

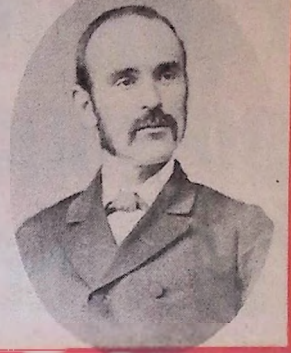
W THE WORKER

Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

INSIDE:

PLO Retreat

**Michael Davitt
and the
Land League**



NO PAY FREEZE NO CUTS

HAUGHEY has cracked the whip. Gone is the soft touch—in comes the boot. Three hundred thousand public sector workers are having their pay agreements torn up and have been told to accept a pay freeze.

But the busworkers, post office workers, teachers and nurses have already dropped behind in their wage settlements by settling 3% or 4% behind most other groups and accepting a pay pause at the beginning.

Haughey is also planning a variety of massive cuts that can only mean job losses and hardship for mainly working people. Medical card holders are now having to pay for 900 medicines previously supplied on prescription.

Postal deliveries are to be cut to one a day. Overcrowded classrooms; hospital beds in corridors; delays of months in housing maintenance; a bus service that is near complete breakdown—will all result from his attempt to trim already miserable services.

There is no money left in the kitty, we are told. It's plain rubbish. Last year the IDA handed out £123 million in direct subsidies to the multi-nationals and native Irish bosses. These same companies pay hardly a penny in tax on their profits. And there's also plenty of cash

about to build up the Irish army to 14,000—its highest level since the second world war. The cupboard is not bare, but it's only the bones and scraps we are being offered.

That is not to say that there hasn't been massive borrowing and that the Irish state is not paying out millions to foreign banks. It is, but we had no choice in that. And we didn't get much of the benefits. The rulers of this country borrowed in order to stretch out the good time for business beyond the recession. *It didn't work but it was part of their desperate risk in the world wide capitalist scramble.*

There is no group of workers who can stand aside and let Haughey's whip crack. The public sector includes some of the most militant and organised sections. A defeat for them will set the headline for even more vicious wage cuts next year and a full turn down the Thatcherist road. It will encourage the private employers to have a go at claiming 'inability to pay'.

Soften

Haughey's aim is to set up the public sector workers as scapegoats for a tax system that gives the bosses a free ride. His intention is to divide workers in order to soften them up for the attacks that are still to come.

Everyone knows that it needs unity and co-ordination. But it is the ICTU which is to do the co-ordinating. And therein lies the problem. Our trade union leaders have shown little stomach for a fight. They managed to successfully divert the tax campaign into a mood of moderation and petition gathering. They have spent more energy in recent times enforcing the two-tier scabs' charter than helping to win the smallest strike. Already John Carrol is talking compromise and offering a trade off to give up special claims in return for ending the freeze.

The ICTU has called for a demonstration on 24 September. We need to build for it with workplace leaf-



lets and meetings. The strike on the 24th should only be a start. The ICTU mustn't be let turn it into a once-off 'expression of indignation' to let off steam as they did during the tax campaign.

One-day stoppages and local actions aren't good enough. The nurses' strike in Britain has dragged on for five months that way. It needs an all-out strike to bring Haughey to his knees.

The pressure must be built up inside the unions for the all-out strike. Resolutions should flood into the executives. Lobbies should be organised when they meet. But it is not a question of just waiting for the call. Union militants should be arguing for maximum solidarity with every group of workers who come out, for example the busworkers' strike on 29 September.

Teachers, nurses, post office workers should argue for stoppages on that day in support and look for the same on their days of action. It is only in that way that the militancy can be sustained.

THE announcement during August that the government intends cutting public spending by £120 million during the current year is the first indication that the government intends taking action over the crisis facing the economy.

The proposals by the government are a direct attack on the living standards of working class people. Everyone in the country will feel the effects of the cuts immediately, with increases in butter, margarine and flour as subsidies are removed and further cut-backs in health and education. 300,000 public service workers are affected by the deferment of a 5% increase promised last February and a ban on recruitment in the public sector.

Response

The main problems facing the government are:

1 The forecast budget deficit of £10,000m which proportionately is by far the worst of any country in Western Europe. This has to be financed by foreign borrowings whose repayments add to the deficit.

2 Unemployment: the figure of 156,078 at the end of July is the worst on record. In the nine weeks of June and July unemployment increased by almost 1,000. It is now widely thought that unemployment will reach 180,000 by the year's end.

The response of the Fianna Fail government has been to adopt the policies of Thatcher and Reagan, reduce public expenditure and cut wages.

This is the road Haughey and Fianna Fail are taking, and we have already seen the problems caused by that. In Britain unemployment is over 3 million, real wages have fallen and the trade union movement has not been weaker for fifty years. The situation in the US is similar. What Fianna Fail should know and we have to learn is that these policies don't work.

The main problem is that capitalism worldwide is still in the longest and deepest slump since the 1930s. Export markets are being squeezed everywhere—by the deepening problems of the United States economy, by the fall in the price of raw materials which has forced Third World countries to slash their imports from the West, by the spread of import controls as the trade wars between the Common Market, America and Japan intensify.

In every country the bosses are desperately sacking workers and cutting wages in a bid to be more competitive than the rest. But the effect of that in Ireland as elsewhere is to cut demand even further. Faced with stagnant markets even those capitalists whose profits are rising are not going to invest in extra capacity. What they are investing in is labour-saving machinery which will put even more workers on the dole. Guinness have announced an investment of £100m which will result in the loss of 1,100 jobs.

There is no doubt that there will be a pick up in the world economy in the next year or two but not enough to reduce unemployment or increase workers' living standards.

The crisis that faces us is both national and international. As capitalism is unwilling or unable to take the actions necessary to end the crisis, then another answer suggests itself: that is the building of an international workers' movement which will seize control of these companies so that production takes place to satisfy human need and not the drive for profit. Such ideas are not popular in the trade union and workers' movement, but until workers take them seriously the crisis will just go on and on.

Paul O'Brien

Pro-lives' poisonous 'prayer'

THE JESUITS used to have a motto that went 'Send me the boy and I will give you the man'. (Girls didn't count for much, it seems.) It was a phrase to show how powerfully the effect of an education system could be on forming adult ideas. The Pro-Life Campaign have taken the motto to heart.

One of the side shows they have organised is the Pro-Life Prayer Campaign. A 'prayer' is being forced down the throats of young boys and girls of nine years old and upwards. Most could barely read its complicated words such as 'legislators' or 'formulation'. But it is typical of the Church-controlled primary schools that the mindless learning of Church ideas is more important than the basic skills of reading or writing.

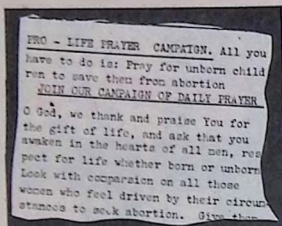
The Worker spoke to Helen, whose daughter received this piece of nonsense. She wished to remain anonymous in case her child was victimised in school.

Lying

It's disgusting but there is not much I can do about it. They would take it out on the child. Do you know what she thinks abortion is? Literally killing new-born babies. She hasn't even got the basic idea on how kids come into the world.

It is a blatant case of the Catholic Church using its control of education to enforce its political views. The prayer asks for 'wisdom for our legislators'. And the whole aim of the prayer is that it is not just recited in the classroom but also brought home to 'involve the parents'.

This has been a clear trend in the new religious education classes. As attendance at masses has dropped, children are being asked to get their parents to say prayers with them, to come to the communion and confirmation and to 'discuss' their religious books with them. It's all about



catching the parents—through their children.

