.

The workers at Brunswick must put pressure on them to turn talk into action. They can still undo the damage done by the union officials by setting up a committee representing all workers in the factory, and prepared to fight for all the jobs. They should hold mass meetings to discuss ways of saving the jobs. They should hold mass meetings to discuss ways of saving the jobs. They should make the union officials responsible to those meetings, and make them back strike action or occupation to force the company to keep the factory open. In anticipation of any such action, they must mobilise other workers in Dublin and in the country in support of a call for nationalisation under workers' control of firms declaring closures.

C. GIBSON

CAR WORKERS FACE ATTACK

"The Industry will certainly disappear with tariff reduction and assembly work for its 2,000 or so wage-earners will disappear with it."

This was the verdict of the Committee on Industrial Organisation on the car assembly industry in 1963. Today following the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement, and the go-ahead for entry into the EEC, there are over 4,000 workers in car assembly and related industries, the future of whose jobs is uncertain. Last year Booth Poole sacked 140 men, and now Lincoln and Nolan (East Wall) is reported to be closing.

One of the most dangerous aspects of the current wave of redundancies throughout Irish industry is the general uncertainty and the wild rumours which it causes. This has affected the car trade too, although its workers are better organised than most.

The import of fully assembled cars has shot up in recent years — a 3,000 per cent increase since 1965. Irish assembly has not shared the gains from the dramatic increase in the numbers of cars sold. In spite of their lunatic optimism about Irish industry in the EEC, the government found it necessary to negotiate a 'stay' on tariff reduction until 1985.

At the same time, Chrysler (Ireland) are building new models in their Santry plant, and are now engaged on a big sales drive. One Japanese manufacturer, Toyota, is building a new factory at Bluebell, in South-West Dublin, and another is reported to be interested in setting up here. So the car industry will, it seems, not be collapsing with a big bang.

The threat car workers face is the effect of rationalisation by the Irish assemblers. They will have to concentrate production much more and step up productivity (even double it), or go out of business. Some, at least, seem intent on continuing production for the Irish market, and Chrysler is now talking of exporting 3,500 cars a year. What this can only mean is sharper attacks on jobs and conditions.

assembly workers, as part of a committee of seven for the whole factory.

The management proposals were accepted by 57 votes to 44. The new arrangement is now 'on trial'. The right of negotiation has been won, but it will mainly concern cost-of-living adjustments. It is very unlikely to bring anything close to the rises being demanded.

The lesson for the Technicon workers is clear. Without really strong organisation, the most militant-sounding demands can evaporate. Strike action could not have been maintained if the workers were split, and if there was no outside help.

The workers' independent organisation must be rebuilt. The management's divisive tactic of negotiations section by section can be beaten by general meetings, and firm leadership. The Technicon workers can use the financial strength of the company as their bargaining counter; the company cannot afford to risk loss of production.

But if the Technicon workers are to succeed, they will need support from outside too, particularly from the suppliers to Technicon. This will be easier to get if they are the union. If they keep their shop-floor organisation and solidarity, they can gain from the union's numbers without being dominated by the bureaucracy.

The Chrysler workers have had a taste of what is involved. They now work under a productivity agreement and they build cars almost twice as fast as in some other Dublin assembly plants. Although rates are a bit higher than elsewhere, they are still well below the British rates for building at the same sort of speeds.

If the Japanese manufacturers come in, the problems will be the same. They have the experience of having increased labour productivity faster in the 1950's than any other industrial country in the world — and that wasn't done by automation. The reports are that Toyota will pay £40 for 40 hours, with no bonuses and no overtime (at least in the early stages). This shows that they intend to leave as little open to shop-floor negotiation as possible.

Nissan, who make the Datsun cars, have explored possibilities of setting up here. In 1970 they established a company in Ireland.

RESIST

In this situation, there is an obvious and urgent need for car workers to prepare to resist attacks on jobs and conditions altogether. Although the car trade was one of the most active in fighting EEC entry, militancy seems to have sunk since the referendum. The links between the plants have weakened, and several of them are thought to be 'outside the pale'. The shop stewards council for all-Dublin has not met for several months. It could begin to counter-act the demoralisation of the 'dying trade'.

Car workers share many problems, although conditions differ quite widely. They share them not only across Dublin, but also in Cork (Ford) and Wexford (Renault). The links between them are vital to resist redundancy and speed-up. The militants must be brought together who are prepared to fight. The car workers must maintain and strengthen shop-floor control, because it is there that the fight is won or lost.

Even in apparently side issues the question of shop-floor control comes up. Some British Leyland workers in Kimmage have answered the management's attempt to appoint a safety committee with a call for one controlled by the workers.

Car workers should not be lulled into a false sense of security by the seemingly 'left' noises of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union. That union has shown itself as unresponsive to rank-and-file demands as any other.

What is needed is an organisation of car workers across the factories and across union lines, prepared to resist every attack aimed at cutting the work-force. As an immediate task such a committee should produce a bulletin of information and argument to link the plants and co-ordinate the struggle. The links must also be built to car workers in Britain and on the Continent, and the call raised for parity at the highest levels. The main demand, however, must be:

NO REDUNDANCIES!

Need for shop-floor organisation

'The Worker' talks to Jimmy Farrell, shop steward (ITGWU), fibre-glass section, Brunswick of Ireland Ltd.

How well organised was Brunswick before the redundancies were announced?

One of the problems was that the stewards never used to meet. Our first workers committee meeting wasn't till three weeks after the announcement of the redundancies, and then only because of pressure from the shop-floor. The shop stewards did very little on the job. They were stewards in name only; the company even collects the dues. We set up the committee too late. We should have set it up years ago and then we could have fought the redundancies.

What have the union officials been doing about the closure?

They have been fighting over the redundancy money without any concern about saving the jobs. Some take the word

of union officials as if it was law, even when they disagree with them. Because there was no committee in the factory, the officials could come in and run it their way. One or two stood up to them but they were shouted down. I think the union officials should have been the first to say: 'No redundancies', but they accepted it from the start. They say they have a policy on redundancies, but only where the firm is financially viable.

Why has a fight not got underway at Brunswick yet?

The officials have headed off anything by saying: wait for negotiations; don't jeopardise them. The only reason things have moved at all is because we put pressure on the ITGWU delegate, and the only reason management have made small concessions is because some of us on the floor were kicking up. People seem to be only worried about money. We couldn't even get a proper ban on overtime, because they were afraid of losing a few shillings. One of the things that's stopped us from holding a meeting is the fear some workers

have that the redundancy money will be cut. What do you think the unions should be doing?

Fianna Fail promised 50,000 new jobs in the EEC, but now there's nothing but redundancies. The government should take the blame. They're running the thing, handing out grants, encouraging the firms to come in. Workers should demand that the government foots the bill and sorts out the mess. The unions could put pressure on them. We will have to fight in the unions for this. What advice would you give to other workers who may face redundancies?

Every factory should set up a committee straight away, representing all the workers. There should be regular general meetings. Then the full-time officials could be treated with contempt. They shouldn't be allowed to negotiate without representatives from the shop-floor. The only way to fight is for the workers themselves to take action, and not to rely on the so-called experts on redundancies.

Techni-conned

THE MANAGING DIRECTOR of Technicon, in Swords, County Dublin, was once an air navigator. One thing he learned from that experience is that when two planes are on a collision course, the first thing to do is get them off it.

Rich in this human understanding he has been persuading the 520 workers at the Technicon factory that all their problems can be solved in co-operation with management. The staff committee used to meet monthly to discuss such wide-ranging topics as the sports club and the toilets. But not wages.

Since December of last year a grading system has operated in the factory. None of the workers know how it functions except that some get more or less than others. Now the assembly workers have beaten this arrangement, and have won the right to negotiate, but still within the grading system.

The 118 assembly workers felt particularly sore about the wages system. They averaged between £20 and £24, yet they were presented to the outside world in the glossy Technicon literature as 'highly skilled'. They are the main production workers. Without them Technicon would not make the enormous profits it does on its fluid analysis systems.

