

THE WORKER

FOR WORKERS POWER AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM



Prior goes to the North

FILTHY HYPOCRITES

They tell us to tighten our belts while they live it up



Peter Barry..



Garret Fitzgerald..



..John Bruton enjoying the good life

We are living 10% above our means. It's official. We are all that little bit too greedy. But look at who is telling us.

Hypocrite No 1 is John Bruton, Minister for Finance, who recently came out for a top hat society wedding. Bruton owns a massive farm in North Dublin. The lucky couple will honeymoon in New York, paid for by the Government.

Then there is Peter Barry who owns a huge tea importing business in Cork, and Michael O'Leary. Remember him—the friend of the labouring man.

Michael has had some problems lately. Needs his bachelor pad out so Michael moved into a swish penthouse suite in the exclusive Hibernian Hotel complete with room service.

Presiding over it all is Fitzgerald. The man who abhors violence—but sanctions meetings with the assassins in the UDA. The man who weeps crocodile tears for 'social justice' but sticks the boot into the unemployed and trade unionists.

What a bunch of hypocrites. But while they lord it up, this is what they have in store for the likes of us. The swelling ranks of the unemployed

will get a mere 3p in the pound increase in October to cope with rocketing prices. For most this will scarcely buy a packet of cigarettes.

Public sector workers—all those working in the P&T, CIE, Teachers & Civil Servants etc, will get no increase at all if Fitzgerald has his way. Their employers will claim 'inability to pay' on government instructions.

Funny how the country never seems unable to pay the rich and powerful to keep them in the manner to which they are accustomed. It's time to call a halt. We've had enough of wage restraint and unemployment.

THATCHER's much heralded cabinet reshuffle occurred last month.

The beleaguered Catholics of the Belfast and Derry Ghettoes will not find much comfort in the replacement of Thatcher's henchman Atkins by former Minister of Employment James Prior.

Although Prior is regarded as a wet in Thatcher's cabinet he is still part of the Tory machine.

He is also owner of an 800 acre farm, Director of Norwich Union, Avon Cosmetics and United Biscuits (who incidentally were the first employers to slap injunctions against so-called secondary pickets.)

He inherits a situation far worse than Atkins and with as little intention of making any concessions to the demands of the H Block prisoners.

The intransigence of Thatcher's government is not going to be changed by the appointment of a so-called wet.

It is only the workers North and South that can force the Tories into a political solution and break the hold of British imperialism.



Inside: Eamonn McCann on the H-block campaign

The Independents Three Paper Tigers



Mr Jim Kemmy



Dr Noel Brown



Mr Joseph Sherlock

AS THE Dail opens in October after its long summer recess, attention will switch more and more to the three most powerful backbenchers of the House.

Joe Sherlock, Jim Kemmy, Noel Browne hold the balance of power between the Coalition and Fianna Fail. They claim to be committed socialists. They claim to stand on the side of the working class. Yet over the last few months, they have done nothing but keep their seats warm in the Dail.

Jim Kemmy has probably distinguished himself more for sheer hypocrisy. He voted for a budget that has led to massive price rises. He

voted for the Coalition Government itself. He has stood for Maggie Thatcher against the prisoners in H Block. Kemmy's loudest protest, in fact, was against the fact that there were not enough Coalition ministers from Limerick. Kemmy is one of the leading members of Socialists Against Nationalism. But for all his anti-nationalism he voted for the budget in order to save 'the country's economy from ruin'. Put simply, 'the country' comes before his own class. Kemmy's record comes as no surprise. The Limerick boss's favourite union official has attacked building workers in his own town opposing even repres-

sive laws from the last Coalition. A number of years ago, building workers at the Syntax site came off work to protest against the introduction of the seven-day detention periods.

The first to rush to the press to condemn the unofficial action was the bold Jim Kemmy.

Preacher

Noel Browne has always been regarded as a different kettle of fish. A consistent radical, he has even at times spoken out against the Parliamentary road to socialism. But middle class radicalism and socialism are two very different viewpoints.

Browne has never once identified himself and thrown his active support behind workers in struggle. When EBS workers, Alcan workers or CIE craftsmen have found themselves under a barrage of media attack Noel Browne has not exactly leapt to the forefront to defend them. Browne's role has been to see himself as a socialist preacher from the vantage point of the Dail. Preaching on the need for a planned economy and

state enterprise, without dirtying his hands in the day to day struggles. Browne, of late, has seen a major threat coming from 'left-wing fascists.'

The SDLP was criticised for failing to defend parliamentary democracy in Fermanagh from this threat. 'Left-wing fascists' in Noel Browne's eyes seem to represent any movement that is

prepared to fight on a mass basis outside the hallowed halls of the Dail.

Joe Sherlock, at least has the honesty to stand on a party platform—rather than as an individualist. But there the honesty ends. After rightly criticising the last budget as 'vicious anti-worker' Joe Sherlock abstained. As a 'member of Sinn Fein the Workers Party' he has participated in the attacks on the oil strikers—condemning them as 'ultra-lefts'. Like Kemmy and Browne, Sherlock is totally opposed to the H Block campaign and instead has offered a programme of reforming the RUC and the Orange State.

Reactionary

All these backbenchers essentially—despite their differences—comes from the same tradition. All of them stand first and foremost, as believers in the parliament. They come to the Dail through the same methods as their fellow TDs—clinic work and avoidance of nasty controversial issues.

All of them, look on the movement in the North against the H Blocks and state itself as 'reactionary'. And the reason is basically simple. Because that movement has long since gone beyond parliamentary democracy, because it is bound up with an armed struggle—the Dail socialists have totally dismissed it.

Instead all three have essentially come down on the side of law and order.

GAA - Verbal Republicans

I WENT to see Kerry beat Offely in the All Ireland final. It was the first time I had been in Croke Park since the early sixties when Down won their first All Ireland. There was a good reason for this, I have been in England for the last twenty years.

It was interesting to see the reaction when I said I was going to Croke Park. Going where? Who's playing? Do you follow Gaelic football?

Now I realise that the GAA have brought a lot of this attitude on their own head over the years with their holier than thou attitude. The ideal GAA 'man' was a cross between the Pioneer Sodality and Matt Talbot. He wore a Fainne and did not touch anything foreign be it soccer or contraception and as for those Dublin 'gurrriers' he would not have them around the place. (Hill 16) they were a disgrace to Ireland (and by extension the GAA). Let them go back to Shamrock Rovers where they belonged.

The GAA was for decent country folk.

I remember when I was a kid asking how come if there was a ban on foreign games that Dev was always at International Rugby matches.

I was explained to me that Dev had to be there because of 'diplomacy'. 'Diplomacy' like 'Faith' was a mystery to me so I left it at that.

I would like at this point to say that this is not just a snide attack on the GAA. I support Gaelic football but I do not support the people who run it, or the

by MARTIN MCGOVERN

politics they put across, which is that all true Gaels support the GAA and are by extension republican and therefore support the 'true' 'Republican' party Fianna Fail.

Now I am a Socialist but I do not support the Labour Party, and I am a Republican but I do not support Fianna Fail, because one is not Socialist and the other is not Republican.

Right wing

The fact of the matter is that the politics of the GAA are those of the narrow right wing nationalism of Arthur Griffiths.

