

# the worker

No 6 JULY/AUGUST 1972 Inc. Tax

FOR A WORKERS' REPUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

After ceasefire, after defeat of Pay Agreement, more urgent than ever

## THE NEED FOR SOCIALIST POLITICS

Everywhere the talk is about peace having come to the Six Counties. Everywhere, that is, except in areas of the North which have taken a hammering from British troops and the RUC over the past few years. There, the people want peace but they know it cannot come until the old order is completely destroyed.

The people of 'Free Derry' have stated that they will not allow the state forces to enter their area. In Andersonstown, Ballymurphy and other parts of the Six Counties the resistance committees are still active.

There may be an IRA cease-fire, but the war is not over. Contrary to one of the Provisionals' claims, the system of discrimination and oppression has not been abolished. Whitelaw can still use the enormous repressive machine against anybody upsetting his plans. He will use it - if it becomes necessary - against loyalists who translate their frustration into more extreme action.

### SUPPORT

This new situation faces the republican movement with a challenge as serious as any since 1968. As long as the conflict was concentrated on the military front, the IRA had little difficulty in keeping its support. It depended on that support to keep going.

Now, the needs of the moment have changed. The months since direct rule have shown many of the political weaknesses of the republican movement. Catholic workers have not been prepared to counter Whitelaw's manoeuvres. To nobody's surprise, the SDLP have taken advantage of this to boost themselves.

The republicans recognise that political action now has priority. But for some, at least, the issue is posed as an opposition between military and political methods. It is precisely because the armed struggle has not been directed by clearly recognised political aims that the confusion now comes up.

The Officials advocate a 'return to the streets', to civil rights-type agitation on civil-rights-type demands. The ceasefire statement from the Northern Republican Clubs talks in general terms about the need for socialism but leaves out the essential ingredient: the working class, and its central role in the struggle for socialism. The Provisionals put forward purely nationalist demands both North and South; the 'democratic Socialist Republic' is occasionally held out as some vague perspective.

### CLASS DEMANDS

The fight against repression and for the release of political prisoners obviously has immediate relevance. But if agitation is confined to these issues, and if workers are not consciously prepared to take action on their own class demands, it must lead into a cul-de-sac. The socialist, working-class perspective must be pushed to the fore.

This means linking the fight against repression to a struggle against unemployment and factory closures. The confidence which workers in the North have gained in the resistance to repression can be directed into the demand for jobs and into other issues. Pushing the working class perspective to the fore means, above all, broadening the horizons to the common interests of workers in the 32 Counties.

The necessity and the possibility of doing this has become greater with the defeat of the National Wages Agreement in the South. The coming months will certainly see sharper clashes between workers, on the one hand, and employers and government, on the other. The Lynch government has shown what it is prepared to do against the republicans; it can use the same weapons against workers.

Fine Gael spokesmen are urging that the build-up of the Irish Army be taken more seriously because of increasing civilian disturbances. The repression in the South is a warning to militant workers as well as an attack on the republican movement. The attempt to evict rent strikers by brute force shows this too.

### COLLABORATION

The control of wages is not a purely economic question. The possibility of the bosses achieving it depends on their winning the support of Trade Union officials, and involving them in political collaboration.

The rank-and-file can force an end to this collaboration, but socialists must also bring further political demands into the trade union struggle: against Special Courts and repressive legislation; against Labour coalition with Fine Gael.

What needs to be spelled out, North and South, is that the working-class has independent interests from other groups in society. In the Six Counties this can be demonstrated by maintaining the 'no-go' areas, by refusing to be bound by SDLP diplomacy with the British Tories, and by opposing sectarianism with a consistent fight for workers' unity.

The situation in Ireland today is not one of a distinct physical struggle in the North and economic struggle in the South. The opponents the working-class faces in both parts of the country are closely related. They have a political strategy for the whole island; they can only be fought with a socialist strategy and a clear commitment to the struggle of the working class, in 32 Counties.

Workers will not come to adopt such a strategy, and to fight on it, by some automatic process. The need will only be proven to larger numbers by being tested in action, and the test can only be carried out by a workers' organisation. We in the Socialist Workers Movement are building an organisation which can bring these ideas to more workers, and which can translate the ideas into action. The present situation shows its need clearly enough. We urge workers to join us in spreading its influence and in making it more effective in the fight for Irish freedom and socialism.



Shape of things to come



SACK  
THIS  
MAN!

Basil Chubb, 'neutral' chairman of the Employer-Labour Conference. He should be made redundant by boycott of the Conference. He has other jobs. During June the Socialist Workers Movement distributed thousands of leaflets calling for opposition to wages agreements and for a union boycott of the Employer-Labour Conference.

## End secret deals with bosses!

Trade unionists have rejected the National Wage Agreement, and have chalked up an important victory. Repeated speeches by government ministers and by employers and bankers showed that the Wage Agreement was central to their plans to make the working class pay for their problems.

The bosses' attacks are not finished, however, and many sections of the union officials seem prepared to negotiate a new deal. This must not happen. The advantage gained by throwing out the proposed Agreement must be built on to force Congress's withdrawal from the Employer-Labour Conference and from the Employer-Labour Conference and from other joint bodies.

Many trade unionists opposed National Wage Agreements in principle at the meetings called during June. We must fight to make opposition-in-principle the policy of the whole movement.

### Price soar

During three weeks in June, the price of cheese went up 29 per cent; baby foods up 62 per cent; bacon up 22 per cent; beef up 16 per cent;

sausages up 44 per cent. The list could go on. These are just some of the basic food-stuffs. During the same period we have also seen a rise in the price of electricity of 10 per cent. Dublin Corporation are trying to impose a 4p per room increase on thousands of tenants on the 'A' scale.

When all this is added up, what would have been left of the £2.25 increase under the proposed National Wages Agreement? Income tax would have taken about 55 pence alone. The rises in the price of food and the rent increases hit the lower-paid hardest.

The lies with which the negotiators of the National Wages Agreement have tried to push it on workers should be a sufficient warning against any further such Agreements.

### State

The effect of negotiating Wage Agreements and of being bound by proposals of such bodies as the Employer-Labour Conference is to tie the trade unions to the state. And the state is the ruling class's means of maintaining political power.

The employers have other methods of involving the union bureaucracy in solving their problems. Chief among them, perhaps, is productivity dealing. Already we have heard from some officials that their reason for opposing the National Wages Agreement was that it did not allow them to propose productivity deals! But the purpose of one and the other is the same: to boost profits by holding wages increases below the increase in productivity; to get more work out of less men.

### Pressure

It was rank-and-file pressure which threw out the National Wages Agreement. That pressure must be kept up to prevent any more secret negotiations. It must be kept up to get real, flat-rate increases and to end trade union collaboration with the bosses and the state.

This can be started by serving claims aimed at securing a minimum basic wage of £30 for 35 hours, and equal pay now. If the Employer-Labour Conference meets again to discuss further restrictions, the meeting should be picketed, and trade union participation prevented.

WORKERS' COUNCILS

-see feature on page 5

# Why they opposed the National Wage Agreement

**PHIL FLYNN, Deputy General Secretary Local Government & Public Services Union**

*'I don't think we should over-estimate the number of workers who are rejecting the National Wage Agreement in principle', said Phil Flynn, Deputy General Secretary of the Irish Local Government and Public Services Union, as the results came in from the union's branches. The ballot showed a majority against the Agreement of over two-thirds.*

*'The main reasons for the rejection in our case are the terminal dates, and the issue of equal pay. For many members, their present agreement does not run out until June 1973, so they would have been tied up until the end of 1974. With the uncertainty of EEC entry, and continuing inflation, they did not want to enter into such an agreement.'*

*'On the question of equal pay, this union has a good record. Accepting the terms of the proposed Agreement would have meant a step back for us.'*

## Secret

But even if the members of the I.L.G.P.S.U. did not declare an opposition in principle to the National Wage Agreement, Phil Flynn is certain that the message must be brought home to trade unionists that these Agreements have nothing to offer them. The Employer-Labour Conference meets secretly (what have they actually been discussing for the last 12 months?); its business is dominated by the bosses' interest

## IRELAND'S IMPORTED INFLATION

The three basic problems currently troubling the economy are inflation, the balance of payments deficit, and unemployment. It is unfortunate that the remedies necessary to curse these ailments are mutually exclusive. The simplest way to boost employment is through a rapid expansion of demand and the injection of extra capital into the economy. But the immediate effect of such measures is to escalate imports and aggravate inflation. *BUSINESS AND FINANCE 20/1/72*

Following the defeat of the proposed National Wage Agreement workers in the 26 Counties can expect a new barrage of propaganda from the bosses, blaming their wage demands for inflation. We see the daily evidence of price rises all around us — but is it true that they are caused by wage rises?

In fact, as most workers and their families know, the National Wages Agreement has had little effect on the level of price rises. Prices have risen by an average of 11.1 per cent in the past year, with increases well above that on foods.

The bosses themselves admit this. C. A. Cusack of the Federated Union of Employers recently said that 'the Agreement has been in operation for 15 months, and, in the F.U.E.'s view has worked reasonably well. It has not made a major contribution in easing inflation but it has prevented further deterioration. It has brought greater stability into industrial relations'.

## Stability

This 'stability' is the key to much of the propaganda. Irish profit rates have been falling in the last few years. The National Wages Agreement was intended to hold back wages and boost profits. If the bosses can win the support of trade union officials for their economic arguments, then the officials can do the disciplining for them. 'Stability' in industrial relations means having Congress and the individual union bureaucracies policing the whole movement.

The talk about wage rises causing inflation has a political and economic purpose: to prevent the development of independent working-class politics and to restore the level of profits. We have to look elsewhere for the real causes of inflation.

in imposing some form of political and economic stability.

