



the worker

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Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

The never-ending crisis

Fiddling with figures won't solve unemployment

FULL EMPLOYMENT' according to the bosses, does not mean there is no unemployment. WE might think it should, but that's because our interests are different from the man who strives to achieve as much profit as he can.

His logic is one that says if there is no unemp-

loyment workers don't feel threatened by job insecurity and so they become 'lazy'.

It is, therefore, a balance between, on the one hand, the desire of the ruling class to maintain a disciplined workforce and, on the other, the desire to extract as much as possible out of the labour force. And so the balance will change according to how

they see the strength of their force and the face of the working class.

In 1968, 'full employment' in Ireland, they said, would mean 2% out of work: in 1975 they said 4% out of work. This shows a confidence crisis among the bosses. In 1975 Professor Brendan Walsh made a detailed study of the structure and changes in the Irish population. With

some embarrassment, his masters learned that 30,000 jobs were needed each year between 1971 and 1986 to achieve 'full employment' by that time.

The fact of the matter is that Irish capitalism, even in its boom years in the 60s, could only create a tenth of that figure.

Since that report came out the Government produced a programme for the economy. They were wildly optimistic but they still fell far short of the mark, admitting that 'unemployment will continue to pose a serious problem into the 1980's.'

You can imagine their problem if they are trying to tell us to work harder and we will all pull through, while at the same time such glaring contradictions are allowed to remain.

So in October the same professor comes to their aid—we only need 23,000 jobs a year, he now says.

The lies are only incredible. The cap didn't fit so he went out and bought a new head.



Left: Martin O'Donoghue, Lynch's guru who is supposed to solve unemployment. But juggling around with the figures is no answer.

dust. Fighting, against all wage restraint and attempted redundancies and productivity deals which cause unemployment. Fighting, by linking up and contacting those sections of the unemployed who are fighting back.

The Dublin Fight Unemployment Committee is a small start to a much larger battle ahead. When the bosses come out with verbiage about times being hard we must argue that the working class did not create hard times for the bosses, but the bosses have created unbearable misery by their control of our lives.

Politicians of course simply paraphrase the bosses. The unemployed must be letting off cries of euphoria at Martin O'Donoghue's remark when receiving the latest unemployment figures. The Minister replied: "The Government was aware of the magnitude of the job requirement problem."

Enough said.

The Fight Unemployment Committee can be contacted at: 2 Tranquilla Terrace, off Camden St., Dublin 2.

EXCLUSIVE

The dirty tricks behind wage restraint

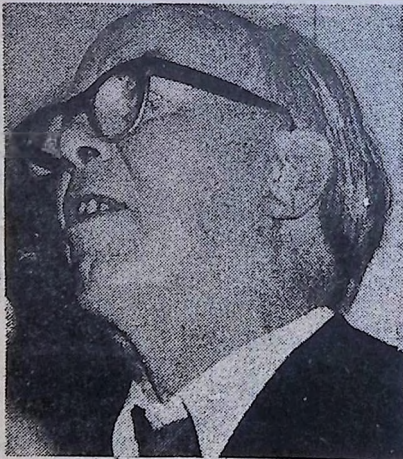
THIS IS RUAIDHRI ROBERTS, General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

We have proof that this hypocrite was party to the manipulation and deceit of hundreds of workers, and their unions.

Roberts is a Director of the Irish Sugar Company (CSET). A photocopy of an 8-page letter from R.B. Godsil, then Chairman of CSET to Richie Ryan, then Minister for Finance, has been sent anonymously to THE WORKER.

This letter demonstrates, beyond a shadow of a doubt, the hypocrisy, deceit and manipulation which lie behind the pious calls for "sacrifice for the nation". And Roberts was a party to everything described in the letter.

The letter describes in detail the lies, the deliberate delays and the tricks used to prevent workers getting a wage rise.



The Trade Union Coordinating Committee Against Repression has recently protested against Robert's decision to serve on the government's cover-up inquiry into ill-treatment of Garda brutality. Roberts made that decision without reference to the ICTU Executive. The revelations in our article on page 5 adds wait to the TUCCAR protest. This is not a man who can be trusted by the working class.

The ready-up for the next round of wage restraint is already under way. We can be certain that the same hypocrisy, the same deceit, will be used to pressure workers into accepting it. And it will be trade union leaders like Roberts who will join the government and bosses in using it. Unless we organise to stop them.

A Socialist Labour party?

A PACKED and enthusiastic Independent Labour meeting in Dublin in October laid the basis for the formation of a Socialist Labour Party.

Those present had learned how useless it was trying to reform the Labour Party. But there was not a great deal of discussion on what sort of party the S.L.P. should be, nor on how it should be built. Some talked of getting back to the famous 1969 pro-

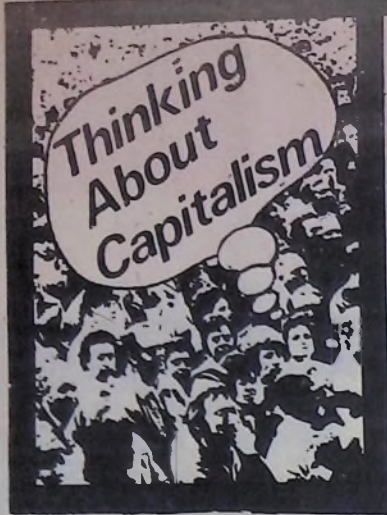
gramme of the Labour Party. Some emphasised slow hard constituency work in the areas.

The most serious attempt to analyse where the party should go came from Noel Browne, who queried the notion that socialism could be achieved through the parliamentary road. The S.L.P. will have to face the question of what alternative there is to the parliamentary road.

It is an understanding of how socialism is to be achieved which will determine the manner in which we organise and the programme we use. If the S.L.P. believes in gradual parliamentary change, then the Labour Party programme of 1969 or another like it, will suffice. Because that programme simply tells workers to rely on their T.D.s in the Dail to introduce gradual change, while they sit back passively once the elections are over.

Again, the party geared to gradual change will also be organised on a constituency basis. Like the Labour Party, it will set up its own constituency advice clinics in order to build an electoral base.

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By DERMOT BYRNE

Terrorism

THE STRATEGY of the Baader-Meinhof group in Germany—simple terror tactics in order to achieve the release of political prisoners—underwent a predictable defeat in October when the plane they had hijacked was stormed by a government-trained anti-terrorist squad.

No sooner had the passengers on the plane been freed and three of the Baader-Meinhof group shot dead when the powers behind the operation started congratulating themselves on a thorough job well done. Jim Callaghan shook hands with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and admired his tenacious efforts, and Schmidt thanked Callaghan for the loan of a couple of S.A.S. men.

The S.A.S. are very good at that sort of thing, at least in Germany it seems, and all had gone well. Germany could carry on with its so-called democratic society and another blow had been struck for worldwide law and order.

That, at least, was how the whole affair was dished up, and any dubiousness about it according to the right-wing press supposedly puts us in league with the terrorists. Nevertheless it is the duty of socialists not simply to condemn groups like the Baader-Meinhof full stop, but to probe deeper and condemn the sick society which in the final analysis causes sick reactions from self-styled revolutionaries.

Certainly, revolutionary socialists unequivocally condemn terror tactics. Especially when the means employed, such as the murder of people who have no part in the terrorists' private war, annihilates any hope of ever winning workers to support radical change.