This has become very clear during the Hunger Strikes. The GAA over the years has slobbered out verbal republicanism, but when it came to the bit, when reality intruded in the form of dead Hunger Strikers, they quickly backpeddled.

Of course individual members and some clubs supported the five demands, and at the Ulster Final in Clones there was a major demonstration but the ruling body of the GAA now suddenly finds that it is a 'non-political' body.

Gaelic football is a

great game, I defy anybody to match the All Ireland Semi-Final between Dublin and Kerry in 1977, for the sake of argument I will accept the European Cup Final between Real Madrid and Eintracht in 1960.

I grant you that the game is going through a bit of a bad patch at the moment. The All Ireland Final was not a great game but Kerry are a great team. I speak as someone who has occupied a fair share of time on the terraces at Arsenal, with the odd break down to Fulham for a bit of a laugh.

Basically what has to be altered in Gaelic football is the personal foul, Eoin Liston had about three backs hanging out of him and yet he did not get a penalty.

The fact that the Urban working classes are soccer fans, particularly the Dubs, I blame squarely on the reactionary nature of the GAA not on any superior merit of soccer over Gaelic.

After all in the great games between Dublin and Kerry in the mid seventies Hill 16 belonged to the Dubs.

The fact of being squeezed out of Gaelic sports has created a strange kind of inverted snobbery among the Dubs. Thus Gaelic football is a 'culchie' game and must be inferior.

I blame it on the Christian Brothers myself. Gaelic football is associated with the Brothers.



There seems to be a half nostalgic image of what my six year old daughter calls the 'olden days'.

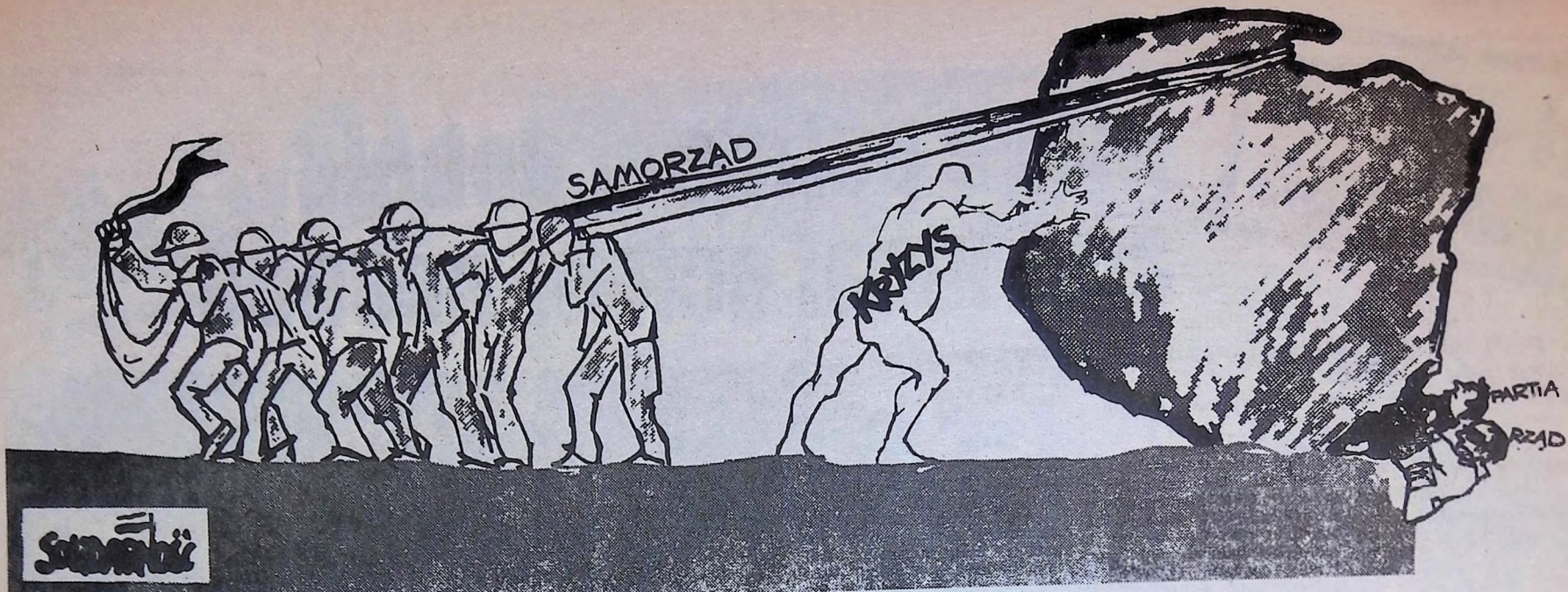
In this image Dubs are always getting whacked around the ears by a 'Thickie' Christian Brother at school (the brothers are also seen as the backbone of Gaelic Football and Hurling) and getting the shit kicked out of them by 'Lugs Brannigan'

at the side of the pub.

I am sick of 'Lugs' and the 'lovable right wing policeman'. 'Bring back lugs' is the same in Dublin as saying bring back the cane, hanging, and a quiet kicking from your friendly policeman as a solution to all ills. I would like to hear a story of someone kicking the shit out of Lugs Brannigan for a change!

JOE SHERLOCK in his own union branch at Mallow Sugar No 2 Branch ITGWU in the vote for Secretary at General Election time, was defeated by 1 vote. In second vote for Chairman his MAN was defeated. But it was found on Sherlock's instigation that the vote was not in order because there was one vote too many. (fiddle).

A second count was arranged for a week later inside the factory where he has most of his support. The vote of course went his way and he's still there but for how long?



• The Gdansk poster which angered the Polish government. 'Samorzad' means self-government. The workers are trying to stop the giant 'Kryzys' from pushing a boulder shaped like Poland over the cliff. The two tiny figures trying to prevent it from falling are the 'Party' and 'Government'.

Solidarity must take power—NOW

By CHRIS HARMAN

POLAND'S independent trade union movement, Solidarity, began its first national congress last week. It did so to a background of growing tension in Poland as food shortages get even worse, and while Russia's armed forces staged their biggest military exercise—including mock landings on Poland's Baltic shore.

The continued distrust of Poland's workers, represented by Solidarity, for the regime was shown at the Congress itself. The congress voted for free elections to replace government by the present self-appointed ruling party, and urged workers in other Eastern bloc states to follow the Polish example and set up their own independent unions. It also refused to allow the TV cameras of the state media into the congress—because these continually distort what the union stands for.

The congress showed that the workers are refusing to give way to a regime they despise and are not being intimidated by the Russian threats.

But it also showed that the majority of the union's leaders are evading the biggest problem they face.

A year ago, when the Solidarity movement took off, all its leaders argued that it had to be a means by which the workers put pressure on the regime, without challenging the regime's power.

The problem now is that the regime had led the country to complete economic chaos. With help and advice from Western banks it has built huge new factories—and now can neither pay off the money it borrowed to build them nor find Western markets for the goods they produce. So there are immense shortages of food and fuel, with queues for almost everything.

The regime cannot solve this crisis. It can only threaten repression. It uses the Russian threat against challenges to its power and it has moved top army men into key positions, so that generals now hold the offices of prime minister, minister of the interior, minister of energy and minister of communications.

When Solidarity threatened a strike over its demands for access to the media, the regime said it would use the police to break that strike.

