

**TRADE UNIONISTS
AGAINST
REPRESSION**

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the worker

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Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

WHAT A BLOODY INSULT!



THE MAN in the shiny suit is John Carroll, one of the three bosses of Ireland's biggest union, the ITGWU. Mr. Carroll is an unprincipled opportunist, an ambitious and arrogant hack, and a bloody insult to the whole working class movement.

We do not make these charges lightly. The unions are the most important defence weapons of the working class and Mr. Carroll occupies a prominent place in the trade union movement. This is the John Carroll who made militant speeches on equal pay and contraception. Who has talked loudly about the plight of the pensioners and the misery of the unemployed. About the scandal of workers being forced to pay for the bosses' crisis.

However, socialists judge people not by their words but by their actions. And Mr. Carroll's actions condemn him and every other one of the hacks and timeservers in the bureaucracy of which he is a king-pin. Just two of these actions bear this out.

Firstly, Carroll is a member of the government's Prices Commission. As such he is in a position to know when a wave of price increases is coming. He is part of the body which sanctions such increases. So Carroll KNEW BEFOREHAND of the massive wave of increases which were timed to come just after the National Wage Agreement was signed. Yet when the Executive of the ITGWU met on January 29th last, Carroll kept his mouth shut about this and weighed in with the Executive's recommendation of acceptance of the NWA

Now the ITGWU leaders have been making speeches about how the NWA was a con because they weren't told about the increases in food, fares etc, which were coming. This pathetic attempt at maintaining credibility is another insult. Will Carroll be disciplined for his deceit? Like hell! Will Mullen, Kennedy and the rest of them call for a withdrawal from the NWA? Like hell!

Their militant-sounding words are easy to spout. But, remember, we must judge by action, not words.

Another of Carroll's betrayals occurred in the Kilmartin strike. The 190 women, in the seventh week of their strike, were fighting tooth and nail to defeat an 18th century type boss who had them working in disgusting conditions in a string of betting shops across Dublin. They put a picket on another Kilmartin-owned firm, the Irish Box Company.

Not only had the Box Co. workers been instructed by their officials to pass the picket, but Carroll sent another union official down to the picket line to threaten the strikers with cutting off their strike pay if the picket wasn't lifted.

SELLOUT

Carroll is not alone. He may be one of the most blatant sellout merchants in the business but he is merely part of the union bureaucracy which has made compromise, deceit and betrayal a way of life. These are the "leaders" who moan about the "apathy of the workers", and yet who are terrified of militant activity by the rank and file.

They thrive in, and fight to maintain, a union machine which is out of the control of the rank and file and which responds only to the wishes of themselves. Their policies — of restraint, acceptance of redundancies, the dropping of any real fight for equal pay — in return for a promise that the government will do "something, sometime" about the economic crisis, have proven disastrous.

If there is to be a real fight to protect workers' living standards, and if the thousands of workers who have shown their frustration in the recent rash of strikes are to be mobilised, we will have to go right through the discredited Carrolls of the trade union movement.

Already there is the beginning of opposition to the dictatorship of the bureaucrats in the ITGWU. It deserves the support of every member of the union.

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CHARLEY MOONEY, AGEMOU official, gets booked after speaking at a public meeting on the ICM picket line in Pearse St, Dublin.

An increasing number of names are being taken on picket lines and it's getting so a picket doesn't seem complete without a few uniforms on it.

And increasing attention is being paid by the bosses and their helpers to the still-powerful picket weapon. Though Congress helped to dilute that power by bringing in the two-tier picket — the scabs charter — and quite a few officials have got the habit of early rising in order to browbeat their members across pickets, the bosses are still unhappy.

The FUE made angry noises about the need to curb the power of the picket. Three high court judges joined in the chorus for O'Leary to bring in new picketing laws. The FUE kept the ball rolling with more speeches, while Cosgrave urged them on.

Our answer must be to go on the offensive by repealing the unions' own self-imposed chain — the two-tier picket.

Thinking About Capitalism

BY MARY BURNS

ONCE worked with a man who, to put it mildly, was rather fanatical about religion. He knew I was "one of dem reds" and when a church in Dun Laoire mysteriously burnt down another man on the job had no bother in convincing this guy that I had been busy with a box of matches. It started as a joke, but from then on I could never light a cigarette without getting startled glances from the fanatic.

That's the image, and if we were to take the Catholic Standard seriously, all socialists are waiting for is the day when religion is banned and all the bishops and priests in the country are locked up and fed cold tea and dry bread. I think I can assure their lordships that SWM is not making any plans in that direction. Marxists believe that religion is a fictitious understanding of the universe.

It developed out of a desire to understand and control a hostile environment as society developed. As the first human beings came out of the trees facing a world in which inexplicable and potentially disastrous phenomena abounded they invented a God to which they gave power over all things. In time, the rituals devised

to please that God became institutionalised. The guy who organised and directed the rituals became, because of his "nearness to God", vested with greater powers himself. Those "divine" powers, and the respect which they brought with them, easily became common or garden political power over the believers.

The more sophisticated, civilised and respectable "messengers of God" which we have today, have much more in common with the primitive witchdoctor than they would like to think.

As the forms of society changed (e.g. from barbarism to slavery, to feudalism, to capitalism) so religious concepts changed. But, being part of the ruling class, the church leaders have throughout history used religion to consolidate ruling class power. They had Aristotle's philosophy to explain that slavery was decreed by nature. And, later on, Thomas Aquinas could justify a lot of repression by representing the universe as a kind of huge feudal system with kings and lords getting their authority from God. In 320 A.D. the Christian communities became the Roman state church and as church wealth rose it began to safe-

guard the rule of the slaveholders of the Roman empire. In the same tradition, we have our own Bishop Dermot Ryan telling workers to "think twice before going on strike" and think of the "moral responsibility to the country." Not a word about the bosses who run this lousy system and who force workers to strike for a living wage. Not a word. That's called "leading the flock."

