

the worker

FOR A WORKERS' REPUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

NO 25 OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1974 3p

YOUR JOB COULD BE THE NEXT TO GO ...

Jobs loss factory threatens close-downs jobs in peril
Jobs of car assembly men in the balance
Jobs threat
TO DISMISS PLANT
Play-off rumours
Redundant workers
JOB LOSSES

DO YOU HAVE the feeling that if you hear another speech about restraint, moderation and consultation you will scream? It's understandable. But even if we all screamed at once we won't stop the barrage of thinly disguised abuse coming out from the politicians and the employers. We only do that if we take up the challenge the way they have laid it down: fight tooth and nail to push up our standard of living; even when they say there will be no real increases in worker's income for a period of years, and fight tooth and nail to defend every single job even when they say we have to accept their will be widespread redundancies.

There's been too much "consultation and co-operation" between union leaders and representatives of employers and government for too bloody long. The union officials have taken initiative out of the hands of the ordinary members. The National Wage Agreement is the biggest example of that. And the result? The rank and file are left defenceless in the

face of threats to jobs and cuts in wage.

A small section of workers — a small section, mark you — squeezed a little bit more than the minimum out of the National Wage Agreement through the anomaly clause. Now they tell us they're closing that "gap" as if thousands have been galloping through it.

There's a flood of propaganda coming out from employers and government. Not only nationally, but in individual factories too. The Chairman of Cadbury's sent around a statement to all employees of the company's Dublin factory talking about "difficult times", "more difficult circumstances", the "present precarious position". That's just the softening up. The real message comes clearer later on. The bosses want the workers to help increase output and get maximum efficiency. They want the workers to understand there can be little or no improvement in wages.

That kind of stuff needs to be answered. And answered immediately. That should be the job of the union representatives on the job: to say we're not going to help you screw higher profits out of us again.

Just before you shed a tear for the millions the McNerney Brothers may lose ask yourself where they got the millions from in the first place. Nobody's job is guaranteed in this situation. And if we talk and accept the buttering up from the bosses, then we put even more people at risk.

Your job could be next to go.

TURN NOW TO PAGES 4 AND 5 FOR A RUN-DOWN ON WHERE THE JOBS ARE BEING LOST AND HOW WE CAN FIGHT BACK.

WORKERS: FIGHT AGAINST REPRESSION & BOSSES

THE THIRD anniversary of internment during August brought out one of the biggest demonstrations against repression in Belfast seen for some time. It showed a feeling in favour of united action on these issues. But, politically, the anti-unionist population is very divided.

Last year, the Political Hostages Release Committee (PHRC) had brought together Officials and Provisional Sinn Fein, NICRA, the Communist Party, the revolutionary socialist groups and a number of non-political organisations in a united front against repression. This year, although the PHRC organised that biggest demonstration against internment, it has lost all these groups except People's Democracy, the Revolutionary Marxist Group and ourselves, the Socialist Workers Movement.

The way anti-imperialist forces are divided, strengthens the determination of the ultra-loyalists to restore their sectarian ascendancy and allows the British government to continue giving in to the demands.

The SWM stands for the building of a genuine United Front of working class and anti-imperialist organisations on the basis of the principled demands for an end to internment and repressive laws, and the withdrawal of the British Army from



Ireland. In such a United Front every organisation keeps its political independence and is free to advocate its own particular programme, strategy and tactics.

In this way working class politics can be brought to the front in the struggle against the Northern State, which is a capitalist state which oppresses and exploits all workers. This would create a real base from which a working class alternative could be offered to the most advanced elements in the Protestant section of the working class.

The possibility of a civil war cannot be dismissed however, and the vital need for defence should not be played down. But even in that situation socialists must still propose a strategy which would keep the working class interests distinct and offer a chance of deepening the splits in the loyalist camp.

We fundamentally disagree with those who advocate a retreat into the ghettos and the 'tailing' of the IRA in terms of defence. Such people think that the loyalist bloc has been solidly and permanently recreated, that there is no prospect of winning any section of the Protestant workers away from the right-wing leadership. If this is true then these prophets of civil war paint a picture of impending doom for the minority, whose ability to resist militarily has been steadily eroded over the last five years while the loyalists have been given a free hand to recruit, arm and train on a massive scale.

We are not simply calling on those

organisations which have left the PHRC to return to the fold. We believe that rank and file Officials and Provisionals and members of NICRA who are fed up with the sterile 'Bill of Rights' strategy, principled trade unionists, tenants' associations and all others who are concerned to fight repression, must begin to agitate among their comrades and colleagues for the formation of a genuine United Front. If the leaders won't lead, the rank and file must build unity in action from the bottom upwards and force the leaders to take a definite stand.

But while a United Front is necessary, it is not by itself enough to carry the struggle to a successful conclusion. The demands of the United Front have to be restricted to the basic ones on which all agree, which are essentially against repression and the presence of the troops.

But if the struggle is to achieve success then independent working class organisation and politics are also vital. It is in this context that the SWM advocates the formation of Workers' Committees which would link the struggle against repression with the day to day struggles of their class against the severe and deepening attacks on their jobs and living standards. Such committees would be fully democratic and based on places of work, industrial estates etc.

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The development of Workers' Committees, and of socialist politics within them, is essential too for breaking the stranglehold of the SDLP and its sectarian middle-class reformist politics, on Catholic workers. Workers' committees could mobilise anti-unionist workers in large numbers, and would keep them mobilised on a definite working class basis. Such a perspective also makes possible the building of real links with workers' organisations in the South.

Within the context of Workers' Committees the problem of defence under the control of working class politics could be solved and the prospect of turning a possible civil war into a class war on a 32 county basis become a reality.

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THE REPUBLIC.

SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 1934

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BELFAST ELECTION RESULT

Fifty Per Cent. Abstain From Voting

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Fifty Per Cent. Abstain From Voting

CENSORED

THEN AS NOW

FORTY years on — and no change. The Special Branch raid on the offices of 'An Phoblacht' is just one more example of the sporadic attempts at political censorship that the radical press has suffered in our "democracy".

From time to time the routine harassment turns into a more definite crackdown. 'An Phoblacht', being the most visible, has borne the brunt of this repression. In the thirties this sometimes resulted in the paper appearing — as above — with whole stories missing where the police had raided the printers and seized the plates.

In the latest raid, two members of the staff were charged with publishing and possessing "incriminating documents";

forty years ago people were pulled in for merely possessing "seditious documents" — i.e. copies of 'An Phoblacht'! The sentence then, as in one case in Strabane, was a £10 fine. Today, with the Offences Against the State Act, it could be an arbitrary jail sentence.

While disagreeing with the politics presented in 'An Phoblacht' we support and defend them against such repression, and so must all workers and trade unionists. As the ruling class gropes around for solutions to their ever-increasing

problems niceties such as "freedom of the press" and "due process of law" are shown up for the shams they are.

So far the repression has been comparatively mild and ineffective. On April 28th 1934 a complete issue of 'An Phoblacht' was seized yet a day later a special edition was printed. Four days after the latest raid a new issue of 'An Phoblacht' appeared on the Dublin streets. Despite the wrecking of offices and confiscation of equipment the paper is still in business. It remains to be seen if this will be tolerated or if the hammer will be brought down harder and over a wider field.

For not only left wing papers can be repressed but under present laws ANY newspaper which displeases the government can be dealt with.

What we must defend is not just an abstract "freedom of speech". We have no rights except those allowed us by the State, and these can be, and are, taken away when it suits. We can appeal to no higher morality, the state has none.

Only the support of our fellow workers and trade unionists can guarantee the right of the working class to organise and agitate.

G.K.

Bearcat Sackings

BEARCAT Tyres is an American-owned factory in Tallaght, Co. Dublin, which employs about 100 workers. The pay and conditions are better than in many other places — which isn't saying much — but management attitudes to the workers is summed up in the words of one of the men there: "It's like working under Hitler" But recently there have been a number of strikes in the factory.

There is a quality bonus system in operation for moulders. The quota is 624 per month and last January six of seven men began to fall behind. Five of these were marked up to the quota by management. Mr. A. E. G. Paul, the Managing Director, and Mr. Con Hayes, some of the men went on strike because not all had been brought up to quota. The union delegate, Sean Lenehan, suggested a vote

for a return to work. The strikers wanted the vote to be taken by those outside the gate only — but it was taken by the whole factory and the strikers left the meeting. Lenehan is now the Personnel Manager of Bearcat Tyres.

On the 23rd August a man felt sick and he went to the foreman and got permission to go home. There is an agreement with the firm that workers are entitled to 8 sick days off a year. But there is nothing in the agreement about a man getting sick on the job and when he reported for work the following Monday he was told he couldn't start without a doctor's note. This time all the workers struck and they stayed out until the following Thursday.

One night during the strike, at about 12.30 two Supervisors, Dave Smith and E. White, and the Personnel Manager, Sean Lenehan, drove in the gate. They were drunk and they crashed. Management blamed it on the pickets and brought in

MARY wanted a baby. She wasn't interested in living with or marrying the father. She liked children and so she deliberately became pregnant.

