

the worker

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FOR A WORKERS' REPUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

WORKERS CAN STOP SACKINGS

Workers face a grim prospect in the coming months, as Ireland, North and South, prepares for Common Market conditions. In both parts of the country the governments and bosses must step up their attacks on the working class in order to impose some semblance of political and economic stability.

One of the main forms which these attacks will take is certain to be wide-spread redundancies. Already the spectre of redundancy haunts many workers throughout the country. There is a general feeling of insecurity, when such old-established firms as Sirocco and Guinness lay off their workers. There are rumours and counter-rumours about closures.

In the board-rooms and the shareholder's meetings, company directors are advising each other on the need for 'shake out' - just another polite word for sacking. The economic 'experts' have found that Irish industry is 'over-manned' and needs to be trimmed - that is, men have to be sacked. The government recognises that there must be more 'rationalisation' of Irish industry and agriculture in the Common Market - more lay-offs. Even the Industrial Development Authority in the South, an eternally optimistic organisation, predicts that 30,000 jobs will be lost during the 1970's.

But let us be clear about one thing: nothing - certainly not the large-scale sackings - is inevitable. The trend has been laid down over the past few years, but it only need continue if workers, and their organisations, allow it. The sackings can be fought.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions fought against E.E.C. entry very largely on the grounds that it would cause large-scale lay-offs in many industries. It must now be made to fight the effects of entry into the Common Market.

The ruling class is out to impose law and order in the political field and the industrial field. It can only solve its problems at the expense of workers' living standards, jobs, and political rights. That is why we must resist its present efforts, and build on the examples of such struggles as that of the Navan workers to turn the tide, and force out the thugs and thieves who rule us.

Inside we publish an analysis of redundancies and a programme to beat them.



Crannac workers take over

On Monday, 1st May, the 43 workers at the Crannac furniture factory in Navan, Co. Meath, turned up for work as usual. But the doors of the factory, on the outskirts of the small Meath town, were locked. The liquidator, Mr. Luccan, was there to meet the men; he told them the factory was closing, and, if they would stay at the entrance, he would hand out their tool-boxes.

The men refused their tool-boxes, they refused redundancy notices, they refused their cards: they took over the factory.

Since that day the 43 workers, members of three different unions

and some of them with over 20 years' experience at the factory, have been sitting in. They have challenged in the most direct and most forceful way possible the right of the bosses to dispose of workers when the whim or declining profits, takes them.

Liquidation

The first indication that the workers at Crannac had that the factory might be closing was the liquidation notices which appeared in the newspapers in April of this year. Immediately, they formed a workers' committee. They sent one of its members, Oliver Travers, to speak at a creditors' meeting. He was hardly allowed to explain the workers' case, and, although some of the creditors at the meeting wanted to hear him, Edward McElroy, the big furniture manufacturer, who had bought the Crannac factory only a year before, controlled the meeting. McElroy was determined to close down.

Indeed, the workers believe that he never had any other intention. He only kept the factory open as long as was required under the conditions of certain government grants he received - one year exactly. He was interested in the high quality furniture produced at Crannac, but he wanted to produce it in his own factory at Castleblayney with more modern plant, and with higher profits.

Sympathy

McElroy employs 300 people at the Castleblayney factory, and has a number of directorships in furniture companies; he was the fourth owner of the Navan factory.

McElroy's precise motives for his action are not known. He refuses to make any public statement, and has

carefully avoided the glare of publicity which has been thrown on the Navan factory.

Because of the publicity, and the local sympathy, others too, who might have been expected to condemn the workers' action, have stayed quiet. The local sympathy is understandable. In the last two years there have been 300 jobs lost at Navan factories, 140 at Boyne Mills, 37 at Navan Carpets, 40 at Walsh's Furniture Factory. Unemployment in Navan is well above the national average.

The workers have refused redundancy notices, therefore they get no redundancy pay. They depend on collections which are made at factories in

Pickets

There are picketers outside the factory all day, and frequently passers-by stop to make donations. Inside, the men operate a 5-shift system to keep a 24-hour presence in the works. But also there night and day is the liquidator, or a representative, guarding the offices, and preventing the workers from reading files which might reveal to them the certain double-dealing in Crannac's recent history.

Co-operative

After two weeks of the sit-in, and only one Northern manufacturer showing any interest in taking over the factory, the workers decided that they themselves would try to take over the factory and run it as a co-operative.

To run a factory as a co-operative with workers on the board, does not remove the factory from the forces of competition which may destroy

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RELEASE POLITICAL PRISONERS

The riot of republican prisoners at Mountjoy Jail has served very effectively to draw attention to their forgotten plight. Almost unnoticed the harassment and imprisonment of republicans has gone on for months in the 26 Counties.

There are now 12 republican prisoners in Portlaoise Jail, who have been convicted of arms possession and armed robbery.

Forty republican prisoners were in Mountjoy awaiting trial at the time of the riot. Some of them have been held there for over three months on charges under the Offences against the State Act. Repeated remands have been used as a form of detention without trial.

STATUS

The demand for the men in Mountjoy and Portlaoise is for political status. This would mean an end to penal work, and more facilities for

study, recreation, and to meet other prisoners and visitors.

The 50 prisoners are being held for activities inspired by their support of the military struggle against the British Army in the North. Socialists do not believe it is a crime to take up arms against an occupying army. On the contrary, they recognise fully the important role of the armed struggle in a fight to overthrow imperialism.

REPRESSION

The response of the state forces to the Mountjoy riot shows clearly the attitude of the political rulers in the South. The police and army appeared on the streets with riot gear, including CS gas. The months and years of training in anti-riot and anti-civilian tactics appeared for the first time fully in the open.

We must make our opposition to the rising repression very clear. Those trade unions, particularly the

Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, which have spoken out in the past against repression North and South must take up this campaign vigorously.

The Socialist Workers Movement picketed the Department of Justice at the end of May calling for the release of the political prisoners. The demands raised there must be raised by the whole working class and republican movement. They are: unconditional release of the political prisoners, and recognition of their political status while they are in prison; the closing of the Curragh camp; no further use of the army in civil disturbances, and an end to the stock-piling of anti-civilian weaponry.

In a different context, Matt Larkin General Secretary of the Tenants' Associations, has said: 'Freedom will have to mean more than green pillar boxes instead of red pillar boxes.' The trouble is, Matt, they've changed the colour again.

Rent strike spreads

Crannac (continued)

such a small unit. In fact, it is the workers themselves who have the liability should the factory fail. Crannac furniture has a very good reputation — the British use it in their embassies; at least it burns well — and Dublin dealers have said they will take furniture produced at Navan under the control of the workers. But a workers' take-over guarantees nothing in the long-term. It is certainly not socialism in action, as some may believe.

Orders

When Crannac closed there were orders on the books worth £30,000. The annual turnover was £200,000. Clearly there is some hope that the co-operative might succeed just in capitalist terms. But the struggle of the Navan workers is a fight essentially against redundancies; even a take-over by another manufacturer would be a victory. It is clearly not possible for workers to form co-operatives everywhere there are layoffs and closures.

From the vigorous resistance of the Navan workers a general demand must be drawn for fighting redundancies; it must be for the nationalisation under worker's control of firms declaring closures.

Workers in ESB know that the mere fact of having the state as employer does not guard against layoffs. In the long run, the only guarantee against redundancies, arbitrary closures, management-imposed productivity dealing, is to change the very basis of control throughout industry and society. Only in a democratically planned economy, controlled by the workers, — only under socialism — will there be a satisfactory answer to the problems posed by the system in its present crisis. The answer is therefore, a political answer, one which challenges the right of the tiny minority who control this society to dispose over the livelihoods of the vast majority.

THE DAIL-IS IT DEMOCRATIC?



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

What's worth seven years research, and costs between £23 million and £39 million? A new drug to help cure cancer? Methods of making land more productive and help the 60 per cent of the human race who are under-nourished?

No, according to the 'Irish Times' of 11th May, Humble Oil and Refining, the U.S. home branch of Standard Oil of New Jersey, have spent this time and money on finding a trade name for its products on the American market.

Its overseas trade-mark, Esso, could not be used in the U.S.A. for legal reasons, so after much effort by the computer it comes up with EXXON.

Recently, a Dublin company announced a competition among its employees to find a name for a new branch. The entries flooded in, were carefully gone through by the management, and finally the choice was made. The originator of the name got one old-fashioned guinea for his effort.

Northern Police Attack Protestants

The forces of the state will attack anyone who threatens the state. For the past three years the armed wing of the state in the Six Counties has concentrated its assaults on the Catholic working class because it is they who have threatened to bring down the whole rotten Unionist structure.

But now the Scottish landlord, Whitelaw, has realised that the Protestant working class by their disregard for the peace plan also represent a threat to class rule in the North. So the order has gone out that as well as continuing the murder of Catholics the Protestants too must be kept in their place.

Attack

This explains the events of the first weekend in May in East Belfast. The Tartan gang were attempting to invade the Catholic Short Strand area. The R.U.C. and the Army did little to stop them. But the Protestants disregard for "law and Order" had

We are often told that we are living in a democracy. Yet when you ask what democracy means you are told 'government of the people by the people for the people'. Look around you and consider if this fine theory has got anything to do with the reality of life. Most people are on the receiving end of government: they have nothing to do with the taking of decisions, they have no influence on the decisions that are taken, and they know that the government is not carried on in their interests.