We are told that we shouldn't bring religion into politics — but it's in there, intimately wrapped up in the running of the system. But it's no role of ours to "stamp out" religion. As the material, economic conditions change so will the religious, philosophical and political ideas. As workers come up against the ideas of the church in practice and choose their own way forward the need for a "guiding force" will decrease.

You can't stamp out a desire for what the mass of people need. As the mass of the working class are faced with a crisis which demands a different form of society they will have no need for the props of the old system.

Roots

or: you, me and Kunte Kinte



"WHAT YOU mean 'We's free'?" says Tom, in the last episode of ROOTS. "We never been trained to live in a white man's world"

And the ex-slaves, "freed" by the defeat of the South in the American civil war, go back to tending the crops and living in shacks.

The lesson is not a new one. No one can sign a paper and make an oppressed class free. If Liam Cosgrave and his mates have a fit of conscience tomorrow and pass a Bill calling Ireland a workers' state it will make little difference.

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erence. We'd still have to carry on with the same lousy working conditions, the same lousy housing, the same set of overseers telling us how to live.

In Roots, the old master had to quit and new one comes along. He pays the slaves just enough to keep them alive and in debt to him. Just like the old master fed them just enough to keep them working.

Because the slaves had not freed themselves, had not fought and built new forms of organisation in the fight, they could do little but accept the change of master and their own continued oppression under a new form.

Roots copped out, of course, by having the family rustle up enough money to buy some land far away and settle down. The real struggle of the blacks continued for most of them as a more oppressed section of the American working class. As such they are still fighting today. But that's something the TV people don't particularly want to broadcast.

RUTHLESSNESS

Despite the cop-out, and the many scenes depicting slavery as being just a little more nasty than having a leaky chalet in Budlins with a few drunken redcoats on hand, the series was worth a look. The casual ruthlessness of a class which can subject human beings to

miser and seek its own comfort and justification in the bible has seldom been exposed so openly on TV. Perhaps the fact that the events are seen at a distance and are depicted as having happened long, long ago has something to do with it. But the parallels with our own society and its ruthless rulers are there. There isn't that much difference between a man with a whip in Virginia and another with a baton in the basement of the Bridewell.

FIGHTERS

What sustained the spirit of the characters in Roots was the knowledge, passed on from one generation to the next, that there was once one hell of a fighter in the family — Kunte Kinte. They passed on the story of the African who retained his pride and his will for freedom despite the odds.

And there's one hell of a lot of fighters and a lot of stories to be passed on in working class history. From Marx, through Larkin and the millions of workers who gave reality to their ideas, to the fighters of today.

You, me and Kunte Kinte. We've got a world to win, and nobody will be passing any Bills to make it happen. We have to do it ourselves.



IT'S A FARE FIGHT — JOIN IN!

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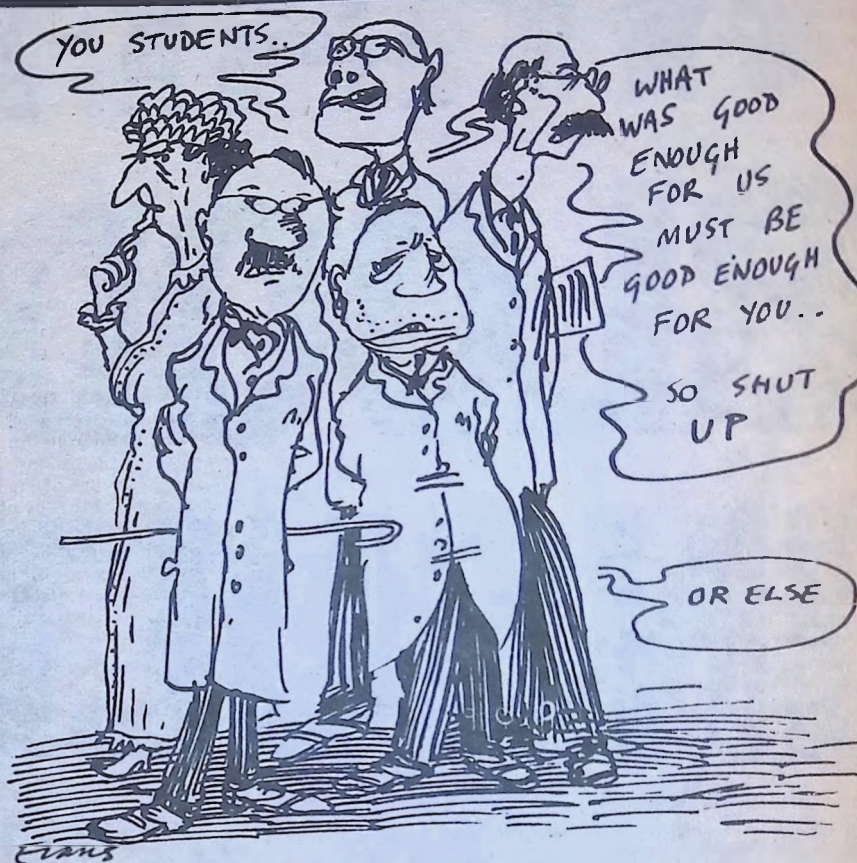
Address _____

FARE FIGHT

Sponsored by the Dublin Fight Unemployment Committee.

A Fight Unemployment Committee has been formed recently in Dublin to launch a fight back that can unite unemployed and those still at work. The first major issue the committee will be taking up is a campaign to win Free Travel for the Unemployed. The committee will be issuing tickets at the Labour Exchanges so that people can give the conductors their names and addresses in place of a fare. It's then up to CIE to collect the fares and if they want to go to that bother they are only creating jobs for busmen. If you want to help in this campaign or better still want to join the Fight Unemployment Committee contact:

2 Tranquilla Terrace
(off Camden Street)
Dublin 2.



NUU students occupy in fight against fee increases

STUDENTS AT the New University of Ulster in Coleraine occupied the administrative complex recently in protest over the British government's proposed increase in fees. The fees are to rise from the present £212 to a whopping £500 per year.