In the sections organised by the Irish Local Government and Public Services Union trade unionists have become aware of another influence aimed at controlling pay increases. In the Presidential address to the I.L.G.P.S.U. it is referred to as 'an invisible — almost sinister — influence at work behind the people we meet at the bargaining table. I refer to the Department of Finance'.

The drafting of the Second National Wage Agreement showed clearly the hand of civil servants, Phil Flynn says. They can more easily intervene in the public sector. But this is crucial in the wages struggle in Ireland where the public sector has often given the lead.

## Co-ordination

Faced with this kind of situation, there is an obvious need for greater co-ordination of effort by unions organising in the public services.

This can only come from the bottom. Employer-Labour negotiations cannot bring it, even if they wanted to. Phil Flynn thinks there might well be a place for guide-lines in a particular sector, but there is no place for national agreements which tie workers down with massive restrictive clauses.

If Congress is to be taken out of such negotiations, as Phil Flynn thinks it must, the opposition must be organised inside Congress. The struggle starts, he says, in the individual unions, to make them more democratic, and more responsive to the needs of the rank-and-file members.

## Openness

The high rate of inflation in Ireland has to do with the position of economy vis-a-vis international capitalism. The 26 Counties has one of the most 'open' economies in the world: imports and exports combined make up 80 per cent of the annual turnover. The figure for France is 30 per cent.

In the last 15 years the 'openness' has increased enormously. Three-quarters of the total investment in new enterprises between 1960 and 1970 came from foreign firms. There was a capital inflow in the region of £400 million.

Nearly half of our consumption of raw materials, capital goods and consumer goods is imported. All of this means that the 26 Counties imports the world-wide inflation. The government is powerless to do anything about it.

In the past ten years the rate of inflation in the large capitalist economies has jumped from 2 or 3 per cent to something between 7 and 12 per cent. This has contributed to the shakiness of the financial system, illustrated in the latest adventures of the £ — which are incidentally, likely to cause further sharp price increases.

## Concentration

Since World War II there has been vastly increased concentration in the size of firms and their international spread. Mr. Peter Parker, chairman of a large colonial enterprise in Britain, predicted in 1969 that 'by 1970 the free (sic) world's economy will be dominated by some 300 large companies, responsible for most of the world's output . . . it is possible that most of these companies will be American'.

**PADDY DUFFY, General Secretary, Building Workers' Trade Union**

It is not the function of Congress to adopt the role of an industrial or economic police force.

This quote from the Report to the Annual Conference of the Building Workers' Trade Union by their Acting General Secretary, Paddy Duffy, shows how vigorously this small union opposed the National Wage Agreement. They were one of the first unions to come out openly against it. They rejected not only its terms, but 'the concept or principle of National Wage Agreements.'

Speaking to Paddy Duffy just the day before Congress took its momentous decision, it was clear that attitudes had not softened. Although happy that the tide was moving against the National Wage Agreement Paddy was clear that there was still a struggle to be fought to put an end to further negotiations of this sort.

## Claim

As the first National Pay Agreement ran out on 30th June for thousands of building workers and maintenance workers, the Building Workers Trade Union could play a key role in the wages struggle over the next few months. They have a claim before the Construction Industry employers for a 33 1/3 per cent increase, plus improved conditions

'I think Congress could lay down guide-lines for increases in particular sectors, especially to bring up the lower-paid. But they should only have the force of recommendations, Paddy Duffy said. He thinks that under the present system the traditional form of collective bargaining is the most democratic method.

Democracy concerns him greatly, particularly as it affects the trade union movement internally. 'The trade unions are working-class organisations', he says, 'and they must remain in the hands of the working-class'. The effect of Wage Agreements: is to alienate union officials from the members. Trade Unionists come to see Congress 'as a centralised bureaucracy effectively operating as an extension of the existing establishment'.

That is a primary reason for the formation of break-away unions, mistaken, but considers that the fault lies with its policies of the unions which dominate Congress.

Too many unions have allowed themselves to become isolated in their opposition, Duffy says. The way is now open for a fight within Congress to overthrow the concept of a National Wage Agreement as an on-going exercise'.

## TOP 20 LARGEST FIRMS 1970

	Turnover Mill. Doll.
Gen. Motors	24.3
Standard Oil	15.0
Ford	14.5
Shell	9.7
Gen. Electric	8.4
Crysler	7.0
Mobile Oil	6.6
Unilever	6.0
Texaco	5.9
ITT	4.9
Gulf Oil	4.9
Westinghouse	4.9
US Steel	4.7
Stand. Oil (Calif)	3.8
Ling Temco	3.7
Du Pont	3.6
Phillips	3.6
Shell	3.6
Volkswagen	3.5
Westinghouse	3.5
IRELAND	3.4

The size and the scale of these companies' operations mean that they generate finance internally — up to 95 per cent of their needs, in some cases. This cash is managed internationally, and switched around overnight from one country to another.



## CAN PRICES BE CONTROLLED?

At union meetings called to discuss the proposed National Wage Agreement, it was often suggested that control of wages would be acceptable if prices, too, were controlled. But is this possible? Can the bosses' state be expected to intervene in the economy in such a way as to damage bosses' profits?

Last year the National Prices Commission was set up by the government to keep an eye on price rises. Since its foundation it has considered scores of applications for price increases. Some have been granted, others deferred, reduced, or refused. But this does not amount to price control.

## RETAIL PRICES

Most importantly, from the working-class consumer's point of view, the Commission has no powers to deal with retail prices. Beyond that, they make it clear that they 'are very reluctant to interfere with established trade practices and margins'. Thus, they note the big margin which the wholesaler gets in some cases and can do nothing about it.

They come up with only two suggestions for keeping down the level of price increases: both of them are designed to make the worker pay. There is a need, they say, for greater productivity, and it is necessary to match money incomes with efficiency.

The Commission claims that wage rises greater than the increases on productivity are 'the main cause of

price increases'. There are two points to be made about this:

1. as stated in the article on inflation, real incomes in Ireland have increased less than productivity (official statistics show this);
2. the evidence which firms submit to the National Prices Commission when applying for price increases shows that the increase in prices of materials is a more important factor than rising wage costs. When firms apply for a price rise they have to account for it. Their figures show that increased wages only account for 30 per cent of the increase on production costs, while they make up 50 per cent of constant costs.

## EVIDENCE

The National Prices Commission has the evidence in front of it, and apparently can't read it. It could be something to do with the tint of the glasses they use.

One of the more recent suggestions for checking prices is to set up local prices committees. The structure they propose is for a 9-man committee, of which three would represent business interests, and only one (a Trades Council delegate) coming close to representing the interests of the working-class consumer. As the traders are on the committee, the names of shops were different, prices are charged will not be given. This is getting ridiculous.

**ITT**

SERVING PEOPLE AND NATIONS EVERYWHERE

This is a major cause of international currency disturbances and thus of inflation.

Further, their method as near monopolies — of guaranteeing profits is to pass on increased costs including wage costs, to consumers. When production is stagnating, this has a sharp inflationary effect.

## Gloomy

Because the big companies can pass on cost increases in prices, the overall result is general inflation throughout the world, along with increasing unemployment and stagnant production.

The international outlook is gloomy for capitalism. The more thoroughly Ireland is integrated into the system, the more the effects are felt here. The impact of inflation on a world scale is immediate and more dramatic.

The 600, odd foreign-owned firms in the 26 Counties import their raw materials, and export their products and profits. This leaves nothing but the wages behind. These then compete for available goods and add to imports. Already under the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement imports competing with Irish goods increased 117 per cent in five years.

In spite of all these factors involved in inflation, Lynch can still argue: 'When wages rise too fast, prices rise. When prices rise, wages rise'. (Irish Times 24/4/72). This assumes that there is a direct relationship between Irish prices and Irish wages.

By far the largest proportion of Ireland's inflation is imported — but not all of it. State expenditure (eq-

ivalent to 41 per cent of the Gross National Product) plays its role: it depends on credit creation without parallel production. Business men amongst themselves will admit that this is a prime cause of inflation.

Indirect taxation (e.g. turnover tax, wholesale tax) has pushed up prices beyond the amount of taxes collected. In the last three years the level of this kind of taxation has increased 100 per cent. Decimilisation and Value Added Tax will have similar effects.

Wage rises do play a part, too. But it is worth noting that the real increases of wages from 1960 to 1970 is less than the increase in productivity. The one has increased 43 per cent, the other 60 per cent.

## Dishonest

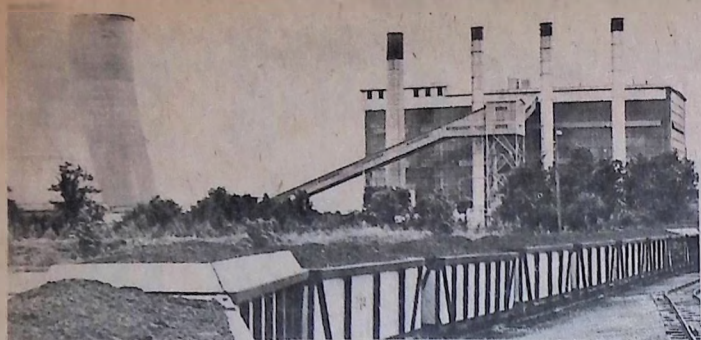
Workers should not be conned into moderating wage demands on the basis of a dishonest explanation of the reasons for inflation. Workers' actions should not be determined by the irrationality of the capitalist system. They should be determined by the knowledge that a quite different system is possible: one where the productive capacity of the thousands of unemployed would be used to create a higher standard of living for everybody.

By resisting the propaganda put forward by the establishment, and in fighting for real wage increases, workers can begin to acquire the confidence and fighting spirit which, directed by revolutionary politics, can make a new order — socialism — possible.