Like her boss, the doctors at the hospital tried to persuade Mary to have the baby adopted. She wasn't interested. She avoided the hospital social worker until she was confined to her maternity bed.

She was taken into hospital three days before the birth of her baby with high blood pressure and a doctor wrote on the chart, at the bottom of her bed, that she was going to keep the baby. The social worker glanced at the chart and asked Mary how she was possibly going to manage to keep her baby. Mary told her of her job and her parent's agreement to help and provide accommodation. Materially there were no problems but the social worker wasn't satisfied. What did the father do? Where did he work? Why hadn't she married him? Mary told the social worker that she didn't believe in marriage. The social worker looked at her with disgust and asked if she really thought that she was a suitable person to have a baby.

Mary learnt later that the social worker wasn't asking questions about her child's father simply to make her feel guilty but because an adopted baby's future is made to depend on the class of someone he might never meet: a middle class natural father means middle class adoptive parents.

After the birth of her son, Mary was put in a ward with sixteen other women — only five of them were married. Only three single girls were going to keep their babies. All of them had been pushed by social workers, doctors, bosses, priests and parents to have the babies adopted. There were three catch points, as Mary recalls:

"They always use economic arguments first. They know most girls can't even earn enough money to keep themselves and their child to say nothing of paying for a babysitter or finding a day nursery. If you still think that you can manage with the help of parents or friends they ask

you how you can cope with a child socially, what your employers will think how your relatives will react, what chance you'll have of getting married. Then finally, if they haven't got you convinced they ask if you're really good enough.

Clergy Hog Schools

WHEN the last government first proposed the idea of Community Schools, Clonakilty in West Cork was earmarked as one of the locations for such a school. The nuns at the convent which ran a Secondary girls school immediately took steps to stop it. A delegation visited the Minister of Education and got a guarantee that there would be no Community School at Clonakilty. The people of Clonakilty were not to realise this until the new Minister of Education informed them that his predecessor had made a decision to scrap the Community school in Clonakilty.

Over the past few years there have been several public meetings in the town on the issue. At first the nuns, with the very strong support of the clergy, opposed the Community School. Instead of discussing the issue of the Community School, they made the issue one of whether or not the people appreciated what the nuns had done in the past; people who were in

guard dogs and police to make sure the picket didn't block traffic. Later the police proved that the supervisors' cars had crashed into each other. At a meeting management changed their lies. They said that an oil-tanker had caused the crash. No tanker had in fact passed the picket that night.

The union officials (No. 12 Branch, ITGWU) urged a return to work and the man was taken back to work. A meeting was arranged for the FUE headquarters. At this meeting the company simply handed a letter to the workers' representatives stating that all agreements with the company were hereby cancelled. Just like that.

On September 20th a man was sacked and the following Monday there was another strike. A night worker whose wife had a bad heart, asked for day work and got it. But he found he couldn't live on the reduced money and asked for his old job back. Jimmy Fallon, who

Is it fair on the child, should he or she be allowed to suffer for the "immoral" act you have committed? — is it right that he should be brought up without a father?"

In most European countries, mothers never see their children, if they are to be adopted. In the National Maternity Hospital, Holles St., Dublin, children are left at the bottom of their mother's bed. They are fed five times a day by their mothers. Their mothers finally take them to the adoption homes. The "lesson" is rubbed in.



At visiting times, the unmarried girls sat reading magazines or talking to each other. Nobody came. Only the babies cried at the bottom of the bed. When the visitors left, the mothers cried. Most of the fathers had, long since, left them but Mary talked to the girls and every one of them would have kept their babies if it had been economically possible. The State provides a tiny allowance for the unmarried mother and her child.

The girls watched anxiously over their babies. If they had any physical flaw or illness they could not be given up for adoption — they would spend their lives in foster homes and orphanages. One nurse, being kind to a girl the night before her baby's adoption said:

"You must think of the child. He'll have a good Catholic home", Mary saw that most girls don't even get this sort of self-righteous sympathy:

"Day after day, girls are breaking down. Is it deliberate policy not to comfort them? The nurses and doctors and social workers all seem to think that women are just stupidly emotional and they must be pandered to. Many times, I just had to run out of the ward, I just couldn't bear to watch the suffering"

There was a strange kind of double-think in the hospital: the morality — insisting on calling unmarried girls 'Mrs.' — making them suffer for their "sins" — and alongside it, some of the most amazing physical filth. Mary reckoned the loos were a breeding ground for Hepatitis". The seat-bins were covered with blood. Over the weekend, they were left uncleaned for 36 hours. But still the priest came into the ward to crack jokes with broken-hearted mothers.

The unmarried girls left the hospital with their babies dressed for adoption in the best clothes they could possibly afford to buy them. Irish Catholic society had given them an experience they would never forget and all in the name of God and religion. For them no adequate benefits, no housing provisions, no equal pay or job opportunities, no nursery facilities, no contraception — just mouthfuls of hypocrisy and social workers interested in supplying the adoption market. Last year, 2,000 single girls had babies — 95% of them were adopted.

Cherish and Ally — organisations for unmarried mothers — may help in little ways with moral support and odd jobs but a very different society is essential if this type of hypocrisy is to be eliminated. In the meantime, we must fight for equal pay, for nurseries, for adequate benefits, for proper housing facilities, for legal contraception. In the long-term, we fight for a society where private property does not exist; where it is not necessary for a woman to be somebody's wife — preferably SOMEBODY'S wife — for her to choose where she has a baby; a society where women can decide, like Mary, that they will have children without marriage and they won't be made to suffer for it.

favour of a Community School were not appreciative of the nuns, were anti-clerical it was alleged.

The issue became an emotional one of for or against the nuns. A group of concerned parents tried to get the discussion back on to the main issue, organised meetings for parents in all the surrounding communities and tried to get a democratic decision on the issue. Everywhere they were slandered; in one place the local priest refused to give them the parochial hall to hold such a meeting. But they did have some success in gathering signatures in favour of a community school.

Just as it looked as if they could muster enough support for a Community School, Mr. Burke informed them that there would be no Community School. Instead the other two schools, St. Mary's (Boys) and the Vocational School would be amalgamated to form one unit. The

had been given his old job was taken off it and told that seniority had been claimed over him. So he claimed seniority over another man. He was given a week's notice "for being so smart". At this the men sat in the canteen. They were told to clock out. Next Monday they stayed outside the gate and as we went to press were still out demanding that Jimmy Fallon get his job back.

On the same night as he was sacked Jimmy Fallon met Con Hayes, the manager in the pub and Hayes called him over. He bought him whiskies and cigars and said that he was sorry for sacking him. But he didn't give him his job back.

Bearcats continually use the threat to the workers that they will pull out of Ireland. There is talk of 30 redundancies workers will have to answer any threat to jobs with the same action as brought them victory over management high-handedness in the past.

nuns would continue to operate as before. This is a complete capitulation to the nuns since St. Mary's was in danger of closing in any case. Now the town will have two schools and the nuns have made it very clear that they will not teach any subjects other than purely academic ones. The new school will consist of a secondary school for boys, linked to a technical school. The whole school will be under a new management now more firmly under the control of the clergy than before.

The Clonakilty case is similar to the Thurles dispute — and in both cases the Minister has imposed the same solution. When he is confronted by the clergy and religious orders, he backs down. The religious orders are not prepared to loosen their control of the schools, for to do so would begin to undermine the power of the church over the people.

D.H.

Meanwhile, in Dublin's other big tyre factory, the Austrian-owned Semperit plant in Ballyfermot, there have been stoppages recently over conditions. The management insist that there is no health risk from the chemicals used in the production and point to the fact that there are no short-term effects on the workers. But the workers themselves are convinced there is a hazard.

The Semperit workers have also been in dispute about the bonus system which management have changed several times. But they have found their union representatives (ITGWU) more of a hindrance than a help in getting changes.

LATE NEWS: Jimmy Fallon, the victimised Bearcat worker was reinstated, but 16 others in the factory were sacked.

Clover Victimisation

MARTIN HANNIGAN was officially given his notice on the 15th of August. He had just completed his probationary period in the beef loft at Clover Meats in Waterford. Management told him that his work didn't reach the required standard although they made no complaints at any time during the ten week period.

The shop steward was simply told that Martin was unsuitable. No explanation was offered by the management so his fellow workers in the beef loft came out.

At a general meeting of all the employees in the factory, the beef loft workers stressed that Martin had been part of a group incentive scheme. If his work had been unsatisfactory, they would have noticed.

Assistant Secretary of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union Mr. P. Reidy, said that the workers' action was unofficial and the local section chairman, Johnny Tracy, argued that work should not stop until Monday so that people could fit in their Saturday overtime. The men stood firm and the whole factory was put out of action.