Such murders do not endanger the capitalist system. In fact they give the ruling class in Germany a chance to consolidate their privileged position as the upholders of state security. Thereby, they make the working class indifferent to the call by socialists for real change within German society. Exploits by gun-happy anarchists, no matter how zealous, in the final

analysis can only be detrimental to the socialist cause.

Apart from the hijacking exploits there has been the kidnapping of the German industrialist Hans Schleyer, former bigwig in the Nazi party, who was imprisoned for a while after the War.

Again, the Red Army Faction claimed the limelight. It has little to do with socialism but it has plenty to do with playing right into the hands of the German state apparatus which is controlled by the privileged few. These people are only waiting for a chance to launch an attack on democratic rights, thus guaranteeing the status quo on behalf of the ruling class.

This is exactly what acts of terrorism accomplish, nothing for the exploited class, and an excuse for the ruling class to bolster the armed wings of the State.

Nevertheless, while socialists condemn adventurism which puts terror tactics above the fight for the working-class revolutionary road to socialism, we must also differentiate between the violence of small bands of terrorists and the violence of the ruling class in capitalist society.

Groups like the Baader-Meinhof are the result of German capitalist society where 9% of the people own 80% of the wealth.

The representatives of the privileged are now engaged in building an extremely dangerous fast breeder nuclear power station near the Dutch border. When a recent demonstration took place against this abomination it was met with state terror which included tanks, machine guns, tear gas and barbed wire. A nuclear plant which endangered millions of people was being defended by the "democratic" state.

But it is only German workers themselves who can change this situation, not abortive acts of violence by small armed groups. Terrorism hinders working-class support for the struggle ahead by sowing illusions in workers' minds that without the capitalist state to "protect" them civilisation would crumble.

However, as socialists we should also categorically state that we do not accept the crocodile tears being shed by the representatives of world capitalism who, in a fraudulent bid to play on people's revulsion against suffering, have played up their hypocritical self-conceived "humanitarianism".

These are the same representatives of the ruling class who support a system which turns to fascism as a last resort, has half the world starving because there is no profit in feeding the poor; who live on the sweat of the working class from Germany to the United States.

SEAMUS COSTELLO

THE ASSASSINATION of Seamus Costello on 5 October was a blow not merely to the Irish Republican Socialist Party, but in reality to the whole Irish left.

One of the first in Sinn Féin to advocate the ending of the abstentionist policy and to build up support through local agitation and as a local councillor, he had no time for the theological Republicanism—the legitimacy of the I.R.A.—which went into

ded the relationship with the Irish National Liberation Army. The I.R.S.P. never resolved the question of whether it was possible to add a socialist face to the Republican tradition, or whether it was necessary to make a break with Republicanism as such.

As a result, the I.R.S.P., particularly after the departure of the left wing including Bernadette McAliskey, did not live up to the initial signs

Waterford: FIGHT LOSS OF JOBS

THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN in Waterford. Our city fathers with one eye on the bar in Leinster House and the other on their public image, have decided to ask the Minister for "Industry and Commerce" to receive a deputation of Trades Council members, Chamber of Commerce and themselves to discuss the possibility of new industries for Waterford.

It seems they were irked by the fact that the Minister had returned from America with news that 2250 new jobs were on the way!! But none of them were earmarked for Waterford.

Of course this won't make the slightest bit of difference to the increasing army of unemployed in the city. They will still have to trek to the local dole office to pick up their pittance to exist on. Many will continue to trek to the St. Vincent de Pauls "used clothes sale" on Wednesday nights and to Tucker Powers welfare office each month for the "Free Milk Dockets".

The Corporation members and the others recognise this only too clearly. Alderman Joe Cummins, who was Mayor when he went on the last deputation, said: "The last time we went through this procedure the deputation returned as emptyhanded as they went up," but he nevertheless agreed with the idea.

Meanwhile jobs will go by the board. Only last week (Friday, 21 October) Morrissey Engineering Works closed. Munster Chipboard are asking for 30-40 redundancies and over 25 jobs will go in British Rail. The Trades Council will close a blind eye to these obvious opportunities to push itself into offering assistance to the workers and organising against these redundancies. Also many industries are working systematic overtime. These include Wellworthy Raytex, Paper Mills, and Seickmans (though it must be said Seickmans workers have introduced a ceiling of 12 hours per man per week to help the unemployed). 25 jobs will go in Milton Bradley toy factory on 28 October.

This factory is only open a few months.

Productivity deals and natural wastage schemes which reduce numbers at work are being negotiated all the time (although it should be said National Wage Agreements encourage the above because they hold down wages). Also many workers are moonlighting which further reduces jobs. But closing a blind eye to all this completely strips the Trades Council and deputation's arguments for jobs of any moral force whatsoever.

What then can rank a file trade unionists and the unemployed do about unemployment? We have seen half-hearted gestures from above will not reduce the army of unemployed. Instead of defending jobs, many trade union officials and leaders have been instrumental in the selling and chopping of jobs. In the past, many opportunities for our union leaders to match their words with action have been lost.

The answer lies in our own strength and organisation and our refusal to carry the burden of the bosses' crises. A militant campaign of action uniting the unemployed with the strength of the organised workers around the following is the only way.

RESIST ALL REDUNDANCIES: Full support for Waterford busmen fighting installation of ticket machines — Make all actions and sit-ins to defend jobs official — Work-sharing of all available work — Five days' work or five days' pay.

IF YOU ARE RICH in Belfast you can move to Northern Ireland's most exciting residential development—**THORN-HILL LUXURY** on the Malone Road. For only £26,950 you can buy a three-bedroomed flat. A garage is a mere £1,250.

Included with your flat are:
 ■ a beautiful mahogany front door with brass furniture.
 ■ tiled bathroom with coloured suite including bidet.
 ■ wardrobes with louvred doors in all bedrooms.

Hurry, though, the more expensive townhouses are all sold, and these elegant luxurious flats are going fast.

Now, who said there is a housing problem in Belfast??

LATE NEWS: As the redundancies in Milton Bradley approached, The Worker learned that the workers being made redundant will not know until they get their pay packet on 28 October. This is because of an agreement with the ITGWU, which was signed before any workers were employed there, that the management would decide who would go, and that there would not be a 'last in, first out' principle.

The workers going are to get the princely sum of £10 each. The union is not opposing the redundancies.



the making of the Provisionals.

But neither could he follow the increasing obliteration of the national liberation struggle, which the Officials engaged in.

The I.R.S.P. advocated the unity of the class and national struggles. But it never achieved clarity on how such unity was to be expressed. It didn't seem able to grasp that the national struggle must be fought as a class struggle.

Ambiguity also surround-

of promise. It advocated a broad anti-imperialist front, but the most concrete activity towards this end, the Irish Front in Derry, incorporated the Nationalist Party. Such an alliance with the Catholic bourgeoisie covers over the class antagonism which is necessary to a real struggle against imperialism and capitalism.

Had he lived, Seamus Costello might have helped to resolve these problems. It is now left to his comrades to take up the struggle.

IF THIS IS TRUE MULLEN MUST RESIGN!

OUT LAST MONTH is the first pamphlet from *New Liberty*, the ITGWU rank and file group. Called *Hands Off Our Union*, the 16-page printed pamphlet sets out to detail "The secret deals, the manipulation and the property speculation" connected with the ITGWU leadership leading up to and during the last General Election.

