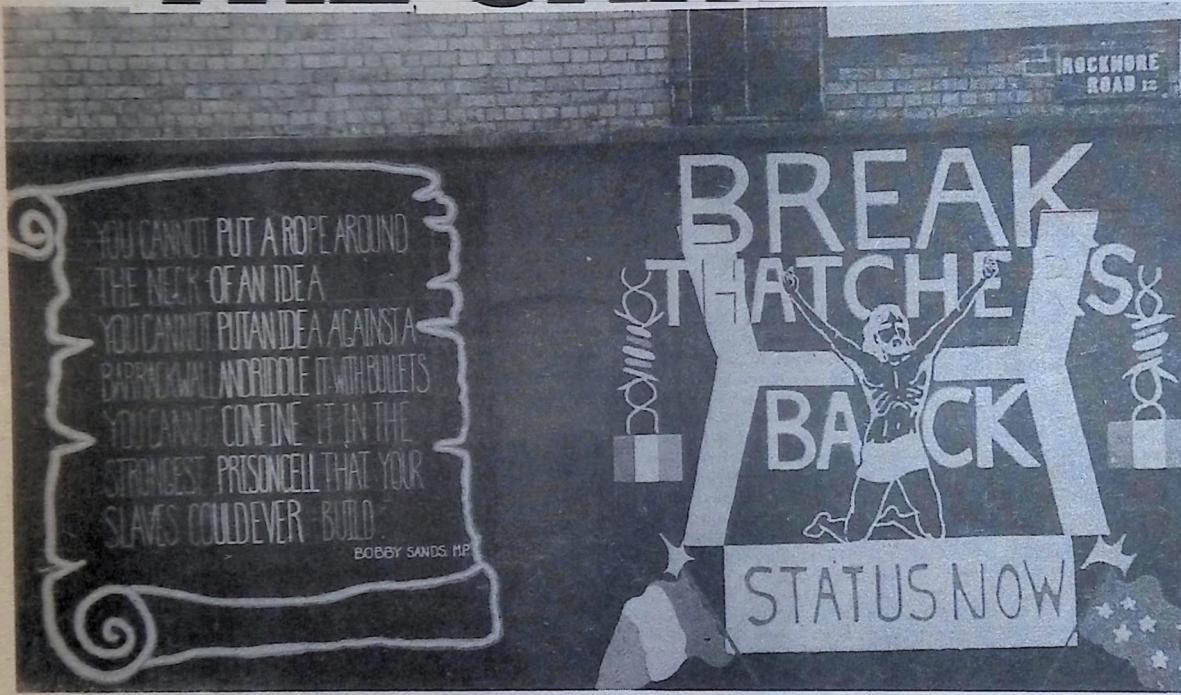


THE WORKER

For Workers Power and International Socialism

H-BLOCKS: THE CAMPAIGN GOES ON



But the plastics keep on coming

by PAT WHITE

SINCE THE beginning of the hunger strike six people have been murdered by the British Army and the RUC in the North.

They were killed by plastic bullets.

In the words of the "Security Forces" the plastic bullets are a "minimum force weapon used to disperse rioters."

In fact they are lethal killers and all evidence suggests that their victims were in no way involved in any disturbance when they were hit.

The ages of the victims reinforce the point.

A fifteen year old youth, two young girls aged 12 and 14, two men over the age of 40, and a twenty-nine year old mother of three.

Hardly the type of people who make normal group of rioters in Belfast or Derry.

The first to be killed was Paul Whitters from the Bogside who died on April 25th. He was followed by Julie Livingstone of Lenadoon,

aged 14 who was shot on May 5th and died the following day.

Carol-Ann Kelly, 12, was shot in Twinbrook while returning home from the shops on a totally quiet afternoon. She died three days later on May 22nd.

On that day Harry Duffy aged 45 from the Creggan was shot and killed.

Twenty-nine year old mother of three Nora McCabe was shot near her home in the Lower Falls on July 8th.

The latest victim was 40-year-old Peter McGuinness, shot in the chest by an RUC fired plastic bullet in the Greencastle area of Belfast on August 9th.

The aims of the British Army and the RUC seems to be to frighten people off the streets.

Everyone is rightly aware of the lethal danger of the plastics.

Most of the deaths from

the plastic bullets have coincided with the deaths of the hunger strikers and seem to be geared at crushing the frustration and anger of people at the flow of coffins coming out of Long Kesh.

Interestingly enough, Thatcher was quick enough to dissuade the use of plastic bullets in the recent rioting in British Cities.

Apparently what is good enough for the people of Belfast and Derry is not so acceptable a little nearer home.

Tricia describes a now everyday occurrence in the North:

"A group of us were waiting at Kennedy Way for Kieran Doherty's coffin to come off the motorway.

"The next minute the Brits came running up the road roaring and screaming and firing the plastics.

"We all had to run like hell.

"Even still one of the

bullets just missed my head by inches.

"There was no trouble going on at the time—just people waiting quietly for the coffin."

If the British think that they have had some success in keeping people off the streets, they certainly have not lessened the anger of the nationalist people.

Murals now adorn the walls of increasing numbers of gable-end houses in West Belfast, paying tribute to the hunger strikers.

In Ardoyne also, an area particularly vulnerable to loyalist assassination attempts people spend their time decorating the walls.

A measure of the support that still exists for the hunger strikers took place one morning as Michael Devine lay dying.

About a dozen or so girls in their early teens lined the middle of the Whiterock Road near Ballymurphy.

They held pictures of the hunger strikers and signs asking drivers to blare their horns if they supported them.

Hardly a car went by silent.

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by STEVE GREEN

THIRTY ONE thousand constituents of Fermanagh and South Tyrone gave two fingers to Thatcher last month when Owen Carron held — by an increased majority — the seat won earlier this year by Bobby Sands.

Thatcher's government tried to prevent the embarrassment of hunger strikers winning elections by the simple trick of banning them from standing.

The nationalists of Fermanagh and South Tyrone replied by returning a prominent supporter of the hunger strikers.

The achievement was remarkable considering that this time there were five candidates.

Owen Carron.....	31,278
(H-Block)	
K Maginnis.....	29,048
(Ulster Unionist)	
Seamus Close.....	1,930
(Alliance)	
Thomas Moore.....	1,132
(Rep. Clubs)	
Martin Green.....	249
(Peace Lover)	
S Hall-Raleigh.....	90
(Gen. Amnesty)	
Majority.....	2,230



Mr Owen Carron

But even Thomas Moore of the "Republican Clubs" could not dent this majority.

Moore's organisation trades in the 26 counties as "Sinn Fein the Workers Party" — of course it is neither — and has lost no opportunity in trying to sabotage action in support of the H Block prisoners.



Carron's victory gives a useful fillip to the H Block Campaign at a time when there is open division in the British camp.

It is time to press forward with the campaign, taking it into the workplaces of Ireland.

We review the state of the Campaign on page 4.

