

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

## FITZGERALD BACKS THATCHER'S THUGS

THERE'S TIMES you're nearly tempted to feel sorry for Fitzgerald, Thatcher and their crews.

Millions of people all over the world saw the RUC gun down unarmed protestors with plastic bullets—just as Jim Prior was making one last effort to come up with one last "solution" before giving it all up as a bad job and getting out.

Even before he had announced his latest meaningless measure the Loyalists had told him straight: "We're not having it".

Now Maggie and Garret are planning another "summit" in November—to assure one another that they are still on the same side. Garret may have to mutter a word of protest to Maggie at times—when

there's an upsurge of nationalist emotion after a killing like that of Sean Downes for example.

But when the smoke from the plastic bullet guns has cleared they can see that their interests remain identical. Two bourgeois politicians, under different pressures perhaps, but with far more in common than in conflict.

So after every bust-up, they are still the best of buddies.

But the problems this pair of pals is now facing are very fundamental.

Even people who for years have been propping up the Northern state are

beginning to turn their backs on it.

Gerry Curran, the Armagh coroner resigned because the lies being used to cover the sectarian violence of the RUC had become too blatant to take.

When people like him can't take the charade, is it any wonder that the Catholic working class has seen that it will never be possible to get justice inside the Northern State.

But for Fitzgerald—or Haughey for that matter—to make common cause with the Northern Catholics would mean breaking with the Brits. And that they can't do. They don't want a deal which would want the Brits out. They

want a deal which would keep the Brits in AND guarantee political stability.

Unfortunately (for them) any deal the Brits would buy would alienate the Catholic workers in the North entirely and, in the short term anyway, leave the field wide open for the Provos.

In other words, they are up the creek without a paddle.

They're not much better off when it comes to the economy. They've admitted that unemployment will continue to rise for the rest of the year and into the next.

If they could give young working class people jobs—or even a realistic hope of a job—

the anger and aggro spreading from the Six Counties could maybe be checked at the border. But they can't.

So they have to prepare themselves for a fight to hold back the working class in the South. Just as Thatcher is fighting the miners to hold back the working class in Britain and in the North. In the end, that's what unites them. That's their common purpose.

And the only way to answer them is for the workers to get into the fray on their own account. This is not a question of the interests of the "Irish" against the interests of

"the British" — which is the way Republicans tend to see it.

The problem is capitalism. And only the working class can get capitalism — British and Irish — off Irish workers' backs. And that can only happen if there is a movement rooted in the working class in both parts of Ireland and arguing socialist politics in the context of the day-to-day struggles in which workers are involved.

There are no short cuts available. We need a revolutionary socialist alternative, and that's what the Socialist Workers Movement is in the process of building.





# CARROLLS POOR MOUTH

IN 1983 P.J. Carrolls turned in a profit of £9.8 million.

But this doesn't stop the company putting on a poor mouth when it comes to negotiating with its workforce. And, unfortunately over the years they have had considerable success putting in their message of sacrifice over to the workers.

They managed to introduce new technology with the minimum of discomfort and made no significant payment to the workers. The ploy they used was job evaluation. Workers who produced twice as much only got an extra grade in return—after years waiting around.

In the last few months they got away with two new attacks on the workforce. As many as 112 workers have left the factory in Dundalk through voluntary redundancies. Carroll's had claimed that the cigarette market had shrunk. But within days of their leaving there was overtime. Carroll's suddenly announced that a new order had come through. It is clear that the redundancies were a cynical con-job from the start.

## MAXIMUM

P.J. Carroll have followed the redundancies up with an attack on the bonus scheme. The maximum bonus in the factory has been cut from 15% to 11%. Anger swept the shop floor when the cuts were first announced. Since it was just before negotiations on the 24th round began, it seemed that it could be fought.

But the union negotiators failed to tie the issue of restoring the bonus to the cost-of-living increase. And although the 24th round wage settlement was reasonably high—11½ for twelve months—it is obvious that Carrolls were buying industrial peace. Their accounts department know full well that a cut in bonus is far better in the longer term than a temporary wage increase.

Shop floor organisation has to be re-built in P.J. Carroll's: otherwise, the workers are at the mercy of the union officials. That can only be done little attack from the company and re-building confidence. The key to this is a socialist presence on the shop floor.

Carroll's are one of the leading firms in the FUE. It's Chairman Donal Carroll is one of the main directors of the Bank of Ireland. They have all the arguments on the economic crisis, on the need for sacrifice and so forth. Only a strong socialist presence in the factory can counter them at every turn.

September 20—The relevance of Lenin. Speaker: Mary Smith

September 27—The revolution in Palestine. Speaker: Goretta Horgan

October 4—Nicaragua, What type of revolution? Speaker: Paddy Carroll.

Details of SWM meetings and activities phone 716932 or write to address below.

## NOW OUT!

The SWM has produced a new pamphlet: "Where we Stand" price 35p + 25p p+p from: SWM 41, Herberton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8



Health Minister, Mr. Barry Desmond chatting to the new chairman of the National Health Council, Professor James McCormick.

for those who can't afford to go private and the consultants' wallets continue to grow fatter. The link is well-established between poor social conditions — unemployment, housing etc — and ill-health. With capitalism going deeper into crisis, living conditions for the working class will get worse. People won't just get poorer, they'll get sicker too. And the facilities to meet their needs are being slashed.

Meanwhile, wards are closing in almost every hospital; nurses are being forced to try to look after patients in wards that are already overcrowded; corridors are full of sick people who simply aren't getting the care they need.

## FACILITATES

Private patients, though — those with VHI for example, continue to have access to public facilities. This makes the waiting lists even longer

the system make sure it stays that way.

With the chill winds of recession whistling round the corridors of power, the government decided in 1982 that the cut backs required in public spending meant that they must "underfund" the local health boards by £20 million, later upped to £32 million. They are looking for staff cuts of 3% by 1985 and a reduction of 5000 hospital beds by 1986.

The cuts mean increases in payments for services, the introduction of payments for previously free services and a reduction in the number of people entitled to medical cards.

## MEDICAL CARDS

There was a scandal recently when it was revealed that some of the cuts had ended up costing more. This was because over 900 pharmaceutical items were taken off the medical card — things like simple cough bottles and painkillers. So doctors had no choice but to prescribe stronger drugs which their patients could get for free. Now expensive stomach ulcer drugs are being



THE millionaire press in Britain is running a propoganda campaign against the miners the like of which has not been seen since the Falklands War.

It is a tissue of lies. The Tories are getting nervous that the miners will hold out until winter — when the strike really bites.

Solidarity from Irish workers is still necessary. Regular collections should be taken up in the workplaces. A victory for the British miners is a victory for workers in every country.

# NEWS FROM THE SWM

## DUBLIN

The S.W.M. is growing. The role of the organisation in spearheading the militant opposition against Reagan's visit last summer has led to a flood of new recruits. Many of them have joined the organisation in Dublin. But the first steps are also being taken to found more branches outside the capital.

This month sees a public meeting in Dundalk. Eamonn McCann will be speaking on "Why you should be a Socialist". The meeting takes place on Wednesday September 26 and will aim to establish a Dundalk branch of the SWM.

The British Army has occupied the North for the last 15 years. The myth that is propagated by the British and Irish press is that they are a "peace-keeping force". But those peacekeepers were responsible for the murders of Bloody Sunday in Derry 1972. Now they operate an open "shoot to kill" policy against republicans.

On September 13 at 8pm in the CIE Hall in Marlboro St, Dublin, Eamonn McCann will speak on "Fifteen years of the British Army".