Against such a background, hostility to the regime is growing. People are looking desperately for some alternative to shortages and chaos. The difficulty is that those leaders of Solidarity who say it should

put pressure on the government, refuse to present it as such an alternative.

Indeed, the very means it used to put pressure—strikes, go-slow-s and demonstrations—are presented by the media as causing the shortages and chaos.

The so-called 'moderate' section of Solidarity's leaders around Lech Walesa have res-

ponded by condemning many strikes and demonstrations, and by urging workers to accept price rises and to work on Saturdays.

He won a vote at the congress to strengthen the full time leadership and to give it more power to stamp on local actions. But such an approach means preventing the union acting as it has in the past as a

focus for the aspirations of all those who are exploited and oppressed by the regime.

The great danger of the 'moderate' policy is that it will lead to a fall-off of active support for Solidarity, thus allowing the regime to move towards repressive measures. What is more, it also opens up the danger of people beginning to blame scapegoats for their

problems rather than real enemies.

Within Solidarity there is a powerful 'radical' current. This opposes Walesa's attempts to compromise with the regime and is behind the widespread demands for workers to take direct control of the factories from the regime's nominees—the so-called 'self-management movement'.

Yet even the radicals are shying away from raising the idea of the workers in Solidarity taking power, the only way the acute economic and political crisis could be solved.

Hence the dangers increase all the time of Solidarity losing its momentum, of the movement behind it fragmenting and of the regime beginning to reassert its power.

Iran: 'We made a revolution for a better life. But now our basic rights are being trampled on'

THE REVOLUTION in Iran has appeared to many in the West as strange and fantastic. As the situation there slips towards civil war the Worker obtained this exclusive interview in Europe with a visiting Iranian revolutionary.

Describe the present situation in Iran

There is massive opposition to Khomeini's regime. It has proved that it cannot meet the most basic economic demands of the people. Its only message is 'tighten your belts.'

Many people say that we made a revolution for a better life. But now our basic rights—whether as workers, women or Kurds—are being trampled on.

The last few weeks have seen major street fighting. Up to 200 armed members of the Mujahedeen may arrive in a district to distribute leaflets. Khomeini's so-called Revolutionary Guards

arrive to break it up and many people get killed. The situation is heading for civil war.

Who are the Mujahedeen?

They call themselves Islamic Socialists. In fact they are reformists with a bourgeois programme.

They stand for workers' rights—but as something secondary to the building up of a 'free, independent, Islamic Iran. They have aligned themselves with Bani-Sadr in order to win the confidence of the bourgeoisie.

But they are the main organisation fighting Khomeini—and they enjoy mass support. The rank and file are very militant. If they win—and it is the only alternative to a right wing pro-Shah coup—they will open the space for workers to organise and to rebuild the Workers Councils.

After the Shah was overthrown Workers Councils were formed in many factories in Iran. What happened to them?

It is important to be clear

that they were originally genuine workers' councils—taking control of the running of their factories after the bosses who supported the Shah left.

But then the IIP—the Mullahs' party—removed their leaders and changed them into Islamic Councils.

Even these were forced to respond to workers' demands and so they too have been disbanded. At the moment, there only exist 'Islamic Societies' which act as the agents of the secret police.

You say Khomeini has lost all support. But isn't he able to appeal to a reactionary religious sentiment, particularly as regards women?

It's not true. Iran was one of those countries where there was mass industrialisation. Religious feeling is not as strong as say in Saudi Arabia.

Khomeini became leader of the opposition to the Shah only because there was no alternative.

On the issue of women—just look at the famous veil that Iranian women wear. It

was simply part of a tradition.

But now the regime is telling women exactly what they must wear. And people just won't stand for that. For one thing, they cannot even afford the clothes Khomeini demands they wear.

How do you think the present impasse can be broken?

A lot depends on the Mujahedeen. Unless they call for and work for mass strike action and give up the policy of substituting themselves for the people, they will not win.

There is a great possibility that they can overthrow the regime. To give you a simple example, a few months ago, the house of 6-8 Mujahedeen was discovered.

It took 500 Revolutionary Guards to clear them. A great crowd gathered outside. But they were saying 'there is nothing we can do. We have to sit and watch'. Only mass organisation can defeat the regime.

What can be done in Ireland to help the Iranian Revolution?

Khomeini is using the Irish



situation by claiming that the IRA support him. He uses that to bolster his anti-imperialist image with the working class.

But that 'anti-imperialism' has no meaning. For example, last year British arms manufacturers claimed it was their best year ever in Iran—better even than the Shah's.

Iranian revolutionaries find it surprising that the Irish republican movement has not disassociated itself from this bloody regime as the PLO has already done. We call on them to do so.

H-BLOCK CAMPAIGN

More political debate and local action needed

TEN DEAD and eight to go is the score at the time of writing in the H Block struggle.

And it seems no nearer an end than it was on the day almost a year ago when the first hunger strike started.

Small wonder that voices are beginning to be heard—even on the left and on the Republican fringe—asking if it's not all now a forlorn fight.

On the face of it, an apt question. Gone are the emotion-choked days of the Sands and Hughes funerals when the sheer mass of the marchers on the streets seemed irresistible.

We have to work harder now to build smaller demonstrations, while elements in the Catholic Church and the SDLP and Southern parties feel more confident about hitting directly at the H Block Committee.

But strangely enough this doesn't seem to have happened because of a fall-off in support. There doesn't appear to be any growing hostility to the prisoners' case. The dominating factor is the sense of futility, the feeling that, whatever we think should be done, there's nothing much can be done.

And it has to be faced that this feeling is well founded. Given the strategy of the campaign—reasserted at the Dundalk conference on September 6—there is very little that can be done. (Which is not of course to say that we should be doing little...)

The Conference accepted the argument from Gerry Adams and others that the reason the five demands hadn't been won wasn't that the strategy was wrong but because hitherto it had not been pursued with sufficient vigour. The conclusion followed immediately: we needed the same, but more of it.

The strategy readopted at Dundalk aims to pressurise

Eamonn McCann

Fitzgerald, Haughey, Hume and the Catholic bishops (and a few others, but seemingly these are the most crucial) into backing the five demands and taking positive action to win them. The strategy does make a certain sense in that if all these people did back the five demands, and did all that it is in their power to do to win them, quite likely Thatcher would back off.

The problem—or one of them—is that there was no clear indication just how these prominent persons were to be persuaded. Obviously none of them want to back the five demands.

But it wasn't even clear if the effort is designed to change their minds or to force them to back the campaign publicly, unchanged minds notwithstanding.

The confusion came across clearly when Bernadette McAliskey chided some delegates at Dundalk for dismissing calls on O Fiaich to support the prisoners. The politically-conscious people at the conference might see clearly that O Fiaich is a schmuck, she argued. But around the country very many people have illusions in him. And putting demands on him is a way of dispelling those illusions.



March to expel British attache

ONE of the obstacles the H Block Armagh campaign has faced has without doubt been the hostility of the capitalist media. In the 26 counties both RTE and the press have tried to discredit the campaign since the hunger strike began. The activities in support of the hunger strikers undertaken by local action groups receive little coverage.

Dun Laoghaire is one example. This group's activity has been centred around

a local campaign to secure the expulsion of the British military attache from Ireland. A recent successful march to his home in the area only received coverage in the Irish Times. Much has been done however to mobilise support from local people in Sallynoggin and the surrounding area to put pressure on the home of the British Military Attache.