PAUL GILLESPIE

PRODUCTIVITY and PRODUCTIVITY DEALS:  
See next 'Worker'

# MULCAHY BROS WORKERS BEAT CLOSURE



Rhock power station—closed by IETA strike

## SPARKS DEFEND NEW UNION

Paddy Duffy of the Building Workers' Trade Union has given above some reasons for the formation of 'breakaway' unions. The debate about the National Wages Agreement, following hot on the heels of the Congress call for scabbing against the Shift Workers, demonstrated clearly enough how the Congress Executive sees its role; to discipline trade unionists.

The Shift Workers have already given their answer to this by setting up a new union. Is this the way to fight bureaucracy in the trade union movement? We asked Paddy Dunne of the Irish Electrical Technicians' Association, why this union had been set up last year. (The I.E.T.A. is still involved in dispute with the ESB over the sacking of seven members at Poolbeg power station.)

'First of all', he said, 'it shouldn't be necessary. It is a reflection of the frustration which members of the established unions feel that they will make the sacrifices to set up a new union.'

'We don't like the term "breakaway". It seems to suggest that you are breaking away from the workers themselves. This was not how it happened in our case. We had the support of a large majority in the electrical contracting industry in Dublin. We found the officials got in the way of every move we wanted to make.'

### STRUGGLE

The decision to form a new union was not taken lightly. It followed years of struggle within the main electricians' unions and against the officials, most of them appointed for life. There is still great satisfaction among members of the E.T.U. and the N.E.E.T.U. Some E.T.U. members threatened to join the I.E.T.A. if the National Wages Agreement was not thrown out. In the nine months since the first major dispute of the I.E.T.U. with ESB, membership of the new union inside ESB has increased 300 per cent. The I.E.T.A. has a strong base in the contracting industry, and a significant number of members in CIE.

Paddy Dunne rejects absolutely the charge levelled against the I.E.T.A. that they are 'divisive' or 'elitist'. It's strange to hear someone like Matt Merrigan make these remarks. It was the attitude of people like him which lost his union a couple of hundred members among the

Shift Workers. The people who are being divisive are the officials who so often are 'too busy' to see the men they are supposed to be representing.

It is also difficult to make a charge of 'elitism' stick against the I.E.T.A., when it is the only union which gives apprentices, full rights. There are apprentices on the Executive. At the same time, the I.E.T.A. does not allow foremen to be members, they consider that a man cannot be on both sides at once.

### RULE-BOOK

The Electrical Technicians have put into their rule-book and constitution a number of safeguards against bureaucracy: the Executive is elected every year, and its members are subject to recall during their period of office; every branch is represented on the Executive; meetings alternate between Dublin and Athlone in order to have full participation by provincial members.

It is the membership, and not the Executive, which determines policy. Unlike in some other unions, the Executive does not have a veto. During the recent ESB sit-in and strike against redundancies and for I.E.T.A. recognition, the seven sacked members ran the union's activities. The strike was more successful than the press made out. At six stations pickets were not passed. The ESB and the ESB Officials' Association used intimidation against clerks who respected the picket-lines. The matter in dispute is now with a Rights Commissioner.

Whatever the other lessons of the experience of 'breakaway' unions it is clear that the I.E.T.A.'s record can stand against the charges of such people as Matt Merrigan.

### BREAKAWAYS

In the National Busmen's Union, formed eight years ago as a 'breakaway' from the Irish Transport Union, there is growing discontent with the handling of the one-man buses issue. In the next issue of 'The Worker' we will discuss the question of trade union democracy and the 'breakaways' in more detail.

## What kind of victory for Crannac workers?



Crannac workers celebrate the purchase of the factory

From July the workers at Crannac furniture factory in Navan, Co. Meath will be running it as a co-operative. During a seven weeks' sit-in they raised enough money to buy it.

Of the 43 workers who started the sit-in 30 remain. The others have left, but most of them are still looking for a job.

The jobs have been saved. That in itself is a victory. But public attention is turned to the setting up of the co-operative, not the fight against redundancy. Some people are putting this tactic forward as the weapon against factory closures.

### NO ILLUSIONS

Most of the Crannac workers have no such illusions. They realise that the co-op itself may face difficulties for which the only solution seems to be lay-offs. They know that they are not protected against the effects of competition. They recognise that the co-op is not a tactic which can be used generally against redundancies.

During June the Dublin Branch of the Socialist Workers Movement organised a concert in support of the Crannac sit-in. It was an outstanding success. In the words of the 'Irish Times', 'Everybody who was Anybody in the Folk and Ballad scene was there'. Among the many singers who performed were Joe Heaney, Christy Moore (Planxty), Luke Kelly (Dubliners), Johnny Moynihan, etc.

The concert, raffle and collection raised a total of £150 for the Crannac fighting fund.

Yet, their example has given confidence to workers elsewhere. They have proven that the workers do not need the bosses. They have, as Paddy Brennan, P.R.O. to the Workers' Committee, points out, forced the government to give money to a factory run by the workers.

In Navan itself the response has been falling off. Collections from the factories declined over the period of the sit-in. At the same time, a

400 workers in Mulcahy Bros. Dublin hosiery factory face redundancy with little prospect of other work, unless they can successfully resist it themselves in the coming weeks. The factory, where the well-known Bear Brand stockings and tights are produced, is due to close exactly two years after being taken over by Sunbeam Wolsey of Cork.

Sunbeam, Ireland's second largest employer, paid £½ million for the firm in 1970, confident that the acquisition would be 'of great benefit to them. After six months, however, they declared that the new baby was proving 'disappointing', and warned that it would be necessary to rationalise areas of production in which both Sunbeam and Mulcahy's were engaged. These cover the entire range of Mulcahy products.

Workers at the factory have good reason to suppose that this was the intention all along.

Until mid-June, a feeling of fatalism seemed to have overcome the workers at the Clanbrassil Street factory. Most of them assumed that the directors had done all they could, and that they could not be persuaded to change their decision. The workers were told that the management had sought the support of the Industrial Development Authority, and failed to get it.

### Vague

Over several weeks, people who left the factory were not replaced. Workers who were late were not chased by the time-keeper. Machines were left idle. Even the shopsteward looked for a job elsewhere.

Most of the workers were vague about what the union was doing. Some had heard that the officials were meeting Sunbeam, but nobody from the shop-floor was involved. There were rumours about redundancy terms - two weeks' pay for every year's service.

### Committee

On Saturday, 16th June, the situation was dramatically reversed. Staff and shop-floor workers came together to form an Ad Hoc Committee. They gave two simple instructions to shop-floor workers and staff alike:

1. Refuse redundancy notices;
2. Refuse to allow machinery out of the factory.

On the following Monday they served notice on Sunbeam in Cork that they were in dispute.

Within a week, the union officials had a new story. Severance pay was no longer the issue; continuance of employment was what they were now fighting on.

Workers throughout the factory experienced a sense of direction, missing for so long. There was new and enormous potential. As Eva Carey a supervisory worker, put it: 'Everyone below the managing director is on the same side'.

A meeting with the Minister of Industry and Commerce revealed that Mulcahy's had never asked the Industrial Development Authority for help.

The workers at Mulcahy Bros. can show that the real power lies on the factory floor. Their joint action can demonstrate the common interest of

all who sell their labour for a wage. Already, the employers are trying to prevent any such unity by holding out promises of work for a few - perhaps 100 - at Clanbrassil St. The Committee is confident nobody will fall for this. But the only real check against divisions in the ranks is regular general meetings to which the committee should be responsible.

What is happening at Mulcahy Bros. is similar to situations which Irish workers will be facing everywhere in coming months and years. Take-overs, mergers, and rationalisation have accelerated rapidly since the EEC Referendum. There are even rumours of some link-up between Sunbeam Wolsey and Glen Abbey. Cassidy's of Naas Road is closing down, following Ben Dunne's take-over. Jobs are threatened throughout the 'rag trade' and in many other sectors.

Whatever the outcome of the struggle at Mulcahy's, it is clear that workers cannot rely on union officials to lead the resistance. This has to come from the shop-floor. Particular effort must be made to prevent divisions in the labour force, between staff and workers, young and old, men and women. If Sunbeam don't succeed in closing the factory exactly as planned, they will try some other approach. Some may be offered jobs, others may be let go. If these kind of divisions are allowed to take effect, the bosses can drive in a wedge.

Solidarity, militant rank-and-file leadership, can prevent this happening. It is the only basis from which to resist the bosses' attacks.

BRIAN TORODE

## Unidare pushes up profits —and pushes out men



'The Internal efficiency drive is proving fruitful'.

Behind such phrases—a comment by the 'Irish Times' on Unidare's latest reports — is hidden the reality of a vastly increased work-load for workers at the big Finglas, Dublin, plant.

The Unidare group of companies has had mixed fortunes in its 25-year history. But recent years have seen a determined effort by management to increase productivity. Without any reduction in output, Unidare have been letting men go at an average rate of 1 per week for the past few years. This year management is hoping to see a 20 per cent increase in sales over 1971.

Unidare was founded as Aberdare Electrical in 1947 by C.O. Stanley (Pyl Sunbeam Wolsey etc). Stanley resigned as Chairman and director in 1966. By that time, the company was expanding steadily. Oerlikon Electrodes (G.B.) Ltd., was bought over, Thos Pearson was acquired, and production integrated. More recently, Unidare has taken over control of Telecommunications Ltd., and is working on a joint venture with Tinsley Wire Industries Ltd., a British firm.

### Philips

The close connection between the aluminium industry and the electrical industry can be seen in Unidare's shareholders and directors. The majority of shares are held by Philips, the giant Dutch electrical company, and another quarter of the shares are held by Alcan Aluminium of Quebec, Canada. Among the many smaller share-holders is Bishop Brown of Galway!