As long as the Catholic Church controls the schools, this type of religious pornography will exist. It is up to the teachers, through the unions to at least black ordinary lay teachers from cooperating in circulating this pro-Life prayer.

One branch of the TUI in Dublin has already given an excellent lead when they condemned the use of SPUC material in the schools. Hopefully the INTO can match the lead.



IRELAND's first four-day unemployed march. 40 marchers from all over the country who were sponsored by many trade union branches set out from Waterford as part of the Peoples March for Decent Jobs in late June.

They visited factories on the way and held meetings sponsored by local trades councils. One of the highlights of the march was the visit to Clondalkin Paper Mills occupation. At a meeting there

speakers from Clondalkin and De Lorean expressed support for the march and pointed out that occupation was the only way to combat redundancies.

By contrast support from the leadership of the trade unions was negligible. The Workers Party and CP domination of the Dublin Trades Council meant that they refused to support it.

The paralysis of religion

The history of all previous societies may well have been the history of their class

struggles but the form that conflict very often takes to this day is a religious form.

It is of course true that underneath many superficially religious struggles there is the fight for dominance by one class.

In Iran, the Shi-ite Muslims fought for the establishment of their idea of a religious state against the secularism of the Shah.

In reality it was a banner under which the bourgeois and priest class allied with workers, to fight against the despotism of the aristocratic Shah and his class of international millionaire thieves.

In Ireland Catholic proletarians wage war against an old Ascendancy class who held power for their Imperial masters. The fact that many Protestant workers take the side of the Imperialist ascendancy class does not change the nature or essence of the struggle.

selves great money spinners for the people who own the shrines but still serve as dust in the eyes of the millions of workers who continue to pay homage to God and religion.

Stamp

In a world of ignorance and darkness any explanation was better than none. Religion acted as the sociology, philosophy, economics and psychology of the day. Religion, like art, philosophy and science are in fact the manifestation or revelation of the human essence.

'Man's essence' wrote Fuerbach, the predecessor of Marx, 'is only in community, in man's unity with man.' Marx himself said, 'The human essence is the ensemble of social relations'. But the failure of men and women to control their world meant that they projected their own possibilities onto a God. Humans take for God that which is their own. The creation of God by humanity is both a testimony to its own social existence and its failure to control that existence.

Marx

However Fuerbach, who gave Marx his ideas on Materialism, was limited. In his 'Essence of Christianity' he argued that theoretical activity was the only genuine human activity. In effect, that meant that religious ideas could be changed through intellectual debate. Marx argued that because religious beliefs had roots in the material world, they could only be changed through activity and practice.

Religion is passive and conservative. 'Philosophers have merely interpreted the world' said Marx. 'Our job is to change it'. That is the message socialists convey today.

Jim Blake



Blatant

So religion is still important in a world where we would have expected by now that it would have 'disappeared as a childish notion which can find no confirmation in reality' to use Marx's phrase.

We have after all reached a level of development in science which explains the world and the environment in a much more readily rational way than our immediate ancestors could possibly have imagined. Much of the uncertainty has disappeared out of farming and general food production. Much of the population in Ireland for instance has become urbanised yet we still have 90% churchgoing on Sunday.

The fact is of course that religion still remains the most powerful weapon open to the owners of capital and wealth for keeping the exploited masses in fear and subjection. The miracles of Lourdes, Fatima, Knock and Czestocova remain in them-

Say one thing do another

WHERE does the Workers Party stand on the Pro-Life Amendment? They claim themselves to be the leading exponents of 'secular republicanism'. In an article in the May issue of 'Workers Life' they themselves denounced it as 'a pro-hypocrisy amendment'. They went even further. Quite correctly, they pointed out, 'It raised a class issue, in exactly the same way as the subject of contraception and divorce'.

Excellent analysis on paper. Yet, in a brief four-line letter to the Irish Times they stated that they have nothing to do with the Anti-Amendment Campaign. The Anti-Amendment Campaign is the broad based force that offers the best possibility of building a united campaign to oppose the 'pro-hypocrisy' amendment. So why aren't the Workers Party involved? It is obvious to everybody that the broadest unity of the left is required.

It is very simple. It is one thing to make known your opposition to this amendment for the record—it is quite a different matter campaigning to defend it. To campaign means to carry your arguments to all those who are

prepared to vote for you. It may mean losing votes. But for the non-opportunist left that is a risk that must be taken in order to build up a general socialist consciousness amongst the mass of the working class.

The Workers Party is hooked on electoralism. Despite its 'hard' internal stalinism, its electoral appeal is based on its 'we can fix it' constituency work. Campaigning against the amendment may actually detract from that vote getting exercise.

In the July issue of 'Workers Life' they printed a letter from the PRO of SPUC without any editorial comment. SPUC are of course the organisation of the extreme right of the reactionary offensive. The sort of organisation that will mobilise to break up or disrupt meetings which put across the argument for the woman's right to choose on abortion. It may be a sign of a new liberalism in the Workers Party that its letters columns are open to all. We doubt it. The same privilege does not apply to those who wish to reply to its line on H Block or 'ultra-left' unofficial strikers.

UN proves sham of Irish neutrality

IS the United Nations really the neutral, peace-keeping body it is made to sound? Is the frequent deployment of Southern Irish troops on UN missions merely a neutral peacekeeping stance from a neutral peaceable country?

The last major crisis of world capitalism intensified imperialist rivalries to such an extent that the Allied powers went to war to crush the threat that Hitler's Germany posed to British, French and later American and Russian interests.

Towards the end of World War 2, the Allied Powers began to plan for the share out of the world that their victory would bring. At summit conferences like that at Yalta, Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill divided the spoils among themselves. The post-war map of the world with its 'spheres of influence' is the familiar result of this great imperialist settlement.

However, those rivalries still existed between the victors even if their intensity did not mean immediate 'hot' war. In particular, in 1943 and 1944, Britain was seen as a powerful threat to US supremacy. The existence of her Empire was a potential block on American commercial expansion. The Americans saw the UN along with the IMF, the World Bank and so on as an instrument for beating down British and Russian obstacles to American power.

The powerful core of the UN—the Security Council—was to have America, Chiang Kai-Shek's China (Formosa), Britain, Russia and France as permanent members. Formosa would back America, it was no more than its puppet; France, with a colonial empire of its own would be likely to see things Britain's way and Russia would look after itself. All the permanent members would have an absolute veto.

While America was opposed to other countries setting up 'spheres of influence', that concern did not apply to their

own—South America. The UN Charter, however, forbade military intervention by a member country without the approval of the Security Council, except against former enemy states. That, in theory, meant a free hand for Russia against Germany or Japan, while restricting America's 'right' to intervene at will in Latin America.

The Americans wanted their right to interfere in Latin America recognised by the UN Charter without it giving the go-ahead to Britain or Russia to do the same elsewhere. So they attempted to have the military agreement they had just made with South American states written in as an exception to the provisions of the Charter. The British balked at this.

So the Americans came up with the famous Article 51—the 'right of self defence'. This allowed them to intervene under the auspices of the kind of regional military agreement—like the current Rio Treaty—which provides that 'an attack on one is an attack on all'.

In the US Senate discussions of

the Charter, it was spelt out that Article 51 allowed US intervention in South America without Security Council approval.

As the defeated Axis powers' possessions were disposed of, Britain did a deal with America which allowed US untrammelled control of the Pacific islands to become US bases in return for US silence on the future of the British Empire.

Coup

The UN action in Korea in 1950-53 proves that the UN at that stage was nothing more than an instrument of US foreign policy. At that time Russia was boycotting the Security Council because of the continuing denial of the China seat to its then ally, the Peking Government. This allowed the US to commit its troops (dressed up with token forces from other UN members) under its command and get UN backing as a rubber stamp.