Brigadier General Peter Robertson lives in a comfortable middle-class estate in Glengary. Some of the houses were specially built to house British personnel in Ireland. The houses are expensive and lavish. His

function is that of a representative of the British military machine in Ireland. He works in the British Embassy in Ballsbridge. In the past he has been engaged in training men and officers in the Irish army.

Ireland does not have a military attache in Britain, but the links between the two capitalist governments have become so close that it comes as no surprise that even with the murderous policy of Thatcher's government in the North, the 26 county government allows his presence to continue.

The Dun Laoghaire H Block-Armagh group to highlight his presence has held constant pickets outside his house and has postered and leafleted

demanding his expulsion.

Constant marches have also been held. His neighbours are getting very worried indeed. As with the British Ambassador no attempt has been made by the so-called concerned Dail politicians to demand his expulsion. The role of the British government and its army in the North is to crush the resistance in national communities. A resistance which has continued unabated for twelve years. The British Military Attache by his presence is a representative of Thatcher's murder machine in the 6 counties. His presence is an insult to the thousands who support the hunger strikers and political status for political prisoners. We say—GET HIM OUT.

If that's what it was all about—dispelling illusions in O Fiaich in order to get him out of the way—there would be no argument from socialists. And there's a way of going about that sort of thing. It would involve saying things like: '...We don't believe O Fiaich is a friend of

the prisoners. He's an enemy. But if you people think he's really on our side, let's go together and ask for his support. We're telling you in advance we won't get it, we'll have to do this job ourselves...'

But that, most decidedly, is *not* the approach which

the H Block campaign has taken to the hierarchy. Instead the campaign has consistently urged O Fiaich and other bishops to see it as their *duty* to campaign for the prisoners. The suggestion has been *not* that backing the H Block struggle would be in contradiction with the real role of the hierarchy, but that their refusal to back it is a contradiction.

This is not getting rid of illusions. It is deepening them where they exist and creating them where they don't. And much the same approach has been taken to the middle class politicians of the main parties.

The effect of all this on the ground is clear. If it is the case that the prisoners are to be saved by political and religious big shots, however recruited to the cause, 'ordinary' people are, in the end, reduced to the role of spectators. And political struggle is not an attractive spectator sport.

None of this is to be taken to mean that the leaders of the H Block campaign act in bad faith. Of course they do not. But their strategy can be traced back to an assumption

which in some ways is central to all Republican thinking: that deep down all the Irish people are basically 'sound', albeit that oftentimes they have been bribed or bullied or bewildered into taking up negative positions and maybe even holding on to them for decades... But if you can dig down deep enough you'll touch the sound heart's core.

It is a charming assumption when expressed, as it often is, in a plaintive ballad. But it is just not true. And because it isn't true, the strategy based on it doesn't work. Far from coming over to the prisoners' side, Fitzgerald and his ilk are increasingly confident about insulting the prisoners' representatives.

What we need inside the H Block campaign—as well as public campaigning—is much more, and more open and vigorous, debate about the fundamental politics on which it is based, about political perspectives, not as a substitute for action but as a means of analysing our action and trying to determine how it should be different in future.

We say

The H Block campaign is facing its gravest attacks at the moment. Many of the establishment forces which dared not openly attack the campaign in the past have gained a new confidence. At one stage, the new Coalition government announced that it was their first priority. Fitzgerald even had meetings with the relatives. Now the full force of the political police has been unleashed on the campaign. Activists have been rounded up for the demonstration to the British Embassy. In many local areas, the police have literally beaten up members of the campaign.

The Catholic church which once called for conciliation between both sides has now embarked on a campaign to break the hunger strike. Relatives have been placed under tremendous pressure by their local priests. Priests like Father Faul have used some of their former credibility to knife the campaign.

Even the SDLP who were under most pressure have regained their confidence to label the campaign an IRA Front. Now it must be said that this change is simply one of degree. These forces were always totally opposed to the campaign. The mistake of the leadership of the campaign was to set up the Church, Fianna Fail and the SDLP as forces that could be persuaded to solve the crisis to the advantage of the prisoners. But now it has backfired as those forces have gained a new confidence to go on the offensive. There is a simple reason for all this. The campaign is seen to be losing its confidence to

win. The element of a massive response to a death has largely gone. And as it goes, one of the major weaknesses of the campaign, the lack of a working class base becomes more uncovered. When there is a lack of a spontaneous response, you need organisation to carry the arguments. And that is what's lacking.

The conference in Dundalk partially recognised these problems. It passed a very simple resolution from Derry which said: 'forget taking relatives to the politicians and the bishops and take them to meet engineering workers, power workers, car workers'. The SWM argued in addition to it for major preparation for a Day of Action to be organised independently of a death. That was also carried.

The campaign must now turn to putting that programme into action. The relatives who toured England must be taken around the major factories and union branch meetings to argue now for industrial action to save the prisoners' lives.

That action may not be as big or massive as in the past. But the experience of the campaign has thrown up thousands of militants in the workplace who are prepared to stick their necks out and argue for it. Unfortunately, despite these advances in the campaign, the leadership that was thrown up showed itself to be more dominated by Provisional Sinn Fein than in the past. That reflected the major decision of the conference to stick with a form of abstentionism in practice—simply because it was a Provo article of faith. In the current situation those developments can only assist in the marginalisation of the campaign.

Whether or not Owen Carron takes his seat in Westminster is not of fundamental importance at the moment. But the ending of the practice of abstentionism though would change the broad based nature of the campaign.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Corpo back-sliding unites workers

ON THE 10 June 1981, the Labour Court recommended in favour of the claim made by the Construction Union for parity with the travelling allowance paid in the construction industry retrospective to Jan 1st 1981.

Prior to the hearing in the Labour Court, George Courage, Regional Organiser UCATT and convenor for the Group of Unions in Dublin Corporation had pointed out to the Corpo that as our travelling allowance has always been linked to the building industry it was in fact an agreement that we should have automatically received the increase when it was awarded in the building industry.

Meeting

The Corpo called a meeting on the 5 Feb 1981 with the Building Union in an attempt to get out of this agreement. But the union stood firm and pointed out that the previous year the Labour Court had recognised that this agreement was solid and should be adhered to.

On 26 August, a meeting was held at the request of the Corpo. The purpose of the meeting was rather unusual. Mr Softe on behalf of the Corpo was seeking a modification of the Labour Court's recommendation.

This modification was for a two month pay pause. G Courage, UCATT, told Mr Softe, Corpo, that neither he nor any other union official could modify Labour Court recommendations. He also told Mr Softe that this claim had already been granted to craftsmen in government departments without any request for a pay pause.

The Corpo finally agreed to

pay the increase to the building unions to take effect in October retrospective to January 81.

At the meeting on 28 August the Engineering Union (who have a different agreement from the building unions) were told that as they were not covered by the Labour Court recommendation they would not be included in the increase.

On the 31 August in Stanley Street (Dublin Corporation Engineering Section) members of ATGWU, AUEW, NEETU and NUSAW held a meeting and decided to seek official backing for strike action in pursuance of the claim.

A full report of the meeting and the discussion taken at the meeting was relayed to the respective unions. The AUEW endorsed the decision and served strike notice to expire on 9 October 1981.

A meeting of the Group of Unions on the 16 September decided that Congress would serve a new claim on local authority health boards.