It's a sordid and disgusting story—the result of the class collaboration policies of the trade union bureaucrats and Labour Party leaders during the years of National Coalition.

The pamphlet details the secret meeting between ITGWU boss Michael Mullen, Minister for Unemployment Michael O'Leary and arch-manipulator Brendan Halligan in Bernardo's restaurant before the election. Here it was decided who would run where, who would back who, and how the spoils would be distributed after the Election.

SOLICITORS

A major part of the deal was to ensure the election of Mickey Mullen Junior in Cabra. In order to achieve this, help was needed from ITGWU solicitors Bowler Geraghty. They provided the

membership for Junior's "paper branches". The reason they helped—property speculation. Junior was marketing consultant for a company they owned which was sitting on prime industrial land. What better way to get planning permission than with your own pet TD!

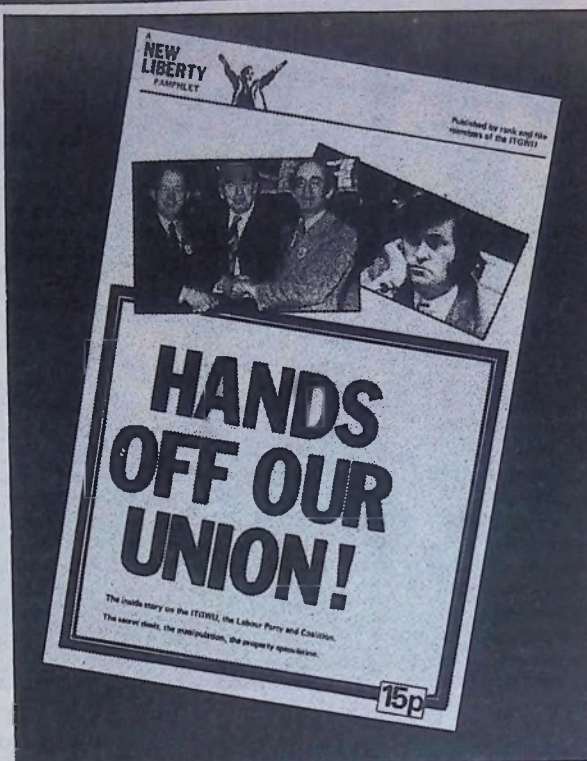
ANTICS

The pamphlet goes on to detail the incredible antics in the election campaign. How ITGWU men and money were used to further the political ambitions of our so-called "leaders"—and how it all came unstuck when the ordinary voters failed to respond. The "secret deal" lay in tatters when O'Leary even failed to capture the Labour Party leadership.

It's a gripping story—and obviously well-researched. The midnight oil is said to be burning in Liberty Hall in an attempt to uncover the sources of such embarrassing leaks.

But it's not just political scandal-mongering. Throughout the pamphlet stress is laid on the root causes of the affair—the lack of control over the union bureaucrats leading to policies of class collaboration.

In the words of the pamphlet, "The lack of dem-



ocracy, the rigid loyalty of the full-timers for the top brass, which allowed the antics described in this pamphlet to take place, are the same conditions which permit the day-to-day collaboration with the employers and the government. And the undermining and selling out of so many struggles by the rank and file."

There is only one answer—the rank and file must organise in every union and every workplace to subject the bureaucrats to democratic rank and file control and a fighting, militant struggle for workers' rights. The New Liberty Group has embarked upon this task in the ITGWU. As this pamphlet shows, it was never more needed.

Meanwhile, if ITGWU members can force a rank and file investigation and the allegations in the pamphlet are proved true, Mullen must resign.

Copies of the pamphlet *Hands Off Our Union* (price 15p) can be obtained from The Worker Book Service, 24 Talbot Street, Dublin 1 or direct from the New Liberty Group at 15 Ventry Drive, Cabra, Dublin 7. Also available, copies of the monthly bulletin *New Liberty*.

ant action and union democracy.

The S.L.P. can, and must, fight for the right to work. But that does not stop at passing resolutions on expanded state enterprise or on planning which nobody intends to do anything about.

It means fighting for a 35 hour week: for bans on overtime: for an end to the bans on recruitment in the public sector, and supporting all the activities of the unemployed—such as the demand for free bus fares.

REPRESSION

The S.L.P. has got to take a stand on repression. That means defending from the state all those who fight imperialism. It means launching a campaign through the trade unions, through the building of the Trade Union Campaign Against Repression, for an end to the Special Criminal

DEFEND RAPE VICTIM

NOREEN WINCHESTER was raped by her father for years. When he attempted to rape her younger sister, Noreen killed him. Now Noreen, the victim of a rapist, is serving a seven year manslaughter sentence in Armagh jail.

Noreen, who is 20 years old, and comes from Sandy Row in Belfast, has seven younger brothers and sisters. When Noreen was quite young, her mother, an alcoholic, was put in a mental home. She is still there today.

Her father, who drank, began to rape Nora. He threatened to kill her as well as her brothers and sisters if she told anyone. It was only when he attacked one of her younger sisters that Noreen turned on her father with a

North: the repression continues

THE LEVEL of repression continues to increase in the North. It is felt on the streets, in Castlereagh and in H Block.

The Royal Marines went on a rampage before they left Turf Lodge, which has once more been the centre of attack. Their much publicised beating of Sammy Hyland brought immediate response from the people in the area, where 250 cases of harassment have been counted in the last four months.

The Women's Action Committee again organised patrols of the area to give warning when the troops come in. A meeting organised by the Turf Lodge Tenants Association unfortunately called only for better communication between the army and local groups. Surely "Troops Out" is the only answer to the continuing harassment.

The uproar about RUC torture has reached such a pitch that even the SDLP, after years

of silence, are complaining. The response from the RUC chief, Newman, is that though there may be a few "bad apples" in the RUC the force as a whole "is vitally concerned with human rights". (Perhaps they'll even get next years Nobel peace prize.)

The repression and brutality are not the acts of a few "bad" policemen. It forms part of Britain's criminalisation programme. High rates of conviction are needed so that Mason can claim that his strategy is working. So, suspects get their heads thumped and their arms broken, confessions are forced, bent courts are used and H block fills up.

Mobilisation of the anti-imperialist population is necessary to fight the repression. The Relatives Action Committee, which has been leading the fight for political status, can play a vital role in leading and coordinating protests and involving more people in the struggle against the torture centres and the repression.

knife, killing him instantly.

Lord Justice McGonigle, who is well known as a reactionary, showed no sympathy towards Noreen. He claimed that "she had plenty of occasion to tell the police about the incest." He obviously didn't care about the threats to her life. He accused her of being a willing partner.

McGonigle sentenced Noreen to seven years, though for years Noreen had been a victim of rape—a crime that this society doesn't want to talk about. McGonigle didn't want this case talked about. He instructed the press that "only the bare details of the case" be published. The British and Irish press followed—we haven't had any news of Noreen Winchester.

Noreen's case is not unusual. There are many Irish

women who are victims of rapists—often their own fathers. Usually they are afraid to speak up. They think they will be blamed, as the judge blamed Noreen. These women know they won't get support from their own community. That is what we can change.

For too long in Ireland sex has been treated as a dirty word, a taboo subject, something not to talk about. The sexual repression encouraged by the churches in Ireland instead of protecting women, has made victims of them—suffering rape silently in their own home.

SUPPORT

Hiding the facts, keeping it quiet, is not going to help, these women. The women victims must be encouraged, given the support, particularly by other women, to come forward and expose what has happened to them.

