

the worker

FOR A WORKERS' REPUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

Unite To Resist

NO ONE can doubt the worldwide nature of the crisis facing the capitalist system. It is only necessary to look around. In every country the pressure is on: on the ruling class to juggle their way out of the worst recession since the war; on workers to defend our hard won working and living conditions.

In Portugal, the weakest link in Europe, the crisis has thrown up the possibility of workers seizing power. The same pressures which may snap the Portuguese link are being felt throughout the rest of the system presenting opportunities which must be grasped by socialists in the coming period.

At home the tinkering with the National Wage Agreement and the imposition of the £6 limit in the North are increasingly being seen by workers as part of the attempt to make us pay for capitalism's chaos. Every fight back against these attacks puts another spoke in the capitalist's wheel.

In the North there's another aspect to the crisis. The seeds sown and nurtured by the ruling class to facilitate their rule have grown into a massive problem — one which they are trying to solve — again — at our expense. Their solution may be written in the blood of the working class.

Only the strength of the working class can throw their solutions back in their face. And that strength must be organised. Rank and file opposition to wage cuts and redundancy — in the unions and across industries; a united front against the British Army and Loyalism in the North; solidarity with Portuguese workers.

The ruling class are moving on all fronts. Unless their solutions are to succeed at the expense of our jobs, living standards and — in Portugal and the North — perhaps the very lives of workers, the ruling class will have to be resisted on all fronts. That means organising — NOW.

GROWING LOYALIST THREAT

FOR OVER six years now we have seen the violence in the North escalate. From stones to bullets to bombs. From baton charges through internment torture, sectarian assassination — and every day the predictions grow of civil war. Our fellow workers in the North have gone through all these hells, with perhaps worse to come, while the ruling class and its puppet politicians changed partners in a maca bre dance.

As the Convention near its end and the tempo quickens and the politicians are running out of time-saving manoeuvres the situation is being stripped down to its essentials: a sectarian statelet outgrown its usefulness to the ruling class; the Loyalist section of the working class determined not to give up its marginal dominance over the Catholics; the Catholic section of the working class equally determined to resist that dominance; and the ruling class, of Britain and Ireland — north and south — juggling with the statelet it created in an effort to stabilise the situation without losing its control.

The politicians, of whatever party,

reflect this situation as they manoeuvre to implement the wishes of the ruling class without losing the support of various sections of the population which they supposedly represent.

Support anti-imperialists

In this situation, where the Loyalist forces seek to retain the crude trappings of imperialism — even in opposition to the ruling class who seek to impose a modernised imperialism, as they practice in



Agreement on wage cuts

ISN'T it marvellous the way the government subsidies have brought down prices? Don't your wages go a whole lot further? OK, so they don't. But aren't you proud to be doing your bit to get the country through this economic crisis? You don't mind losing the third phase of the National Wage Agreement do you? And when you've tightened your belt and helped the government and employers ride out their crisis without serious damage to their interests they'll give you a big bonus when the next "boom" comes, won't they? OK, so you know that that — and the rest of the bosses' propagandā — is a load of crap. But the question is — what are we going to do about it?

They've got a crisis on their hands. They've got the National Wage Agreement to tie us down while they operate on the economy. They've just used their bureaucratic friends in the trade union movement to tighten the NWA and tie us down more firmly.

With the unemployment figures bobbing back and forward across the 100,000 mark and inflation continuing to eat into the value of wages

the south — and where the Loyalists attempt to retain this through civil war or some form of political settlement backed up by military intimidation, socialists must support that section of the working class which is anti-imperialist. We must defend the Catholic working class not out of a sense of nationalism but as the most advanced section of the working class struggling against repression.

The form that defence must take is a united front North and South, taking up NOW the concrete issues that can mobilise the thousands of



Workers' democracy: a worker addresses a mass meeting (above) at T.A.P. the Portuguese airline.

Solidarity with Portugal!

THE half-truths, distortions and downright lies with which our "free" press have been reporting the revolution in Portugal is an indication of how worried our rulers are about the situation there. And they have cause to be. For the first time in decades the working class of a European country have placed the possibility of workers' power on the agenda. Factories, farming estates, newspapers and a multitude of other workplaces are being run by workers. 75% of firms have been nationalised, and revolutionary workers councils have been thrown up in the greatest explosion of working class energy in forty years.

But things are very far from being cut and dried. The economic big guns of international capitalism are trained on Portugal. Economic and political sabotage is rampant and the Portuguese economy is in a state of near collapse. Inside Portugal the forces of reaction are gathering strength. Within weeks or months the crunch must come. The outcome can only be either a savage defeat for workers as the gains they have made are torn back by an ultimately fascist regime — or the Portuguese workers, through their revolutionary councils, will go forward to seize state power.

Either way, our fellow workers in Portugal face massive opposition. Even with a victory within Portugal they can not stand alone against the force of international capitalism. They need our solidarity.

the living standards of workers are taking a beating. And there's worse to come. The price paid so far by workers will not be enough to stave off the effects of the recession. The factors causing the crisis go way beyond the cost of wages. So the attacks on workers' living standards will continue. The wage-cutting during the present NWA will be followed by further wage restraint when that agreement runs out.

Held back

The trade union movement has been held back for too long. The time to organise the fight back is now. In the short term the fight will be led by the public service workers against the special payments ban. They must have the solidarity of all workers. In the longer term the rank and file of the unions will have to organise within and across the unions to force a strenuous defence against the attacks of the government and bosses.

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workers who alone can provide a defence against the reaction of Loyalism and the designs of the ruling class. The working class have suffered enough from the consequences of capitalism's actions, we cannot afford to wait for civil war before organising the only true working class defence — the united front. We must organise now.

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The Socialist Workers' Movement has been organising meetings in Dublin, Waterford and Galway in support of the Portuguese revolution. We intend to continue these meetings and hope to bring a Portuguese worker to Ireland shortly to press the case for solidarity. We need your help to do this. Watch THE WORKER, the papers, leaflets, posters, for announcements of meetings. If you can, raise the issue of "Solidarity with Portuguese workers" in your union and workplace.

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Licence to kill

THE OFFICIAL republican movement in Ireland has a distinctively paranoid way of explaining its own decline. In the face of a steady loss of active members and a shrinking influence, it has been striking out wildly at those alleged to have "infiltrated" and "disrupted" the movement. Ultra-lefts and ultra-left adventurism are now the main enemies - and, in the Officials' view, either directly or indirectly agents of the establishment.

Even the Officials' closest allies in Ireland, the Communist Party of Ireland, must blush to read the rantings in the 'United Irishman', in a pamphlet devoted to "ultra left adventurism" and, most recently, in an article titled 'What is the IRSP?' published in 'Teoric' which is outrageously described as the "theoretical organ" of the republican movement. Nobody is named, of course, but there is one thinly disguised reference to a member, or members, of the Socialist Workers' Movement.

Absolutely unable to believe that activists in the Irish working class movement or - horror of horrors - in their own movement could arrive at revolutionary socialist positions, the Officials have to find the origins of the plot outside the country. So,

"a Trotskyist from the United States" is behind the infiltration of the Official republican movement in Donegal and Derry. "This person organised classes and organised factional activity inside the movement." But there's only one person to whom that can refer - and he was INVITED by the Official republican leadership to do educational talks for their members.

The ultra-lefts are blamed for keeping up the barricades in Derry and thus preventing "schemes . . . to draw the whole community together". It was presumably non-sectarian to let the British Army patrol Catholic areas or give easier access for loyalist killers. The same people are charged with "fleeing" across the Border when the barricades were taken down - in fact, they were instructed to leave the North by the Official republican leadership and were for a short period given financial support while in the South.

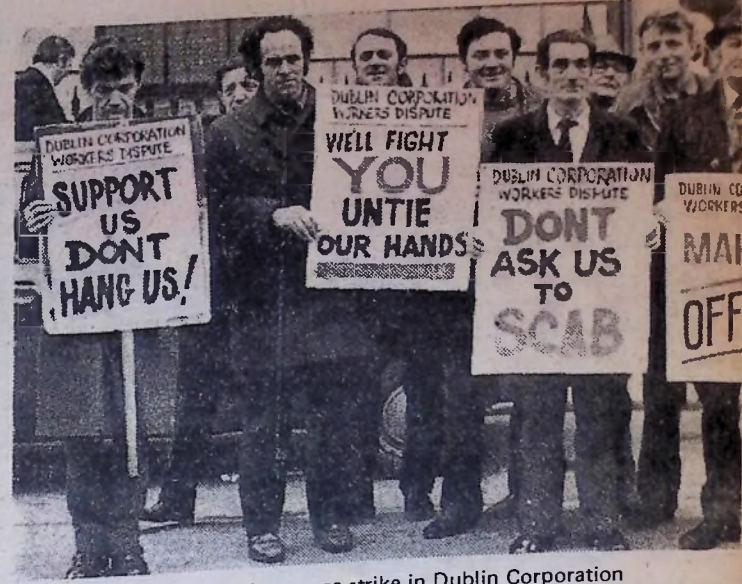
Some of those who came south are castigated for having "claimed in outright fashion, or hinted, that they were on the run for activity in the North". It can only be Smullen's hope that they should have walked into the arms of the RUC and the British Army.

Or else he is pretending that the Official republican movement has no responsibility for that large part of its members' activities which would make them liable to arrest or harassment.

Elsewhere, Smullen refers to people drafted into certain areas to disrupt things. He claims they included "known members of the International Socialists" So well known, of course, that he needn't name them. They are, of course, the figments of a perversely distorted imagination. The International Socialists have never had people acting for them, paid or unpaid, in Ireland. The I.S. has made no secret of its fraternal links with the Socialist Workers' Movement.

hardline

Smullen may not believe his own lies but at this stage it probably matters little. The hardline Stalinists who lead the Official Republican Movement don't know, or care for, the difference between truth and untruth. What matters is the obscene purpose: to plant firmly in the heads of their own members a justification for a campaign against the IRSP and left-wing groups. Not just a campaign of slander and intimidation, but one of physical assault and murder.