Thus, the 'democracy' that we have got fails to deliver even the goods it promises. The fact of having a parliament does not change anything; once every five years, the people vote for T.D.'s or M.P.'s to control the country for the next five years. This is called a 'free election'. But it is not free: it is quite expensive.

DEPOSIT

For a start, every candidate has to pay a deposit of between £100 and £150. A much higher amount has to be spent on bringing their name and policies before the voters. Not many working-class people have this sort of money. Candidates who have a lot of money, or whose parties have a lot of money, can produce more posters, more leaflets,

to be punished, so instead of attacking the Tartans the R.U.C. entered "Blue Bar" in East Belfast and bated all around them. The people in the bar at the time were mainly middle-aged men and women who had never thrown a stone in their lives, their only crime was that they were working class Protestants.

Victims

We cannot and will not defend the actions of the murdering Tartans but at the same time we realise they are only victims of the Unionist system of divide and rule. Because the Tartan attacks must be resisted this does not mean the R.U.C. or the British Army have any right to brutalise any member of the Protestant working class they care to. We know they are not doing this to protect Catholics, they are doing it because the Protestant working class threaten to upset the latest Imperialist solution for the North.

and this helps to imprint their names in the minds of the voters.

The choice which generally faces the voters at election-time is between candidates selected by the various parties. Only a small fraction of the population are members of political parties, and of these, fewer still have any influence over the choosing of candidates: bargains are struck between one faction and another, people of influence announce whom they are supporting and their followers meekly toe the line, those seeking nomination dispense promises and drinks in all directions. The ordinary voter is faced with the end-product of all this.



Democratic leader of undemocratic country?

If these obstacles are not enough larger ones can be put up by the government. In the 26 Counties, only parties over a certain size are allowed to have their name on the ballot paper. In the 6 Counties, Republicans have been excluded by requiring them to promise to take their seats if elected, and the Republican political organisations are banned.

Constituencies in the 26 Counties are gerrymandered so that they are simply geographical areas, and parliamentary representatives do not represent real communities.

The electoral system is also crooked: the Northern system of single-member constituencies makes it difficult for minority representatives to be elected: in the 26 Counties, the number of constituencies returning more than the minimum three deputies has been steadily reduced: 73% of constituencies in 1923 38% of constituencies in 1969. This means an extra bonus of seats for the largest parties: Fianna Fail in 1969 got 52% of the seats with only 48% of the votes.

The purpose of elections is becoming increasingly clear; it is not to represent the voters but to return a 'stable' government, i.e. one that is not too responsible to changes in public opinion. In any case, the deputies elected are there for five years and cannot be removed by the voters, no matter how far they depart from their election promises.

JOHN GOODWILLIE

Under this system of election, the working class loses out. They cannot get members of their class elected. Over one third of the population are manual workers, but only 3½ per cent of the deputies elected in 1965 were in the same group (all of them skilled workers). One quarter of the population were non-manual workers (excluding managers, professional people, and trade union officials); but only 2 per cent of the deputies. Meanwhile, the 3 per cent of the population who are employers and managers supplied 34 per cent of deputies.

PROCEDURE

The parliaments which are elected by these processes are bodies strange to the working class and without much understanding of the working class. Their methods of procedure are long-winded, despite the occasional put-on display of fireworks. To somebody who does not know the rules of the game they appear incomprehensible. They cultivate the atmosphere of a club so well that on the rare occasions when the electoral process throws up a member who has the interests of the working class at heart, he is generally absorbed into the machine and made to 'realise' that his parliamentary colleagues are courteous and sincere people who are working in their various ways for the betterment of the country.

Like trade union officials who have attended too many dinners alongside employers it becomes too much of a strain to be friendly in private and ferocious fighters in public: yet another earnest critic of the parliamentary system is captured by the system.

MANIPULATED

Parliaments, then, are composed of members of the ruling class, or of those who have surrendered to the ruling class, and the function of parliamentary elections is to decide which members of the ruling class are going to wield the symbols of power for the next five years. But the kernel of understanding parliaments is to understand that they wield only the symbols of power. The real power lies outside them.

Parliament is manipulated by many means. It is reduced to a mere talking-shop, where speeches are made to an empty house without even a quorum present: speeches which are made to be reported in the newspapers: speeches which do not affect the issue one way or the other, since the government can rely on its disciplined voting majority to overrule the vast

majority of arguments, however brilliant.

Because parliament is a debating body and not a working body, the real business of carrying on the administration of the country is in the hands of the government and civil service. Senior civil servants generally do not have much sympathy with the working class. The civil service machine hides itself behind mounds of red tape: the civil servants are dehumanised, they do not treat the public as human beings, and the bureaucratic rules are there to shield them from the temptation of serving the public rather than the government.

However, parliament and government do not run the country primarily in their own interests. What I have described are some of the methods by which the will of the people is distorted and set at naught. The effect of these methods is to replace the will of the people by the will of the minority which exploits the majority of the population.

CONTROL

The industrialists and financiers who control the economy of the country have, behind the scenes, the real control of politics also. In countless ways they bring pressure to bear on the government. The men who make up the government and the higher civil service have vested interests in maintaining the unequal distribution of wealth.

Big businessmen decide when and where they will invest money on the basis of profitability, and in order to keep the economy afloat the government must make things easy for them. State companies and boards are used to help industrialists, not to compete with them, and they treat their employees just like private companies do. How often does the government condemn the employers in an industrial dispute? Rarely — because they are on the same side. The state is the capitalists' policemen. And parliament is an essential part of that state the instrument of the minority's power and privilege.

The task is not to change the politicians; it is to change the system.

But if Parliament is not democracy, what alternative form of democratic rule is there?

In the next issue of 'The Worker', Peter Davies argues that past working class struggles have demonstrated an authentic form of democracy — workers' councils.

NO PEACE AT ESB

The ESB may have been saved a strike by the decision of the Irish Electrical Technicians Association (I.E.T.A.), but they have by no means overcome their problems. Unrest and tension exists in many sectors of the board's employees despite the attempts of management and of the union officials to calm the waters.

The sacking of 20 men at Poolbeg power station seemed almost calculated to cause trouble. The ESB claims it is expanding; it pointed out that jobs would be available for electricians at Turlough Hill, Co. Wicklow, in a couple of months, and yet it could not find positions for vacancies elsewhere.

Guarantee

When they were taken on at Poolbeg, they were promised at least ten years continuous work, and possibly a career in the Board after that. That guarantee has been broken. The conclusion is inescapable: the Board intended to smash the new union, which has recruited electricians in ESB steadily since the strike at Ringsend power station last September.

The Electrical Trades Union, which represented 12 of the 20 men laid off at Poolbeg, made no efforts to oppose the redundancies. Last September it instructed its members to pass unofficial pickets at

Ringsend, and issued a statement denying the I.E.T.A. the right to negotiate for electricians. Fortunately, most workers at Ringsend refused to obey the leadership's instructions to pass the pickets.

On this occasion, too, the union bureaucracy had ganged up with management to break a fight against redundancies, ordering members to pass pickets if they should be placed. In view of the demoralisation after the defeat of the Shift Workers, the Electrical Technicians were well advised to adopt a different tactic: a sit-in.

The I.E.T.A. has a trade union's negotiating licence for its 400 members, but it does not have negotiating rights for the 100 members within ESB. It intends to continue the struggle for recognition.

New agreement

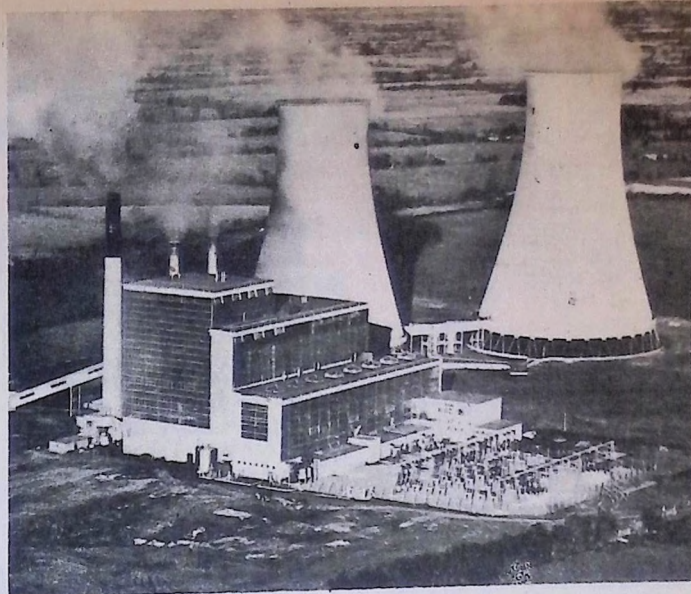
Meanwhile, unrest is building up among other ESB employees. Several hundred of the 1500 members of the ESB Officers' Association, a purely ESB organisation, are in doubt as to whether a new agreement between the Board and their Association covers them or not. The agreement which a large majority supported in the Ballot in May is described at different times as covering 'Clerical' and 'Clerical/Administrative' categories.

Some ESB officers who are not definitely in one category or another have been asking the Officers' Association whether they are due to get the handsome 12 per cent rises, backdated over 12 months. The reply they are getting is that they should wait until they get their pay packets and then contact the Association if they have not received the rise. The Association's secretary claims he does not know what categories are covered, although he has been negotiating about the re-grading for months.