The coalitions' anti-worker budget delivers a short, sharp shock

WILLIAM WHITELAW, the Tory Home secretary, used the phrase 'a short sharp shock' to describe his new methods for delinquent youth. It was the Tories who got the sharpest shock as unemployment and 'delinquency' escalated and began to tear Britain's cities apart. To bosses everywhere the workers are the delinquents of the economy. In true Tory language a special report from the Federated Union of Employers has called for a 'short sharp shock' for Irish workers to keep down our wages.

Capitalism in the 26 Counties has two main crisis points: state finances and the general recession in industry and the economy. The bosses and their government's solution is the same on each case: 'let's protect our wealth and profits; tell the workers that we're all in this together; blame them as much as possible, and cut THEIR share of the cake'.

by DES DERWIN

No sooner was Garret installed in the Taoiseach's chair than he delivered the first 'sharp shock'. After a barrage of propaganda in which we were told 'the State cupboard is bare' and that a wage

spiral was making Irish industry 'uncompetitive'. Garret's carrot was shelved and we got a full-scale budget instead. Garret was doing what Charlie had held off doing until his hoped for re-election. That is, reducing the difference between government spending and government income by cutting the spending that goes on essential services, job creation and public sector wages and by increasing the revenue from the wage earner (the 1% levy) and the least well-off (through increased indirect taxation). At the same time subsidies to private industry remain untouched as have taxes on the rich and company profits (which have actually been reduced since last January.)

"THE STATE CUPBOARD IS BARE" — Indo 3/7/81

"It is not often realised that in the past ten years the State has contributed almost £1 billion for the promotion of industrial development by private companies." — Christie Kirwan ITGWU, at the ICTU Conference.

Up went the cost of living by 4%. On went the 1% levy on wages. That's 5% gone from the 7% we received under phase 2 of the National Misunderstanding. That's on top of the 2.7% we lost when Congress' cost-of-living claim was rejected. The cost of finding somewhere to live went up again with the withdrawal of the government subsidy on mortgage rates.

The current budget has been cut by £113 million. This will partly be achieved by cutting the subsidies to CIE and the ESB and forcing their prices up (and possibly their workforce down in the case of CIE) and by increasing hospital charges. Bruton, the Minister for Finance, was not specific about where all the cuts are to come—perhaps he was afraid to spell it out how current spending cuts hit the needy. Previous budgets have already cut or tightened funds to the Health Boards, the Combat Poverty Committee, the free schoolbooks scheme and local authority housing loans. Under Fianna Fail a skimping policy was quietly developed—for instance it was planned to hold back grants to clubs and community centres—and under the Coalition this is likely to continue with a vengeance—for instance the 50% extra to be paid on prescription charges before state subsidies operate.

The budget was a slap in the face to the unemployed and shows that the unemployment clauses

of the National Understanding still have a few laughs left in them. It will lower demand in the economy and the cuts in funds to the semi-state bodies will lead to a job freeze there.

Earlier this year the Rueudebac Investment Company went into voluntary liquidation producing a surplus of £719,000 for Joe and Seamus McGrath. Only £13,000 of this was set aside for tax.

None of this will stop the FUE screaming about the 'vicious pay spiral'. On July 2nd they called for a pay pause, to be backed by the government, for up to nine months. Rises are too 'vicious' when we have had 15% plus £1 since last September, to last us to December next, under the terms of the NU, while inflation is running at over 20% for this year alone! They tell us that price rises are way ahead of 'our' (they mean 'their') competitors abroad without referring to their lower inflation rate. They ignore all the international surveys which consistently show Ireland to have the lowest, or almost the lowest,

labour costs in the industrialised West.

At every opportunity the establishment blame wages for inflation ignoring such facts as the amount of price rises that are imported. While the international currency markets keep the dollar at its current price around 4% is added to the consumer price index because almost a quarter of our imports are paid for in dollars.

It is public sector pay above all that the government and the bosses would love to get their choppers on. Trade Union strength held off Fianna Fail, but the Coalition seems set on making a stand with the clerical civil servants.

The Coalitions offensive is aimed at knocking £160 million off an expected deficit of £947 million for this year. A lot of pain for such a small bite. There are more 'shocks' in store, obviously.

There's nothing in the kitty they tell us. So services must be

For United Working Class Action
For an independent fighting trade union movement
For the economic and political equality of women
For a 32 county Workers Republic

The SWM is a 32 county Socialist Workers Organisation. We organise around these demands.

If you agree with the above demands and the ideas expressed in this paper, send off this form.

NAME

ADDRESS.....

UNION/ORGANISATION

send to 41 Herberton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8.



chopped and taxes upped to raise £160 million. But on what was the kitty spent? For every £1 collected in taxes at least 25p is handed out to wealthy money-lenders in unearned interest rates. £275 million was spent last year on security—much of it to protect the Northern Ireland State and more per head than British expenditure. And what about the untapped kitties: the untaxed profits on exports? Garret's hair-shirt covered the banks to the extent of £5 million. Why not £50 million? It has been estimated that the 2% reduction in industrial oil taxes, given in the budget will benefit Cement-Roadstone Holdings to the tune of £1 in a year. And the FUE says that workers should not expect compensation for price rises due to oil.

"WE HAVE TO FACE THE FACT THAT WE ARE PAYING OURSELVES TOO MUCH." — Garret Fitzgerald on TV, 17/7/81.

"I understand that the palatial 5,000 sq. ft. residence recently completed on the Lucan Clonee road belongs to Tom Brennan (co-builder of Kilnamanagh Co. Dublin) and that it must have set him back £200000 to £300,000." — Des Crowley, Sunday Tribune, 21/7/81

The bosses have been busy building up their case for little or no wage increases at the end of the National Understanding. The ICTU have said that Trade Unionists will be seeking compensation for increases in the cost of living. Yes, but will the union leaders be backing them? Or will they be trying to deliver another sell-out national agreement? In the present climate there is only one way that workers can protect their living standards.

By fighting back!
This means an end to national con-deals which prevent us from fighting back. It means vigilance against any attempts to restrict trade union rights. It means rejecting THEIR logic by saying that inflation and unemployment are caused by capitalism and that the crippling public debts are the debts of the rich to the rich.

The cuts can be fought. The old, the sick and the homeless may be relatively powerless until organised. But hospital workers, local authority workers and teachers can resist reduced services and redundancies, by demanding proper working conditions and by pressing their unions for organised action and demonstrations against cuts in social spending, jobs and public sector pay.

We say

AT THE end of this month, the ICTU meets to decide on whether to enter negotiations for a new National Understanding. Conditions could never have been riper for saying NO!

The Irish trade union movement has been shackled by a decade of centralised bargaining. The effect has been to drastically weaken and contain the movement.

The wage agreements were not just about how much we got but more about what sort of trade union movement.

Alongside the Wage Agreements, the tradition of the two-tier picket was established. From a situation where the picket line had an automatic affect we have moved to a scab's charter line.

Take the present Switzers strike. The ITGWU members have been out now for over three months for the simple reason that their fellow workers—members of IUDWC—are passing an official picket.

The All Out may still come—but it has already taken over three months and the danger is that it will be difficult to get the shop workers to respect a picket they have been passing for that long even if it has the magic Congress seal of approval.