What was in reality a US force in Korea was presented to the

world as a UN peacekeeping intervention.

Since that time, America has not had everything its own way in the UN. An example is the Congo 1960-64. The Congo became independent in 1960. However, Belgium had a special interest in the province of Katanga. Copper, cobalt and other metals provided a major share of the world production. Belgium owned companies like Union Miners, the Bas-Congo-Katanga Railroad and the massive Société Générale banking company stood to gain if Katanga was excluded from the distinctly unsympathetic government of Patrice Lumumba. Moise Tshombe—a puppet of these interests—seceded the province, backed by a massive military force from Belgium on the pretext of 'protecting the lives and property' of its nationals.

Lumumba's government of the Congo appealed to the UN for assistance in ridding the Congo of Belgian troops and white mercenaries, and restoring its rule over Katanga.

The Americans were unwilling to back the old colonial rulers. It was in their interests to create a unified but subservient Congo under a leader more pliable than Lumumba. Diplomatically, it suited them to curry favour with the leaders of Afro-Asian states in their opposition to a transparent colonial conspiracy.

'Neutral'

But Belgium was backed by Britain who perfectly understood the desire of a colonial power to hang on to its interests. The consequence was a series of ambiguous UN resolutions that were so worded as to satisfy everybody. When a coup was staged against Lumumba the UN forces closed down the National radio and all the airports, except in Katanga. This prevented Lumumba rallying troops loyal to him. Action by Lumumba against Katanga was halted. UN action in Katanga, under one of the conflicting mandates, against Tshombe's forces was aborted and—under British and Belgian pressure—disowned in a series of lying UN reports.

As the shifting nuances of UN diplomacy swung in favour of the US, the upshot in 1964 was a reunited Congo under a regime more cooperative to US interests. And this is the point about the UN. Its military operations reflect the shifting balance of diplomatic forces among the major powers. At times the feelings of the rulers of third world countries are taken into account if it suits the interests of a major power, at other times not.

The one party who never get a shout are the mass of people in Africa, Middle East or anywhere else. It is a 'thieves kitchen' and the blue flag is no more than a fig leaf for naked aggression.

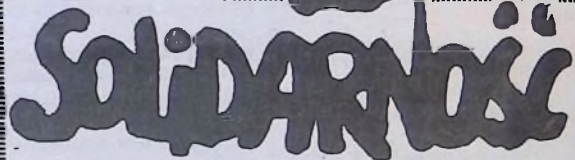
Weapon

So why is Ireland such a prominent member? The Southern regime has never joined NATO for one reason—partition. NATO is founded on existing borders and the 26-county government has never—so far—been able to publicly accept the border as fixed and legitimate. But being 'neutral' enables Ireland to perform the sorts of services for the US that no member of NATO ever could. Irish troops in the Lebanon under a blue flag could persuade the unwary that its role was neutral peacekeeping. Troops from, say, El Salvador or West Germany would find it difficult to present such an amiable front.

But it is now clear that those troops were only window dressing. When Israel—armed by American might—decided to take out 'the terrorists' (read Palestinians) they merely stepped aside, good and trusty servants of the US.

The 26-county government is not neutral, it is a bosses' government as every other member of the UN is. On the international, as on the national stage, the real struggle is between bosses and their governments on the one hand and workers and their allies on the other. The conditions for peace both nationally and internationally are workers' power.

STEVE GREEN



DESPITE the military coup last December, Solidarity is still alive. Almost every day there are reports of vigils, demonstrations and strikes. Next Monday, 31 August, the underground leaders of Solidarity are calling for demonstrations of defiance against military rule. Meanwhile there are reports from Szczecin that workers were fired after protests that they could close the shipyards there.

The fact that the Polish authorities continue to hold many of the leading Solidarity members is a sure indicator that the union has not been smashed.

The Irish Polish Solidarity Campaign was founded as part of the worldwide campaign in support of Solidarity. Support groups have been formed in the ITCWU, FWUI and others. It is hoped that more support groups will be formed in the coming months. Its most recent event was a fringe meeting with a Solidarity speaker at the ICTU congress in Belfast.

Reagan and Thatcher have got a lot of mileage out of the attacks on the Polish workers. Yet those same people are not above the smashing of trade unionism in their own countries. In the US, PATCO, the air traffic controllers' union, faced with a bill for 40 million dollars for fines and damages, recently dissolved itself. The only support that Solidarity can rely on is the support of other trade unionists throughout the world.

For further information or for copies of the IPSC Bulletin, contact: Irish Polish Solidarity Campaign, 45 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2.

PLO—THE MISTAKES THAT LED TO DEFEAT

During the 10 week siege of Beirut the PLO fought the longest and most heroic battle ever seen against Zionism. They have also suffered a most shattering defeat.

The extreme right of Zionism has achieved its objective. The military organisation of the PLO have been broken up and dispersed across the Arab capitals of the world. The Palestinian population in Lebanon have been made into second class citizens. A buffer regime under Major Haddad has gained full control of southern Lebanon.

In Beirut itself, the Maronite fascists have taken over what is left of the state machinery with the election of Gemelil. The Israelis' hope is that the shattered Lebanese national army will be rebuilt and integrated with the phalangist militia to be in a better position to control or smash the Muslim left, and the remaining Palestinians.

Activity

There are many on the left who would prefer not to recognise the defeat or analyse its faults. Nine years previously in September '73 there was a similar reaction to the Chilean coup.

'Solidarity is what we need and not discussion', but the lessons of Chile and now of Beirut have to be learned, so that similar disasters are not

repeated. And they have a particular relevance for Ireland.

The PLO fighters expected and relied upon support from the neighbouring Arab regimes. They did not lift a finger. Despite their Arab nationalism they feared the revolutionary implications of the Palestinian struggle more than they feared the expansionist regime of Israel.

Take Syria for example. Some sections of the PLO have links with the regime, and because it is in the Moscow camp many regard it as progressive. Yet Syria called its own ceasefire with Israel and left the PLO to fight alone. But that is no surprise.

During the 1975/76 civil war when the Palestinians and the Muslim left seemed close to victory in smashing the privileged fascist Christian militia, it was Syria who moved in to save the neck of the Phalangists. Unfortunately

ly as the PLO developed it believed it could win through a combination of the armed struggle and diplomacy at the UN.

The neighbouring Arab regimes offered support on both these fronts, but their intention has been quite cynical—to buy the silence of Palestinian critics and to manipulate some Palestinian groups for their own purposes.

The second major error of the PLO was their belief that the armed struggle alone could defeat Israel. The truth is that the weaponry of the PLO could never match the might of Israel. How could it? The technology of a dispersed nation versus that of America's puppet. Events have proved that guerilla struggle cannot bring down Israel. It is through politics, through mobilisation that the key to victory lies.

Increasingly the Israeli state has come to depend on the Palestinian workforce of the occupied territories. It was partially to head off their increased militancy that it invaded Lebanon. The power of these Palestinian workers inside Israel—harnessed to a workers' movement that can topple the surrounding Arab regimes—is where the strength is.

Just as in South Africa, it is the power of the black working class in industry that counts far more than simply the guns of a guerilla organisation.

The scattering of the PLO to the four corners of the Arab world now confronts them with a sharp choice. They can enter a period of 'enforced' moderation confined with isolated military attacks on Israel.

Or there can be a turn in the politics of the Palestinian left towards building an opposition inside the workers' movement of Damascus, Cairo and Baghdad against the native Arab regimes. Those regimes are the real buffer to the Israeli state.