Price

There is a price for the big rises, of course: the 'peace clause' which is an agreement between management and the Association not to use lock-outs or strikes during a three year period as a means of backing demands about wages, conditions, grades, etc. What this means for many members of the E.S.B.O.A. is that they cannot use industrial action if they discover that they have not received the rise which other members of the Association have received.

The ESB Industrial Council has stated that it 'welcomes the Peace Clause and sees in it a most significant development in ESB Industrial Relations'. But there are few signs that industrial peace is coming to the ESB.



Break with congress urged

The Dublin District of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers recently passed a resolution condemning the action of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions over the ESB strike. They considered the Congress's call for workers to do the strikers' work as a decision seriously violating fundamental principles of trade unionism.

The Dublin District therefore thought it incompatible for the A.U.E.W. to remain affiliated to Congress, if

Congress was to encourage scabbing. The resolution urging this line was originally put to the District Committee by Dublin 9DI Branch, where it was passed unanimously.

Last year, the Engineers' Union was suspended from Congress for a short time, because it took part in industrial action which contravened the National Wage Agreement. The A.U.E.W. does not support the Congress's handling of wage agreement negotiations.

Hotel workers fight sackings

On Monday, May 1st, workers at the Intercontinental Hotel, Dublin, held a mass meeting where they voted by an overwhelming majority for strike action.

The dispute had arisen some weeks earlier when the Management named 47 workers whom they intended to make redundant and at the same time demanded that new demarcation lines be drawn up. They demanded that Porters do jobs previously done by cleaners and waiters, and that trainee waiters and barmen do jobs reserved for cleaners. On top of this, chefs would be asked to operate the kitchens with only half the present staff.

In spite of a clause in the National Wage Agreement that any new work regulations must be agreed by management and unions, the management of the Intercontinental consulted with no-one before issuing their 'demands'.

MEETING

Shortly after the redundancy notices were first issued, the workers held a mass meeting in the hotel. They told their union officials that various departments were working to rule in protest against this move. The union officials asked for time to negotiate. On May 1st, some weeks later, they returned to report to another mass meeting of workers the result of the "negotiations" on their behalf:

1. There would have to be redundancies - but they did not know how many.
2. There would have to be new demarcation lines drawn up.

The workers totally rejected this capitulation and themselves voted to strike if and when the management tried to impose the new conditions. The strike is due to begin on June 20th.

Action to improve conditions

Workers at Charles Bells Blinds (Ireland) Ltd. have been on strike recently in protest at the foul working conditions in this Marrowbone Lane Dublin, factory. Conditions at the works, and the attitude of the management, show how in many places the 19th century has managed to extend into the last third of the 20th century.

These are just a few of the things which have finally forced the couple of hundred workers to take direct action:

- there are holes in the roof, and workers have to dodge between the drops when it is raining;
- the cups in the canteen are cracked and the chairs are broken, so many of the workers have to stand through their 10 minute break;
- the heaters are turned off in February no matter how cold it is.
- the lights are not turned on unless it is actually impossible to work because of darkness;

- the lavatories don't flush, and the cisterns are cracked.

The workers at Bells are all members of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union, and are represented by Charles Douglas. When the complaints were put to him, he suggested that he should write to the Federated Union of Employers asking them to make an inspection. Is the union under the impression that the bosses' organisation is going to take one of its own people to task?

The requirements under the Factories Act are sufficient to force Bell's to do repairs and to make sweeping changes. It would be much more to the point to insist that the Industrial Inspectorate looks at the factory and takes action unless things are changed. But that possibility has now passed; the workers are determined to force a change themselves.

Others: please copy.

Bosses' justice

As men in the North get sentenced for blowing up the property of capitalists to ten and fifteen years in jail, it is interesting to now how the crimes of capitalism are rewarded. After all, if the sentence for damaging property is fifteen years, how much more should it be for murder. But in the capitalists' eyes there is murder and there is murder.

In December 1971 Mr. George William Moore, a labourer, was killed when working on the laying of a water pipe line, for those exploiters-in-chief of Irish labourers, Sir Alfred McAlpine and Sons Ltd. Moore was working near Carmoney, Co. Derry.

In the Derry Petty Sessions recent-

ly it was disclosed that Moore died when a trench he was working on collapsed. McAlpine's were found guilty of breaking government regulations, because there was not enough timber to support the almost vertical sides of the trench. It was also found guilty of breaking regulations which provided that no one should be employed in a trench excavation which had not been thoroughly examined by a competent person within the previous seven days. The firm was finally found guilty of not providing sufficient access from the trench.

In other words, in their desire for quick profits the firm had put

the safety of their workmen at risk and as a result Moore died. But the capitalist system does not punish such crimes; for the exploiters, profit comes first.

And so the firm was not punished as the men who attack property are punished, the directors were not jailed, they were not called "terrorists" by the capitalist press. Instead McAlpine and Sons were fined a grand total of £360. Another example of what the capitalists mean by "law and order".

A soldier's honour

Colonel Wilford of the 1st Parachute Regiment is due for promotion soon because he is proving himself one of the greatest representatives of British Imperialism.

In the military field he is outstanding, having led the murdergang on "Bloody Sunday". But, more than that, Wilford had quickly become the greatest liar in the British Army and with the opposition he has to face that is no mean feat.

Wilford started on this promising career when he appeared on T.V. after Bloody Sunday and claimed he had seen a civilian with a rifle. But his lie was exposed in court when under cross examination in the Widgery inquiry he admitted he had seen no such thing.

But the brave colonel was not

explaining the new arrangements. The company had, in fact, known of the union's opposition to the changes, but had still tried to push them through.

When Hobin spoke up, he was dismissed. The Irish Transport and General Workers Union then mounted a picket and stopped production; the management changed their line: Hobin was only to be suspended; then he was to be given a job in another department; then he was to be paid for the time he was out; and then, finally, he was to get back his original job. Although the workers at NET had agreed to accept a Rights Commissioner's decision as binding, they would not meet him until Hobin was re-instated.

Differences remain about the operation of the new plant, but the first round has been won.

CONGRESS CONDEMNED

At their recent conference in Limerick, one of the oldest of the 'break-away' unions outside Congress, the Post Office Officials' Association, passed a resolution condemning Congress, and Maurice Cosgrave, in particular, for supporting scabs during the ESB Shift Workers' strike.

upset by this exposure.

Recently he appeared on B.B.C. T.V. after the U.V.F. attack on Kelly's bar and Ballymurphy. Wilford told the viewers that it was impossible for Protestants in the Spring Martin estate to fire on Kelly's Bar, because it couldn't be seen from Spring Martin. But Wilford wasn't to know that the television report had begun with a picture of Kelly's taken from Spring Martin, with the commentator saying "Kelly's Bar is clearly visible from the Spring Martin Estate". Once again Wilford was shown to be a liar.

The reason he lied so badly is that he wants to draw attention to himself for disregarding the truth so constantly - it is the one way he can be sure of gaining promotion in the British Army.

VICTIMISATION AT AER TURAS

Some months ago, the workers in Aer Turas, a small air freight company, decided to join a union in order to change the poor pay and bad conditions they had to work under. All went well until the bosses got word of the move.

They called a meeting of all workers and told them that a union would not be tolerated in the company. They proposed, instead, that an employees' committee should be formed.

Some of the workers rightly pointed out that an 'employees' committee' confined to this one company would be controlled by the bosses. It would be a means for the employers to increase their

control over the workers. What the Aer Turas workers were aiming to do was to cut back the amount of control the bosses enjoyed. Such an employees' committee could make victimisation of individual workers by management easier.

However, with the promise of more overtime at higher rates, the management won that round.

The consequences of setting up the committee were exactly as has been predicted by those who originally opposed the idea: within a few weeks, the management announced redundancies. No prizes for guessing who was to go - the workers who had spoken up against the committee.

The reason given by the management for the lay-offs was that they were losing money. But now they have informed Aer Rianta that they intend to go into passenger travel and to buy two Bristol Britannias for that purpose. The lie is exposed.

The more likely reason for the sacking is that they intend to enter into some contract arrangement with Aer Lingus for maintenance work. Sooner anything than 'risk', keeping on union-minded workers who might begin to really fight for their rights.

BRIAN O'CONNOR

FIRMS LAY OFF WORKERS

The spectre of redundancy haunts many workers in Ireland today. Rumours and counter-rumours go around about lay-offs and closures.

Last year, 1971, the rate of redundancies in the South increased 120 per cent over the previous year.

Unemployment has reached the 80,000 mark in the 26 Counties and nearly 50,000 in the Six Counties the highest levels in both areas for over twenty years.

There are few workers who can relax, and say, 'my job is safe'. It is only a short time since a job with Guinness was looked on as the safest thing around. Now brewing is to be phased out in Dublin, and moved to London, where a new process makes it quicker and more profitable.

In some small towns, where redundancies have taken place in one or two of the main factories, the whole appearance of the place, and the spirit of the community, has been affected.

EEC

Irish entry into the European Economic Community will certainly increase the problem. Even the Industrial Development Authority agrees with the estimate of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions that 30,000 jobs, or more, will be lost during the 1970's. However, they also think that new jobs created will more than compensate for those lost. If their recent past record is anything to go on, we can have little confidence in this prediction.