On the shop floor, the Wage Agreements have weakened the role and authority of shop stewards. In many cases local bargaining has effectively been abolished. The shop steward is becoming very often merely a messenger boy or girl for the local union official. While at the top the union leaders have been strengthened as a labour police force.

The Capitalist crisis has forced the employers to go further than their previous aim of incorporating trade unionism into a consensus—they now are aiming to inflict a decisive defeat on workers organisation. A decade of NWAs has left us in poor shape to face this challenge.

The FUE is seeking to impose a massive wage cut. They want a single figure wage settlement while inflation hits 20%. The principle of indexation—wage rise for price rise—is to be torn up. And the Coalition is hacking them up all the way.

And now the bosses ideas machine has been thrown into top gear with learned economists and the rest telling us that the crisis is our fault. Our answer is clear—it's a bosses crisis and attempts to solve it at the expense of workers will make matters worse not better.

The ICTU Delegate Conference is an excellent opportunity for the movement to take the offensive again and reject all the National Understandings and wage cuts.

We live in a world where worker and boss face each other across an unbridgeable divide. They live by exploiting us. We can only live if we fight back. Our unity is our only strength.

A letter from the Ukraine

NIKOLAI POGYBA, a Ukrainian worker from Kiev, is currently serving a second term of imprisonment for campaigning on behalf of workers' rights. This is his open letter to the Ukrainian human rights movements and to the United Nations Human Rights Committee.

He was imprisoned for the first time in 1975 after criticising the situation of the Soviet working class in front of his fellow workers. He was charged under article 187 of the Ukrainian SSR Criminal Code with 'circulating fabrications known to be false which defame the Soviet State and social

system'.

His case was heard by the Kiev Regional Court which sentenced him to three years' imprisonment. After this Pogyba continued to express his critical views and produced leaflets which he wrote and posted throughout Kiev.

He was arrested for a second time in 1979 and charged under article 206 with 'malicious hooliganism'. Pogyba states in his letter that the charge was based on his having posted leaflets on a statue of Lenin although the real reason behind it was his 'slanderous activity'.

AS a worker relegated to the lowest rung of the Soviet social ladder, I have experienced economic, socio-political and national oppression. I could not help but consider the real reasons for this oppression. I realised that my fellow workers were also victims of exploitation and that this exploitation was greater the lower one found oneself on the social ladder.

I came to the conclusion that the state is the exploiter along with the state-party bourgeoisie in its service. The socialism and internationalism of which one so often speaks in the Soviet Union is nothing more than a smokescreen for a means of production and distribution of material goods which is not in the least socialist. Our country is actually a state capitalist society with a totalitarian form of government.

In informal conversations with fellow workers I expressed some of my views regarding Soviet reality. I saw nothing wrong in so doing. I noted that the real causes for our impoverished condition are to be found not in mistakes committed by the administrative apparatus but in the very system of production which is capitalist.

Value

The labour of the working class is sold at a much lower cost than its value and the working class is excluded from sharing in the profits of the goods which it has produced. I pointed out that this leads to the impoverishment of the working class, a class completely lacking in rights.

In my conversations as well as in the leaflets which I wrote and then posted throughout Kiev on bulletin boards, buses, monuments, etc I showed that Soviet labour unions (ie state-party organisations) neither constitute a separate autonomous organisation nor do they represent the rights and economic interests of the working class.

They are, in fact, an integral part of the party-state apparatus whose principal aim is to extract the utmost from the worker while keeping the working class in blind obedience, checked and ensured by a system of meting out at first minor and then ever greater benefits. The dispensation of

benefits depends on such factors as good behaviour, success in meeting designated quotas and loyalty to the state.

Those workers who express dissatisfaction, be it outrightly or indirectly, are demoted to the lowest-paying jobs, lose any privileges and are put under the 'care' of Soviet penal authorities. All this is done with no objections raised by the labour union.

Two antagonistic classes exist in the Soviet Union—the exploiters and the exploited. The class struggle has a criminal nuance: the state robs the working class and the working class robs the state. Exploitation is such that the least sign of protest is stifled, with the result that we are transformed into beasts of burden.

In my writings and speeches I pointed out that such a form of 'class struggle' exists only to the advantage of the state. We, the workers who hold differing views, have to renounce it and proceed to find new forms for the class struggle—one which would lead to a true unshackling of the working class.

Labour

I believe that I am not alone in the endeavour, that the situation in the Soviet Union is ripe for the founding of independent labour unions. I explained to my fellow workers that we not only have the right to talk of independent labour unions but the right to organise them.

I also brought up the fact that the working class in the Soviet Union is composed of three large groupings: the privileged class (the 'heroes', party toadies who spy on workers); the middle and most numerous class; and the exploited class, which has no rights and leads an impoverished existence.

These worker-slaves (prisoners and former prisoners who number millions) already have one foot in prison, receive low wages and suffer constant persecution by the authorities.

This drives these people to crime. Ninety nine percent of the people found in the corrective labour institutions are from the working class. The most promising workers are to be found in these institutions which only serve as an intimidating force for the working class in general.

Throughout the course of my so-called 'slanderous' activity I came to see that similar views are held by many workers. I became aware that their numbers are growing daily.

Even though the ruling class will go to any length to check independent-minded workers