COMPROMISE

John Dwan, the Branch Secretary, met the management on the following Monday and suggested a compromise. Martin should be re-instated, his probation period frozen and his case taken to the Rights Commissioner. Because the probation period was frozen it was not possible for him to gain permanent status while he was waiting for his case to be heard. The Rights Commissioner ruled that management could hire and fire as they liked during the probation period. Dwan suggested at this stage that the case should go to the Labour Court. The section committee said that there was to be no unofficial strike. Martin is still awaiting the outcome. Dwan had made it quite clear that Martin didn't have a snowball's chance in hell of winning — the result is a foregone conclusion.

FINE GAEL

One point that wasn't raised during the whole proceedings was the fact that Collins, the Manager of Clover Meats, had seen Martin selling "An Phoblacht" in a Waterford pub two days before he was handed his notice. Collins is a well-known supporter of Fine Gael. You don't have to believe in conspiracies to see that this was a clear case of political victimisation.

Trade Unionists should oppose all probationary periods. They place new workers in a position of great insecurity. They allow management to victimise political activists and potential militants.

READ: Socialist Workers Movement pamphlet on 'The Working Class and the National Question'. Send 15 pence (inc. postage) to the address below.

TOP FLOOR, 95 CAPEL STREET,
DUBLIN 1

PRICE INDEX FIDDLE

FOUR TIMES a year workers are publicly reminded of the scale and pace of inflation by the publication of the Consumer Price Index. From May 1973 to May 1974 the index increased by 16.2%. But food prices increased in that period by 20.2% and fuel and light rose by 49.9% (according to the index).

These figures are mainly reminders for most workers; they considerably underestimate the real effect of price increases on workers' living standards. Dr. Garrett Fitzgerald in reply to a student's question in U.C.D. three years ago, said that he thought the index underestimated the effect of price increases on workers earning below the national average wage by as much as one-third. In which case a reported inflation rate of 16% means an actual rate of 22%.

It is difficult to show where the official figures distort except with individual examples even though you know that the index gives a biased picture of the erosion of our wage packets. Nonetheless, the index is used to determine threshold pay increases under the National Wage Agreement and is brought to bear in any negotiations that take inflation into account. That is why it is worthwhile to take a closer look at the way the index is constructed and how the bias occurs. A lot of work goes into its compilation and its calculation is, on the face of it, quite complicated.

HOW IT'S DONE

Government officials gather information on the prices of 343 items of household expenditure on four days a year, ranging from food and drink to clothing, fuel and light, household durables, transport etc. These items are selected from those reported in a household expenditure survey, which was made in 1965-6 from a sample of 4,800 households in 65 towns and villages. These households kept detailed records of their expenditure over two-week periods.

Broken down into main areas of expenditure, an average household expenditure figure was arrived at and government statisticians worked out the average proportion of weekly expenditure on each item. For example, they calculated that the average household spent 32.4% of weekly income on food, of which 8.5% went on, for example, meat (0.1198% on liver, 0.4462% on streaky rasher etc.). The same figures were worked out for the whole range of expenditure, i.e. housing 6.9%, fuel and light 5.5%.

Then the price increases recorded by the inspectors are examined and related back to the position in mid-November 1968 which is regarded as the base of the series. The overall price index is calculated

by reference to the price increases in the previous three months and to the place items have in the overall picture of household expenditure.

To take meat as an example again; from mid-February 1974 to mid-May 1974 it increased in price by 12%. In the same period the overall index increased by 5.5% and that of food by 5%. But since meat is reckoned to represent only 8.5% of average weekly household expenditure its price increase contributes only that proportion to the overall index increases.

Since the index is an overall average figure it therefore conceals great variations in the rate of increase for different commodities. No one is likely to have an average spending pattern anymore than 0.9% of a wife and 2.8% children. It is



Justin Keating, Minister for Price Increases

largely because the index relates to an "average" family that it is biased so far as working class families are concerned. Messrs. Corish and O'Leary have admitted that a quarter of the population is living below an acceptable poverty limit, let alone below the 'average wage'.

These families are likely to spend more than the average figure on essential items such as food, clothing and transport and this is not reflected in the way the index is constructed. When the prices of these necessities are rising faster than the index, the resulting hardship will simply not show up. The "average" wage, like the "average" household budget, obscures the position of everybody except the better paid.

Government statistics show that a greater proportion of manual workers earn below the average income figure than is the case for most middle-class occupations. This is not even to mention the case of women whose earnings are on average 50% less than men.

Another distortion arises because the index is based on a pattern of household expenditure of nearly 10 years ago which

therefore takes no account of changes in spending patterns since then. A new survey was carried out this spring, but the threshold increases due to everyone under the National Wage Agreement in November will not be calculated in terms of the new survey.

DISTORTION

This leads us to a final source of distortion in this index: what is not included. We have seen that Government taxes are not considered in the index, but neither are interest payments on loans and overdrafts or instalments on house purchase. In a period when interest rates have gone as high as 14-15%, affecting any family buying items on hire purchase or repaying a loan this is a very serious omission. Another area of expenditure excluded is life assurance and pension contributions.

The present weighting for housing in the index is 6.9% of expenditure, of which rent and rates (in rented dwellings) makes 3.5%. Now any worker in a corporation or county council house knows that he/she is paying nearer 15% of weekly income on rent, while the worker in private accommodation will be paying up to 20% — i.e. three to six times more than the index assumes.

It would be possible to give further examples of distortion, but I think the main points have been made. In conclusion the practical consequences need to be stated again. This index is the official barometer of price increases. It therefore affects every worker who seeks a Wage rise to keep up with the cost of living and it is built into the threshold clauses of the National Wage Agreement. But it does not give an accurate picture of the real rise in workers' cost of living in the last few years, underestimating by up to one third. It follows that annual rises would need to be of the order of 28% (16% index figure plus 6% underestimate plus 6% taxation) simply to keep where we are, and 35% to achieve an increase in real standards.

Maximum pay rises under the wage agreement are not more than 15% in the year in return for which the right to strike has been 'bargained' away. The campaign against the next agreement should now begin in real earnest and workers should be very sceptical of government statistics which in effect simply support the employers, particularly in a period when employers all over the world are trying to shift the blame and the cost of inflation on to the working class.

PAUL GILLESPIE

Around The Sites

A RECENT strike on the big Setanta building site in Nassau Street, Dublin, showed the need for effective communication between all sections of workers on a job. The electricians had been complaining about inadequate toilet facilities and demanded a separate toilet for themselves. Cramptons, contractors, refused. The electricians then began to use off-site toilets and clocked out when doing so. The men were docked this time lost by the management. The men continued to use outside toilets for four days until their shop steward was informed by the foreman that 17 of them were to be sacked at four hours notice.

The previous day an ETU branch official had spoken to the men concerned telling them that they were quite justified in their action. However, the foreman thought otherwise. The electricians did not inform the other workers that they had been sacked. The other stewards on the site only heard it through management. The other trades held hurried meetings at knocking-off time and the stewards recommended support for the electricians' pickets.

UNITY

All the tradesmen refused to pass the pickets but the general workers were ordered in by their steward who have them the pretext of going to a meeting. The steward convinced them to work until an ITGWU official was due to arrive. A small number of general workers did stay out however, although most of them continued to work for the rest of the day after the official had given them the line on unofficial strikes. The general workers on the site have a good record of union militancy but are continually weighed down by their steward who is always keen to do management's dirty work for them at the same time as getting a fat rake-off from union contributions.

The strike was over at 3 o'clock when the ETU official had negotiated a settlement with the management. All the men were reinstated with no loss of pay and action was promised on the toilets within ten days. Ironically, it was the trades who lost a day's pay. All their unions had recommended that they should work. Even the ETU official said "It did not concern you."

This kind of unilateral action could lead to disunity if not properly carried in consultation with all those concerned. A strong works committee is now in operation and any further development will be immediately reported and discussed by all stewards and then taken to all the workers.

ELSEWHERE

Things are more primitive still, however, on building sites in Tipperary. In Cashel, a contractor's firm building local authority houses during the summer, quickly revealed how it had been able to undercut all other contractors by £200 per house. They had schoolboys working at 35 pence an hour, and others at 50 pence an hour, with nothing extra for overtime work. Conditions are terrible, and recently a trench collapsed burying a man. The whole thing is all the more scandalous because a couple of men on the site are union members getting the union rate, but yet the union does nothing about getting the rest in.

In Clonmel, the contractors building the big new chemicals plant for Nerck, Sharpe and Dorne, found a simple and cheap way around a problem: they wanted men to do the work of welder's mate and fitter's mate but didn't want to pay the extra rate, and they couldn't have labourers do the work.

So, they re-named the labourers "General Operatives" and got them doing all kinds of work — and all for the labourer's rate. After all, what's in a name?

General workers, patiently awaiting the answer of the Labour Court to their £1 wage claim (plus 25% shift allowance), should take note of the rejection by the same Court of the chargehand's claim for the same pensions as the staff. Unidare have so much money that they can sponsor races at the Phoenix Park. But they can't give pension rights to chargehands or dirty money to polishers. Now how is that?