Israeli troops in the Becca Valley

THE SAVING OF IRELAND

IDA: not just for foreigners

Lately the call for 'import controls' has been heard from some of our trade union leaders. DERMOT BYRNE argues here that such demands are not in the workers' interests. Those same leaders also support the Industrial Development Authority. KIERAN ALLEN shows exactly whose interest the Authority serves.

EVER since it was first established, the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) has lived on the promise that it could bring full industrialisation to the South.

Its efforts have been held up as a showpiece by both ruling class parties—Labour and Fine Gael. But the so-called working-class parties—Labour and the Workers Party—have also given it their full backing. Collaboration with the bosses doesn't just begin with a coalition pact—it is carried out daily in the bits of practical suggestions and 'helpful advice' given to the IDA.

Yet the IDA's philosophy is one of unbridled free enterprise. The more the handouts—the higher the profits—the more the jobs. Since the early seventies it has worked on a two-pronged strategy. First, it has gone to massive lengths to attract foreign capital to the South as the principal motor of industrial development. Secondly, it has also attempted to revamp native capitalism and graft it on to the sectors controlled by the multi-nationals.

Meander

It is a myth to believe that the IDA's handouts are just for 'the foreigners'.

In 1980 for example the IDA planned to pay out £97 million in grants to overseas investors. Yet it planned to pay out £133 million to domestic industry. Domestic for IDA includes expansions of existing foreign industry. Nevertheless, £60-70 million of these domestic grants are going to the pockets of our own native capitalist class.

Since 1980 they also enjoy the full benefits of a 10% Profits Tax (after all allowances) if they are in manufacturing.

Native capitalism has been the principal beneficiary of the £91 million that has been handed out in re-equipment grants over the last decade. Under the guise of making industry 'more competitive', these grants have been a virtual invitation to make workers redundant.

Over the last two years the IDA has made a turn to encouraging native small industries. The subsidies to capital here are higher than in most other areas. The state provides more than half in grants to what the small industries are prepared to put up.

The problem for Irish capitalism is that it is too weak to compete directly on the world level. Left to its own devices, it could only disappear down the chute. But the IDA has presided over its integration with the multi-nationals that are operating here.

The traditional native industries

The boss class have it easy in Ireland.

There are a whole series of handouts and subsidies they can get.

- Bosses in manufacturing are guaranteed a 10% tax rate on profits until the year 2,000. And this is after all deductions are made of depreciation etc. Effectively it means paying no tax at all.
- They are offered ready made factory buildings at a subsidised rental.
- They get a 100% grant for training workers including all the costs of sending workers abroad.
- If they want to set up a research and development unit, they can get up to 50% grant to cover wages and expenditure.
- They are offered ready made factory buildings at a subsidised rental.
- They have full freedom to repatriate their profits and have a number of double tax arrangements with particular countries, where profits that are shipped back can only be taxed at the same rate as they would be in Ireland.

Like the shoe or textile industry—many of whom were linked with British capital anyway—are in serious trouble. On the other hand, those areas of native capital which operate to service and supply the multi-nationals—such as in civil engineering—have managed to expand. Since 1973 for example there have been 1,300 native Irish companies established which now employ 22,000 workers in 1980. It is those 'survivors' who receive the bulk of the IDA's subsidies and handouts.

Each year the annual report of the IDA shows where the planned investment is coming from. Since 1973, American capital accounts for roughly 60%-70% of all foreign capital coming into the South. Compare that with, for example, British capital which rarely accounts for more than 10%. Between 1974-79 American investment in Ireland increased by three times the rate in other European countries!

1973 is a significant date. It was the year Southern Ireland joined the EEC as its most underdeveloped member. It therefore provided the American multi-nationals with a

relatively cheap labour force from which to get their producers around barriers of the EEC.

It also offered other advantages. The then ambassador to Ireland in 1978, William V Shannon, spelled it out:

'In other places 30% of the population is voting communist. All the leading parties in this country are sympathetic to private enterprise—so that an American does not have the fear that the operation might be nationalised.'

Political stability, plenty of relatively cheap labour and access to the EEC markets were the key. The grants and the tax concessions were almost the icing on the cake after that.

One of the proud boasts of the IDA is that the American multi-nationals can get their highest return on capital in Ireland. With a profit rate of 29% it is one of the highest in the world and double the European average in the boom times. An executive of the Johnson Wax Company, William K Eastham put it like this:

Slogans

'In the US if we had 20% of a return we would be delighted.'

There are a number of reasons for the high rate of profit. The subsidies that the IDA hands out and the effective zero rate of tax help. But it is not the whole story. The American based industry that comes here is usually at the final stage of a production line that began in Detroit or South Korea.

Much of the materials is imported from sister firms of the multi-nationals. As a result there is ample opportunity for price-fixing and transferring of profits within the multi-nationals to take advantage of the price haven. Despite the full freedom to repatriate the profits, American companies don't bother and generally have a high rate of reinvestment.

In addition, although labour is only moderately cheap, the record of trade union militancy in the American controlled factories has been low. The sweetheart deals which the ITGWU has entered into have contributed. But so too has the general ideology of the union bureaucrats that the IDA must be supported and that nothing can be done because we are dependent on them.

The IDA is no neutral body that encourages development. Its primary aim is to cheapen the costs of capital—both for Irish capitalists and the multi-nationals. The task of the labour movement is not as the Workers Party would see it, to support 'industrialisation' in general so that the working class is numerically stronger at some future date. These type of policies led to the diversion of the whole tax campaign onto simply attacking farmers.

The Irish working class pay through the nose in taxes in order to subsidise capital in Ireland. The demands of the tax campaign should have been to say clearly 'Make the bosses pay'.

KIERAN ALLEN

WHEN a baby starts to babble it's good fun; you know the sort of thing I mean. Everybody gets round the pram going 'goo goo' and waiting for a reply. The baby replies, but we are still in the dark. The little mutt has a language all of its own.

Sometimes I get that feeling watching trade union leaders on TV. I'm looking into a pram saying 'who's going to do something about unemployment then?' The reply makes as much sense as the baby in the advert for bum powder.

John Carroll of the ITGWU really takes the biscuit. At the union's conference he was asked to speak on 'the way forward for job creation'. The answer according to John to the

Will import controls

plight of the 160,000 unemployed is import controls. When he spoke he got a lot of support.

Now John Carroll, let me say without a shadow of doubt, is talking nonsense. First, there is no such thing as full employment under capitalism. If there was capitalism could not work. Even in times of 'full' employment in Ireland there were always around 50,000 out of work.

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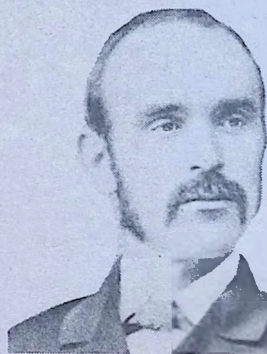
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Action

Socialists and trade unionists should see through this. We do not want to solve Ireland's huge unemployment at the expense of British workers or French workers. Import controls on foreign goods does just that. It recognises that Irish workers have an interest which is the same



Michael Davitt and the beginnings of the Land League

ONE OF the perennial problems facing socialists in Ireland is, how does one relate to the small farmer. How does one force him away from supporting, with almost devotion, the very system which grinds him down just as efficiently as it does the rest of us.

If the small farmer is just as conservative as the politicians would have us believe, why is this so, will it always be so and what made him so?

In a country like Ireland, a reactionary small farmer class would act as a very effective buffer in the war between Capital and Labour. One of the nice things about history is that you can find out that things weren't always the same and therefore won't always remain the same. Like when 100 years ago, the tenants farmers, under the slogan 'the land of Ireland for the people of Ireland' and with their demand for the nationalisation of the land, had their own fighting organisation—The Land League.