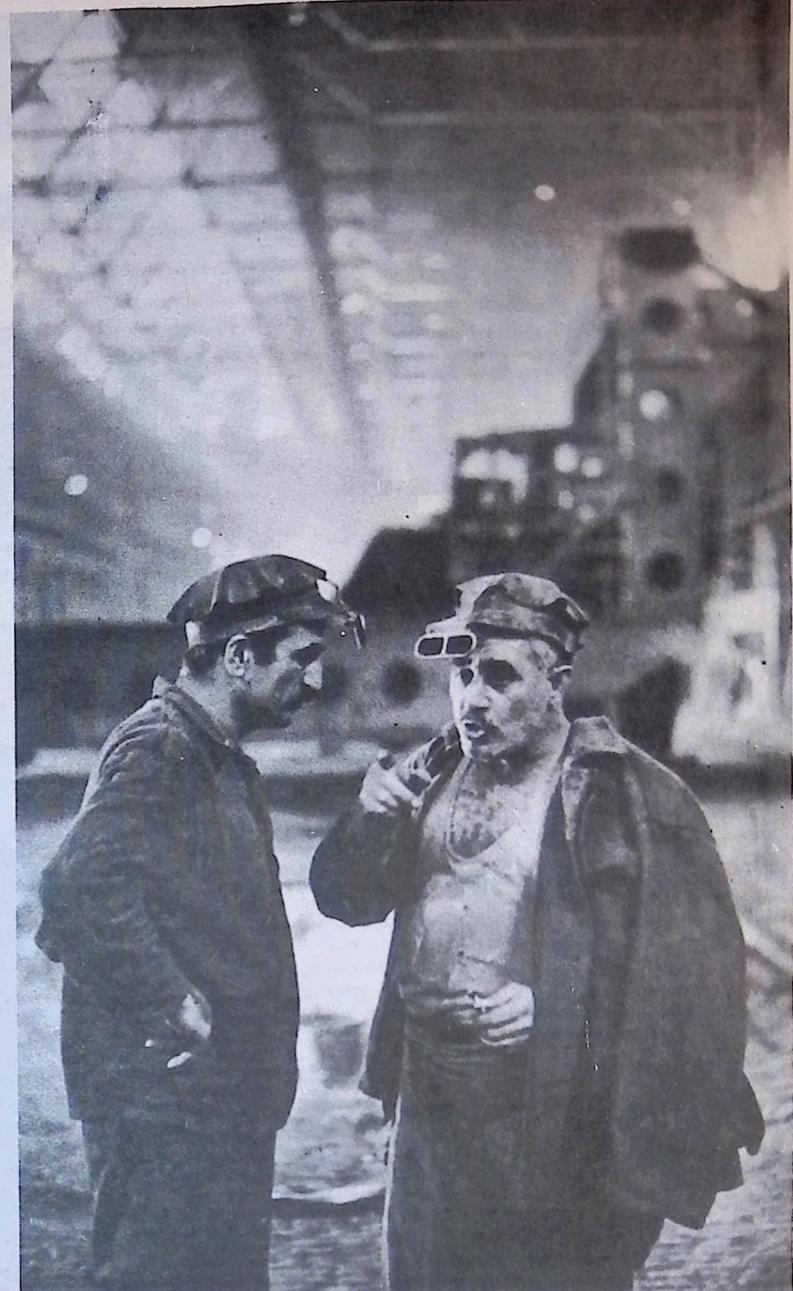
whose protest is born of spontaneity, repressions will no longer be able to suppress that awareness which has been awakened in the consciousness of the free-thinking section of the Soviet proletariat.

Recent events in Poland have shown the working class is capable of leading the struggle for its rights and freedoms. The effectiveness of the struggle waged depends on the degree of solidarity of the working class, on the degree of self-organisation.

This is the 'slanderous' activity for which I am being 'rehabilitated' behind barbed wire.

I believe that each man, even a worker, has the right to express his views, be it in speech or in writing. To be persecuted for this constitutes a blatant violation of human rights as formulated in the General Declaration of Human Rights passed in the General Assembly of the United Nations and ratified by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in 1956.

I ask that the Ukrainian human rights group make my letter known to the people of the Soviet Union and to world public opinion. But foremost, to the labour unions throughout the world. Let them be the ones to determine who the real culprit is and what his true motives are.



Mitterrand backs bosses

"TWENTY THREE years of hope, but only three months to be disillusioned."

The speaker was slightly exceptional. He had joined a crowd of half a million in Paris on the night of 26th April to celebrate the victory of Francois Mitterrand — the first socialist President of France for 23 years.

Now he was looking back on the record of three months in office.

That sentiment is still somewhat exceptional. Yet it does point to a growing disillusionment with Mitterrand.

Consider the following:

- * Mitterrand promised the vote to immigrants. He has since announced that they will not get it before the municipal elections in 1983.

But it remains "an objective".

- * He promised to reduce military service. That has now also become "an objective."

- * Despite his protests

against the American military build-up, Mitterrand continues to test his own nuclear show pieces in the Pacific.

- * Despite being elected in order to tackle inflation and unemployment — both continue to rise.

That is not the whole story. Mitterrand has actually introduced many reforms into French society.

For that reason "the honeymoon" period still continues with the working class.

by KIERAN ALLEN

He has embarked on an ambitious programme of decentralisation in order to curtail the monstrous French bureaucracy.

He has legalised some of the free radios; suspended work on some of the nuclear power stations and also committed himself to abolishing the death penalty.

However none of these reforms touch on the basis of class power. None of them decisively shift economic or political power from "the bourgeoisie".

All of the above measures allow Mitterrand to maintain an image of reforming zeal — while firmly setting out to administer a decaying capitalism.

The example of Mitterrand is one that can be transferred to other countries.

Originally he was a totally discredited politician — supporting, for example, the French colonial war against the Algerians.

His tiny Socialist Party seemed to be thrown out to the margins of French politics dwarfed by the Communist Party. Yet he has succeeded in rebuilding his party and outstripping the Communists. How?

By building a coalition on the basis of the most elastic politics. Against the CP, Mitterrand brandishes his independence from Moscow. For the tired generation of May '68, his party gives some support for the surviving "movements" for example the ecologists. For the growing middle class, Mitterrand flies the flag of cosmopolitanism.

There is one problem. Reformist parties can be built from the top down — but on the promise of some reform.

The truth is that today, capitalism is on the decline. No fundamental reforms are possible on the basis of the system. Indeed, the depth of the crisis means that its continued existence demands sustained attacks on the working class, its organisation and its living standards.

It is for that reason that the

new reformism of Mitterrand is concentrated at the "political" level. It does not touch on the lives of the mass of working people yet presents the appearance of change.

Mitterrand has now won a breathing space. After years of right wing governments, that is not surprising. But all honeymoons come to an end.

Unfortunately, some of the revolutionary left — those who claim to see the necessity to overthrow the system — are not doing their best to break the honeymoon.

During the election, they fell over themselves calling for a Socialist/Communist government as if it would open the door to the advance of the working class.

Now they continue to maintain that the problem of Mitterrand's government is the presence of the Radical Party.

Out with the bourgeois ministers, they shout, as if Mitterrand and indeed the CP have not proved themselves to be the most effective bourgeois ministers.

For there to be any progress it is necessary that the widely held reformist illusions are broken and an independent working class revolutionary party is built in France as elsewhere.

H-BLOCKS: WHAT CAN NOW BE DONE

Organise...

THE CHAIN of deaths in the H Blocks is lengthening. It began with Bobby Sands MP and now a coffin is coming out of the H Blocks every fortnight.

Increasingly as the mounting anger mingles with despair, many more people are asking "What can be done now?"

Thatcher's strategy has been to play on that despair. In Ireland, she has combined a hard stonewall position with military terror to crush resistance. Internationally she believes that she can weather the storm of "public opinion" in the belief that she will regain that respect after crushing the IRA.

Last month, Britain's Northern Ireland Secretary Atkins had the gall to reply to a statement from the prisoners by simply announcing "they do not seem to understand our position." The arrogance is not just a matter of words. It is backed up by the live and plastic bullets of the "security forces". It coincides with actions like the imposing of a curfew on the Short Strand and the unleashing of the sectarian UDR on the local people.

The question remains: What can now be done?

Over the last year, the National H Block Campaign has pursued a definite policy of lobbying and pressurising the major political parties, the Southern government and the Church. It has hoped that this would also lead to international pressure on Thatcher. It is also clear that organised mass action has taken second place to winning over sections of the SDLP, Fianna Fail and the Church.

Take the question of trade union action which the Socialist Workers Movement has consistently argued for. It was not just a matter that the H Block Campaign did not have the resources to devote to the area. The simple truth is that you cannot on one hand hope to win over elements of Fianna Fail or the Church and at the same time lead workers onto the streets in strike action. You have to choose which class to rely on.