UNIDARE WORKER

Unidare Workers; more 'disloyalty' needed

THE PUMP Section in Unidare, Finglas, has been closed down. The 24 men working there were offered alternative jobs in different part of the Unidare site. Many of the men, all of whom were day workers, would have to change to shift work. The move meant a loss in bonus earnings that the men have been used to. Some of the factories where alternative jobs were available are highly unpopular. Instead 20 men want to leave the company and want redundancy money.

While it is understandable that the men think this is as good a time as any to get out of the low wages and bad conditions of Unidare — possibly with a lump sum in their pockets — their jobs could have been saved. There is no reason why they should have to accept a loss of earnings just because Unidare — who increased their profits by 77% this year — decided to close down their section. Their wages should have been frozen at their average

weekly earnings in the Pump Section. There is never any need for any worker to go on shift. If there is enough work to keep a man on shift there is enough work to give two men day jobs. Unidare can well afford to make any of these arrangements.

In the first place, the union officials (ITGWU) and the Works Committee should oppose all redundancies and only if that fails to look for job replacements. But when the union officials let us down it is up to the rank and file. The Pump Section



is attached to No. 1 Works and a stoppage in No. 1 Work would have forced the management to change their terms.

But it is not too late. If the 20 men want increased redundancy money it is up to their mates in No. 1 Works to take action in support of them. In these days of mass redundancies around the country it is very, very important to put the hammer on all closures — even internal closures, like at the Pump Section — at the very start. The next time they may not offer alternative jobs. In 1971 a 7-week strike at Unidare stopped sackings. No loss of jobs, no loss of pay, no loss of conditions.

In early September the workers at Anadising, another Unidare section, sat in the canteen for an hour and a half in support of workers in the polish shop, where the men were demanding 12½p an hour dirty money. About 10 weeks before that the claim had been given to management. When no reply came the shop steward again approached the factory superintendent. A week later there was still no reply so the workers sat in. They waited one hour while Mr. Keegan the

General Manager, was meeting Mr. Pearson a director, who happened to be visiting at the time. Eventually, the polishers went outside the gate and came back when a meeting with Mr. Keegan was promised.

Mr. Keegan began by mourning the 'disloyalty' shown in the time picked for action — when Pearson was visiting — and ended by promising immediate action in negotiating dirty money for the polish shop. But one week later the polishers were informed for the first time by management that the claim would have to be in writing. Incidentally, guess how Arthur Kelly, the Branch Secretary (No. 14 Branch), found out about the sit-in? It wasn't from the shop steward or from the Works Committee, or from the General Manager, but from Pearson himself. Some communications there.

The same polishers, in mid-September, were threatened with "action" or closure of the polish shop if they did not polish 60 handles an hour. They sat in the canteen until the head shop steward arrived and informed management that no 'quotas' or 'figures' are set for production in the polish shop.

WE HAVE THE POWER TO SAVE JOBS

YOU DON'T need to be an economic wizard to see that the Irish economy is in a mess. Cosgrave's "economic summit" in late September was a belated recognition of this. The Irish economy faces an enormous balance of payments deficit in the coming year. But its problems are not its problems alone; they are part of a world-wide crisis. When Denmark, for instance, has over 4 per cent unemployment, then you know something has changed. The long period of stability in the capitalist world since the war has come to an end.

There are restrictions on credit, there is a fall-off in investment, there are bankruptcies. As a result of all these things, and other causes, redundancies and unemployment are going up in every capitalist country.

There are those in the working class movement who look for simple explanations for what's happening: it's the EEC, or it's the "oil crisis". In fact, it is both of these things, and a good deal more besides. But the basic thing to remember is this: the increased redundancies and the higher unemployment are an attempt by those who own and control the wealth and resources to make us, the workers, pay for a crisis which they have caused.

The bosses took the decision to push for Irish entry into the EEC. They take the decisions about rationalisation. The competition which leads often to collapse of individual firms comes from the pursuit of profit. There were powerful sections of the international capitalist class who benefitted from the so-called "oil crisis". We must refuse to bear the consequences of these decisions. We must refuse to let

A Northern correspondent writes about the worsening situation in many industries in the North:

In the last couple of months, the Grieve needle factory in Portrush has closed down, as has a shoe factory in Banbridge, and the Osborne electronics factory and Reckitt & Colemans in Newry, and Keady carpet factory in Co. Armagh. As well as this there have been lay-offs in a number of other places, including 70 in the Regna cash register factory in Derry.

In most cases the response has generally been passive, and nearly always too late even where it wasn't passive. The Regna workers got together in an action committee only five days before the redundancies were due to take place. A statement was issued on their behalf which called for the sharing out of the work available, but it did not represent any real organised will to fight by the majority of workers. In redundancy situations you can never be too early in preparing.

It's true a sit-in was proposed by the Grieve workers, but, as in the case of the workers at Clamico-Murray in Dublin, it had not been worked for in advance, and nothing came of it.

The Osborne factory never started up production again after the strike in June and July, which we reported in THE WORKER. Under the pressure of the ITGWU officers the pickets had been called off, and the management then used the holidays to lay the workers off "temporarily" finally announcing the closure in August. The whole affair had dragged on too long for the 200 workers - mostly women - to do much about it; they were in any case, outside the gate and couldn't even stop machinery being moved.

At Keady carpets, the workers have decided to set up a co-operative to take over the factory from the parent company in Ayr, Scotland. But, even if this is successful, they probably won't be able to keep up the full level of employment. The whole carpets industry is under threat - there have been redundancies too in the GT Carpets factory in Co. Donegal.

Late in September, however, there was a new development in the whole redundancy situation. The 100 workers at Reckitt and Colemans in Newry were made redundant in two batches at the end of August and early September. They had been promised re-

placement jobs at Wayne Foods, but that fell through; Wayne closed. But the workers weren't prepared to accept it; they moved in and occupied the factory.

In Bangor, Co. Down, 60 men were due to be made redundant in McKee and James, an engineering factory. Loyalist politicians have taken up the case making the absurd claim that if the jobs of Catholics had been at stake Stan Orme would have been on the spot in a flash while they couldn't get hold of him. But they do have some bargaining power: they are producing machinery for Donaghadee Carpets and should sit tight on that. If they place any trust in the likes of Jim Kilfedder the Official Unionist M.P., they probably won't do that.

A Cork correspondent writes about the threats to jobs in Kinsale.

Nowhere do the contrasts of capitalism appear as starkly as in Kinsale. In mid-September the Kire Manufacturing Co. (part of the American Genesco Group) announced that they were closing down their factory in the town. 240 workers will become redundant on 1st November. The IDA is trying to get another company to buy the factory, which makes clothing, but even if they are successful the great majority of Kire workers will still not get jobs in the Kinsale area. In the case of the Danus factory in Limerick the I.D.A. openly admits that there will not be jobs for all the workers if another firm takes over the factory.

Meanwhile, the Marathon Oil company have found natural gas off the Old Head and are about to make millions for their directors and shareholders. The only part of the building industry which is healthy is the construction of luxury houses for the executives of the oil companies and of the chemical firms which are due to start up in the area soon.

But the "boom" will bring little direct benefit to the workers. Investment - and profits - will be out of all proportion to the jobs provided. But then the investment is not made with a view to providing jobs.

In another aspect of Kinsale you see the contrasts too. At the end of the "summer" season the hotels and restaurants around the town are letting staff go. In this famous yachting centre and resort for the rich and super-rich, the workers in catering have low wages and insecure jobs.



Workers at IPD (formerly Fisher-Bendix), at Kirkby England, vote to occupy the factory to prevent closure in July this year.

them dispose of our jobs and livelihoods when the going gets rough.

Where are the redundancies happening? They are taking place in industries formerly protected by tariffs and which are not equipped to face the chill winds of international competition: in the clothing and textiles industry, where 325 jobs are threatened at the Limerick Danus factory and over 300 have lost their jobs through the closure of Wexford Fine Wool; in the sugar and confectionary industry, where 270 jobs were lost in Clamico-Murray, in Dublin, and in the car assembly industry where several thousand workers and their families could be affected.

Redundancies are occurring on a wide scale in the building industry and industries supplying it, because of the squeeze on credit. Already, hundreds of jobs have been lost on sites around the country, but we may never know exactly how many because so many of the men involved are on the "lump"; they are not registered - and they are also powerless to fight back. 50 workers have been laid off in the Scariff chipboard factory, in Co. Clare, and 127 jobs are threatened in Munster Chipboard, Waterford.

Redundancies are also taking place as a result of rationalisation or

A Waterford correspondent writes about recent redundancies in the town:

During September nearly 100 men were laid off on building sites, most of them working for McInerney, 127 were threatened with redundancy at Munster Chipboard, and 21 at ACEC which makes electrical goods. The rising redundancies are a big talking point in the town, and, as we saw a couple of years ago, it's mostly talk about "redundancy committees" and deputations to government ministers.

But there are more hopeful signs too. All five unions in ACEC formed a shop-floor committee to get management to withdraw the notices, even though all but one of the workers threatened with the sack came from just one union. In the Chipboard

whenever they were threatened.

