

the worker

FOR A WORKERS' REPUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

READ INSIDE

HOW TO GET a Labour Party nomination—the run-up to the local elections in June is marked by the usual intrigues and manoeuvres. On page 4 we demonstrate the orthodox methods of Dermot O'Rourke, Dublin City Commissioner in securing a nomination. As he says, 'everyone does it.'

A MAN'S LIFE—but they treat you like dogs. Two ex-soldiers who recently left the Irish Army give their accounts of the boring routine, the pointless training, and the arbitrary discipline. Page 4.

AFTER THE ROSARY—republican rhetoric at Easter. We look at Tomas MacGiolla's sermon on the possibilities of unity with the loyalists. Page 5.

CORK TENANTS SHOW THE WAY a lesson in determination and solidarity. In the face of threats and imprisonment Cork tenants have kept up their struggle for improvements in housing and for changes in the rent system.

Labour Councillors press the Corporation to 'get tough'. Page 8.

THE INDUSTRIAL WAR HOTS UP inside we carry reports on Chrysler, Unidare, Dunlop, Galway Crystal, Dublin docks, and many other places of work. All the reports are written either by, or with the direct co-operation of workers in these companies.

PROFITS UP

BELOW ARE SOME recently published profit figures. That's what they mean when they say the economy is swinging upwards again:

- McCAIRNS—profits up 330 per cent
- SUNBEAM WOLSEY—profits up 430 per cent
- J & L F GOODBODY—profits up 184 per cent
- BROOKS WATSON—profits up 157 per cent
- DUBLIN GAS CO—profits up 140 per cent
- UNIDARE—profits up 124 per cent
- DUBTEX—profits up 116 per cent
- GLEN ABBEY—profits up 85 per cent
- IRISH TIMES—profits up 77 per cent.
- YOUGHAL CARPETS—profits up 45 per cent.
- CLONDALKIN PAPER MILLS—profits up 45 per cent
- JONES GROUP—profits up 39 per cent
- CEMENT ROADSTONE—profits up 36 per cent.

There will be factory gate collections for poor old Cement who only managed to increase their margin by just over one third.

WORKERS AT SISK'S yard on the Naas Road, in Dublin, recently backed an apprentice who was being pushed around by a foreman. They stayed out two days to have him re-instated at his old job and have promised support in the future if the company take action against him in the remaining months of his apprenticeship.

That's the way to stop the exploitation of apprentices as cheap labour—solidarity of qualified workers. But there is also a crying need for an effective apprentice's organisation to push for full union rights, control of training on the job and in the technical schools, and for big increases in apprentices' wages.

'GOVERNMENT POLICY is to make money', says Werner Henbeck, head of the North's bus services, and to do that he is attempting to force through a merger deal already rejected several times by Belfast busmen. Henbeck's action has provoked a strike by 350 maintenance engineers at Ulsterbus. They are looking for parity with their Citybus (Belfast) counterparts. The gap at the moment is £9.

SCREWS ARE ON North & South

NORTH AND SOUTH, the authorities have a common purpose. They aim to isolate and intimidate those ready to fight against their system and for our class, the working class. They have an armoury of laws, courts, police, army and undercover agents at their disposal.

We have our collective strength with which to resist this. But if we allow the individuals, and individual sections, to be "picked off", that collective strength will not be brought to bear. We should see that there is a connection between the harassment of republicans and their supporters in the North and the increasing use of the law and the police against political activists and against strikers in the South.

"Stability" is the main aim of the ruling class, and they are quite prepared to sweep existing democratic rights aside in order to get it.

In Cork, rent strikers are jailed. In Dublin police break the Corporation workers' pickets to get scab lorries across. The Dublin Special Criminal Court jails people every day on the basis of the thinnest evidence and the most repressive laws.

In Belfast, the British Army swoops on Andersonstown early one morning and lifts 50 or 60 people, many of them women and 15 or 16 year olds. For all the Labour promises about bringing internment to an end, there are as many held without trial now as there ever has been.

The Sunningdale agreement is due to be ratified soon. It makes it necessary that the republicans should be cut off from their base and no longer operate with the comparative freedom of some time ago.



Quarter of a million people celebrated May Day in Lisbon, Portugal. How long will they be allowed such freedom? See page 7

The Southern government has a big role to play in this deal. They have to be seen to be "tough" on the republicans if loyalists are ever to be persuaded that they should accept the agreement. And they also have to get rid of any other elements of disruption — "unofficial" strikers, and so on. The alliance of British and Irish ruling classes is to be cemented over the ruins of smashed working class and anti-imperialist movements.

That's the script according to the Sunningdale agreement. That's what happens — if we allow it. None of the existing organisations can stop it on their own. The Provisionals are unable to defend their members under attack from the Southern courts. Their Northern bombings may disrupt things for a while, but do not create the conditions for a lasting victory.

The National Wage Agreement makes the trade unions as hostile to

strikers and picketers they call "unofficial" as the bosses and the state.



The resources of the various working class and anti-imperialist organisations brought together could turn the tide. We need to link the fight against repression North and South. United action of working class and anti-imperialist organisations may be the only guarantee that we all live to fight another day.

UP TO THEIR TRICKS...

"I am not opposed to professional anti-guerrilla squads set up by the government. Anti-terrorist measures must themselves be terrorist, or ineffective." — Robert Moss, "expert" on counter revolutionary warfare, lecturing senior British Army officers and police chiefs at Lancaster University, England, April 1974.

Moss's advice is nothing new in Army circles. As far back as the Second World War the Special Air Service was set up to operate behind enemy lines on sabotage and intelligence missions. That regiment has continued in existence since then, and is currently involved in anti-civilian terrorist activity in the North, and increasingly in the South as well.



In April of last year, 'THE WORKER' revealed that Kenneth Littlejohn had been employed by British intelligence to carry out bombings, robberies and even murders, in the 26 Counties, all in an attempt to force the Southern regime to crack down on the IRA. To achieve this end Castlebellingham and Louth Gardai stations were petrol-bombed, and robberies were carried out in Dundalk and Dublin. A

plan was drawn up for the assassination of leading republicans. All this was directed by British secret service living and working here.

Not long after Littlejohn's escape two months ago, Gardai arrested three men in Co. Monaghan who were attempting to kidnap a local republican. The three men came from the British Army's headquarters town of Lisburn and even the Gardai, who are working hand in glove with the British forces and RUC on the border, had to admit that the men were almost certainly army agents.