The directors of the company include one P. J. Elton, representing Alcan's interest, and involved in aluminium companies in at least eight countries.

Unidare's expansion has not only been financed by international capital, however, the company has received an 'adaptation grant' as large as any other from the Industrial Development Authority — £½ million. The giving of this grant may not be unconnected with the fact that when Sean Lemass withdrew gracefully from the political scene, he was quickly made Chairman of Unidare.

### Productivity

The directors and shareholders are now congratulating themselves, above all else, on a 'continuation of the real productivity rise', and 'the successful realisation of the many plans for rationalisation, cost reduction and consolidation.'

A Works Joint Productivity Committee meets regularly to discuss ways of making life more pleasant for the employees, and, incidentally, getting more work out of them. The agreement signed earlier this year by No. 14 Branch of the Irish

Transport and General Workers' union and the group of companies recognises the importance of increasing productivity. The union agrees 'to co-operate and assist to the full with all productivity measures designed to achieve this end and on the understanding that no redundancy will arise directly out of such productivity arrangements'.

There may not be direct lay-offs. But it took an all-out strike for seven weeks last year to stop them. And, as anyone will tell you, there's half the number of men on some of the lines that used to be on them.

### Collapse

The push for greater productivity dates especially from the collapse of Unidare's profits in 1969-70. In that year, profits throughout Irish industry took a hammering. This was a result both of domestic and international factors. In his last years as director, C. O. Stanley had no doubt what the main problem of the company was: workers putting in for wage rises. The days are gone, he said, when labour had to be protected from wicked employers. So, just to prove his point, he advocated that Labour Court findings be made binding i.e. legal-industrial coercion. True, the wage bill had been going up, but profits had remained steady at just over £½ million.

Unidare's 'strong recovery', as the financial correspondents call it, is largely due to the first National Wage Agreement and to union co-operation in pushing up productivity. 'Smooth running' is all the talk. Trouble is, the management can't quite live up to it. They keep picking on people.

### Re-instated

In June they gave notice to a fitter in the Wire Division. No reasons were given, but it did not escape the workers' attention that the notice came just two weeks before the fitter's six-month probationary period was up. The Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers protested strongly at the proposed sacking. Members were particularly enraged that the management intended to take on another fitter with massive arrears on his union card. Following representations to the management, the notice was withdrawn. The fitter was re-instated, but with an extension of 3 months on his probationary period.

The agreement with the I.T.G.W.U. contains the assurance that all of the Unidare companies are anxious to uphold the probationary period, and with it, their 'good name, and reputation for justice'.

Wherever they think they got that reputation, it isn't one they have with the workers at the Finglas plant.

# ADVERTISING

One group with a vested interest in advertising are the psychologists and sociologists employed as market research consultants. They claim that their job is to find out what the needs of consumers are, so that they can help the manufacturer design a product which will best fulfill these needs. They claim that by applying batteries of tests, questionnaires and interviews they can discover what the consumer wants, better than he can himself, and in this way that their scientific skills can be used for the benefit of all.

But once the new product has been manufactured — it might be a feminine deodorant or a tin of slimming baked beans, or some other product nobody ever thought of before — the psychologist is called in again to tell the public why they should buy this commodity, that, up to now, they have done well without. He has to explain what needs the commodity satisfies in a clear, direct way, which will appeal to the public. For the public have to be persuaded how much they want it.

At this stage the roles have been reversed. The scientist is no longer discovering what people really want, he is persuading them of what he thinks they want. In fact he creates in us the very needs his product claims to satisfy and he sees us, through his advertising, a new picture of ourselves as the sort of person with those needs.

## PROFITS

Why has advertising come to be such a big business in its own right? Because, in modern capitalist society, industry must continuously multiply its profits in order to sustain itself. So, it must create the demand for its products by constantly generating new and artificial wants. As consumers, we become objects for the market researcher to manipulate, ourselves commodities in a production process.

In order to understand how the advertiser manipulates us we need to step back from our own response to his message. We took a walk around some Dublin shops to look at advertising and to work out what it was trying to say. We found a number of themes which were repeatedly hammered home in these statements.

## ESCAPISM

The most mundane products bear names which promise to transport their purchaser faraway from the real world he lives in, to an imaginary realm, where all his problems will cease to exist. One pair of girls' sandals, for instance, was named "Paradiso" while another was called "Cloud Nine". Women's toilet compounds, such as talc, have names like "Apple Blossom" "Heaven Sent" and "Lovemist". Each conjures up

Why does a pair of womens' sandals bear the name "Paradiso" while mens' shoes bear the name "Rebel"? How is it that a tailored suit made by Hector Powe can be captioned "Does Powe corrupt"? We may laugh at advertising and feel detached from it — but the huge annual expenditure on it shows that its sponsors must think it's for real.

## You'll never use an ordinary deodorant again

an ephemeral zone in which — if material problems were to enter at all — they would dissolve in a cloud of fragrant bliss.

Imagery aimed at men is rather different. Cosmetics bear names like Brut and Bacchus and hairspray — normally a female product — is designed to fulfill the most extravagant of male fantasies. A cossack sits astride his rearing steed. At his feet sways a beautiful peasant girl he is abducting. Underneath we read "Cossack Hair Spray for men — all it controls is your hair". This offers the promise of freedom — but an exploitative freedom for men only, men the master sex.

Why should women try to escape the world by flying away on Cloud Nine? Why should men enjoy imagining themselves as adventurous marauders of an exotic age? There must be something very wrong with life Here and Now if men and women cannot face up to it squarely. Escapism reveals and sustains the poverty and frustration ordinary men and women find in their daily lives. The magical answers the ads give us are phoney: they turn us away from any real struggle against what is bad in our lives and — of course — they simply cannot live up to what they promise.

## SEXPLOITATION

The names of male and female products reveal a startling contrast. Mens shoes are "Rapier", "Rainmaster", "Rebel", his underpants are "Brute". Not only do men and women have to retreat from the real world — they also have to retreat from each other into stereotypes which divide them. Men are portrayed as virile, dominant and coercive; women as fragile, delicate and devious. Women are encouraged to make themselves helpless but desirable — in fact, objects for consumption by rapacious men. This kind of fantasy stands in the way of free and spontaneous relationships between men and women in our society.

Advertising encourages people to escape from reality and turns sex into a mythology of gods and goddesses instead of encounters between ordinary flesh and blood human beings. The world of advertising promotes phoney solutions to our problems. Capitalism, which it serves, thrives on the very misery created by its own existence; all is grist to its mill; peoples' frustrations can be turned



Chiquita no ordinary banana

to good effect by deluding them that they can be satisfied. At the same time, by channelling their real frustrations away from real problems into fantasies, the system wards off the threat these people might pose if they recognised the true source of their hostility.

## BE LIKE US

The advertisers threaten to take away our autonomy altogether. At their whim we are to be just one of the crowd. Everyone is doing it, so why aren't you? The most insidious example of this is that of feminine deodorants which "girls like us" are warned to use for fear of causing unmentionable offence. This works by creating fear in us by making us hate or mistrust our own bodies.

## BE DIFFERENT

The advertising aims to make us imagine ourselves as different from everyone else. It seems the public regret that in our society we are all moulded, stamped and branded as workers and consumers. The advertiser claims a solution to this unpleasant situation: the uniqueness of his product. This is usually just a fraud.

A banana ad contrasts pictures of two specimens of the fruit — one slightly smaller and more bruised than the other. The first of these carries the message "Ordinary banana. Ordinary banana. Ordinary banana. Ordinary banana". The other reads "Chiquita banana. The tasty banana The fresh banana. The prime banana" and concludes with the message: "Chiquita no ordinary banana". This of course, is a kind of joke, but its serious nature is indicated by the fact that the importer paid for a full page advertisement to make it. Someone has calculated that a lot of people will be seriously persuaded to buy bananas to pay for that. A lot of

# Enjoy the good taste

# —Fitting you into the system

people, that is, will be deluded into believing that they can find an answer to the uniformity of their lives and to their status as commodities under capitalism by buying Chiquita bananas instead of Fyffes. That joke takes some laughing off.

Some other real ambitions men experience come through these slogans and one of these frequently invoked in ads is man's desire for power. With this the Marxist would firmly agree: man seeks power over himself and over his world. In the present state of society however he experiences himself as powerless and cannot understand how this power can be regained. The advertisers give him an answer of a sort. "Fire it!" cries a British Army recruiting poster: "This is the Army's 81mm mortar — one of the deadliest modern battlefield weapons. You could work with it".

To resolve your frustrations you can get a job and play with a real live gun.

## COMMODITIES

In the very falsity of their claims advertisements show up the nature of the world we live in. They make a claim to satisfy the desires people really feel in society. By looking at them we can see a reflection of the kind of society capitalism has made for us.

It is a world in which men seek power — the power to manipulate others of their own kind. It is a world in which men can only find fulfilment by imaginary attempts to escape from it. It is a world in which men are dominated by commodities to such an extent that they become commodities themselves.

BRIAN AND RUTH TORODE

# ONE WORLD

Nixon visits Moscow while the US Navy blockades North Vietnamese ports. On Russian TV he declares: 'Our power will only be used to keep the peace, never to break it; only to defend freedom, never to destroy it'.

Kissinger visits Peking while American bombs rain down on North Vietnamese villages, hospitals, and installations.

The last few months and weeks should have seen an undermining of the myth that there are a socialist bloc and a capitalist bloc, fundamentally opposed to one another as only socialism and capitalism could be.

## Co-existence

Apart from the more publicised visits of American leaders to the East, there have been further approaches and agreements between leaders on 'both' sides under the banner of 'peaceful co-existence'.