Accurate forecasts of the number of redundancies are impossible. There is little point in playing that numbers game. The central thing is that Irish entry into the EEC sharpens those

trends which have already caused the redundancies of the past few years: These are:

- greater exposure to the shifts in the international economy;
- greater competition under free trade conditions;
- increased technological change;
- rationalisation, and the drive for greater productivity;
- mergers and take-overs.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, in particular, fought for a NO vote in the Common Market referendum very largely on the grounds that many jobs would be lost if Ireland entered the EEC. Just as the government must not be allowed to forget the promises it made of 50,000 new jobs (over and above possible redundancies), so we must keep up pressure in the trade unions for complete opposition to redundancies.

The 'right to work' is something which most people recognise as a right. Even the supporters of the present system see full employment as a desirable goal.

To recognise the right is one thing. To fight for it on every occasion is another. That fight brings us directly up against the economic and political regime we live under. The bosses, and their state, do not allow a challenge to their 'right' to dispose over the lives of working people as and how the profit-motive demands.

TRADE AGREEMENT

One of the turning-points in the recent history of new jobs 'created' and old jobs lost was the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement of 1965. That pact allowed British manufacturers unrestricted access to the Irish market;

NO REDUNDANCIES!

Make the unions fight for:

- total opposition to redundancies, instructing members to refuse redundancy notices;
- a 35-hour week, an immediate reduction in overtime and working hours to create more jobs;
- a minimum basic wage of £30, making overtime unnecessary for adequate earnings;
- no productivity dealing;
- nationalisation under workers' control of factories threatening closure.

The rank-and-file must fight for full control of their unions to ensure that these demands are implemented. They must be prepared to occupy factories, and take other industrial action to prevent sackings, closures, and the removal of plant and machinery. The unions must give support to such actions.

In a society based on production for need and not for profit, the development of labour-saving methods would mean a higher standard of living all round and more leisure time for those who produce the wealth.

The Socialist Workers Movement aims to build an organisation capable of fighting for the immediate implementation of these demands and for a new society based on workers' power.

in the six years from 1965 to 1971 competitive imports from the United Kingdom went up 200 per cent. The effects - sackings and closures - have only now begun to be felt. Even Garrett FitzGerald, the consistent advocate of Free Trade, said earlier this year: 'In the next three years, the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement could yet have a significant effect on redundancies.'

In the competition with British Industry, it is the older Irish industries, set up behind tariff walls, which have been affected most. The redundancies have been heaviest in the food-based industries, furniture textiles, and leather. Distributive trades have also been hard hit.

TEXTILES

On top of this, the textiles industry has also been hit by a worldwide recession. A report on that industry in Britain stated that firms with annual sales of less than £1 million could not expect to survive. Many textiles producers in this country are, of course, much smaller than that. There were over 1,200 redundancies in textiles in the 26 Counties alone last year.

In Tuam, Co. Galway, Anglo-Irish Weavers closed down, after only two years on production. 135 jobs were lost. Redundancies also occurred in Blackwater Cottons, Youghal, Co. Cork; Loughrea Cottons, Co. Galway; and Longford Weavers. As well as this, workers in many other textiles

factories have been on short-time.

The annual report of Seaford Gentex warned that 400 jobs in the Castleguard Textile Co. of Ardee, Co. Louth, could be in danger. Blackwater Cottons was also part of the Seaford Gentex groups as is Seaford Fabrics, Cork, where 65 of the 80 employees have been working a 3-day week.

FURNITURE

In the furniture industry, too, there have been closures, lay-offs, and short-time working. Last October, Hearne's, of Waterford closed down, putting 32 people out of work. Earlier in 1971, Arco, another Waterford furniture factory had closed down, making 28 men redundant. Fourteen out of the 35 employees at Slaney Industries, a Wexford furniture factory, were laid off; ten men were made redundant when two Cork furniture firms amalgamated, William Foley and Roland Connolly.

Redundancies have not been confined to these older industries, however. Some of the new factories coaxed here by grants and tax concessions during the 1960's have closed down or laid off some of the work force. In January, Sragero Optical of Sligo, closed down, after 1½ years in production. 35 jobs were lost because of deterioration in markets'. The threat of redundancies hangs permanently over the heads of workers in the Shannon Industrial Estate.

If Pan-Am does get the landing rights for Dublin, another 1,000 jobs could be lost at Shannon.

One of the main difficulties about fighting redundancies is illustrated in the case of Dublin docks where some 300 men were laid off in 'de-casualisation'; 56 of the men were offered jobs again but the others claimed they had not been told about them. The threat - or the reality - of lay-offs and closures can divide and weaken the workers. Indeed, this is the main way managements push through sackings - by dividing the work-force and making it unable to resist collectively. We illustrated this in the case of Batchelor's bottling plant in last month's 'Worker'.

PIECE-MEAL

Redundancies in a factory most often occur piece-meal. The total closure is the exception rather than the rule. Partial lay-offs may happen because of a recession in that particular sector of industry, because of a shift in production to another plant owned by the same firm, or because of a move towards greater automation. On occasions, men may be recruited again when the market 'picks up'.

When an employer announces redundancies in a factory, most workers react instinctively by saying that it must not happen. But if there is not immediate resistance, and the boss is given time to name the people to go, the workers who are not threatened will no longer be so interested in resisting by industrial action.

OFFERS

To many of those being laid off the 'offer' of a lump sum redundancy payment, as well as regular payments under the Redundancy Payments Act, may be tempting.

This kind of thing can affect even the best organised factories, as long as it is not clearly established that all redundancies will be resisted as a matter of principle.

Reducing the work-force in the interests of pushing up productivity, or because of a recession, need not take the form of direct lay-offs. One device which employers are using these days to trim the work-force to the bare minimum is productivity bargaining. Re-manning and speed-up which go with productivity schemes, are a cause of 'hidden redundancy' 'creeping redundancy'; the vacancies created are not filled.

Productivity schemes, therefore, are one of the factors which contribute to unemployment. In many places workers have recognised this by declaring that they will not participate in such schemes while the level of unemployment is so high.

Commenting on this kind of proposal, the Bulletin of the Federated Union of Employers has written: 'It has been suggested that trade unions in the present situation might consider imposing a ban on overtime working and participation in productivity schemes. Such measures would be short-sighted and harmful. What

Continued opposite

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Sackings hit Western town

The computer data plant in Tuam, Co. Galway where 450,000 copies of the personal letter which Jack Lynch issued to all rural voters was produced, has been hit by more redundancies.

In the first week of May a further eight girls at the Dart Ltd. plant were laid off. Now 40 of the original 180 have been laid off since the factory started production last summer. With the help of Government grants, the £750,000 plan was set up to provide jobs in the Tuam area.

This is an area which has been badly hit by unemployment due to the closure of the Textile factory a year ago and the recent cut-backs at the Sugar Company.

When Dart opened, the newspapers praised their efforts, and the Government, because of the 180 new jobs to replace those lost at Anglo-Irish Weavers. But they did not mention that the 180 jobs at Dart were for young women, and only

a few of the textile workers got jobs at Dart.

Wages at Dart are low. Costs are kept further down by employing women wherever possible as women are paid just over one half of what men are paid. This means higher profit margins. The textile workers are still on the dole.

Company officials at Dart state that they made a mistake in employing 180 at first. The claim now that only 140 are needed and there will be no further redundancies.

Error

It is difficult to believe that a company would make such an error, they will always hire just the number of workers that are needed. It is much more likely that the cut-backs are happening because a new computer is being installed with a lower capacity than the original one. All of this just six months after opening causes serious concern among the

Dart workers.

Dart, like many foreign firms operating in Ireland, is anti-union. They deny 'their' workers the basic right to organise. Thus Dart's employees are in a weak position to resist the lay-off.

Insecurity

It is absolutely necessary that they change this, and get into a union. Elsewhere in the West - in Co. Mayo - we have seen workers come out on strike in one factory to support the demand for union recognition in another factory.

The closure of Anglo-Irish Weavers and the insecurity at Dart demonstrate clearly that Government grants do not necessarily provide jobs but rather a chance for some industrialists to make a 'fast buck' and then clear off. The whole capitalist system is geared to profiteering.

The fight against redundancies, brings us into conflict with the sys-

tem as a whole. We can only challenge it with a movement of workers, both around the immediate issues such as unionisation, equal pay for women, higher basic wages, and develop the awareness and the strength to change the system and build one controlled by the workers, that is, Socialism.

GALWAY S.W.M.



picket at Crannac Furniture Factory

SOUTH AND NORTH

COMMON PROBLEMS AND A COMMON STRUGGLE

SURVEY BY MIKE MILLER AND BRIAN TRENCH



Mineworkers in Ireland's newest and most profitable large industry are also threatened with redundancies (see special feature on page 8).

is needed at the present time is greater co-operation between management and labour and a realisation that existing jobs can only be made secure by raising productivity levels'.

This is nonsense. It is precisely the drive to make Irish industry more productive which has been the cause of so many redundancies. Greater co-operation between management and labour whether at national level, as in the National Wage Agreement, or at local level, in relating bonus payments to productivity, and making workers dependent on bonuses, must always mean that management gets the same amount of work from less men. Directly or indirectly, it means redundancies.

'PULL TOGETHER'

Inside the Common Market, bosses and government will no doubt increase the pressure for employer/labour pacts on the grounds that 'we all have to pull together'. It is necessary that we are prepared to resist this too. Entry into the EEC was the bosses' solution, not ours. We are not prepared to pay the price. We should not be prepared to take a cut in living standards in order to boost profits for big business.