GUTTER

In March, when the RUC shot dead two plain clothes soldiers, at least four contradictory explanations were offered. One thing that was not explained was an eye-witness's claim that one of the shot soldiers was left in the gutter for four hours, bleeding to death, while his accomplices talked to the police.

British terror tactics don't only apply in Ireland as the case of Kenneth Lennon shows. Lennon, from Newry, was forced by the British Special Branch to infiltrate the Provisional's organisation in Luton. At the time, Lennon's wife was in hospital and he was out of work. The police threatened to imprison him on a riot offence committed many years previously if he did not do as they told him. He was ordered to actively encourage those in-

involved in legal political activity to become involved in illegal acts so that the police could pick them off and imprison them so as to prevent them from functioning politically.

By sheer chance, Lennon told his story to the British National Council for Civil Liberties just three days before he was shot dead in a quiet Surrey Lane. It is more than likely that the Special Branch killed him.

The British government, the respectable politicians in Ireland, the mass media, the churches and so on, never tire of denouncing those who use violence for political ends. Yet at the same time they freely advocate the use of violence for their own political ends. The political violence of the state is tolerated and praised. The state, as Lenin said, consists of "bodies of armed men".

Francis Pym, the last British over-lord in the North, had this to say about the Special Branch: "they are a marvellous collection of men — unsung heroes to a large extent — and they are absolutely super people."

Lord Carrington, multi-millionaire and ex-Minister of Defence — responsible for the activities of the Littlejohns — had this to say on the army: "They are the embodiment of the highest standards of discipline and efficiency and honourable conduct . . . the army have retained decency and humanity in their behaviour and their actions". Those who might think otherwise, he forgot to add, are likely to

be imprisoned without trial or shot in the back.

The "dirty tricks" department of the British state will not be overcome by inquiries and minor reforms. The only long term answer to the political violence of the ruling class is to remove them from power and destroy their state machine.

There should be no doubt in anyone's head about the real role of the army in the North. Far from being here to keep the peace, as its supporters (including the SDLP) would have us believe, it is here to uphold the interests of British big business, the interests of Carrington and his friends. It is the domination of Ireland, North and South, by these men, that is the root cause of our trouble.

DIVISIONS IN WORKING CLASS

So long as they or their allies in Ireland remain in power the divisions in the working class will remain. These divisions will only be overcome in the struggle to get rid of imperialist and capitalist rule. Part of that struggle must be for the immediate withdrawal of the British Army, whose presence only serves to maintain the system which has created disunity.

all correspondence to 95 Capel St Dublin 1

Union Branch Crucified

WHAT'S SELDOM is wonderful, or so they say. The Dublin No. 7 Branch of the I.T.G.W.U. has just one general meeting a year. You might think that every moment would be taken up with discussing the urgent business of the branch. Not so.

If there's a big shot in the union who needs a platform to get some publicity, he comes along and delivers a boring speech which bears no relevance to any of the problems the members are there to discuss.

This year it was John Carroll, the union's Vice-President. He spoke on industrial democracy and didn't even make the pretence that the speech was directed at the branch members. There was no reference to the particular concerns of the No. 7 Branch. But we must be grateful for small mercies. The speech only took 25 minutes.

Last year we had John Carroll too. He gave a long speech on the ethics of advertising and got himself a TV interview on the strength of it. RTE apparently were bored too this year, but he made the newspapers.

The No. 7 Branch meetings are always held on Good Friday — possibly because nobody who could be having a drink in the pub would waste his time at the meeting. Or more likely because there's a drink to be had after the meeting, and that helps the attendance. Mick McEvoy, the burly Branch Secretary, leads the rush downstairs where pints of Guinness are dispensed to the worn-out members (at the non-profit making price of 23 pence a pint...).

But even this consolation was jaundiced last year when Mick insisted on singing his strangled version of "The Rose of Tralee". This year the call of "silence for the singer" was greeted with a mini-exodus. Not even the rare treat of drink on Good Friday could keep the members there.

On a more serious note, though it's worth remarking that this year's meeting of the No. 7 Branch sent forward a resolution to the union's Annual Conference calling for full branch meetings quarterly. But there aren't four Good Fridays in the year.

THE UNIDARE site in Finglas is a grim complex of shabby factories. But underneath the rusty paint-work is a goldmine. The owners of Unidare (mainly Philips, the giant international combine) have reaped a profit of over £1 million for 1973. This was an increase of 124 per cent over 1972! In 1970 Unidare lost £71,000. So the company has not just made money in the past three years; it has taken a financial leap over the moon.

SPRINGBOARD

"Since the 1970 loss", says one financial commentator, "Percy Greer (Unidare's Managing Director) has expended a lot of effort in straightening out Unidare". Percy's big leap could only have had one springboard — the backs of the workers in Unidare. In fact, to look at the same old ugly Unidare buildings it's plain to see that Percy hasn't been straightening out Unidare — only its workers.

What about the people whose work has produced those big profits for Philips (already in the world's Top 100) and for Alcan Aluminium, the enormous American firm who own another 24 per cent?

A worker in one of the Unidare

PARITY FIGHT AT C&C

FOR NEARLY two months now, the Cantrell and Cochrane plant in Dublin has had a series of unofficial strikes, lightening stoppages, and disputes. Different sections of workers, one after another, have been in dispute.

To understand what we mean by sections, we will give you a brief description of the way in which workers are divided up.

Firstly, there are the junior casuals, who have just started work in C & C and are in their first season. They are employed on a temporary basis, and can be let go — and often are — on 48 hours notice. They have no rights at all on the job, because of the policy both of management and of the unions.

UNIDARE: BAD PAY BAD CONDITIONS

factories, Anodising Ltd., spoke to 'The Worker':

"Our part of Unidare is small, we have only about 45 working here. Pay is low and conditions are bad. There is more and more aluminium coming in for anodising each day. The place is crammed and we can't cope with the amount of stuff we're getting."

"So there is a constant rush and push from supervisors. Confusion reigns in the factory, and there is no space to work or move properly anywhere. Cases and bundles of aluminium stacks everywhere could lead to a nasty accident."