Yet the same Michael O'Brien went to a Trades Council meeting recently knowing the redundancies were coming up in the Chipboard and didn't even mention it! The "Watch Dog Committee" only held one meeting last year, and then dispersed.

Has he not learned the lesson that only immediate action by the workers, and broad support by others outside, can stop redundancies? Or perhaps he has learned the lesson too well - and sees that it would put him to one side.

The initiative in the fight back has been taken by a number of shop stewards in the town. They issued a statement condemning the redundancies and calling on the workers involved not to accept them. A meeting was held at which a committee was



factory, one of the unions involved, the ATGWU, is refusing to accept the notices.

This is where the resistance counts. Even if the deputation to Mr. Tully did succeed in persuading him to order greater use of chipboard in local authority house-building it would not be an answer to the immediate threat to jobs. Unhappily, the workers can no more look to the officials of the I.T.G.W.U. to organise the fight-back than they can to local T.D., Eddie Collins, who himself sacked workers in his meat factory last year. Michael O'Brien, the I.T.G.W.U. Branch Secretary for the workers at Munster Chipboard last year proposed the setting up of a "Redundancy Watch Dog Committee" at the Trades Council. The committee was supposed to act as a warning device, for impending redundancies and swing into action

electd with the aim of bringing shop stewards from all round the town into the struggle.

John Cloono, himself made redundant from the local Dunlop shoe factory during the summer, told the meeting of the lessons of the bitter experience of Dunlop workers' four-month long strike against redundancy two years ago.

Many of those who now face the sack in Munster Chipboard and ACEC were only recently made redundant from other jobs. The rot has been allowed to go too far. As John Cloono says: "We must deny these lovers of Hennessy Brandy and Schimmelpfenick cigars the right to hire and fire as they please. . . . When they talk of falling profits we have to answer: You have made profits out of us for long enough, we're not going to walk out just because you've got a few problems."

cutting back in investment, by the international corp have subsidiaries here. The Grieve needle factory in closed as part of rationalisation plans in the British Group. 250 workers were made redundant in August in ECCO factory which is part of the US General Electric. Over 200 jobs will be lost as a result of the closure European plants by the American Genesco Group.

The 40 redundancies in the Solus factory, Bray, are producing equipment for the British telephone service result of a 20 per cent cut in government spending on The threat to jobs on the Belfast-Heysham ferry also the cut-back in government spending.

The redundancies all come from bosses' attempts to fix to their problems at our expense. The blame for unemployment redundancies rests fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the capitalist system.

Let's now look at some of the industries and redundancies have been taking place and at the response workers to them.

Patronising Saint

HIS NAME is Thomas Francis St. John, managing director. Tall, dapper cigar-smoking, drives a flashy car, the clothes on his back would cost as much as he pays any five of the people he employs. He runs the Ambassador Cinema, and he says the rent is going up - so he wants us to pay it.

Of course he doesn't put it as crudely as that. Tommy St. John likes to keep up his image as a "reasonable" man. He is "nice" to his staff. He smiles at us. Sometimes he even talks to us. So when his rent goes up he merely says he wants "co-operation". Translated, that means staff cuts.

Lately however, his image has become a little tarnished. He closed one of his other cinemas, the Capitol in Talbot Street, at the end of August and refused to pay the staff the increased redundancy money won by other cinema workers. We in the Ambassador sent in strike notice in their support. That's the kind of language that doesn't need translation.

Then St. John effected the latest in a series of manoeuvres designed to weaken the already frail unity of the Ambassador. On the day that strike notice was served a mysterious "staff petition" appeared in the cinema, neatly typed and officially worded calling for another meeting of the staff. It was deliberately kept secret from about a dozen of the most militant of the staff.

The staff petition was just one element in an effort to split the Ambassador workers. Some of those who had voted for a strike action were given the silent treatment while others had restrictions put on their movements by management. A campaign of slugging individuals was carried out with much whispering about "communists", and two young girls were so intimidated and chastised that they left to go to other jobs. The most conservative members of the staff had their fears of a strike used by management to isolate the militants and shatter solidarity. In the resulting confusion the strike was called off before it began.

But that was not the end of it. The redundant workers placed an unofficial picket on the Ambassador. Enough of us refused to pass it to ensure that the show would not go on. We then



placed our own unofficial picket on another of St. John's Regent, and closed the who up to then had consider paying the on, most fell over himself negotiating table.

In a matter of hours we were looking for. Rents were increased by over 400%. It's strange for losing a job but we could out of him.

A closer look at St. interests shows the antics. His company, Capitol is controlled by New Ltd. ment Trust which has very well and which is some of it's less profitable jobs of the people who

St. John joined the Hibernia in 1971 and old Capitol in Prince's now the Talbot Street another, the Academy. At the same time, St. John in new cinemas in Bridge with the money he is Irish assets. Last year Ltd. enquired about the asking price was of the other cinemas were cut staff to pay his rent

Judging by the he has a long way to of cigars. His fellow The Hon. Jonathan wing Tory and dis Alexis FitzGerald, Fine Gael and director panies; and not for The Earl of Rose. grotesque in some

There's a Law Against Workers

IF YOU go on strike nowadays there's a fair chance you will be served with an injunction to stop you picketing. Down through the years injunctions have only occasionally been used by the bosses to break strike but lately they have become almost as common as parking tickets. The number of injunctions served against striking workers in the first six months of this year was double the total for all of 1973, an increase of 200%. And we can expect this trend to continue in the coming months.

An injunction is a legal trick to prevent picketing and therefore cripple a strike and the procedure for getting one is ridiculously simple. It can amount to an employer getting a friendly judge to give an 'ex-parte' injunction in between drinks at their club, with no chance for the workers case to be heard. Often the boss doesn't even intend to go through the full process of law, as the appearance of the boys in blue, waving an injunction at the picket line, can be so intimidating to some workers that the strike collapses there and then.

STIFLE

Since some of the laws used to obtain this handy piece of paper have been there all along (some since the birth of trade unionism) there is some significance in the fact that their use is accelerating at this time.

Runaway inflation has got the bosses worried and harsh measures are called for. The most inviting course is to attack jobs wages and working conditions and in order to do this they must stifle militancy. We workers, being "greedy" and "selfish" tend to kick back when attacked and as the situation gets more serious they can't

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

all correspondence to 95 Capel St Dublin 1

afford to have us thrashing around while they operate on the economy. So first, with the help of the trade union leadership the anaesthetics were applied. National Wage Agreements held down wages and restricted the right to strike, while the Two-Tier Picket became a virtual "Scab's Charter" as union officials ushered their members across picket lines. Then the law was brought in to strap us down tighter with injunctions.

CRISIS

But there is life left still in the body of the working class, and as the economic crisis forces the ruling class to use ever more repressive means to protect its position workers are reacting with increasing vigour. As the NWA's began to bite the number of workers on strike action jumped, and even with the use of the law against them are proving troublesome. The judges, who dispense injunctions are not impartial observers. They are as much a part of the state as the government or the army and their function is to provide the muscle with which the ruling class keep workers in check.

As the ruling class comes to rely more and more on the direct use of state power to solve its problems workers are being brought face to face with the realities of the capitalist system and must be prepared to fight back. As long as the system exists it will try to solve its problems at our expense. The only permanent answer to this use of state power is direct action by the working class to take over state power, but meanwhile we must put on the pressure through the unions to get the law on injunctions repealed altogether.

Dear Sir,

We are two ex-customers of the Viscount pub in Whitehall, and we'd like to tell you about the way publicans treat the ordinary working class man in his own local. A small incident happened in the Viscount when one of us threatened to throw a pint over someone else. The manager, Brendan Mullins, came over and we apologised. It would have ended there except that the manager started to curse and swear at us. One of our mates came in then and said to him: "Who are you here, you ought to have more tact". We were all barred on the spot.

We feel that this was unfair because we've been drinking there for years and last Christmas a big row broke out but nobody was barred. Mr. Newman owns three pubs in the area and has it sown up. They are the Viscount, the Comet and the Pilot. When you are barred from one you are barred from them all. We are barred from our own environment and the nearest pub we can get into is 25 minutes walk away.

But we want to tell you that we are not leaving it there. We want to start a Workman's Club in the area. Money has been collected from customers and there is a site available in the area. Mr. Newman is high up in the Licensed Vintners Association and we know he is trying to stop this club being opened, because it would destroy his hold on the area.

Yours faithfully,

Two ex-customers (Names and addresses with the Editor).

EDITOR: In the last few months there have been customers' strikes in a number of pubs on Dublin's Northside, some of them in support of barmen who have been victimised. A few chains of pubs have enormous power in the city. One of the biggest, Belton's, recently had sellers of 'Ballymun News' and 'An Phoblacht' barred from their Ballymun pub, 'The Towers'. There should be more support for worker's clubs and an arrangement set up between those that do exist to make membership transferable. It's sad to hear that the members of the Gas Company Employees Social Club have voted to sell their valuable property in South Co. Dublin without making plans to put the proceeds into a more suitable premises in the city.