Equally we must not allow the bosses and the government to use redundancies as a stick in order to hold down wage rises. By agreeing to hold back pay claims we do nothing to help the unemployed; we only prolong the existence of an economic system which must always have a certain number of unemployed a 'reserve army', as Marx called them.

The number of jobs lost and the speed-up on the lines, is too high a price to pay for increased bonuses. Irish industry is 'over-manned' to stand up in the intense international competition. Employers are now using the trend of rising redundancies in order to 'shake out' the 'excess labour'. Productivity dealing and natural wastage are some of the ways this is done.

The reasons for redundancies and the circumstances in which they happen, can differ widely. But, for all the differences and difficulties involved, a fight against redundancies is both necessary and possible.

There have been cases of successful resistance. Last year's all-out

strike at Unidare stopped the sackings there. The Irish Transport and General Workers' union has given official backing to a couple of strikes against sackings. In shoe factories in Limerick and Dundalk, the threat of occupation has halted rationalisation plans and closures.

The fight must be taken up inside the unions — particularly those which opposed EEC entry — to commit them to oppose redundancies completely. We publish here a number of demands which can be the basis for a struggle to reverse the present situation, where bosses hire and fire as they see fit. The fight against redundancies, particularly against closures, poses the question clearly: who controls? the bosses or the workers? The sit-in at Crannac has started to give a new answer to that question?

If it is true that the increasing exposure of the Southern Irish economy to the pressures of international capitalism is a major cause of redundancies, this is also true of the North. The economy of the Six

Counties is bound to the international set-up in many of the same ways as the economy of the South.

Workers, North and South, face many similar problems, although the political context is obviously very different. Alongside the shrinking of the traditional industries, which is going on steadily, we have seen pay-offs and closures in the new international companies operating in the north. Many of the redundancies of the past year have taken place in new industries, and the new jobs have nowhere near met the need created by these lay-offs and the sackings in the older industries.

Like its British and Southern counterparts, Six County capitalism has to 'shake out' in preparation for entry into the Common Market. The efforts to keep the economy internationally competitive have thrown thousands of workers on the scrap heap. In an area where unemployment is rarely below 10 per cent, this means long-term unemployment for many, who have no chance of finding other jobs.

GRANTS

The massive government grants for plant and machinery means that new firms setting up in the North can establish semi-automated factories, employing few men or women relative to the investment. Firms like ICI, Standard Telephones, Courtaulds, Enkalon, Du Pont, Chemstrand, and Grundig, have their most modern factories in the Six Counties. All have a low labour content, and are heavily subsidised.

PRODUCTIVITY

The introduction of modern plant and techniques allows the bosses to exploit workers better. Labour is actually more productive in the Six Counties than in Britain. In four years from 1964 to 1968 output per man rose at an annual average of 6.6 per cent, compared with an average of 2.2 per cent in Britain. It is continuing to rise. Such an advance in methods of production should benefit the working-class. But under capitalism it causes greater misery. Only the rich get richer.

The more advanced firms set the pace for the rest of industry. If the traditional Six County firms are going to compete, they too must increase the output of their workers. They must 'rationalise': and they can only

do so at the expense of the working class.

A number of companies operating in the North have attempted to get themselves out of difficulties and boost profits lately by sacking numbers of men, notable among them are: Regent Candlewick Bedspreads (part of the Carrington-Viyella empire) who sacked 140 men at the Newtownabbey plant as part of 'rationalisation' in the group of companies. 60 jobs were lost at the Dundonald Rolls Royce plant last year when the firm found itself in 'difficulties'. Slack and Parr paid off 50 men at their Enniskillen plant; Stubbe of Portadown sacked 36, and the Grundig factory at Dunmurry had made 50 men redundant.

CLOSURES

Other firms have decided that the effort to keep their heads above water in these days of fierce international competition, would not pay off. Rather than even try, they choose to close down altogether. It's not that they are broke, so don't feel sorry for them, but rather that there is more money to be made elsewhere, and capital follows profit. The Ulster Textile Mills of Newry closed last year throwing a further 300 people on to the dole in an area where nearly 30 per cent of the workforce is already jobless. The Manchester firm Ulster Plastics, went into liquidation in May of this year, depriving 'loyal' Bangor of 100 badly needed jobs.

QUICK PROFIT

Some firms who are unwilling or incapable of 'rationalising' themselves manage to find purchasers for their factories. This opens the door to speculators who are always ready to gamble if there seems to be a chance for quick profit. Such is the case with Corfeld's car components firm in Ballymoney which was bought from Arthur Guinness in 1969 by Smiths Industries. In October 1970 Smiths sacked 70 men, about half the workforce, and the following July a further 80 were paid off and the factory closed. We don't know how much Smiths made on the deal, but we can be sure it was a tidy sum.

Sirocco is the latest example. One of the oldest engineering firms in the North was sold in March this year to the South African company Abercorn Investment. The existing direc-

tors resigned (the chairman had 11 other directorships to fall back on) and 350 men were unceremoniously sacked.

Between 1967 and the end of this year, the Government will have given away over £200 million of our money to the get-rich-quick international adventurers who plague our society. Many of these modern pirates were millionaires before coming to Ireland. Many will leave multi-millionaires. In spite of this fantastic dole-out, the number of people actually employed has fallen sharply.

In 1970-1971, the number of people employed in textiles, mechanical engineering, construction, distribution, transport and communications fell by 15,800. The Government claims to have created 7,200 new jobs last year, but the 'Observer Business News' estimates that the figure was nearer 4,000. In the same period 7,900 people emigrated (4 times the rate of emigration in the South). The record in the North

is much worse than in the 26 Counties where the actual number in employment has risen by 2,000 since 1966, compared with a decline of over 15,000 in the North. As Garret FitzGerald remarked recently in the 'Irish Times', 'the growth of Northern Ireland industrial employment has come to a virtual halt since 1966'.

CRISIS

The problem has obviously reached crisis proportions, and yet so far the Trade Unions have come forward with nothing but platitudes. Speakers at this year's annual conference of the Northern Committee of the I.C.T.U. meeting in Belfast last month, attacked redundancies and went so far as to recommend opposition. But Congress showed the extent of its militancy when it gave a standing ovation to the latest representative of the British Imperialist interest in Ireland — William Whitelaw. For all the fine talk, the bureaucracy still has no policy for fighting redundancies and unemployment. They go cap in hand to the Tory murderers pleading for 'public works' schemes to absorb unemployment.

But redundancies can and must be fought. If the trade union leadership is not prepared to put up any opposition, then the task falls to the rank and file. Only a co-ordinated struggle on the shop-floor and in the unions can start to beat back the bosses' attacks on jobs. The demands we put forward could, if fought for vigorously, meet some of the immediate problems. But it is only when the working class controls the means of production and the state that the anarchy of capitalism, the cause of so much waste and misery, will finally be brought down.

300 Workers Obsolete?

Five months ago, 'The Worker' reported the struggle of the workers in Henry Denny and Sons, Waterford, to keep their jobs. The workers there only succeeded in postponing the closure for some weeks. However, the bosses decided that it would cost too much to keep the factory open, so 300 men and women were laid off.

Compared with other plants in the Denny group, now directed from London, the Waterford factory was old. The machinery was obsolete, and running costs kept profits below the highest possible level. Of course, even obsolete plant is not worthless: there are now notices at the factory gates saying 'Beware Guard Dogs — Protected by Securicor'. I wonder what it's costing Denny's to keep the factory closed.

The Chairman of Henry Denny and Sons recently made his annual statement to shareholders. It should make interesting reading for redundant workers in Waterford. It reveals, for instance, that the highest paid

director gets over £10,000 per year. Last year he gave himself a rise of £2000, or £40 a week. Was this his way of celebrating the Waterford closure?

There was good news for the shareholders, too. Profits rose to £135,000, and dividends were handsome.

Only the workers were the losers. The Chairman told the shareholders that 'It was with the greatest reluctance they decided to close the factory down'. They were reluctant to boost profits; Believe that if you can.

The lessons of this set-back must be learned if further closures are to be avoided. The workers in the area must build links between the factories to develop a united, militant strategy to resist the bosses' threat. If an action such as that at Navan is to succeed, it must have the support of workers in the locality. With unity and determination we can beat the bosses back.

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(from Wall Street Journal): American companies at Shannon look likely to lay off more workers than anywhere else in Europe.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

SOCIALIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

Imperialism

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Workers struggles

The Socialist Workers' Movement fights for:—

- full support for workers and small farmers in struggle;
- defence of the living standards of workers and small farmers;
- rank-and-file control and socialist leadership of the trade unions;
- the election of all trade union officials, subject to recall;
- all strikes to be declared official if supported by the majority of the workers concerned;
- a minimum wage of at least £30 for a 35-hour week;
- equal pay for women;
- 100 per cent trade unionism;
- opposition to all anti-trade union legislation;
- opposition to all incomes policies under capitalism;
- against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay;
- repeal of all repressive legislation—e.g. Special Powers Act and Offences Against the State Act;
- extension of the Civil Resistance Campaign in the Six Counties;
- release of all political prisoners;
- evacuation of British troops from Ireland;
- defence of working class areas against military and sectarian attacks;
- freedom of worship for all religious groupings;
- total separation of Church and State;
- an end to clerical control of education;
- a secular and comprehensive education system controlled by teachers, pupils and parents;
- raising of school-leaving age to 18;
- free education to the highest level;
- full adult rights at 18—e.g. the right to vote;
- adult wages and adult rights for workers at 18;
- free and comprehensive health service;
- end to means-tested benefits;
- minimum wage for the unemployed and pensioners;
- one family—one house;
- emergency housing programme and expropriation of all building land;
- tenants' control of estates, including rents;
- full social equality for women;
- 24-hour nurseries;
- income for small farmers and agricultural labourers on parity with industrial rates;
- division of large estates under control of local farmers;
- the building of a genuine co-operative movement among farmers and fishermen;
- nationalisation of hunting and fishing rights.