Over 200 students from the Republic, who receive no grant aid due to the out-dated and inadequate grant selection system, will be forced to discontinue their academic studies in September. During the occupation the students were told that the British government had determined that students from the South are not "overseas students" and will not have to pay the overseas rate of £650! They will only have to pay £500.

The students demanded that the university council refuse to implement the fee increases for all overseas, self-financing and repeat year students. Many universities in the U.K. and recently the Northern Ireland Polytechnic opposed the government by doing this. However, NUU university council consistently refused to agree to the students' demands. These fee increases will mean less grants,

less students, drastic staff sackings, less government expenditure on education and the spreading of the cutbacks in public spending.

The students controlled all nine floors of the administration building which they held for three days. During this time a student was physically struck by a member of the administration who demanded the names of many students taking part in the occupation, threatening "severe disciplinary action" against them.

The occupation ended when the students were granted the "honour" of stating their case personally to the council. Upon meeting the council the students were promised assistance from the coffers of Lord Melchett — Britain's local hack and puppet in charge of slashing educational and social services spending in the North.

This occupation, which had the mass support of the student body, the campus trade unions, the sympathy of the media, and the university authorities on their knees, should have been continued until the university council gave in and refused to implement the fee

These fee increases are nothing more than disguised cuts.

Students are still unaware of exactly how much of a donation they will receive from the British treasury to enable them to continue their education at NUU. These alms from "Her Majesty's Government" will of course be strictly means tested.

NUU faces a massive decline in student numbers due to the fact that students from the South can no longer afford to come North. Most "Southern" students come from depressed border areas such as Donegal and Monaghan. These fee increases are some example of so-called "cross-border co-operation" policy. These declines in student numbers will mean the further sacking of cleaning, portering, catering and maybe even some academic staff for the sake of economy.

A local branch of the SWM has been established and will fight against cutbacks in educational spending and defend the right of all to educational opportunities.

To contact SWM in the Coleraine/Derry Area: SWM, Students Union, NUU, Coleraine, Co. Derry.

Waterford

FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHT TO WORK

WATERFORD, with about 1800 on the dole, and about 600 school leavers walking the streets, is as badly affected by unemployment as most parts of the country.

What makes the position in the town worse is the number of closures of old-established factories over the last couple of years—Denny's Meats, Goodbody's Jute Factory etc. The hope that the Industrial Estate would replace these jobs and absorb the young workers coming out of school, has been seen to be a false hope. Four factories have closed out there over the last 12 months: D.A. Radiators, Morachem, K.D.C. Parts, and now Rumbach Plastics.

The response of the trade unions to these closures has been almost nil. Instead of fighting for these jobs the trade union representatives immediately start talking about redundancy payments. They have sold jobs, not realising that the majority of workers can expect a couple of years on the dole, when the redundancy money will have run out.

It is now time to fight back.

Socialists and militants in the Unions have been trying for a long time to get the unions to take a strong stance on unemployment in the town. We have been pushing consistently in the Waterford Council of Trade Unions for real activity against unemployment.

PROTEST MARCH

The traditional response from the Council to this pressure has been to send delegations to talk to Ministers, Mayors, Chambers of Commerce—in fact to any shitehawk who would listen to the them. These delegations were sent, not in the belief that they would achieve anything, but rather as conscience-balm-ing operations, and, sure, anyway, it was a right good excuse for a piss-up.

This year things have changed because younger and more militant workers have been delegated on to the council. Instead of pressurising public representatives the council has called for action by the unions themselves to stop the rot of unemployment.

The first major success was a protest march on unemployment through the town—two weeks after the Dublin march. Shop stewards in the town were invited to come to an open meeting to organise for the march. A militant programme to fight unemployment was agreed. It included demands for a 35-hour week to create jobs, an end to double jobbing and excessive overtime and opposition to redun-

dancies.

Unfortunately a classical piece of manipulation soon followed. This programme was scrapped and replaced at a closed meeting by a programme remarkably akin to the policies of Sinn Fein, the Workers' Party. Our arguments against these policies are:

1. To believe that by expanding state industry unemployment is solved ignores the fact that these industries will also make workers redundant. Workers in C.I.E. face cut-backs and loss of jobs; workers in the E.S.B. have seen apprentices let go in their final year; workers in the Post Office have seen bitter resistance to equal pay. They are treated no differently to the rest of us.

2. To demand a smelter for Waterford is to engage in parish pump politics. Should we as workers take up a fight with workers in places like Drogheda or Connemara who might also want a smelter located in their areas?
3. A crash programme of housing and public works can only produce at the most 6000 6000 new jobs for a short period of time. Even Richie

Ryan will offer an investment of a couple of million for this work in his last budget.

We said that such demands will achieve nothing. Rank and file trade unionists or unemployed workers could do little to implement such demands. The I.C.T.U. has for years got those same types of resolutions passed to gather dust some place.

It is time that the people who manoeuvred these resolutions on to the Waterford Council of Trade Unions—and the Dublin Council of Trade Unions—realised that by offering workers these dead-end solutions they are asking the Irish working class to sit back, accept the bosses' attacks and leave the rest in respectable parliamentarian hands.

It is no wonder that the trade union officials are so ready to accept these policies. They are doing nothing which allow the officials to pass militant-sounding resolutions and at the same time carry on as normal accepting redundancies and falling real wages.

There are limitations to what can be achieved in Trades Councils and union branches. What we must

begin doing is helping to set up some kind of organisation of the unemployed themselves. This will not be an easy task. Nobody should delude themselves into thinking that everybody on the dole queue is just waiting to be called into action. The start must be made now, though, no matter how small a start. We in the S.W.M. will be playing our part in building unemployed committees and linking them with rank and file organisations on the factory floor, where workers' real muscle is.

A start has already been made in Waterford, first with the well supported Trades Council march and secondly with Right to Work pickets being put on a Labour Party public meeting attended by the Minister for Unemployment himself, Michael O'Leary. The fight-back in Waterford will continue.