Poland and Austria have signed an agreement which removes all visa requirements for travellers between the two countries. President Boumediene of Algeria and King Hassan of Morocco, have resolved their differences on the border between the two states and have signed a declaration which lays the basis to 'estab-

lish permanent peace for centuries to come'.

Perhaps least expected of all, preparations are being made for talks between the North Korean and South Korean regimes. Prime Minister Park, head of the ultra-reactionary South Korean government, has asked that the Asian and Pacific Council, formed in 1961 as an anti-communist front, should admit 'communist' countries.

## Co-operation

Meanwhile, Kim Il Sung, leader of the North Korean regime, and revered by some as a great revolutionary figure, declares: 'If Koreans sit down face to face, they can make mistrust and misunderstanding disappear; they can find points in common and realise national unity on this basis'. (Le Monde; 16/6/72)

Premier Park, whose regime imprisons a record number of political opponents every year, talks of 'multiplying joint enterprises', and 'rising above confrontation to harmonious co-ordination'.

The unity which they are talking about is the unity of exploiters and oppressors.

The co-operation between Nixon and Brezhnev talk about is co-operation between architects and accomplices in crimes against working people throughout the world.

## Opposition

But there is evidence that at least workers in Russia have not been fooled by the claims which the Russian leaders make for themselves. A group in that country has published a document which attacks the system and the leaders. It explains that working conditions and living standards in Russia are worse than in Western countries. It calls for strikes and demonstrations against the 'state capitalist' regime.

## Domination

The document is not fully socialist and internationalist, but it is a genuine reflection of the truth about the 'socialist' world. As it states: 'The Kremlin rulers are engaging in commerce not in the interests of the people, but in their own adventurist-political interest, in the interest of achieving world domination.'

From 'Workers Power', paper of International Socialists (US)



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# Workers' Councils—alternative to Parliaments

Socialists are often criticised for only attacking the system — 'Down with Capitalism', 'Down with Bosses', 'Down with Parliamentary Political Parties', etc. It is often said that we don't want to explain the sort of society we want, except to say that it will be socialist. But socialism seems to be becoming an increasingly vague term these days. Conor Cruise O'Brien, and the states of Russia and Eastern Europe are supposed to be socialist!

## FREE

We believe that a socialist society is a free society. For anyone to have a chance to be free they must have control over their own lives. As society spends so much of its time working to produce things and then selling and consuming those things, the guts of society are in the workshop and factory, and in the relaxations between workers and bosses. If we gain control of the places where we work we can directly control the present and future of the society we live in. That's a beginning on the road to freedom.

## STRUGGLE

To reach that point, however, requires attack and criticism of the existing structures; it requires mobilising people around demands and objectives to be fought for. There is plenty to attack, there is a continuing struggle every day. We are reminded of the nature of this society by the way we are pushed around at work, told what to do and how to do it by people who don't have a clue how the job is actually done. Factories are closed down by a decision made in some distant board-room; rents to up; food prices rise; people are evicted from their homes; others are shot by troops — life under capitalism consists largely of that kind of thing. We write about it in our papers so that others can understand it, and are convinced of the need to change it.

If we wrote: 'This is the way society should be run', and offered plans and blueprints, we would not be describing a free society, because the people had not decided themselves, in struggle, and in discussion how things should be run. We could talk poetically about a beautiful Utopia, but the trouble with Utopias is that they don't connect with the here and now; they never tell us how to get to the promised land and the good life. They don't draw on the experiences of people in the past who have fought for a radical change, and for a better society.

## LESSONS

Learning these lessons is important. It is not at all the same things as learning history from a text-book. The struggles of the working class are, in any case, very largely unwritten in the ordinary history books. The periods from which we can learn important lessons from the present struggle include those when workers took over, for a limited time, or in a certain locality: Hungary 1956, Spain 1936, Italy 1920, Germany 1919, Russia 1917.

In all of these cases workers were living under harsh conditions, but they were prepared to fight for a change. In all these struggles the workers took over factories and set up workers' councils in order to carry on their struggles. In each factory a General Assembly of Workers, that is, everyone in the factory, elected a Workers' Council. The members of the council were directly responsible to the rest of the workers. They were not a new elite, but were liable to be thrown out at any time if the General Assembly found their contribution unsatisfactory. The main job of the Workers' Councils in these cases was the co-ordination of every-

# SO YOU DON'T THINK WORKERS COULD RUN THE COUNTRY?

one's efforts. The final decisions were taken by the whole mass of workers.

*In this way, workers in struggle have begun to define a shape for a society controlled by the majority. But clearly there would be little chance of total revolutionary change if each group of workers simply concerned itself with its own factory of locality.*

## DEMONSTRATION

The Hungarian workers recognised this in 1956. When the revolution erupted after the 23rd October demonstration, at which several people were shot by the secret police, workers' councils were immediately formed. Within a matter of days these councils had joined to form Regional Revolutionary Councils in some areas. In Miskolc, one of the main industrial centres of Hungary, all the workers in the area elected a local council, took over the local radio and were

broadcasting their demands by Thursday, 25th October, only two days after the original confrontation in Budapest. The following day, a National Council of Free Trade Unions met, which was broadly representative of the workers' councils throughout the country, and drew together all the demands the local councils were making.

These demands included the call for the withdrawal of Russian troops and the forming of workers' militias. Also prominent were demands for workers' management of industry and for the transformation of the central, and bureaucratic, economic planning system. Workers' Councils were to be the most important organs of power in the country. The state was to be managed, planned and run by the workers.

## COMPLICATED

To anyone who starts to talk in terms of workers' control, it is often

objected that modern society, and the modern state, are so complicated that they cannot be run effectively by the workers, from the base. Such objections are usually founded on the idea that power must always be concentrated in a few hands.

Nobody would deny that society is very complicated. But technological advance has also produced machinery to make decision-making and planning easier, and to do away with a lot of unnecessary work — for example, the computer. Most people associate the computer with massive, anonymous, bureaucratic organisations; but under workers' control, and if the profit motive was no longer determining, it could be 'liberated'. It could become an essential instrument of planning in a worker-managed society. Computers could evaluate the likely effects of different decisions and proposals put forward by different groups — at least those of a technical kind. Programmed with the knowledge of an industry or a group of industries it could balance changes in one sector with changes in another.

## EXPERTS

The final arbiter, however, on decisions affecting the lives and everyday existence of the working people must be the workers themselves through their representative bodies. Socialists strive to keep this idea present at all times; they aim to explain how the questions of power and control are posed even in the day-to-day struggles of workers under capitalism. They oppose the idea that a few 'experts' — whether economists, teachers, technicians, or sociologists — should take decisions 'on our behalf'. Modern capitalism is infested with the experts and specialists who are presented as if they have all the answers. Education and other influences aim to discipline us into accepting without question the decisions of authorities.

## CONFIDENCE

Obviously some people will get more pleasure from, and will be better at, certain jobs than others: some specialisation is inevitable. But there is no reason why this should be a basis for privilege; these people can help others understand problems facing society, and help towards the democratic solution of those problems.

At present we find that many workers lack the confidence to insist that they can, and do, acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to a whole range of work and political

activities. They are trained to accept the rule of the few. Yet, in many different and small ways, everyday experience can lead workers to discover their own power. How many times have we had to listen to the boss telling us how to do the job and making it abundantly clear that he doesn't have the first idea of the problems involved! Most of us tend to prefer an easy life and say: OK, and then go straight ahead and do it as we always have done.

If we start to relate that kind of experience to the whole of society, we can see how many wrongheaded assumptions we make about political power and economic power. *The sum total of working class experience is infinitely more than the knowledge of any 'experts'. It is the working class which has built the world as we know it — not experts and leaders. It is the working class which can change a situation where a tiny minority have effective control of the whole of society.*

## DEMANDS

If we build a truly democratic society, a society controlled from grass roots by the workers' own organisations, we will be able to build our society in the way we want, not the way the bosses want.

These are a few of the demands which workers have made in the past through Workers' Councils:

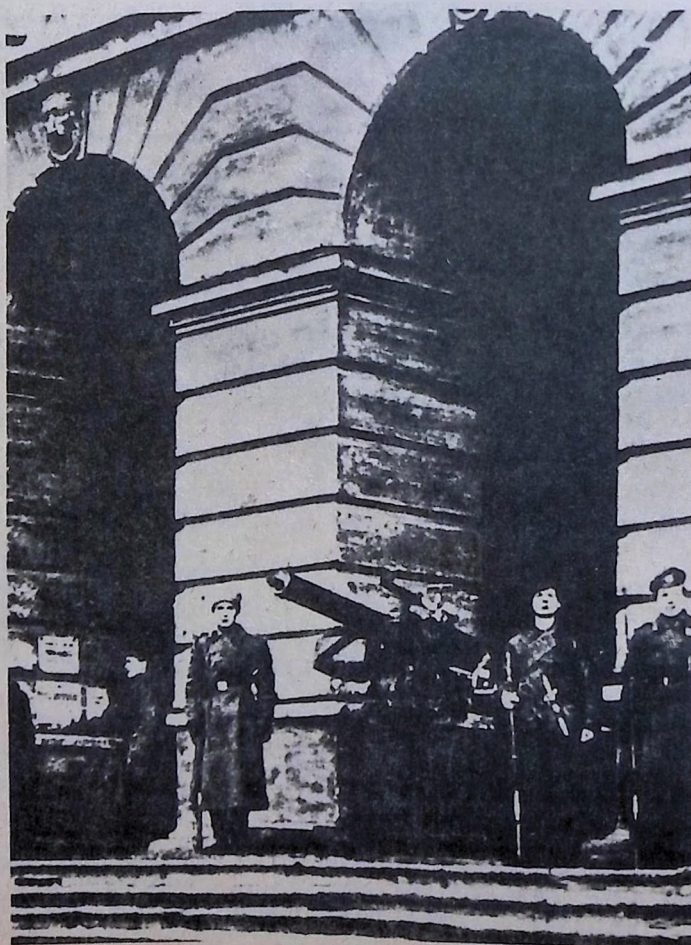
- introduction of a maximum and minimum wage leading to equal wages and eventually the complete abolition of the wage system;
- delegates to the Workers' Council to remain at their jobs, or if this is not practical, all the Council members to receive no more than the average wage for other workers;
- the General Assembly of all workers being the highest decision-making body for the factory as a whole to amend, reject, refer back or endorse all but the most routine decisions of the Workers Council;
- the Workers' Council to have a general directive to reorganise production to meet the needs of the people, determining the actual products, the method of production and the implementation of a principle of production for need not for profit.