At the beginning of the last century, the condition of the Irish peasantry was described as 'the most miserable in all of Europe'. Along with the ancient grievance of being serfs on a land where they once were lords (with the added indignity of the oppressors being of different creed, language and culture), there was the daily threat of

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WHEN a baby starts to babble it's good fun; you know the sort of thing I mean. Everybody gets round the pram going 'goo goo' and waiting for a reply. The baby replies, but we are still in the dark. The little mutt has a language all of its own.
Sometimes I get that feeling watching trade union leaders on TV. I'm looking into a pram saying 'who's going to do something about unemployment then?' The reply makes as much sense as the baby in the advert for bum powder.
John Carroll of the ITGWU really takes the biscuit. At the union's conference he was asked to speak on 'the way forward for job creation'. The answer according to John to the

Will import controls help?

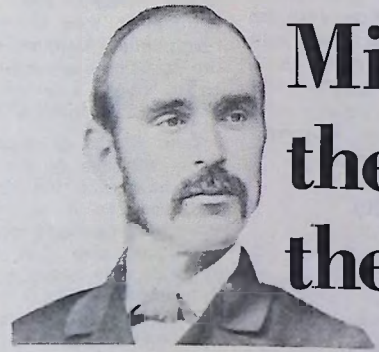
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the unemployed figures. If controls were put on 'foreign' goods being imported, working class families would have no choice but to buy the home produced product, which is often dearer, and have less money to spend on other goods.
Redundancies and cutbacks therefore would continue as the demand for other goods fell, due to Irish workers buying dearer 'Irish' goods. Fiddling around with the capitalist mess gets us nowhere.
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In a country like Ireland, a reactionary small farmer class would act as a very effective buffer in the war between Capital and Labour. One of the nice things about history is that you can find out that things weren't always the same and therefore won't always remain the same. Like when 100 years ago, the tenants farmers, under the slogan 'the land of Ireland for the people of Ireland' and with their demand for the nationalisation of the land, had their own fighting organisation—the Land League.
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monopoly storekeeper over the peasantry.
Who could the peasantry look to for political leadership in the crucial period between the famine and the birth of the Land League in 1879? The Young Irelanders who were responsible for the 1848 debacle, a mainly middle-class movement, refused to see the land question as relevant to their panacea, the political independence of Ireland. (One of the leaders, James Fintan Lalor, did in fact originate the slogan 'the soil of Ireland for the people of Ireland' and called for the abolition of landlordism. This was rejected by the rest of the leadership.)
The constitutionalists who sat in Parliament, if they thought about it at all, didn't go any further than mouthing support for the Three Fs—Fair rent, Fixity of tenure, and Freedom of sale, attempting to reform landlordism rather than destroy it. Likewise with the Fenians or Irish Republican Brotherhood (formed in 1858), they were only for driving the British out through force of arms, all else, such as agitation over land, the organising of urban and rural workers, were distractions from the real struggle.
The catholic hierarchy, of course, gave its usual counsel: 'Render unto Caesar' etc. So the peasantry and much despised rural worker (in the poorer areas the difference wasn't great) were left very much to their own devices and they reacted very much as

their forefathers had done—formed secret societies to wreak vengeance on the landlords and their agents.
These went under different names at different times. Whiteboys, Peep o Day boys etc and latterly Ribbon Men. These wholly localised organisations carried out terrorist attacks on the landlords, their agents and often enough on the cattle herds, and although sometimes successful in keeping the enemy in line usually only managed to bring on further repression and more coercion laws.
Connaught, the poorest and most congested area, always topped the league table with the most of these quaintly termed 'agrarian outrages'.
The village of Straide in Mayo could in 1850 serve as a microcosm of the whole western part of Ireland. There in that year a small tenant farmer, Martin Davitt, pauperised by the famine and unable to win the unequal struggle with both landlord and gombeen man, even through the expedient of taking seasonal work in England, was evicted. The family cottage was burned down. After a brief stop at the poor house, which was not to their proud liking, he, his wife and four children took the road to Dublin on the long trek which ended in the small textile firm of Haslingdon, Lancs.
Their second oldest child on that trek was 4½ years old Michael. Many years

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The Davitts were just a small part of a mass exodus driven off the land by the clearances. So it was natural that much of this transient surplus humanity should gravitate towards an area of new opportunity to the heartland of the Industrial Revolution—the dark satanic mills of Lancashire. When the Davitts reached Haslingdon a well-delineated Irish ghetto had already been established there, inhabited by people at the bottom of a very big heap, scratching a living as street hawkers or casual farm labourers, while their

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Ireland now imports more and more goods by the year, like machinery, computers, chemicals etc which are assembled here and re-exported. To interfere with this would simply maintain the current level of unemployment. The factories which assemble 'foreign' goods would be worst hit.

In short import controls tie workers to their own employers and let the trade unions off the hook. If workers of one country are turned against workers in another country, the bosses have the last laugh. And it's for this reason that the leadership of the ITGWU are so bent on putting forward import controls as a solution.

It's easy to blame other capitalist countries. It's easier than giving a lead in the here and now for a fightback—to share work and no loss of pay, to fight for the 35-hour week, to fight all redundancies and lay-offs. In the long term it's only by rank and file workers themselves fighting unemployment and its cause—capitalism—that gains can be made.

The hypocrisy of John



It is not only at Delorean that workers have taken over their factory recently. These workers are on strike in the Talbot plant at Poissy in France.

Carroll's call for import controls was highlighted by the fact that in between applause he was taking gulps of water. But what's this?

The water he's drinking is French Perrier Mineral water all the way from Vergeze, France.

It occurred to me that he might protest and demand an Irish mineral water company be set up and the French stuff banned. But then maybe not. There's lots of drivers and storemen at the C and C company who distribute Perrier water from France who

might object to see part of their jobs being taken away. Especially since they are in John Carroll's union; No 3 branch ITGWU.

DERMOT BYRNE, No 3 Branch ITGWU

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children, on mastering English, qualified for the delights of work in the textile mills.

Michael Davitt worked in the textile mills from the age of nine until eleven when he lost an arm while attempting to clear a blockage on a machine. This, ironically, enabled him to get the rudiments of an education, clerking being deemed the only work he could do. Through this long process of self-education Davitt inevitably came into contact with contemporary radical thinking.

He met such people as Ernest Jones, a veteran Chartist leader who filled his head full of new ideas such as land nationalisation. But full political involvement did not come until he, like thousands more, joined the Fenians, an organisation whose leadership and ideology was mainly middle class nationalist, yet whose propaganda struck a deep chord in the newly proletarianised Irish, in Ireland itself, America and Britain, even penetrating deeply into the Irish regiments in the British Army.

The Fenians though strong in number and resolve suffered from the weaknesses that dog all conspiratorial groups—clashing egos at the top and

fifth column with its rank of spies and informers. So it was that the attempted rising of 1867 ended in fiasco. Davitt himself was implicated as a leader on the daring but abortive arms raid on Chester Castle and got seven years in Dartmoor to ponder the whys and wherefores of the disaster.

Slumped

It was while there, he claimed, that he saw the need for another New Departure. This entailed as we would now say it the Broad Front of armed struggle, land agitation coupled with Parliamentary manoeuvring. On his release Davitt began to campaign for the remaining political prisoners (and to his credit for general prison reform on behalf of all prisoners) which inevitably took him to America and into contact with the Fenian leadership there.

These men, in particular John Devoy, seem to have benefitted from viewing the situation from a distance, and seeing what amounted to a neutral stance by the peasantry in '67 took the view that if you wanted the peasants to support the Republican cause then you had to show what the Republic offered

them in the here and now. This meant supporting the war against landlordism. In the late 1870s this land war was to heat up again.