Flas-back to last year's maintenance strike in Dublin Corporation

Wage agreement talks

THE SHAMSHAM DANCE

THE EFFORT to get the terms of the fourth National Wage Agreement resembled nothing more closely than the Liz Taylor/Richard Burton affair as talks started, and broke off, then started again during August. It will certainly have the same result as the Taylor-Burton affair: the middle-aged, middle class partners - government, employers, and union bosses - fall into each other's arms again.

The tension created by alternating headlines like 'Wage Pact Optimism' and 'Wage Talks Break Down' could only have the effect of making us all eternally grateful to the negotiators for finally producing a package.

The original stumbling-block, you will remember (though you're not supposed to), was the unions' insistence that the 5 per cent ceiling on the third and fourth phases of the Agreement should be lifted. The employers said: No way. The government said nothing. Until, suddenly, after a lull in activity of some weeks they announced that they favoured the unions' approach, and recommended the employers to play ball.

What had happened? Nothing very startling, really - only what THE WORKER said last time was going on. The government, having manipulated price rises to have maximum short-term effect on the Consumer Price Index, had had a chance to see the preliminary results of their handiwork. You see, their announcement came exactly two days after the Central Statistics Office did the shopping to measure the Index. Obviously their findings showed that the rise for the quarter from May to August was less than the 5 per cent ceiling. So it didn't matter if the ceiling was taken away.

victory

The unions will greet this as a victory. And it is extraordinary and shameful to see just how easily they have swallowed the whole notion of directly linking wages and prices. Traditional opponents of the National Wage Agreements, like Matt Merrigan and Noel Harris, have been quiet or else actually supported the adjustment on these lines. Others - supporters of the National Agreements - have even tried to maintain that this represented an improvement of the terms.

In all the mock excitement about 4 per cents and 5 per cents the trade union leaders have chosen to forget the traditional union criticism of the Consumer Price Index as a means of measuring inflation. It has been long established that the Index does not reflect price rises as they are experienced by most working class families. And the government - praised by many union leaders for "doing their bit" - cynically exploited the oddities of the Index to get maximum effect. So, they reduced all bus and suburban rail fares

but didn't touch long-distance rail fares. So, they reduced the price of the ordinary bread pan but not the Vienna Roll. So they reduced milk by 2 pence per pint just days before the quarterly measure was to be taken.

By the simplest of political manoeuvres the government created an atmosphere in which the unions were obliged to "give a response". And there was hardly a voice heard at the Congress or in any public statement from the leaders of any union saying that this was what it was all about and that this was totally unacceptable.

responsibility

Unions and employers and government are not, after all, equal partners in an open and democratic society. Rather, the whole of society is structured around the power and privileges of the property-owners, the entrepreneurs and their political representatives. Once the unions start taking responsibility for the problems of such a system, they start cutting their own throat. Above all, in the context of this National Wage Agreement, they have helped to make a situation where the bosses can more easily get out of paying any increases at all by not challenging the whole idea that they should co-operate with the employers and the government.

The objection of the public service unions to the ban on special awards has been the most genuine obstacle to peace and harmony in the interests of big business. These anomaly increases were essential to many in the public service at a time when they were falling behind those in private industry. In some areas, of course, public services rates and conditions are now the standard by which those in comparable jobs in the private sector bargain.

The June Budget, which laid down the framework for revision of the terms of the National Wage Agreement, marked a new departure in National Agreements - direct government intervention to set the terms. The ban on special awards in those areas where the government has control of the purse-strings adds to the picture. We are moving closer and closer to the British type of solution, a "contract" between unions and government, backed up by the power of the state. In that situation, the limits would be lower, the controls would be tighter and the force used against those breaching the contract would be greater.

All workers must, therefore, rally to the support of any group of workers in the public service who take on the government over this special awards ban. Not just because the merits of this or that case are recognised, but because a blow against this proposal would be a blow against any restrictions on collective bargaining and thus against National Agreements as a whole.

BT

CONFUSED IRSP

JOHN GOODWILLIE

THIS TIME last year the split in Official Sinn Fein was widening to the point where it was obvious something would have to crack. In December it did; the Irish Republican Socialist Party emerged and the rapid formation of branches, the none-too-choosy recruiting and the lack of a stable political base left the new organisation with a lot of problems. These problems were intensified when the Officials attempted to physically smash their former comrades.

The I.R.S.P. today is still coasting along under the impetus of its enthusiastic beginnings, but the political unevenness and the lack of a coherent, agreed and understood policy has led to an uncertainty about just where it is coasting to.

The organisation came out of its April conference with quite an impressive - if somewhat mixum-gatherum array of paper policies. It has proceeded to ignore a good proportion of them.

trade unions

Its involvement in the trade union movement has been minimal, except for a brief effort in Limerick/Shannon. No interest in any women's movement is apparent. The call for a broad front against repression has resulted in one meeting in Dublin, although more has been done in Belfast.

Despite the composition of the National Executive elected at the Conference - predominantly to the left of Seamus Costello - he has remained Chairman and Principal spokesman. The Conference decided that "the struggle for national independence and a socialist republic is one and the same struggle". Yet Costello has not deviated from the address he gave to Conference (before we can establish a Socialist Republic). He continues to imply that you can carry an anti-imperialist struggle to success without its being consciously a socialist struggle and that by some undefined process the liberated Ireland then becomes socialist.

There are two objections to this. Firstly, a worker's republic can only be set up by the working class itself. Unless workers have struggled in the factories to take them over, they will not be able to run them. Unless the working class itself has sought state power, it will not be able to prevent an elite

emerging to rule in its name. An anti-imperialist movement cannot remove British imperialism and then patronisingly hand socialism to the workers on a plate.

The second problem is: does Costello believe in a stages theory? If the anti-imperialist struggle is a matter for the present, and the anti-capitalist struggle a matter for the future, it follows that there is no need to start much of a struggle for socialism until imperialism is out of the way. The manner in which the I.R.S.P. is found attractive by left-wing Provisionals suggests that some such perspective is in the air.



Seamus Costello, IRSP chairman

The failure of the I.R.S.P. to understand that the anti-imperialist struggle can only be fought successfully as a working class, socialist struggle is illustrated by their paper, the "Starry Plough". One reads of small farmers, fish-ins, the Irish language, unemployment, co-operatives; together with the occasional article on a strike.

Because their involvement in the South is not centred on industry, they have no clear line of approach in the North. They rightly condemn the Officials for their pathetic attempts to link arms with Loyalist organisations. But the I.R.S.P. seems to hope that the Protestant workers will just go away until British imperialism is defeated. Of course the Protestant workers will not be won before the struggle starts; but the struggle must be fought in the trade union movement as well as on the streets.

The only strategy the I.R.S.P. offers is to build local defence committees. But unless these follow a mass movement, they will be under the domination of the Provisionals or of elements which are even more backward and sectarian. The I.R.S.P. seems to suggest an offensive against British imperialism to take up the struggle where the Provos have left it off. But since it insists that it has no military wing,

it is presumably organisations like the People's Liberation Army which will do the fighting, and will decide the targets. I.R.S.P. members in the P.L.A. will be doing things not decided on by the political leadership of the Party. This is a disastrous situation. If the I.R.S.P. had any real commitment to democratic centralism, they would ensure that any physical force activities by their members were within perspectives laid down by the democratically-elected leadership.

This lack of control over military matters can have a devastating effect on the political organisation. How can there be free and democratic political discussion within the I.R.S.P. if some members have guns under alien control? The temptation to resolve difficulties by military methods could become overpowering. And if political leaders have military connections they can rule unchallenged.

military

The appalling lack of clarity on the military question meant that the Officials, to a large extent, won the propaganda battle over their attempt to physically smash the I.R.S.P. The Officials' campaign was a failure in the North: far from the I.R.S.P. being liquidated, it has been strengthened; but the tendency towards militarism has been particularly strengthened and the I.R.S.P. has grown on the basis of its military attitude rather than its socialist attitude. (In speaking of tendencies here, we recognise that the two tendencies often co-exist in the same individuals.)

The Officials' tactics have been somewhat more successful in the South, where the I.R.S.P. has failed to make a breakthrough into the organised working class. Indeed, in Dublin its organisations hardly seems to be functioning. The I.R.S.P. has failed a breakthrough which requires a jettisoning of some of the worst traditions of Republicanism. They have grandiosely organised their own poorly-attended Easter commemorations and Bodenstown rally (not yet understanding that Wolfe Tone represented the rising revolutionary capitalist class). They adopt the worst tokenism with regard to the Irish language. You open the Meann Fomhar issue of the "Starry Plough" to find the Eagarshocail on Leathanach 2. The National Conference becomes an Ard Fheis, the National Executive becomes an Ard-Chomhairle, Regional Executives become Comhairli Ceantair. Branches become Cumainn. It is like "Suidheachain do 41 phaisneiri: please do not talk to the driver".

The I.R.S.P. showed promise of recognising the importance of the working-class struggle. It has failed to put this into action. Unless it can alter its direction, it will remain in the bog of traditional Republicanism. Unless it can unite the national and class questions, it will fail to advance either of them.

PROD DEAL BLOCKED

CORPORATION workers in Dublin are going to be the first group of workers into the fight to defend our living standards against the present government.

The government are trying to make out that workers in the public sector are secure in their jobs and free from redundancies and must therefore make a 'sacrifice' by giving up any special payments that they have won over the basic terms of the National Wage Agreement. For corporation workers this will mean going without £3 a week.

The whole idea of security in the job in the public sector or that public sector workers are somehow spoilt is a load of rubbish. Every year the ESB knocks off older apprentices in order to make way for new streams of cheap labour. At the same time as they are demanding that workers give up their special increases, the government and the bosses are demanding that there be massive redundancies in CIE and the ESB.

A few months ago unskilled Corporation workers negotiated a productivity agreement in return for a £3 a week increase. The main provisions of this agreement were that workers be paid on a fortnightly rather than weekly basis. This meant less work for the wage clerks and the corporation would only lose an hour every fortnight on pay day rather than every week. The workers also accepted a differential between drivers of three wheel trucks and four wheel trucks where they had previously claimed parity. The Corporation also insisted that drivers of trucks should help unload them.