This was a strange decision because the Dublin County Council has an agreement that states that they will get whatever the civil trades get in the Dublin Corpo.

Another strange thing was that the AUEW representative of the Group ignored the decision of his own Committee and went along with the Group's decision to submit a new claim which will not stand a chance with the recently introduced policy of claiming 'inability to pay'.

The Engineers' unions and the General Operatives' unions will get whole-hearted support from the Corpo building unions in whatever action they take. Charlie Nolan

TUAM's massive and united protest against the closure of the Sugar Companies beet-processing plant secured a year's stay of execution for the 200 full-time and up to 400 part-time jobs. But 'what's another year', particularly in the life of a beet factory.

The workers and people of Tuam regard the year's reprieve not as a consolation, but as a bitter disappointment because they know that the farmers around Tuam will wind down their beet growing if they know the factory is only good for another year. Only a sustained and militant campaign in Tuam, including the occupation of the plant by the workers, and by the unions throughout the Sugar company can ensure the saving of the jobs.

Next season's 'beet campaign' should become a 'jobs campaign' for the trade union movement. The threat of huge job-losses goes beyond Tuam. Already the Sugar Co. have closed the vegetable plant at Carlow last year and they pulled out of Fastnet foods in Skibbereen. The remaining vegetable plants at Thurles, Mallow, Limerick and Middleton are being closely watched by the company, on a day to day basis. Even the futures of the Carlow and

Thurles plants have a question mark hanging over them.

Whatever the problems of the Sugar Co., they have not been caused by the workers. Yet thousands of jobs—the livelihoods of whole towns—are in danger. Nationalised or no—the Sugar Co. is in deep capitalist trouble and it's responding with all the ruthlessness of any capitalist enterprise. The Sugar Co workers are also falling victim to the shadow of Thatcherite cutbacks that is creeping across all the state and semi-state bodies.

Cream-off

The new policy is that state industries will not get the necessary investment from the Government but must borrow themselves. In this case the Government delayed its decision on the £75 million investment sought by the company. Meanwhile the interest payments on loans were colossal.

It was not until 1980 that the group showed the first overall loss in its history. This year it is expected to lose £10 million—with £8 million of this being unearned income in the form of interest rates to big moneylenders! Of the £8.3 million loss in 1980, £1.7 million was set aside to cover the frauds of that year!

Besides the interest rates on borrowing to keep up with new technology, the company is in the red because of increased fuel costs and inflation—both the result of the capitalist system in international crisis, not to mention the cream-off by the oil and fuel barons. As with any capitalist enterprise, new technology is needed to remain competitive.

French and Duch sugar com-

panies have boosted their production, and in this crazy unplanned dog-eat-dog system the Irish Sugar Co must do the same to stay in the market.

To date £40 million has been spent on new equipment and the Sugar Co reckon they need £75 from the government to complete the modernisation programme. After years of skimping on investments in the sugar section the panic is now on for a crash programme, which may still leave the company in dire straits. While the government were quite right to put the money-demands of this shady management to the test of a consultant's report, they have left their decision on the investment on ice since September 1980.

Both Fianna Fail and the Coalition showed the same incompetence. The Oireachtas Joint Committee has already backed a grant of at least £25 million to the company—but this wasn't acted upon.

The company acted anyway—without waiting for the Government's decision they announced the axing of Tuam. The workers were the pawns. In September the Minister asked the chairman to defer any decision on the closure of Tuam. When this was ignored he again requested that the announcement be deferred until other jobs were found. This too was ignored. Don't ever let them tell you we live in a democracy!

The Sugar Company has also suffered from deep-rooted problems that again are inherent in the system and in management decisions. The farmers west of the Shannon have never delivered the quantity of beet necessary for economic beet-refining in Tuam. There was enough time to deal with this problem or to

find alternatives. Secondly the whole Erin-Heinz escapade drained finances from the company.

The workers and people of Tuam are dead right to take talk of alternative jobs with a pinch of salt. Nothing concrete is in the IDA pipeline and even if it was any alternative jobs would have to provide the same pay, conditions, trade union rights and organisation for all the workers. Anything else would be sugar on the pill.

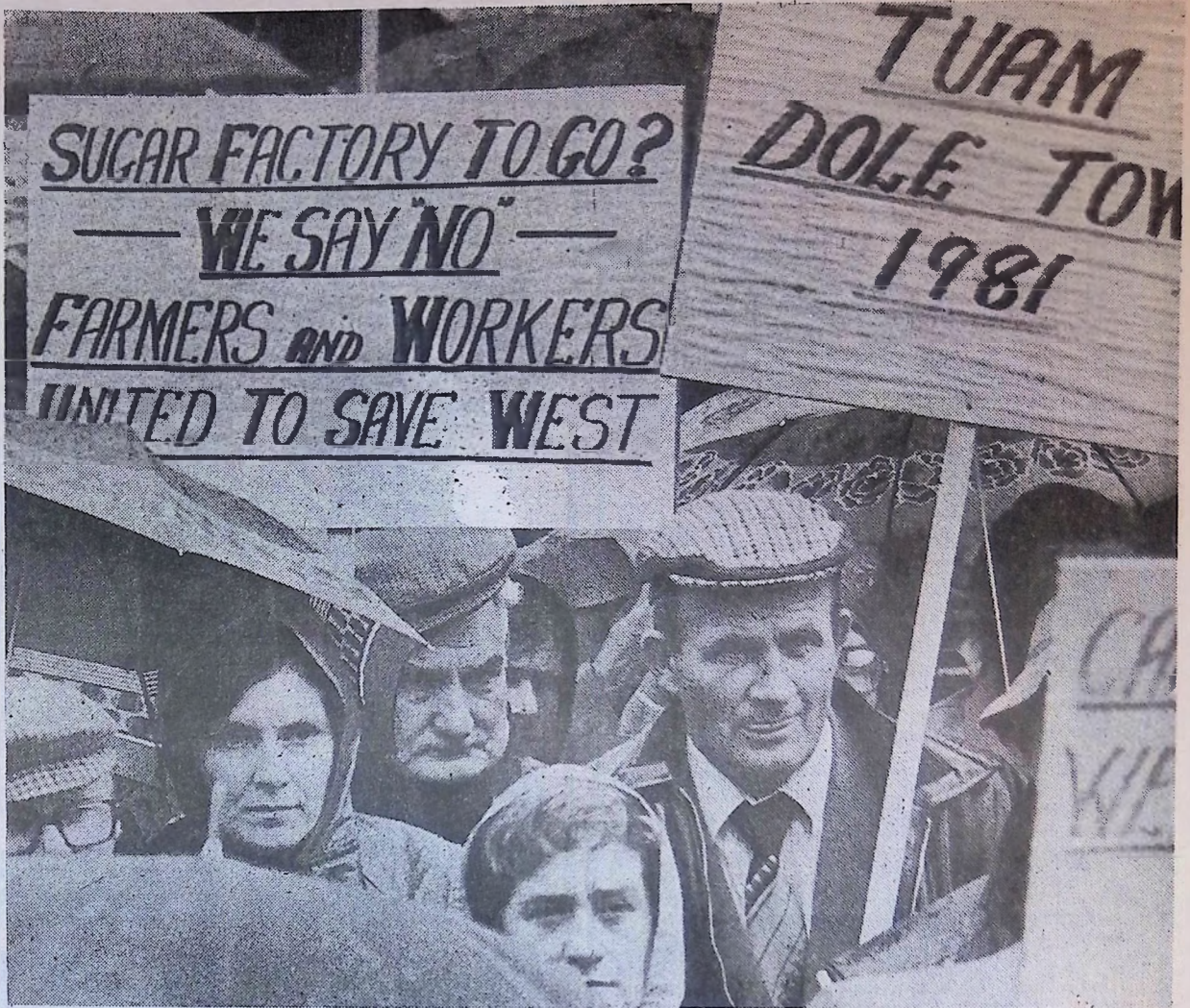
Besides, the Oireachtas Joint Committee recommended that the Tuam plant should close only when alternative jobs have been found and the Government is allowing only one year to find them!