The financial commentator we quoted above has a "nicer" way of putting it: "The existing capacity was way in excess of the company's requirements, so it has been possible to shove up output just by increasing plant utilisation without incurring any additional overheads." In other words, it has been decided to increase the amount of material going through the factories without building the extensions which would cost money and lower profits.

The Anodising worker goes on: "most men here are on a basic of £24. It's like a back-alley firm; most of us have to work overtime to make up the money. The National Wage Agreement has kept down our pay since last June. Some of the married men are here 13 hours a day. We have no bonus scheme even though the factory is getting more and more work in."

"The main problem with the place is supervision, especially one particular supervisor, McCabe. He has no respect at all for the workers. He attacks people for not having done enough. He comes out of the floor sometimes pushing and shouting."

"One man was demoted from being a 'bathman' without even being told. He looked at his pay-slip and saw he was £2 short, and that was the reason why. Another man was suddenly taken off despatch and reduced to the lowest grade of pay."

"When shift work came in here last January, first there were two twelve hour shifts, then a notice went up changing it to three eight hour shifts. Then later the night shift was suddenly dropped."

"McCabe tried to sack a man on the day before his six months probation was up. No wonder they can't hold on to men here. More than ten have left the place since the beginning of the year."

There is a polish shop in Anodising, and the conditions there are particularly unhealthy. No proper face-masks are provided to protect against flying polish dust, which covers everything. Overalls were only distributed this year for the first time and the extractor was out of action for months. In the rest of the factory caustic fumes sometimes come from the baths and, in the mornings, certain areas fill up with steam.

SAFETY

The company has no concern for safety. Cases are stacked four or five high, instead of two high. The foreman who said "Don't be safety conscious, be adventurous", was only half in jest. The Safety Committee at Anodising met once, came to a whole list of agreements, but hardly one has been acted on.

The workers have begun to stand up against management however. Recently a man was suspended for being absent from the late shift when the factory superintendent "dropped in". McCabe did not go through the grievance procedure as laid down in the site agreement with the Irish Transport and General Workers Union. So the workers went through their own procedure and sat in the canteen.

Immediately, McCabe agreed to talk with the newly elected shop steward. The suspension was lifted. The union branch secretary did not know what the dispute was about one week after it had happened. He knew there had been a dispute and he knew he did not want a stoppage. But the men made his views irrelevant.

Unidare is an I.T.G.W.U. closed shop, but the Unidare works committee is remote from the members, particularly as far as Anodising is concerned. The committee supported the National Wage Agreement, cancelled a ballot on Christmas holiday arrangements half-way through the ballot and recommended the check-off system of collecting union dues, making sure the stewards had even less contact with the members.

BRANCH AGM

Neither the Branch Secretary, Arthur Kelly, nor the Works Committee told the Anodising workers about the branch Annual General Meeting last month. One of the workers just happened to hear about it a couple of days before. It seems to have been the same for quite a few places in that branch — I.T.G.W.U. No. 14 — for the attendance at the AGM was exceptionally low.

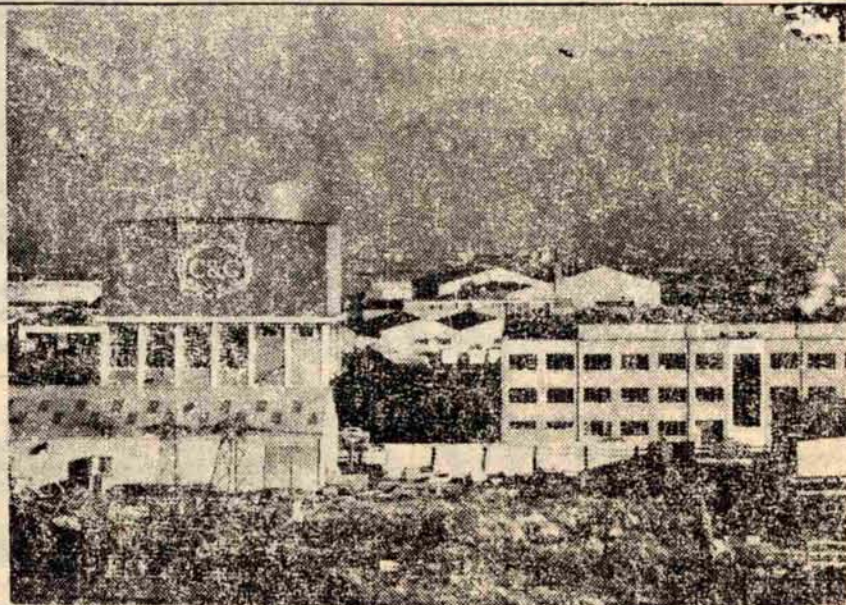
At Allidare men were working 12-hour shifts, seven days a week, and bringing home about £45. In March, the shifts were reduced to 8 hours, and the men's earnings fell to £25. Foremen were working machines at the Arlucon factory until the workers there sat in, and got that stopped. Elsewhere, Unidare are planning to lay off all part-time women workers.

EXCUSE

Stronger, more militant union organisation is the only way forward for Unidare workers — a union that is controlled by the rank and file members. At Anodising the new shop steward must be backed up with a full factory committee. The vital questions of supervision, safety and conditions must be raised at union meetings and action insisted upon. In March a section meeting was called on some of these matters, but because the attendance was bad the branch officials had an excuse for doing nothing, and not calling another meeting.

The divisions between men and women must be healed if there is to be progress. The women must get support in the fight for equal pay. The men can never take effective action as long as women pass the pickets.

With those new profit figures, the bosses must be made the target for a united claim for rises — a claim for £8 to throw off the chains of the National Wage Agreement. But if that is ever to have a chance of success, the claim, and all other demands, must be discussed by the workers on the job. And that's a right that still has to be fought for.



The casuals spend most of their first season working in the warehouse on loaders and are on the lowest wages scale. To stand a chance of being recalled for a second season they have to toe the line, and keep their noses clean.

Next up the scale are workers who have done between one and six years service in the company but are still "casual" workers. Like the first year casuals they can be let go at 48 hours notice. Their duties include helping on lorries, loading the lorries, sweeping, and so on.

The other section — again on different rates — consists of drivers, checkers, and factory workers. The recent disputes in the factory have arisen from a demand by night workers — then taken up by day workers — for parity with the drivers and other transport workers.