Many workers at the time felt they were selling very little for the increase. A few months previously skilled tradesmen had put in a claim for parity with skilled workers in the ESB and won an increase in return for a productivity deal. The differential in the corporation between skilled and unskilled was widened a lot after this but the corporation refused to consider any anomaly claim. Instead they offered a separate productivity deal which the workers accepted.

Sacrifice

But now the Coalition government are demanding that the corporation refuse to pay it and that the workers be forced to make a sacrifice. But already some of the provisions of the productivity are in operation.

The corporation workers have the power and the strength to break through the revisions of the wage agreements and begin the struggle for the defense of our living standards. Not only are the cleaning and garbage workers involved but strategic groups like firemen and waterworks attendants. Already the workers at the Graingegorman cleaning depot have shown their militancy by operating an unofficial go slow because of the mess up over the payment of their overtime.

But the militancy and strength can be weakened by the divisions and lack of contact between the different sections of corporation workers. Between the skilled and unskilled and between the different depots. And the whole idea of the two-tier picket is not much help. The Municipal workers union have a rule that there is no strike pay for workers who refuse to pass the pickets of other unions. During the recent unofficial strike only a handful of skilled workers refused to pass the pickets.

Links between the skilled and unskilled must now be forged. If the corporation workers break through the ban on special payments it will mean a victory for all workers in the public sector. Regular joint mass meetings between the different unions can cement this unity. Where possible alliances should be built with other public sector workers around the holding of support collections. If the State believes that it is going to make this the test case there is every likelihood that the army will be called in. This can only be met by mass picketing and appeals to the rank and file soldiers.

STOP PRESS: As we go to press the Corporation strike has been called off again.

AFTER MONTHS of determined struggle in defence of trade union principle the workers of Crown Controls in Galway are still in fighting spirit. The strike began in April in defence of a victimised shop steward and the workers have kept the pickets up over the holidays. Scab lorries, arriving by night, have now forced the strikers to extend the pickets after dark.

Support has been rallied largely through the efforts of the Crown Strike Committee and the Galway Shop Stewards and Rank and File Committee. Solidarity from AUEW members and workers throughout the country has aided the men in their fight. A large donation was sent from the Chrysler factory in Dublin when the workers there won their own battle for a lump sum increase. This support contrasts with the lack of even a statement of support for the strikers from the Galway Trades Council and the lack of active support from the Labour Party branches — though some Labour Party rank and file marched in the two demonstrations which disrupted Galway city.

The staff-led scabs who have continued to work throughout the strike are beginning to show splits as can be seen from recent happenings. The Crown bosses ordered office staff on to the factory floor to do the work of the strikers — forcing non-union labour to do the work of trade unionists. Some refused and were dismissed. This woke up some of the more naive of the scabs to what they were being committed to by the scab leadership and some of them spoke out against the transfers and dismissals. There is only one way of showing their real opposition — if such it be —



SIX MONTHS ON STRIKE:

Crown workers must win!

and that is by staying out of work, even at this stage; by paying a heavy fine into the strike fund and doing picket duty. There should be no question of anyone who does this being refused acceptance — other than the scab leaders.

The Galway Press — the Tribune and the Sentinel — have continued their pro-boss propaganda as could be expected. They published advertisements from the scabs as though they were the normal ads of an official union branch. They did their best to blacken the strikers by attributing to them the daubing and stoning of scabs houses. When others were arrested for these acts the print was small. They failed to report attacks by scabs on strikers, the latest of which was a savage attack on a picketer by one of the scab leaders. Printers and journalists on these papers should refuse such censorship by the bosses and organise to veto such distortions of the truth.

The Gardai have, during this strike, never faltered in their protection of the bosses' interests. They have escorted scab lorries across picket lines and well out of the city. They have harassed and taken the names of workers and a summons has been issued against Martin Daly, the victimised shop steward. This followed the expulsion of scabs from the Atlanta Hotel when they tried to take over a union meeting. Several workers can swear that Daly never touched anyone but the cops want to blacken his name as a rowdy strong-arm man.

Collections again

The crown bosses hope that the strike will drag on into the winter and eventual defeat. This must not be allowed happen. Collections must be reactivated and stepped up. The strike committee must organise jointly with the Galway and Gaeltacht Shop Stewards committees another mass demon-

stration into Galway, a sit-down around Eyre Square, blocking off the whole city for a protracted period. The Galway Shop Stewards Committee's petition which is pulling in a lot of signatures should be used in sending a deputation from this protest to the Minister for Labour to demand a freeze on state money to Crown. Demands should be made on the Trades Council and Senator Higgins to rally in their areas of influence for this protest.

There are rumours that the Crown bosses may threaten to close the factory. It seems their order books are not as full as they would have everyone believe. If they attempt to do this the strikers must occupy the factory and use it as a base to rally other workers in the fight against sackings and wage cuts. In such a case they must demand the company be nationalised without compensation to the Crown capitalists who should be summarily dismissed. Under any new state management the workers would have to enforce a full veto and scrutiny of management policies on production and marketing in order to safeguard jobs and conditions.

But at the moment, there are two immediate dangers facing the strikers; the night-time scab lorries bringing supplies into the factories which must be met by the organising of vigilante groups of workers to keep an eye on the factory at night and keep tabs on these lorries. It is crucial that these lorries are traced and blocked.

At the same time the scabs are using their hack lawyers to bring the union to court for calling the strike "illegally". This represents a threat to the independence of the union to which AUEW militants throughout Ireland must react. Any interference by the courts will inevitably weaken the fighting ability of the union. Such interference will transform the Crown strike into a national issue which can only be met by the union going on to the offensive. Already one Dublin (9DI) Branch of the AUEW has passed a resolution calling for a national one day stoppage in support of the Crown strikers. Other branches around the country should follow the example and put it into effect as soon as possible.

A.J.

SEMPERIT SPLITS THEM UP

THE WORKERS at Semperit tyre factory in Ballyfermot have not had the best of deals from management. Since 1969 they have been on the receiving end of all kinds of whizz-kid tactics — used with the co-operation of their union, the ITGWU.

A system of three shifts and separate sections has divided and isolated the workers leaving the different shifts and sections in the dark about each other. This has led to the company being able to change the bonus scheme to suit themselves. As the bonus makes up the best part of the wages of most of the workers they are under constant pressure.

Conditions in the factory are lousy. If you work anywhere near the chemical mixing area you can find yourself, by the end of the shift, covered by a substance known as carbon black. There are obvious health dangers from the long term effects of the chemicals, also from the pressure of shift and bonus work.

There has been some fight back from the workers but seldom to lasting effect. The present shop stewards are, in the words of one Semperit worker, "in the pocket of management and not for the workers". What is needed is strong union organisation in the factory with a shop stewards committee elected by the workers and responsible directly to them. It will have to include the maintenance men who will have to eradicate any elitist attitudes to the general workers.

A strong rank and file organisation on the shop floor would enable Semperit workers to build links with other rubber and car workers in Ireland and make contact with, for instance, Semperit workers in Austria. The first step in this direction would be the building of links within the factory by means of a factory bulletin.

Sixty-six workers at the American-owned Callins factory in Shannon have been on strike since early August against the firm's pay freeze. They have received no payments under the National Wage Agreements since last October! So, in this modern company which produces capacitors for the electronics industry the workers are earning the medieval wages of £20 for women and £28 for men.

rare

The attack on the workers' living standards has been so blatant that the strike is one of those rare things, an official ITGWU dispute. However, Branch Secretary, Frank Prendergast, has not lived up to his early promises of aid to the strikers. Having promised publicity for the strike — "he virtually promised us film star status", said one striker to us — he has had to face an attack at a general meeting for the silence around the strike.

The ITGWU is, of course, the main union on the Industrial Estate, but no attempt has been made to gather wider support from the members. Yet, if Callins succeeded in pushing through this wage cut — 23 per cent over one year — other employers will try to follow.

trick

The Callins workers have been amazed to see their union official accepting the

FOR THE SECOND time this year Unidare have sought a substantial number of redundancies.

As reported in THE WORKER No. 30 the firm pressed for 70 redundancies in May, which the union, the ITGWU got modified to voluntary redundancies. By September — a number of factors — including the union's negotiating — had reduced the number of redundancies to 14. But, the sudden increase in business in at least one of the areas affected by redundancies — SCA where 20 workers were to go and now an order from Libya has led to 12 hour shifts — makes us suspicious that this is why the firm was

Shannon workers fight wage freeze

word of the factory manager, Dunne, whom they would not trust as far as the door. Dunne tried the usual trick of threatening that the firm would pull out

cue

So, taking his cue, Bro. Prendergast started the next meeting by reading out what the workers were entitled to in redundancy payments. This had the predictable effect of splitting the workers — between those who stood to get more than £200 and those who would get less.

they select

After four weeks of the strike the ITGWU official was making it clear that he thought the strike could not be won. But Dunne himself saved the day for unity when a few days later he announced that the factory would now definitely NOT be closing down. He was, he told the committee, willing to take back 25 on a permanent basis; the rest would

prepared to reduce the redundancies in this area.

Hot on the heels of the drop in voluntary redundancies came the announcement from management that 10 workers in Oerlikon Electrodes and 30 in Tinsley Wire were to be laid off. It's possible that Unidare want to substitute these redundancies for the earlier redundancies that had been negotiated away. Their stated target is a workforce of 1,400 by December.

The union Section Committee strongly rejected the new set of compulsory redundancies and opted for pressing management to make them into voluntary redundancies. (There were rumblings of industrial action).

work out their notice. And Mr. Dunne would select the 25 himself . . .

The workers gave that 'offer' the right kind of treatment; they turned it down by 49 votes to 3. Dunne's bluff has now been called. The workers are now strengthened in their belief that nothing he says can be believed. They are determined to get the increases due to them — and to squeeze Dunne until the pips squeak. D.L.