JOIN US IN THE FIGHT
Contact Waterford S.W.M at:
114 The Quay
Waterford.

UNITY AGAINST THE FLY-BY-NIGHTS

RUMBACH PLASTICS, a German company at the Industrial Estate in Waterford, is typical of the type of firms which the I.D.A. has attracted to this country.

Most multinationals have a strategy of having a factory in one country doing only a part of the processing from raw material to finished product. This has several advantages for them, one very important one being that one factory on its own is useless when separated from the rest of the multinational combine. It wouldn't be able to get a supply of its base material and it wouldn't have a market for its output (which is not marketable until it has been fully processed). A bit of a Catch 22 situation.

LAY-OFFS

What this actually means on the factory floor is that, if the workers do hear of an impending closure or lay-offs it seems useless to them to put up resistance.

Attempting to keep the machinery as a bargaining point to save jobs isn't always on the cards. When Dobson's Fibres closed, the machinery wasn't moved out until 12 months later. It was cheaper, thanks to the I.D.A., to leave the stuff in the factory than to hire warehouse space in England.

One very good trick which the bosses and their agents have in order to get the workers to docilely accept closures on Industrial Estates is to spread the word around about an impending takeover by a different company. Naturally, the workers are told, any militant action by them to prevent the orderly departure of the old company would jeopardise the takeover by the new company.

It is because of a combination of these things that the workers in Rumbach Plastics were left hanging around the factory wondering if their place was going to close down or not—even though the electricity was shut off.

With four factories of the Estate in Waterford after closing down without any resistance from the workers, the morale and confidence of workers in the remaining factories is obviously not very high.

ANGER

But resistance of any further closures will have to be made, and some of the anger and frustration of the workers will have to be directed towards the I.D.A. and their local offices on the industrial estate. It's they who invited in these vultures in the first place.

If a group of workers make any serious and sustained fight against the bosses it would be possible to organise solidarity action from other workers around the estate. We have a little bit of history of such action, and on the Industrial Estate, the slogan "Your fight is our fight" is not seen as just a slogan but as a necessity for survival.

Notes of the month

A HOST OF STRIKES

THE UNMISTAKEABLE nod and wink from the Supreme Court judges to the Government, for stricter control of picketing, gives us some idea of the reaction of the ruling class to three months of increased militancy from workers

The Chief Justice, ex-blue shirt Tom O'Higgins, led the court in reluctant granting the brave handful of Gouldings picketers the right to continue the struggle for their jobs. The FUE quickly followed up the judges' statements, calling on O'Leary to crack down on pickets. Cosgrave, seeing the rising tide, came out with a strong speech backing the "spirit and letter of the National Wage Agreement."

Dublin saw 26 strikes in one day last month. On April 27th there were 2,000 workers out. Long strikes dragged out over more weeks — HB, Hodge Finance, Kilmartins, Irish Catering Machines, Poolbeg and others — and other large strikes sprung up which challenged the restrictions of the National Wage Agreement — Irish Steel, Leyland, Unidare.

Workers are fighting wage restraint, but not as a conscious move against the root of that restraint, the National Wage Agreement. We are seeing indirect challenges to the NWA: parity claims outside of it at Unidare for instance. But some of the anger has been quite explicit, forcing union leaders to cover their tracks by condemning price rises, and resolutions from two ITGWU branches calling for a national ballot to withdraw from the NWA.

Meanwhile, women workers continued the fight for equal pay in the telephone exchanges and for decent conditions in Kilmartins. The Minor pick-up in productivity and profits in the first quarter of this year has also contributed towards a boost in workers' willingness to hit back. A host of small strikes burst out. Victories at Poolbeg, Hot Tom, Waterford, honourable draw at Hodge Finance, defeat at Massey-Ferguson. Some are still in the balance as at Irish Catering Machines.

These strikes have been overwhelmingly upsurges of the rank and file — with some honourable exceptions the union officials have shown how unwelcome they regard militant action. Instructions to pass pickets at Unidare and General Motors; no spreading of the fight at HB or in Kilmartins, and in the latter the disgusting orders from above to stop picketing another Kilmartin owned company.

There is only one way to assure victory for strikes which are isolated — either by the union officials or by their small size — and that is solidarity. Each strike must be built into a campaign — of collections, mass pickets, sympathetic action, public meetings, fund-raising socials, marches etc. The full-time officials won't do this. This requires rank and file organisation, link-ups between workers at rank and file level.

Welding together the scattered blows against the NWA also requires rank and file organisation. The union leaders have shown their unshakable support for the leg-irons of wage restraint. Because the NWA prevents workers putting in a simple claim for a wage rise when they feel they need it, indirect claims (i.e. parity) are the only way many workers see of defending their living standards. Or else the frustration breaks out on a bonus issue or smaller issues. But the real blockage is the Wage Agreement and it must be openly opposed as the instrument of declining wages.

To return to the law. Injunctions are flying, but the last couple of months have shown not only an increase in the use of the courts against pickets, but two successful cases of resistance to injunctions. The Poolbeg and Leyland strikers ignored the injunctions and were not jailed. The bosses held back from pressing for legal action out of fear of the backlash against the jailing of strikers. It can be done.

A STATE OF VIOLENCE

COSGRAVE and Co. have for quite a while now been hammering home a simple message — respect us or we'll smash your face in. Time after time they have flexed their muscles. They bring in blatantly repressive laws almost at will. They openly discuss whether or not they should hang a couple of people in order to show their strength. They recruit a gang of thugs whose special duty is to beat "confessions" out of suspects. They terrorise and torture prisoners and calmly deny it. They occasionally bring their heavy gang onto the streets for a little practice. The man on the right thought that prisoners in Portlaoise should not be abused. Cosgrave's militia took the numbers off their uniforms and casually smashed his face in.