The Sugar Co assured the Barlow vegetable workers that an alternative factory would be found before closure there. No factory was found! Holding out for the retention of the Tuam plant is the only way.

Jobs

But £75 million? When the public finances are broke? According to recent reports four cattle dealers stand to make £100 million, over two years, from the Department of Agriculture in EEC subsidies on cattle exports. If £100 million can be found for four men why can't the system cough up £75—if indeed that much is needed—for 3,500 jobs in the Irish Sugar Company?

A final point: surely Ruairidhi Roberts deserves to be removed from his position on the Sugar Company Board, or from his position as General Secretary of Congress, for voting for the Tuam closure?



Don't ever let them tell you we live in a democracy

THE WORKER Inside:

FOR WORKERS POWER AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

H-BLOCKS: THE CAMPAIGN GOES ON

BREAK THE PLASTICS BACK

STATUS NOW

But the plastics keep on coming

Buy a copy of 'The Worker' at the GPO 15p every Saturday afternoon.

What we stand for

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

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

Only the working class can destroy capitalism and build a socialist society based on workers control of production.

Our political action to prepare the working class for that is based on the following principles:

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

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

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

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

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

A SOCIALIST ANSWER TO THE NATIONAL QUESTION

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

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

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

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

The Disbandment of the RUC and the UDR.

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

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

We support feminism as being the legitimate progressive and necessary struggle by women against their oppression as women and believe that the self-emancipation of women as a sex is central to the meaning of socialism.

Only through socialism can women achieve full emancipation and therefore the women's struggle must be led by working class women as part of the struggle of the whole working class for socialism.

FOR A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT

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

We oppose all anti-union legislation and all forms of national wage understandings and wage restraint. We oppose all redundancies. We say: Occupy to demand Nationalisation under workers control. Fight for a 35 hour week. We support the building of a rank and file movement which draws together militant trade unionists to oppose the class collaboration of the union leaders.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

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

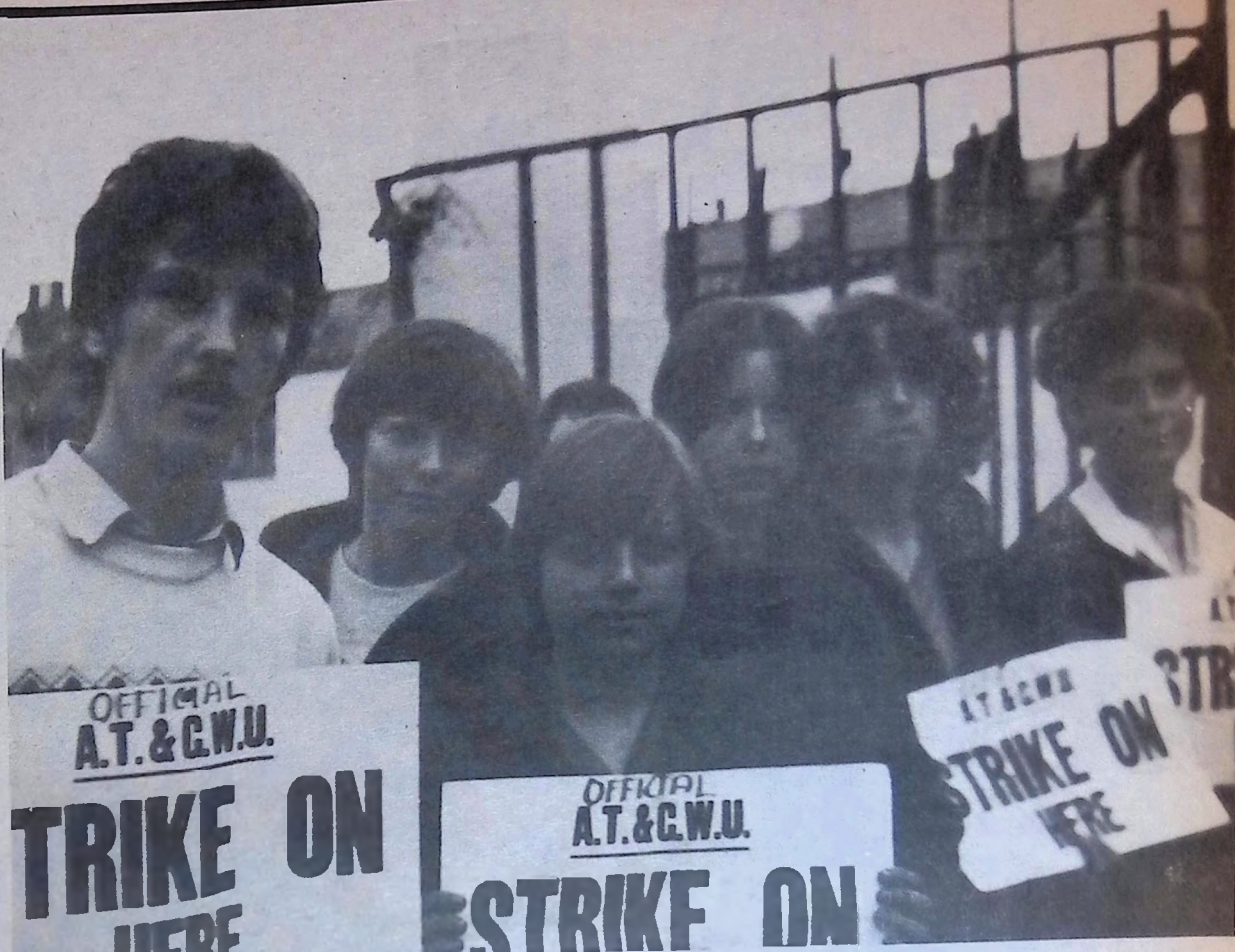
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I want to join; I want a subscription and enclose £2.50;

I would like more information about the SWM

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Address.....



Sweated labour not so sweet

SINCE JULY 17, 25 workers—mostly teenagers—at Milroy's sweet factory in Drumcondra in Dublin have been on strike for union recognition and improvements in pay and conditions.

by BARBARA WILSON

During the summer the workers joined the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union in the hope of organising for better pay and conditions.

The union served a claim for increases but within 2 weeks of the factory becoming unionised the shop steward was sacked. There was an immediate walk out and they have been on strike ever since.

The Worker talked to some of the strikers. Marie Nolan, shop steward, said that her take home pay was £32, at fifteen the pay is £27 and for eighteen year olds £55 with no prospect of earning more. Michael Walters said he got £2 extra for doing deliveries round the country and that was supposed to cover expenses!