Now there is no doubt that the lobbying and the pressure has worked to some extent. But it is double-edged. The more Church leaders were pressured into making statements, the more the Church leaders could also pressure the campaign itself.

Ten years ago Bishop Philbin toured round West Belfast on a British Army Jeep telling people to get off the streets. He was told to get off himself. Today, the new-found nationalism of sections of the Church means that they are in a better position to attempt to split the relatives from the campaign and to encourage pacifism.

It is possible that some sort of settlement may be achieved through official government and international pressure. But at a cost. Garret Fitzgerald's aim — as was Haughey's before him — was to extract concessions from Britain in order to politically weaken the militants in the anti-imperialist camp.

The Justice and Peace Commission intervention was an attempt to hand credibility for a settlement on to "moderate" politicians. Any settlement brought on by agreement between "friendly governments" will be one designed to damage the anti-imperialist movement in the long run. Of that at least we can be sure.

The H Block Campaign has made many advances. It has brought a new confidence back to the movement against the Orange state. But at its core it has had a serious political weakness. It has only gone half way to building a real mass movement that has had the power to impose its five demands on the British and Southern governments.

It has, particularly, neglected to organise for the sort of industrial action that could carry it through. Instead sections of the campaign have sought to win through lobbying and respectable pressure.



...the workers!

THE PRISONERS could still win a real victory that could shake the British Establishment.

But there is also only one force that can guarantee that victory — the power of the organised working class.

In 1920 the trade union movement opened the doors of Mountjoy for republican prisoners after a three day strike.

It can be done again.

But there are obstacles on the way. The H Block Campaign has only the weakest connections with the organised working class.

The biggest component of that campaign — the Republican Movement — has never organised inside the unions, despite much working class support.

It has not had a tradition of seeking support for the struggle in the North from rank and file militants — because it believed there was no need to.

All that is simply a matter of fact. When industrial action did take place — as it did consistently in towns like Waterford, Dundalk and Drogheda — it was not led by Republicans.

To some extent, after the death of Bobby Sands, and Francis Hughes, that lack of a base was compensated for by the sheer outreach of anger from many Irish workers.

It was possible then to pull off work stoppages with a minimal level of organisation.

In many cases, the workers stopped after an appeal from the outside — in some cases even because of a leaflet.

any move for workers action.

Once the decision cannot be made "spontaneously" in the workplace, the bureaucracy can hang all the chains of procedure around the campaign.

Nevertheless, all these chains can be broken. The Socialist Workers Movement has argued for a determined approach from the campaign to win and to bring about the form of industrial action that is possible.

At the moment it is possible for the campaign to set up a major day of action that is independent of a funeral and to work for as much industrial action as it can get on the day.

* The leadership of the campaign should issue a clear call for a day of action well in advance.

* It should work for official sponsorship from as many Trades Councils, Trade Union Branches and Shop Stewards Committees for the day.

* It should organise locally for meetings of Shop Stewards to prepare for industrial action locally.

THE KILLER PHOTO COPIERS

THE HUGE increase in the incidence of cancer over the last forty years can in some part be attributed to the extensive use of dangerous chemicals in industry.

Many chemicals are introduced with little or no testing of the long term effects on those who have to use them.

In some cases workers are not even aware that they are being exposed to these dangerous substances and even where the facts are known, companies frequently act to conceal the facts.

IBM, manufacturers of computers and business equipment are a case in point.

Since 1970 IBM have been using Trinitrofluorenone (TNF) in their photo-copiers.

Tests have shown that TNF causes cancerous tumors in laboratory animals. IBM went ahead with its programme despite the knowledge that every customer would be exposed to the TNF.

The copiers were developed in the USA and under the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976 companies are required to notify the Environmental Protection Agency before marketing chemicals, but IBM did not do so.

When Irish Computer magazine approached IBM Ireland asking how many of the affected copiers were in use in this country, IBM refused to answer.

The models in question are Copier I, Copier II and the 3800. If any of these models are in use in your office they pose a hazard to health and the issue should be raised with management.

We should not have to work with dangerous equipment to satisfy the lust for profits of the likes of IBM.

As manufacturing becomes more complex it becomes more important that trade unionists take up the issue of health and safety at work.

Every job should have a safety officer whose function is to get the information on the possible effects of any process which may be a health hazard before it is introduced.

A useful book in this respect is *The Hazards of Work* published by Pluto Books and can be ordered through *The Worker* at the address on page 5.

What we stand for

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

The system under which we live, capitalism, is based on production for profit and not for human need. It is a system that leads to poverty and war, racial and sexual oppression.

Only the working class can destroy capitalism 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

There is no parliamentary road to socialism as the left in the Dail believe. The system cannot be changed by piece-meal reform. The state machinery—the courts, parliament, the police and army—are used to maintain the dominance of the ruling class. The real power lies in the boardrooms of big business.

We stand for a workers revolution which produces a different and more democratic society—one based on councils of delegates from workplaces and localities who are democratically elected and subject to recall at any time.

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

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

A SOCIALIST ANSWER TO THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The six county Orange State is propped up by British imperialism. By bribing loyalist workers in the past with privileges in, for example housing and jobs, Protestant workers have come to see their interests as being served by the British-backed Unionist boss class. This divides the working class and delivers a section of the workers as allies of imperialism. The Northern state is sectarian in essence and must be smashed.

The slow task of building working class unity against imperialism must be begun.

However imperialism must be fought in the here and now and we support all forces engaged in that struggle regardless of our difference of programme.

We stand for: Immediate withdrawal of the British Army. Political Status Now.

The Disbandment of the RUC and the UDR.

In the South, the bosses are junior partners with other European and American bosses in world capitalism. The main enemy is the boss at home. Nationalism or a united capitalist Ireland offers nothing to workers. The only republic worth fighting for is a workers republic.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

We support feminism as being the legitimate progressive and necessary struggle by women against their oppression as women and believe that the self-emancipation of women as a sex is central to the meaning of socialism. Only through socialism can women achieve full emancipation and therefore the women's struggle must be led by working class women as part of the struggle of the whole working class for socialism.

FOR A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT

The main area of political action for socialists is the mass organisation of the working class, particularly the trade unions. We fight for the independence of the unions from state interference, democratic control of all union affairs and the election of all union officials.

We oppose all anti-union legislation and all forms of national wage understandings and wage restraint. We oppose all redundancies. We say: Occupy to demand Nationalisation under workers control. Fight for a 35



Tess— pretty, passive and hopeless

THERE HAVE always been writers who have written about the "good old days".

by MARNIE HOLBOROW

The days before nasty, dirty smokey towns when people lived in peaceful bliss between the hay rick and the cottage fireside.

They always wanted to set back the clock and pretend that capitalism wasn't happening.

The English writer, Thomas Hardy writing from the West Country of nineteenth century Victorian Britain was no exception.

Things looked very bleak to him. He deeply resented the growth of industrialisation; the way the corrupt city life was eating into the countryside, and how the old values of country life were being destroyed by the harsh reality of men and women selling their labour to industry.