Dublin SWM meets every Thursday. The branch meeting opens with a political discussion followed by the day to day business of the branch. Anyone who supports our politics and is interested in finding out more about the SWM is welcome to attend the meetings. These are the coming meetings for September.

September 6—Can the Labour Party be changed? Speaker: Kevin Wingfield

September 13—Public Meeting CIE Hall Marlborough Street.

# Health service: a sick joke

THE AIM of the health policy in the Republic is supposed to be "to promote the enjoyment by all, of the highest possible level of health". The "all" referred to, is obviously all those with money enough to pay for it, which leaves a lot of the rest of us "all" out!

The government spends about £1000 million on running the health service. That's

tax-payers' money — it comes from us. Where does it go? Well a great deal of it goes in profits for drug companies, rich consultants and rich bankers by way of interest payments, etc. The system itself is a two-tier one, with

one level of health care for the rich and another for the poor. And those who profit from

# ISN'T IT RICH

PITY the rich!

In Southern Ireland they have always been able to avoid paying an inheritance tax by setting up "trust companies".

Dunnes Stores Ltd will serve as a useful example. Old Ben Dunne built up a massive empire valued at £400 million. Before he died he placed much of his share-holding in trust. The directors of the trust were none other than his sons, Ben Jr, and Fran. Both stepped into his shoes without paying a penny in inheritance tax.

But now Alan Dukes has given a sop to his Labour Party friends. From August one of the provisions of the 1984 Finance Act will place a tax on these phoney trusts. They will now be liable for a whopping great tax rate of ... 3%!

It is too much for some millionaires. Jeff Smurfit — brother of Michael millionaire — is taking himself off to the Isle of Man tax haven. In 1983 Jeff and Michael each "earned" £366,000 as a bonus payment from the profits of their Smurfit group.

But the rest of the Irish capitalist club should be staying put. Dukes' mild tax measure only serves to show how the rich get away with murder. Very little is known about their exact fortunes. But one sociologist estimated that the top one percent of the Irish population control a quarter of the wealth. They have successfully managed to avoid paying any effective tax on their wealth.

\* Capital taxation—tax on inheritance, windfall profits etc—amounts to a mere ½% of all state taxes. When Avenue Investments, controlled by the McGrath family, sold their shares in Waterford Glass for £17 million, they did not pay a penny in tax.

\* Tax on company profits amounts to a mere 4% of all state taxation. In the sixties the average company could expect to pay out a quarter of its company profits on tax. Today it has dropped to a mere 10%.

The rich are not above a number of minor fiddles to avoid tax. One half of all company executives now get free company cars as an untaxable perk of the job. Almost all pay the top rate contributions to the Voluntary Health Service as these are tax deductible. This entitles them to treatment in private hospitals which are in turn subsidised by the local Health Boards.

So the next time they tell us "the country is in debt" our answer should be simple. It is the rich who have enjoyed any of the benefits that have been going. It is they who have the money to pay up.

According to a report commissioned by Barry Desmond recently, almost a quarter of the Irish population is already living below the poverty line. That was before that same gentleman helped to cut the food subsidies. The working class have taken more than enough. It is time the rich paid for the crisis of their system.

## GETTING the kids ready for school again?

School books alone are costing almost £30 for the youngest child. But spare a thought for our betters. They no longer go to the same schools as the rest of us. The Irish rich have come of age. Increasing numbers are sending their off-spring to the top British public schools. But there is also a home grown school for snobs.

St Columba's at Rathfarnham charges a fee of £5000 per year for each child who is boarding. Day pupils are let in for a mere £2,200 a year.

St Gerard's in Bray charges £1,200 for entrance to its private primary school. Both schools have a waiting list for prospective entrants. The rich well know that schools such as these provide their sons and daughters with "connections". For those with money, education is an investment in the future.

# Socialist Worker Public Meetings

## Dublin

"Fifteen years is too long — Get the British Army out!"  
CIE Hall, Marlborough Street,  
September 13, 8pm.

## Dundalk

"Why you should be a Socialist"  
Wednesday September 26th  
venue to be announced.

# Speaker Eamonn McCann



# STRIKING AT APARTHEID

NEXT TIME you ponder on that fundamental question of life: whether your Kit-Kat is a biscuit or a bar, consider the view of a black worker in Rowntree, South Africa: "The Sweet Union is what we call a coffin club. For Blacks the only benefit it provides is a funeral. While we are alive it does absolutely nothing". Surprise, surprise, this was the only union the company would recognise and it was naturally deaf to workers' reminders that a handful of Smarties doesn't go as far as it used to.

When in February 1981, 500 workers struck for the right to join other unions and were promptly sacked, the scene was set for the longest-running strike in black trade union history. That the strike lasted till the end of the year was an economic and political victory for the workers. Economic because of the financial support organised by their union, South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU). Political because in doing so they deliberately flouted the state's repressive Labour Relations Amendment Bill, which sought to defeat strikes by banning solidarity collections.

## PROGRESSSED

And it gets better and better. As the year progressed the tempo of strike action increased. Throughout 1980/81 the government tried to contain the strike wave by legal manoeuvres and outright brute force. Their hopes of doing so were dashed in July when the country's 450,000 miners began to mobilise. The miners,

the economic backbone of South Africa, are mainly migrant workers, separated from their communities and families, and until then, isolated from the remainder of the workforce. By the end of the year the ivory pillars of Pretoria had been shaken to their racist foundations by a militant workforce determined to assert their rights and prepared to confront the ruthless government reaction head-on

## TOLERATED

During 1981 union membership doubled. By August confidence was such that 29 new black unions with a membership of 200,000, sent delegates to a conference in Cape Town that simply wouldn't have been tolerated just a few years ago. United in their intention to resist the latest repressive anti-union law they declared: "Prohibition on financial support for strikers will not be obeyed." And it wasn't. October saw 20,000 workers out on strike. In one dispute alone 10,000 miners caused £½ million worth of damage to the management buildings of the Anglo-American Corporation. As if they didn't have enough to worry about with strikes threatening their copper mines in Zambia, their coal mines in Zimbabwe and their diamond mines in Namibia. The implications of a linked-up workforce are enough to make a socialist heart leap and a capitalist heart miss a beat.

Why, you may well wonder, did the South African guerrilla movement, the ANC, miss out on this golden opportunity of



In spite of severe repression black workers are organising with increasing confidence

uniting half the workforce of a continent in common struggle? With the support of the black nationalist states they were strong and confident and had military bases closer to the South African border than ever before. Maybe they just got carried away with the excitement of it all and didn't notice when strikes in Angola were labeled as sabotage, or when all strikes in Mozambique

were banned or when Mugabe used Smith's anti-union laws to arrest strikers in Zimbabwe.

But surely some conclusions could have been drawn when troops were batoning miners into submission at an Anglo-American coal mine in Zimbabwe at the same time as their buddies in South Africa were beating strikers back to work at an Anglo-American gold mine in South Africa. The

reason for their "what strikes?" attitude was not because Mugabe's troops used black batons, it was because their politics and those of their Communist Party backers had led them up a gum tree. Because the strength of their operation relied on the goodwill of their host nations they were in no position to object when the black nationalist governments turned on the very workers whose support had been vital in their struggle for power and on whose behalf they claimed it.

## RHETORIC

How could this happen after all the "equal opportunities!" and "redistribution of the wealth!" rhetoric? The answer is blowing in the trade-winds, and the fact that the colonial economies of black Africa have had to bend with them. Their economies were built round supplying the west with raw materials and are still very much a part of the world system, and far beyond the control of their governments.