Noreen fought back against her attacker. For this brave act she is in jail. She has been threatened by the UDA and by her family. She is afraid for the future of her sisters and brothers.

There have been other courageous women who fought against rapists. The cases of Joan Little, Inez Garcia and Yvonne Wanrow in the U.S. show that freedom can be won for women who fight back.

Publicity is important. Support for Noreen must be won. Let her know you support her—write to her at A1 Wing, Armagh Prison, Armagh.

As well, let the British government know where you stand. Write to The Northern Ireland Secretary, Stormont Castle, Belfast.

Below: Noel Browne.



S.L.P.

Continued from page 1

Instead of organising active, collective opposition to the system, it will be content to offer a radical social worker type of service.

The problem for the S.L.P. is that there is no room for such a party on the Irish left. The political ground there is well covered. Sinn Fein, the Labour Party, the Socialist Party of Ireland and the wishy-washy Left still in the Labour Party are all ploughing that furrow.

ACTIVITY

The real alternative lies in fighting for activity in the working-class movement which deepens the crisis in capitalism and raises the confidence of the rank and file.

Concretely, that means initiating a campaign in the trade unions for an end to the National Wage Agreements and any other form of wage restraint; for a return to free collective bargaining, and for the launching of common claims for a £15 rise across the board.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Such a campaign would mean opposing the sell-outs of the compliant trade union leadership. It would mean opposing their new attempts to negotiate a Social Contract-type arrangement which trades off our living standards for a series of promises of reform. Above all it can only succeed through the building of rank and file groups in the unions which fight for milit-

Letters

THE OCTOBER issue of the Worker carried an article by Joan Kelly on vandalism in which she condemns those socialists who take part in conferences and talk about vandalism and proposes in turn that the fight against unemployment is the only answer to crime.

Whilst agreeing that the fight against unemployment is important in the struggle against crime, as well as against poverty, poor housing, bad health etc., I feel that her article displays a certain naivety and lack of understanding of the role of socialists in a society that is bedevilled by ignorance and inadequate solutions to social problems.

While the handful of socialists active amongst the working class have a relatively clear understanding of the causes of "vandalism" and are possibly aware of some ways out of the dilemma, the majority of workers have not that same clarity. The calls for increased R.U.C. presence, community policing and knee-capping etc. are made because the working class are not aware of the real nature of the problem and therefore resort to the only solutions that they know of.

Correct

Socialists, who lay claim to correct understanding and thus a positive way forward, cannot do anything about it unless they are in contact with the class and are constantly putting forward their perspective in order to get the widespread support necessary to gain a solution. It is their duty to meet workers in their areas and places of work, to discuss with them all the problems that affect them while giving leadership and direction.

The conference on vandalism in September was one attempt to get the working class in one part of Belfast to sit down and clarify their think-

ing on vandalism, which was and to a great extent still is negative, to see the cause and effects in relation to capitalist exploitation and to come to agreement on ways forward based on this new experience. Such conferences and discussions have an educative role which is extremely important if socialists are to give successful leadership.

To land in the midst of the working class proclaiming the 'correct' way forward in the absence of any prior educative processes and expect the full support displays an arrogance not fitting to socialism.

The knowledge and understanding of socialists combined with the experience of the working class are necessary to the struggle; one without the other leads to reaction, or to failure.

The conferences and discussions are not ends in themselves, but rather means towards changing the consciousness of the class and developing the struggle into wider positive spheres, fraternally
P. Murray,
from Workers Resource Centre,
52 Broadway,
Belfast.

Editorial reply:

P. Murray puts forward a concept of a conference geared towards the working class. But we are inclined to feel that the particular conference referred to was geared towards social workers and community workers, and thus blurred the lesson that ought to have been put across: that the working class have nobody but ourselves to rely on.

The question really is, was the conference geared towards getting the working class to move into action towards changing society?

Write to:
THE WORKER,
24 Talbot Street,
Dublin 1.

FERENKA: SWEETHEART TURNS SOUR

THE CHICKENS came home to roost with a vengeance for the ITGWU leaders at Ferenka, in Limerick. The policy of making "sweetheart" deals with the bosses, signing up workers into an incredibly strict agreement almost before the factory is built, rebounded on them.

After a strike in 1973 it was a condition of returning to work that you had to sign the notorious Ferenka agreement. You could be dismissed for taking part in any unofficial action. It was even against the rules to collect money on the job for other workers on strike.

The Ferenka workers saw the writing on the wall when they started getting ITGWU letters on Ferenka newspaper!

The move out of the ITGWU is understandable. But the MPGWW is unlikely to prove a haven for the frustrated workers. Already, the

apparent willingness of the MPGWW leaders to consider allowing all trade union representation to be removed for six months indicates that they are more concerned with getting the Ferenka workers' scalps under their belts than with the interests of the workers.

Other ITGWU members, just as dissatisfied with the "labour police" role of the ITGWU leaders, have been organising to change the union. They believe that leaving the union is no long term answer. However, now that the Ferenka workers have taken a democratic decision to leave, that decision should be respected. The attempts of the ITGWU leaders to hang on to the members (and the £20,000 a year dues) has been disgusting. "We'll starve them out," said one of them. When our union leaders start using the language that the bosses used in 1913 you know that change in the unions is overdue.



Above: Some people who don't want contraceptives

Playing with the lives of women

By Joan Kelly

ONCE AGAIN, evidence of dangers to women on the pill has been published, this time by the Royal College of General Practitioners and by a professor in Oxford University. The studies show that women who take the pill have a five times greater chance of death from circulatory disease than women who have never taken the pill. This includes a greater risk of heart attack.

The dangers are greatest for women over 35, particularly for those who smoke or have taken the pill for five years or more.

When these findings were announced, radio reports urged women not to rush off

to change their method of contraception. It sounded like doctors were afraid of getting long queues at the family planning clinics or that society would be faced with a rash of unwanted pregnancies. Two leading doctors said: "We see no reason for any woman who is on the pill to make any immediate changes before careful consideration."

They had the nerve to say that after publishing two nine-year-long studies involving 63,000 women. They argue that there were only 28 extra deaths from circulatory diseases among pill takers. Some doctors advise giving up smoking, others say think again about using the pill.

These are typical attitudes whenever the many studies linking the pill to medical dangers are announced. 28 dead women don't matter much to the medical researchers. We think one death is too many.

Medical research has been too slow in finding a convenient safe method of contraception. Women are forced to continue to take risks.

This is particularly true in the South. Because of the laws against contraception, family planning advice is available for relatively few women. Many women who want to use contraception take the pill, without first

investigating the various forms of contraception available and finding out which is most suitable for them.

These new studies support the urgent need for more family planning centres in the North and for the establishment of free legal centres in the South. Women must be provided with the fullest possible information, including the medical dangers, about the various types of pill and other methods of contraception available.

As well, the studies condemn the medical profession and government, which continue to play with the lives of women because of the neglected research on contraception.

TYRONE CRYSTAL workers prevented the layoff of 43 workers by taking over production at the factory and locking management out. After a week of the protest the 43 workers have been rehired. They will go into a fully paid training scheme.

The Northern Ireland Department of Commerce had announced that a grant aid of £750,000 was to be given to Tyrone Crystal in Dungannon and to Antrim Crystal in Belfast. This grant was coupled, however, with the announcement of layoffs in Dungannon.