The S.W.M. is now distributing 'Portugal At The Crossroads' by Tony Cliff (Price 40p from 95 Capel Street).

So, at this time, many Unidare workers are 'getting the lump'. It is now up to the remaining workers to make sure that ALL the gaps are filled. That is, a headcount should be made in EVERY factory and THE NUMBERS KEPT UP TO THE ORIGINAL WORKFORCE. The rank and file can press for this from their shop stewards and refuse to take on the work once done by the now redundant workers.

There is an alternative: if things are slack let the work be shared out among everybody during SHORTER HOURS with no loss of the full 40 hours pay plus a bonus compensation. Above all we need a strong union stand against ALL redundancies.

What is the alternative?

SINCE the prime need of all human beings is to make a living, the power within society is held by those who control the means of making a living. So the object of a revolution is to take control of those means — the means of production — away from the ruling class.

But the question is whether this will come through parliament or through some other means. We have always said change can never come through parliament because that is not where the real power lies; we have no control over the people who get in except for the odd mark we make on the ballot papers every few years. And we believe that there is an alternative—that workers in struggle can build new institutions to take control from the bosses and run our own lives.

For many years workers in struggle have developed ways of impinging on the control of the capitalists as a means of defence. Workers committees, shop steward and combine committees are some of the ways in which that control has been limited. When the struggle goes beyond that and workers organise consciously, revolutionary committees and councils which can threaten not just the control of individual capitalists but of the capitalist state itself — revolution is on the agenda.

In these pages we deal with some of those struggles — of the past and of the present — the struggle for workers power, the only hope for the future.

REALITY OF WORKERS' CONTROL

IN PORTUGAL today workers' control is a reality in factories in different parts of the country. Elected workers' committees extend even wider, but in many factories they just do the work of a shop stewards' committee, negotiating with management. In others they are giving instructions to a management that is powerless to resist them and in some the workers' committee are running the factory themselves.

Although many workers are still putting forward demands for wage increases, there are other firms where this is no longer the issue, when workers' control has to be used to defend the workers. For example in July, all West German orders at the nationalised SETENAVE shipyard in Setubal were cancelled. Ships coming in for repair were diverted the day before they were due to arrive. Such actions force the workers to consider political questions — the question of what class is in power in Germany, and in Portugal. The workers' committee has presented proposals to the government for solving the shortage of work, but the government has failed to respond. The workers' committees of the nine heavy engineering firms in the country drew up a joint economic plan, but the government shelved it for 3 months. The firms have decided to go ahead on their own as far as possible.

In the election of the Setenave workers' committee of 19, Communist Party sympathisers, who argued that the committee should be basically concerned with trade union problems, were defeated. A revolutionary slate was elected, which recognises that it has first and foremost a political function, to discuss political problems and control production. Revolutionary proposals include the organising of a workers' militia.

UNION COMMITTEE

There is a separate trade union committee to look after questions like wages, working conditions and safety, composed of one delegate for each 50 workers. Like the workers' committee it can be overruled by a general assembly of the 4000 workers in the shipyard. Equal pay for equal work has been introduced, and production

and office workers are on the same rates. The 8000 workers at the LISNAVE shipyard near Lisbon have a workers' committee of 20, elected by a mass meeting as individuals rather than on a politically-inclined slate. The shipyard is 60 per cent nationalised, this being all except the foreign shareholding. On the whole the workers' committee is sympathetic to revolutionary proposals, but does not think military involvement is necessary. However, they have been forced to adopt the position of being for the M.F.A. (Armed Forces Movement) only when it is with the workers.

The organisation of workers' control extends into many parts of the economy. The Portuguese airline TAP employs 2000 manual workers and 5000 white-collar workers. The manual workers were the first to organise. But they were smashed by the Army, in its strike-breaking days. They were forced to realise that the M.F.A. was not so much in favour of the people as it pretended to be, and they also adopted the position: "we are with the M.F.A. when it is with the workers,



Soldiers guard Republica offices

we are against it when it is against the workers". They also realised the necessity of bringing the white-collar workers in, and held a mass meeting of all workers. Such mass meetings continue to be held once a week.

There are two small but famous examples of workers' control in the mass media. The first is the radio station owned by the Catholic Church RADIO RENASCENCA. Trouble started there a year ago when the management tried to sack eleven workers by the use of "psychological tests" designed to find out their political allegiance. After a strike the workers put the station at the service of the working class, and later undertook a full occupation of the premises and aerials on 27 May.

The station used to finance itself partly from advertising and partly from a Church subsidy which has now stopped. Donations have been received from the trade unions and other sources. Trade unions called a demonstration in support of the radio workers at which 30,000 workers appeared, confronting the counter-demonstration of 1000 people called by the Church. The workers now all earn the same wages. The workers' committee is elected at a general assembly of the workers, who number 30 in all. They now fit the advertisements into the spaces between the programmes instead of vice versa. The general assembly at present oversees the programming, but the workers are trying to form a co-operative which will be open to neighbourhood committees and factory workers' committees, as the radio workers feel that the working class in general should be in ultimate control.

SACKINGS THREAT

The occupation of the newspaper "REPUBLICA" also started with threats of sackings. A workers' committee took over from the editor, a right-wing member of the Socialist Party. It used to take decisions only on economic and technical matters, but it has now started a weekly discussion of the content of the paper. About three quarters of the journalists refused to accept workers' control and have been replaced by journalists more sympathetic to the working class.

Organisation has also taken place in the SANTA MARIA hospital, where a management committee is composed of 28 members elected for a year, with one appointed. At present the management committee looks after trade union issues, but there is a feeling that there should be a separate body for these. There is also an elected committee in

each department. When the management committee fails to agree on a matter, it refers it to a general assembly of workers. The members of the management committee are full-time, but it is regarded as important that they should return to working positions in order to avoid becoming bureaucrats.

These are a few examples from the area around Lisbon, which includes a third of the population of Portugal. Circumstances have produced differing patterns in different places of work. But the workers are learning how to take control of their own destinies. The establishment of Revolutionary Councils of Workers in each factory is being advocated. The more politically active workers' committees with trade union functions. Above all, the different factories must be linked together on a district basis, bringing together delegates representing workers who see the need for their class to take power, as the only way to stop the advance of the Right.

JOHN GOODWILLIE



SOVIETS IN IRELAND?

ONE OF the things that has been hidden from Irish history books, has been the way that the Russian Revolution of 1917 influenced Irish workers to take up the struggle for workers control in this country. Across the world the Russian Revolution was seen as meaning one thing: that workers had the power to control their own lives. Workers control was to be based on Soviets or Workers Councils which were to be based on elected representatives of every workshop who could be recalled by the workers at any time. In Ireland too, this lesson was quickly learnt.

From 1918 the struggle against British imperialism was raging in this country. The Trade union leadership had decided to concentrate purely on recruitment and on building up the union machine which was to be controlled from the top. They left the leadership of the national struggle to the middle class Sinn Fein whose message was "Labour must wait." But the rank and file of the trade unions were having none of this. After the British Army put Limerick under Martial Law, the Trades Council declared a general strike in the town. They soon took over the running of the town by organising the food supplies, printing their own money and taking over all the policing. By

1920 the trade unions were calling a general strike of hunger strikers in. During the strike the showed their radical Bagnalstown the work a provisional soviet go policed the town. In-I Branch secretary report body that wanted anytl the town had to come committee and place : before us." In many c the Red flag was carried.

CLEEVE

After a lockout at Cleeve in Knocklong in 1920 their way back in ar Red flag and a slogan butter and not profits' a Trade union organis manager and producti way again. Healy toge other trade union organ Munster Council of Ac of Action were being se at this time to organise the Russian Revolutio made up of delegates fr and trade union branch town. Unfortunately w if the Munster council on the same line.



1920 - and Italian workers seize their factories.

Revolutionary democracy

THE SITUATION in Portugal today, with revolutionary workers, tenants and soldiers councils coming to the forefront of the struggle is an exercise in workers power. Today they limit the power of the capitalists but tomorrow they could and must be the organs of working class power, replacing the bosses' system.

COUNCILS IN ACTION

In Russia in 1905-6 the soviets (the word means Council) sprang up for the first time. In 1917, after the overthrow of the Tsar in February, they re-appeared on a vastly greater scale and soon there were also soldiers' soviets, peasant soviets and, most important of all, workers' and soldiers' soviets. As everybody knows, the October revolution was made under the slogan 'All power to the Soviets.'

These soviets were made up of elected delegates from workplaces, regiments and so on and also representatives of those political parties that were based on the working class and the peasants. They represented the active force of the working class and, to a lesser degree, the peasantry. Because they were created from below by workers and by peasant soldiers and not from above by bureaucratic decree, no two soviets were exactly alike in their composition and structure. They were living, changing organisations evolving to meet particular needs and under the influence of different political ideas.

GERMANY 1918

They were not, however, a response to peculiarly Russian conditions. Germany in 1918 was, in some ways, almost the opposite of Russia. It was a heavily industrialised country as opposed to largely agricultural Russia. It had had, for a long time, a powerful labour movement operating under legal conditions, conditions quite different from those of workers under the Tsar. Yet the German equivalent of the Russian soviets—Arbeiterrat and Soldatenrat—came quickly into being as the Kaiser's regime cracked. 'During the first days of the November (1918) revolution workers' and soldiers' councils were elected in all workshops, mines, docks and barracks', explains a history of the time. (E Anderson, *Hammer or Anvil*, p 43).

SPAIN 1936

In Spain in July 1936 workers and peasants committees were created as the military and fascist forces under Franco tried to overthrow the Popular Front government and smash the workers and peasants movements. 'In all the towns and most of the villages in Spain, similar committees were operating under various names... They had been appointed in an infinite number of ways. In the villages, the factories, and on the worksites, time had sometimes been taken to elect them, at least summarily, at a general meeting. At all events, care had been taken to see that all parties and unions were represented on them... because the committees represented, at one and the same time, the workers as a whole and the sum total of their organisation.' (P Broue and E Temime, *The Revolution and the Civil War in Spain*, London, 1971, p 127).