## POSSIBILITY

None of the experiments in control from the bottom upwards of an industry, a factory, or the whole of society have lasted for any great length of time. The reasons for this are various, and should be the subject of another article. *What the experiences of workers' councils have started to demonstrate is the possibility of a different order, the possibility of making work that is unavoidable more interesting and enjoyable. The workers have it in their power to build a society where life is worth living, not a round of clock-punching boredom and insanity.*



Defenders of the Paris Commune (1871) on the barricades. The Paris Commune was the first experiment in workers' democracy



Red Guards outside a meeting of the Congress of Russian Soviets in 1917

# 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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

## 'WOBBLY' JOE OFF BALANCE

Most film reviews in left-wing papers seem to be boringly similar; whether they are talking about Jane Fonda's latest or 'War and Peace', the message usually seems the same. Either the reviewer uses the film as an excuse to attack middle-class ideology, or he criticises it because the 'obvious need for a revolutionary party' was not spelt out.

Having said that, I am going to view the 'Ballad of Joe Hill', as a political film, and talk about the artistic side more as an after-thought.

As the title of the film indicates it is about one man rather than the movement he was part of. This is unfortunate, because it puts all the emphasis on Joe Hill as a person, tends to idolise him, and thus to distort the actual struggle as it was fought by thousands.

Before making 'Joe Hill', Bo Widerberg directed 'Adalen '31' (the story of a viciously fought strike in Sweden in 1931), and when you compare the two films, 'Adalen '31' seems the more successful. It does not centre on any one of the strikers, but concentrates on capturing the mood of everyone in the struggle.

Joe Hill was judicially murdered by the state because he was a member of the Industrial Workers of the World (the Wobblies). But he was one among many. In several Southern States of America it was enough to carry an IWW union card to get you lynched. Many members were lynched or shot by agents of the factory owners. The struggle of the American working class in the first thirty years of this century was extremely bloody.

The 'Wobblies' are a syndicalist union (they still exist today). They believe that one big union of all the

workers can form the embryo for the future society, where all production is controlled by the workers. The idea is that within the one big union there are syndicates for all the workers in each industry. After the revolution, when the workers take power, these syndicates will become the new workers' management, carrying out much the same functions as a Workers' Council.

### PREAMBLE

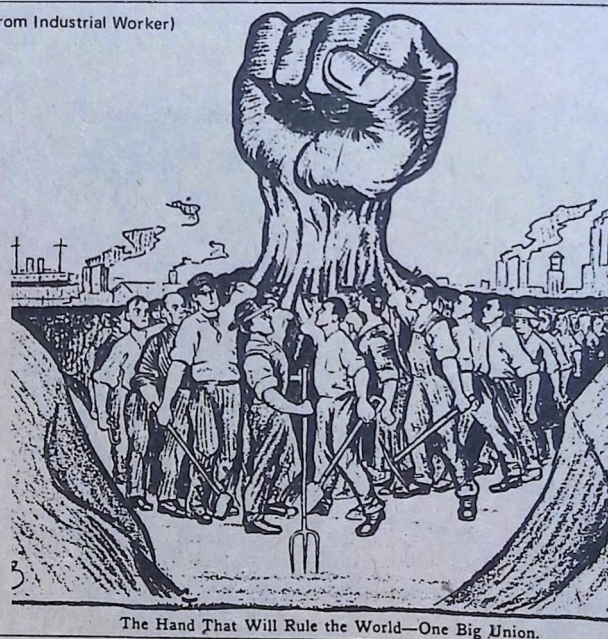
The preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World is well worth quoting:

*'The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things of life.'*

*Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organise as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.*

*We find that the centering of management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions and the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.*

(from Industrial Worker)



The Hand That Will Rule the World—One Big Union.

*These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organisation formed in such a way that all its members in one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.*

*Instead of the conservative motto 'A Fair Day's Wage for a Fair Day's Work', we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword 'Abolition of the Wage System'.*

*It is the historic mission of working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organised, not only for the everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By*

## Reviews

in fact, the trip made in 1908 from Seattle to the IWW Convention in Chicago. They would hardly have travelled in new, starched overalls—they were tough itinerant workers, well experienced in fighting and in living rough.

One chattering characterisation in the film for anyone who knows something of American labour history is that of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn—that girl looking like a polite school teacher pleading with the President for Joe Hill's life.

### CONNOLLY

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn was the 'Rebel Girl' of one of Joe Hill's songs; her reputation for toughness has been emphasised many times! It is interesting to recall that James Connolly (not unknown in Ireland) introduced Elizabeth Gurley Flynn into the IWW when she was only 16.

Connolly was New York Organiser of the IWW for several years until his return to Ireland in 1910.

Bo Widerberg is well known for making beautiful films. 'Elvira Madigan', an earlier film, recently shown in Dublin, must be the most beautiful of all beautiful films. Unfortunately the technique or style does not fit the 'Ballad of Joe Hill'. Everything is just too clear to be real; it seems Widerberg would find it impossible to film a dirty shirt or some red-hot revolutionary anger.

But go and see the film, and try to understand what was not filmed—the struggles of thousands of workers for a bit of 'pie on earth'.

PETER DAVIES

The 'Ballad of Joe Hill' is showing at the Academy Cinema, Pearse Street Dublin.

### NICE

Returning to the film: I object to Hill being portrayed as a well-fed innocent. He is made very 'nice' in the film. But to have been such a successful labour organiser, he had to be hard.

The scene in which the 'Wobblies' jump off the train in their black overalls and red neck-chiefs makes them look like boy scouts on an outing. The 'Overalls Brigade' was,

## Quebec Workers Shake Regime

Every now and then, a country is shaken by a tremour of class struggle which, without bringing a change of regime, upsets all the established political institutions, and creates new confidence in the working class.

The events of May-June 1968, in France, are the most important example in recent years. The repercussions are still felt in the French workers' movement.

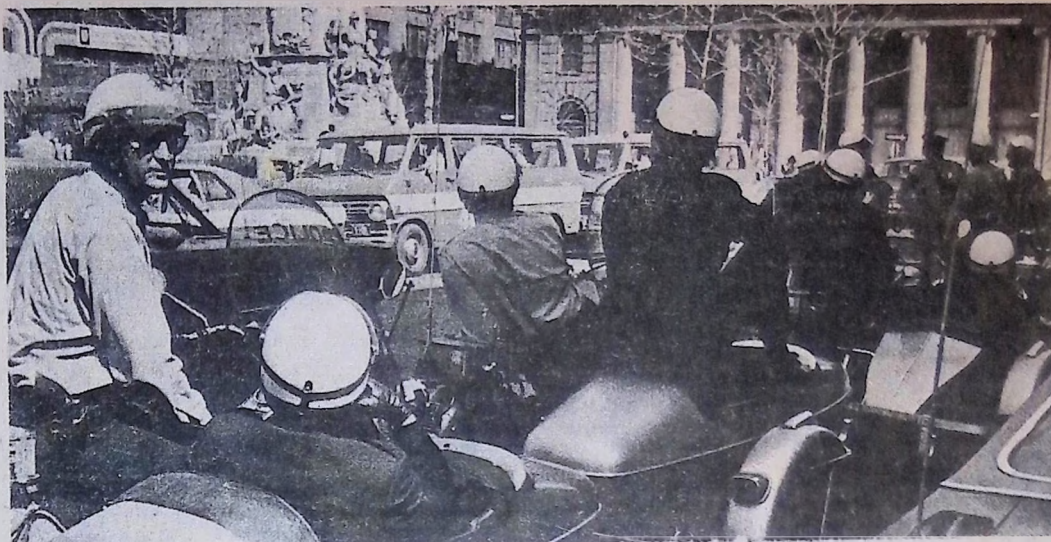
This year, French-speaking Canada had its own 'May events'. They passed off unreported by the capitalist press in Britain and Ireland. They have stirred up old sores in relations between Quebec and the rest of

Canada. But more importantly, they have instilled new determination in the organised workers in Quebec.

The two strikes - in April and in May - of public service employees were defeated, but nothing will ever be the same again in the Quebec labour movement.

For seven days in May the workers of Quebec realised their own power. Under banners proclaiming 'NOUS - le monde ordinaire' (WE - the ordinary people), they defied the provincial government and the whole system of privilege and abuse.

'The Worker' has received first-hand reports from correspondents in Canada, which we summarise below.



Canadian police ready for action against striking workers

# NOUS

On 9th May, three trade union leaders were jailed for their part in a strike by 200,000 public service workers in April. There was an immediate response: within two days, a quarter of a million workers had walked off their jobs. They barricaded towns. They gook over radio stations. They closed down major factories and mines. What had started as a local dispute of workers in the public sector had escalated into a general strike.

It all began with the renewal of contracts for public service employees - hospital workers, electricity supply workers, teachers, etc. The three unions representing the workers formed a 'common front' to press demands for a higher basic wage and new terms of employment.