The Swords factory alone, without five of the American company's total number of workers in different countries, produces half of the £5 million profits. Every worker in the Swords factory produces an average profit of £100 per week! Most of it goes into the pockets of the company president, Edwin Whitehead, who owns 94 per cent of the shares.

EXAMPLE

The assembly workers originally demanded a basic rate of £34 for a 40-hour week. They formed an independent workers committee, with representatives from each line, to press their demands. But they were not members of a union. The Irish Transport Union has never had more than 50 members in the factory. Several of the assembly workers had previously been shop stewards in other factories, but their experiences with union officials had persuaded them that they could manage without a union.

The assembly workers threatened strike action if their demands were not met. This scared the management, especially as there was a meeting of top Technicon executives scheduled to take place in Dublin in late September. It wouldn't do to have the great prestige works stopped by a bunch



of ordinary workers. After all the IDA quotes Technicon as an example of successful profit-making to bring in other industrialists.

The managing director explained to a meeting of the assembly workers the theory of the two Spitfires on collision course. He blinded some of them with his confidence. Then the company held out an offer: disband the present workers' committee, and send one delegate for each of three sections to negotiate for the

Can the Republicans bring

CLASS STRUGGLE TAKES PRIORITY OVER NATIONAL STRUGGLE

Any political movement is defined by its political programme and the way this relates to its activities.

The Provisionals have produced a pamphlet on social and economic issues, much of which, 'can be put into effect here and now, even within the context of the existing political system'. It amounts to vague proposals for co-operatives in various fields. Even with such limited perspectives, the Provos have made no headway with them. In the North everything is geared to the military machine, and in the South, local cummains simply act as service units, collecting money, etc.

The Provos' programme is utopian and in parts reactionary. It dreams of a future when 'each individual worker will own an economic unit of the means of production . . .' This is the petit-bourgeois myth of individual capitalists working in harmony. Any attempts to establish such a system would be pulling back the forces of production instead of developing them further as socialists wish to do - with production geared to satisfy social needs rather than boost profits.

Why do the Provos refuse to put even their very limited policies into effect? The inactivity on anything other than the national question stems from an acceptance of the theory that national independence must come before there is any social change.

Different

The Officials seem to have a different goal in mind. They want socialism. But their way of going about getting it is similar to the Provos. Officials will be horrified to hear this said of them, for they believe themselves to be the complete opposite of the Provos.

The major difference is NOT that the Officials don't bomb, but that they have added on a stage, civil rights, which must come prior to national independence.

We can see how this theory looks in practice with the day-to-day activities of the Officials. They give more emphasis to work in the South than the Provos do, but like them, they keep away from the central working class issues of the day, and devote their energies to fringe questions, like fishing rights - hardly an issue on which

As the Ard-Fheiseanna of the two Sinn Fein approach, there is increasing discussion within both wings of the republican movement over the direction in which the movement is going. The Provos' bombing campaign has been called into question. Recent issues of the 'United Irishman' have caused dissatisfaction among the Officials.

In these articles we examine the political basis for the republican movement, and consider whether it can be changed in the direction of revolutionary socialism, as many members believe.

to mobilise the mass of Irish workers. There was no attempt to sustain the 'Trade Unionists opposed to Internment' group although there were 200 shop stewards at one of its meetings. In Waterford where a Civil Rights Support Group was set up, Officials were amazed at the suggestion that they could broaden the appeal by raising demands around unemployment. On one of the major issues facing the Irish working class today, the National Wages Agreement, they offered no strategy or tactics for fighting it.

The number of working class issues where the Officials could have been involved, but refused, is enormous. The working class may be necessary for the achievement of civil rights and national independence, but any attempt it makes to raise specific class demands at this stage, is ruled out of order, and denounced as 'ultra-

left', 'utopian', and 'adventurist'. It is true that many officials see the need to turn more towards working-class issues. But even the increased coverage of industry in the United Irishman rarely raises any demands for workers to fight on.

Those of us in the labour movement who do raise class demands at this stage are revolutionary socialists who believe that the tasks of creating democracy and winning national independence can only be fulfilled when the working class itself comes to power. If anyone is Utopian, it is the 'stages' theorists who imagine that these problems can be solved prior to the achievement of socialism.

The solution to our problems requires that we place the class struggle above the national struggle. It then becomes possible, and only then, to get across to loyalist workers, as workers, with politics

ANTI-UNIONISM AND SECTARIANISM

Since the split in the republican movement of two years ago, many people have become used to seeing the two wings as entirely different, even opposed, organisations. It may come as something of a surprise that we treat Provisionals and Officials under the same heading.

Most of the energy spent in disputes between the two wings has been tragically wasted. 'Wasted' because it has most often been about inessential things (e.g. the principle of abstentionism); 'wasted', because it has concealed the fact that the similarities between the movements are more important than the differences.

Each wing of the republican movement accuses the other of being in league with British imperialism. They will not even recognise each other as republicans. One is 'sectarian'; the other 'collaborators'. Nothing annoys them so much as to be reminded of their close relationship.

There has, of course, been an important difference of strategy in the

North. The origins of the Provos in the Catholic defence group of 1969, and in the nationalist emotion which gripped large sections of the Catholic population at that time, have made them a prey to the sectarianism which has long affected Belfast, in particular. But is the whole military campaign to be condemned as 'sectarian'? Is the civil rights strategy a meaningful alternative?

The Officials point to the involvement of Southern middle-class nationalists in the setting up of the Provos as evidence that the anti-Unionist movement was deliberately diverted into sectarian paths. But it hardly took such deliberate diversion. There was always the danger that any political or military campaign directed against the Unionist regime and the British Army would be seen by Protestants as an attack on themselves. This was inevitable as long as they identified so closely with that regime. There was also a sectarian aspect to the civil rights movement.

A 'WORKER' FEATURE



Above: Ruairi Bradshaw, a member of Kevin Street Sinn Féin, is a programme for the working class, not for the work

Below: Cathal Goulding, a staff Official IRA, and other members of the 'think tank' regarded by some as an obstacle in the movement.

relevant to their immediate situation - something neither wing of the Republican Movement has been able to do. A genuine anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist struggle, centred on the working class, and operating in all 32 Counties, is vital.

One of the consequences of not raising class demands, and actively arguing against the need to do so, has been the rapid growth of sectarian attacks in the 'United Irishman' against those with a different perspective. No political criticisms are offered or only the most naive - usually all

we get is a long string of nasty words.

Socialists must not confine their perspective to any middle-class solution as the Officials do with Civil Rights and the Provos do with smashing the border. To solve our problems we must have working class power; it is both necessary and possible. Any diversion from the struggle to attain it only serves therefore to prolong the problems. This is what adherence to the 'stages' theory leads to, and in the final analysis, in spite of the best of intentions, it can only lead to defeat.

A calculation had to be done which neither the Officials nor the Provisionals were willing to do: to weigh up each tactic and strategy from two points of view - how far will it undermine the authority of the establishment? and how far will it alienate the loyalist workers, whose support must be won? It is utopian to imagine that opposition to Unionism on the basis of middle-class demands could have avoided rousing the anger of Protestant workers. It is a complete distortion of fact to blame the rise of such organisations as the U.D.A. on the Provos' campaign, as 'United Irishman' has done.

For the Provisional leadership, at least, the calculation was irrelevant. The idea of aiming for Protestant working-class support was as foreign to them as the idea of raising working class demands in the South. For other Provisionals it was something to worry about after the Northern regime had been destroyed; how it was destroyed and what happened meanwhile, mattered little.

But has the military campaign of the Provisionals achieved nothing at all? Its conception is certainly elitist, but it has forced the British ruling class to move at times when it would have rather stood still. It largely forced the suspension of the Stormont regime at a pace which the British establishment found awkward. Because it was not followed up and supported by a conscious political movement, it could go little further. The problem the Provisionals now face is that of reviving morale even among their own members without launching on another bombing campaign which would lose them more

support without achieving much more than that. The 'pure military' idea of the campaign has left the Provisionals stranded: caught in a cycle which they entered almost unwittingly.