The most notable thing about the stoppage which brought production to a halt last month was how the day workers not only observed the night workers pickets, but then took up the demands on their own behalf, and worked out a common approach — across the union divides and despite the pleading from the shop stewards to go back to work.

A general call has come out of that strike for the end of casual work, and an end to the system by which service is broken because of casualisation.

The men will have to work hard for an end to these harmful divisions and stand together on a united basis in order to win their claims, and also in order to make sure the union officials involved — from WUI and ITGWU — don't sell out.

C & C WORKERS

Extract from "Lament", a poem published in the union journal of the Post Office Engineers in Britain.

LAMENT

By a Union Secretary's Wife

My husband is a Union man,
And I, alas! an also ran!
I'm left at home to do the chores,
While he is fighting for the poor.
The poorly paid, the 'poorly' sick,
Sometimes, it's laid on far too thick!
And when my voice is raised in rage,
He calmly turns another page.
"I'm busy writing out the minutes,
"Give me an hour, I'll have it finished."
I wonder who he thinks he's kidding?
He turns his 'deaf' ear to my bidding!
His other ear, the 'special' one,
Reserved for phone calls to his home,
Is crystal clear, and never fails
To hear his colleagues' many tales.

record of all dockers. This could be used by the employers as a basis for dismissals from the register. It is a blatantly divisive measure. Dockers should reject any agreement containing these clauses; they should demand that the Ports Committee refuse to co-operate in enforcing discipline.

Older men off register

Many dockers resent the collusion of the union bureaucrats in putting older men off the register. They also resent the Marine Port's role in collaborating with the bosses to bring in the new register. The rank and file will have to insist their voice is heard on the issue.

The pension scheme worked out since the Ranelagh seminars is an insult. It would give a pension of £17 a week to a docker with 24 hours unbroken service. What is needed is a pension equivalent to not less than half the wage being earned by a non-stand-by docker at the date of retirement. Dockers should also look for a full year's wages as a lump sum on retirement.

This is not exorbitant. Teachers get these rates; bank workers get much more. Is the docker's work worth less or more to society?

If the union officials say these things cannot be won, the answer must be: That is only true if we follow your policy of co-operation with the bosses. We do have the power to force out of them a bigger slice of the wealth we create. We should use that power.

A. J.

Bonuses and overtime

First, with incentive bonuses and transfer fees a docker working all through a normal week could pick up £60. With overtime this could reach £90. A docker on stand-by would get £40, however. Dockers who can expect to spend a fair amount of time on stand-by resent this. The allocation of stand-by is also wide open to abuse.

The discipline clauses in the agreement have also angered many dockers. Under these clauses, the Ports Committee (nine dockers elected every 12 months) would exercise discipline and act as policemen for the bosses for a trial period of six months. If the trial marriage of committee members and bosses works, it could become permanent.

The Ports Committee would also be able to impose fines. It would keep a

DOCKS STALEMATE

NEGOTIATIONS between the Marine Port and General Workers Union No. 2 Branch and the Association of Dublin Stevedores on Phase 2 of the de-casualisation scheme for Dublin docks have reached a stalemate. A first ballot on the proposals during April showed a majority of 11 in favour. But the Executive Council of the MPGWI was forced to declare the result void under pressure from rank and file members.

They complained about the way the vote had been taken. A second, more democratic ballot produced a majority of 58 against the deal.

The first phase of the de-casualisation scheme began to be implemented in 1971. The basic aim of the scheme is to transform a large casual work force into a small flexible permanent force. The port bosses plan to stream-line the port increasing automation, speeding up turn-round times for ships, and boosting their profits and those of shipping companies.

They want to ensure that the wage bill will be declining all the time. This means increased exploitation of the Dublin dockers, who will be handling a steadily rising amount of cargo each year. All the benefits of innovations in transport technology, such as unitisation and ro-ro cargo, are being scooped in by the bosses.

This may be disguised for some people by the fact that a fraction of the deep-sea dockers will get relatively high wages, namely, the fraction with low stand-by entries in their time schedules.

The number of deep sea dockers before 1971 was about 1000. Now it is

less than 600, and decreasing. In the words of a key negotiator in the ADA, "We got rid of 400 in one fell swoop. He also stated that the Association's policy was to further reduce the numbers on the register."

The Phase 2 proposals were presented to the union members after a series of seminars involving representatives of the Stevedores, the union, and the Ports Committee. These have been held in the pro-boss College of Industrial Relations in Milltown Park. The aim of these seminars was to sell the proposals to selected dockers who would in turn "explain" them to their work-mates.

Why, then did the "sell" not work? Why did the rank and file reject the proposals?

CHRYSLER KEEPS UP PRESSURE

REGULAR readers of 'The Worker' will know the story of workers at the Chrysler car assembly plant in Dublin, who, fed up with Measured Day Work and the worst wages in the Dublin car factories, put in a claim for £12 six months ago. Management offered only £4.55 for a two-year agreement and a big worsening in conditions. The men rejected the proposed changes, and even when management offered £7, it was overwhelmingly rejected.

Faced with this impressive determination, management came back with £8 in two stages back-dated to last October. Taken overall, this would mean that Chrysler workers would gain something like £160 more in the year than the wage agreement offered. Even this offer was only accepted by 170 to 100 after the issue had gone through the Labour Court and Branch official, Danny Browne, swore that nothing more could be got.

But many workers are beginning to see through Mr. Browne who promised the men the earth when he helped bring in Measured Day Work and cut down shop floor control as well as hold down wages. The moral of the story is obvious - shop floor militancy forced the company and the union to cough up better offer after better offer.

However, when the elections for shop stewards came up recently, the chairman of the Shops Committee changed the rules for election. Up to this year stewards were elected on a show of hands at a mass meeting, but this year a secret ballot was brought in. This means less open discussion of the issues involved and makes it easier for people to spread stories about "commie agitators" and so on. The result was that in the key elections in the trim and body shops the existing Shops Committee maintained their control although two of them scraped in with the tiniest majorities - two votes.

The elections also highlighted once again the unfair balance on the Shops Committee, since one steward represents 15 men, another 25 men while two other stewards represent 75 men each. It must be a major task to get fuller representation in the next months.

The elections also happen to be invalid technically because union dues have not been paid since the beginning of the year as cards have not been returned. Thus all the men are 13 weeks in arrears and ineligible to vote. This is hardly a very impressive display by the Shops Committee.