Against that period of transition, Hardy stands resolutely for the old values, looking back with a true Victorian morality to when things were good.

So with Tess. She is good personified, battling against an indifferent world and against all odds.

She is the last glimmer of innocence, prey to nasty

people in a nasty world. She is raped by her rich cousin, condemned by the man she loves who leaves her on the night of her marriage for being the mother of an illegitimate child.

She is left to the misery of another unhappy marriage and finally from sheer despair finds herself killing her hated husband.

Her revolt leads only to her death on the gallows as a murderer. Fate triumphs, there is no way out.

Polanski's recent film "Tess" is as bleak as the book. But Polanski sees women differently to Hardy.

Tess in the film is simply a pretty and passive woman. All the fighting spirit that Hardy gave to his heroine, Polanski reduces to dumb passivity.

You can't help thinking of the rape case that Polanski himself was involved in some years ago and you are left feeling that somehow he should not have got off it.

But the film also stereotypes "country folk." They are, for the most part, rural idiots or

giggling cowmaids with little else in their heads except their desire to be faithful servants of possible husbands.

Polanski misses what Hardy was talking about — the struggle of these people to keep their old comparatively secure way of life in a world where jobs on the land became scarce and where people are forced off the land to the dingy estrangement of factory and mill.

Hardy, while reflecting that change, offered no solutions. Indeed his heroines and heroes are ground down by their fight against it and end up wretchedly disillusioned.

In one book, *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy began to look for solutions. *Jude* turned towards emerging socialist ideas

to combat the corruption of urban factories. But, under pressure from his publishers, Hardy changed the first draft of the book and finished the story in a similar defeatism to that of Tess.

Hardy was certainly not prepared to push what he was writing about to its logical conclusion — the need to

change, not reverse, the society.

He, like Tess, succumbed to the existing order of things and with that, the world became for him a fated conspiracy against helpless creatures.

SINGLES BARRED

SINGLE OR gay people will now pay £4000 more to buy a new house. That's the effect of the Coalition's new piece of legislation which allows married people only to benefit from the mortgage subsidy.

It is not just another penny pinching measure - supported by the Labour Party. It is a bribe to bolster the institution of marriage.

Clearly the cleverest element in Fine Gael are getting a little appalled by the growing number of people living in sin.

The convent's parish priest will sleep a little more soundly.

But will THEY get the mortgage subsidy themselves?

all those who accept its principles and objectives. The struggle for a workers republic in Ireland is inseparable from the international struggle. The SWM fights to build a mass party of the working class as part of a revolutionary international of working class parties.

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politics



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by getting the Worker—the paper that fights for workers' power.

hour week. We support the building of a rank and file movement which draws together militant trade unionists to oppose the class collaboration of the union leaders.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

The SWM is a democratic centralist organisation open to

★ THE WORKER is produced by the SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT. If you would like more information on our activities and policies; would like to become a member of the SWM or would like to take out a subscription to THE WORKER — £2.50 for a year — clip and post this form to SWM, 41 Herberton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8.

★ I want to join; I want a subscription and enclose £2.50;
★ I would like more information about the SWM.

Name

Address

.....

The Multinationals

by PAUL O'BRIEN

The activities of the multinationals have come under some scrutiny in recent months. In the following two articles we examine the multinationals in relation to the massive evasion of tax and their failure to provide the jobs for which they are paid increasingly large grants by the Irish taxpayer.

THE GREAT JOBS FRAUD

IN 1980, the Haughey government commissioned the US-based Telesis Consultancy Agency to carry out a review of Irish industrial policy.

Their findings were contained in a massive 700 page report presented to the government in July.

So far they have not published its findings and probably will not because they are an indictment of the bankrupt policies pursued by successive governments to create jobs.

THE MAIN FINDINGS

Telesis have discovered that only 30% of jobs approved by the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) between 1970 and 1978 actually exist in 1981.

The figure is as low as 16.7% for mechanical engineering.

Many companies in recent years have inflated their job creation projection "because the IDA only expects us to achieve 60% of the target."

WE GAVE 40 YEARS SERVICE
WE GOT THE DOLE QUEUE



job creation and to have failed in the task it was set up to do.

Not all of this information is new. In the Socialist Worker Review (Forerunner of the Worker) issue of April 1978 we stated these facts and arrived at the same conclusions.

The plain fact is that the level of unemployment is not determined by the IDA or the government but by the chaotic system of international capitalism and the blind pursuit of profits by the bosses.

They will stay so long as it is profitable and pull out just as quickly.

The Telesis survey reveals that 80% of all companies located here for tax incentives and for access to EEC markets.

are now pulling the wool over the eyes of the IDA in obtaining grants by giving vastly inflated projections of jobs targeted and actually employing substantially lower numbers, as the table shows.

In total, between 1970 and 1978 96,026 jobs were approved and paid for. Today only 28,937 of those jobs exist.

There are no grand schemes available to make or save jobs, no matter what the government say. If workers want jobs they are going to have to fight for them.

That means opposing every closure and redundancy. If the owners cannot guarantee the jobs of those working there, then the company should be nationalised, without compensation, under workers control.

The type of industries being attracted here by the IDA have little stand-alone potential; use very few Irish raw materials; have high levels of job losses and low levels of skills.

The cost per job created is £7500 for foreign-owned companies and £15700 for Irish owned.

The national budget pays out £1740 per year as industrial aid for every existing job in manufacturing.

The IDA expenditure has more than trebled in the last ten years to a current rate of £169 million in 1980.

Despite its image as the saviour of Irish industry, the IDA has been shown to be inefficient, wasteful of money, to have concealed the facts on

COMPANY	JOB TARGET	ACTUAL JOBS
GENERAL ELECTRIC	4788	1000
DIGITAL EQUIPMENT	3000	1300
BURLINGTON IND.	3034	2200
ABBOTT	1869	852
COURTAULDS	1800	200

Ireland still has the lowest tax and wage rates in Europe.

They also claim that the IDA pays too much in capital grants, companies have described them as "too good to believe" and "a real steal".

The foreign companies

The trade union leaders must share some of the blame for they have taken the easy way out in many cases, selling jobs for money.

The fightback must start now, next week it could be your job that disappears.

THE TAX RIP-OFF

machinery and industrial buildings

Nearly all the multinationals surveyed by the *Irish Press* recently benefit from this.

None of them, according to a spokesman for the IDA pays any significant amount of tax.

The EEC in a directive have demanded that the export relief scheme be abolished, and in order to protect the multinationals the government have introduced a ten per cent Corporation Tax for all companies

engaged in manufacturing since 1981.

Both the IDA and the Department of Finance concede that the new 10% manufacturing tax will probably yield less than the old system.

The export relief scheme will still be available to all companies who were set up before 1981, for the first 20 years from the date of set up.

This means that of the top ten multinationals, the first to lose the benefit of this scheme will be Becton, Dickinson & Co, but not until 1990! Even then it will make little difference to the amount of tax paid.