The civil rights strategy and the supposedly purely defensive use of force by the Officials provided no alternative, however. Even the Officials themselves were not all that convinced by it. Many of their military actions have been as aggressive, or offensive, as those of the Provisionals. And when a deputation from some border-area Republican Clubs complained to Tomas MacGiolla that they could not sell the 'democratic Stormont' line, he suggested they talk about the Common Market instead. The civil rights movement has no roots in Derry, and the Officials there have little intention of putting those roots down. Above all, the civil rights movement has not been seen by Protestant workers as non-sectarian, much less worthy of their support. On the contrary, Protestant workers have seen that the demand for more houses for Catholics without a demand for more houses in total, could only mean that they bear the burden.

To be non-sectarian could only mean to oppose middle-class nationalist and middle-class Unionist politics with a clear commitment to working-class struggle. Democratic demands directed against the Unionist regime and imperialist repression are part of that, but they must be directly linked to socialist perspectives for struggle against capitalism throughout the 32 Counties.

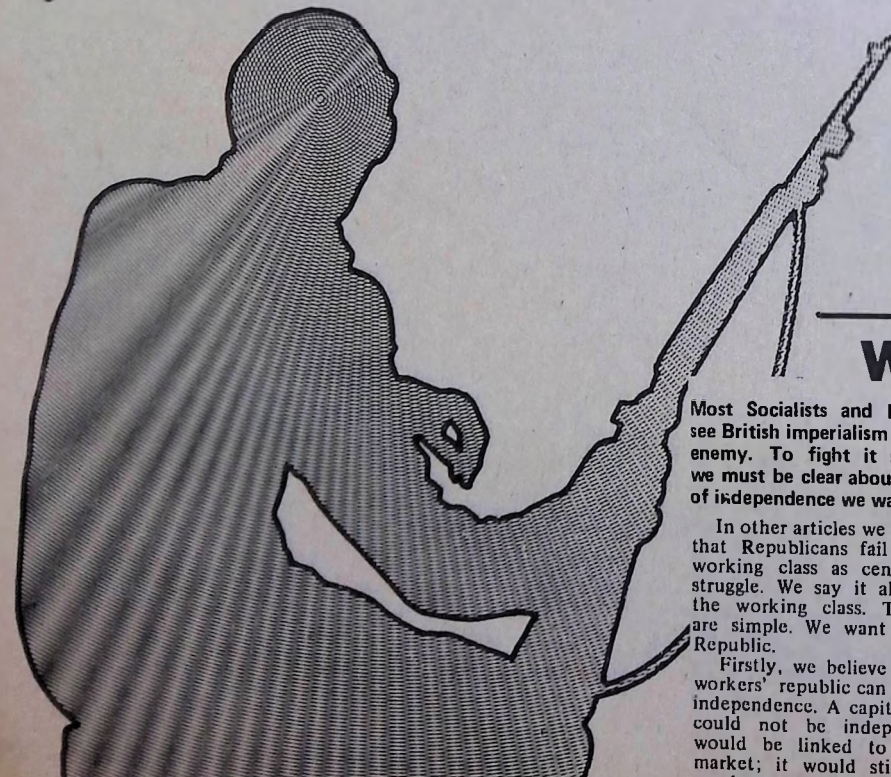
There are still Officials who say that they want to shoot as many Protestants as possible before "it's all over". There are Provisionals who see

the limits of pure military areas of the South t between rank-and-file me less strong. There are c ences between the respect but it is hardly true to issue of 'Starry Plough' Derry Officials did, the als have no political pro the Officials do. It's a p we cannot remember see members of the Official about.

Coherent

If 'opposing foreign part of the programme with the Provisionals, the two organis Irish entry into the EEC. The fact that the Off more meetings and f posters does not chang ical programme is defir tent and the way in t to the classes in so effective it must be t translated into action b

Neither wing of movement has anywhere We believe that a rev programme will only be a organisation committed engaged in, the struggle of class. Neither wing of movement now has thi or engagement.



Most Socialists and Republicans see British imperialism as the main enemy. To fight it successfully we must be clear about what kind of independence we want.

In other articles we have argued that Republicans fail to see the working class as central to the struggle. We say it all hinges on the working class. The reasons are simple. We want a Workers' Republic.

Firstly, we believe that only a workers' republic can give Ireland independence. A capitalist Ireland could not be independent. It would be linked to the world market; it would still have unemployment, emigration etc. It would be something like the 26

Counties is today. So we believe that the only real republic that is possible is one that breaks with the system of capitalism. And that could only be a workers' republic.

Party

Secondly, only a workers' republic could solve the problems of emigration, unemployment, wage slavery, etc. This could be done because production would be for the needs of people and not for the profits of the few. Such a republic would be run by the working class. They would decide what was to be done.

Thirdly, we see a workers' republic as the only republic that

the workers and small farmers will fight for. Only the working class has it in its interest to establish a society free from exploitation. The struggle for a workers' republic would be aided by the workers of the world, to whom it would give a lead.

The fight for the Workers' Republic requires the building of a working-class party that fights on all working-class issues. Only this kind of struggle could unite the whole Irish working class, irrespective of religion. Only by the working class making the change themselves will we have a democratic socialist republic. The party must be the most aware section of the class, all the time urging the class on to power.

Ind

A working class the a revolution would to fear from new bos The class would rule. It may be argu a work demand for a work would alienate middle "What does this obj That we must concili eged classes in Ireland!

Separate

The strongest arg workers' republic co tory. In the struggle ence the left-wingers a separate work class When Sinn Féin si Treaty the capitalists to shoot McIlwain

Building the Workers' Republic?

NEED FOR A WORKERS PARTY

There is only one possible revolution in Ireland - a socialist revolution. This can only be achieved under the political leadership of the working class. For this task, the working class needs its own party - a party of class-conscious militants. This is obviously a far remove from Sean Garland's vaguely conceived 'party of the Irish people'. Are all the five million Irish people potential recruits?

A revolutionary organisation aims to develop class consciousness; it cannot, therefore, tail behind the mass movement, accommodating to the less advanced sections. This is what the Repub-

licans tend to do by basing their activity on single-issue campaigns. They therefore fail to lead; they fail in the central task of the revolutionary organisation.

To provide leadership while avoiding elitism, the revolutionary organisation must be part of the working class itself. The Republicans, however, refer to the working class as 'them', and the movement as 'us'.

There are many within the republican movement, of course, who recognise that neither wing is a revolutionary party. Some claim that it can be changed by the gradual development to socialist politics through education. The question then is: how would they

face the opposition necessarily involved in a critical education programme?

A central problem here is the lack of democracy in both wings. Education for members is largely imposed from above, if it takes place at all. Political differences are seldom argued out. It is one of the failures of those who differ from the leaderships not to have pursued the differences. Some dissenters have, however, been disciplined on the most trivial grounds. This lack of democracy hinges around the army-structure; elections are seldom contested.

Those who aim to reform the movement will have to establish democracy there - a democracy of politically conscious activists. Besides that they will have at least three main issues to contend with. First, they must offer a perspective for class demands and a 32-County socialist strategy against the emphasis on the Six Counties. Second, they must offer

a socialist and internationalist alternative to the isolated national solutions now being put forward for the problems of international capitalist domination. Third, they must ensure every working class struggle is taken seriously, and that the building of a militant opposition in the trade unions is given top priority, rather than the side-line issues of fishing rights, motorway routes, high-rise flats, etc.

Abrupt

The Provisional leadership's abrupt attitude to disagreements among members stands in the way of such a development. The Official leadership's refusal to engage in principled debate prevents those with clear politics from building a base among the members. A revolutionary party could only be built in opposition to those leaders.

Many republicans believe that the republican and socialist tradit-

ions are the same. Thus the Officials today claim to inherit the tradition not only of Tone, Lalor and Davitt, but also of Connolly. It would be nearer to the truth to say that the Officials are socialists because they are republicans who have failed by traditional means. They see the working class as one of the more useful sections of the oppressed nation, but do not recognise its leading role.