HUNGARY 1956

In the quite different conditions of the Hungarian revolution of 1956, workers' councils again played a central part. 'By the third day of the revolution, 26 October, people everywhere were establishing institutions to give expression to their new power. They formed 'Revolutionary Councils' in the towns, the villages and the quarters of the cities, in newspaper offices and government ministries, in colleges, on collective farms and, above all, in the factories. (C Harman, *Bureaucracy and Revolution in Eastern Europe*, p 137).

PORTUGAL 1975?

Left: 40,000 workers, soldiers and sailors marched through Lisbon's streets in June for the unity of workers, soldiers and sailors in Revolutionary Councils.

The idea of such councils is far from new, stretching back to the Soviets thrown up in the Russia of 1905 and 1917. The development of the ideas of such institutions is part of the legacy of the great Italian revolutionary Antonio Gramsci.

The massive factory occupations in Turin in 1919-20, where Gramsci played a leading role, were the anvil on which he hammered out his ideas.

Gramsci's ideas, developed in practice, his theories worked out in detail, argued that the social life of the working class is rich in institutions but that they demanded development and coordination. He called for the election of vast delegate assemblies chosen from the best and most conscious workers. He argued for street committees to survey the factories in their areas and to join with committees in those factories and become the seat of street councils and workplace delegates. This would knit together and centralise all the working class energies in the district.

The system of elections in the streets would vary according to their size. In the factory the aim would be one delegate for every fifteen workers, arriving by electoral stages at committees of factory delegates which would include representatives of the whole workforce (manual workers, clerical, technicians etc) The district committees from the factories and streets would include delegates from other categories of workers living in the district; railway workers, Corporation, transport, shop workers etc. etc. These committees would be the legitimate, democratic and authoritative expression of the whole working class living in the district.

Gramsci's ideas were not dreams of impractical theories conceived overnight, but concrete development of fighting institutions thrown up by the struggle of the working class. They are as applicable here in Ireland as in Italy 1919 or Portugal 1975. As Gramsci stated: "The dictatorship of the working class must cease to be a mere formula, an occasion for showy revolutionary phraseology. He who wants the end must also want the means."

Those means - revolutionary councils of the working class built in the struggle against capitalism and becoming the means of taking and holding power - are not yet on the agenda in this country. But the ideas are there, the struggle is there and the barbarism we know as capitalism will not end until those ideas and that struggle are welded together in the fight for workers power.

K.Q.



UNIDADE

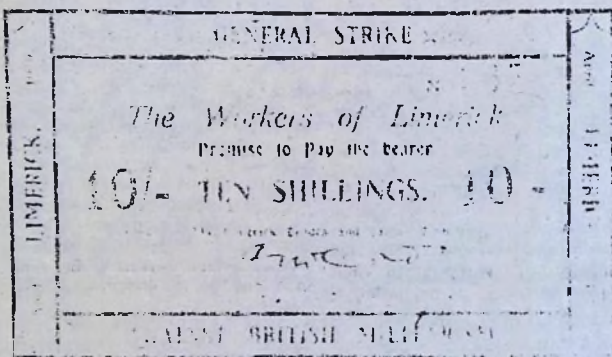


Delegates to the Congress of Soviets examine documents outside the Smolny Institute

Around the same time Miners at the Arigna coal mines seized the mines after the bosses refused a wage claim. They continued on working and sold the coal to the railway companies to pay their wages. Again in 1921 the Cleeves bosses became victims of the workers militancy when their factory in Brucec was seized because they sacked ONE man.

On September 6th one of the strangest and shortest of 'soviets' was formed. After the Cork Harbour Board had refused a demand for a minimum wage of £3.50p a crowd of dockers gathered outside their offices and watched as a few of their officials entered the offices. The officials dismissed any of the staff who were not prepared to recognise the newly elected

Cleeves factories be seized and run under workers control. Within two days a whole chain of factories were seized in the Munster area. New managers were elected from the workers. The produce was distributed through sympathetic trade unions. But this time the bosses were determined to put up a fight. Through their rancher friends in the farmers union they attempted to organise a boycott on the occupied plants. After a week or so shops in Clonmel were picketed by hundreds of workers for not taking produce from the worker-run creamerys. The local I.R.A. arrived and fired blanks over the heads of the pickets. It is unclear how the occupations ended. In some areas they went on for months but as the Free State



Money used by workers, and accepted by traders, during the 1919 Limerick 'Soviet'.

management. However by four o'clock a mass meeting decided to end the 'Soviet' pending the resolution of their claim.

But it was only in 1922 that Ireland saw anything that approached the real meaning of the word Soviet. The Condensed Milk Co. run by Cleeves demanded that its workers cut their wages by a third or they were going to close their factories. The Munster Council of Action decreed that their

forces began to achieve victory in the civil war in that area they soon restored law and order.

At the same time the Tipperary Gas works were seized by workers. Some of the local bosses of the town tried to refuse to pay up their bills to the workers but they soon found that their gas supplies were cut off. Although the workers confiscated coal from some of the local landlords and shared with the Cleeves workers, they were beaten after a month because they could get no coal.

NO PARTY

However, despite the clear expression of workers' confidence in their ability to control production, it is still very debatable whether we are to regard these experiments in workers control as soviets. In the first place, while the leadership was largely in the hands of political militants like Hedly, the occupations were largely seen as tactics to be used in order to put up a militant fight against wage cuts rather than as new institutions that were capable of mobilising workers for seizing power. This explains why they so rarely spread. They also failed to involve the strong sections of the working class around Dublin where the dockers and the railwaymen had already begun to take wage cuts. Because of the syndicalist influences on the Irish Left, there were no serious attempts to build a working class party that would spread the soviets and see them as instruments by which the working class could wield power.

Because the bosses were given a fright but were not paralysed they were able to come back on to the offensive. "Not a single section of our members did not take a wage cut in 1923" said the ITGWU annual report. For ten years afterwards, the life was knocked out of the unions and ideas of workers control and workers power were quietly forgotten and buried as a right wing nationalist leadership took over.

S IN
ND?

the trade unions leadership were a general strike in support of the strikers in Mountjoy jail. In the strike the rank and file showed their radical intentions. In the town the workers proclaimed a soviet government and the secretary reported that "anything that wanted anything moved in the town had to come to the strike committee and place an application for a flag was carried."

CLEEVES

After a lockout at Cleeves creamery in 1920 workers forced the bosses back in and hoisted the flag and a slogan: "We make the milk and not profits". Jack Hedly, the union organiser was elected and production got under way again. Hedly together with two other trade union organisers founded a Council of Action. Councils of Action were being set up in England at the time to organise solidarity with the Russian Revolution. They were made up of delegates from workshops and union branches in a particular area. Unfortunately we don't know if the Munster council was formed on the same line.



Economic struggles in the Dublin Newspaper industry are now throwing up the question of workers' control - not only over conditions and the day-to-day running but over the editorial content. The process is in its early stages as yet but more will be seen of it as the struggle intensifies during the next year.

NEWSPAPER BOSSES TRY TO CUT WAGES

NOTHING pleases the capitalist press more than to be able to use its own propaganda on the recession and the need for workers' sacrifices to confront workers in its own industry. The Irish newspaper industry is no exception to this general rule. They have been among the first to plead inability to pay the national wage agreement increases. They have a superficially plausible case, since their sources of revenue are hit almost immediately by the onset of recession - advertisements down and buoyant circulation figures cut back. The oil crisis has also affected the price of newsprint quite dramatically - it has trebled in a year.

However when we look closer at the situation this plausibility loses its gloss. Each of the three main groups of daily newspaper publishers has quite a lot to hide when it comes to a plea of inability to pay. The IRISH TIMES has recently been successfully asset-stripped to the tune of £360,000, the deal sold as a great breakthrough in the protection of editorial 'independence'; the IRISH PRESS has successfully completed a costly modernisation programme financed entirely out of profits and has been able to proceed with a one-for-one script issue to the benefit of its

shareholders; the IRISH INDEPENDENT, now part of the sprawling, if disintegrating, Fitzwilton complex wasted up to £400,000 on a giveaway paper in London - while its provincial newspapers are still highly profitable. So there is a rotten core to the claims of poverty.

Simultaneously newspaper companies in Fleet Street, most of them part of immense conglomerates, are trying to force redundancies on the basis of the introduction of new technology. The lessons are not being lost in Dublin and we may expect announcements along the same lines here, probably beginning with the IRISH TIMES.

Reaction to any such developments are complicated by the diversity of unions in the industry and by the fact that some of them are run in a highly bureaucratic manner.

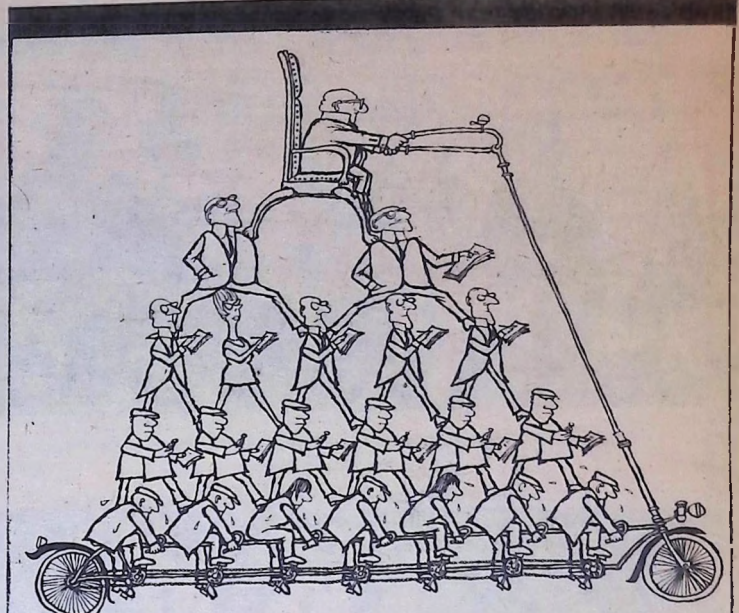
There is a history of rather thorny inter-union rivalry which the managements attempt to use in a divide and rule tactic. Such divisions are likely to be particularly dangerous when confronted with a determined attempt to introduce new technology.