The Quebec government answered with an offer of a miserable 4.3 per cent, which would have meant a reduction in wages. The unions then called out their 200,000-plus members in the Quebec province. Again, the Quebec government of Prime Minister, Bourassa, responded: injunctions were served on strikers; to pay enormous fines. The Quebec parliament sat all night to pass Bill 19, outlawing strikes in the public

sector for two years.

In face of this repression, and in spite of the militant mood of the rank-and-file, the union leaders called off the strike. Discontent was smouldering among the ordinary union members.

The repression continued. Eventually, three popular local union leaders were sentenced to one year in prison. Much to Bourassa's surprise, the whole union movement - in public and private sectors - answered immediate with strike action.

Day 1: 2,000 dockers left their jobs; teachers, maintenance workers, and hospital staffs followed.

Day 2: 50,000 building workers downed tools. More teachers came out. Radio technicians went on strike. Workers at Thetford Mines occupied the town and took over the local radio station, only leaving when forced out by the police.

Day 3: Town occupations snowballed. Rallies and demonstrations were held. Even the employees of the provincial courts struck. In Sept-les, a small mining town, occupied by the workers for several days, one person was killed, and 35 injured, when a Liberal Party organiser drove his car into a crowd of demonstrators.

The local council of the Confederation of National Trade Unions in Sorel issued a statement: 'Workers are demonstrating their solidarity in an unprecedented political gesture. The oppressed people, terrorised for so long, are no longer afraid. The escalation will go on until Bill 19 is abolished, the union leaders are freed, and the Bourassa government has resigned'.

In this short time, the Quebec workers learned some interesting things about the political parties. The separatist Parti Quebecois, which commands some working-class support because of its nationalism, shows middle-class colours. Rene Levesque, once stupidly known as 'Quebec's Castro', attacked the strikers and called upon the trade union leaders to resume negotiations, and prevent the spread of anarchy. Workers on one of the French-language papers refused to print the column of a Parti Quebecois columnist because it was unfavourable to their cause.

### Media

Much of the direct action was directed against the media. In all, 23 radio stations were taken over by the workers for a greater or shorter length of time. Strike news and revolutionary music were broadcast. In many places, newspaper buildings were also a target of the workers' anger.



Allende

The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes.

Marx

impact on the economy at the highest levels. Meanwhile, the big landowners are arming their supporters to prevent the landless from seizing the land on their own initiative.

Allende is paying compensation to I.T.T., the giant American company which tried to organise his overthrow 18 months ago. He recently handed back a paint-making firm to its original owners only 22 days after expropriating it.

### Middle class

The fact is that Allende has gone just about as far as he can along the constitutional road. He has used the legal framework of the state to carry out his reform measures. Nothing he has done has really alienated the middle class or the army. Now, it seems, he can go no further; he has

But, in spite of this energy, and in spite of the political instinct, the union leaders were allowed to dither, and eventually call off the action. There was no political leadership which could have forced them to force demands for the sacking of the government.

The 'Common Front' called for a 'truce' period after a week. Talks were re-opened with the government, but workers were prepared to take action again if the government should remain obstinate. As in April, the union executives were going against the majority in their unions. They were able to do this because the rank-and-file militancy was not coordinated throughout the province.

### Militancy

Many Quebec workers are now at odds with the union leaderships. But at some levels in officialdom, their militancy is reflected. At least one of the jailed leaders is a committed fighter for socialism. At a conference in June, the Confederation of National Trade Unions called on workers to 'fight the injustices and inequalities of the present capitalist system'.

There are particular reasons why such a revolt should have taken place in Quebec. The province has always been a distinct unity within the whole of Canada. In recent years the separatist movement has had big support. The province is discriminated

against in many ways: unemployment is much higher than elsewhere in Canada, reaching 20 and 30 per cent in some places. But the nationalist movement has proven itself fairly irrelevant in the recent struggles. The Quebec Liberation Front, previously a purely terrorist organisation, has only just 'discovered' the working class.

More importantly, the working class has discovered itself. The workers had a brief taste of their own power, bringing the province to standstill. At the same time, they discovered the limitations of the traditional trade union movement, and of the political organisations.

'The confrontations between workers and exploiters of all shades is no longer just about to start, it has already begun' (Quebec Free Press Agency).

Liberal Prime Minister, Bourassa, 14th May:

'We have never seen anything like this before anywhere in the world - trade union leaders who call on people to defy the law. There is nobody above the law, and as long as I am head of government, it will stay like that. Even in France, the communist leaders tell their supporters that one must respect the law.'

the middle class, this is not winning the middle class; it is letting the middle class win'.

### Army

The problem for Allende is that he came to power on a purely electoral basis, and not as the result of a revolutionary upsurge. He has discouraged working class self-activity in the past, and continues to do so. He has consistently refused to arm his supporters among the working-class, thus leaving the army as the ultimate arbiter of his fate. But it is only on the basis of revolutionary activity - in the factories and in the streets - that the present back-sliding can be halted. Only in this way can an end be brought to such incidents as happened in Concepcion. There, the Communist Party governor ordered the police to break up a workers' demonstration - killing one person.

### Initiative

Allende has left the middle class with plenty of room for initiative. The workers still have the chance to take the initiative to head off the threat from those quarters, to take power, and then to cancel foreign 'debts', nationalise all land and industry under worker's control, and spread the revolution into neighbouring countries.

## ALLENDE IN RETREAT

The coming to power of Allende in Chile was hailed by many as proof of the theory that there could be a peaceful transition to socialism, that it was unnecessary for the working class to smash the capitalist state and replace it with the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Allende's record to date is a sore indictment of this illusion. All the indicators from recent events in Chile point to a massive failure by Allende to fulfill his election promise to 'lay the foundation for socialism'.

But hadn't he nationalised the copper mines, the banks, and several foreign-owned concerns? Hasn't he instituted a radical land-reform programme?

Indeed, he has; but these actions are, on balance, more beneficial to the national middle class than to the workers and poor farmers. Copper nationalisation had more to do with boosting the national economy than with socialism, as the 8000 miners who went on strike in May dramatically showed.

Business men recognise the need for a more efficient agricultural system, and as agriculture produces less than 10 per cent of national income the land reforms have had little

The last round of wage increases gave miners 30 per cent; they had asked for 50 per cent. At the same time the army got a 45 per cent rise.

Price rises have already cut into what seem to be the biggest advances. Chile has the second largest foreign debt in the world, £1,500 million, which can only be paid off by holding down wages in favour of profits.

### Mixed economy

The 'Sunday Times' Business News recently remarked: 'Chile has now virtually become a classic mixed economy (i.e. like Britain)... there is a growing body of opinion in Chile which believes that Allende may unwittingly end up giving a boost to local capitalists rather than creating a thorough-going socialist society'.

Allende's dilemma is one of choosing between more state capitalism (nationalisation without the working class controlling the state) or simply maintaining the present 'mix'.

Neither choice would solve the problems facing the working class and poor peasants. Their most class-conscious spokesman, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (M.I.R.) has attacked Allende for 'waiting for a majority in order to advance, rather than advancing in order to get a majority'. They add: 'If the advance of workers is held back to win over

In the next issue of 'The Worker' we will publish an analysis of the Algerian revolution

# the worker

## LOYALISTS AT ODDS WITH BRITAIN

The aim of all 'loyalist' institutions, from the Unionist Party down to the factory branch of the Loyalist Association of Workers' is to keep Ulster British', yet all of them in varying degrees state their willingness to fight Britain in order to fulfill that aim.

This seeming paradox had not been explained by those who wish to maintain the Union. They describe the recent British actions in terms of 'betrayal', but why it is that Britain has 'betrayed' them, no-one seems to know, or cares to tell. That a 'betrayal' has taken place, no self-respecting loyalist would deny.

Apart from the apparent silence on the reasons for the 'betrayal', there is little in what is said or written by loyalists to help us understand what it is in Ulster's 'Britishness' they wish to retain. Any such question is usually answered in terms of what they do not want - Jack Lynch's Catholic state with all its reactionary trappings.

### Promises

Promises that such reactionary aspects of Southern life that they disapprove of will be removed, seem to have no effect, however. Loyalists retort that they are British, and the vicious circle is completed again.

The aspects of the Union with Britain which have been most responsible for creating the loyalist consciousness are now seriously threatened. It was the original needs of Ulster capitalists, in the pre-partition days, that kept the Six Counties under British rule: they needed the British Empire for their raw materials and markets. But they needed more than the few words in the right ear to decide the day - they needed mass support. That they got it was largely due to the absence of a socialist alternative to capitalist Home Rule.

by M Miller

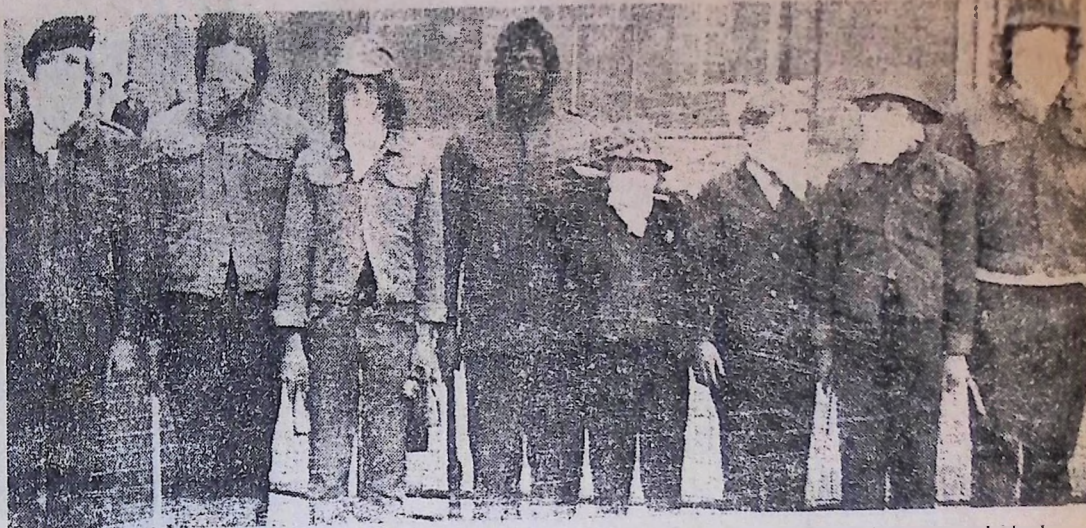
They have sustained it by blatant discrimination, giving marginal privileges to the Protestant workers. Gerrymandered electoral boundaries, and the abolition of proportional representation, ensured Unionist control even in majority Catholic areas, and made possible the distribution of council houses and jobs to those who remained loyal to the 'Protestant state'. The best jobs, in shipbuilding and engineering, were reserved for the loyal.