Tools of Repression

IF YOU are not entirely convinced that there is a planned capitalist approach to repression in Northern Ireland, get a copy of the new British Society for Social Responsibility in Science's pamphlet: 'The New Technology of Repression - Lessons from Ireland.' (Price 30p). Indeed even if you are in no doubt about the course of repression being adopted this publication is well worth reading, for it expands the lessons into the future, and points out clearly the pattern that could be followed in putting down industrial disputes and similar opposition moves.

How the escalation occurred from the use of baton charges to water cannon to CS gas to rubber bullets is thoroughly exposed, and simultaneously the interaction of the technology and the politics of the situation is highlighted.

Here the infamous Brigadier Frank Kitson, and his theories ("Low Intensity Operations", 1971) come into their own. This well known defender of "democracy" sets out clearly what he is after: "If a genuine and serious grievance arose (in Britain, but one can with ease read into

this anywhere in the world) and such might result from a significant drop in the standard of living, all those who now dissipate their protest over a wide variety of causes might concentrate their efforts and produce a situation beyond the powers of the police to handle. Should this happen the Army would be required to restore the position rapidly."

All the Army's "harmless" weapons are detailed - from riot control to interrogation and the lesson is simple; they are about as harmless as the interests that control them: they are badly tested, indiscriminate and can cause death; less of a welfare state and much more "an integral part of the government's strategies to suppress the struggles of people to secure a more just life."

As the crisis worsens the working-class must prepare for the use of these techniques against them, and one way as the pamphlet suggests is for the information contained in it to be widely distributed - it may be a "plug", but it's a sound one.

The new technology of repression: Lessons from Ireland. By British Society for Social Responsibility in Science. Pamphlet 30 pence. Available from Worker Book Service, 95 Capel Street, Dublin 1.



MONSTERS OF CHILE

IT IS now just over a year since Chile's military leaders overthrew the Popular Unity government led by Salvador Allende. In the first few weeks after the coup thousands were killed - working class activists, supporters of the Popular Unity government, and others who were suspect only because they were foreign. In the months since then the junta has established a cast-iron rule, and the Chilean people have had to pay the price of inflation at over 1000 per cent!

What happened in Chile was not, however, that a revolution led by President Allende was defeated by a counter-revolution led by General Pinochet. Although he and his government had mass working class support, Allende was a middle class reformer and tried to balance things out between the classes. It was he who invited some of the military leaders into the government just weeks before the coup. He and his government spent more of their time attacking striking workers than making preparations to resist a coup which was being organised before their very eyes.

Allende and Popular Unity based their strategy for a "peaceful road to socialism" on the impossible assumption that the army would not step in. The Communist Party, which had significant influence in the leadership of the trade unions, fully supported this notion of bringing socialism by gradually modifying the existing state machine. That strategy, that notion, were directly responsible for the massive defeat of the Chilean workers.

Helios Prieto, who was active in socialist politics in Chile before the coup, details all this in "Chile: The Gorilla Are Amongst Us." This little book, which is crammed with relevant facts, presents its arguments neatly and crisply. It is probably the best thing to come out of the Chilean experience, and it's a must for anyone willing to learn the lessons.

Some people who don't want to learn those lessons are themselves committed to the idea of bringing in socialism "from above" - a contradiction in terms. The Socialist Party of Ireland refers to Allende as the "leader of the Chilean revolution", 'United Irishman', the Official Republican paper, calls for a "campaign to restore Democracy in Chile", and says it is "urgent if the death of Salvador Allende is not to be in vain." Quite clearly his death will have been in vain if Sinn Fein and others believe that it is possible to fight for "democracy" (whatever that is) on the same lines as Popular Unity did.

Prieto's book will not be reviewed in the papers of these organisations; it asks too many awkward questions and shows up too many blatant lies. It also, incidentally, contains useful and obviously valid criticisms of the biggest force to the left of Popular Unity, the MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left).

Helios Prieto: The Gorillas are amongst us. Pluto Press. Paperback. 50 pence.

BRIAN TRENCH

WHAT WE STAND FOR

SOCIALIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT

The SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT is a revolutionary workers' organisation, which aims to organise the working class in the struggle for power and for the overthrow of the existing social order. All its activities, its methods and its internal organisation are designed to achieve this purpose.

The system under which we live, capitalism, is based on production for profit, not for human need. It is driven by the capitalist's need to amass more and more profits. This makes capitalists compete with one another for markets and for political control, both nationally and internationally. The fruit of that competition is seen in war, poverty and crises.

The capitalist class controls this society by its ownership and control of the means of production; that in turn is based on their exploitation of the working class. The capitalist class is a tiny minority governing the lives of the majority, and claiming to have 'democracy' on its side. In Ireland, 7 per cent of the population own 70 per cent of the wealth.

The working class - and only the working class - has the capacity to end exploitation and oppression. In Ireland its confidence and its strength have increased enormously in recent years, and the working class is now the largest social class. What our class lacks, however, is a political leadership with the influence to resist all ruling class pressures on our actions and to point the way clearly towards socialism as the only solution to the working class's problems, and those of any social group oppressed by this system.

A working class organised independently of the middle class in its own fighting organisations in the work-place, and in its own democratically controlled socialist party can create a society based on production for human need. The establishment of a Worker's Republic the necessary goal of the class struggles, would not mean merely state control of investment and of industry, but workers control, from the bottom, of all aspects of society.

That kind of socialist society does not exist anywhere today. The attempts of the Russian working class to build socialism were halted by the failure of their revolution to spread, and by the actions of the Stalinist rulers, who established a new type of society based on exploitation and oppression. We oppose the Moscow regime as we oppose those of Washington and Peking.

Because the capitalist system itself is international, and the world economy is increasingly dominated by a couple of hundred companies, the fight for socialism must be organised on an international basis too. A Workers' Republic in Ireland could not survive without the aid of the British and Continental working classes. In supporting all genuine anti-imperialist struggles, in Ireland or anywhere else, we hold that imperialism and capitalism can only be defeated by world-wide worker's revolution. For imperialism is simply the form which capitalism takes today.

The SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT fights to unite the working class irrespective of religion and sex in struggles to cut back exploitation and improve living conditions. We fight to make the

workers' organisations, the trade unions, completely independent and democratic in order that they may play an effective part in these struggles. As immediate aims we fight for a minimum wage of £30 for a 35-hour working week, for rank-and-file control of the trade unions, and we oppose all anti-trade union legislation. We oppose redundancy, unemployment and lay-offs.

On the national question, we believe that the present leadership of the anti-imperialist movement has shown itself incapable of maintaining a consistent approach because it is incapable of recognising the class content of the question. The national question can only be solved in the working class's struggle for power, and that can only be won by a united working class. As immediate aims, however, we fight for an end to internment and to repressive legislation North and South, and for the withdrawal of the British Army from Ireland. We support the self-defence of working class areas against military and sectarian attack. We fight for total separation of Church and State.

The SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT is a democratic centralist organisation open to those who accept its principles and objectives, who work in one of the units of the movement, agree to recognise its discipline and to pay dues. Along with revolutionary organisations in other countries, with whom we have fraternal links, we are striving to build our own organisation to gain such support as to work meaningfully for a revolutionary international of working class parties.

Crisis Election In Britain

THE BRITISH ELECTION takes place against a background of soaring inflation, rising unemployment and bankrupt industries. The minority Labour government elected last February has suffered a series of defeats as it tried to bring in newer and cleverer ways of controlling trade unionists. The election had been fought amidst the miners strike and the three day week; industrial 'strife' has occupied the minds of big business and the major political parties.

SOCIAL COMPACT

The Tories failed in their iron-fist approach - the Industrial Relations Act, Rank and File workers organised against attempts to smash the unions and hold down wages. Now the Labour Party, after a militant campaign by nurses and other hospital staff and facing a massive unofficial strike by Ford workers, have presented the TUC with the social compact - supposedly a compact between the trade unions and the Labour Party.

The TUC accepted after the Engineering Union (AUEW) withdrew their opposition. The bosses magazine, The Economist, sums up the compact:

"It is no more than a voluntary incomes policy, concealed as an attack on social injustice."

The Labour Party is relying on its traditional working class support to persuade workers to keep their wages down in the face of rocketing prices. Because of inflation an English working class family living in a council house needs an income 10.2% higher than it needed in February of this year just to keep it above the bread-line; they must spend £501 a year on food alone.

RECEIVER

Because of the increasing economic crisis a major travel firm, Court Line collapsed and now Ferranti, an electronic combine, which employs more than 17,000 workers, have demanded a massive government loan to keep them from the hands of the receiver. The alternative for Ferranti's is to take a cut in their enormous

profits and this they won't do - they expect instead a subsidy from the British taxpayer. Nor is Ferranti's an exception, it is a typical, well-established firm. Many others will be following with demands for subsidised profits. British workers are confronted with redundancies and the Labour Party asks them to voluntarily tie their hands behind their backs.