They have also allowed warbings and suspensions and have even accepted them. Let a Chrysler worker tell his story:

ASKED TO MOVE

ON A FRIDAY evening Foreman McGlynn approached me and said he was putting me on to a different operation on May Day morning. I was being expected to do a total of 28 units in the day - 16 in the morning, 12 in the afternoon. I would have another operation with me until 12.30 mid-day. We would work together on 16 in the morning, each of us fitting one wing. But in the afternoon I would have to do both parts of the operation on my own - that is a total of 24.



I told the foreman forty units in a day was just "not on". So the second man was left with me all day. As it turned out, however, he could not do the operation, and it took some time to show him the ropes.

At four o'clock in the evening, when we had completed 28 units, the foreman came to us. "Why isn't that car done?" he said, pointing to the first car on the line without the wings. I told him it wasn't finished because we had done the quota.

"Do that car", he said getting abusive. I protested that I had already done the equivalent of one man's work on 35 units, what with showing the brother how to do it, and later checking his work.

He then tried to bring in witnesses to show I had refused his request. Another foreman called me and told me to tell my shop steward about the situation as I was "on the carpet" in the morning.

On the following day, the shop steward and myself were called into the General Foreman's office. Several foremen and managers were there, as well as the shops committee chairman. Before we could even sit down, one of the foremen pointed at me and announced: "This man is under five day's suspension." I was "tried" and

convicted without even being heard. Only when I pressed the point did they let me have my say, but I couldn't shift them. The shop steward and myself left the charade. The shops committee chairman was asked to stay behind.

I went to the canteen and a while later the shop steward came to me and said the shops committee chairman wanted me to start back. As soon as I did, the foreman lost his head, ran up and down to the offices, and shouted at me, "I've no work for you here, fuck off out to the locker room and have a rest." On advice from the shops committee chairman I stayed at my post, doing nothing.

Later one of the foremen told me not to come in the following day. When I did attempt to start work next day he stopped me. The other workers in the Body Shop downed tools in my support. Eventually I was allowed back to work and since then I have received a severe caution.

I tried to appeal against this but the Branch Committee refused even to entertain the idea of an interview, and wrote saying they had already settled the matter. Even worse they wrote telling management it was settled before they told their own members.

The first the men knew of it was when Oakes, the Personne Manager, told them. Since then several other brothers have been given their last chance without protest from the stewards - one for swearing at a foreman whose favourite habit is swearing at workers.

CHRYSLER WORKER

The luck of Paddy Morgan

ONE DAY late last year Paddy Morgan's bad luck seemed to have ended. The "Manpower Services" informed him that he had been selected as a candidate for a job with a top security firm in Cork.

A couple of days later he heads off for the all-important interview. He knocks at the door of opportunity and gets a brisk "Come in!" Sitting behind the desk in the room was Mr. Beam.

"You must be Paddy Morgan," says Beam.

"Yes," says Paddy.

"You're not very tall, are you?"

"Five foot seven isn't all that small."

"Well, you know this job involves wearing a company uniform and I'm sure you'll agree with me that there's nothing worse than a small man in a uniform. You know it just doesn't look right" Mr. Beam sermonised.

"Some of the Guards walking around Cork at the moment aren't much bigger than myself," Paddy comes back quickly.

"I wouldn't know about Cork; only came from Dublin this morning," says Mr. Beam, heaving all of his overfed five foot five inches in a wall upholstered chair. Straightening his tie, he continued.

"Now for some questions, Patrick. How old are you?"

"Thirty eight last October."

"Married?"

"Yes. Three children, two at school."

"Have you ever done any boxing?"

"No. It never appealed to me."

STEERING THE MIDDLE COURSE

THE I.T.G.W.U. runs industrial relations courses for its members. Any member who is in benefit and is interested in their union's affairs may attend the eight week course free of charge. I'm interested in my union, I'm in benefit, so I attended.

What kind of lessons are the officials of Liberty Hall passing on from their experiences in the class struggle? To be honest, I didn't really expect a course in basic socialist principles, but was on the look-out for something more along the lines of "The Thoughts of Gen. Sec. Mullen". But my mind was fairly open.

The first session was an ice-breaker and the lecturer ("my name is Buckley, call me Jim") introduced himself "to get us used to each other." He is an experienced trade unionist and he told us how he had started as a shop steward and had risen through the union via the branch committees, branch secretary's position to the Education and Training Division.

So, he assured us, "we're all in the same boat, all trying to climb a little higher." That sounded like Mickey Mullen all right. A socialist does not aim to rise OUT of his class but WITH his class. But then unlike some of the Liberty Hall hypocrites, Mr. Buckley made no pretence of being a socialist. By the fourth night he was affirming his belief in "free enterprise" - which presumably means capitalism, which is neither free nor enterprising.

SAME BOAT

This all set the course firmly on its tracks with plenty of emphasis on the "middle way" of co-operation with the bosses to avoid industrial strife - remember, we're all in the same boat. With the aid of slides and through discussion of typical dispute situations we were advised that trade unionists must be "responsible" and that we should substitute diplomacy and compromise for militancy and aggression.

There were discussions on such issues as the salaries of full-time officials, whether or not they get enough - guess what Mr. Buckley thought. With the breaks for tea and biscuits the classes were at times little more than chat sessions where everyone could get their favourite bee out of their bonnet.

There was little in the way of hard information that a worker could use in conflict with the bosses. Just vague generalities about moderation.

Not all the blame can be laid at the feet of the lecturers. They are merely reflecting and passing on the philosophy of those who run the unions. There is no way of making these courses meaningful and of use to the workers in their daily struggle with the bosses until the unions themselves become weapons of the working class once more and not merely cogs in the machinery of the state.

Mr. Buckley left two nights before the end of the course to "climb a little higher" He was leaving the union to take a "job in personnel" where his trade union experience will be of more direct service to the bosses.

Taking his cue, I left the course as well. Workers interested in learning to defend themselves against the pressures of the system are wasting time and effort listening to the bleatings of the union bureaucrats. Even the tea was weak. **GK**

Where do rich supermarket owners who have gone into liquidation retire to? The Intercontinental Hotel, Ballsbridge - or at least they do in the case of the collapsing Elephant Markets.

And where do the workers made redundant by liquidated supermarket owners go? The labour, and the depressing search for jobs.