Evictions began to increase as did the agrarian outrages in response.

It was back to Mayo again that the first seeds of the New Departure were sown. Local tenant farmers, fenians and supporters of the rising Parnellite faction in the Parliamentary Party came together to organise a mass meeting on tenants' rights in Irishtown on April 1879. The outcome of this meeting itself was unusual for rural Ireland—pledges on solidarity with evicted tenants were made, messages of support from urban workers and shopkeepers and the whole thing organised by the laity in the teeth of fierce clerical opposition. Indeed, Irishtown was chosen as a site for the meeting because the local Canon, Bowke, acting as executor for his dead brother's estate, threatened evictions for people who patently could not pay rent increases that year.

The meeting and its outcome were a huge success, landlords in the Galway, Mayo area faced with a united organised tenantry had no option but to forego rent increases and sometimes rents themselves. Naturally enough the idea caught on across the whole country. By October the National Land League was set up

The movement offered hope not only to the tenant farmers but also to the landless labourers and, to the great fear of the Orange landlords in the North, because of its patently non-sectarian nature, to make recruits among the Protestant tenant farmers there.

So what went wrong? We had a risen peasantry, a rising urban proletariat, the first sign of a crack in the Orange monolith and the clergy shooed back to the cloisters where they belonged. As we will see, the seeds of the destruction of the Land League were present at an early stage. Next month we will examine them in the fall of the Land League and the rise of the Irish working class.

OLLY CASEY



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.

THE WORKER is produced by the SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT. If you would like more information on our activities and policies, would like to become a member of the SWM or would like to take out a subscription to THE WORKER—£3.50 for a year—clip and post this form to SWM, 41 Herberton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8.

I want to join. I want a subscription and enclose £3.50.

I would like more information about the SWM

Name:

Address:

INDUSTRIAL NEWS LIGHTHOUSE MEN SHOW THE WAY

'At any time during 24 hours you can be called upon to carry out repairs.... or travel at a moment's notice to any other station. The only payment is made for work carried out. You work without food or rest until the job's done. You spend 28 days on Rock station—that is 672 hours continuous. Any electrician or LHT who due to crowding on the Rock station cannot stay and goes back home will lose his right to eight hours' working leave due to him for working in that station.... on the station you purchase your own food and cook it, maintain and clean dwellings and leave in clean condition afterwards.'

The above extract is from a long document concerning working conditions and rates of pay for the men who work in and maintain the lighthouses around the coast of Ireland.

The document reads like a horror story and is an indictment of the Commissioners of Irish

Lights who have refused to budge on pay and conditions during a long strike by craftsmen at the Dun Laoghaire depot. It was submitted to the Labour Court but the men decided on strike action after many years of frustration.

Vocation

Pat Drolen, a steward in the Dun Laoghaire depot, explains what it is like to work for Irish Lights and gives the story of the dispute....

'First of all I'd like to tell about the job itself. Many people think we love our job. They think that working out at sea and on the lighthouses is some sort of vocation. Well, it's not. The Commissioners for Irish Lights are the general lighthouse authority and are responsible for establishing and maintaining navigational aids for shipping around the whole coast of

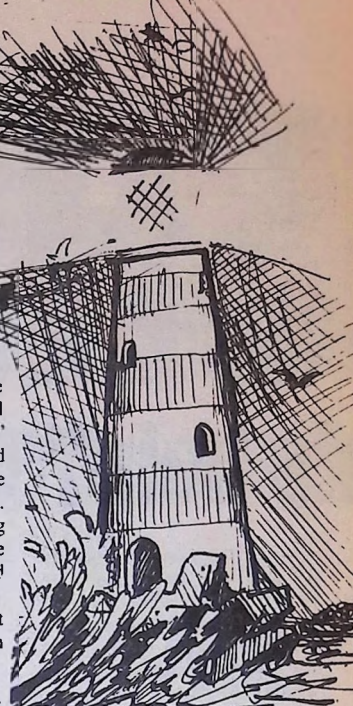
Ireland.

'The commissioners derive their funds from international shipping owners, who pay 'dues' to the general lighthouse fund which is administered by the department of trade in London.

'For over 15 years, having been told of the depressed state of the lighthouse fund, we did very little to improve our conditions. At Dun Laoghaire depot where I am employed as an electrician we came up against a stone wall.

'An electrician is on 24-hour call for seven days a week—even on holidays! A man who waits on a call over a weekend and is not called out will not get a penny, but he still loses his 'free' weekend. He must stay on hand just in case.

'If you do go in a 'Rock' you carry lots of equipment to do the job. One sometimes has to leave personal luggage at home to accommodate such work-



material. On the day of travel you assist with loading and organising all supplies being carried by ship or helicopter. Each LT (electrician) brings his own bedding, tool kit, food and clothing. I could write a book but you get the picture. The craftsmen have had enough of this and low pay as well. That's why we took the decision to strike.

'Three unions representing craftsmen went on strike some eight weeks ago and were joined by members of the ATGWU and the ITGWU. The Dun Laoghaire depot has been picketed as well as the Commissioner of Irish Lights headquarters in Dublin. Two ships, the Atlanta and the Granuaile, are at the time of writing tied up at Sir John Rogerson Quay. At present it looks as if the lighthouse keeps themselves will now come out. The workers on strike are AUEW, ETU, and NEETU who have had enough of the sorry conditions and the rate of pay. We are seeking 25% now. It's gone to the Labour Court again but it's doubtful whether anything will be achieved.

Danger

'We had an agreement (and a very bad one it was) with the Commissioner which expired in September 1979. Since then there has been talk and more talk. Now the talking will be a little more realistic.

'Shop stewards were told by the men to take positive action. The CIL said they had no money. Of course they'll find it if we stick it out. The craftsmen as far as I can see are the lowest form of life in the service. We have the worst conditions, so after a meeting of the workers we rejected 15% and some 50 men placed pickets in Dun Laoghaire. We are supported by the Granuaile and Atlantic ship crews. The strike to date has disrupted the commissioners' round the coast inspection tour, which inspects everything but their own living quarters aboard the Granuaile. Ships' officers, I believe, are still going aboard and doing seamen' work.

'This is our first strike at Irish Lights. When week-in-hand money was being paid out after the first week on strike, the ILC really played it dirty. Some of the tradesmen found that after deductions had been taken from many pay packets without any authority it left some men with as little as 42p to bring home.

'It could be a long drawn out dispute but even if it's over by the time you read this, next time you hear a ship sounding off Dun Laoghaire Pier in the night, think of the workers.'

PAT DROLEN, NEETU



Waterford workers support Asian seamen

MANY of the crewmen who work the ships carrying livestock from Waterford port to North Africa and the Middle East turn regularly to Mecca for their spiritual needs as part of their Muslim faith.

Over the last 18 months or so Waterford has become a new sort of Mecca for these seamen—a place where they can have their industrial needs catered for.

The ATGWU on behalf of the International Transport Federation (ITF) have secured wage increases and back-up pay of up to £¼ million for underpaid foreign seamen over the last year and a half.

According to Declan Cheasty, district officer of the ATGWU and chief negotiator on behalf of the seamen, 'Unscrupulous ship owners sign on these men, who are glad of the opportunity to work with a view to making fat profits from them.'

The seamen are recruited in the Philippines, Pakistan, Uruguay, Chile and almost every other dictatorship in Africa, the Middle East and South America in the hope that they are less likely to cause 'union trouble!'

They are paid around £40 a week for working 60-70, sometimes 80 hours. (This is about a quarter of what European seamen earn.)