Because of South Africa's overwhelming economic and military strength Botha has been able to destabilise the black-ruled states. In March this year he blackmailed the FRELIMO leader, Machel, in Mozambique into cutting off support for the ANC with the signing of the Nkomati pact. Because FRELIMO was the most radical of the black ruling parties, and despite CP claims of Machel's "master-stroke", the Nkomati pact represents a crushing defeat not only for the military strategy of the ANC, but for their political ideology manifest in FRELIMO, and its sister organisation in Angola, the MPLA.

Having repelled the black nationalist wave, Botha will doubtless engage his energies in reassuring the South African ruling class that no black

workers are going to pull the plug on their swimming pools (unless, of course, they have to be cleaned). The bad news is that the workers in South Africa can expect an increase in the level of brutal oppression as they confront the viciousness of capitalism under attack.

## PREPARING

The good news is that there is every indication that they are preparing for it. The trade union movement is becoming more keenly tuned to the political as much as to the economic demands of the workforce. In recent years workers have struck time and again for the right to join the more radical trade unions, particularly those affiliated to the Federation of South African Unions (FOSTU). Says one militant member of the Motor Assembly and Components Workers Union (MACWU): "The position of blacks in factories is political. so the problem is also a political one, which the union cannot divorce itself from." More and more unions are demonstrating that they will not be tied down by legal tethers. FOSTU shop stewards constantly train their own replacements because of the high risk of imprisonment. 1984 started with 20,000 workers involved in strike action.

The bosses know that South African workers hold the economic key to the region and that they have far more reason to fear the threat of a national strike than they have to fear the rebels in Soweto. The guerrillas of the ANC cannot win unless the struggle is led by South African workers. The guerrillas alone can't achieve liberation — any more than they could in the black capitalist states.

—JEAN CROSS

# What price US boom?

THERE'S been a lot of hype in the news recently about how well the American economy is doing. All the economists agree that the US is having a "mini-boom".

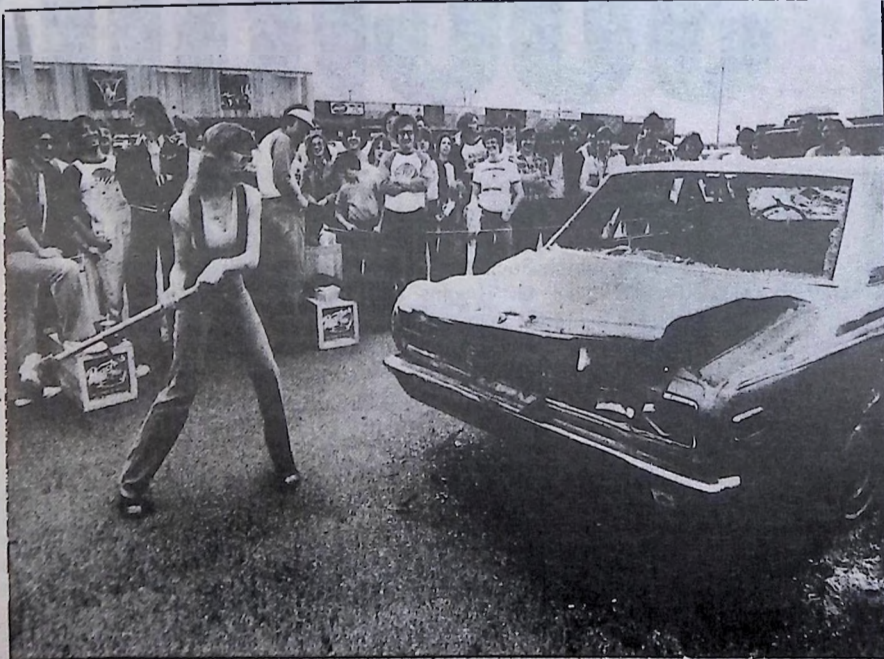
Over the last year, the US has experienced an unprecedented strong recovery from the slump which lasted, with brief interruptions, from 1979 to 1983. Millions of jobs have been created, the gross national product has risen dramatically and profits are soaring. Ronald Reagan is able to claim that he's brought back the Good Old Days and should therefore be re-elected.

This may be the best year for the American economy for more than 30 years, but it bodes ill for the rest of the world economy.

The problem is that the main stimulus to the American economy has come from RayGun's rearmament programme. This has been financed by colossal government borrowing. They've been able to get as much money as they need because high American interest rates have sucked in capital from the rest of the world.

But as profits soar, private corporations are regaining confidence and are willing to invest again in new plant and equipment. They need to borrow heavily to finance these investments. Result—the demand for loans is in danger of exceeding the supply. This will have, and has had, the effect of increasing interest rates.

And the Twenty-six County economy is being crippled by this "boom" too. Forty per cent of Government's £7,500 million foreign debt is held in dollars. The rise in American interest



The latest craze in America — smashing imported Japanese cars. Many workers were led to believe that the recent slump in US car production was the fault of Japanese workers.

rates and the value of the dollar has already added over £140 million to the interest bill for the foreign debt. Which the Government will to screw out of workers in the budget next January.

That means that the £46 million which they've saved by slashing the subsidies on food will only go a THIRD of the way towards paying this extra interest alone. Small wonder then, that the

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has warned that further rises in American interest rates, could precipitate the severest slump in the world economy since the 1930's.



# What we stand for

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

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 believe that only through socialism can women achieve full emancipation and that their struggle is part of the whole class struggle 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.

SOCIALIST 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 SOCIALIST WORKER - £3.50 for a year - clip this form and post 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 .....

# Why the Labour Party can never be socialist

JAMES CONNOLLY'S resolution to the 1912 Irish Trade Union Congress proposing the formation of an Irish Labour Party has created myths and illusions under which Socialists as diverse as Labour Youth, Michael D. Higgins and Matt Merrigan have been living for many years.

Despite the recent betrayals of Spring, O'Leary and Corish, it's still the same old formula of "if only we could break with Coalition, kick out the right wing leadership and reestablish the Party's socialist soul . . ." if only . . . In fact, its socialist soul has not been lost. It never existed.

Opposition to imperialism would seem to be a fundamental principle of any socialist party, it would seem to be even more so for a party that claims to be Connolly's Party.

But long before Conor Cruise O'Brien's infamous

reign as Minister for Posts and Telegraphs and his decision to ban Sinn Fein from RTE, the Labour Party had, at best, said nothing on the issue, at worst being hysterically anti-republican.

Even in Connolly's day the party took no position, arguing that to take a position would alienate Ulster Protestants and split the Movement—a motion from the party executive simply "regretting his loss" marked Connolly's execution.

At the Congress of August 1916 Tom Johnson, chairman

of the party stated "This is not the place to enter into a discussion as to the right, or wrong, the wisdom or the folly of the revolt." Delegates were asked to stand for a minute in Connolly's memory. They were also asked to honour the memory of those who died fighting on the Allied side against the Germans!

## LIBERTIES

As Johnson argued "The Cause of Democracy, the defence of such liberties as the common peoples of the Western nations had won was bound up with the success of France and Britain. I had held to that opinion with some enthusiasm and, despite the efforts of our Government to prove that the governing methods of all ruling classes are

much alike, I hold the same opinion still, for France is still a Republic—more firmly established".

By a clever compromise Johnson satisfied those who were for and against the Rising, for and against the Imperialist War. This nonsense was a far cry from Connolly's simple position: ". . . we have no foreign enemies outside of our own ruling class. . . if we are compelled to go to War we had much better fight that ruling class than any other . . .".