TROUBLE

In the past couple of years a number of supermarket chains have run into financial trouble. Some have solved their problems by amalgamating. Elephant markets, who had five stores in Dublin, don't seem to have that possibility. They used to have between 15 and 20 people in four shops, and 30 in the biggest, at Blackditch Road in Ballyfermot.

"The Elephant" was taken over 18 months ago by P. J. Maher who has interests in a number of other firms - Brent Chemicals, Brent Chemicals International, Henry Bell of Waterford and Bell Air International. What Maher took over was a valuable group of shops with good credit facilities and about £50,000 worth in stock. During the last couple of months the courts have judged that Elephant owes sums of £1,500, £2,000, £2,500, and more to bakeries, butchers and a host of other suppliers.

Maher's mismanagement of the Elephant was not helped by his partnership with Samuel Abel-Smith, a merchant banker and an absentee Scottish landlord.

BILLS UNPAID

Within months of Maher taking over the Elephant shops ran into trouble. Most shops are given six weeks credit by wholesalers, but Maher, it seems, was not satisfied. He left bills unpaid for a lot longer. Soon, suppliers were refusing to supply. This carried on until practically nothing was coming in to the shops. So Maher decided to buy with cash what was needed from day to day. At the same time he was able to get several loans from merchant banks and credit companies.

Nothing could symbolise the anarchy and insanity of the system better than

P.J. MAHER'S WHITE ELEPHANT EXPLODES - and more join the hunt for jobs

that fools and swindlers can get thousands of pounds in loans to squander when a working man and woman with children can't even get a loan to buy a house.

Late last year Maher's creditors got worried. But when they approached him he made sure they met in public. He would provoke them so that they would insult him. Then he would sue for slander - preferably for the amount he owed them. But that was breaking the code of "honour among thieves" - so they increased the pressure.

About the same time, workers in Elephant shops discovered their stamps were not being paid. There was a general feeling of insecurity about their jobs. We looked for an undertaking in writing that stamps would be paid up so that we would be eligible for any benefits due. But then the payment of wages became uncertain. ESB were looking for money every day. In the Walkinstown shop we had to hold on to enough money ourselves in order to pay wages and buy stock.

We were keeping the shop going virtually under workers' control. We did not need general managers and the others who run round giving orders. But we also knew we were at the mercy of the system and could not keep going.

As things got worse, Maher tried to get rid of workers one by one. Years of



service were ignored. Redundancy payments were refused. Officials of the Banba Hall Union (INUVGATA) still told members not to worry the man by pressing for their rights. Officials in the government departments did nothing to help.

From an original 74 the work force had sunk to 12. Some had left voluntarily or tried to push claims for redundancy payment. Some are still trying, while others are looking for jobs - with all the redundancies in shops and supermarkets recently, this is proving difficult.

Maher's least concern has been for his workers. As long as this system exists we will have bosses like him. But one thing the experience at the Elephant did show: workers do not need bosses; they can do the job as well as them. Most of us working in Walkinstown felt that the food industry and wholesale and retail distribution should be controlled by the workers in them. Only then could such a vital industry serve the interests of working people, and no longer be the plaything of fools and tax-dodgers.

In the meantime, we are exploited, you are fleeced and Maher lives in the Intercontinental Hotel.

KEN QUINN

'A MAN'S LIFE' - but treat you like dogs

"ARMY LIFE is a man's life . . . for you". So say the recruiting posters in the Irish army's campaign to increase its size and strength. Donegan has made the purpose of this build-up clear: to arm the state against any internal disturbance. The 'Daily Mirror' understood the reasons for the build-up too: "Blitz on I.R.A." said their headline.

The workers who join the Irish army must be 'brain washed' into acting against, and maybe shooting, their fellow workers. Two ex-soldiers spoke to THE WORKER about their training and experience in the Irish Army. Any young worker thinking of "joining up" should read this - and think again. This is the first of two reports of conversations with recent ex-soldiers which THE WORKER will publish.



Immediately, the cleaning of boots, the polishing of buttons and the ironing of trousers began. There was senseless drilling and marching, and more drilling and marching.

The men rose at seven and the first main event was inspection. Everybody dreaded this. Two or three men have been known to smoke forty cigarettes between them before inspection. Inspection takes an hour; the men stand either "at attention" or "at ease".

One of the ex-soldiers said "I had to rub my nose with my rifle. An officer looks you up and down as if you were below him. Men who were perfectly neat and clean were confined to barracks for failing inspection." With every inspection somebody has to be punished.

Running, fast and long is an essential part of the training. Men are lumped together regardless of age or weight for these runs. Our other ex-soldier says he was in a state of near-collapse after some of them.

Every platoon was confined to barracks at least once a week as a punishment. A whole billet was punished if two or three occupants were rowdy. This led to friction between the soldiers - hence the many stories of men being knifed in the billets. Punishments consisted of running, washing-up after meals or confinement to barracks. Any of these could even be imposed for having dirty boots.

A soldier might have a date and be told at the last minute that the whole barracks was confined. Men who were engaged were forced to desert. "You could be insubordinate by the look on your face. The N.C.O.'s take out their personal grudges and troubles on recruits." They have complete discretion to judge offences.

Breakfast was one hard-boiled egg, medium-stale bread and tea. Dinners were sometimes inedible. For tea there was a very greasy fry every evening.

This was always cold. "If you complained about the food the cook would show the stripes and he could charge you for insubordination."

TRAINING CAMP

At the end of the initial training, which takes three months, comes a camp in the Glen of Imaal. One of the ex-soldiers describes one day at the camp. "In the morning we had a 4-5 mile march. After lunch there was a route march. This is fifteen miles foot marching and running with rifle and full pack; some men had a radio or a heavy machine gun to carry. When we got back there was a meal and an hour's rest. Then night tactics. Night tactics start at 9 or 10 o'clock and end around 3.30 a.m. This did not change the next day's programme which began at seven with a 4-5 mile run."

Once, at Christmas, a man was detailed to go back on duty having been on guard duty for 24 hours without sleep. The man was at his post for a further 16 hours and he fell asleep later at his Christmas dinner. On another bank holiday a soldier finishing 16 hours continuous duty was immediately given a further 24 hours.

NO MEN, ONLY MICE

One of these men had to attend a psychiatric clinic when he came out of the army. The other man says "You have to sign over your whole body, soul and mind. There are no men in the army, only mice. You are told how to breathe, sleep and think."