The workers, members of the ATGWU, decided to fight the layoffs by locking the factory gates. An 18 person Workers Action Council was chosen to represent the 150 workers. All workers continued production until management stopped supplies of needed raw materials.

The workers' action gained support from Dungannon Trades Council and from workers in Moypark factory, Dungannon and the Power-screens International in Edendork.

SIT IN STOPS LAYOFFS

The government grant aid to the Crystal factories was obviously linked to a demand for higher profits and higher productivity. Laying off 43 workers in Tyrone was the immediate result. Next, 40 jobs are to be cut back in Antrim Crystal.

The same argument has been given to strikers at DC Products by both government and management. The Department of Manpower Services backs up the boss by advising the workers that all government subsidies will be withdrawn if the workers break Phase 2 of the Social Contract. (Their claim is still governed by Phase Two.) The boss argues if we don't get our subsidies, we'll close

down.

So far the government has been defeated in its plans. Mackies management held out and gave the wage increase. Militant action by Tyrone workers who sat in and the strike at DC have shown what must be done to get a decent wage increase and to protect jobs.

These government attacks have helped expose the role of the Catholic bosses in the North who, aided by government grants, have set up small businesses in areas of high unemployment.

The Workers Action Council in West Belfast has investigated the bosses in the Kennedy Way Industrial Estate. Patrick McKillen has a substantial interest in DC Products. He has also taken advantage of grants given in the Republic to set up three factories in Dublin distributing the same product as the Belfast plant.

As well, McKillen has directorships in Tyrone Crystal, Antrim Crystal and Strathearn Audio. All these factories are threatened with redundancies, particularly if workers push their wage claims.

Boss admits 'negotiations' were a charade

WHY DID Mr. Godsil get the push? Robert Godsil had been a director of the Irish Sugar Company for eighteen years. He had been Chairman since 1969. Suddenly, on 27th of November 1975, his appointment was terminated by the then Minister for Finance, Richie Ryan.

Godsil stressed publicly that he had not resigned, that he had no wish to sever connections with the company. He refused to speculate on the possible reasons for his sacking. Reporters guessed that it was because Godsil had originally been appointed by Fianna Fail. But other FF appointees weren't removed, so why pick on him?

A highly confidential document, sent anonymously to THE WORKER, reveals the real reason for Godsil's sacking — and a lot more. It exposes the truth behind the pious calls for wage restraint and sacrifice and calls into question the loyalties of certain trade union officials.

Above all, it damns completely the myth that "we're all in the same boat", and exposes the hypocrisy and manipulation used by the bosses and government to force workers to pay for an economic crisis which we did not create.

The document is a letter sent by Godsil to Ryan, three days before 1000 Sugar Company workers were due to strike for a pay increase.

THE STORY begins on December 18th, 1974, when craftworkers in the Sugar Company put in a claim for a "substantial" pay increase.

This involved members of the AUEW, NEETU, ETU and UCATT, working in factories in Carlow, Mallow, Thurles and Tuam. The Sugar Company (CSET) is a semi-state company.

The company deliberately dragged out negotiations over several months, all the time keeping government officials informed. "At no stage", says Godsil in his letter, "did CSET take any action which was considered by the Department officials to be at variance with the Minister's wishes".

By the middle of 1975 things were getting tense. In his June Budget, Ryan had placed an embargo on pay increases in the public sector. CSET continued to stall the unions.

Normal Channels

Godsil says: "We continued to refrain from making any offer, which so frustrated the craft unions that they were on the verge of industrial action." The bosses were counting on support from the union leaders and the ICTU to prevent this. They got it. The workers were persuaded to go through "normal channels" and the claim went to Conciliation on 19th September, 1975. Nine months after the claim was first made.

"It was difficult," says Godsil, "to get the craftsmen to attend Conciliation at all since they were aware that our rates are up to £17 'out-of-line', and yet we had made no offer whatsoever. Hence they began to conclude that the 'negotiations' up to that point were a charade." As well they might!

At the Conciliation talks, says Godsil, "we followed the policy of not making an offer." The bosses put forward a 7-point argument as to why they could not pay. They cited the usual stuff about "Competitiveness", cost increases and the need to increase productivity. The all-too-familiar threat that a wage increase might endanger the survival of the company was trotted out. Yet, CSET knew that the profits for 1975 would be five times those of the previous year. "We chose companies which we alleged were comparable", says Godsil, in order to con the unions into believing that CSET was paying wages which were "better than most."

The bluff worked. Although the unions could show that their members were getting £17 below wages for comparable work, the Conciliation Officer recommended a mere £5 increase. The union accepted. The Board of CSET, gleeful that they were pulling a neat stroke, also accepted.

But Richie Ryan wasn't happy. Even a £5 increase went against the grain. 1975 was a tricky year. The government strategy of using the union leaders to control the rank and file was paying dividends. Wages were being held down, "stability"

was assured as long as the "social partnership" was maintained.

But any pay increase outside of the National Wage Agreement was a potential spark which could start a fire which would send the policy of wage restraint up in smoke. Ryan was taking no chances. He refused to sanction the increase.

CSET would have to stall a little longer. On October 21st, ten months after the original claim, they invited the unions to have "further discussion." That did it. The AUEW sent in strike notice, effective from November 7th.

The company kicked for touch again. With the help of the ICTU. Godsil: "The ICTU and CSET management have been endeavouring to persuade the workers and their unions to go to a full hearing in the Labour Court."

Investigate

On November 3rd, workers at the CSET factory in Carlow decided on a work to rule. The Labour Court hearing was set for two days later, Nov. 5th. Just days before this hearing sections of the workers were demanding a meeting of the Central Crafts Council to investigate the union decision to go to the Labour Court. As well they might!

CSET were preparing to go through the same old rigmarole in the Labour Court, claiming (as Godsil puts it) "Damage to Company's competitive position etc etc." in order to dodge the claim. But, on Nov. 3rd, Ryan sent two errand boys, Murphy and Stacey, to tell Godsil that it was time to use the old "inability to pay" trick.

Godsil was astonished. "We now understand that we are to

if they were to learn of the change now contemplated.

Apart from Management's credibility, the workers will likewise lose confidence in their leaders and particularly in the ICTU who, together with Management, are succeeding in keeping the negotiations going within the proper framework, in spite of the many headline activists who have been consistently advocating strike action and a demand for a higher settlement - nearer to £10. It should be noted that the decision to settle for £5 gained marginal acceptance from workforce.

COMHLUCIIT SIUCRE EIREANN, TEO.
(IRISH SUGAR COMPANY LTD)
ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN HOUSE,
DUBLIN 2,
IRELAND.

OUR REF. RBG/ak
YOUR REF

4 November, 1975.

Mr. R. Ryan,
Minister for Finance,
176, St. Stephens Green,
DUBLIN 2.

re: C.S.E.T. Crafts Dispute

Dear Minister,

We understand from our meeting on 3 November 1975 with your officials, Mr. Murphy and Mr. Stacey, that you wish the Company to proceed in the following manner:-

- That we should go to the Labour Court on Wednesday, 5 November 1975.
- That the hearing will be a public one by arrangement of the Department of Public Services.
- That the Company is to plead "inability to pay" as our main line of defence, quoting Clause 6 of National Agreement.
- In support, we should refer to pressure from farmers, labour, and other inflationary factors, and their effect on viability; price of sugar; and employment.