We do not believe that the Left can transform the republican movement into a revolutionary party. But nor do we claim to be infallible. We encourage the development of socialist politics among republicans. If they succeed in changing their movement, we will have to admit we were wrong, and join them. But if they fail, are pushed out, or quit in frustration at being blocked, then they will at least know that there is another organisation fighting the class struggle in a principled and determined way.

bove: Ruairi Ó Bradaigh, president of Kevin Street Sinn Féin. His movement's programme, 'Eire Nua' is a programme for the middle class, not for the workers.

low: Cathal Goulding, chief of staff Official IRA, one of the main movers of the 'think' following the last Border campaign, but regarded by some Officials now as an obstacle to moves to the left.



limits of pure militarism. In many areas of the South the differences between rank-and-file members are even stronger. There are certainly differences between the respective leaderships. It is hardly true to say, as a recent issue of 'Starry Pough' (published by the Officials) did, that the Provisionals have no political programme, while the Officials do. It's a programme that cannot remember seeing, and most members of the Officials know nothing about.

Coherent

If 'opposing foreign capitalism' is part of the programme, it is shared with the Provisionals. The basis on which the two organisations opposed each other in the EEC was the same. The fact that the Officials organised their meetings and produced more programmes does not change that. A political programme is defined by its content and the way in which it relates to the class in society. If it is to be understood and accepted by the members, it must be understood and accepted by the members.

Neither wing of the republican movement has a coherent programme. Neither has a revolutionary programme that can be developed by a mass movement, and actively engaged in, the struggle of the republican movement. Neither wing of the republican movement has this commitment to engagement.

The Republican Tradition -and History

A strong sense of tradition has held the republican movement together through its defeats and splits down the years. The republican movement at any period has seen itself as the latest expression for national freedom, descending in a continuous line from Tone, through Mitchell and Lalor, Connolly and Pearse, down to the present.

Beyond this, most republicans have an awareness of the history of the national struggle in terms of individual and heroic exploits to 'free Ireland'. The Officials have seen the limitations of this, and are now organising their education programme around three pamphlets of the history of republicanism.

The first two of these have been published. They are supposed to show the lessons of the past. But what lessons!

The United Irishmen movement is re-constructed as the precursor to the

civil rights movement. It is never once made clear that the revolution which Tone envisaged was a bourgeois revolution, or that Tone's conception of democracy was bourgeois democracy. On the contrary, the United Irishmen are attributed with the achievement of having united urban and rural working class. But what about the Orange Order?

It is not made clear that O'Connell was consciously anti-working class, or that Parnell, by his very class background, could not lead a break with the British establishment. Connolly's 'Labour in Irish History' draws the lessons much more firmly - i.e. that the class divisions of Irish society were reflected in the national movement.

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles". Ireland is no exception.

Connolly saw that the main force driving history forward was class struggle. But this is concealed, and Connolly used to bak up the 'stages theory', which takes some twisting.

The lesson of the 1916 period is drawn as follows: "The cause of Ireland is the cause of Labour, the cause of Labour is the cause of Ireland. In other words, Irish labour can only obtain full social emancipation in a country that is politically and economically independent of British imperialism". Is there any need to point out that the second sentence does not follow from the first?

Lead

What the pamphlets cannot, and will not, say, is that socialist and working class politics must lead the struggle against imperialism for that struggle to be successful. For that is what Connolly was saying.

So it continues to the present day. The class divisions of the 1930's, for instance were sharply reflected in the republican movement itself, but they

Military struggle must be directed by class politics

Revolutionary socialists are not afraid of violence. They recognise that the capitalist state is an institution of violence, designed to keep the owners of the means of production in power against the working class. They further realise that when the working class is in a position to take power, it is unlikely that the ruling class is going to give up

'Spiegel', the German magazine, interviewed Sean MacStiofain following the Maria McGuire affair.

Spiegel: Who would tell whether a government set up after all-Ireland elections would express the will of the people.

MacStiofain: An IRA Convention in which all units and battalions would take part. This convention would decide whether the elected government expressed the will of the majority of the Irish people - if it does, the IRA will be loyal to it.

Spiegel: Does the IRA represent all the Irish people?

MacStiofain: The IRA represents the republican idea of freedom, the centuries-long struggle for a united and free Ireland. That is why we, the IRA are the real representatives of the Irish people. ... Catholic moralists have laid down the doctrines which justify the struggle: it is a fight against oppressors.

without a struggle. The working class must be prepared to defend itself.

It is necessary to distinguish between violence in support of mass working class action and violence which attempts to substitute for working class struggle. Armed struggle must be directed by the needs of the mass struggle if it is not to reduce the workers' confidence in their own capacity to fight and win. Elitist military action leads people to rely on the daring of individuals over whom they have no control.

The working class alone has the power to win the battle for socialism; no-one can substitute for it, however well-intentioned. In its struggle for socialism, the working class must be prepared militarily to resist the repressive attacks of the state, but this military aspect of the struggle is subordinated at all times and in all situations to the political needs of the mass movement.

Elitism

However, both wings of Sinn Féin deny responsibility for the actions of their armed wings, the IRA, and therefore cannot claim that the military struggle is directed by the political. In fact, the theological argument which claims that the Army Council is the legitimate government of Ireland, makes Sinn Féin, the political wing, secondary. The IRA's influence in Sinn Féin makes Sinn Féin less responsible to the political needs of the working class. In this respect however, there is some difference between Kevin Street and Gardiner Place.

The concept of a military policy depending on the popular struggle is one which the Officials have accepted to a certain degree. But too often what they put up as the alternative to old-style military elitism is the notion that 'if we support the workers in their struggles, maybe they will support us in ours'. This is still an elitist viewpoint, and one which in fact separates the national struggle from the class struggle. But the working class is the only class that can solve the national question in Ireland, and it can do so only in the process of creating socialism.

Ignored

The Provisionals are inclined to see the military struggle as enough in itself, and they constantly cite examples like Kenya, Aden etc., where this appeared to be the case. If the Provos are going to free Ireland by their own efforts, then the working class, and everyone else for that matter becomes irrelevant, as long as they do not actively assist the enemy. With such a view, the danger is always that the military aspect of the struggle becomes nothing more than terrorism: the masses are ignored, and thus weakened. Those who hold the guns and bombs have effectively substituted themselves for the activity of the workers.

Unless the military struggle is brought under the control of the political party of the working class, their violence does nothing to liberate the Irish working class.

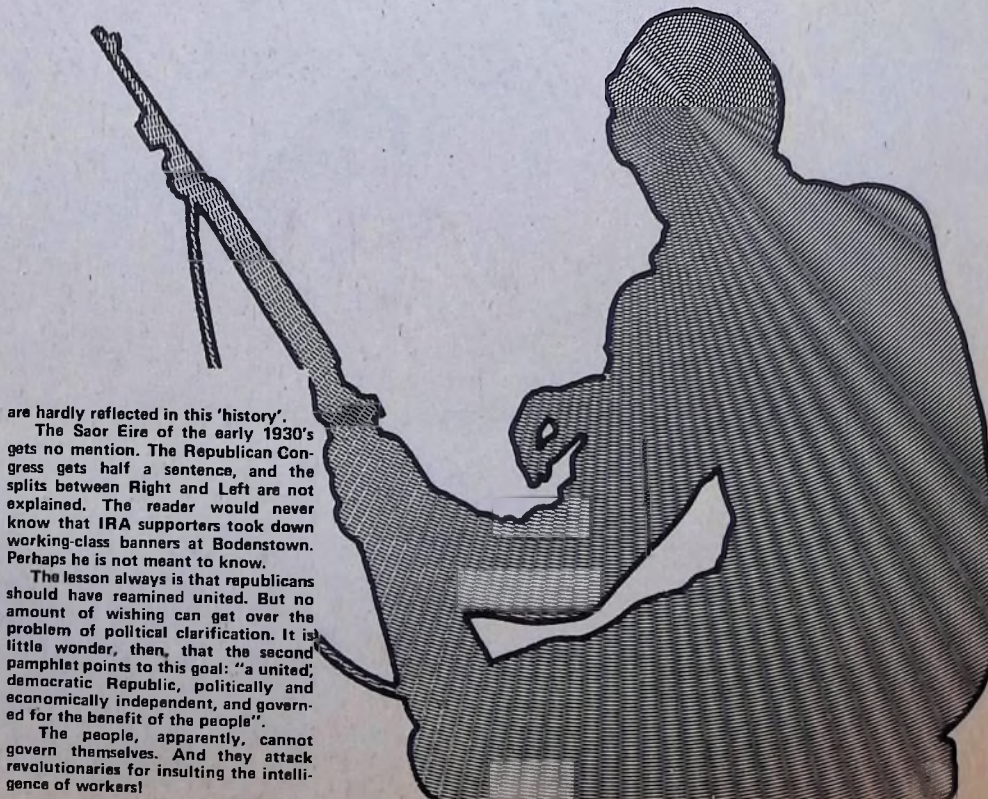
for Independence

working class that made such a revolution would have nothing to fear from new bosses emerging.