D.D.

DERMOT O'ROURKE'S BEER PARTY

(non-members welcome)

MY SISTER and her husband recently acquired a Corporation house in Dublin and were anxious to show it off. I went to visit it one night. I expected to spend a quiet night in the house, maybe watching television. But when the brother-in-law got in from work, he asked me if I would go to a Labour Party branch meeting in Crumlin.

"But look," I said to him, "you know I am not a member of the Labour Party and don't live near Crumlin. In fact, come to think of it, you're not a member, and this is Terenure."

He explained that it did not matter. No one would ask for a membership card or where we lived. He had got a telephone call from the Labour City Commissioner, Dermot O'Rourke, the man who arranged his Corporation loan to get the house. O'Rourke had asked him to get hold of as many people he could trust and bring them to this meeting; they didn't have to say anything.

I was not clear at all what the meeting was about, but decided to go along. The brother-in-law was anxious to return the favour to O'Rourke.

We picked up three other people along the way, all of them relations of my brother-in-law, and one of them an active member of the Fianna Fail party. As the five of us went to the meeting, I learned a bit more. The Crumlin Branch had not been very healthy over the past year. Only three members were active - the chairman, secretary and treasurer, or in other words, one man, his wife, and his mistress. They could not all get to the same meeting.

Anyway, O'Rourke was being offered this branch. All he had to do was get some people to the meeting, making sure they were "his own". It seemed that the constituency organiser was coming to see if it was a valid branch. He is "Big Al", a man who goes around checking the constituency.

There were 13 people at the meeting, including the five of us. The atmosphere was odd, to say the least. Everyone drinking pints, sitting miles apart, and pretending to know each other or trying to look like they belonged there.

The chairman was "well on" and doing his best to get the meeting looking right before Big Al got there. After some reminiscences about the last elections, he suggested we start the meeting. This was at about 9 o'clock. One big man wanted to know why Crumlin had not a community centre. "Yes, why not?" interrupted the chairman, "since Ballyfermot have three, and are getting another ten." A great subject everyone could talk about without saying anything. No one needed to be embarrassed, not even the Fianna Fail member.

Big Al came shortly after this, listened to us for a while slag the church and all the property it has, and the other parties for their failure to get Crumlin a community centre; he then got up to speak. He added a few points on the question of the community centre and then made a speech on all the work the Crumlin Branch had done, thanked everyone for their work over the year and said how glad he was to see so many people at the meeting.

It was 9.30 p.m. and a few people had said they had to leave early because they were on night shift at Guinness. The chairman suggested we hold the elections for officers and delegates for the year, adding that he himself would not be going up for chairman.

I could have been chairman, secretary, or anything you care to name. The chairman called me Bill, Joe, and Tom. He appeared to be writing everything

down, but I later discovered the sheet of paper in front of him was blank.

The new chairman who was eventually elected said how happy he was, how he would do his best, and gave a few points to be remembered at branch meetings. One of his friends was made Secretary, and three young blokes were made delegates.

REAL PURPOSE

The chairman and secretary had to go to work, so the meeting ended abruptly. Big Al had just time to remind people that we had to get to work on our project - the community centre - before other parties got to hear about it. "After all", he joked, "there might have been a Fianna Fail member here."

We went down to the pub for a few pints, and soon O'Rourke joined us, "how did the meeting go?" he asked. "Great," we said, so he invited us up to his house. But who should we find there drinking pints and eating tart but the two "night-shift workers" who had to leave the meeting in a hurry.

It was only when O'Rourke had taken four or five pints that we learned the real purpose of the meeting. The local elections were coming up soon. There are five seats to be contested in the constituency, but Labour Party rules will only allow four people to go forward. O'Rourke's main aim, therefore, is to get his main rival out of the way. The other candidates, or likely candidates are less of a danger, so O'Rourke can afford to offer a few votes to one in order to ensure his own nomination.

He has the vote of his own branch, and now those of the Crumlin Branch. These three young delegates are safe. One of them is his nephew. O'Rourke's main rival may not even get the party nomination, in spite of the fact that he was a candidate at the General Election last year. Somebody asked him if he thought this was quite right. "Everyone does it," he

replied. Even Big Al, the constituency organiser, once tried to make two branches out of three people, but I suppose the third person didn't fancy being cut in half. O'Rourke has just one goal - to get a seat in the Dail. He has to win again in the local elections to improve his chances for a nomination in a General Election.

D.L.

LOCAL ELECTION ILL

WITH THE APPROACH of the local elections, to be held in June in the 26 Counties, the voters will as usual be deluged with propaganda. Pleading candidates will pretend that they can solve all the people's problems. The results will be hailed as victories by the parties that do well, and passed off as irrelevant or rigged by the parties that do badly.

STATE CONTROL

The first point that it is necessary to make is that the local authorities are machines controlled by the state. And that state is a capitalist state, and will go on functioning in the interests of the capitalists. The councillors to be elected in June will have very little power. The chief powers of councils are: small changes in spending, building small housing schemes deciding the priorities for letting council houses, changing the town plan, and electing the vocational education committee. Decision on other matters are taken by the Department of Local Government or by the manager, a civil servant. Candidates who promise to make radical changes if elected are simply frauds: they won't have the power.

Does this mean that there is no point in voting? Anybody who thinks that their vote is going to make a big difference to their lives is in for a let-down. Nevertheless if there is an opportunity to express your

feelings, it should be taken. If there is a left-wing candidate of any variety standing in your area, although we would criticise him in detail, he should be given a vote. Such candidates would be those of Sinn Fein (Gardiner Place) and the Communist Party, left-wing members of the Labour Party and of Sinn Fein (Kevin Street), and individuals standing as independents on a left-wing platform. Where there is no such candidate, the only way workers can express their views is: stay away on polling day.

The main body appealing to the working class for votes will be the Labour Party. After more than a year of coalition government, it is not necessary to spell out the sell-out. The Labour Party has surrendered its principles to Fine Gael, and through the National Wage Agreement it tries to act as the bosses' policeman over the labour movement.

LABOUR RECORD

At local level its record is even worse. Labour councillors have bargained for mayors' chains and apologised for the failures of their Fianna Fail and Fine Gael colleagues. Nor is this entirely surprising: at the last local elections in 1967, one quarter of the Labour members elected to county councils and city councils were "employers and managers", although only 3 per cent of the population belong to this group.