Socialist parties, even the most rightwing, have traditionally had some sort of an anticlerical reputation. The Irish Labour Party has been a notable exception. The one thing at which they have excelled has been licking the bishops' arses. At the 1934

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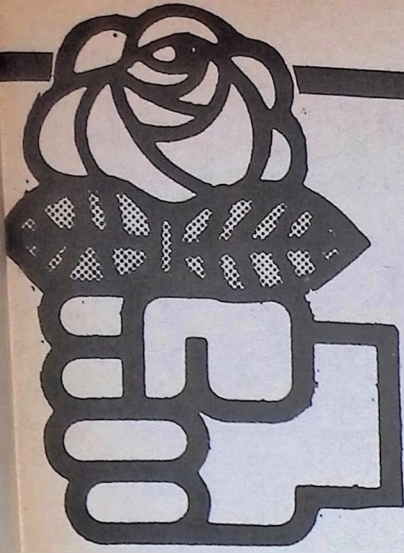
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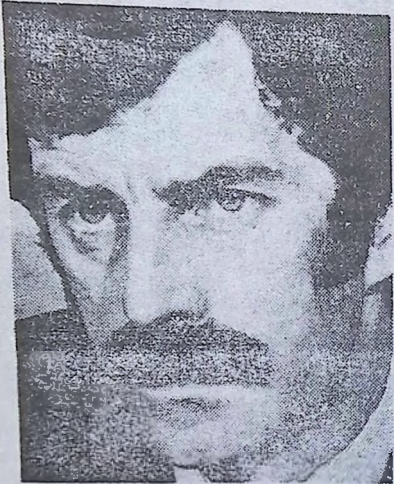


DESPITE its betrayals, some still think that the Irish Labour Party is on the side of workers. WILLIE CUMMING looks at its history and KEVIN WINGFIELD examines the record of the European Socialist Parties.

DICK SPRING said recently that although the Irish Labour Party was only a junior partner in Coalition, it was doing better than the Socialist Parties which formed majority governments on the Continent.

In spite of the outrageous

role of the Labour Party here — propping up a viciously anti-working class government — he has a point. The European socialist governments have been, without exception, a disaster for workers across Europe.



congress during a fit of heady radicalism, a motion was passed declaring that "the aim of the Labour Party is to continue Connolly's efforts for the establishment in Ireland of a Workers Republic". Three years later this was deleted from the party constitution because, as Norton the then leader explained "Objection has been taken by the Hierarchy to the term Workers Republic—".

During the controversy over Noel Browne's Mother and Child Bill, opposed by the bishops, which was attempting to give proper health care facilities for pregnant mothers and their babies, Norton declared, "There will be no flouting of the authority of the Bishops in the matter of Catholic social or Catholic moral teaching."

It should come as no surprise then to find out that Brendan Corish, was a member of the Knights of Columbanus.

Why then, you may ask, if the party has always been so despicable, did Connolly propose that motion in 1912?

From the death of Marx in 1883 up to the first world War socialist parties developed massively throughout Europe. Huge organisations incorporating parties, trade unions and other groups were built. Resolutions were passed at international conferences declaring that workers of one country would never bear arms against workers of another; declaring war on war—

But with the first World War the whole edifice collapsed. As Connolly wrote, "What then becomes of all our resolutions; all our protests of fraternization; all our threats of general strikes; all our carefully built machinery of internationalism; all our hopes for the future?"

Many of these parties were nominally Marxist and revolutionary but in practice they believed that it was possible to gradually reform the system through parliament. Their entire practice became geared to that objective—Revolutionary socialists like Connolly, Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky saw some of the problems but still believed that it was necessary to remain a part of the broader labour movement and not to organize independently as revolutionaries. Unlike Lenin with the Bolshevik party, when the crunch came, they had no independent revolutionary organisation and were thus isolated. It took the success of the Russian Revolution to convince revolutionaries of the need to build their own organisations.

With the lessons of history behind them Socialists today who argue that the Labour Party is Connolly's party are lying to themselves. Connolly in 1912 had an excuse; today there are none. If there are any socialists left in the Labour Party they should be joining with us to help build a truly revolutionary socialist party.



Craxi, Gonzalez and Soares: giving workers a rough ride

In SPAIN the PSOE — the Socialist Party — won a landslide victory over the Right in October 1982 and formed a government under Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez. They promised withdrawal from NATO, Spain's commitment to the Alliance remains as strong as ever; they promised to dismantle the remnants of Francoite terror, but they have delivered new repressive "law-and-order" measures and continue to clamp down on the Basque and Catalan nationalists. The movers of the Francoite attempted coup of 1982 are treated with kid gloves.

The PSOE government's handling of the economy provoked Right Wing MP Juan Arespacochoaga to complain that it was "quite unfair of the socialists to rob our economic policies". And rob they certainly did: the election commitment to create 800,000 jobs was ditched; public sector investment has fallen where a rise was promised, wage cuts of 8 per cent over two years are being implemented. The 40-hour week legislation is completely ineffective, instead employment legislation has been introduced to allow easier sacking.

Spanish PRSI contributions are increased (while the employer's share has fallen) and plans to cut unemployment payments are in train. "Rationalisation" of industry — particularly steel — threatens to increase by a massive 15 per cent the two million-odd unemployment figure.

In GREECE Papandreou's PASOK government has reneged on NATO, US bases and the EEC, introducing crippling anti-strike laws in the public sector and abandoned its promise of wage indexation in favour of a wage freeze in face of 20 per cent inflation.

DAMAGE

But the example of FRANCE provides a good example of why reformist socialist politics must fail. Great hopes were aroused by the election in May 1981 of a "socialist" government under Mitterrand. It was going to reverse the damage done by the monetarist policies of Raymond Barre, the outgoing Prime Minister. Job creation would have the highest priority. A combination of massive expansion and state intervention in industry would restore the competitiveness of the French economy and produce sustained growth.

Little more than a year later, in June 1982, much of the programme was effectively abandoned. Expansion was ditched and austerity and wage freeze introduced. "Fighting inflation" became the number one priority. Last year another more severely deflationary austerity package was introduced.

Workers paid the price with zero growth for 1983, an extra 100,000 on the dole queues and falling living standards as

prices raced ahead of the 8 per cent wage limit.

The expansionist idea was that of the English economist John Maynard Keynes. By pumping money into the economy, more people would have shillings in their pockets, they would buy more and factories would increase production, taking on more workers. There would be a boom. Mitterrand promised increases in public spending, welfare benefits and wages to achieve this.

ECONOMY

But it wasn't just the French economy that had to be considered. If there was more money in people's pockets, they would buy more goods. Some of these would be imports. If demand was high, locally produced goods would fetch a higher price, but imports from countries with depressed economies would likely be cheaper. Under capitalism, what is imported must be paid for by exports — this is called the balance of payments — or any shortfall covered by foreign borrowing. But foreign debt must be serviced and paid for — in the long run by export earnings. The capitalist vicious circle is complete.

If the French economy expands while others stagnate then imports will rise faster than exports. A balance of payments crisis will ensue. The only way out of the circle is to cut workers' living standards so that less goods will be bought at home and more exported. Mitterrand's government twice devalued the franc. The effect of this is to make imports dearer and generally raise the cost of living at home — so workers can afford fewer goods — and to make exports cheaper, so more foreign earnings come in to pay for the

balance of payments deficit or interest on foreign debt.

In addition wage restraint is brought in to lower costs of home production to face foreign competition. So a government elected on the promise of reflating the economy, increasing jobs and standards of living ends up doing the exact opposite — cutting wages, welfare benefits, public spending and jobs to reconcile France to the realities of the capitalist world economy.

The case of France is important because here the reformist solution had the best chance of working in all Europe. France has a tradition — dating back to De Gaulle's post-war nationalisations and Five Year Plans — of state intervention in the economy. The domination of the country by multi-national corporations is less in France than in any comparable European state. It is less dependent on international trade than most and appears less at the mercy of international finance capital. Yet with all these advantages, the attempts of the Mitterrand government to "go it alone" and "spend its way out of the recession" came to nothing.