Accommodation is deplorable with four men to a cabin where there should be only two. European seamen get regular paid leave but these men get none, says Declan. 'I have recently had a case where crewmen were at sea for 2½ years, without any paid leave and another where the ship owner had all the crew down as deck-boys paying deck boys' rates.

Talk

These men aware of this super-exploitation will fight back when and where they are sure of local support and solidarity.

The latest dispute involves the crew of the Liberian registered ship 'Purcell Livestock' which has been tied up at Waterford Port for almost three months now. The crew, who are members of the Pakistan Seamen's Union, were being paid only £40 for a 16-hour day and are now seeking a 300% pay increase.

When the dispute first started

the ship's owners, Commons Bros Ltd, Newcastle upon Tyne, had food, water and electricity supplies cut off and threatened through the captain to have the men deported to Karachi and arrested to face the wrath of President Zia's police force.

As a result of this 20 crewmen gave up the fight and were flown home by the company. The remainder of the crew have decided to fight on 'whatever the cost' and are being supported by ATGWU portworkers and others. The strikers have contacted other Asians living in Waterford and have full access to all the facilities at the local ATGWU hall.

The danger is that as the dispute drags on the men might become isolated and demoralised, but it is up to all those trade unionists and socialists in Waterford who claim to understand the importance of international solidarity to ensure that does not happen.

Donations, messages of support, old books and mags, cigs etc to: Seamen's Strike Committee, c/o ATGWU Hall, Keyzer Street, Waterford.



Stores strike — bosses split

READERS of the Worker will have noticed pickets on most of the major retail stores in Dublin in pursuit of a pay claim. Latest information from the shop steward on the British Home Stores picket line is that ITGWU porters, drivers and cleaners have succeeded in gaining increases of 21% + £4 for Marks and Spencers, 12% + 16% for Switzers plus a 37½-hour week. Other stores have got settlements along the same lines. Hickeys and Arnotts have agreed to roughly the same terms over 14 months.

Although these workers faced a tough struggle they have achieved at least some of their demands. Other stores as we go to print (Brown Thomas, Maceys, BHS,

Clerys, Roches, McBerneys) are still trying to get management to the negotiating table. Throughout the dispute all ITGWU workers have faced tremendous pressure from both the bosses and the usual dilly dallying of the ICTU, when it comes to handling the IUDWC shop assistants who in block have passed all pickets.

This strike is a good example of the bureaucratic straightjacket that the Irish trade union movement find themselves in. As many strikes in Dublin stores have shown in the past, the shop assistants have never been given a lead in basic trade union practice.

The infamous two-tier picketing policy of Congress which allows workers not in dispute to pass

pickets is well suited to the leadership of the IUDWC who instruct their members to scab, and therefore make a victory for the strikers much harder to gain, as well as causing enmity between the workers themselves.

One of the key factors which helped the Marks and Spencers workers was the backing of goods coming into the docks and BHS strikers hope to get the same action from the Belfast dockers. Solidarity from other workers can overcome bureaucratic obstacles. Canteen workers in BHS have refused to touch blacked goods, management docked their pay so they are out in sympathy on the picket line.

All trade unions are workers'

organisations, built up by workers to defend their rights in the workplace and advance their interests. But no union is properly controlled by its members and most unions are run (to a greater or lesser degree) by bureaucrats who have different interests from their members. The ITGWU is one of the most bureaucratic unions and it needs a militant rank and file to struggle towards a more democratic and accountable union which really reflects its members' interests.

For further information on the strike contact Dermot Moore, shop steward BHS picket line, or any of the picket lines at the shops still out.

Report DAVID BYRNE

THE SCABS OF THE FUTURE?

T J BAKER is a senior researcher with the prestigious Economic and Research Institute. The sort of an expert economist who is called in regularly to give us neutral reports about 'how we are living way above our means'. A man that is supposedly above all the strife and noise that goes on in industry.

In the summer issue of the top people's journal 'Administration' Baker outlined some of his thoughts about our industrial relations problems. It seems that workers in the essential services are getting a bit uppity. Goddam oil workers can hold the country to ransom and something has to be done.

Small

Baker wants a permanent scab force set up that can move in during that type of strike. And he has some very bright ideas on how it can be done.

- There would be a small permanent staff who could call on soldiers to make up the scab force in the event of a strike.
- The soldiers could wear a special uniform so that it wouldn't be seen as direct army strike breaking. These soldiers would be seconded from their regiment for training prior to any strike.
- Agreement should be reached with the trade union leaders before the institution of the 'Emergency Service Force' was set up.
- Anything up to 1,000 men could be involved.

And it could all be done on the cheap for £3 million a year.

Very bright, T J. Takes years of academic training to work out the intricacies of that type of scheme.

But the rank and file won't be fooled. They are, unfortunately for T J, very emotive people—particularly when it comes to blacklegging. Next time you hear

a neutral expert's report, remember T J Baker and his little dream. It makes you feel like asking the simple question, 'Which side are you on?'

FERTILE GROUND FOR STRUGGLE

THE NET plant at Marino Point on Cork Harbour, variously described in the media as 'white elephant' and 'drain on the economy', has come under further attack from the upper management gurus. The plant is now working at full capacity producing much needed fertilisers for farmers and is reckoned to have made a trading profit of £20m in the last year, before capital and interest payments are taken into account.

Management consultants HAYMSL were brought in from Britain in 1981 and after much in-depth analysis came out with a report which recommended 100 redundancies in a workforce of 500 (approx), 87 of which are immediate and spread over maintenances, clerical and production. One whole layer of supervisory staff, members of ASTMS, are to be wiped out in a new rationalisation.

This at a time when local residents are already uneasy about spillages and leakages whose very real danger must be exacerbated by the cuts in

manning levels.

On top of that the Irish Government have put in Cooper and Lybrand to look into the financial structure of the operation.

Workers there have become so sick of media analysis and attack

that they now cheerfully ignore it, are determined to fight the redundancies and to continue to operate what they know to be a badly needed industry. There are already talks of an occupation if there is any attempt to close the plant down.

A refined victory

ONE hundred and sixty workers at Whitegate refinery have won the right to continue working in a plant that the big multinationals Esso, Shell, Texaco and BP wanted to close.

Workers who had been there the full 20 years forfeited as much as £32,000 each in redundancy payments so that jobs could be saved.

The big companies who already supply Dublin's needs from refineries such as Milford Haven and Fowley in Britain wanted to supply the whole 26 county area from there.

In their attempt to get a closure they spread the story that Whitegate produced very high-lead petrol.

The refinery is in a state of preparation for re-opening so that extra maintenance workers have been taken on.

The plant has a high spin-off of jobs in the whole Cork harbour area and closure would have been a disaster in an area of heavy industry already hard hit.

There are some bureaucratic and legal hold-ups before re-opening but Whitegate workers have shown that jobs can be saved with resistance and determination.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Dail R for redundancy

THE first stages of the bill to change the present P&T set up into two separate semi-state companies, an bord phoist and an bord telecom, have already gone through the Dail. So what does this 80-page document have in store for the thousands employed by the P&T throughout the country? Judging from the unions' responses the reaction is different according to the area that you work in. The POWU (Post Office Workers Union) which represents the vast majority of the unskilled, manual and clerical jobs within the Post Office, is firstly totally against the changeover at all. But at this stage it seems to be inevitable despite the overwhelming agreement among the membership against the changeover. Despite vigilant efforts to secure any knowledge about the future, management constantly reiterated the same tired statement, 'There is nothing to worry about. You will be consulted in due time.' The 'in due time' became when the bill was published and was being discussed in the Dail!