COALITION

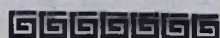
The Tory Party are taking a harder line, advocating a wage freeze and offering to form a coalition with anyone who'll have them. Above all they want to increase profits, and that means making the workers pay. They talk about National Unity. What they really mean is propping up the privileged few. The Liberals will go along with them - their only distinction is that they do not receive the support of either the employers or the unions. Their major election slogan is "Smash the two Party System" but merely upsetting one party and achieving power would suit them adequately. They do not and cannot offer an alternative, the people who vote for them are expressing an understandable frustration with party politics - that frustration is inevitable because the power doesn't lie in Parliament.

The present Labour Government is the first minority government since 1931. Many workers felt in the last election that they had nothing to gain from either of the two political parties and a number of workers in Scotland and Wales believed that their respective nationalist parties would do more to prevent rising unemployment in these areas. But the Scottish Nationalist Party and Plaid Cymru (the Welsh Nationalist Party) can offer nothing. They talk of an independent Scotland and an independent Wales: they do not talk of how wealth and power will be distributed when this independence has been won. Scottish and Welsh workers have more in common with English workers than with local capitalists. At a time when the whole working class is under attack it is dangerous for energy to be wasted on futile Nationalist causes.

INTERNMENT

The Irish Civil Rights Association is also putting up a number of candidates because it totally opposes Labour Party policy on Internment in the North of Ireland. ICRA understandably believes that the Labour Party in its policy and practice has sold out the minority population in the Six Counties. The Labour Party has traditionally enjoyed massive electoral support from the Irish working class in Britain. Many Labour seats in Irish immigrant areas could be threatened. Obviously Labour Party policy on the North must be opposed but what will happen if the Labour vote is split? In some areas it could mean that a Tory will slip in instead. The ICRA policy is the clearest demonstration that they do not understand anything about the class struggle - or else they are on the wrong side.

In this situation socialists must vote Labour. Not because it is the Party of the working class - patently they are not - but because it is more difficult for them to attack the working class. They have to rely on the co-operation of the unions. When the 1966 Labour Government tried to bring in their own Industrial Relations Act they were defeated by working class action. Also when the Labour Party is in power it is possible to see clearly the limitations of their 'socialism'. When they are out of office it is possible for illusions in them to develop.



ALL THE BOOKS REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE OF THE PAPER ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE WORKER BOOK SERVICE, 95 CAPEL ST, DUBLIN and 58 O'CONNELL ST, WATERFORD. WE ALSO HAVE A VARIETY OF SOCIALIST BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS. THESE INCLUDE NOVELS, MODERN HISTORY AND BOOKS ON THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SCENE. WRITE TO US FOR DETAILS.



Trotsky

The documents take us on through Russian history since the revolution: descriptions of Stalin's labour camps, and the mass arrests. The West has for a long time been fed with a diet of dissidents such as Solzhenitsyn, who believes that the Soviet bureaucracy can adopt a more 'human' face. But nowhere does Solzhenitsyn tell us of the strikes organised by Leninists in the Vorkuta concentration camps between 1950 and 1953. Contrary to Solzhenitsyn's view of Russia, the Samizdat documents show us that workers, not only intellectuals, opposed the process of Stalinisation. In the 'Memories of Alexandra Chumakova' we get an account of workers fighting the betrayal of Leninism at Glukhova textile mill:

"The Glukhova workers had no respect for Stalin; during the 1932 May Day demonstration they had carried portraits of Lenin and Trotsky through the streets of the settlement, and had shouted angry phrases against Stalin."

The documents in 'Samizdat' show us that many workers took up the struggle, and many died in labour camps because of their courage. Throughout the collection of writings, we can see the constant strain of left-wing opposition to the betrayers of the revolution. It is there, despite the concentration camps, the torture and the mass repression.

Samizdat, voices of the Soviet opposition. Edited by George Saunders. Pathfinder Press. £1.65.

GRETTA MULROONEY

THE OTHER RUSSIAN OPPOSITION

'SAMIZDAT - Voices of the Soviet Opposition' - is a collection of documents written by political dissidents in the Soviet Union. The writers in the collection are following a long Russian tradition of secretly circulating political documents in defiance of the censorship imposed by the Soviet bureaucracy and before it the Tzarist bureaucracy. The tradition is known as 'Samizdat'.

There is a heavy amount of material to sift through in the book, and it is best to be selective about where you start. The two most important are 'Memoirs of a Bolshevik Leninist' and 'Memoirs of Alexandra Chumakova'. The collection covers a great deal of political history since the Russian Revolution; from an eye witness description of the events of 1917 and after, through the terror of the Stalin regime to the present-day situation in the USSR.

The two main documents mentioned above were first published in the West in 1970. They proved conclusively that a left opposition still existed in Russia, despite the terror of the Stalin era, and the post-Stalin clamp-down on all political dissidents. In 'Memoirs of a Bolshevik Leninist' the writer gives a detailed account of the betrayal of the revolution, the lies and slanders put out by Stalin against Trotsky and the distortion of Lenin's politics by the Stalinists. He recounts Stalin's opposition, at the end of World War II, to pushing forward the frontiers of the revolution by aiding the proletariat of Western Europe, thus putting the final boundaries to his idea of 'socialism in one country'.

International News



British troops get in some practice at London Airport

Colonel David Stirling is trying to organise 'Great Britain '75' to keep Britain moving in the event of a serious breakdown of law and order". He has led mercenary armies in the Persian Gulf and talked about moving into state institutions in the event of a crisis caused by strikes. According to a Daily Express report he is backed financially by leading business men from the city and industry.



Colonel David Stirling

All socialists must vote Labour, not complacently thinking they can or will do anything to prevent inflation or rising unemployment. But preparing to fight. The Ford workers are fighting for a wage increase that will keep them abreast of the cost of living. The nurses have won a large pay rise, other Hospital workers are still fighting for more. To let the Tory Party in at this stage is to make the struggle harder for the working class. Britain can't win with Labour, it isn't one nation, it is two classes with totally opposed interests. 'Britain' can't win with Labour - but the working class have a better chance of doing so.

SHEILA DUNCAN

Like Poland Like Spain Like...

The ruling class are mobilising their resources but as Socialist Worker, the paper of the International Socialists, says: "the main target of socialists should be neither the NF nor Fascism but Reformism and Racism"

FASCISM

The British ruling class are getting very edgy. Their profits are falling, investment is being cut back. As yet, the situation is not so serious that Fascism is an immediate possibility. The rise of Fascism needs mass unemployment, a ruined middle class and a demoralised ruling class. Most of the British ruling class feel that strong Conservative government is enough to overcome the crisis and force workers to take a cut in living standards.

Nevertheless socialists cannot be complacent about the rising support for the National Front. In this election they are fielding 80 candidates. Already workers have been jailed after supposedly 'assaulting' police on anti-National Front demonstrations.

INFLATION is having its effect in "socialist" Poland too, and the state and party leaders have been attempting the same solutions as the Capitalist bosses of the West; jack up the productivity in industry. But as happened nearly four years ago, the workers in the ports of Gdansk and Gdynia have been resisting this. Late in August dockers and shipyard workers struck work and operated work-to-rules against the new wage policies. Strikes and go-slows are actually illegal in "workers' Poland" - and the army was sent in to move freight. But the same workers who brought down Gomulka's government in 1970 have been keeping up the fight and that fight could spread.

In Spain too, which is normally regarded as being at the other end of the scale, police have been used against strikers who have been protesting against 17% inflation and threatened factory closures. A Barcelona radio and television company has been strike-bound since late August because of its plans to move production away from the town. The illegal "workers' commissions" have been leading the struggles and State officials have been forced to take the unprecedented step of contacting them in order to negotiate at all.

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Prices Rise; Small Farmers Still Losing

The EEC chickens have come home to roost — on a mountain of beef. While farmers protest about prices being too low, the consumers can't afford to pay the prices in the shops. There are more cattle than ever before in the country — but little beef on the plate.

A couple of years ago cattle prices were rising steadily, restoring confidence in an industry which had been in a state of collapse just three or four years previously. It was tempting to believe that this was but a taste of things to come in the Common Market. That's what the Government, the economists and the big farming organisations were saying anyway.

Experts with letters after their names were talking about milk and beef production doubling within a decade, at constantly rising prices too. Small farmers were encouraged to borrow heavily in order to increase their breeding herds. Credit was given more or less on request to enable them to expand, produce more young cattle and to take full advantage of the coming boom. But so did farmers in the EEC countries. Produce they did. And the result is the worst crisis of over-production ever experienced in the Irish agricultural industry. But the consumers — you and me — can't afford to buy all the beef produced. There are now 7½ million cattle in the country but there is only enough cattle fodder for the coming winter to feed 5 million. Large numbers of cattle are going to starve to death.

Many small farmers now depend for their livelihood on producing young cattle to be sold to the big farmers who fatten them up and then sell them as beef. The EEC Beef Intervention scheme guarantees a good minimum price for fattened cattle — and for fattened cattle only. So it's no help to small farmers. If beef prices drop below a certain level, the EEC intervenes, buys the cattle at the minimum price and stores it for re-sale, hopefully when the market is healthier.