ILLUSIONS

Mitterrand's government is now quite obviously an enemy of working people. Yet the illusions that most workers had in the French Socialist Party and its Communist Coalition partners have been a real brake on a fight-back. After all, many workers reason, this is our government, one that rules in our interests. The right wing alternative must surely be worse. Therefore we must not fight Mitterrand too hard. Further, if our socialist government insists that yet more sacrifices are necessary, surely no amount of organisation or re-

sistance can alter that fact. Better to keep your head down and wait for better days.

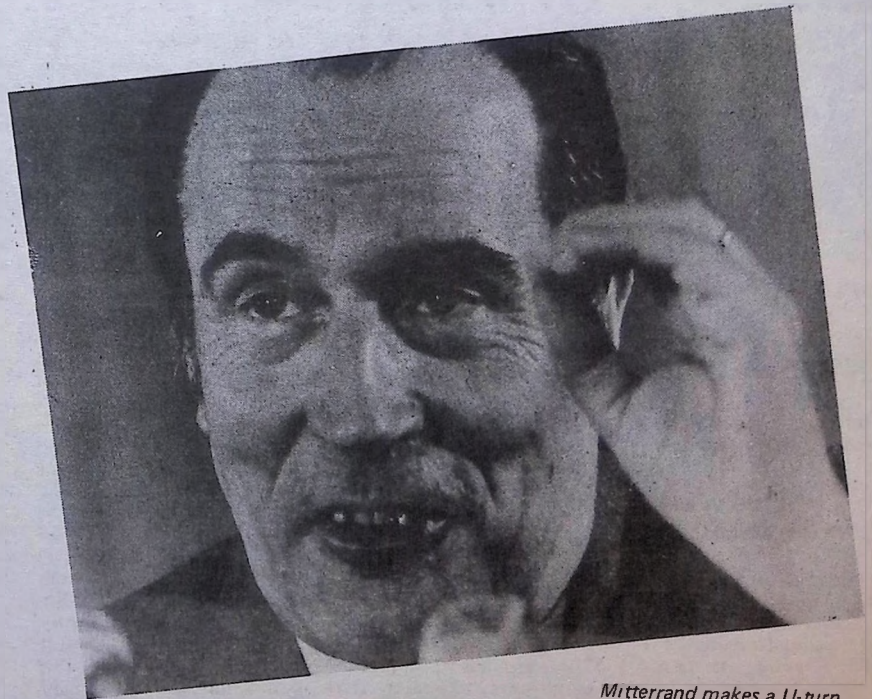
The demoralisation and hopelessness does more than anything else to prepare the way for a right wing victory at the next election. Mitterrand, the French Socialist Party and Communists will have done their parliamentary duty by capitalism—to gull the workers by soft phrases and hand them over demoralised to the right wing. The capitalist ruling class has never had cause to fear this sort of "socialism".

SMART ALECS

We are not here talking about individuals who sell out. What is at issue is a question of class. After the Russian Revolution, the question that split the socialist movement around the world was workers councils or parliament. That is: are you for the workers taking over and running society or are you for a few smart alics in parliament managing capitalism with sentimental phrases. This boils down to workers' power or bosses' power.

The reformists—the Labour and Socialist Parties of Europe, for example—chose the bosses. Their role—then as now—was, by talking about justice, welfare and reform, to corral the support of workers for the bourgeois labour lieutenants of capital—the Springs, Mitterrands, Kinnocks and the rest. A bit of rhetoric here: "the Party Connolly founded, etc" and a Militant Tendency there, sugars the pill, creates the illusion that a political instrument honed and sharpened to dupe workers can now, or at some time in the future be an instrument of their liberation.

Progress depends on shattering that illusion.



Mitterrand makes a U-turn.

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# Shelley: The trumpet of a prophecy

FORGET what you learned about Shelley in school. All that drivel about skylarks and romantic lyrical poetry is the emasculated Shelley, shorn of the radical ideas behind some of his greatest poems—"The Revolt of Islam", "Queen Mab" and many others.

Shelley was expelled from Oxford University in 1810 for writing "The Necessity of of Atheism" the first attack on the Christian religion published in English. In 1812 he was hounded out of Devon for writing a seditious pamphlet about Ireland. Indeed he came to Dublin and distributed his pamphlet "An Address to the Irish People", calling on the people of Ireland to break the connection with Britain.

Shelley lived in the shadow of the French Revolution of 1789. He saw the revolution as a way out of the darkness and degradation that destroyed the lives of ordinary people.

## REVOLUTION

*The greater part of his poetical writings were devoted to the cause of revolution.*

For this he was hated and hounded by the ruling class of his day. When he drowned in Italy in 1822, the "Courier", the "Irish Independent" of its day, trumpeted: "Shelley, the writer of some infidel poetry, has been drowned. Now he knows whether there is a God or no". They hated him for his political ideas but they could not ignore his genius. So they censored him, distorted his ideas, ignored his political writings and left us with a shell, who was interested in larks, clouds, west winds and other such doggeral.

But Paul Foot in his book "Red Shelley" has given us the real person. The poet who could write in 1819, after the Peterloo massacre of a working class demonstration.

*I met Murder on the way—  
He had a mask like Castlereagh  
Very smooth he looked, yet  
grim;  
Seven blood-hounds followed  
him.  
All were fat; and well they  
might  
Be in admirable plight,  
For one by one, and two by  
two,  
He tossed them human hearts  
to chew.*

It's not just that Shelley was a great poet or that Paul Foot has written a magnificent book about him, that makes him worth reading. We socialists have great difficulty in explaining our ideas. However much we know or understand the political solutions to our social problems, if we cannot

communicate them, they are useless. We have developed a language of politics that cuts us off from the world. As a result it is harder to explain our ideas to people who are interested in what we have to say. That is why we should read Shelley and writers like him. We can enrich our language and our ability to communicate by reading great revolutionary poetry, like that of Shelley.

*And these words shall then  
become  
Like oppression's thundered  
doom  
Ringing through each heart  
and brain  
Heard again, again, again.  
Rise like lions after slumber  
In unvanquishable number  
Shake your chains to earth  
like dew . . .  
Ye are many. They are few.*

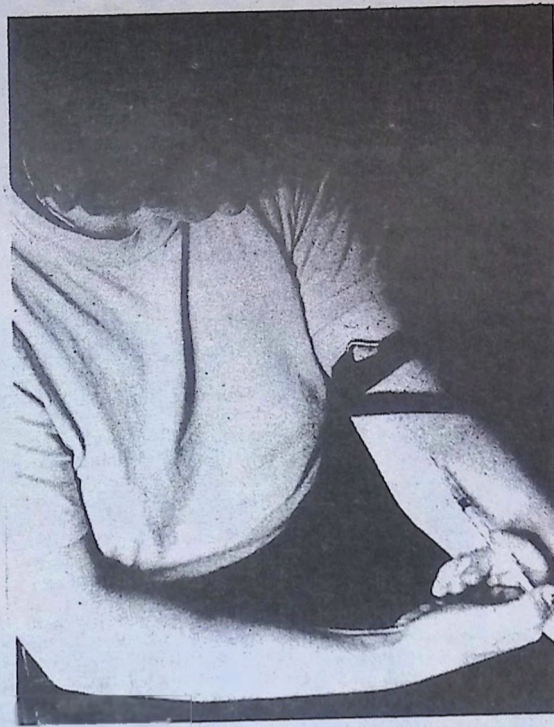
Read this book and then search out the collected works of Shelley.