Recently there have been moves to overcome these divisions at the rank

and file level. In the Irish Press and Irish Times workers' councils have been set up which bring together shop stewards from all the unions (eleven and nine respectively). Besides co-ordinating approaches to the issue of conditions information and parallel negotiations the national wage agreement has forced them to pool strategies on the refusal to pay by managements. After a canvass of workers' opinion in these two firms it was decided to refer the matter to the Labour Court for assessment - the same applied to the Irish Independent. There was very little support for strike action at that stage. The result is that the workers in the industry await the results of the assessment, the details of which will not be available to the unions.

In an effort to turn this to the Workers' advantage the Irish Times workers' council demanded a very detailed breakdown of the company accounts combined with a much greater degree of workers' veto power over decision-making. Some of the information was made available and it has become much clear that workers are being made to carry the can for managerial incompetence and squandering of resources. At the moment there are signs that the management might be willing to introduce some form of 'workers' participation' in a continuing attempt to channel militancy away from confrontation. This should be resisted - the greatest guarantee of advance in knocking back management's 'right to manage' is to maintain and extend the workers' independence.

It is, nevertheless, quite probable that there will be a strike in one of the papers when the Labour Court issues its findings. This will be important since the paper workers are in a position to give a lead to other workers threatened with non-payment.



THIS MONTHS "funny incident". The owners of the Green Cinema, in Dublin, have a reputation as wily sharks. The Green Group has a grubby fin in almost every aspect of the cinema business and the head sharks - the Andersons, Kevin and Paul - are known by cinema workers from Dublin to Waterford and points south - to have particularly sharp teeth. Workers in one cinema in Killarney had not received the second phase of the LAST National Wage Agreement until recently when the ITGWU put its dainty boot in - at its usual leisurely pace. However, when news got round a few weeks back that the Andersons had sacked three ushers from the Green for - wait for it - "non-cooperation", it was obvious that the sharks had bitten off more than they could chew. Strike notice went in and the Andersons dawdled.

WHOSE SIDE ARE THEY ON? (1) Andy Barr, past President of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and Chairman of the Communist Party of Ireland, quoted by Michael McInerney in the 'Irish Times', 8th July 1975: "Britain cannot leave Ireland now. To do so would be an admission of defeat and abject failure and would lower her stature throughout the world."

WHOSE SIDE ARE THEY ON? (2) Frank McCaughey, Provisional Sinn Fein member of Clones (Co. Monaghan Urban District Council), proposed that the Council should not pay the first phase of the 16th round increases to the council workers. His proposal was defeated by the Chairman's casting vote.

THIS socialism business can get quite grim at times, but history has always thrown up some light relief. These days a lot of it comes from that point of the political spectrum known as "Maoism". Our home-grown Maoists have begun to publish a series of pamphlets which promise many a chuckle in the winter days ahead. No. 1, published in August, is up to the usual standard: "Differentiate between Sham and Genuine Marxism-Leninism to Unite the Revolutionary Forces and Defeat the Enemy - British and Irish 'Communist' Organisation - Trotskyite Thugs, Sham Marxist-Leninists and Agents of British Imperialism." Phew! - and that's just the title. Really good value for only 4p. It's a pity they take themselves so seriously though. If they put that to music there might be hope yet for Ireland in the Eurovision Song Contest.

CUTTING THRO' THE LIES

EMPLOYERS are liars. Few of us learned that maxim at grandma's knee but most of us find the truth of it after we've spent a while at work. The bosses don't like us to know too much about what's happening on their side of the profit margin. As a result, trade unionists can be at a loss when it comes to negotiations on pay or working conditions. The boss comes to the table armed with all the facts. He KNOWS the situation down to the last half pence, and that leaves trade unionists at a disadvantage. Even should he produce some facts and figures they will merely be those which improve HIS case.

Pluto Press have published a book which goes some way towards evening things up. YOUR EMPLOYERS' PROFITS, though primarily intended for British workers, explores the ins and outs of the methods by which the bosses bury the money we earn for them in a swamp of figures and accountants' tricks -

and explores and explains those methods in a way which can help us all dig them out. It explains where to find the true facts and knit them together to get a clearer picture of the situation. At the moment workers everywhere are experiencing the poor mouth from employers and any guide to the means by which the bosses can switch figures around and hide important facts is to be recommended to all trade union activists.

There's another old socialist maxim: "Tell the truth and you'll shake the world". Well, this book, while telling us how to get at the truth, won't exactly shake the world - but if used properly it can help us shake a little more of our hard-earned cash out of our bosses' sweaty fingers.

YOUR EMPLOYERS' PROFITS: Workers Handbook No. 2, by Christopher Hird. Pluto Press, 90p. Available from the Worker Book Service, Top Floor, 95 Capel St., Dublin 1.



Peter O'Hara, managing director, Irish Times with Donal Nevin.

By this time it was obvious even to them that this was one they weren't going to win and it was with some glee that cinema workers watched the face-saving manoeuvres that were thrown up. At the last moment the Andersons offered six weeks pay - but no reinstatement. It was rejected, so they backed down again. Okay, they'd take the ushers back, but they wanted an apology. It was the thought of losing, through strike action, the excellent business they are now doing which finally brought them to their knees. Full reinstatement with no loss of earnings. Since they'd had to employ two other ushers during two weeks it took to settle the issue their recklessness cost them a few quid. How appropriate that the Green's coming attractions include "That's Entertainment"!

Now that the shark's teeth have been somewhat blunted, it's up to workers in the Andersons' cinemas to do a bit of extracting.

MARY BURNS

WHAT WE STAND FOR

SOCIALIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT

The SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT is a revolutionary workers' organisation, which aims to organise the working class in the struggle for power and for the overthrow of the existing social order. All its activities, its methods and its internal organisation are designed to achieve this purpose.

The system under which we live, capitalism, is based on production for profit, not for human need. It is driven by the capitalist's need to amass more and more profits. This makes capitalists compete with one another for markets and for political control, both nationally and internationally. The fruit of that competition is seen in war, poverty and crises.

The capitalist class controls this society by its ownership and control of the means of production; that in turn is based on their exploitation of the working class. The capitalist class is a tiny minority governing the lives of the majority, and claiming to have 'democracy' on its side. In Ireland, 7 per cent of the population own 70 per cent of the wealth.

The working class - and only the working class - has the capacity to end exploitation and oppression. In Ireland its confidence and its strength

have increased enormously in recent years, and the working class is now the largest social class. What our class lacks, however, is a political leadership with the influence to resist all ruling class pressures on our actions and to point the way clearly towards socialism as the only solution to the working class's problems, and those of any social group oppressed by this system.

A working class organised independently of the middle class in its own fighting organisations in the work-place, and in its own democratically controlled socialist party can create a society based on production for human need. The establishment of a Worker's Republic the necessary goal of the class struggles, would not mean merely state control of investment and of industry, but workers control, from the bottom, of all aspects of society.

That kind of socialist society does not exist anywhere today. The attempts of the Russian working class to build socialism were halted by the failure of their revolution to spread, and by the actions of the Stalinist rulers, who established a new type of society based on exploitation and oppression. We oppose the

Moscow regime as we oppose those of Washington and Peking.

Because the capitalist system itself is international, and the world economy is increasingly dominated by a couple of hundred companies, the fight for socialism must be organised on an international basis too. A Workers' Republic in Ireland could not survive without the aid of the British and Continental working classes. In supporting all genuine anti-imperialist struggles, in Ireland or anywhere else, we hold that imperialism and capitalism can only be defeated by world-wide workers' revolution. For imperialism is simply the form which capitalism takes today.

The SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT fights to unite the working class irrespective of religion and sex in struggles to cut back exploitation and improve living conditions. We fight to make the workers' organisations, the trade unions, completely independent and democratic in order that they may play an effective part in these struggles. As immediate aims we fight for a minimum wage of £30 for a 35-hour working week, for rank-and-file control of the trade unions, and we oppose all anti-trade union

legislation. We oppose redundancy, unemployment and lay-offs.

On the national question, we believe that the present leadership of the anti-imperialist movement has shown itself incapable of maintaining a consistent approach because it is incapable of recognising the class content of the question. The national question can only be solved in the working class's struggle for power, and that can only be won by a united working class. As immediate aims, however, we fight for an end to internment and to repressive legislation North and South, and for the withdrawal of the British Army from Ireland. We support the self-defence of working class areas

against military and sectarian attack. We fight for total separation of Church and State.

The SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT is a democratic centralist organisation open to those who accept its principles and objectives, who work in one of the units of the movement, agree to recognise its discipline and to pay dues. All other revolutionary organisations in our countries, with whom we have fraternal links, we are striving to build our own organisation to get such support as to work meaningfully for a revolutionary international working class parties.

SWM

I wish to:

have further details of the Socialist Workers' Movement

take out a subscription to 'The Worker' and enclose 80p for 1 year

Name _____

Address _____

Send to: TOP FLOOR, 95 CAPEL STREET, DUBLIN 1

First step to workers' power?



BRIAN TRENCH

PORTUGAL'S Sixth Provisional Government, which took power last month, will find it very difficult to implement its programme to stabilise capitalist rule. In spite of all the right-wing manoeuvres to get an anti-worker government, and in spite of the right-wing terrorism which has spread from the North into Lisbon itself, the Portuguese working class is still in fighting form. Two years after the bloody coup which overthrew Allende's regime in Chile they are determined that Portugal will not be the Chile of Europe."

That's the cry that has been taken up on demonstrations during the last few weeks in Portugal. The most aware workers, and the revolutionary groups, know that to prevent another Chile the working class has to be organised, united and prepared for self-defence. The Western press has tried to paint a picture of total anarchy by speaking of the thousands of arms in civilian hands. But in the face of the attempts of right-wingers to assert control over sections of the army and in face of the activities of the fascist Portuguese Liberation Army (ELP), the working class has no choice but to arm itself.