The ability of the state to indulge in such casual violence without generating a storm of protest should be a cause of concern not just to those who bear the brunt of it — the republicans. The growing strength of the state is not only physical. For every head which gets a thump to convince them that the state is right, the state is powerful, the state deserves respect and obedience. It's encouraging that rank and file trade unionists are now beginning to take up the fight against repression. (See page 5)

the worker

First Floor, 24 Talbot Street, Dublin, 1.

LETTERS

Due to pressure of space we have had to drop the letters column this month, but keep them coming and keep them short, please.



United last time — Paisley and Barr after the 1974 stoppage

THE LOCKOUT

The old Loyalist state did not help Protestant workers. They suffered the worst housing and unemployment in the U.K. (after their Catholic brothers and sisters)

To demand the restoration of Protestant ascendancy (which really means Protestant middle class ascendancy) only divides the working class. And in the absence of a mass alternative to the Provisionals, to defeat the IRA means to wipe out the only significant opposition to imperialism at present. An imperialism which has imposed the same rotten conditions and low wage rates on workers in both parts of Ireland.

There are many differences between this time and 1974. British imperialism must be less willing and less able to concede the demands, since its interests lie in an up-to-date form of exploitation which is not blatantly sectarian. It is more difficult for the Loyalists to create a new (or revived) system of government, than to bring down the Executive which had already been weakened by the UUUC victory at the Westminster election. The Loyalists are more split, with Vanguard and Official Unionists opposing the stoppage.

It is one thing to unite Loyalists against the SDLP in government — it is another thing to unite Loyalists on a definite strategy to restore ascendancy rule.

The frustration and demoralisation which can arise from

(Continued from Page 8)

the inability to restore Stormont can be turned by Paisley and Baird against Catholic workers.

There is a danger of Loyalists attacking Catholic areas in frustration. There is also the dangerous demand, raised as in 1974, for an Ulster Trade Union Congress: a demand which is based on purging the trade union movement of republican, communists and all militants who oppose the Loyalists.

The trade union leaders are not in a good shape to lead the fight back. Most of them have offered little resistance to the Social Contract, which has meant a falling standard of living for their members. They do not, therefore, have a strong base of support. They have collaborated with the government's economic strategy, and their withdrawal from the Northern Ireland Economic Council is a meaningless gesture. Some of them shared a platform with Paisley and Craig in opposing defence cuts which threatened jobs.

Now they are opposing the stoppage, they say, because of the danger to the economy of the North. They have issued joint statements, and appeared on TV with the leaders of the CBI saying the same things. They oppose political strikes on principle, instead of basing their opposition on the reactionary objectives of the stoppage, which is not for any working class interests. Their record makes it impossible for them to appeal to any working class militancy to defeat the lock-

out. The argument that the lockout ruins the economy can be used against any work stoppage.

And the trade union leaders appeal for support from the British army and the RUC. They want the army to keep the roads open. But workers should know that the army is not, and never will be, on the side of the working class.

It is a capitalist army whose aim is to hold up the capitalist state. It is an imperialist army with a long record of oppression. The class background of its officers, and its objective of defeating the IRA, can easily lead it into collaboration with the Loyalist leaders, — particularly if the strike gathered momentum.

It is within the working class that opposition to loyalism must be developed. The workers who voted and went to work have shown tremendous courage. They must be encouraged to organise Back to Work marches protected by the unions. Trade union activists living in particular areas should come together to organise meetings to oppose the sectarian thugs.

Workers in anti-unionist areas must organise in self defense against possible sectarian attack. The Provos cannot be relied upon to maintain a totally non-sectarian approach or to organise the people.

If the Loyalist thugs can be isolated and defeated by Protestant prospects can open up towards overcoming sectarianism through militant working class unity.

YOU CAN'T START A STRIKE FROM THE BACK OF A LORRY IN O'CONNELL STREET

THE HUNGER STRIKE by political prisoners in Portlaoise has ended in defeat. There may be rumours in the future about small modifications in the prison rules. But the basic harassment of prisoners through the use of strip searching and solitary confinement will continue.

Cosgrave has made it clear that there will be no inquiry into prison conditions. They have got away with the threat to allow prisoners to die rather than make the slightest concessions.

The defeat at Portlaoise is not just a defeat for the Provos—it's a blow against every worker. The Coalition government has come out of it strengthened. It can now gradually extend the use of the Emergency Powers Act. Already during the protest about the prisoners, it had started using the seven-day detention provision against picketers. The police thugs who had a field day batoning protesters will get a new burst of confidence.

The Coalition government has once again got away with crushing the protests rather than being forced to concede. And the same "tough guy" approach will not just be used for Republican protests—it will also be adopted against workers and trade unionists.

Why were the Provos defeated? It is now clear that the Provos have not enough support in the South to be able to force the government to concede. Their elitism, their lack of involvement in the trade unions, their nationalistic trappings have all cut them off from the broad mass of working people. As such, the only hope of success for the hunger strikers was the building of a genuine united front that would have mobilised more than the Provo supporters on emotive marches.

But time after time the Provo leadership at national and local level have discouraged the building of genuine and democratically run united fronts between Republican and socialist groups. Only such bodies could have involved the active support of trade unionists.

FIAT STRIKE

But the Provo leadership does not understand or doesn't want to understand the power of the working class. It puts more of an effort into getting liberals and clerics on to its platforms than in trying to win workers' support.

It was only on one of the last demonstrations that Sean Mac Stiofain issued a call for strikes in support of the hunger strikers. Men had to be on their sick-beds

before Sinn Fein finally recognised the power of the working class.

All credit is due to those workers at Fiat in Dublin and workers on building sites who came out on strike. But you do not organise strikes from the platform in O'Connell Street. Sinn Fein has always neglected the task of organising workers at their place of work—the unspectacular and gradual building of support which is necessary before such a strike call will be heeded on a large scale.

MINERS TAKE ACTION

Hunger strikes in themselves are an act of desperation—the only form of protest left to the prisoners themselves. They are also a dangerous tactic. Unless it can be backed up by mass action on the streets and in the workplace, the government will win no matter how heroic those involved. It was only the mass action around the hunger strikes in Long Kesh that won political status for Republicans in the North.