### Police

The police force was overwhelmingly Protestant; the 'B' Specials, entirely so. This gave them a near monopoly of guns, always a potent factor in Irish politics, as well as providing extra employment, and underlining their supremacy over their Catholic neighbours in an obvious and dramatic way. It kept the disloyal in their 'proper place', thus securing a semblance of stability in which discrimination could function, and capitalists keep their grip.

But the Gerrymander is revised and P.R. is to be re-introduced for local council elections. The Orange Order still holds significant power at the local level, but if present trends continue, its days may be numbered.

Shipbuilding and engineering have declined, to be replaced by multinational conglomerates - like I.C.I., and Courtaulds - none of which relies on the old Orange-loyalist network, and all of which demand a rationalization of the political set-up in Ireland as a whole, so that they can exploit all Irish workers to the full. For them, a united Ireland, federated to Britain, would be ideal.



Orangeism and Protestant supremacy are being hacked away by the sharp axe of economic necessity. Further, the B-men have gone, and the RUC is not what it used to be: they were too much of a hindrance to the schemes for 'normalizing' Ulster. When Stormont itself stood in the way of these schemes, it too went under.

If Protestant working class Unionism was constructed on the basis of privileges - not always obvious, but always there - the undermining of those privileges has dealt a blow to Unionism itself. In the last analysis it was the link with Britain which protected the privileges. That's what it meant to 'be British', and that is the only way we can explain the contradictions in the loyalist camp.

### Welfare state

Protestant workers are very fond of 'their' Welfare State, and use it as a case against the re-unification of Ireland; but they have never supported the party that brought it about - the Labour Party - precisely because it did not publicly stand for the maintenance of their privileged position. The Unionist Party on the other hand has been consistently opposed to social welfare, voting against the measures in the 1945-1951 Westminster Parliament, and leading the many attacks on it since then.

When loyalists say they will 'go it alone' or declare UDI and fight Britain to remain 'British', they mean they will do anything to retain their

privileges. All the aspects of their 'British heritage' and 'British way of life' which they will defend are the ones directly associated with their privileges - the Empire, the Tory regime, the Monarchy, the Union Jack, the Orange Order, the British Imperialist Army.

### Decay

One of the leaders of Protestant reaction, Rev. Martin Smyth, Grand Master of the Belfast Orange Lodge, has made clear his reasons for political involvement: 'to prevent such people as Bernadette, Eamon McCann and Michael Farrell trying to plan, not the old idea of a Roman Catholic United Ireland, but a United Workers' Republic'.

It is for fear that, with the material roots of Unionism in decay, the Protestant section of the working class may split the Unionist block along class lines, that some ruling-class politicians are desperately searching for new ways of binding the working

class to their interests and ideology: Vanguard; UDI; hysteria over Catholic no-go areas; and, in the last resort, Civil War, where class differences would be washed away in workers' blood. Unionists are old hands at this game...

They will only succeed as long as the alternative made available to Protestant workers goes no further than Jack Lynch's corrupt regime. The re-unification of Ireland, with the help or indifference of British imperialism, and against Protestant workers, would be no victory for socialism.

Only a strategy which can actually offer more to these workers can hope to overcome the pro-imperialist and supremacist consciousness. Such a strategy must involve a struggle, primarily in the South, but with a clearly stated 32 county perspective, against all the aspects of capitalist and imperialist rule in Ireland which make meagre privileges seem like they are worth dying for.



Corish

## Labour's choice : collision or collusion?

Brendan Corish's decision to go all out for coalition with Fine Gael can hardly come as a surprise to those who have been watching the Labour Party's rapid retrogression to the worst days of William Norton. It ought to sober some of those who fondly thought that by remaining in the Labour Party they could moderate its betrayal of the working class.

Coalition with a right-wing party like Fine Gael cannot result in a government favourable to workers. Fine Gael voters, whose roots are fundamentally middle-class, conservatives, and pro-imperialist, have tolerated the adoption of radical-sounding policies and front-benchers, for the sake of winning an election. They might not forgive the implementation of such policies.

### Reform

However, there is not much danger of them being implemented. They are policies for the reform of capitalism, not for its destruction. Therefore they can only be implemented when capitalism can afford them, and for the foreseeable future capitalism will be preoccupied with bating down the hatches to face the harsh winds of the Common Market. Repression, not reform, is the order of the day.

Now, with ink scarcely dry on the Amendment to the Constitution, the coalition proposals are brought out of cold storage. It had not

been easy to talk about them during the Common Market campaign, with the Labour Party opposing entry (though without much enthusiasm).

The union of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael into a "grand coalition" in favour of the Common Market had a particular danger for the cowards nincompoops, and place-seekers who run the Labour Party to carry the Labour Party to carry the standard of opposition to the EEC. If that sort of "grand coalition" persisted, the Labour Party would find itself forced to express, however feebly, popular opposition to the conservative parties: to become the voice of the discontented and the oppressed.

### Frightening

This prospect was too frightening. The Labour Party is a respectable party. As Brendan Corish said in his speech, "democracy in this country is already threatened from within by subversive organisations. The Party's image was sadly marred during the referendum campaign because it was on the same side as subversive organisations.

In the days to come, such organisations may well be found defending the exploited, the unemployed, the homeless. If the Labour Party - even within the Dail - voiced any sympathy with the struggles of ordinary workers, dear Mr. Cosgrave might get the idea that the Labour Party was somehow tainted with socialism.

JOHN GOODWILLIE

## Eviction fails to break Rent Strike

The Corporation and the Gardai only succeeded in strengthening the rent strike in Dublin with the attempted eviction of John Leonard in Coolock. Intimidation has failed; the determination of the rent-strikers has grown.

The Regional Council of the Tenants' Associations started the strike on 1st May with 28 affiliated organisations. Seven weeks later they had 51. The meetings of the Action Committee have increased in size

Matt Larkin General Secretary of the Tenants' Associations (NATO) faces trial in September following Coolock evictions. Trade unionists have struck work in support of rent strike.

and in urgency.

The tenants can win. In some provincial towns, the authorities have conceded the tenants' demands, and the rent strikes have ended. In Dublin the City Manager has agreed to meet a N.A.T.O. deputation. They are entering the negotiations determined to get all they are asking for - no rent rise for 'A' - scale tenants, and big changes in the differential rent and house purchase schemes are just some of the demands.

The rent strike must not be ended however, one minute before any agreed terms are sanctioned by the Minister. He has the last say. A settlement could still take a long time; the vigilance of the rent-strikers must not be relaxed.



## RATIONALISATION FOR WHOM?

A lot of speculation was aroused by Mick Mullen's speech to the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union Annual Conference in June, in which he suggested that legislation to rationalise the trade union movement was on the way.

It was not entirely clear what he had in mind, though he said he would welcome a Bill to encourage amalgamations of unions, and to allow 'a new dynamic in organisation.'

### MEN ORIES

Trade unionists with memories longer than two years have been pointing out that the last time the government tried to introduce legislation of that sort, there was much more involved than 'painless' amalgamations. They cast their minds back to February 1969 when Mr. Hillery offered funds to cover the expenses of union amalgamations.

That offer was part of a package deal which would have transferred the position of trade unions in this country. It would have taken away many legal rights won

in the past, and made the unions into coercive agents of business interests. The Minister was to give licences only to those unions judged to have 'authority' over their members. The authority intended was quite straight-forward; a shop-steward calling a strike would have no legal protection. All strike proposals would have to be submitted to a secret ballot.

The Bill was also to encourage the formation of 'groups' of unions in particular industries. These groups were to be placed under the supervision of Congress of Trade Unions. Again, any individual union within a group which called a strike on its own would be without legal protection. The Minister was to have the right both to authorise the groups and to dissolve them if he wished.

### CORPORATE STATE

Mattie Merrigan of the Amalgamated Transport Union has described the business of Wages Agreements as 'corporate statism'. The government would happily take us further along that road if they could.

Only the vigilance of rank-and-file trade unionists can prevent their organisations being absorbed more into the state machine.

Mick Mullen spoke of 'efficiency', 'stream-lining', and 'amalgamation', 'efficiency' is obviously desirable, so that claims for better pay and conditions can be fought more powerfully. The unions need to be 'stream-lined' so that full-time officials are made more accountable to their members on a day-to-day basis. 'Amalgamation' of unions is certainly desirable if it is an amalgamation of members, not of bureaucracies.

### COLLABORATION

But this kind of 'efficiency', 'stream-lining', and 'amalgamation' is not what the government has in mind at all. Their aim is for a more easily controlled working-class. It must be fought at every level. In particular, we must oppose behind-the-scenes collaboration between union officials and representatives of government and employers.