Red Shelley by Paul Foot, Bookmarks £4.50 + £1 p+p, available from S.W.M.

—PAUL O'BRIEN



# PURE MURDER!



The political rootlessness of the Concerned Parents is partly explained by the weakness of the working class movement. The campaign has arisen at a time when there is no mass upsurge of working class militancy, no strong fight going on against job losses, for example, or the cuts in real wages.

If things were different, if there was a powerful movement of their own class for the Concerned Parents to latch on to then the relevance of socialist ideas to what was happening would be far more obvious. But at a time of defeat and demoralisation socialist ideas can seem abstract.

Right-wing ideas . . . like getting the guards to take the gloves off . . . seem easier to grasp at.

There is no answer to this except to argue, even in the face of hostility, that socialist ideas provide the only solution for the people the Concerned Parents represent.

Why do working class kids take to heroin? Middle class elements might dabble in drugs just for kicks. But the fundamental reason in inner city areas is that life is pretty lousy, no work and no hope of work and a rotten environment.

How is that going to be ended except by fighting against the social and economic set-up which causes it? Against capitalism.

## QUESTIONS

And if that seems too long term, are even the short-term demands going to be met? The recent book about drug abuse in the South, "Pure Murder", asks about Dublin: "Why has Jervis Street Hospital only got nine beds for in-patient treatment? Why is the Drugs Advisory Centre there stuck in a tiny portocabin? Why is there such a small staff?"

The same questions could be asked about every other urban area. The answer isn't just that Health Minister Barry Desmond doesn't give a damn. It is that the cut-backs in public spending imposed on the Free State by the international bankers don't allow for the these facilities to be properly funded. After all, Desmond is cutting back on the existing health services and planning to make people pay for ordinary hospital treatment.

So the fight for even simple things like local drug treatment centres has to be seen as part of the general fight against the government's economic strategy and the whole economic system. And that means linking up with those workers in factories, shops and offices who are willing to take on the bosses and the bosses' government: giving support to them and looking for support from them.

The tougher laws and restrictions on civil liberties which the Coalition government wants to impose on the South are designed to defend the system which is at the root of the problems the Concerned Parents are facing. It makes no sense at all for the Concerned Parents to drift into supporting these laws and restrictions—and even proposing some more of their own!

Sinn Fein supporters in particular should ask themselves how come they can end up applauding a US cop as he calls for the guards to put the boot in . . . which happened at Bray.

The reason it happened is the absence of socialist politics.

THE CONCERNED Parents Campaign against heroin pushers has been one of the best things to happen in the deprived, inner-city areas of Dublin for a long time.

But from a socialist point of view it also contains big dangers.

The Concerned Parents have booted out evil bastards who were peddling poison and death to the children of areas like Teresa's Gardens, Dolphin House, Hardwick St. Flats. And they did it on their own with only harassment from the police and hindrance from the politicians.

Anybody who says they were wrong is either a political knave or an ignorant fool. (The political knaves include, naturally, Workers' Party and the Labour "Left" who have denounced the Concerned Parents as "fascists" or as just a front for the Provos.

The ignorant fools include those who, despite everything, still don't recognise what a massive problem heroin had become in working class areas of Dublin.

On top of this, the experience of getting together to fight the pushers has encouraged some of those involved to take on other issues, campaigning for better housing maintenance and against the Coalition's water rates, for example. And Tony Gregory has held out hope that the energy generated in inner city areas could be directed again against unemployment.

As against all that, the political limitations of the campaign are very dangerous indeed.

At the end of a mass march to Leinster House last February a leader of the Concerned Parents read out a list of demands which called for stronger action by the gardai, a tougher line from the judges, more power to customs and immigration officers, restrictions on bail and so on.

A letter to the national press from the Dun Laoghaire Concerned Parents in July repeated much of this. And at an anti-drugs march in Bray the same month a former New York cop complained from the platform that the gardai's hands had been tied by weak-willed politicians.

This type of law and order stuff is sheer lunacy. It plays straight into the hands of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael right wing. It echoes the constant demands of the garda representative bodies. Much of it is exactly in line with the provisions of the repressive new Criminal Justice Bill.

This has arisen in the first instance because the leadership of the Concerned Parents haven't thought through the politics of what they are at. Indeed they insist they are "non-political". And the Sinn Fein members involved, in an effort to refute allegations that they are manipulating the campaign, have gone along with this.

As a result, the Concerned Parents have had no firmly-rooted political ideas which would have prevented a drift towards the "obvious" conclusion that what's needed is for State to crack down. And of course the State is only too willing to crack down. But when it does it won't be just on drug pushers but also on "dissidents" of certain descriptions . . . including Republicans and socialists.

—DAVID BYRNE

# Nicky Kelly booked



Nicky Kelly - Dublin 20th May 1978

IT'S ALL here: the harassment of any political activist by the Special Branch, the beatings by the Heavy Gang to get confessions, the famous Sleeping Judge who all the other judges swore was awake when everyone in court could see he was on the way out (which he was!).

The trials of Nicky Kelly and his co-defendants are well detailed, as are the beatings and the frame-ups. All this is told in a very punchy (excuse

the pun!) and readable style. With so much information about the trials it could have been bogged down with legal jargon and become boring. It never is. It is a book worth reading to remind of the lengths to which the state will go with repression when its power is threatened.

It's on the threat to the state that the book falls down. The reader gets the impression that the only trouble the state faced in the Seventies was from

the Republican movement. That this or what was happening in the Dail or rows within the ruling class were the main threats.

But this just isn't the case. During the same period workers were occupying the Ferenka plant in Limerick and oil tanker drivers were striking. The massive tax demonstrations of these years caused Barry Desmond to say in the Dail that it was undemocratic for workers to be on the streets telling the government what to do!

It is necessary to make this point because in such a good book about repression one would expect at least a mention of the only force with the power to fight it—the organised working class.

This omission stems from the politics of the authors. Repression will be ended only when we smash the capitalist system which produces it. This means building a revolutionary party with roots in the organ-

ised working class which, when workers move against the state, will make the argument for going on to smash the state.

One of the authors of this book used to be a revolutionary socialist and once shared these ideas. But then there are a lot of ex-revolutionaries knocking around this island. Having given up on the working class they now spend their time writing about, commenting on, the repression which people suffer under capitalism.

They will be kept pretty busy over the next while. As the bosses system goes deeper into crisis, we will see more attacks on workers, Republicans, women and gays. Commenting on repression does no-one any good. It would be far more productive for them to build a revolutionary party to lead workers in smashing this repressive system.

● Round Up the Usual Suspects, by Derek Dunne & Gene Karrigan, Magill.



# BOSSSES ON THE RAMPAGE

Their aim always is to avoid their union being drawn into "needless conflicts". That is why every single union leader in practice supports the continuation of the two-tier picket.

The role of the union leaders is well shown in two recent cases. In the CIE Phibsboro dispute, the NBU organised a £5 levy for the strikers. But the levy wasn't a way of building solidarity — it was insurance money against solidarity. When the strikers tried to spread the strike, the NBU instructed its shop stewards to go to the gates to argue for the crossing of their pickets. The slander that Darby and Company spread was that the picketers were ITGWU members "whose union had not organised a proper levy for them!"

Or look at the more "left wing IDATU". The union conference passed a resolution calling for the blacking of South African goods. The workers at Henry St. Dublin took them at their word — they did it and got sacked. Now if you ask one of the dogs on the street what is the obvious way to win, they would give you this answer: Dunnes is a £400 million empire. A strike in one shop cannot win. It has to be spread. But the union leaders will not run any active campaign to spread the blacking. They will not take time off to visit every shop and carry the arguments with the shop stewards.