It may be argued that the demand for a workers' republic would alienate middle-class support. What does this objection mean? "that does this objection mean?" (Connolly).

Separate

The strongest arguments for a workers' republic come from his- tory. In the struggle for independence the left-wingers did not build a separate working class movement. When Sinn Féin split over the issue of the capitalists were able to shoot Mellows etc., and re-



WHAT WE STAND FOR

SOCIALIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

Imperialism

International capitalism operates in Ireland through British imperialism's military, economic and political

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

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

Irish capitalism, Green and Orange, is wholly integrated into the world system. Because of this, the mere unification of Ireland, or the removal of British troops, cannot in themselves mean the defeat of imperialism in Ireland. There is no independent republic this side of the Workers' Republic. Only by the uniting of the working class can power be taken from the Orange and Green ruling class minorities and victory be won over imperialism.

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

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

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

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

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

Workers struggles

The Socialist Workers' Movement fights for:—

- full support for workers and small farmers in struggle;
- defence of the living standards of workers and small farmers;
- rank-and-file control and socialist leadership of the trade unions;
- the election of all trade union officials, subject to recall;
- all strikes to be declared official if supported by the majority of the workers concerned;
- a minimum wage of at least £30 for a 35-hour week;
- equal pay for women;
- 100 per cent trade unionism;
- opposition to all anti-trade union legislation;
- opposition to all incomes policies under capitalism;
- against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay;
- repeal of all repressive legislation—e.g. Special Powers Act and Offences Against the State Act;
- extension of the Civil Resistance Campaign in the Six Counties;
- release of all political prisoners;
- evacuation of British troops from Ireland;
- defence of working class areas against military and sectarian attacks;
- freedom of worship for all religious groupings;
- total separation of Church and State;
- an end to clerical control of education;
- a secular and comprehensive education system controlled by teachers, pupils and parents;
- raising of school-leaving age to 18;
- free education to the highest level;
- full adult rights at 18—e.g. the right to vote;

- adult wages and adult rights for workers at 18;
- free and comprehensive health service;
- end to means-tested benefits;
- minimum wage for the unemployed and pensioners;
- one family—one house;
- emergency housing programme and expropriation of all building land;
- tenants' control of estates, including rents;
- full social equality for women;
- 24-hour nurseries;
- income for small farmers and agricultural labourers on parity with industrial rates;
- division of large estates under control of local farmers;
- the building of a genuine co-operative movement among farmers and fishermen;
- nationalisation of hunting and fishing rights.

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

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

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

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

Name _____

Address _____

PENNIES FROM HEAVEN

-no answer to poverty

Mary Reilly was in debt. She and Joe had 8 children and now that the older ones were working they should have been able to enjoy a few years of comfort. But though Joe was good to the children, he didn't have an idea about money and Mary had never been able to manage on what he gave her. For years she had been borrowing money to buy the essentials, food and clothing for the children and the rent.

But looking around her, she could see every day that she had no home to speak about. She owed hundreds of pounds to money lenders and they were beginning to chase her. She had just got another big loan to keep some of them happy for a while. So one day she went to the Credit Union and arranged to pay them £6 a week. They would pay her debts. The union manager said she would have to give him the rent too, as an eviction would make her a very poor risk. So she did that and came off rent strike.

MONEY-LENDERS

The money lenders were unhappy about losing such a good customer and kept coming to her door to tell her how bad the credit union was at paying and what a mistake she was making. It was hard for her to tell the credit union about her debts. She had always been proud of her good name and her ability to manage on her own. In the union office she would be kept waiting with a crowd of other customers around her listening to what she was saying. But still she paid the union faithfully each week and kept telling herself it was for the best; she even began to plan to start putting some money into the home comforts that other families have.

One day the union manager said his committee was unhappy about the arrangement; they shouldn't be dealing with a woman but with her husband. Joe didn't know about the debts and he would leave home if he found out. So, after keeping her side of the bargain for 2 months and putting up with the harassment of the moneylenders who had been paid nothing meantime, Mary took her cards and her money out of the union and went back to her old way of managing. She was worse off than before; she owed more money than ever.

One day she saw the manager of the union office passing her house with a friend and saw him turn round to point it out. She could imagine him saying "Look at the poverty in that house" and she was furious with him for the way he had raised her hopes, false hopes, and furious with herself for letting her private affairs become public knowledge.

This is only one story but we can learn some lessons from it. Mary and others like her don't feel they are poor. Poverty is a bad word; it means other people knowing your problems; it means letting other people point a finger at your children in their shabby clothes. Everyone knows that delinquents tend to come from poor, tough homes so we get the idea that the result of poverty is in fact the cause of it: that it is bad people, idle people who are poor: that it is their fault they are in that situation.

Mary was angry about revealing her private affairs because she knew her neighbours would not take her side but would see her as someone to be despised. This is the idea that the bosses teach us and which drives ordinary people against each other. Although Mary was more capable than Joe at managing the money,

she was treated as if she was witless and not someone to be dealt with in a businesslike way. So Mary and others like her struggle to disguise their hardship and keep their troubles to themselves.

If you've got a good income, the credit unions and the banks will look for your custom, but if you're hard up, you can only put up with it or else take the public shame that goes with asking for help.

DIFFERENCES

The Flanagans have a child who has polio. Like many other people they had always given money to charity and supported the Polio Association for some clothes for the child and were given a docket; when they went for the clothes, what they got were second-hand worn clothes, neither attractive nor the right size. Just because their child had polio, they reasoned, was no reason for the child to look poor and shabby. They felt angry and insulted. This kind of charity keeps the differences between the giver and the receiver always the same.

Mr. Byrne had left home and often didn't send his wife the maintenance money. So she went to the Home Assistance Officer. The first time he decided to give her £5 but he gave it in voucher form so she couldn't misuse it. The next time she went for help he wasn't so helpful and called to her neighbour's house to find out if her husband ever came around and how many of her older children were living at home. He said: "I can't believe every cock and bull story people tell me".

He starts from the point of view that his clients are trying to take what is not theirs, that they are greedy and idle.



The answer is that charity carries with it stigma and scorn. The help, pitiful as it is, that charities and the state services hand out often have a deterrent attached to them. They either means test people so that they have to display the full extent of their personal difficulties and have to prove it in embarrassing ways before they can get help, or else they have to fill up endless forms and queue for ages before they earn the right to help.

You only have to think about how hard it is to get a medical card: Mr. and Mrs. O'Connor both have chronic illnesses, bronchitis and asthma. Their combined bills for drugs and visits to the doctor often amount to £20 a month. But because Mr. O'Connor earns £27 a week, they are not eligible for a medical card and each week they face the dilemma of whether to get the drugs they need or to pay the rent. They have applied three times and seven differ-

ent doctors and social workers have applied on their behalf but still the medical authorities judge that they should be able to afford the luxury of good health.

Charity and state aid rest on the idea that the poor are a separate small section of the community like the mentally handicapped and the orphaned children and are content to leave things that way. If the poor are modest and wait their turn maybe someone somewhere will notice and give them a helping hand.

Why are the itinerants so despised? It is because they refuse to disguise their poverty and thrust it at us. The young children who sell papers in the pubs late at night shame us into giving them a few coppers. We'd rather they went away and suffered in silence.