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

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

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

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

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Address _____

HOW NOT TO DO IT

The Irish Crisis, by C D Greaves, Lawrence and Wishart, £1.00

This is the latest offering from the man who once applauded the gombeen republic as the most progressive country in the world, and who slanders Trotsky, the co-leader of the Russian revolution, as belonging to 'the petit-bourgeois junk pile', along with Bakunin and Proudhon! All that is worst in dogmatic Stalinism comes to the surface in Mr Greaves' latest droolings on the Irish question.

In spite of his Marxist rhetoric, (thinly spread as it is), no-one should be in any doubt as to the dangers contained in the type of arguments used here. For Greaves, the way forward for the Irish working class is to dissolve their independence into an all-class alliance, euphemistically referred to as 'the people's alliance'. This would be firmly under the heel of 'prominent citizens' such as John Hume who is praised for his moderating influence. Greaves advocates 'an alliance which contains substantial bourgeois elements', and insists that 'leftist posturings were not necessary' to defeat Unionism.

Middle class leadership, by responsible men, will, Greaves assumes, create working class unity. Any talk of 'socialism' will upset the boat. Those who believe that the only way towards unity for the Irish working class is for socialists to stand on their own two feet, with a clear revolutionary perspective—i.e. to sink the boat of class collaboration—are denounced as 'ultra-lefts'.

Instead of such a clear working class

outlook, Mr Greaves offers us a multi-stages route: first to get rid of the Tories in Britain; then to reform Stormont; then to think of a united Ireland; then . . . well Mr Greaves has completely lost sight of the socialist goal.

The movement itself has become his only vision. Instead of telling us how to achieve the socialist society, he has developed a detailed blue-print for an independent national capitalism, right down to the level of deciding what to do with our abundant scrap metal!! Not a word about workers' power. No mention of a Socialist Workers' Republic. Not an inkling of proletarian internationalism. This betrayal of the working class interest is disguised as 'an Irish-centred policy'.

Ahead

Lenin remarked on several occasions that the masses often went far ahead of the Bolshevik Party in their perception of what was possible at any given moment, and of the best way to achieve it. While not wishing to imply that Mr Greaves bears any resemblance to the Bolsheviks, his dogmatic insistence on a Bill of Rights as the absolutely necessary precondition of progress in the Six Counties, forces one to assert that the masses have indeed left him far in the rear. Unlike Lenin who fought within the party for a recognition of what had happened so that lost ground could quickly be recovered, Mr Greaves, true to his Stalinist soul, advocates the

reverse—that the masses come back to where he is at, in order that he can pull them down into the morass of class collaboration.

Why is Greaves so pathetic? To understand him we must be aware of the basic tenet of Stalinism to which he adheres—that socialism is something that can be distributed to the masses from above. Mass action along revolutionary lines is therefore not only unnecessary, but also undesirable. This dread-fear of self-activity by the oppressed, lies behind his many insidious attacks on what he narrowly refrains from calling the young hooligans.

Symbols

The unemployed youth of Newry who wreaked their angry frustration on the symbols of their oppression—RUC tenders—he portrays as 'the devils who swarmed up in ever increasing numbers'. It also explains his adoption of the right wing theory of 'outside agitators' in relation to PD, and his uncritical acceptance of the findings of the Cameron inquiry. A Stalinist hack and a member of the British ruling class make quaint bed-fellows!!

A great deal of space is taken up with analyses of legal formulations and parliamentary possibilities, not just to fill up space, but because Mr Greaves actually believes that the institutions of bourgeois rule can be entered by the 'leaders' of the working class on their own terms and used for the doling out of socialism, outwards and downwards. While the mass movement is crying out for a clear perspective on how to go about smashing the state and defeating imperialism, Greaves screams his reactionary 'solutions' from across the Irish sea. Instead of pointing out the class nature of the state, and asserting boldly that only socialism on an international scale can ever defeat imperialism, Greaves sticks to his bankrupt reformism. It is perhaps unfortunate for Mr

Reviews

A BLUEPRINT.

Review by
Michael O'Reilly

THE IRISH CRISIS. By
Desmond Greaves.
Lawrence & Wisharte £1.

A blue print for the Irish revolution is Desmond Greaves' book. In 222 pages Desmond Greaves has done an invaluable service for the whole progressive movement. This book is not only a fascinating analysis of the strategy of British imperialism towards Ireland, but it can also become, if the correct conclusions are drawn, the basis of an approach which if grasped and understood can lay the basis for Irish unity backed by British solidarity.

Greaves that Stormont had to go just when he had finished his blue-print solution! One wonders if he wants it back so he can practice his little games on it.

Two more points. Firstly, it will be obvious to everyone who reads this book that the author is exceptionally soft on the 26 County regime. Those who are

suffering from its repressive legislation will be saddened to learn that 'one of the most important preliminary tasks is . . . that of ensuring that the people of Northern Ireland are possessed of democratic facilities on a par with those in the Republic.' Greaves has no 32 County perspective in the anti-imperialist struggle, and for that reason alone is doomed to failure. The second point is, for those who are unaware of the Irish solidarity movement in Britain, that Greaves has indulged in a rather excessive advertising campaign for his own bankrupt group—the Connolly Association (an insult to the man and his ideas). This group, rather than stressing the importance of mass action in Britain, advocates shuffling around the corridors of Westminster with petitions. Greaves fails to mention the Anti-Internment League, although it has done more than any other organisation in the solidarity struggle in Britain.

Defeats

It was policies such as those advocated here by Greaves, which led to the tragic defeats of the first Chinese Revolution of 1925-1927, and the working class in the Spanish Civil War of 1936. It is fortunate for the Irish working class that Mr Greaves is not leading them; but unless they develop a clear revolutionary socialist leadership now it could be people like Mr Greaves who will lead them to defeat.

Although the theoretical material is not worth the paper it is printed on, there is a fair amount of useful empirical material to compensate. But it hardly justifies the extortionate price—£1 for a paperback that would normally sell for 30p. The lack of an index makes references difficult, and thereby prevents the fullest possible discovery of all the contradictions which this book is rife . . .

Mike Miller

International News

British union leaders change course

In the second week of May Percy Coldrick, general secretary of Britain's railway clerks union rose to his feet and told delegates to the annual conference that there could be no discussion of the railway pay crisis. This was sub judice, said Mr. Coldrick.

The man's knowledge of Latin summed up the complete about-turn of the official leadership of the British trade union movement on the question of state control over the unions. The Tory Government's Industrial Relations Act, rejected so loudly and so often in theory, would be accepted in practice.

A movement officially pledged to defy this legal part of the Tory onslaught on organised workers has surrendered in the first round.

Its leaders have taken it into the courts it was boycotting and paid the fines it said it would never pay. And under instruction from the National Industrial Relations Court the unions have instructed their own members to desist from their 'illegal' activities — be they officially called work-to-rules in support of a pay claim or the unofficial blacking of container lorries being used as a fifth column to destroy trade union wages and conditions in the docks.

The Trade Unions Congress decision to allow affiliated unions to appear before the Tory courts 'in their own defence' is of course only the first part of a progressive collapse.

Having accepted the law of the

land, the pressure will be on to bring cases to the NIRC on trade union initiative. Then it will be a case of getting trade union representatives on the judges' bench so that 'our' side of the question is adequately represented.

Finally the trade unions will register under the Industrial Relations Act in order to take advantage of the legal and financial incentives of a law already accepted in practice.

Then trade union rule books can be altered at will by a state appointee. Trade union officials will become the policemen of the rank and file that big business and government would like to have on call.

BALANCE

This is the essence of the Tory act. It is not designed to sweep away trade unionism once and for all. It is carefully constructed to dramatically shift the balance of forces in the movement in favour of the official bureaucracy. They are now answerable in law for the activities of all shop floor militants. If they do not deal with them, then the law will deal with the union funds.

It would in no way be inaccurate to say that the official leadership of the movement — both 'left' and right — conjured defeat out of the jaws of victory. For the TUC surrendered just after organised labour in Britain had extracted one of its most

remarkable victories since the war.

The miners refused to be consigned to the scrapheap or to the pages of the history books and took the Tories on. By unity determination and good tactics combined with a groundswell of solidarity action from other rank and file workers, the miners won and put new heart into whole sections of the British Labour movement.

But the Government did not relent. It had the measure of the trade union leadership which knew nothing of the changed needs and tactics of big business over the last decade.

With the government going full out to use the powers of its new act in the railway dispute, the TUC sought only to provide the compromises it had so often provided before. It was pay negotiation time as usual.

At no stage did they think of organising for a fight with the state. After all, their whole system of ideas taught them that the state was neutral, a referee who can be persuaded to good sense by other men of good sense. The Tories held firm and had the TUC leaders on their knees within days.

This is of course a serious setback but it is not a disaster. The danger is that it isolates sections of the working class, and leaves them more open to the full venom of the law and the press. The necessity to fight it



Vic Feather, head of British Trades Union Congress

is also being born out of the overall nature of the big business offensive.