But there is no excuse for the inactivity and apathy of our trade union leaders and sections of the left. The trade union leaders refused to lift a finger; they have sat back and let the government build up more and more repression; they have seen their own members beaten up, charged before the Special Criminal Court and held under the worst prison conditions—and they have done nothing. But rank and file

GALWAY COPS USE BOOTS AND FISTS TO 'LIVEN UP' A PARTY

GARDAI in Galway city and Loughrea have proved recently that they do not lag behind their comrades in the use of the fist and boot. These 'guardians of the peace' have for a long time relied on extracting confessions through sheer force. But through the activities of the Galway Civil Liberties Action Committee their methods have now been publicised.

On Friday 25th March a party which was held by apprentices in the Coachman Hotel in Galway got an unwanted "kick" to life with the arrival of gardai from Eglinton St. Station.

The party which was held to celebrate the end of the term and exams was due to end at 1 a.m. However, the gardai arrived before that and got annoyed at the fact that some of the party goers were in a good mood and singing. Two apprentices were picked on, and as others began to question the cops they drew their batons and

beat the daylight out of the two, Maguire and Gallagher.

As they were being escorted to the street the two apprentices were quite dazed and Gallagher, seeing a guard lunge at a fellow apprentice with his baton, put out his hand to protect his mate. Immediately, as a result of this, both Gallagher and Maguire were "thrown" into a squad car and brought to Eglinton Street Station, where they had to put up with a torrent of verbal abuse.

They were only then taken to the Regional Hospital where Maguire received seven stitches and was detained overnight. Gallagher received three stitches and was then brought back to Eglinton Street to be detained overnight and until 5 p.m. the following evening.

At no time were the apprentices informed of their legal rights, and they were not charged until the moment before their release.

A year or two ago seven blokes from Mervue brought charges of assault against the cops after being beaten in the station after some-

one gave a bomb hoax. The guards got off the charge on a pure technicality—the case was supposedly being tried in the wrong court.

In mid-February of this year three miners from Tynagh, Pat Torpey, Alfie Quinn and Dermot Mitchell, were subjected to worse torture in order to extract a 'confession' for stealing or possessing explosives.

Dermot Mitchell was picked up at 12.00 midnight. He was called a "murdering bastard" and a "thieving whore". When he dozed off to sleep in the Station after hours of interrogation, his eyelids were pulled open. Gardai kept shouting: "Look at you evil bastard!" The police put their noses up against his and forced him to look into their eyes.

In the morning the Heavy Gang arrived—politely referred to as "special agents from Dublin." Beatings and

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Limerick, Waterford and Navan, has been elected, and a national conference will be held in early July.

—from a TUCCAR press release.

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trade union inquiry into prison conditions. Interviews with ex-prisoners, with relatives of prisoners and anyone who cares to testify can provide the means of establishing the 'truth'.

And if the I.C.T.U. refuse to accept such resolutions as have already been passed, it's up to rank and file trade unionists to form such an inquiry and publicise the findings. Already the No. 2 branch of the I.T.G.W.U. has called for such a trade union inquiry. The Wexford Trades Council have taken the first step by meeting a delegation of relatives of prisoners in Portlaoise.

We also need to build a real campaign inside the trade union movement for action by workers to oppose repression. Many fine resolutions have been passed at various trade union congresses. But they are left to gather dust on the shelves. We need a campaign inside the unions to make sure they are acted on. Already a start has been made with the formation of the Trade Union Co-ordinating Committee Against Repression. We reprint here their press release and urge all trade unionists and readers of *The Worker* to support its activities.

AND YOU CAN'T KILL CAPITALISM BY KILLING THE CAPITALISTS

IN THE PAST few months there have been signs that the Provisionals were moving to the left. There has been more reference to a democratic socialist republic as the aim. There have been attempts to express solidarity with liberation movements in other countries. There has been a greater willingness to share platforms with other organisations.

However, the most public demonstration of this "left turn"—as the Establishment newspapers would call it—was the campaign of assassination of businessmen, and the left-sounding language which the Provos have used in talking about it.

But the only note of welcome which revolutionary socialists can give to this campaign (which seems now to have stopped) is, if somebody is going to be killed, let it be a businessman rather than a worker.

Any military campaign must be judged according to its effects. And while it is true that businessmen are the local agents of British capitalism, they are not going to be frightened into releasing their grip on the economy. When imperialism loses one of its local agents, it is always able to find some mercenary willing to go into the danger area.

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As revolutionaries, we oppose capitalists because they are capitalists, not because they are bastards (even if most of them are that too). It is a delusion for workers to think that a "good" capitalist can be found to replace a "bad" one. You cannot get rid of capitalism by passing a few laws, or by planting a few bombs.

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POLISH STRIKE LEADER CONDEMNS RUSSIAN 'SOCIALISM'

"WHEN WORKERS get shot and imprisoned for going on strike what has this got to do with socialism or communism?" You can give your own answer to that question. There's no prizes for guessing ours.

The question was asked by Edmund Baluka, an exile from Poland, where in 1970-71, he led a strike of shipyard workers on the Baltic coast which sparked off widespread protest against the government's sudden jacking up of prices. And he asked the question at a meeting held during April in Trinity College, Dublin, to support the radical opposition in Eastern Europe.

His answer was quite clear, too. He regards the regime in Poland as a thoroughly bureaucratic one. He sees the system that regime presides over as a new kind of capitalism—state capitalism, exploiting the workers even more severely than they are exploited in Western Europe.

Opening the meeting, which was called by the Trinity College Young Socialists, he outlined the development of the strikes in Stettin and other Baltic ports. 3000 people, he claimed, were killed when the government used police and troops to put down the strikes and the riots. But the shipyard workers forced the Communist Party leader, Gierek, to come to the shipyards and hear their grievances. The price increases

were postponed. And, as the strikes and demonstrations of last summer show, the enormous repression since that time has not quelled the radical and revolutionary spirit of Polish workers. Last year, too, direct action by industrial workers in central Poland forced the government to change course.