Poverty threatens us all in a system where profits are more important than people. If you're sick or unemployed and you fall behind with the rent you're not offered sympathy but the threat of eviction.

We're ashamed to be poor and struggle to hide it but we should not be ashamed. We all have a right to a house and a job and treatment when we're sick. These are basic human rights.

PHONEY

Charity is the middle-class answer to poverty; it is a phoney answer. The rich try to pretend that only a few people are poor and they save their guilty consciences by giving a little to a good cause. After all, if there weren't a few poor people around, how would they be able to feel good.

Charity is no substitute for justice. Social workers and charitable organisations only try to make poverty more bearable and in the long run they stop us from fighting for our rights. The only way to get rid of poverty is to achieve basic human rights for each and every one of us: A home, a job, free education and medical services, and a decent wage, working or not. These can only be achieved by changing the system.

RUTH TORODE

Israel backs imperialism

The Palestinian question has been highlighted all over the world by the killing of 12 Israelis at Munich. Not so much has been heard about the Israeli invasion of the Lebanon in September, which killed 200 people the majority of them civilians.

It was, of course, the intention of the Munich guerrillas to gain publicity for their cause. As the public relations men will tell you, any publicity is good publicity. But as for the world's rulers, what happened in Munich will hardly have changed their minds with regard to their policies for the Middle East.

To understand the situation of the Palestinians, it is necessary to go back into history. Since the Jews were dispersed from Palestine, they have often met with persecution. It was easy to make them scapegoats in order to divert people from their real oppressors.

The Russian Empire set Russian workers at the throats of Jewish workers, in the same way as Britain set Protestant workers in Northern Ireland at the throats of Catholic workers: in order to divide the working class and keep it down. Hitler blamed everything on Jewish capitalists, in order to take workers' attention away from the other German capitalists.

Investments

The Zionist movement arose to give the Jews a country of their own. They were offered the right to settle in Uganda, but with considerable foresight they turned this down and insisted on going to Palestine.

In 1917 the British Foreign Secretary, the anti-Semitic Balfour, agreed to support this demand: the British government was afraid of revolutionary socialist movements, in

many of which Jews had leading positions, and it wanted to divert the Jews into other directions. It saw that the Arabs were being freed from Turkish rule and that their countries lay dangerously close to the all-important route to India through the Suez Canal.

Apart from the Canal, there were large British investments in Egypt. As the first British military governor of Jerusalem, Sir Ronald Storrs, put it, a Jewish state would create "for England, a little loyal Jewish Ulster in a sea of potentially hostile Arabism".

Evicted

There was only one problem: Palestine had been full of Arabs for 1500 years. As the Jews entered Palestine, the Arabs were gradually evicted from their land. After the Second World War there came a new wave of immigrants: the Allies were all in favour of the Jews, so long as none of them were going to settle in Britain, America, etc.

The United Nations allocated the areas where Jews had settled to the new state of Israel, which promptly conquered large Arab areas. Even vaster areas, mostly beyond the borders of Palestine drawn in 1919, were conquered by Israel in the war of 1967. As a result of the establishment of Israel and its conquests, one-and-a-half million Palestinians now live as refugees, mostly in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. A third of the total live in the misery and squalor of camps run by the United Nations.

It is from the dispossessed Arabs in these camps that the guerrilla movements draw their support. Terrorist successes make life worth living, for people who have nothing else to live for.



A Mercedes taxi containing 7 people crushed by an Israeli tank during the invasion of the Lebanon.

The guerrillas nowadays have to work in a situation where hostile Arab regimes no longer feel bound to tolerate them. The Arab governments vary from the feudal regime in Saudi Arabia, through the Western style parliamentary democracy in the Lebanon, to the noisily radical regimes such as Syria. Some have no wish to oppose British and American imperialism, which is bolstering them up as well as Israel; others are restrained by the fear of losing American or

Russian aid if they give more than verbal support to the Palestinians. The Russian government considers it important to keep the peace, even if this helps Israel: Russian influence makes itself felt through trade and aid, not through helping the Arab Communists, most of whom are in jail.

Many people are inclined to sympathise with Israel because they see in it something looking like "socialism". It is true that the largest party in the government has always been the Labour Party: but its actions have made it clear that it regards the interests of imperialism as the interests of Israel, and it no longer talks about socialism. It is true that between 22 and 25 per cent of the Israeli net national product is produced by enterprises owned by the Histadrut (trade union federation); but the Histadrut is thoroughly bureaucratic and out of touch with its members, and even the leaders admit that a Histadrut factory is run in exactly the same way as a privately-owned one.

Subsidies

It is true that there are some communal farms (kibbutzim): but these have never contained more than 5 per cent of the Jewish popu-

lation, and are still heavily subsidised by Zionist funds from outside Israel. The whole Israeli economy depends heavily on subsidies: in 1968 Israel received 10 per cent of all aid given to underdeveloped countries. The majority of capital going into Israel has come from world Jewry, but there have also been large grants from the West German government (reparations) and the American government.

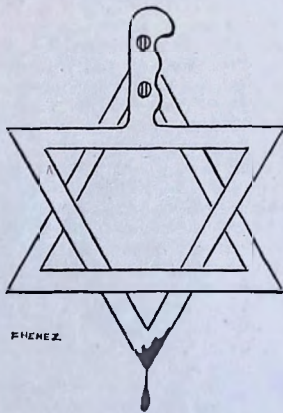
A permanent solution to the Middle Eastern question can come neither from the Arab regimes nor from Israel. Only a socialist solution could enable Arabs and Jews to live side by side, free from exploitation by imperialism and able to use modern technology to end the grinding poverty of the area. The chief creators of socialism in the Arab countries can only be the Arab workers and peasants.

Futile

The so-called "socialist" governments of Egypt, Syria and Iraq are not based on the workers and peasants but rather on the army, lower middle class and bureaucracy. Since the Arab working class is as yet poorly organised, the Palestinian guerrillas fall back on terrorist methods to influence governments in their favour. Most of them do not yet realise that this is futile, and that they should instead help Arab workers and peasants to organise in a mass movement against imperialism and its client regimes of all varieties.

The Jewish workers alone will not establish socialism in Israel; even the under-privileged Jews of Asian and African origin must always look over their shoulders lest they open the gates to the Arabs outside. Only by destroying the rule of Zionism will it be possible to unite Arab and Jewish workers in the struggle for socialism.

JOHN GOODWILLIE



Not the Jews, but Zionism, is the enemy.

Amin aims to deceive masses

General Idi Amin was heavyweight boxing champion of Uganda from 1951 to 1960. In recent weeks he has been throwing his weight around, as well as throwing the Asians out. The world press has given most attention to 'Big Daddy' Amin's supposed madness. Like the dictatorial ruler himself it has diverted people from the real problems.

The background to the crisis lies in British rule of Uganda up to ten years ago. During the 19th century the British literally imported people from India for the building of roads and railways. This was at a period when Britain was having to compete with French and German expansionism in East Africa. The railways were one way to maintain control.

TRADERS

Later, this rootless and inward-looking community was encouraged to play the role of middle-men in the British Empire. Due to their apparent 'superiority' over the 'natives', the Asians became traders, and were given civil service posts as well as other privileges.

When the Ugandan masses revolted against British colonial rule during the 1950's, the 'Asian problem' was brought to the fore. The links tying the Asians to British imperialism were seen clearly.

When Uganda got political independence in 1962, the lives and conditions of the masses were little changed. Even today, after a decade of Obote's rule and a regime of 'competitive socialism', 90 per cent of the rural population live in poverty and wages are low. Just four per cent of the population own 80 per cent of the wealth in the mines, plantations and factories. British banks have a dominating interest in finance and commerce. The trading links with Britain, and the so-called 'aid', are indispensable to the new regime.

The main exports are cotton and coffee. Since 1966 there has been no increase in the revenue from exports, although production has been pushed up. The international companies control prices on the world market, and Uganda remains very susceptible to the inflationary pressures of the international economy. Average income per head of the population is £30 — which means that for millions it is much less than that.