The Portuguese super-rich and the multi-national companies can only impose their authority again by brutal and bloody means. While they may appear for the moment to be trying a gentler, social democratic solution, they know that can only be made to

work if the areas of workers' control are won back, if the class is demoralised, and if the revolt in the army is beaten. And none of that is done peacefully and easily.

"People's power", as it is called in Portugal, has developed in many ways: small farmers and agricultural workers taking over large estates and farming them co-operatively, people travelling in buses forcing drivers to extend the route, residents' committees occupying blocks of flats and setting up co-operatives to build more, popular health clinics, education-co-ops, popular assemblies linking factories, estates and barracks — but, above all, a workers' control in most major industries parallel to that of the management and the State.

ARMY

This struggle has run through the army where authority has broken down completely, and where even the more democratic assemblies existing since last year's coup no longer work effectively. The attempt of the newly structured Revolutionary Council to silence the reporting of anything other than the official military opinions was defeated not just by the journalists' unions but also by the rank and file soldiers.

Just two days after the decree was made at the beginning of September over 1500 soldiers from the

Northern and Central parts of the country marched through the streets of Oporto telling people in the most direct way possible what their opinion was: "Soldiers always on the people's side", "Reactionaries out of the barracks", "Down with the ELP and all who support it", "Workers and peasants, soldiers and sailors, united we shall win."

The soldiers were followed through the streets by about 15,000 civilians in one of the most emotional demonstrations seen anywhere in Portugal since April last year. The next day, a group of soldiers in an Oporto barracks announced they were going to observe a minute's silence for those killed in the Chilean coup. Their commanding officer was opposed to it, so they all stood facing him with rifles loaded and observed their minute's silence. When an attempt was made to discipline some of those thought to be responsible for organising the demonstration, a whole barracks went "paralysed", arms hanging limply by their sides and refused to obey orders.

INITIATIVE

Further demonstrations led by soldiers have since taken place. They are heightening the divisions in the army between the rank and file



Portugal's radical and revolutionary soldiers are making it impossible for the Sixth Government to restore discipline in the army, as they aimed to do. Following the lead of SUV they have held some of the biggest demonstrations seen in Lisbon for some time. In the barracks, there have been many more examples of the kind of revolt detailed alongside.

and officers, and bringing revolutionary workers and revolutionary soldiers closer together. As the economic chaos also deepens, it is clear that the ruling class cannot just let the situation drift. It is now a question about who can take the initiative, and keep it, the working class allied to revolutionary soldiers, or the ruling class and the sections of the army it can control.

If it is the first, then events in Portugal over the next few weeks could begin to change the face of the

earth — if workers in other countries including Ireland, respond to the lead of their Portuguese brothers and sisters, force the capitalist countries and the multi-nationals to end their economic boycott, and give material and moral aid to the working class of Portugal. Without that kind of response even the most heroic achievements of the Portuguese workers could be undone. There must be that solidarity if we are to ensure that: **PORTUGAL WILL NOT BE ANOTHER CHILE!**

CHILE: Repression against all workers

ONE THING is very clear about the repression in Chile today — it is not directed against a few leaders of the Communist, Socialist or revolutionary Left parties, but against every conscious militant, every potential leader from the shop floor. For the real fear of the Generals was not Allende, who only carried out pretty minor reforms, but of the energy of the working class which was pushing him further. Allende had to be forced to nationalise factories after the workers occupied them; he had to be forced to legalise land seizures which the peasants had already carried out. So if the coup was to succeed it was necessary to massacre every local leader possible and completely disorganise the radical working class.



Chilean generals salute a job well done.

slaughtered over 20,000 people and arrested and viciously tortured tens of thousands more.

A few months after the coup the liberal press shut up about the tortures and shootings, giving the impression that the bloodletting was over and things had returned to "normal". In fact the opposite is the case. Once firmly in power, the Generals set about building the massive apparatus of repression which today continues in a routine and systematic way the hunting down of radicals. Whole towns are places under curfew, divided into different sectors and every man, woman and child in a sector is brought out and screened. This goes on until the entire population of the town is covered. The repression is backed up by a massive information network of informants on militants. The director of every school must report each week on the activities of the teachers and the universities are run by the military.

Revolutionaries are vulnerable due to their isolation from each other. Leaflets are distributed advertising secret meetings which turn out to be death traps for those who attend. There is widespread planting of informers in factories and schools. Prisoners who have recently left Chile have testified to

the continuing use of torture. The sophisticated use of "sensory deprivation" techniques is alternated with the more traditional methods of beatings and electric torture.

ASSAULT

The repression of political militants is accompanied by an economic assault on the whole Chilean working class. The price freeze imposed by the Allende regime has been removed and inflation is running at 16% PER MONTH while wages have been more or less frozen. At the same time workers are forced to "voluntarily" work an extra hour a day in aid of national reconstruction. The Junta see the way to "national reconstruction" by means of huge influx of foreign capital. But such an influx will only occur if there is a guaranteed high return on investment — and that means a high level of repression in order to turn Chile into an investors paradise. So, the trade unions have been dissolved, savagely smashed and a 30% level of unemployment

maintained. By such means the Chilean junta have diverted a large part of the national surplus back to profit at the price of the super-exploitation of the working class.

But in spite of all this the spirit of the working class has not been fully curbed. In the face of industrial sabotage and even some strikes the Junta have not been able to raise production.

Because of the Junta's shock economic policies a split has clearly emerged in the ruling class. By cutting workers buying power the Junta are depriving a section of the native capitalists of their markets. Further, the high level of inflation has destroyed the savings of the lower middle classes who initially supported the Junta and provided its mass base. As a result, the Christian Democrat Party — which at first welcomed the coup — has now come out in opposition to the Generals. But behind their talk about "excesses" the real reason for their opposition is to protect native capitalist interests.

The Chilean Communist Party has drawn absolutely no lessons from their experiences. Like homing pigeons they return to the "parliamentary road". Their main strategy now is an alliance with the Christian Democrats around

the demand to "bring democracy back" to Chile, thus redeeming the C.D. in the eyes of the workers. Learning nothing from the fate of Allende they again tone down the struggle in an alliance with the bloodily proven enemies of the working class. It was the same strategy followed by Allende — of appeasement and compromise instead of basing himself on the organised power of the working class and building a workers militia and workers councils — which led to the savagery of the Junta.

It is inevitable that organised resistance is at a very low level in Chile today, therefore international solidarity is crucial. But not the hypocritical solidarity movements supported by such Eastern European states as Rumania which has offered credits to the Generals and promises to invest £100m in the mining industry.

The only real basis for a solidarity movement is in the trade unions, around demands that harness the enthusiasm of workers to the fight for a socialist Chile. This does not mean that such a movement should not be prepared to work with liberals around specific issues — petitions for the release of prisoners; on a humanitarian basis — but the demands and means of struggle could not be toned down to attract such people. The real core of any solidarity movement must be in the unions.

KA

Paul Gillespie was the speaker on behalf of the Socialist Workers Movement at a Chile Solidarity meeting in Galway at the end of September. Chilean refugees in Galway helped us with material for the above article.

And that is what the General have done. In one of the most barbaric victories of the ruling class they have -

UNITED FRONT STILL THE KEY IN NORTH

WITHIN THE LAST FEW MONTHS EVENTS IN THE NORTH HAVE BEGUN TO WIPE FROM THE EYES OF THE ANTI-UNIONIST WORKING CLASS THE VEIL OF LIES, MYTHS AND ILLUSIONS PEDDLED BY THE SDLP - AND BY THE PROVOS, WHO PROCLAIMED 1975 THE "YEAR OF VICTORY"

The SDLP had managed to persuade thousands that their programme of power-sharing and an Irish dimension could be won from the UUUC politicians. These are the same people who more than twelve months ago backed the sectarian and undemocratic UUUC strike which destroyed the similar hopes of the SDLP. Despite attempts by some UUUC leaders to reach some sort of agreement with the SDLP in order to preserve the remnants of political stability in Ulster, the full logic of the UUUC politics meant that the rug would be pulled from under the hopes of the SDLP for a peaceful road to democracy and a united Ireland. The stark truth remains that Loyalism, whatever guise it comes under, means "majority rule", "not an inch", "Croppies lie down". Every attempt to reform, tinker with or democratise the Northern state collapses before this political reality.

RUT IF the policy of the SDLP has been unsuccessful in achieving its declared aims, it has been strikingly effective in creating the apathy, passivity and demoralisation among the anti-Unionist population. This is what the SDLP and the British government need if their plans for a reformed capitalist Ireland are to succeed. Thousands of militants who at one time came out into the streets against the British army, the RUC and internment, because they are instruments of a system which divided and exploited workers north and south, have been hoodwinked into believing that the same system can provide fair play, justice and jobs.

But the SDLP are and always have been a pro-capitalist party. Their record of betrayals, opportunism and careerism was well documented before the Convention. The fact is that they could not have succeeded so well without the unwitting help of the Provos and other Republicans. The Provos have always correctly recognised what anti-unionist workers felt instinctively - that the Northern State cannot be reformed and had to be destroyed. It was this feeling among thousands in the North that enabled the Provos to launch their armed struggle to drive the British Army out of Ireland. The fall of Stormont shows the partial success of their struggle.

BOMBING LEADS TO APATHY

However, the continued reliance on the bombing as an end in itself (rather than a tactic) has brought about a great reduction of mass involvement in politically organised activity against the Northern State and all its oppression. As the bombing increased the level of involvement in demos, marches and meetings against internment declined dramatically. It has been this growing passivity, apathy and confusion which has

given the SDLP, the Church, O'Brien and the Southern State the chance to sow the seeds of parliamentary illusions among the mass of anti-unionists. In face of spreading apathy, the Provos continue to fail to see the need for joint action and united front work as the key to building strength and unity.