Speaking with Baluka at the meeting was Jan Kavan, on his second visit to Ireland. The Czech journalist, also in exile, started by declaring his support for the demonstration taking place the next day in support of the Portlaoise hunger strikers. In this way, he underlined what Baluka had already made clear: that they were not anti-socialist, right-wing opponents of the Eastern European regimes, but socialists who defend democratic rights everywhere.

Jan Kavan spoke of the extraordinary fear which the circulation of a simple statement of human rights, drawn from official literature, had struck into the hearts of the government. They have not only banned the publication of this document, known as Charter 77, but made sure that anyone associated with it has lost their jobs. In a country where it is an offence for individuals or

unofficial groups to have a duplicator to reproduce documents, it is obviously difficult to gather support for opposition statements. But each month since January there have been more signatures added to Charter 77.

When the Czech government went to the factories to get resolutions passed condemning Charter 77 and its authors, they were asked by the workers to read out the text of the document before they could agree to condemn it. But that would have defeated the entire purpose of the operation, so the factory meetings were called called off.

Among the people at the meeting there was a fear that support for the democratic opposition in Eastern Europe might be misunderstood and misinterpreted as anti-communism and used for right-wing purposes. However, those who are prepared to give full support to the struggles of workers in this country as well as in Poland, Czechoslovakia, or Russia for that matter—struggles about wages and jobs, but also against repression—have no reason to fear being misunderstood.



The Polish Dockworkers' strike committee. Baluka is fourth from right, second row.

AND LAST YEAR... THOUSANDS of men and women poured out of the factories onto the streets of Polish cities last June.

The government had announced that meat was to go up by 60 per cent, vegetables by 30 per cent, sugar 100 per cent, cheese 50 per cent, and fish 69 per cent.

Workers responded with stoppages in many towns and vast demonstrations.

The government called the strikers and demonstrators 'hooligans'. But within 24 hours they withdrew the price rises.

They took their revenge, however. Hundreds of workers were interrogated. Many were beaten up. At least one died of a beating. Thousands of workers lost their jobs. Students who supported the workers were interrogated and lost university places.

The Polish economy is becoming increasingly tied up with the west, and is being affected by the same crisis. So far, the government has been able to concede workers' demands by huge borrowing from the west. But this is just patching up a vessel that has new holes appearing all the time

POOLBEG AND LEYLAND SMASH INJUNCTIONS

FOR years the Irish Congress of Trade Unions has passed resolutions pleading with the government ministers to relax the law about injunctions. At the moment a boss can get an injunction by telephoning a friendly judge who will then slap one on.

But while the I.C.T.U. has let these resolutions gather dust on the shelves, rank and file workers at British Leyland and Poolbeg have taken action. They just kept picketing and ignored the judges' rules. In both cases the bosses and the court backed down. The lesson: Action not words will win.

THE RE-HIRING of 15 painters on the construction site at the E.S.B.'s new generating station in Poolbeg, Dublin, after a six week strike could set an important headline for future strikes. For the painters, supported by 250 other construction workers who respected their pickets, defied the injunctions brought by the E.S.B. against them—and won a total victory.

The struggle was seen clearly by all the men on the site as one to hold on to jobs—and the restrictions of National Wage Agreements (which they had already breached in site negotiations, anyway), the impositions of two-tier picketing, and court injunctions were not going to hold them back. They even managed to make nonsense of the usual restrictions operated by the trade unions themselves. They got strike benefit paid to all the men out because of the strike, including those in NEETU and ITGWU who were not directly concerned.

In the past year, a strong shop stewards' organisation has been built up on this important site. The timing of the painters' sacking by a contractor who decided to quit the contract overnight seems to have been aimed at breaking that organisation. But it held together in spite of this provocation, proving once again what we have often said in *The Worker* and *S.W.M.*—that the fight for jobs and against redundancies is one and the same as the fight to develop strong, independent rank and file organisation.

AS ANY reader of the newspapers or watcher of television knows by now, Leyland workers have been at the centre of the fight against the social contract in Britain. In Dublin, too, the men in Leyland factories have been fighting a battle against our version of the social contract, the National Wage Agreement.

Since 28th March, the workers at the car seat frame manufacturing plant in Ballyfermot have been on strike to get the latest National Agreement increase paid. The company, claiming an annual loss of £400,000 on the factory, will not pay up without a commitment from the men to a strict productivity deal based on Measured Day Work (MDW).

In defiance of court injunctions, the seat frame men not only picketed their own factory but two other Leyland premises in Dublin. When the injunction came up for renewal, the men, with the support of officials of one union involved, AGEMOU, had prepared their response (a far too rare thing in injunction cases) and the company did not proceed with their requests for an extension of the injunction.

But the Leyland men may have set an even more important precedent in this strike: on 3rd April, ATGWU shop steward, Tommy Bennett, addressed the massive "rank and file TUC" in Birmingham called by the Leyland shop stewards throughout Britain to discuss the fight against the social contract. He and his AGEMOU colleague, Joe Hanlon, distributed appeals for financial support to the delegates and got promises of more direct help from Leyland stewards.

JOIN US IN THE FIGHT

SWM What we stand for

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FOR FULL EQUALITY FOR WOMEN which can only be won if women themselves are organised to fight for their demands and if that struggle is part of the fight for workers' power.

FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE in order to break the hold of reactionary ideas on workers, and remove a principal obstacle to women's equality. We support the demands for contraception and abortion to be made available on request.

FOR DEFENCE OF ANTI-IMPERIALISTS who face the full force of state repression. We fight for the abolition of repressive laws and for the withdrawal of the British Army. We support the self-defence on working class areas against military and sectarian attack. We fight to build a united front of working class and anti-imperialist organisations for those aims.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS' PARTY which can draw the most advanced, class-conscious workers together to fight for the political leadership of the working class. A revolutionary socialist leadership based in the working class can have a decisive influence especially in periods of upheaval.