The conditions in the factory are terrible. Filthy toilets which the workers have to clean and although Milroy goes on about hygiene and doesn't allow scented soap the state of the towels is disgusting and only changed once a month.

'We have separate can-tees, boys and girls can't sit together', said Paul. 'We have to sit on tea-chests, there's no light and there are mice running about.'

The safety aspect is hazardous. Several of the workers

have had their hands burned lifting hot toffee onto the trays. The only response from Milroy was, 'If you can't do the job properly you'd better find another one'.

Another boy whose hands were badly burned and was off sick was sacked when he refused to do overtime.

The strike has the official backing of the ATGWU and they get £9 strike pay but the workers feel very bitter about the way the union has virtually ignored them. Because they are very young and inexperienced in union procedures and have never been in a dispute before, they hoped to get more support but have only seen their branch official twice.

They have seen other workers in bakeries but they have been involved in their own dispute and haven't been able to offer much material assistance.

Also the factory is in the back streets of a residential area out of the public eye and in fact most of the local factories hadn't even heard of Milroy's, let alone the strike. There are still vans passing the picket and it's difficult to find out where they come from. There are 4 scabs working with the managers but it's

obvious Milroy is losing money.

Marie and the other workers on the picket said, 'We are going to stay out, we've been out for so long now we are determined to fight on whatever happens.'

Organise collections at your works and send messages of support to the Milroy Strike Committee, c/o ATGWU, Marlboro St., Dublin 1.



AIB workers protest

THE DISPUTE over the unfair dismissal of John Lupton and Niall Murphy by Allied Irish Banks is now entering its second year. Both are bank officials who were dismissed for refusing to accept a transfer to another branch because they felt that it was an attempt to victimise them for their leadership in a dispute about after hours banking at the Rush branch of the AIB the previous May.

Since then they have kept up a campaign for their reinstatement, with the support of the Drogheda Trades Council and other workers in Drogheda and

around the country. Niall Murphy is at present having an unfair dismissals case heard in the Labour Court, which promises to be one of the longest and dirtiest cases heard there. (See last 2 issues of The Worker for details).

On September 19th a picket of the Irish Bank Officials Association headquarters in St Stephen's Green was held to protest against the lack of support the IBOA have given to these two over the previous 18 months.

More pickets and activities are planned over the coming months. If Lupton and Murphy win reinstatement, it could mean the end of the transfer system, which the banks use against any employee who fights for better wages or conditions.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Public Sector crisis threatens jobs loss

AS UNEMPLOYMENT in the twenty-six counties rises towards the 150,000 mark, among the demands being made in the government is £300 million for the aid of credit starved state-owned companies.

These include Aer Lingus, B&I, Irish Steel, the Sugar Company, CIE and Nitrigin Eireann. NET needs £150 million mainly for Marino Point near Cork.

The enormous cost of the NET project was justified at its time of construction by the belief that there would be a large surplus capacity which could be exported.

Also one of the few things which the EEC did not have tariff barriers against, was artificial fertilisers so that Eastern European state capitalist countries were able to supply the EEC market much cheaper than Ireland.

Irish farmers could in fact import the stuff much cheaper than NET could produce it. So that even if the government does provide the £150 million it is unlikely that NET will be profitable for a long time to come.

Aer Lingus needs £70 million. It has just announced losses of £12 million and debts of £128 million.

B&I had record losses of £3 million last year and is certain to exceed that this year. The company is looking for £15 million cash. The Sugar Company want £75 million. Irish Steel at Haulbowline in Cork have just completed a new section of the plant and are asking for £8 million to carry on.

CIE are showing a large trading loss. The crisis in state bodies extends also to non trading bodies

such as Bord Failte and the IDA. The IDA has been found to be 'cooking the books' on the number of jobs it has created.

A new report from the National Economic and Social Council shows that of the 96,000 jobs claimed to have been created between 1970-78 only 29,000 exist. Last month the IDA was claiming that it would create 36,000 jobs in 1981 alone! Now that's stretching credibility.

Dr Milton Friedman in his book 'Capitalism and Freedom' offers right wingers everywhere warm comfort—control the money supply and you will reduce inflation.

To control money supply of course means less public spending on hospitals, schools and social services, thus

clearing the road for a free-for-all capitalist economy. He holds as his model of freedom—Hong Kong, as anybody who saw the television programme 'Free to Choose' will remember.

What he fails to mention is that 'freedom' in Hong Kong means massive slums for the working class, a 10 BILLION dollar drug industry, mainly heroin which is in itself twice the size of the island's money supply.

Where Friedman's policies have been attempted, Pinochet's Chile, Begin's Israel and Thatcher's Britain, in fact the economies have gone into reverse producing high unemployment together with high inflation.

Friedman says his theories have never been put

into practice for a sufficiently long period!

Let's hope the Blueshirt Brigade have no intention of providing a new laboratory for the fiendish doctor.

Even if Garret's team are not convinced of the monetarist road to freedom it is pretty certain that there will be no more loans available from abroad to maintain or expand present public expenditure and there is no way they can raise more from increased taxation which might be ideologically unacceptable anyway.

So we are in for large swingeing cuts which will mean a fight to save jobs and services for us all.

JIM BLAKE

Fightback needs solidarity

IN TIMES of unemployment one of the first cries to go up from the 'economic experts' is 'what about the Public Sector wage bill?' The recent coalition budget goes along with this same old depressing routine.

Their argument goes along the lines that if we could cut the public sector costs and reinvest it all in private industry all our problems would be solved.

The fact that is often ignored by these self-styled economic experts is that the public sector provides the back up services in education, health, transport, housing and countless other areas that allow private industry to exist.

The attacks this time round come on both jobs and pay. In the area of jobs as and from the 21st of July last no vacancies will be filled and no new

posts will be created. This will have a dual effect.

Thousands of school leavers who would normally have flocked into public sector jobs will have no option but to join the dole queues. The effects on services being provided will be equally disastrous as there will not be the staff to carry them out properly.

On pay the government is asking for a wage freeze despite the fact that we are now being told that inflation will be about 24% this year. Clause 6 of the National Understanding (inability to pay) is to be invoked in all negotiations on public sector pay.

A fightback against these cuts will be very difficult especially since the public sector unions have been amongst the most enthusiastic supporters of the National

Understanding.

A statement by the ICTV after the budget stated

'Congress supports the resistance of public sector unions to the imposition of any changes in the present procedures without the agreement of these unions.'

All very fine on paper but it is up to the members in the different unions to make sure that these fine words are made a reality. Already motions have been going in from the branches calling for special conferences on the cuts.

The support and solidarity of non public sector trade unionists through the trades councils and through public meetings will need to be canvassed. If these small steps are taken we will be well on the way to defeating these latest attacks on our standards of living.



Is the Union being eased out?

SINCE the turn of the century when workers first made efforts to unionise general workers, we in Ireland have built up one of the strongest trade union movements in the world.

But in the last ten years or so the employers have fought back and industries which have been traditionally unionised have become very weak, and in some areas the union has almost been broken.

The Lump system in the building trade, by which workers are treated as subcontractors and not directly employed is perhaps the best example, but it also exists in many other industries; transport, Petrol, Electrical appliances, Bakeries and Dairies.

In the first of two articles we examine the Bakeries and Dairies two of the traditionally strong union industries now weakened to the point where Union organisation could be gone within 5 years.