Government ministers, company directors and at least one leading member of the ICTU conspired to deceive, manipulate and defraud these workers

agement."

Then comes a passage in Godsil's letter which should cause trade unionists to scratch their heads in wonder at whose bloody side our union leaders are supposed to be on. "The workers will likewise lose confidence in their leaders and particularly in the ICTU who, together with management, are succeeding in keeping the negotiations going within the proper framework, in spite of the many headline activists who have been consistently advocating strike action and a demand for a higher settlement — nearer to £10. It should be noted that the decision to settle for £5 gained marginal acceptance from the workforce."

One of the Directors of CSET is Ruaidhri Roberts, General Secretary of the ICTU. One of the people who conspired over that long period to deceive the workers, to hold down their wages, to lie, to defraud, was also one of the top trade union leaders in the country.

He must have been in on all this trickery. He must have known of the deceit and manipulation of the workforce and unions. He must have been a party to it.

Ryan caved in the face of the threatened strike. He was afraid that once the strike started it would spread to the general workers in CSET — as it almost did, later on. The Labour Court met on November 5th and CSET agreed to pay the lousy £5. "Whether the sanction of the Minister for Finance was then available — or was not needed — was not explained," said the Irish Independent, puzzled at the sudden decision to pay.

Godsil got his marching orders just three weeks later. Why? Figure it out for yourself. He'd opposed Ryan's wishes at a crucial point. Not to help the workers, of course, but to protect the image of the company.

Skilled craftsmen, earning just £47 a week, were conned out of the rate for the job. The unions were lied to. Five thousand workers were almost forced out on strike. Millions of pounds worth of beet and the livelihood of thousands of farmers were endangered.

If the workers had come out on strike when their claim was first refused there would have been howls of protest from the employers, government and press. Probably from Ruaidhri Roberts, too. Now we see that government ministers, company directors and at least one leading member of the ICTU, conspired to deceive, manipulate and defraud these workers.

And don't let's kid ourselves that it ended there. Can we doubt that similar conspiracies are a continuing part of the current wage restraint policies of the government, bosses and union leaders? Knowing, having documented proof of what goes on behind the hypocritical pleas for protecting "the national interest", can we ever again allow these chancers to look us in the eye and appeal for wage restraint?

"They think they kill our spirit"



sations to the left of the tribal chiefs in the Bantustans. Many prominent leaders were placed under government restriction. Two newspapers, the most widely read by blacks, were also banned. So the movement must go underground again.

ON 23rd AUGUST last, the French government threatened to cut trade links with South Africa, and stop sending arms, if it carried out a nuclear test.

On 29th August, the American and British governments were reported to have threatened to cut off oil supplies from South Africa if it did not force Ian Smith to accept Western plans for Rhodesia.

On 20th September the E.E.C. issued a code of conduct for companies from E.E.C. countries operating in South Africa. Companies should grant trade union rights to black workers, should not discriminate in hiring or wages, etc. Just one snag: the "code of conduct" will not be enforced. Not even a threat.

Prime Minister Vorster gave his answer to these people on 19th October, when he banned the organisations of the "black consciousness movement", the Black Peoples' Convention, the South African Students' Organisation (university students), the South African Students' Movement (secondary students), the Soweto Students' Representative Council, etc.

Vorster and his henchmen were showing that they don't care what the Western governments say. The facts of economic life are far more important. And the facts of econ-

omic life are that the South African economy, and the Western investments made in it, are very important to the West.

The huffing and hawing of the Western governments give capitalism a liberal image—which is very useful for building up profitable relationships with the countries of Black Africa. But when the crunch comes, South Africa will not be forced to change.

being given "rights" in the Bantustan "homelands" that many of them have never seen. The South African economy needs their labour, and they regard themselves as South Africans.

It is above all the young people who have acted. The third-rate "Bantu education" that they are offered provoked the riots last year in Soweto. And this year too, demonstrations have contin-

ued in various parts of the country.

The most recent upsurge was over the death in prison of Steve Biko, the leader of the black consciousness movement, on 12th September.

Hunger strike

The Minister of Justice, Kruger, said he had died of hunger strike, and that the death "leaves me cold." The National Party audience to whom he was talking laughed in glee.

It has since come out that Steve Biko was suffering from brain damage, bruises and broken ribs. No problem to

guess where he got those. He was the 20th person to die in detention in 18 months.

A former Soweto student leader, Majakathata Mokoena, comments: "This is where the racists are wrong. They think they kill our spirit when they kill one of our bodies. But the opposite happens. People feel angrier, and braver."

In response to the wave of demonstrations, the government has now banned the only remaining black organi-

Strikes

The last underground period was ended by the wave of strikes in 1973 by unorganised, mostly non-unionised black workers. The workers keep the wheels of industry turning. The young people of Soweto have managed in the past year and a half to bring them out on strike several times. When the workers finally say No to exploitation and starvation wages, when the workers organise themselves, they will be able to put an end to the brutal capitalist system in South Africa.

JOHN GOODWILLIE

Constitution

The government is now offering a junior partnership to the Coloured (mixed race) and Indian communities within a new constitution. The elected Coloured leaders have opposed the suggestion. The Coloured people identify with the blacks, and not with the common oppressor the whites.

To the blacks, the government offers only the hated Bantustan system, to cover the least fertile 13% of the country. The Transkei was given a phony "independence" last year, and Bophuthatswana is getting its "independence" on 6th December. But the 1,000,000 Tswanas living in South Africa outside the borders of Bophuthatswana almost entirely boycotted the rigged elections in August. The Africans of the towns are not interested in



Then there was the rumour in South Africa that Vorster had brought back a clock from a trip to Switzerland. Every day at five minutes to midnight, a small ostrich would pop out and bury its head in the sand.



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 piece-meal 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 days' 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.

Join us in the fight **SWM**

BELFAST:
52, Broadway, Belfast 12.

WATERFORD:
114 The Quay.

COLERAINE:
c/o Students Council, N.U.U.

ELSEWHERE: contact
Dublin address.

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 _____

WORKERS GOING INTO ACTION

THE OCTOBER ISSUE of Liberty, journal of the ITGWU, laments the fact that many people automatically associate trade unions with strikes. — Oh, horrors!

And Liberty goes on to denounce unofficial pickets. 'No responsible trade union can be expected to support an unofficial picket.' Just glossing over the fact that the ITGWU paid out strike benefit to members who were supporting an unofficial picket at the ESB Poolbeg site in Dublin earlier this year.

Could we suggest that no 'responsible' trade union should publish such clap-trap. No trade union should demonstrate so brazenly its insensitivity for the circumstances

which lead to unofficial strikes.

There are, in fact, quite a number of unions—mostly craft unions—who will give official backing to strikes even when they have been launched without it. They recognise that, in the heat of a real dispute, it may not be possible to go through the full procedures of serving strike notice, and so on.

And there's plenty of evidence from the list of recent and current strikes that the unofficial ones took place when there was no other option, when a dismissal, for instance, required an immediate response. Five out of

seven unofficial strikes during the early part of October had to do with dismissals:

- Bally Manufacturing Co., Dublin — 100 workers stop work in protest against dismissal of pregnant woman (MPGWU);
- General Motors, Dublin — 500 stop work over suspension of a worker who refused to carry out an instruction which he considered outside his work (ATGWU);
- Brooks Haughton, Cork — workers in a builders' providers stop work in protest against the dismissal of a worker who had reached the end of his 6-month trial period (ITGWU);
- Killeen Paper Mills, Dublin — 50 workers strike in protest against the suspension of three colleagues (MPGWU);
- Roches Stores, Dublin — storeman and drivers strike over suspension of eight workers who

refused to carry out instructions which they considered outside their grade.