The task of socialists in the coming period is to argue for workers organisation independent of the union bureaucrats. That means carrying the political arguments against sectionalism and against "sacrifice". It means pressurising the bureaucrats — but building independently of them. It means taking on every small issue where it is possible to rebuild confidence.

KIERAN ALLEN

THE EMPLOYERS' offensive is in full swing. Consider the following:

At Hanley's in Roscommon workers were forced to accept a cut in their bonus under threat of the factory closing.

Rowntree Macintosh workers gave a pledge to stop all "unofficial action" under threat of closure.

At Hansons in Sligo the bosses drew up a list of four workers they wanted sacked—and threatened that the factory would close if their demand was not accepted.

The CIE Phibsboro depot workers ended their dispute after seeing their right not to take out defective buses trampled on.

In the Dublin docks, strikers were forced back to work under threat of being committed to prison for defying an injunction. The only promise they got was an investigation into the working of the port.

Meanwhile, negotiations on the 24th wage round in the public sector drags on. The government offered a 3% increase and a pay pause. The unions referred the matter to arbitration. By the time the claim 'come out' again, the Coalition will have effectively got its pay pause.

## OFFENSIVE

The scale of the offensive can be judged by looking at the 1970s. Then the main interest of the boss class was in leaders. The talk was of "industrial peace" of "joint planning". Through the National Wage Agreements the union bureaucrats believed

they had got a voice in running the economy. In return they enforced the two-tier picket on their members. For the first time it was seen to be alright to pass pickets until the ICTU gave it's approval with an all-out.

But despite the straitjacket of National Wage Agreements, neither the bosses nor the union leaders got their way.

Despite the talk of industrial peace, strikes actually increased in the 70s compared with the 'decade of upheaval' in the 60s. The average number of strike days per worker rose from 13.8 to 15.0.

Southern Ireland was the only country in Europe to see the strike level rise in the 70s.

Almost ¾ of those strikes were unofficial. In the better organised jobs, workers used the increases granted under the NWAs as a base to look for more. Fake productivity deals, fringe benefits, payments of disturbance money and the like all testified to the push from the shop floor. The truth was that the conditions which led the bosses to seek an accommodation with the union bureaucrats also led to a growth in confidence on the shop floor. Unfortunately, the unofficial struggles did not give rise to any rank and file network. Workers by and large accepted the two tier picket and the compromises of the union leaders with the bosses.

Now, however it is the bosses who have thrown out the national wage deals.

They've stopped flattering the union leaders. When the ICTU made some mild remarks at its last conference, the FUE laid in to them as if they were red hot militants. Now the



## Dunnes strike against S Africa

IF YOU'RE passing through Henry Street in Dublin any day, you can see an historic event — a group of workers from Dunnes Stores are on strike, under threat of dismissal, for refusing to sell goods made in South Africa. They are among the first workers in the world to strike against apartheid.

One worker, Mary Manning, had been suspended after refusing to handle South African goods. Since she was following an instruction of her union, the IDATU, eleven of her fellow-workers joined her on the picket-line.

mail has been held back. Because all but one of the strikers are women, they have had extra problems. They are often not taken seriously, while many lorry drivers bringing goods to the store have abused them and barged through their picket-line. One manager actually came out of the store on a number of occasions to tell lorry drivers that the strike wasn't official!

Meanwhile, Dunnes are using part-time workers on their check-outs and are relying on the fact that most workers there are too afraid of the authoritarian managers to even think of joining the strikers.

Management's latest trick is to have goods delivered in rubbish trucks! The trucks, from Murray's Hauliers, drive through the picket-line, unload the goods before driving off with the rubbish... so much for hygiene...?

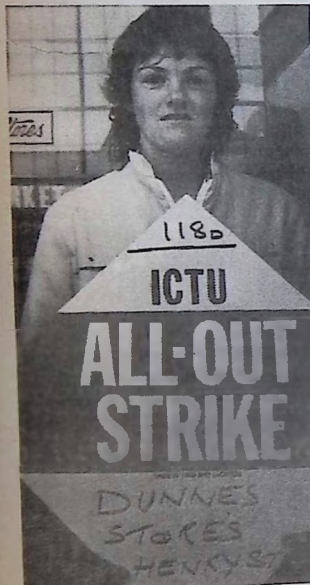
Ben Dunne has been worried however. Business has been cut drastically and his profits are in danger. Dunne has tried to patch up a deal with John Mitchell, new head of the IDATU, so far without success.

The strikers meanwhile are unanimous, "We are now even more committed, more determined to WIN." But they badly need financial assistance and picket-line support — particularly from other Dunnes workers.

As shop steward Karen Gearon says, they hope their action "will be an example to other people to have the courage to stand up in their workplace and not to take whatever treatment is handed out to them."

These Dunnes strikers are showing in a practical way how Irish workers can help their black fellow workers thousands of miles away in South Africa.

To win, they need YOUR help. — MARK LYNCH



The strikers are totally opposed to the South African system of Apartheid and wanted to fight against it in the only way they could. They now form an official ICTU all-out picket.

For over three weeks without a break they have had to endure harassment from other workers and management. They have been pelted with food by scabs and the strikers'



Only workers' action can defeat the employers' offensive

## Reports

### ESB STEPS UP

A MAJOR battle is looming in the ESB over management's attempts to impose cuts.

The immediate cause of the strike is the suspension from the payroll of eleven shift workers.

They had refused to co-operate in a system to provide nine shift relief workers on a permanent basis. ESB management were looking for greater flexibility and productivity in a campaign to cut the workforce.

The strike began at Poolbeg, but pickets are being gradually extended to other stations.

Once the strike began to bite, the ESB workers will come under tremendous attack from the media.

In the 70s, ESB strikes were met with calls to "isolate your ESB neighbour" from papers like the Irish Independent.

ESB workers should not just sit back on the picket line. They should take every opportunity to explain their case. They should be saying that anyone who says there is "too much electricity" is trying to doom another generation of Irish workers to the dole queue.

The should be explaining that the high cost of electricity in Ireland is the result of government taxation—that some government tax-payers are afraid to tax the rich.

### CIE DEFEATED

10 workers got the sack from CIE after a recent strike by operatives. It was a clear case of victimisation. 7 of the 10 were shop stewards. CIE were taking revenge after the defeat of the strike.

The workers referred the issue to the Labour Court under the unfair dismissals Act. In 95% of the cases workers never get their jobs back under this Act—they are normally offered compensation instead. But even despite this pattern, the pro-boss Labour Court re-

commended that the first three workers who appeared before it get their jobs back. They did so because the victimisation was so blatant.

But CIE will not accept the recommendation. Instead they are using tax-payers money to take the issue to the Supreme Court.

CIE are determined to break a all resistance in the maintenance depots. There is only one answer to this attack. It is the re-building of unity on the shop-floor—between crafts and general workers. Many general workers are understandably bitter about the scabbing of the craftsmen during the dispute. But

there are common issues to fight on now.

A joint shop-stewards committee has to be rebuilt in every depot.

### SLAINTE OUT

WORKERS at Slainte—the mineral company—have been on strike for over two months. They are looking for a 9% wage increase but management have offered only 4%. They have already had two Labour Court meetings and countless negotiating sessions but management

refuse to budge.

The workers are also demanding canteen facilities, a rise in dinner money, decent bonus and the introduction of tea money.

Slainte is owned by Cantrell and Cochrane. The manager of Slainte, Peter Reynolds is already known to C & C workers as being a tough boss. He is an ex-C & C manager.

Dublin SWM issued a leaflet to the C & C workers calling for solidarity with the Slainte workers. The

shop stewards at Slainte also issued their own leaflet looking for support from G & C.