Milk

The Dairy industry is being undermined by the emergence of non-union dairies such as Owens in Co Meath and Drogheda and Dundalk Dairies. These companies by paying lower rates are able to offer a higher discount to the big supermarkets and shops where the bulk of the milk is sold. Premier and HB, the two big dairies in Dublin, are losing out in this end of the market and are being left with the unprofitable door to door deliveries.

After years of fighting the workers of HB and Premier abolished the unsocial early morning deliveries and have achieved good rates of pay and conditions. Due to the loss of business lay-offs are threatened at Premier and HB. At one stage all milk sold in Balbriggan (a town just outside Dublin) was from Trade Union Dairies, now it is all non-union. The time has come for the

fight back to begin, or the Union will disappear from the milk trade.

The same problem arose in the bread industry where the issue is night baking. After long agitation by the Bakers Union night baking was abolished in 1936. But over the years the Bakers Union have let non-union Bakeries take a bigger share of the market. They must share some of the blame for this, as some of their own members were 'doing the double' working at night in non-union bakeries, and by day in union bakeries. So today, bakeries like Brennans who baked illegally at night have taken a large share of the bread business in the same way as the non-union dairies did.

Bread

It is much more serious in the bread industry as the employers in all bakeries are demanding night baking and the union is split down the middle with the craft bakers opposing it and the general workers in favour.

Over the last year this has split the workers in Gateaux of Finglas and Kellys of Kilcock. In both bakeries the employers threatened to close down if night baking was not allowed. The union gave in at Gateaux, who are now licensed for night baking. At Kelly's the issue is more complex with the No1 branch on official strike and the No2 branch (the General workers) working.

In both these industries the Unions involved will not face up to the problem of non-union workplaces. The job must be to unionise them by offering prospects of better pay and conditions. The non-union workplaces are only able to offer bigger discounts because they pay less. The unions are now levelling down rather than bringing the whole of the industry up to the best pay and conditions that exist in the industry. The workers must put craft elitism behind them and work together to keep unionisation 100% in the bread and milk industry.

In next month's issue we will look at other industries and how the fightback can begin. Paul O'Brien, Shop Steward No 2 Branch ITGWU (Personal Capacity)

THE WORKER

FOR WORKERS POWER AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

CAN you imagine the resources needed to produce even an eight page paper like The Worker?
 You can help to make sure The Worker is on the streets regularly by contributing to our fund. Send whatever you can manage — large or small amounts — to: The Worker Fighting Fund, 41 Herberton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8.

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

'This is the big one' say Unidare workers

IF YOU'VE been reading the papers over the last few weeks you will easily be forgiven for simply not knowing that 569 workers at Unidare, —one of the biggest factories in Dublin—have been on strike since 18 August.

Since that time they have been

slogging it out with their bosses, the giant multinational Philips, with no backing from their union ITGWU.

The papers have little interest in such matters unless 'the country is being held to ransom'. The Worker has. To find out just why Unidare workers consider this strike of vital importance we talked to three members of the strike committee.

The strike began over the suspen-

sion of two security men for refusing to work on rosters unilaterally imposed by management just before the annual holiday. But as Deputy Chief Shop stewards Des Darwin explained the issues are really far wider.

'The suspension of the security men was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back as far as we were concerned. The suspension,



which was contrary to all agreements including the National Understanding was just the latest example of how Unidare management have been trying to get away with murder for some time.

'If it wasn't this issue it would have been something else. The day after the Security men put pickets up, a mass meeting unanimously decided to support them but within a week we were out not just for the security men but for ourselves as well.

'The workers endorsed a series of 40 demands from the company ranging from basic pay to pensions, a new procedural agreement, holidays etc. This has united everyone on the shop floor behind the strike.'

Security Shop Steward Albert Casey agrees that unity is the key element in this dispute.

'Look, we security men have a cast-iron case on our own. The new rosters mean loss of earnings and really stupid things like only one man guarding the whole site at night. The Company don't have a leg to stand on.'

The need for proper security has been amply demonstrated since the strike began. Vandalism from local kids has been rife, though—and take this how you will—some of the kids are said to be claiming that it's all in support of Albert and his mates.

40 demands

'But it's really great that everyone is now out. We support every one of those 40 demands. The real problem in Unidare is plain bad management and there's no going back until that is properly sorted out. Like I said at one of my meetings, in Poland they've got Solidarity, that's what we need at Unidare. Now

we've got it.'

The show of solidarity by workers has so far failed to impress their union ITGWU. Despite agreeing that all 40 demands plus the security issue are worthy of support, they have so far insisted that the workers must return to work and follow procedures before an official backing will be granted. As a result there has been no strike pay or direct company-worker talks since the dispute began. According to Chief Shop Steward Simeon Starrs, the union attitude has incensed the workers.

'It's just typical of how the number 14 branch has operated in Unidare for years. Most of the 40 demands are things the union should have won for us ages ago. Every time something comes up the union just shoves it into the Labour Court. Nothing happens. It has operated virtually as a company union for years and years. Currently 17 ex-stewards are in Unidare management. So it's no surprise that they haven't backed us this time either. But on our side it's very different.

'We've new stewards in charge now and we have the backing of the workers. Everyone is rightly angry at Liberty Hall and quite prepared to see the dispute through unofficially if necessary. The dispute is as much about establishing the right to control our own affairs in Unidare as anything else. If we win, there'll be no going back to the old company-union situation.'

There's no doubt that both the Union and the company have been rattled by the determination of the workers. As we go to press, we hear that union-company talks have taken place which may produce a 'return to work formula' in time to impress the top Philips manage-

ment arriving from Holland. But the deal would have to be a very good one to impress the workers. And they hold most of the cards. Staff and craftsmen have been put on a 3 day week, and Unidare admit to losing £3 million production. Meanwhile plans are in hand to step up the action: mass pickets to prevent management scabbing; blacking action in Unidare's second factory in Porterdown, a march on the Dail to highlight the dispute, following the recent march on Liberty Hall.

Collections in local factories to be stepped up. Last but not least a big social to raise much needed funds. (see below for details)

The Crunch

Over the years The Worker has consistently reported disputes large and small in Unidare. We felt it important that the struggle of a major group of engineering workers should be highlighted and analysed. Now the crunch has come... this is in the words of the workers themselves 'the big one'.

Whatever the final outcome things will never be the same again. The enthusiasm of the workers for really having a go at changing their working lives for the better is infectious. We share it and wish them every success.

John Cane

SOCIAL
 In aid of Unidare Strikers:
 Tuesday October 6th 8pm
 Erin's Isle, Finglas Village
 Top Cabaret artistes
 Entrance £1.50
 All welcome



DROP THE CHARGES

Last month saw Section 7 of the Offences Against the State Act being used against people who had taken part in the British Embassy riot in Dublin in the summer.

The riot developed only after the police had charged the crowd which had been attempting to reach the Embassy, and batoned men women and children indiscriminately. Any injuries to the Gardai were only as a result of people defending themselves against the most brutal batoning seen in the history of the state, this state.

Now, months after, the state is attempting to stage a political trial against anyone who protests. Last month 14 people were arrested and charged under section 7 of the Offences Against the State Act.

Everything possible must be done to secure the dropping of the charges. This is a politically motivated attempt to smash the H Block Campaign.