You will quickly see another common grievance running through that list—the dismissals have often taken place because workers would not take orders outside their brief. Employers everywhere are seeking to stretch the definitions of particular jobs; this has caused severe problems for craft workers, who have tighter demarcation of their jobs. We will return to them.

To the list above we can add two other unofficial stoppages by ITGWU members on

quite distinct grounds. In Irish Stoneware and Fireclays of Carrickmacross, 56 workers stopped work to press a demand for protective clothing, and in Lissadell Towels, not far away in Co. Louth, 200 stopped work demanding an increase in shift allowances and bonus payments. In both cases, negotiations had been going on previously—but presumably not bringing results fast enough for the workers' liking.

There is no evidence there of mindless, militant action. Indeed, the editors of Liberty would be hard put to produce an example of that kind. Going on strike, and without the backing of a union, may not always be the best tactic. But it is rare, indeed, that workers take such action simply in order to provoke.

There is evidence there, however, that workers are recognising that the high level of unemployment makes it especially important that all dismissals are contested, and employers made to try and justify their actions to the unions. With their one-day unofficial stoppage during October the construction workers on ESB's Poolbeg site in Dublin got the 'running order' for lay-offs at the end of the job reviewed.

The few strikes about pay increases generally relate to talks on productivity deals, and most of those have concerned craft workers. Here, a very serious problem about the use of the picket does come up—but quite a different problem from the one which is upsetting Liberty.

For, in Unidare, Irish Steel Holdings, and Carroll's of Dundalk, the first that most general workers knew about the problems was that there was a picket placed on the plant by the craft workers.

Only the craft workers at Roadstone seem to have made unqualified advance through their strike. 150 of them were demanding parity with their counterparts in Clondalkin Concrete, another company in the Cement Roadstone Group. And after a week-long stoppage early in October, they were awarded a £5 rise, with further negotiations on the parity claim.

It is a curious sidelight on the Ferenka dispute that the members of craft unions have been passing the Marine Port pickets. It certainly doesn't speak for good mutual understanding of each others' problems.

All the indications are that the pressures on craft workers and their demand for the restoration of lost differentials should lead to further disputes of the kind seen in recent months. It must be the job of militants in workplaces where that possibility exists to have joint shop steward committees set up and to have these strengthened, where they do exist, through a regular pattern of general meetings.

Roches Stores

MR J. McMANUS, No. 15 Branch I.T.G.W.U., is quickly losing any credibility he previously had with the strikers at Roches Stores, Dublin. 110 workers, comprising cleaners, drivers, storemen and packers are still out on unofficial strike, and the shop is now closed as a result.

A flexibility agreement negotiated in 1974 by the Union which meant specialised workers could end up doing any number of jobs has not brought the wages of the workers to near a living wage. The result was a work to rule by the staff, in which they reverted back to the pre-1974 situation. Drivers and helpers refused to do other people's jobs, and eight men were suspended indefinitely.

According to the workers the Union did nothing, and the men resorted to unofficial pickets. In addition the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, who represent the sales staff, instructed their members to pass the pickets.

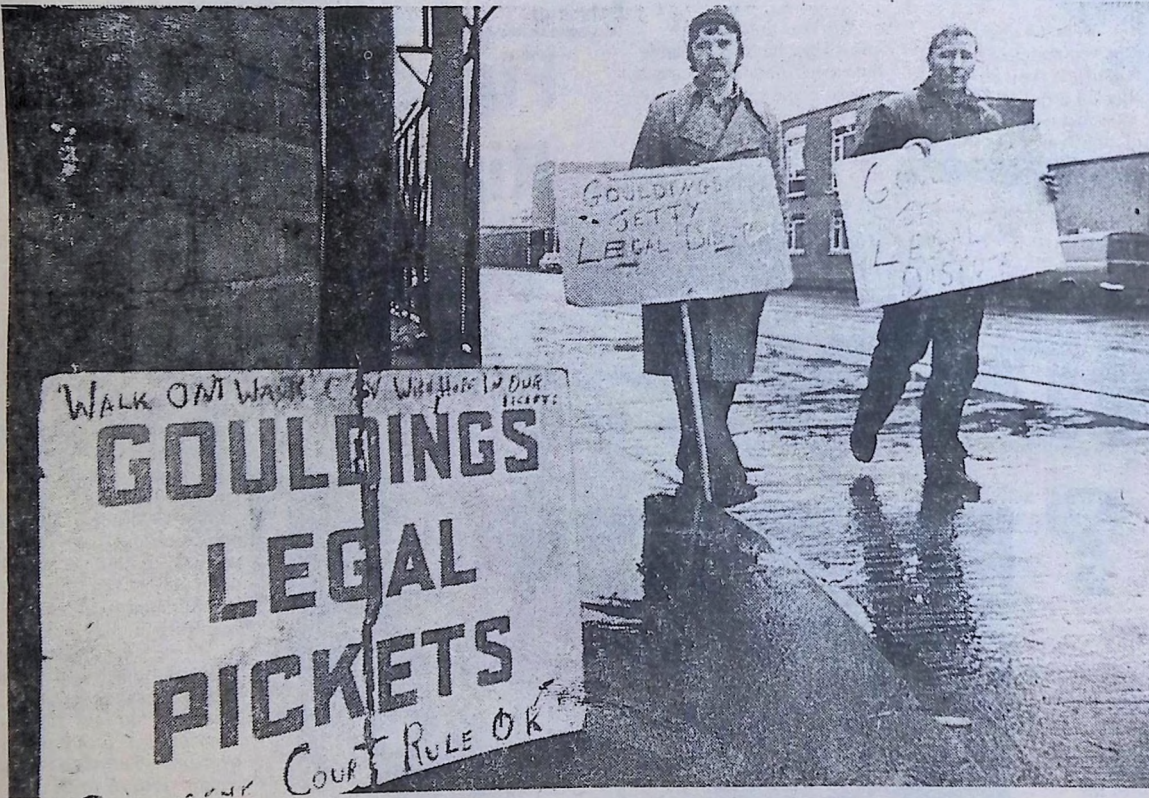
The strikers have received support from maintenance men, electricians and carpenters who have not passed the picket line.

Gerry Craig, the shop steward for the strikers, is calling for support from workers in Switzers, Arnotts and other big stores who have all been through the flexibility game, which is one of the main ways bosses cut back on staff and rationalise, thus lengthening the dole queues.

The strike can be won, with help from other shops, and from members of the I.T.G.W.U., who must push their union for this strike to be made official and the confidence of the men on the picket line regained.

21/10/77

GOULDINGS WORKERS WANT JOBS PROMISE



The Gouldings pickets were declared legal by the Supreme Court. But that was only one court.

THERE IS one small, brave group of workers who have no illusions about the Gardai and the courts being there to protect the innocent or see justice done. They are the 20 Gouldings workers who have been striking for 15 months for their jobs.

On two nights in October Gardai hauled, punched, kicked and batoned them off the railway track leading to the old Gouldings jetty in Dublin Port. Tara Mines have been attempting to use the jetty for exporting ore.