The sham 'Independence' which Obote — President from 1962 to 1971 — had won for Uganda meant increased exploitation for many. The attempts to gain some control over foreign commercial and industrial interests only boasted the new ruling class. The feelings of the masses were reflected in tribal uprisings against the Obote government. The regime's response was to spend more on building up the police and the army. It was also partly to buy off opponents that Obote announced large-scale nationalisation, and threatened to expel the Asians (40,000 of them) holding British citizenship.

TOPPLED

Obote failed in his balancing act between the competing interests, and in February 1971 he was toppled by a right-wing army coup led by Amin, and assisted by British and Israeli officers.

The change of leader was welcomed by the British establishment and its press. Amin started at once to de-nationalise British firms in Uganda, and supported the Tory government in their sale of weapons to racist South Africa. Indeed, he declared that he was quite ready to talk to the South African regime. When Amin later asked for money from the British government, he got it — £10 million in 'extra aid'. At the same time,

Lord Carrington promised arms to put down rebel supporters of Obote.

Thus, Amin came to power with British help. But as he failed to solve any of the problems facing the Ugandan people, in spite of the promises of 'new plans' and 'programmes'. To solve any of the problems the regime would have to take on British imperialist control. That he could obviously not do. Amin has become more and more isolated from the aspirations of the Ugandan people.

INVASION

The political and economic situation was in danger of exploding. Amin needed a diversion. In this context, he decided to expel the Asians, counting on winning popular support for this move, later he claimed that the country is being invaded by an infinite number of countries.

That an invasion took place is not in doubt. It was supported by the President of neighbouring Tanzania, and aimed at restoring Obote to power in Uganda. It is certain too, that the opponents of the Amin army did have support in the Southern Ugandan provinces. In his panic at the threat to his power, Amin started claiming British and Israeli plots, conveniently 'forgetting' his closest friends of a few months ago. (He received some of his military training in Israel). Amin revealed his true colours, mixing inconsistent reactionary rhetoric, with inconsistent anti-imperialist rhetoric.

'SOCIALIST'

But Amin's opponents in Uganda do not necessarily support Obote. The difference between them is insignificant. Obote, too, would use such diversions if he felt threatened. Nor can the people of Uganda look to President Nyerere, often referred to as the leading 'African socialist', but who still maintains his rule by the most anti-democratic methods.

Amin has at least done the service exposing that blood and thunder speeches about the evils of imperialism can, in fact, be a cover for the most reactionary policies. The solution to the political problems and the poverty of the Ugandan workers and peasants does not lie in the hands of any petty tyrant, but only in their own hands. It can be reached through the unity of peasants and workers in Uganda, and it will mean defending their Asian brothers against racial hatred.

NOEL GREALY



General Amin.

SUBSCRIBE NOW!

I wish to subscribe to 'The Worker' and enclose 80p for 1 year

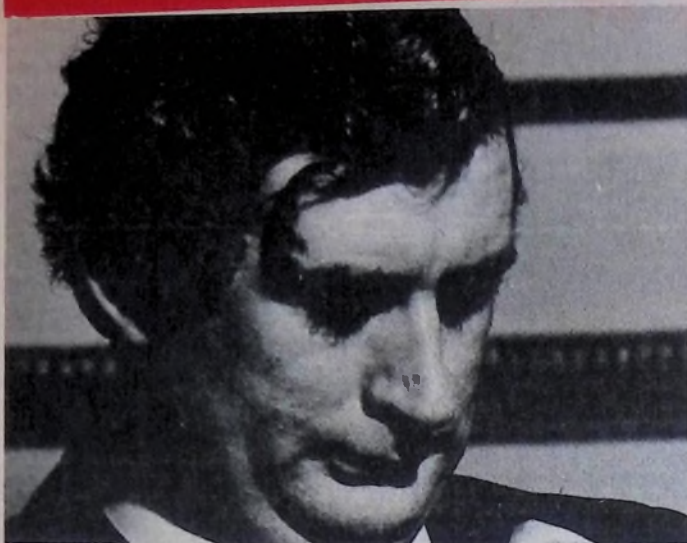
Name _____

Address _____

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

the worker

National rent strike?



Minister Molloy could face all-out rent strike by tenants throughout 26 counties.

The recent annual convention of the National Association of Tenants Organisations (N.A.T.O.) held in Liberty Hall, Dublin, was one of the most successful for years. Delegates attended from throughout the 26 Counties. Both the President, Christy Hynes, and the General Secretary, Matt Larkin, made militant opening addresses. They condemned the National Wage Agreement, spiralling price increases attempted evictions of N.A.T.O. members, and the continuing repression of workers North and South. Their speeches reflected the mood of the delegates present.

As in previous years, the differential rent system was a leading topic for discussion. Speakers repeatedly condemned it, and called for assessment of rent on basic wages only, that is, excluding overtime, bonuses, shift payments, etc. Several people levelled criticism at the Irish Congress of Trade Unions for failing to take up tenants' demands. The policy of the Congress on National Wage Agreements certainly appears in its full reactionary light when it is contrasted with the rent rises which workers throughout the country are having imposed on them.

The N.A.T.O. Convention demonstrated that it is taking the organisation seriously by voting to set up a national headquarters and appoint a full-time secretary.

But the problem of binding the local organisations together in struggle will take more than this. Most delegates recognised that there had been disappointments on this score. The very fact that some associations were not represented at the Convention was itself an indication that NATO has hurdles to get over.

CRITICISM

The main resolution, calling for a national rent and rates strike against the differential rent system, has to be seen in this light. The rent strike has weakened in some places in Dublin and elsewhere, so a national strike would be more than the present organisations could carry. At the same time, some nationally co-ordinated action is vitally necessary. Several Convention delegates pointed to the dangers of local settlements. A national strike would push the whole rents problem on to the political stage; it could also be the means to force the trade unions into action with the tenants.

Speakers on this resolution called for the setting up of action groups in all the localities to maintain 24-hour vigilance on the housing estates, and to defend tenants against any attempted evictions.

These action groups must also be information groups. The Dublin rent strike has shown that even within one housing estate it is possible for tenants to lose touch with the strike. The message must be repeated time and time again that arrears will not be paid. There must be regular mass meetings of tenants on the estates, and in the streets. Protest demonstrations, and mass picketing of local authority and government offices must be organised to maintain the interest in the strike.

The National Executive of N.A.T.O. met on 1st October to consider the question of the national strike. But for the decision to be made effective, a Special Delegate Conference of all affiliated bodies must be held. All militants in the tenants movement must be at this conference to ensure that the mandate for the strike is given, and that N.A.T.O. takes vigorous steps to strengthen the tenants' organisations. Above all, N.A.T.O. must demand guarantees of active support and solidarity from the trade unions.

The rent rises which the government is trying to impose are a political issue – contrary to what many in N.A.T.O. believe – and they must be answered by working-class politics, the politics of class solidarity and militancy.

SPARKS STOP SACKINGS

ESB has a common habit of sacking apprentices when they are near the end of their time, and replacing them with new apprentices. This routine has been smashed by the determined action of electricians of the £2½ million University College, Galway, site.

Over half of the fifth year apprentices in Galway has been sacked before Galway ESB apprentices struck against redundancy notices issued on 1st September. The sackings were aimed to strike a blow at the I.E.T.A. breakaway union to which six of the apprentices belonged. They were told they might get jobs in the future with ESB but only if they joined ETU, ATGWU, or NEETU, the unions recognised by the Board for electricians.

Rank-and-file members of the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) on the site rejected their union executive's collaboration with the Board in this matter. On 13th September all sparks walked off the site. Several one-day stoppages have followed.

Faced with this unity, ESB and Sisk, the contractors, are beginning to cave in. Six of the eight have been re-instated. The fight goes on for the other two – and the tougher fight of the I.E.T.A. to get recognition by ESB. In Sligo, some apprentices were re-employed only when they held non I.E.T.A. cards.

The links between electricians of all unions, as shown at Galway, is the way to beat the reactionary ESB practices and the scab attitude of the union leaders.