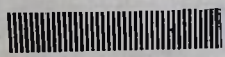
# Courts show political face

## ANOTHER KICK IN THE TEETH

ANOTHER KICK in the teeth for the poor.

That's the Coalition's latest tactic for patching up the Free State economy.

Having hiked the price of bread, butter and milk out of the reach of many working class families, they are now planning to take the clothes off our backs.



A directive issued on the orders of Labour(!) minister Barry Desmond has instructed the Eastern Health Board to refuse children's clothing grants to thousands of families on social welfare.



As a result, the majority of families in Dublin area applying for grants for children going back to school this month have been turned down flat. And the maximum allowance for those who are still eligible has been set at a miserly £35 a year.

Anybody who walks into a drapers shop in Dublin will know that that would scarcely keep a healthy kid in shoe leather in 1984.

At the same time the Coalition is planning to introduce

taxation on Social Welfare Payments. A scheme has been drafted for the possible abolition of food subsidies altogether.

The only sop the pathetic Labour Party has been able to coax from it's Fine Gael partners is the promised Family Income Supplement, which will supposedly soften the impact of the food price rises.



In fact it will do nothing of the sort. The whole point of the measure is to cut back on Social Welfare spending. Sending the price of basic foods through the roof and then offering an "income supplement" is like beating up a kid in a back alley and then throwing it sweets before making a getaway.

And the Labour Party expects thanks.



And, anyway, the Family Income Supplement will NOT be made available to all the people at the bottom of the pile. It will be "wage stopped" Which means that tens of thousands of unemployed people will be refused—in case getting the FIS would deprive them of the "incentive

to work".

The incentive to work! Sweet Jesus! How long will it take these Labour Party bowties to realise that there is no work?



In truth, of course, they know it full well. The new budgetary package isn't concerned with the well-being of working class people. It's concerned with the well-being of the rotten capitalist system we live under. And when it comes to a choice between making the system suffer, the workers lose out every time.

There is no point whingeing about Labour Ministers "breaking faith" or "selling their socialist souls" by agreeing to all this. They never had any faith. Their souls were never socialist to begin with (as Socialist Worker explains in the centre pages of this issue.)

Their problem is that they are wedded to the system. They do what they do in order to shore the system up.

And Dail Eireann, as it styles itself, is a central part of the system. Putting 50 "left wing" TDs into the Dail wouldn't solve the problem either. The needs of a system, of capitalism would still stay

the same. Asking Dail Eireann to fight back against capitalism is like asking Bronco Dunne to help deal with the drug pushers. It is to misunderstand the role of the institution.

Workers can only fight back THEMSELVES. Wherever they work, wherever they are organised, for themselves and by themselves.

And that fightback can only be led by a party with no illusions at all in the system in its "parliamentary" facade.

The crying in this country, North and South, is for a revolutionary socialist party. The SWM urges you to come in and help to build it.

Come in for a fight.



Mr Seamus Shannon

THE DECISION by the Free State Supreme Court to hand over Dominic McGlinchey and Seamus Shannon to the mad-dog RUC was a political decision.

The Supreme Court, like all the other courts in Ireland, North and South, is a political body.

In his judgment in the Shannon case Chief Justice Tom O'Higgins said that it would be a "distortion of language" to give the alleged "crime (the killing of former Stormont speaker Norman Strong and his son) "the status of political offence".

That in itself is a political judgment. Moreover 10 years ago all such offences were called "political" by the Free State Courts and all applications for extradition refused. The nature of the offences hasn't changed in the meantime. What has gradually changed is the way the ruling class in the South sees its own political interests.

### DESTABILISE

As the war in the North has continued, threatening to spill over and destabilise the South, they have become ever more desperate for a deal with Britain which would put an end to the IRA campaign. They hope that handing Republicans over to the North will soften the Loyalists and make a deal easier for the British to arrange.

That's why they wheel out their hack judges to appease their pals in the North.

But in doing this they make the political role of their courts easy for all to see. They also make it more clear

than ever that when it comes to the crunch they line up with the sectarian state in the North and against those who want to bring that state to an end.

The political nature of the law is obvious when you look at the background of the top judge O'Higgins. A nephew of Tim Healy, the first, British-appointed Governor-General of the Free State, and son of leading Blueshirt fascist T. F. O'Higgins, he was a Blueshirt himself at University, then a Fine Gael TD from 1948... and on the far right of the party at that. As Fine Gael candidate for the presidency in 1966 he came within 10,000 votes of beating de Valera.

Throughout his political career he was a crude, vicious, anti-working class reactionary. He got his pay-off when Liam Cosgrave made him a High Court Judge in 1974 and, just a year later, promoted him to the presidency of the Supreme Court.

### RIDICULOUS

The notion that his rotten right-wing ideas have changed now just because he's wearing a wig is ridiculous. Leopards don't change their spots that easy, nor Blueshirts their political colouration.

There is no room for fudging on this issue. Accepting extradition means accepting the Northern State and the Strategy of the Southern ruling class for stitching up a deal with Maggie Thatcher. This has nothing to do with the question whether we approve of disapprove of the actions with which Republicans might be charged. It has nothing to do with the underlying politics of the issue.

And self-styled "socialists", like the Labour so-called "Left" and the Stickers, who refuse to take a stand against—just opting for a safe place on the political sidelines.

They should take note that it's the same courts which are now giving out injunctions like confetti to prevent worker workers fighting against cut-backs and redundancies and which sent the Ranks workers, for example, to prison. This is not a separate issue.

One of the reasons Fitzgerald, Barry and Noonan—and the big business elements who stand behind them—are anxious to ditch the Northern Catholics and make their peace at any price with Thatcher is that they are in the middle of an economic crisis. They are edgy anyway about how to hold down the working class which is having to bear the brunt of the crisis.

They cannot afford the added destabilisation of their state which the Northern troubles threaten.

That's why courts which one day order dockers who are fighting for their jobs to stop picketing will the next day send a Republican, handcuffed to be handed over at Kileen.

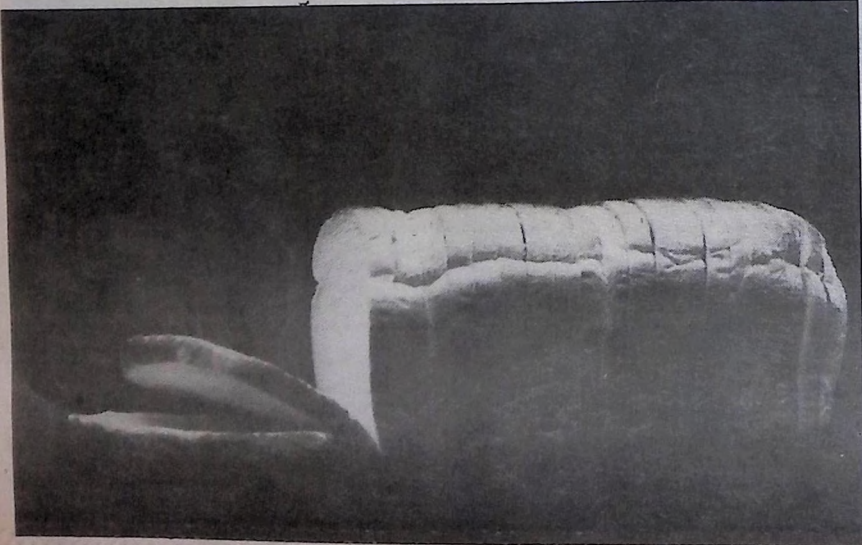
The motive is the same: to prop up the creaking capitalist system.



Prior

—EAMONN McCANN

photo: Mark Lynch



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