Already the dockers are standing firm and refusing to abide by the orders of the court and the consequential instructions of their own union leader Jack Jones. And there is no doubt that they can force the Tories to some sort of compromise on the docks.

CHALLENGE

But the problem is that the new law has a logic of its own. The real challenge to the rank and file strike leader may come very soon. To allow someone to be imprisoned or fined without massive action in solidarity would be a serious defeat.

Whichever way this does in fact pan out, there is a very serious crisis in the whole identity of the trade union movement and a groundswell of hostility at the policies and postures of the official leadership.

For socialists it is quite a crucial task to connect this with the need to fight the state with socialist ideas, and with the construction of a new revolutionary socialist party which decisively intervenes.

This becomes an ever more urgent problem. The Industrial Relations Act — even with trade union consent at certain levels won for the Government — will not solve the underlying problems of British capitalism. And then the Tories will turn to a sharper knife.

A French General Remembers

Just over ten years ago, the Algerian war ended with the signing of the Evian agreement. The French imperialists had at last been forced to recognise that they could not hold on to Algeria by terror alone. Millions of French people thanked General de Gaulle for getting rid of this embarrassment.

But if the French were rid of a political embarrassment and a military burden, the Algerian people were not entirely rid of economic domination by imperialism. The Evian agreement laid the basis for the building of an 'independent' state in Algeria dominated by a weak nationalist middle class.

Heroic

The National Liberation Front had fought heroically in defence of the Algerian people, but it was not a revolutionary organisation, not one which could lead the working class to power in Algeria.

Just what the Algerians had to face during the war is revealed in detail in General Massu's memoirs, recently published in France. Massu was for a time the commander of the French Army in Algeria.

The General writes that without torture, they would never have had a chance of defeating 'terrorism' in Algeria, and admits to the fact that under his direction the parachutists carried out the most obscene brutalities on the population of Bizerta.

Responsibility

This makes horrific reading, but it is significant that Massu does actually admit to his deeds, while the politicians, who knew what was going on, and who were largely responsible for it, stay silent. Have they ever admitted their responsibility to the murder of at least 60 Algerian workers in Parisian police stations after a demonstration?

Monsieur Guy-Mollet, well known 'socialist', and Premier of France at the time Massu suppressed Algiers, actually denied that torture was being used in Algeria. Other politicians will be embarrassed by this book too. Francois Mitterand, campaigner for the unity of the Left, and Mendes-France, who split from the Socialist Party to form the Unified Socialist Party to the left, were, respectively, Minister of the Interior and Prime Minister when the war was on. Massu's memoirs disclose that they were fully aware of the crimes being committed by the French forces.

Howling

Not very long before, the French politicians had been howling for the blood of the Nazi war criminals who were put on trial before the eyes of the world. Those Nazis that escaped, and are still alive, are hiding in South America. But Massu, and his politician accomplices, live in comfort in France. The General engages in earnest polemic with Monsieur Vidal-Naquet in the columns of 'Le Monde'.

Such is the reward for doing the work of French imperialism in Algeria.

The Algerian workers will only have their full reward for a long and bitter struggle against the brutal occupation forces when they have come to power in Algeria, and the working class has come to power in France, and the rest of the world.



U.S. Terror cannot defeat Vietnamese

The Vietnamese people continue their long struggle against their American enemies. The three offensives, mounted simultaneously in the Northern, Central, and Southern areas of South Vietnam have been the most successful for years. The National Liberation Front claims to have put 90,000 of the enemy forces out of action during April.

DEFENDING DEMOCRACY

So the Americans are in Viet Nam to defend freedom and democracy? Well what ever happened at Long Binh, the administrative headquarters of the American Army? The only Vietnamese the 14,000 soldiers there will ever see are their 18,000 servants. One wonders what freedom and democracy means to them.

The camp has an olympic size swimming pool as well as 50 smaller pools, 60 bars, a large number of steam baths, 16 basket ball courts, 14 tennis courts and 12 volley ball courts, as well as many other elitist facilities. All, of course, are exclusively American. The Vietnamese are confined to the kitchens, wash houses, mop rooms, refuse dumps and brothels. American soldiers don't even polish their own boots.

They have shown Nixon's 'Vietnamisation' policy to be a fraud. The American Army with all its modern technology was unable to put down the badly-equipped fighters of the N.L.F. The army of the Saigon government, equipped and trained by the Americans, is equally incapable of success: its soldiers flee from the battle, or desert to the enemy, as much as a regiment at a time. There can be no-one now who doubts that it is the N.L.F. who operate with the support of the local population, and that the Saigon junta are puppets who will fall the moment American support is withdrawn.

Bombing

Unable to stop the undermining of their position in South Vietnam, the American government struck back against the North. Massive bombing raids are aimed at terrorising the North Vietnamese government to change its policy. Experts say it would take six weeks before the effect of the bombing raids would be felt inside South Vietnam: six months before the Saigon area would be affected.

Bombing cannot stop the present campaign; it is intended as a punishment for it.

Bombing is not restricted to military targets. On 27 April a hospital at Thanh-Hoa was bombed: 600 beds in a building in the middle of the countryside. There is no strategic installation nearby. The same hospital had been destroyed in 1965, reopened in 1970, and bombed again in December 1971. In an attack on a school near the hospital, 13 pupils were killed.

Blockade

Not content with this terror and brutality, Nixon has gone on to mine the seven main ports of North Vietnam, through which the majority of Russian equipment is brought in. (China does not seem to welcome the passage of large quantities of Russian arms through her territory, the only other way of getting them to North Vietnam.) The Russians, afraid that Nixon might do a deal with their enemy, China, go ahead with welcoming Nixon to Moscow.

America claims that North Vietnam has invaded the South across an 'international border'. But under the Geneva agreement in 1954 the border is a 'military demarcation line' which is 'provisional and should not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary'. It

was to last only until elections in 1956. The Americans stopped these elections from being held.

Minerals

The North Vietnamese cannot be guilty of invading their own country. It is the Americans who are invaders, and they are more interested in the strategic value of South Vietnam and in its valuable mineral wealth than in protecting the South Vietnamese people (a considerable proportion of whom they have killed during the past ten years).

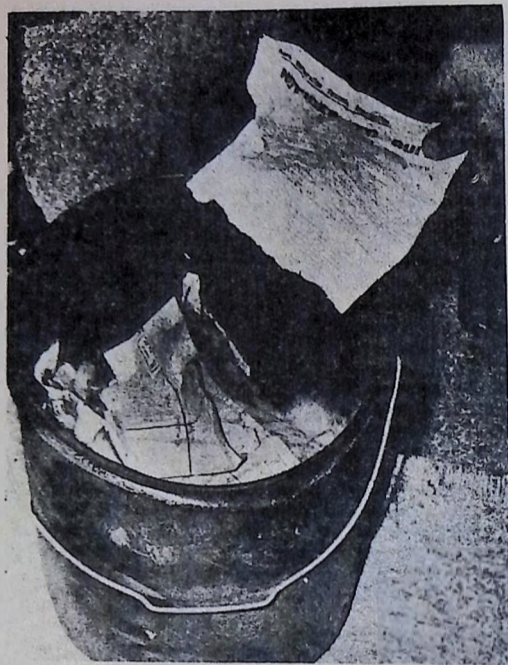
We in Ireland have minerals which American and Canadian firms are coming in to extract, at great profit to themselves, and with little benefit to the Irish people. Anything which weakens American imperialism benefits Irish workers as well as Vietnamese workers. The fight of the Vietnamese people is our fight, therefore. We may not be able to send much help to Vietnam. But we can show our detestation of the Nixon government. And we can speed the coming to power of the Irish working class and the ejection of imperialism from Ireland.

JOHN GOODWILLIE

KEN QUINN

the worker

Rent strike spreads



Notices To Quit are Burned in Protest

The Dublin Corporation is determined to smash the rent strike in the city, and the tenants' associations are equally determined to win. In this clash of wills the strength of the grass-roots organisation is the all-important factor.

The rent strike throughout Dublin started on 1st May and has been gathering support since then. Further tenants' associations have joined the strike; others have affiliated to the National Association of Tenants' Organisations (N.A.T.O.), and yet others

are being set up.

The immediate reason for the strike is the announcement from the Corporation that it intends to raise rents by 4p per room for tenants on fixed rents and on the 'A' scale in the differential scheme. This rent rise, announced without any warning, would particularly hit older people who have been Corporation tenants for a long time.

By organising this strike, N.A.T.O. aims also to press upon the Corporation their demand to be recognised

as the representative body of the tenants. They are demanding status roughly equivalent to that of a trade union in a well organised factory. They claim that the way in which the latest rent rise was announced was contrary to a Corporation promise made in 1967 to consult N.A.T.O. before making such changes.

About one half of Dublin Corporation's tenants are affected by this rent rise. All of them - except those on fixed rents - are affected by the differential rent scheme. Thousands of rent strikers in Dublin now join others in some areas of Dublin, and in many parts of the country, who are withholding rents in protest against this scheme.

The weekly meetings of the Dublin Regional Council of the Tenants Organisations have become meetings of the strike action committee. There is a great urgency in the discussion of tactics to strengthen the strike, and outrage at the intimidation and underhand methods being used by the Corporation to break the strike.