LOYALIST THREAT

Whitelaw's conference was an irrelevancy, not because only three out of the seven invited parties turned up, but because the root cause of Ireland's problems, British Imperialism itself, was not open to discussion. The conference was all about finding new ways to do the same thing – exploit the Irish working class.

The SDLP are well aware that they have a lot to offer imperialism on that score and that whether or not they went to the talks, their voice would be heard and listened to in high places. By not going to the conference they have fooled many into believing that they have principles, and now stand a good chance of coming out tops at the local council elections. Their proposals for the New Ireland contain many ideas which the British ruling class would dearly love to follow through, but can't because of a slight problem with their old allies in the Unionist Party, and beyond, in the UDA and LAW.

These gentlemen have threatened to bring the whole place to a standstill unless their demand for the restoration of Stormont with all its old power is met in full. They have threatened all-out war on the 26 Counties if any of the SDLP's proposals are put into effect. So Heath and his cronies have a headache, because they have no intention of giving back state power to that corrupt little gang of thugs and they sincerely want to disengage themselves from the mess they have created here. If only they could leave friendly Gerry Fitt and Co. in control, with a little help from these fossils in the Alliance Party, and Union Jack himself bringing up the rear, their millions of pounds worth of investments would be safe for a while to come.

Gombeenmen

The Unionist bosses seem not to have realised that Britain pays the piper, and wants to call a different tune from the Sash: the old song has lost its harmony. Gombeenmen sing different songs, more modern and in better taste.

To show that they meant business the UDA has organised riots and for

the first time took on the British Army in the streets of Belfast. It took the deaths of two of their co-religionists to drive home the message that Britain meant business too. The implications of full-scale rebellion were too much for those who have no tradition of fighting the forces of the crown. Rather than face up to the reality of their threats they retreated behind William Craig whose ambiguous stand on just about everything enables them to physically attack Catholics, while claiming to be non-sectarian, to politically attack Britain and arm for rebellion, while pledging loyalty and attempting to re-create good relations with the army.

Riots

The lack of independent politics, suitable to the needs of their class, has forced them into this wilderness, from which the only exit seems to be civil war.

The United Loyalist Front as the new all-class Protestant alliance is called, is an organisation without a future. It might stick together for a while, but the forces which make it up are pulling in different directions. It could only solidify in the event of civil war. Craig represents a tradition of politics and power which is dead. The Loyalist workers who have joined with him represent the politics of the future in a distorted form.

What is needed bring class differences to a head is to split the Unionist bloc once and for all down clear class lines. That requires an organisation which is prepared to put the interests of the working class above all other considerations, willing to wage relentless struggle against the imperialists and capitalists in the South who make that state such an unattractive proposition, not only for Protestants from the Six Counties but for the thousands who cannot find work there.

We all know that these are not the type of battles the SDLP is concerned with. They are more determined to make Ireland safe for imperialism than to look to the problems it causes. The British ruling class will do all in its power to accommodate the slimy grovelers of

I just went home

It was almost worth waiting 40 minutes for David Thornley to turn up and tell us he was beginning to sound like a marxist. This was the Dublin Labour Party's meeting on repressive legislation. Thornley's discovery of his marxist politics was met with some laughter.

With almost as many speakers on the platform as audience in the hall the meeting started very late.

Carroll and Scott told us that capitalism was the cause of it all. It should be destroyed. Then they both left the meeting. The reporters got copies of Thornley's speech and left after five minutes.

The small audience waited breathlessly. Thornley's "Marxist" analysis began. Nobody who had not been to court or jail could understand how class justice operated, he said. He apparently had once given a character reference in court! Armed with this deep experience in court he had come to see how wrong it all was. Socialism was the only hope.

The Labour Party was undemocratic and right-wing, he said. "Conference mandates are ignored. Labour T.D.s refused to fight the EEC". The audience seemed to know that much. They waited for the guru to show the way forward. What should be done?

The answer soon came. We should all join the Labour Party. The forty-odd Labour Party members applauded. The few non-members seemed sceptical.

The first question from the floor. An elderly woman asks Thornley why he was in favour of coalition. Thornley replies: "It depends on who the coalition is with." Everybody else seemed to think that Fine Gael was the only candidate.

The second question. "Why join a party which you say is so lousy? Why not build a genuine working-class party?" No reply.

Next question. And so on. "Marxist" Thornley appeared to see no problems. First we'd all join

the Labour Party, then we'd change it, then we'd win an election. Of course the bosses would hand over the factories. The Guards and the Army would co-operate. And we'd all live happily ever after. Like hell.

A few more routine questions were followed by the Chairman's closing remarks. "We are very weak. We need your help. Don't just go home after the meeting. Join the Labour Party."

I just went home.

J. RAFTERY



David Thornley

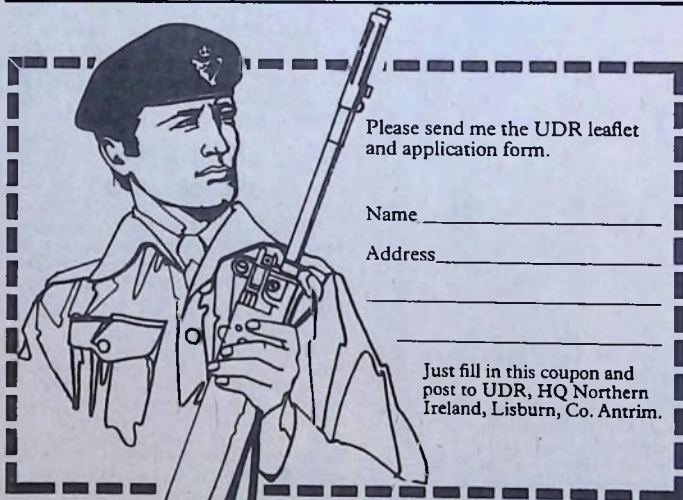
As we wait for the big decision from the British ruling class – will they or will they not ditch the Unionist Party? – a growing number of Unionists have anticipated the answer and, like the rats they are, have begun to desert the sinking ship, leaving the misled followers to their own devices. Who is going to throw a lifeline? Craig's is badly frayed, and many of them know it; the SDLP is swimming in different waters altogether; the Provos haven't got one, and the Officials are keeping theirs till later, until after they have won civil rights and national independence.

So the loyalists workers who come so close to splitting once and for all from the bosses who have exploited their labour and their fears for so long have run back to the devil they know.

Civil Rights, national unity and independence can only come about in one way – through the working class taking power. There are half a million Protestant workers, and there can be no workers' power without their participation in the struggle to achieve it. Unity of Catholic and Protestant workers is not only possible (because of the crack-up of the Unionist monolith), but is absolutely necessary if we are to solve any of the problems facing the majority of Irish people. Such unity will only come about when the struggle for democratic rights and for national freedom are directed by revolutionary socialist politics.

A successful battle fought against redundancies, or against low wages, or to increase rank and file control over the Trade Unions is a greater victory over the ruling class and imperialism than a dozen of the biggest explosions or pious resolutions condemning sectarianism.

M. MILLER



Please send me the UDR leaflet and application form.

Name _____

Address _____

Just fill in this coupon and post to UDR, HQ Northern Ireland, Lisburn, Co. Antrim.

Take your place among the men who are working for peace.

JOIN THE UDR. APPLY TODAY.

The British Labour government's creation, the Ulster Defence Regiment, is increasingly involved with extreme Loyalists.

the SDLP, but is not the job of Irish workers to give credence to these men and their schemes. They must be rejected along with the type of Ireland they stand for.

When we realise that Whitelaw introduced Special Courts in the 6 Counties to remove from the scene those who might stand in the way of the SDLP's rise to fame and fortune, we realise how seriously the British ruling class takes them. The SDLP wanted internment ended so that they could take up their positions

in the state structure once more, and not through any sympathy with the men in Long Kesh. So internment is no more and in its place we have, juryless courts which can meet in secret, and accept evidence obtained by torture. Without having to worry about liberal opinion, which was rather perturbed at the growing number of detentions in Long Kesh, the forces of 'law and order' are now free to make mass arrests of anyone suspected of even speaking or writing in favour of the IRA.