The small farmer gets no such guaranteed price for his young cattle, in fact the intervention scheme operates at his expense. The guarantee of a good minimum price for fat cattle encourages the big farmer to hold onto his cattle until the prices rise. At the same time the shortage of fodder means he is not looking to buy more young cattle from the small farmer for fattening up. Both ways the demand for young cattle falls and the small farmer who has been encouraged to expand finds that his greatly increased stock can't be sold at even half of last year's prices.

This is the basis of the present crisis. It is as always a crisis of the system and one out of which a small minority of big farmers do not suffer. The fuss being made by the Irish Farmers Association is to a large extent a campaign to keep the small farmers in the IFA under the leadership of the big farmers. The banks and credit corporations have made a tidy sum too. Raymond Crotty, in his National Land League pamphlet "The Cattle Crisis and the Small Farmer",



French farmers demonstrate

states that "the increase in farm indebtedness to banks and the Agricultural Credit Corporation from £123 millions in 1972 to £230 millions in 1974 has been the main factor in enabling the banks to double their profits from £20 millions to £40 millions in that time. It has also raised the corporate status of the ACC and brought higher salaries to its senior executives."

Remember the Common Market bonanza for Irish farmers? It wasn't spelt out which farmers, but we know now. This is not the first crisis in the cattle industry. The last one was in 1966-67 and we can be sure it won't end until farming and all other production is planned to meet the needs of the people and not to create profit for the few.

E. O'DWYER

COMMENTING on the frequent farmers' demonstrations in France during August and September and on the fact that the gap between the price paid to the producers and the price paid by the consumers is growing, the French revolutionary socialist paper, 'Lutte Ouvrière' (Worker's Struggle) comments:

The capitalists have got the farming sector under their control while farming is still carried on mainly by small independent producers. This control is effected from two sides.

On one side of agricultural production itself, there are the big companies which supply agricultural machinery and fertilisers; on the other side, the capitalists who operate the distribution network: warehouse owners, hauliers, wholesalers... In 1960, the portion of the sale price of farmers' supplies which actually went back to the farmers was 40 per cent, but by 1971 it had fallen to 25 per cent and today it is probably less again.

Mechanisation of agriculture as well as modernisation streamlining of the

distribution network are both certainly necessary. But, with the capitalists in control, what should be a public service is in fact subjected to the laws of the market and of profitability.

So it is that, hemmed in on all sides by the capitalists, the small farmers don't have their say at all in the price of their products. On the one hand, they have to put up with increases, in industrial products and on the other, the pressure of a market controlled by middlemen who keep down the prices they pay to the farmers...

This can mean that a good harvest doesn't bring the farmer any extra gain but only ensures that it is more difficult for him to sell.

Why would a supermarket boss put shelving out of use to sell fruit at 2 francs per kilo when by selling half at 4 francs per kilo he makes better use of his investment and of his shelving...

The whole thing is as if some passengers arrived at a station to take a train and they were told: "Ah, no! There's not enough of you to interest us in transporting you. It's not profitable enough for us. Wait a day or two until the carriage is full."

LOYALIST RADICALS?

"THERE IS little to choose between John Hume and William Ross", declared Glen Barr, withdrawing from the General Election field in Derry, "One is an Orange Tory, the other a Green Tory."

All good knockabout stuff, but what does it mean? Barr is a loyal member of the Vanguard Party, led by William Craig, who has an impeccable, right-wing record of anti-trade union activities and utterances.

Similarly, Ken Gibsons intervention in West Belfast on behalf of the UVF was based, so he claimed on a desire to have a "working-class voice speaking for this constituency". But the UVF simultaneously carries on a flirtation with the fascist National Front, and in its paper, "Combat", has angrily rejected suggestions that it is "soft on communism"

When it comes to the crunch the new "Protestant working-class radicalism", of which much has recently been made in some quarters, would seem at best to be a mass of confused and contradictory ideas, at worst an illusion.

Which is not to say that it is unworthy of note. The break-up of the old Unionist monolith in the last six years has caused developments in the Protestant working class, some of which open up the possibility — no more than that — of socialist intervention. After all, a series of confused and contradictory ideas is an advance on unthinking allegiance to traditional, reactionary Unionism.

The "betrayal" of Orangism by the Unionist leadership has triggered a number of different Protestant movements. Many harkened back to the old days and rallied to Craig and Paisley who were promising to turn the clock back. Some reverted to sectarian terrorism. And a few searched for a deeper explanation of the betrayal and came up with apparently radical answers. Barr and Gibson are among these last.

But none has dared to take the rejection of "bourgeois politics" to the logical point of an open break with bourgeois leaders. All assert "loyalty to Ulster". The one "working class radical" who did break



Glenn Barr

with loyalist organisations on consciously working-class, anti-sectarian grounds, Harry Murray, went not into socialist politics but into a crazy alliance with conservative clerics and professional pacifists.

By
EAMONN McCANN

Socialists must not fall into the trendy trap of applauding every loyalist leader who sprouts on RTE about the evils of the "fur-coat brigade". The task of socialists is to point out to those Protestant workers who are disillusioned with Orange leaders that their interests will not be served by attempts to construct a new leadership on the same lines as the old, but only by breaking decisively with Orangism itself, and lining up with the Catholic workers, North and South.

Which is much easier to write, of course, than to do. The sectarian chasm is so deep in the North that socialists have little contact with Protestant workers: and that makes it all the more important that the few tenuous contacts which do exist are not devalued by making concessions to sectarian consciousness.

There are no dramatic gains to be made from such a strategy — certainly not by small Marxist groups like the SWM which, as yet, can offer no viable organisational alternative. But at least we will be pointing the way — the only way — to a socialist future, and it is better to start from a real beginning than from a mass illusion.

The basic, fatal limitation on the "radicalism" of Barr and those who think like him is the boundary around Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland is irreformably undemocratic and any strategy confined within it cannot lead on to socialism. Those following such a strategy inevitably end up on the right rather than the left. Historically, there is no exception to this rule.

There is no such thing as "Six-County socialism" (or Twenty-six County socialism for that matter) and any attempt to smother that fact, any attempt to hold national politics in abeyance so as not to repel or discourage Protestant workers who appear to be breaking from Orangism, is certain to end in disaster.

Mines Surrendered

AT THE Labour Party conference this month, one of the chief concerns of the delegates — as last year — will be the question of mining. But while eloquent speeches may be made on the subject, when it comes to the crunch Justin Keating will be able to point out again that the Labour Party is in a coalition and cannot do exactly what the delegates want.

It is in fact tied to the interests of Fine Gael — the interests of capitalism. And nationalisation would breach the rules of capitalism.

No one can doubt now that there is great mineral wealth in this country. The Resources Study Group calculated two years ago that if the minerals were smelted and processed in Ireland the extra output would be around £350 million a year — that's an average of over £100 for every man, woman and child (26 counties). The offshore oil sold by the Government in 1959 for £500 million was calculated last year to be worth £31 million.

But there is no guarantee that this wealth will benefit the working class. On 21 July last Keating said the State hoped for an income of £500 million over 20 years from the Navan mines and smelter: that's only £25 million a year, when this year's budget was £1,336 million.

A lot of the opposition to imperialist control of this mineral wealth is on a purely nationalist basis. Sinn Féin uses the slogan "The wealth of Ireland for the people of Ireland". Yes, but which people? The shareholders of Bula, which owns the smaller part of the Navan mine, are all Irish people. The real point is, which class is going to control them, the working class or the capitalist class? The capitalist class in Ireland is entirely sold out to imperialist interests. Even if the mines were nationalised by the existing Irish state, this state is controlled by the capitalists, and so the mines would be run more or less to suit the interests of imperialism. Only if the mines were nationalised under workers' control would the working class be sure to benefit.

Let's put an imaginary situation. Let's suppose that Britain had gone socialist — that is, it was under the control



of the British working class, not Harold Wilson — and Ireland was still capitalist, and the present dispute over the oil near Rockall was going on. It would be the duty of every Irish worker to support to the hilt the maximum claim of the British workers' state to this oil, and to do everything possible to sabotage the Irish capitalist government's claims. This is what working class internationalism means. The interests of the working class take precedence over "national" claims.

The workers in the mines must have a role to play. It was a sorry day last year when the Tynagh miners marched through Dublin to protest against the ending of the tax holiday for the mine owners. Who could blame them, seeing that they got free travel and the day off on full pay? It was sad, but it was understandable. The agitation over nationalisation of the mines had not mentioned the miners themselves.

It is to the credit of the Navan workers and Trades Council that in the current dispute they have not thrown their weight behind the Tara company, but have simply called for the re-opening of negotiations.

Keating's negotiations with the company have been about whether the State should have 25 per cent or 49 per cent. But the figure is not the most important thing. He is not demanding control of the mine; there is no evidence of working towards a metal industry to process the output of any smelter. The produce of the richest lead-zinc-mine in Europe will fit into the imperialist world economy.

The working class cannot rely on a minister (however talented) in a Coalition government; it can only rely upon its own strength.

JOHN GOODWILLIE