As Manus O'Riordan, a research officer with the ITGWU said, "many of these concerns have become so adept at the different means of tax avoidance that it will be no bother to them to at least half their tax obligation."

Socialist Workers Movement

Industry and Trades Unions Day School

The trade union movement in this country was built by Connolly and Larkin. Today the leadership has been taken over by a set of lifeless bureaucrats. Instead of a policy of solidarity strikes, we get the two-tier picket. Instead of a militant struggle for wages and conditions, we have had ten years of wage restraint. Connolly and Larkin were socialists. Connolly in particular fought for the involvement of the working class in the struggle against imperialism. But today the leadership of the trade union movement will not lift a little finger to save the prisoners in the H Blocks. It's time to reform the unions from top to bottom; it's time to build a real fighting trade union movement.

AGENDA

11.00 – 12.00 POLITICS AND THE TRADE UNIONS

Can the unions work for reform today? Why are they tied to the Labour Party? Why has nothing been done on the H Blocks? Why have they broken with the Connolly tradition?

12.00 – 1.30 HOW THE TRADE UNION BUREAUCRACY WORKS

Moderates or misleaders? Great sell-outs we have known. Can they be changed from the top?

1.30 – 2.15 BREAK.

2.15 – 3.15 BUILDING A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT, THEORY AND PRACTICE.

Why we need to organise inside the unions. The experience of the past. The shop stewards committees. The Rank and File organisations today.

3.15 – 4.15 THE ROLE OF THE SHOP STEWARD

Can shop stewards have any power in Irish unions? How do militant shop stewards keep their support on the factory floor? What have National Wage Agreements done to shop floor organisation?

THE POLICY OF WAGE RESTRAINT AND NATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS.

Centralised bargaining – has it worked? Is a free-for-all the alternative? How do we organise against wage restraint?

VENUE: BUSWELL'S HOTEL, MOLESWORTH STREET (Opposite the Dail).

DATE: SATURDAY OCTOBER 3rd.

PLUS: A SATURDAY NIGHT FOLK AND BLUES SOCIAL

FOR DETAILS CONTACT SWM AT ADDRESS SHOWN ON PAGE 5.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Switzers workers need solidarity

by DAVID BYRNE

EIGHTEEN months ago in Penney's stores in Dublin, store workers and drivers who were members of the ITGWU struck over proposed redundancies. To win they needed the immediate support of the shop assistants represented by the IUDWC.

Because of the 'All out Picketing Policy' operated by the Congress leadership which demands that the striking union

UNIDARE AXE JOBS

by ITGWU Steward

WELL, they got away with it. In a 'rationalisation' move Unidare successfully chopped the 31 jobs in the Foil section.

From now on the foil that was produced at the Finglas plant will be imported by Unidare acting as agents. The workers that produced it are now scattered throughout the Unidare site in jobs that could have been filled from the dole.

Although the company had assured the press that there would be no losses to the man, some of them are already experiencing heavy losses in earnings. These losses are to be the subject of negotiations between union (ITGWU) and management.

The first tier of compensation has already been secured, ranging between £500 and £120 according to service.

It took a long drawn-out fight to get this, ever since the fight shifted from keeping the section open when the Union advised them to accept the closure.

From 16th June there was a sit-in strike when people refused to move out of the section and we were suspended. Then the Union recognised those who were suspended as being locked-out and gave them a grant equivalent to strike-pay.

must go through all the bureaucratic channels in order to get the Congress Committee to call out all Unions on the job, Penney workers waited and waited for solidarity.

It never came. Instead of demanding respect for the picket 'All out' rule has stifled the Trade Union movement. It now raises its ugly head again in another big Dublin store.

For 14 weeks 140 porters and drivers (ITGWU) have been picketing Switzers & Co premises in Dublin demanding compensation for extra work due to alterations. (See last issue of *The Worker*)

Their claim is well justified.

The responses from the management has been the same as the Penneys strike.

Thirty of the workers on strike are now threatened with redundancies.

At a social recently, held by SWM in support of the EBS, one of the Switzer workers explained:

"To win this dispute we needed the immediate support of the sales assistants. To get it we applied for 'The All out' from Congress. It has taken so long in coming, that management have grabbed at the chance to introduce redundancies. 10 drivers, 6 storemen and half the porters were suddenly served with redundancy notices, including the shop steward. They are evidently going to bring in 'Hackers' to do the drivers work."

Management will no now discuss our claim except we talk about redundancies. We are determined not to talk on these terms. We will continue to fight."

The workers at Switzers have a hard battle ahead.

Not only are they up against the bosses like Gannon (a union basher recently bought over from Clerys) but they have also come up against the sorry mess of ICTU and its bureaucracy.

The leadership of the IUDWC will as in the Penny's strike try and delay an all out picket.

The rule itself means that it gives the green light for union 'leaders' to instruct its members to pass pickets.

The ITGWU in this case the striking union has done just this on many occasions.

The two-tier picketing policy or 'all out' makes it harder for workers to show solidarity in cases like the Switzers dispute.

Action by workers themselves however can overcome such bureaucratic obstacles.

Everything possible must be done to gather support for the workers of Switzers.

They immediately need the support of the sales assistants.

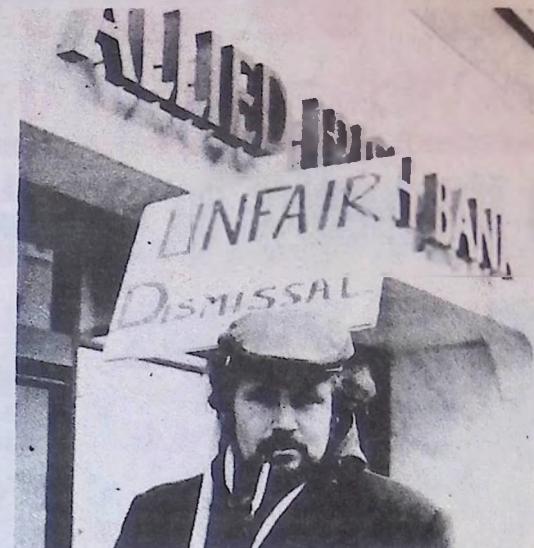
Work must begin now in union branches to ensure that in future workers support for picketers does not depend on meetings of committee meetings by ICTU leaders. The picket is our only weapon, we must ensure it remains in our hands.

SUPPORT THE SWITZER WORKERS

For further information and offers of help contact the shop steward or Paul Anderson at the picket line at Grafton Street.

Or phone 856647 David Byrne SWM Dublin.

BANK MEN FIGHT ON



Mr. Johnny Lupton

IN THE last two issues of the *Worker* we have covered the case of John Lupton and Niall Murphy who have been in dispute with AIB since October 1980.

The strike arose as a consequence of the attempt by Mr Hegerty, the Manager of the Rush Branch of AIB to allow after hours banking, which is against the policy of both the bank and the Irish Banks Officials Association (IBOA).

When John Lupton and Niall Murphy protested against this breach of security and policy they were threatened with transfer to another branch.

That any company should be allowed to hold such a threat over its employees in this day and age is intolerable.