Tommy Grehan, a delegate to the ITGWU Dublin District Council, was kept in the Mater Hospital after the attack. But the workers were charged with assault and obstruction of the police. Just

like similar confrontations at Grunwicks and Lewisham in Britain. Five of the strikers received three-month sentences, suspended for 6 months.

Every now and again—more frequently these days—we get a clear glimpse of the police and the courts in their ultimate role: defenders of the bosses' interests against workers in struggle. The Gouldings workers have felt batons to emphasise the point.

The picket on the jetty was lifted in September pending a meeting with the company and the Port & Docks Board. When this meeting was finally held, Gouldings would not give a guarantee in writing that the strikers would be the first to be re-employed in the event of a re-opening.

As they say in a recent leaflet, "If, as Gouldings say, they never intend opening again why then are they refusing to give us a guarantee of jobs—a guarantee which (if they are telling the truth) they will never have to fulfil?"

The strikers are seeking a statement from the union—the Officers, the NEC—that they will back their claim to the first jobs in the event of a re-opening at Gouldings. The NEC has yet to decide on this, but the strikers' leaflet states: "At a meeting in Liberty Hall our fellow trade unionists who accepted redundancy unanimously agreed that we should have the first option on any jobs."

It is never too late to make this strike official. To put the

weight of the trade union movement behind it.

But maybe the time has come for the "quiet men" to be a little less quiet. It is understandable that they would say "Why should we bother, at this stage, with anybody else?" But unless a solidarity campaign is built, unless they allow and encourage this, they could be left out in the cold.

Part of this campaign must be within the ITGWU for official recognition for the strike.

A campaign could also put pressure on to the Dublin Trades Council and leaflets in every large workplace and union meeting in Dublin, organise collections, marches, public meetings etc.

the worker

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Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

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MAKING UP THE LOSSES

WORKERS in the North have reacted to the ending of the social contract in August by putting in large wage claims, most over 30%. Many groups of workers have been on strike for several weeks. These include Courtauld's, British Oxygen, DC Products.

Others have led overtime bans (Shorts) and work to rule (gas meter inspectors). So far the record is one of success for workers. Fords

workers nationally settled for a low 12½%, but this is still above the government's pay limit. Others range from 15 to 22% increases.

EXCUSE

The government's pay policy, limiting rises to 10%, has been helping employers by giving them an excuse not to pay when there is money available.

Bus drivers who put in for a rise for working regularly

during the troubles were told by Ulsterbus that 'the government won't let us.' Ulsterbus is trying to renege on a promise made to the drivers last summer when workers continued to drive during the Action Council 'strike', resulting in the death of one of the drivers.

REDUNDANCY

As well, many strikers have been threatened with redundancy if they continue pressing for a rise. This is the case in Courtauld's in Carrickfergus and Camco in Monks-

town where 29 have been made redundant because of a strike. The 100 British Oxygen workers have come under heavy pressure because their unofficial strike has resulted in thousands of layoffs in the shipyards and other companies.

LOW WAGES

Workers in the North know they have to get large increases to make up for what inflation and low wages have done to their standard of living in the past. Government and management are trying to settle for productivity deals and low wage increases. These are being rejected. As workers at DC said, "We need the money in our pockets, now!"

scoreboard

	claim	offer	action	result
Courtauld	30%	5% or productivity deal	strike	—
Fords		10%		12½%
BOC	30%	10% plus productivity deal	strike	—
DC Products	30%	5%	strike	—
Shorts	35%	10%	overtime ban	—
Pipefitters	20%		strike	20%
Mackies				22%

AN INDEPENDENT ULSTER?

THERE IS NO doubt that the idea of an independent "Ulster", floated at a recent conference in Belfast and now taken up by people as diverse as Paddy Devlin, John McKeague, Frank McManus, Glen Barr and Belfast Sinn Fein, appears to many to be an attractive one.

Its main appeal to unemployed politicians seems to be that, as an idea of the last resort, it's worth a try. After all, they might get a job out of it! For others of a more principled nature, an independent "Ulster" would seem to hold out hope for a bridge over the sectarian divide. That Protestant and Catholic would be able to find some sort of common identity as "Ulstermen".

Some think of it as a stepping stone to a united Ireland and as a genuine anti-imperialist movement advocating the withdrawal of British troops from the North. Nothing could be further from reality and those who are presently flirting with the idea are engaging in self-deception on a grand scale.

Britain has troops in the North for one simple reason: to protect her assets (currently valued at £7,000m) and her profits (about £1,000m a year). And to engineer some sort of political deal that will safeguard those assets and profits. She would only accept an independent "Ulster" that

guaranteed her economic interests.

None of the independence mob are prepared to challenge Britain's right to exploit the resources and people of the North — there is no talk of nationalisation nor of interfering with the outward flow of profits. The most they are prepared to concede is a "tougher" stance against the multi-nationals. But the idea that British assets could be nationalised and taken under workers' control is not even considered.

In other words the roots of British imperialism will remain largely undisturbed and the North's vast amount of profits will continue to flow into the pockets of the shareholders — not to the workers who create the wealth. To describe the independence movement as anti-imperialist is like calling the Peace People non-political — it just isn't true.

It therefore follows that if an independent "Ulster" is to be economically viable the productivity of Northern workers must be raised. Proponents of the independence idea proudly point out that the North's workers are more productive, export more and are less strike prone than workers in the South or in Britain.

When independence comes, they say, then the workers, with



The roots of British imperialism are profits, not troops

typical "Ulster" grit will put their shoulders to the wheel and all will be hunky dory. Such is the rosy scenario that is drawn, and as such it is partly true.

Workers in the North are among the most productive in Europe. However, what the Devlins and Barrs conveniently neglect to explain is why this is so.

The Northern working class is divided on sectarian grounds and is thus more open to exploitation and less able to organise against the bosses. After all, this is what Northern Ireland has been about for the last 60 years — weaker unions = higher productivity = larger profits.

To increase productivity the capability of workers to organise will have to be weakened. The traditional and most successful way of doing this has been by

Fighting for the Right to Work

OFFICIALS of Coleraine Trades Council have continued to show open hostility to the newly formed Coleraine Unemployment Action Group. A spate of letters to the local papers have attempted to brand the group as "anti-trade unionist" and "dominated by London based Trotskyites."

Similar personalised attacks have appeared in the paper of the Communist Party of Ireland, Unity.

Trades Council officials have continually refused to talk or even co-operate with the group. Despite repeated requests for talks with the trades council, representatives of the group have been told to "stay away and leave the council alone."

The Coleraine Unemployment Action Group seeks to unite trade unionists and the unemployed in a united and co-ordinated fight-back against unemployment.

Workers can organise on the shop floor to stop redundancies. Workers can insist that every vacancy is filled. They can push for bans on overtime. They can organise occupations of firms that threaten to close down.

The unemployed can play a vital role in leading this fight. A workforce being tempted to accept voluntary redundancies may change its mind if lobbied by unemployed school leavers. Unemployed occupations, pickets, marches and demonstrations can initiate action by those at work.

This is the sort of campaign which the Coleraine Unemployment Action Group is trying to create. It is indeed a pity that some trades council officials and the Communist Party of Ireland should spend most of their time attacking in a sectarian manner those who want to do something concerning local unemployment.

Despite this hostility many local trade unionists have expressed support for the group. A few delegates will make an attempt at the next trades council meeting to openly support the Coleraine Unemployment Action Group.