PICKETS

The tenants are scattered over a very wide area; in some Dublin Districts there are no effective tenants' organisations. So the main tactic which the rent strikers have been using is the picket-line. Local rent offices and the Corporation Housing Department in Jervis Street, in the city centre, are being picketed in order to inform others about the strike and to encourage them to join. Appeals were made by N.A.T.O. to trade unions to advise their members that the rent strikers' picket line is to be respected like any other.

PROVINCES

Meanwhile, in the provincial areas outside Dublin, the rent strike against the differential rents scheme continues.

In Drogheda, for instance, the strike has been going on for 12 months. 250 tenants in the new Ballsgrove estate refused to give any more details about income than those relating to basic income.

The alternative to Whitelaw is not to be found in the blowing up of factories or Co-op's. These actions actually hold back the development of socialist ideas by enabling ruling class propagandists to blame Republicans for the deepening economic crisis and attacks on workers living standards. Nor is it to be found in denouncing the Protestant working class as fascist. Such a theory can only lead to demands to wipe them out, and to a rejection of the belief that real gains can be won from the crack up of the Unionist monopoly. Protestant working class discontent with ruling class policies can, and must, be offered an alternative expression based on their real interests as workers.

It is doubtful, whether such things as the small-scale local-based co-operatives can offer this alternative. In isolation from a struggle against capitalism in all 32 counties they cannot have lasting success. Such experiments show that people can work together for something other than profit, but they are limited to this function and do not constitute socialism, or even a threat to capitalism.

Struggle

Nor does socialism come through the setting of examples to those who oppose it. Protestant workers will only be won in struggles which involve themselves, and in which they are forced to rethink their relationship with imperialism and the Unionist bosses. Ideas do not change in isolation from struggle.

Protestant workers will not be won away from Vanguard extremism unless socialists begin to take seriously the growing importance of their confrontations with the ruling class, in issues such as redundancies, (e.g. Sirocco) and wages struggles, (e.g. Michelin), as well as growing repression.

Attempts to link the various aspects of the imperialist offensive, North and South, must be made by socialist republicans within their own organisations and in the resistance movement. Only when the military campaign is directed by such political ends, will Whitelaw's attempts at splitting the anti-unionist side be overcome, and the possibility of making an impression on Protestant workers become a reality.

Criminal proceedings have been brought against rent strikers, but, as the chairman of the Ballsgrove Tenants' Association, Pascal Condra, has said, they have only helped to increase the tenants' determination to force a change.

In Dundalk, the tenants of the local Corporation have succeeded in forcing a change. Their rent strike ended in mid-May when the authorities conceded that a maximum rent of £6.50 should be fixed. In Tullamore tenants are considering withholding rents in order to press their demands for better services.

POWER

Pascal Condra has explained the fear and confusion which the rent strikes have caused in the local authorities: "We are a working-class movement and they see that we have been able to take the power into our own hands. They cannot understand why we have the power".

That must be the guide-line for the rent strikes: that the tenants take the power into their own hands - and keep it. Already many of the tenants associations are demanding that they have some control over the planning and design of the estates.

As a working-class movement, the tenants' organisations must link up with the trade unions, the main defence bodies of the organised work-

ing class. A fighting unity of trade unions and tenants' organisations, determined to resist rent rises and wage-cuts, determined not to let the ruling class make the workers pay for their problems of inflation, could smash the government's attempt at tightening the screws on the whole working class.

The use of the picket already symbolises the unity of purpose of trade unionists and tenants; that must be strengthened. More unemployed workers could be brought into the struggle to do this work, and to help form vigilante committees on the estates which can prevent intimidation and any attempts at eviction.

RESISTANCE

With over 80 affiliations throughout the country, the National Association of Tenants' Organisations has an important role to play in organising nation-wide resistance to the attacks from the employers and the government. But to do this, they must broaden the struggle to take in the homeless and private tenants. Above all, they must see that it is no longer possible to pretend that the fight against rent-rises is "non-political". It is a fight against the priorities of the present government - and these are political priorities.

BRIAN TRENCH

Stop this plunder !

International mining companies could make profits of £850 million from the known mineral reserves in the 26 Counties. That is the finding of the Resources Study Group in its second pamphlet, *Navan and Irish Mining*.

The Group says of Navan that it may be the largest known zinc-lead deposit in the world, worth £486 million in profit to the company which develops it, that is, roughly £15 million profit for each year of the mine's operation. This would make it by far the most profitable enterprise in Ireland. The Resources Study Group further calculates from the past record of the mining companies in this country that over 90 per cent of the profit gained from the development of Irish mineral resources will leave the country to swell the coffers of companies and shareholders abroad.

Confusion

Following the publication fifteen months ago of *Irish Mining - The Need for Action*, there was some confusion as to whether the Resources Study Group, which published the pamphlet, thought the operation of Irish mines by Irish private enterprise would be better than their operation by foreign companies. In this second pamphlet they have included some criticism of the role of Irish business and Irish politicians. Their call is for Irish state enterprise to take over the mines, to build a smelter, and to develop metal industries around the production from the mines.

Exploitation

The Irish mining industry brings us up against the whole question of Irish capitalism within international capitalism. Unfortunately, the pamphlet does not fully face up to this.

One of the main confusions seems to arise around the term 'exploitation'. The R.S.G. takes it as referring to the extraction from Ireland (a poor country) of profits gained from 'developing' its resources; those profits are exported to places like Canada (a rich country). For Marxists and socialists, 'exploitation' refers essentially to the accumulation of wealth by the capitalist class from the labour of the working class.

The working class, as a class, is exploited. It is the only group with the power to end exploitation. Exploitation does not end when the state takes over the mines, or any other industry - unless the workers take over the state.

Workers

It would have been important therefore, not only to relate the mining industry to the position of Irish capitalism in the international context generally, but also to the situation of the workers in that industry.

In the present wave of redundancies, which has hit small towns like Navan particularly hard, the mines which are due to start operations at Navan in two years are being held out as a hope for men without jobs. Meanwhile, the threat of redundancies in the mines at Tynagh and Silvermines hangs over the heads of men already working there.

Communities

The communities in the mining areas have come to depend very largely on the mines; it is therefore essential, for the maintenance of living standards in those communities that employment is planned to meet the needs of the people there.

Three mineworkers have been killed in this still young industry in Ireland. Many others have been injured; yet others are having lungs damaged by ore-dust. Chasing bonuses has taken its toll in injuries because less care has been taken.

These, and other problems, would not be resolved simply by nationalisation, with or without compensation.

Control

It is confusing to state that the mineral resources of this country 'belong to the Irish people in its entirety', and then to give so little detail on the extent of Irish involvement in the international companies. The control of the mines by the majority of the Irish people will only be won in struggle against that section of the Irish people who serve the interests of international capitalism. The demand must be for: the nationalisation under workers' control of Irish mining.

THE POLITICS OF RESISTANCE

Whitelaw has sown seeds of confusion among many Republican sympathizers with his policies of releasing internees, refusing to storm Free Derry, and using force against Protestant extremists. He hopes to turn the mass of activists into passive voting fodder for the S.D.L.P. and thus ensure that these eternal compromisers will regain control over the Catholic working class.

Offensive I.R.A. military activity in the present atmosphere seems unnecessary to many who previously gave it full support. The women of the Creggan have made their feelings known. Reactionary clerics are jumping on the bandwagon. There is much talk of giving Whitelaw a chance. What does this mean? It means in effect giving imperialism another chance.

Sectarianism

Those who have portrayed imperialism as a purely military phenomenon, as something that can be defeated by armed struggle alone, have not made clear its social political and economic aspects, and have no policies for keeping up the struggle except by the old means. If they are to retain their credibility they must ensure that a military threat against them is kept real and active. This has led to sectarian attacks on Protestants in the hope that they will retaliate in a sectarian fashion.

Protestant sectarianism has not of course been created by the I.R.A. It has been fostered by ruling class policies over the generations. The U.V.F. was active in 1966, and was carrying out attacks on Catholics long before the I.R.A. came on the scene in 1969. The IRA is a response to the savage sectarianism of the armed thugs of Unionism. In recent weeks there has been a number of indiscriminate killings carried out by loyalist murder gangs. The threat of a backlash of major proportions seems more real than ever. The appearance on the streets of

Belfast of the para-military Ulster Defence Association makes it vital that the Catholic population stays prepared for physical defence. The struggles against British Military repression must also go on.

But the threat of a loyalist rising must be minimized rather than encouraged, for imperialism in Ireland will not be defeated by a sectarian civil war. Rather, the British Army could in such a situation win back the appearance of a neutral peace-keeping force and thus strengthen its hold.

Strategy

The only way to minimize loyalist threats and at the same time keep up the anti-imperialist struggle is to ensure that the military campaign is subordinated to the political needs of the working class. Imperialism attacks the working class on many fronts, and we must counter attack on at least as many.

Any strategy for defeating imperialism must be centred on the working class. It must be put into effect in all 32 counties. It must raise issues which are common to all workers. The rapid growth in redundancies and unemployment, and attacks on wages and conditions throughout Ireland, the continuing physical repression in the north, and the growing willingness of Union Jack Lynch to use the Army and riot police in the South, all stem from the same imperialist strategy designed to exploit the whole Irish working class more thoroughly.

Alternative

The aim can be frustrated, but it cannot be defeated by one section of the working class acting alone. Unless Whitelaw is countered with a socialist alternative, he will succeed in splitting the anti-imperialist forces, and prevent any coming together of Catholic and Protestant workers. This will set the struggle back many years.