The POWU's main objections to the bill are in the area of

1 Security of tenure: As a civil servant, security of tenure is seen by the majority of workers as an enormous plus of the job. Lower wages, no social welfare benefits (dental, optical), no recourse to the Labour Court in disputes, are seen as serious drawbacks but are accepted because the one saving factor is security of tenure. The telephone exchange is full with night workers who have been victims of repeated redundancies who settled for unskilled jobs despite their trades in the civil service because it offered some security in their lives. And this now is being taken from them. In a report published by the national board of science and technology it suggested that by 1985 the number of telephone operators employed throughout the country will be 1,000. Compare this to the present picture of 5,600 (approx).

2 Worsening of conditions: As civil servants, there is a non-contributory pension scheme, and a limited PRSI payment (for limited benefits). When semi state an increase in pay equivalent to the amount of the increased contributions would be essential to keep the take home pay similar to that of today's pay. But the government have made no provision for this. At the moment the Post Office is bound by the public service agreement (which the government have just

renege on their part of) which does not allow for any further claims to be lodged before 1st March 1983 by which time they hope to have us already in semi state. Also at the moment, because of the cutbacks in the public sector budget there have been cutbacks in all areas. There is a ban on recruitment except in the case—if three people resign in the same area then one person can be recruited to replace that person. This obviously means the workload in all areas is much heavier than previously. It is generally felt that this is a concerted effort by management to change our conditions prior to the changeover as the bill states an employee 'shall not be brought to less beneficial conditions of service ... than that which he was entitled immediately before the vesting day'. The erosion of our present pay and conditions is to ensure that on vesting day we will have so little that we will retain only that meagre amount under the new bodies.

What of the attitude of the other unions? The engineers (IPOEU) are all in favour of the changeover. For them it is an expanding service and they see this as a way in which better conditions and pay will accrue to them when they receive parity with engineers in other semi state companies. The telecommunications official union feels that the bill has left many unanswered questions mainly in the same areas as the POWU have stated (see above).

The GPO departmental officers union express similar feelings to that of the POWU.

So all in all the proposed changeover is seen as a serious threat firstly to the jobs and secondly for those who will remain a threat to their conditions. It must be said that management have flatly denied that there will be any redundancies but anyone able to do simple arithmetic can see that with the increased computerisation of the postal and telecommunication services there will not be the number of jobs available for the number of workers that are presently employed. It seems that they haven't got the guts to face the workers and tell them of the plans that will affect their lives. They will leave that dirty work to others who are well used to doing it.

MICHAEL SMURFITT,
an bord telecom, and
FERGALL QUINN, of an
bord phoist

THE WORKER

FOR WORKERS POWER AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

PRIOR'S PLAN - BACK DOOR STORMONT

ON OCTOBER 20 the elections for Jim Prior's Assembly take place. From Ian Paisley to the Workers Party it has been lauded as a 'bold imaginative' move to bring back democracy to Northern Ireland. In reality it is nothing of the sort. Indeed it contains within it the germs of a revived Stormont.

The British face a major problem in their handling of the Northern crisis that was particularly glaring during the hunger strike. There are no structures where middle-class politics have even a chance to breathe.

In the hunger strike, they found themselves directly confronting the republican militants. In the long term they need a buffer against that. They need to provide a forum where the SDLP can revive its credibility and therefore spread its moderate influence. The fake battles in the Assembly could do the trick.

The carrot Prior has offered the Loyalists is the possibility of full Stormont-type powers if they can behave themselves. If they can achieve the 70% majority and demonstrate some 'cross-community' support, everything up to and including control of security will be available.

It is significant that it is a Paisley DUP which has waxed more enthusiastic about the Assembly. Paisley's has always had a more populist base amongst the Loyalist working class and lower middle class than the Official Unionists.

It is a base that is suffering severely with the current recession. Mass unemployment is no longer confined to the Taigs.

The ambition of a revived Stormont—when living standards for Protestants seem higher—seems to offer some way out of the crisis.

Paisley's occasional 'progressive' noises on economic issues amount to nothing more than saying that 'if only we had our own Stormont then we could...' Yet even for Loyalist workers, the prospect of a revived Stormont can do nothing to halt the decline of the engineering industry. The international crisis of capitalism is destroying Northern industry rather than any planned British economic withdrawal.

For the mass of anti-unionists, the Assembly offers only one big threat. Prior's primary aim may simply have been to revive middle-class politics. But Britain has never been able to plan or implement a strategy for the North.

The Assembly will become the stepping stone for the demand for a revived Stormont. You have only to imagine a simple scenario. The Loyalists win a 70% majority for a particularly 'hideous' security measure. Prior can veto it because it hasn't got 'cross-community' support, and the SDLP would be calling on him to do so. But would he if the Loyalists had mobilised to back up their demands?

The Assembly whets the appetite and provides a direct focus for concrete issues that can pave the way back to Stormont.

The only way the Assembly was 'unworkable' was to kill it stone dead at the start. A massive and well-organised boycott campaign could have capitalised on the bitterness and alienation after the deaths of the hunger strikers.

But the attempts at a boycott campaign concentrated on trying to involve the SDLP and the Irish Independence Party.

What was required was that the forces which had emerged during the H Block campaign should have organised *independently* for a boycott by pointing out clearly the nature of the Assembly. Unfortunately, it now looks as if the possibility of a mass boycott is no longer on the cards.

Prior's Assembly can only revive middle-class politics by re-invigorating Loyalist demands for a returned Stormont. One thing is clear: the opposition to any returned Stormont will not be fought by the new parliamentarians inside the Assembly. It will be fought by those who mobilise and organise on the streets outside.

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



the worker

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

De Lorean occupation abandoned

AT A meeting in the De Lorean canteen on 26 July a recommendation put forward by the shop stewards committee was endorsed by the 200 De Lorean workers who had participated in the nine-week occupation.

The recommendation was that the sit in should end and the people involved should return to work for a six-week period to see if this unknown British company was willing to take over the Dunmurry plant. The decision to end the occupation was taken amongst confusion as workers were becoming demoralised.

This was due to the inexperience of the shop stewards who did not keep the workforce fully informed by having mass meetings and having the workers involved in the running of the sit in.

But the return to work did not please all the workers. One worker voiced his concern about this unnamed British company: 'Did this company really exist?' he asked a steward, who had to reply he didn't know. Only John Freeman (Secretary of the

ATGWU) had spoken to the spokesman for the company and he had been assured that the company exists and is willing to take over the factory if the conditions are right.

We still have to see what the conditions are and what would happen if the deal with this unknown British company fell through: after six weeks would the workforce re-occupy the factory again? That possibility would be unlikely as the militant mood of the workers would be weakened.

The one thing about the occupation was the unity between Protestant and Catholic workers especially since the factory is in the Twinbrook Estate which is classified as a Provos' stronghold. This unity should be an example to all workers in Northern and Southern Ireland: De Lorean workers greatly welcomed the moral and financial support that came from workers in Dublin and other cities in the South. The next six weeks will be the acid test for the De Lorean workers and to see if their decision to end their sit in was a right one.

SOLIDARITY WITH H BLOCK PRISONERS Solidarity with H Block prisoners

The 20th August 1981

Michael Devine died on 20 August 1981 after 60 days on hunger strike for political status in the H Blocks of Long Kesh.

The SWM and The Worker take this opportunity of extending their solidarity with Michael Devine's relatives and salute the ten men who died in the struggle against imperialism

- Bobby Sands 5 May
 - Francis Hughes 12 May
 - Raymond McCreech 21 May
 - Patsy O'Hara 21 May
 - Joe McDonnell 8 July
 - Martin Hurson 13 July
 - Kevin Lynch 1 August
 - Kieran Doherty 2 August
 - Thomas McElwee 8 August
- Fight Capitalism and Imperialism for the 32 County Workers' Republic
Socialist Workers Movement