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

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

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

Join us in the fight **SWM**

HUNGER STRIKE

Why they lost

See page 4

the worker

Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

MACKIES: A FUNNY KIND OF TRUST

MACKIE'S engineering works is one of the few factories still open in West Belfast. It's a company, though, that's made a fortune by exploiting Belfast workers for years.

Mackie's has always maintained a low wage policy, has no pension scheme, and no fringe benefits. An engineering worker in other plants in Belfast, like Shorts, gets a flat rate of £58-59. In England they make much more. But in Mackie's the same skilled worker takes home £27-30. As one worker there said to us, "Can you imagine trying to support a family on that amount? And it's like that for years in spite of the increasing cost of living!"

This family firm has always taken advantage of the high unemployment in West Belfast to keep wages down. They have maintained a sectarian hiring policy in employing only Protestant workers, though they are located in a mainly Catholic area.

Now, though Catholics are being hired, many from Catholic areas are afraid to work there. Ulster flags still fly in several machine shops.

The result for the Mackie family has been huge profits, which they try to keep secret. For workers, both Protestant and Catholic, the result has been a rotten job. Most workers try to get out as soon as they can.

Now things are not going so well for Mackie profits in the West Belfast factory. And again it's the workers who suffer. Workers who used to depend on two nights and Saturday morning overtime now get just the 40 hours work. Their bonus is down. So their pay packet is lower than ever.

To avoid possible future loss of profits, the family decided to set up a trust, "for the benefit of the employees." That's a laugh. One trustee is Lord O'Neill, a landowner and company director.

Others are contractors, a leading member of the Royal British Legion and banking executives. What will they ever do for the workers? Through the trust the Mackie family will avoid large tax payments that would erode the family fortune and the family control of the company. They can avoid going public which would include disclosing their private financial information.

And they can keep making profits from all their other holdings which extend to India, the Middle East, South Africa, North and South America. As well in the North they are engaged in other businesses such as farming, fishing, property development.

And they do very well as a result. An individual family member may make £50,000 a year out of the profits. They drive their Rolls and live in luxury in Clugghmills, where they have a shooting lodge and a private lake.

So the family won't lose through the Trust. But what about the workers in the factory? Are they going to put up with the rotten wages? Are they going to fight the threat of unemployment? One obstacle to that fight is the lack of leadership shown by the union. Their leadership has been a disappointment in the past. Like last year when they gave in to the company after a ten week unofficial strike. The Works Committee newsheet comes out only twice a year.

The December newsheet only offers hope that there will be benefits forthcoming. Mackie workers need more than hope now. They need an immediate guarantee that there will be no redundancies and no more running down of the factory. Better wages and benefits are an immediate necessity. The profits are there. It's now up to the workers themselves to organise and to fight.

LOYALIST LOCKOUT

WE GO to press on Day 1 of the Loyalist lockout. It is therefore not possible to give a detailed report, and the exact course of events cannot be predicted.

It is clear, however that the overwhelming majority of Protestant workers do not want to join the stoppage. The workers at Harland and Wolff voted massively against it. The workers at Ballylumford power station voted not to join in unless the factories stopped. Other workplaces have passed similar votes.

But it is also clear that massive intimidation is taking place, at the workplace and in the communities. There is psychological intimidations through statements by Ian Paisley that he will not be held responsible for what happens on the ground. There is the memory of the stoppage of 1974 when the UDA checked people passing through barricades and took photographs.

This is no strike. It is organised from the top down, by middle class politicians like Paisley and Baird. The para-

military organisations on the Action Council – most importantly, the UDA – enforced the stoppage in the working class housing areas. Workers who collectively oppose the stoppage at the workplace are subject to individual harassment in the community.

The Action Council aims to force the British Government to accept the Convention report – in effect, to recreate Stormont. The other demand is for the defeat of the IRA

through the destruction of their base in the Catholic communities. Effectively, this means that every Catholic worker and unemployed person and their families become targets for mass arrests and harassment enforced by the army, RUC, UDR and other sectarian thugs.

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Keeping them out of Turf Lodge

BARRICADES have appeared again in Turf Lodge. People in the area kept them up for two days as a protest against the activities of the British army. Every day as soon as troops are spotted moving into the area, bin lids, whistles and howling dogs serve as a warning to all. They could be heard on all the streets as the patrol moves through the area. Most afternoons young lads are out on the streets armed with stones to make

sure the troops know they're not welcome.

The bin lids, barricades, and riots are all because a new regiment has come into the area and is carrying out a deliberate policy of provocation and harassment. Foot patrols now come in during the afternoons when the young lads are coming from school. Riots are the inevitable result. And the troops are very quick to use their plastic bullets against the boys. People here remember how Brian Stewart died last September. They don't want that to hap-

pen again and that means keeping the Brits out.

The barricades went up shortly after the troops moved into Ardmonagh flats in force early one morning to carry out a "census". They were asking the residents ridiculous questions like "what colour is your wallpaper?" The army already has this information in their files in the fort. People refused to answer the army questions. Soldiers stayed in one flat on Ardmonagh Parade from 8 to 10 a.m. While they were digging and searching, a woman suffered

a heart attack. The troops refused to get her any medical aid.

Every day someone from Turf Lodge is lifted. Every day houses are searched. Recently men from the area received 18 year prison sentences. These are the reasons why people from this area organise protests, why they build barricades. These activities will be necessary as long as British troops are in this country. We all need to organise in our areas to join the people of Turf Lodge who are fighting to get the Brits out now.

RUC IN ARDOYNE

WHY IS the RUC allowed to come into the Valsheda Park area of Ardoyne every day? Local people who raised this question at a local meeting of the Relatives' Action Committee were told we're not political, we can't deal with that.

But it is the political concern of every person in the area. And local people can organise themselves to deal with the RUC intrusions.

One day the army picked up two wee boys and waited on the street until the RUC came to take them away. This could not happen if everyone on the street were prepared to come out and protest. Bin lids, whistles and many people blocking the streets can begin to remind the RUC that they can't come back in.