Even after the burning of Long Kesh, which sparked off massive street action and strikes throughout the North, the Provos did not learn the lesson. Since last October they have not tried to call one single strike on internment or tried to organise mass action on the streets. Instead they opted to "go it alone", to prove that they were solely responsible for "the year of victory". This "year of victory" grew less real day by day to thousands of Catholics who still faced daily thuggery, assassination and mass intimidation from the Loyalists. The Loyalists were largely growing more confident and prepared to "finish the job" in their terms.

It is in this context that the Provo ceasefire must be seen. The Provo leadership believe that they can achieve success on the most politically sensitive issue of internment while at the same time regrouping and rearming to face the Loyalists. It is precisely this strategy that has intensified the confusion among the anti-unionist working class. For above all the ceasefire has diverted attention away from the root cause of the violence in the North - British imperialism, and its Army, internment and repression. At the same time the Provos offer no perspective for the mass mobilisation of Catholic workers against the daily assaults launched by groups of Loyalists throughout the province.

It is this background that has driven some Republicans to justify retaliatory sectarian assassinations. This totally incorrect and unsupportable "tactic" reflects the growing paralysis and helplessness of those in areas where no effective resistance is possible, or where

no lead is being given. The 'tit-for-tat' argument is being advanced by some on the basis that it makes the Loyalists think twice about their own sectarian campaign and thus "buys time" for anti-Unionists to build street and defence committees. The argument is dangerously wrong for several reasons:

TIT FOR TAT

1. Sectarian killings can in no way further the cause for unity among the anti-unionist population. Only an anti-working class pro-capitalist organisation could justify it as an act of political strategy. As no organisation fighting imperialism can openly claim to be these things, it means that the tactic is restricted to tiny conspiratorial groups totally divorced from the mass of the people and the need to mobilise them.

"ALL ACTIVITY MUST BE SUBORDINATED TO THE POLITICAL AIM OF UNITING AND BUILDING. TACTICS WHICH DO NOT LEAD TO THIS ARE WRONG.

ONLY THE ACTIVE, DEMOCRATIC MASS PARTICIPATION OF THOUSANDS CAN FORCE BOTH AN END TO INTERNMENT, REPRESSION AND THE CONDITIONS WHICH GIVE RISE TO THEM."

2. Far from 'buying time' to persuade people to organise against civil war, it is producing more passivity and confusion, not unity and strength. Furthermore, the idea of defence and street committees in the present confused situation is likely to attract only those who are already in political and military organisations. It is unlikely to mobilise the thousands demoralised by the cynical politics of the SDLP and the slick manoeuvres of the Provos. Instead it will deepen the apathy especially as the whole exercise is meant to prepare for a "doomsday" situation - presumably a moment when massive Loyalist attacks on republican areas will occur. Undoubtedly this is an everlooming possibility but the idea of defence committees NOW dictate the attitude "wait for the civil war". It involves no call to immediate action on the still burning issues on which thousands are not confused - internment, the British Army, repressive legislation. It is only if these issues are in the forefront of agitation that the confidence, strength and unity of the anti-unionist population can be built through their involvement in collective mass action and in political discussion about the best way forward.

FOR THIS reason we support the formation of the Belfast anti-Internment Committee, a united front body for which the SWM had been calling. We believe that the way to build the confidence and strength so urgently needed is through meetings, demos and marches in which the immediate aim is not confrontation with the British Army or Loyalists. We say this because revolutionary socialists do not seek confrontations to prove that they are more brave than anyone else. For them all activity must be subordinated to the political aim of uniting and building. Tactics which do not lead to this are wrong. We believed the decision of the anti-internment committee to march

to Long Kesh was wrong, we therefore refused to participate and proposed a mass meeting with discussion on the way forward. The march, as we predicted, failed - thus adding to the demoralisation of the anti-unionists. Those who sacrifice the future political existence of a united front - which can offer an independent challenge to the British Army, the Loyalists and the southern state - to the sectional moral pleasure of confrontation at any cost fail to realise that these confrontations, at a time when neither numbers nor confidence warrant them, only add to the confusion.

The call by the IRSP subsequent to the Long Kesh march, for the formation of street committees - a call in which it tails PD and RMG leads exactly to this. The call is abstract, putting the cart before the horse and is therefore doomed to failure.

The SWM believes that the building of Anti-Internment Committees

throughout the North still holds the key to the possibility of building real mass defence committees. For Marxists, the question of armed struggle must always be related to the political needs of the masses and to the struggle for the seizure of state power by the working class. Only the active, democratic mass participation of thousands can force both an end to internment, repression and the conditions which give rise to them - the northern state, pivoted ultimately on the British army.

In the building of this mass movement the question of defence against the army and Loyalism and the task of the destruction of the Northern state will be posed as concrete issues. Therefore, the question of armed defence and the forms of organisation best suited to the involvement of thousands is raised in an agitational manner - and not merely in propaganda, as it is at the moment. So too the question of socialism and a workers state. In other words; the tactic of the united front can mobilise thousands and at the same time offer these the opportunity of defence and resistance, uniting workers, socialists and republicans.

TRADE UNIONS

To this end we call upon the anti-Internment Committee to seek the involvement of anti-imperialist trade unionists in such a united front. Trade union branches and committees, north and south, should be encouraged to sponsor a conference on the issue of unemployment, repression and internment, the need for a united front to be argued there.

The involvement of republican workers and trade unionists in the building of anti-internment committees is vitally important. The loyalists are threatening to take over the whole of the Northern trade union movement for their sectarian, anti-working class and ultimately perhaps fascist, objectives. Notice how the UWC platform gives prominence to an Ulster (e.g. Loyalist) TUC and the recent declaration of the UVF against the ICTU. The trade union bureaucracy under Andy Barr and the Communist Party are powerless to stop this takeover. Only if rank and file trade unionists take up the struggle now can Loyalists be challenged and eventually defeated. The question of internment must be the area in which the Irish trade union movement, at rank and file level, begins to be mobilised on behalf of those in most immediate need of leadership - the most oppressed and threatened section of the Irish working class.

A.J.

I remember Dev and I wish I could forget

COME HERE till I tell you a story concerning The Chief.

A man by the name of John James McManus, from Enniskillen, a cousin of the former M.P. Frank, decided that at the beginning of August he would open the State Cinema in Dublin and do it without the help of trade union labour. Well, the union stepped in and delayed the opening of the cinema while they changed his mind for him. When the cinema didn't open as announced Mc Manus, to save face, hung a sign outside saying: "Due to the death of Eamonn De Valera..."

Moral: right up to the end Dev was useful as a cloak for the activities of the men of capital.

WREATHS

Not that I'd anything personal against The Chief, mind you, I never served under him, so to speak. By the time I got my first union card he'd long been put out to pasture in The Park, only to emerge every Sunday with a wreath under his arm for the purpose of laying it on the grave of some deceased person, thereby getting himself a spot on the TV news each week. He seemed to have an inexhaustible supply of wreaths and to have known an awful lot of deceased persons. Of course he deceased quite a few of them

himself, especially when he wanted to prove to his old enemies - the Brits - that he could be just as tough on the IRA as they could.

No, it's not personal. My main gripe against The Chief was not the KIND of man he was but the CLASS of man he was. Ruling class. Of them and for them. Remember Connolly's warning about the patriots who would "free" Ireland - the patriots who would not touch socialism?

"If you don't pay your rent you will be evicted same as now. But the evicting party will wear green uniforms and the Harp without the Crown, and the warrant turning you out on the road will be stamped with the arms of the Irish Republic."

Now isn't that worth fighting for? "With the Green Flag floating o'er us" and an ever increasing army of unemployed workers walking about under the Green Flag...

"Whoop it up for liberty!" Well, Dev was the one who ran up that green flag for the tens of thousands to stream past on their way to seek a job in Britain. It was he who granted republicans the right to execution by Irishmen and not those nasty old Brits. In 1918 he announced that "Labour must wait", the native-born capitalists had to be made free first. He later founded Fianna Fail to represent those capitalists.

What made Dev such a "great man"? Well, he was a staunch republican who



rejected the treaty because of partition. Not quite. The main reason for the civil war had nothing to do with the border. The split hinged on the future relationship of the new Free State to Britain. Those who accepted the Treaty

represented the large farmers and businessmen whose interests were more secure in a more colonial relationship with the former enemy than was wanted by Dev. De Valera represented the small manufacturing interests who wished to build a 26 county state which could develop its own native capitalism - independent of Britain. (These classes eventually came to be represented by Fine Gael and Fianna Fail, respectively). The border hardly got a mention during the Dail debates of the period.

The second feather in Dev's cap was; he stopped the payment of land annuities to Britain.

Half right. He didn't pay the money to Britain - but he still collected 50% of it. He needed the money to help build up native capitalism. In the words of that other Eamonn - McCann - "The one consistent policy motivating Mr. De Valera throughout his political life was that Irishmen ought not to be exploited by foreigners while there were Irish exploiters available for the task"

OUT OF THE WAR

But you must admit, he kept us out of the war.

Depends how you look at it. A ruling class sends its subject out to war when its interests demand that it do so. That applies to any war you can think of; the Kaiser's men in the trenches, the GIs in Vietnam, or the British troops in the North today. Had the interests of the

Irish ruling class demanded so at the time, De Valera would have seen to it that the blood of Irish workers was spilled. Those who opposed him in this would have ended up in the Curragh internment camps along with so many of his other opponents of that time. As it was the Southern ruling class did quite well out of the war as the value of bank deposits more than doubled.

SHROUDED IN MYTHS

Dev lived long enough to become shrouded in myths, to become "The Chief", the "Statesman", an honourable old gentleman. Yet his political record shows him to have been as ruthless, unscrupulous and repressive as any of his class. He manipulated religious bigotry with all the guile and crudeness of Paisley. The examples are legion. In 1935 he banned the sale or import of contraceptives. In 1953 he added seven amendments to a health bill at the behest of the Bishops. And in 1931 he opposed the idea of Protestant doctors treating sick Catholics. It is not right to speak ill of the dead. But then it was not right to do the things he did to the living.

MARY BURNS