The banks are one of the last employers who still have that power.

by PAUL O' BRIEN

For challenging that right both these workers were dismissed.

After a series of incidents at Rush, the AIB tried to silence them by transferring Niall Murphy to Bank Centre in Ballsbridge and John Lupton to Drogheda.

The Bank shortly afterwards transferred John Lupton to Kildare in an obvious attempt to isolate and demoralise him.

He refused to accept this transfer and picketed the Drogheda branch of AIB.

Shortly afterwards Niall Murphy placed a picket on Bank Centre as a protest against the harassment and the attempt to degrade and discredit him since the incident in Rush in May 1979.

Since then both of them have been fighting AIB in an attempt to secure their jobs without victimisation. They have picketed the bank, the home of Niall Crowley, Chairman of AIB and raised the issue wherever they could.

In this they have been helped by local shop stewards who have raised money, helped with pickets and brought the dispute to the attention of the Trades Council.

Niall Murphy has bought a case for unfair dismissal to the Employment Appeals Tribunal.

The first session was held on August 10th in which the bank outlined its case.

Just how unjustified their case is, was shown when the AIB conceded that the bank had attempted to transact business after hours and when the staff refused to accept, Mr Hegarty, the Branch Manager threatened them that:

"If they were not prepared to do their jobs the way he wanted he would get someone who would."

In the light of this admission their subsequent transfer was a clear victimisation which they were quite right to fight.

After the hearing of the bank's evidence the case was adjourned till October, when Niall Murphy will present his case.

Whatever the outcome of the case, the banks and the transfer system have been shown up for what they are. The IBOA has given little or no support to these two men, because the IBOA are not prepared to take on the banks over the transfer system.

A victory for Niall Murphy and John Lupton would be a victory for all bank workers.

They deserve all the support they can get.

If you can help contact *The Worker*, 41, Herbiton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8.

EBS RETURN IN TRIUMPH

by MARY RYDER

THE STRIKE at the Educational Building Society has ended after 16 weeks.

Not one of the strikers ever imagined spending such a long time tramping the picket lines.

Many are new, first time members of the union—ASTMS—and no concept of what a dispute entailed but after 16 hard weeks of picket duty, endless discussions among themselves, with the Union and with the many people who supported them, they return wiser to the EBS.

Their awareness and confidence has grown no end, as MAEVE LAYNG, shop steward said:

"People who were timid at the beginning of this strike have gained confidence that will ensure that they will always stand up for their rights in the future."

This in itself could be considered the success story of the strike.

But the strikers consider the settlement terms a victory for themselves and a great step down for management.

The Labour Court recommendations were as follows: ... increases in salary rang-

ing from 10% to 26% in addition to the National Understanding rises. These increases resulted from rises on the scales of 10% to 13% and from the introduction of a new four-grade structure to replace the two-grade system.

The settlement also provides for a change from a 32 hour to a 33 hour working week.

provides for progression through the first 3 grades based on service with the EBS and for access to the fourth grade by promotion.

Under the settlement terms each permanent member of the staff involved will receive a lump sum of £250 in lieu of retrospective.

The central issue of the strike, the grading structure, is the one that most people are pleased about.

There were only two grades A and B, so after 7 years service you reached the top of the scale and stayed there till retirement!

There was no recognition of length of service.

As one of the strikers, MARY CASSIDY said:

"There are many of us here who came in from school and we now find ourselves at the top of our grade and no further prospects. It's ludicrous."

The Labour Court recommendations which were accepted, mean there will now be four grades and recognition of service.

Management have tried to

introduce a promotional grade in the hope that those promoted would opt out of the union but this ploy was rejected overwhelmingly.

Management also claimed that 4 or 5 agitators were manipulating the union which in turn was indoctrinating the new members. But in the 13th week of the strike, membership totally rejected management's proposals by secret ballot. So much for manipulation and indoctrination.

Now that they have returned to work the strikers do not feel that the struggle is over. The difficulties they will encounter in dealing with the scabs who raked in overtime during the dispute will be overcome by the determination of a united group of workers.

In victory, the hardships of the strike are forgotten. MAEVE LAYNG said:

"The members are now aware of the need of support from other workers when you're on strike and they will definitely make an effort to support other strikers in the future—even if it means a little push in the back from me as a constant reminder to them".

She specially thanked the Socialist Workers Movement for the 2 socials we organised and the money raised but especially for the moral support given which helped them keep going.



O'Malley and Michael McStay, ex-Chairman and now board member of Unidare, chat together in February 1981.

THE WORKER

For Workers Power and International Socialism

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You can help to make sure The Worker is on the streets regularly by contributing to our fund. Send whatever you can manage — large or small amounts — to : The Worker Fighting Fund, 41 Herberton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8.

KEEP THE WORKER ROLLING OFF THE PRESSES EVERY MONTH. SEND A CONTRIBUTION TO OUR FIGHTING FUND.

In the wake of the Coalition's bosses' budget THE WORKER says:

WE WON'T PAY

by KIERAN ALLEN

THE BATTLE lines have been drawn. The Coalition government is out for blood.

'Sacrifices have to be made' they say, 'The country is up to its eyes in debt. Each man and woman and child is living £10 beyond their means.'

'£10 beyond our means'. Tell that to the families who are crowded into the flats in Dublin s(Ballymun waiting for a house. Tell that to the thousands of textile workers who for the umteenth time have been told they are not getting even the terms of the wage agreement.

In a country with both the highest inflation and the highest unemployment in Western Europe, there is no way that working people are living a penny beyond their means.

Mind you there are some. The smooth property-owning sharks like Alexis Fitzgerald—since appointed a government advisor.

Or take the banks or our new breed of 'oil speculators'. The likes of O'Reilly and the rest who have bought up drilling rights for oil, driven up the share prices in the new found companies and then sold them off making a killing!

Fitzgerald talks of sacrifice. But there is one item of legislation that shows it all to be hollow cant.

Since the beginning of the year, tax on manufacturing profits has effectively been written off. A ten per cent rate of profit rate of Corporation Profits tax — after all allowances are deducted — means no tax at all.

Since they have come to power the Coalition govern-

FOR THEIR CRISIS

ment have embarked on a programme that is directly designed to attack the living standards of workers.

They have now directly responded to the demands of the FUE that wages should no longer match prices.

In the recent meeting with the ICTU Fitzgerald told the unions that they could no longer expect indexation — wage rates should now be pegged at what the country can afford.

The truth is that wages in

recent years have never fully matched price rises under the National Wage Agreements.

The consumer Price Index does not fully reflect price rises as they hit working class families, especially such important items as food.*

But now Fitzgerald is introducing a totally new element — he is expecting an open acceptance by the trade union leaders of the principle of wage cuts.

Even that might seem too hard for the ICTU bureau-

crats to swallow. But you can never be sure with them.

There is only one guarantee we can have.

Massive pressure must now be built up in the unions to say quite simply:

- * No talks for any Wage Understanding;
- * No wage cuts;
- * Put in claims now!
- * £25 a week across the board!

TURN TO PAGE 2