WHAT KIND OF UNITY?

WHEN TOMAS MAC GIOLLA took the rostrum at the Belfast Official Republican Easter commemoration, hundreds turned their backs and headed for the gates of Milltown Cemetery. MacGiolla's oration followed a decade of the Rosary in Irish, now a well established ritual of the revolutionary Marxist Officials!

It's a pity, in fact, that more didn't stick around to hear what MacGiolla had to say. Among other things, like blaming the Provos for virtually all the ills of Northern life, he spoke of the need to defend and cherish the 'Protestant way of life', which he described as an attitude of life and politics, a culture, something which was independent, broad-minded, open and receptive to new ideas. All very airy-fairy. All rubbish.

The essence of the so-called Protestant way of life is of course the ascendancy over Catholics. Its culture, if that is the word for it, is firmly founded on sectarianism. Its symbols are the Union Jack and the Queen. It glories in the British Empire and the triumphs of the British Army over struggling colonial peoples, triumphs which Loyalists are proud to have helped secure. It has been fostered by British big business to keep the working class divided and downtrodden. It is reactionary in the extreme.

SOP

So what was MacGiolla on about? Official Republican policy in recent months has come to be more and more dominated by the notion of some sort of alliance between themselves and the Loyalist para-military groups, although on what basis such unity is to be based, no-one seems very sure. MacGiolla's rantings were no doubt intended as a sop to the wished-for allies in the UVF and its hangers on.

MacGiolla's speech and the present policies of the Officials are an example of their inability to come to grips with the split that has occurred in the Unionist all-class alliance. The struggle against imperialism for the last five years has disrupted that alliance beyond repair. But the Protestant section of the working class has shifted steadily to the right. The UVF and similar bodies are an expression of this. While it is essential to recognise that this split has occurred, it is also necessary to fight against the direction that Protestant workers have moved in. That is not done by accepting that the UVF or any of the others represent the interests of these workers, as "Official" thinking would seem to assume.



Provo parade enters Derry cemetery for Easter ceremony

The UVF represents a section of the Protestant camp which is attempting to preserve the Protestant ascendancy and the rule of imperialism. The UVF magazine 'Combat', which is financed by small Protestant businessmen, openly supports

the British fascist National Front party, and the fascist regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia. It attacks the British government for giving independence to colonies such as India, Malaya, Kenya and so on. Its main reason for opposing

sectarian violence of an indiscriminate nature is that this violence plays into the hands of those who say the only way forward is for Catholics and Protestants to share power.

Since the much publicised meetings between the Official leadership and the leaders of the UVF (which the UVF now deny ever took place), the UVF has loudly condemned the 'communism' of the Officials. They have described as 'utter rubbish' any suggestion that the UVF and the Officials could ever come together on an anti-imperialist basis. A recent statement said the UVF was "the only Loyalist military organisation in Ulster to publicly condemn the infiltration of Communism into the loyalist camp."

DAY DREAMING

In spite of all this the Officials still seem to believe in the possibility of some sort of deal with the Loyalist para-military group. At the height of this day-dreaming the UVF leader, Ken Gibson, a painter of Orange Order banners depicting the victories of "Protestants" over "Catholics" was busy offering to provide a "third force" for the British ruling class to defeat all opposition to their rule in Ireland. That is what the "Protestant way of life" looks like in practice. And that is something that will never be overcome by the crawling of MacGiolla and Co.

The Socialist Workers Movement holds that working class unity is essential for the defeat of imperialism and capitalism in Ireland, but we reject the naive approach to the problem offered by the Officials. Class unity will only be won in the revolutionary struggles of the working class which are uncompromising in their rejection of the pro-imperialist, pro-ascendancy 'Protestant way of life'. That is a long hard struggle in which there are no short-cuts. It will not come about through back-room negotiations with ultra-right wing, ultra-loyalist gun men.

IN SEARCH OF STABILITY

"Although the picture may at first sight seem to the outsider in industry to be dismal, the establishment of the new administration here has given hope of permanent stability and peace in Northern Ireland for the first time in 50 years. Stability is one of the factors upon which those who command industry insist before they are prepared to establish basic industries. For the first time we can show them that we have the means of achieving stability."

Michael Canavan, SDLP Assemblyman, speaking in Stormont 24/1/74.

"Our unemployment figures in January this year was . . . the lowest January figure since 1945. One result of this should be increasing social stability throughout the province and this in turn will be another attraction to investors."

Brian Faulkner talking to 'industrialists, financiers, investment chiefs and representatives of commercial and other interests at the Ulster Office in London.'

These two quotes sum up the reality of the Sunningdale agreement. The 'peace and stability' sought by the SDLP and their Faulknerite allies is not desired for humanitarian or moral reasons as they would have us believe. It is rather, demanded by 'those who command industry' as Canavan so correctly put it. And who DOES command industry? About two per cent of the population! The boards of directors of such firms as Courtaulds, ICI, Du Pont, British Enkalon, and the rest, who represent no-one else but a tiny handful of shareholders. That is the real force behind the so-called solution to the "Irish Problem" drawn up at Sunningdale.

The Assembly Executive would have us believe that this tiny clique of wealthy and powerful businessmen have the interests of the people of Ireland at heart, that their only desire in life is to provide jobs for the thousands of unemployed who crowd the dole queues. Nothing could be further from the truth. Their only interest is in making profits and, as far as Northern Ireland is concerned, they are doing very nicely. 'Peace and stability' on their terms would enable them to do even better.

Take British Enkalon, for example. At the end of March the Chairman of the company announced an increase in profits from half a million pounds to almost three



Smug looks on the faces of the Executive

million in 1973. In the ten years that Enkalon has been in the North, production has soared by 1,300 per cent. With investment in the North at £15 million, and no production taking place anywhere else, Enkalon derives a profit of 20 per cent from its investments here. According to Lloyd's Bank Review the average rate of profit for firms in Britain is less than 8 per cent. So profit in the North is two and a half times as great as in Britain. Enkalon employs 2,800 men. That means that the profit derived from each one of them is around £1,000 per year!

With over 80 per cent of industry owned by British and other foreign business men hundreds of millions of pounds are flowing out of the Six Counties every year, and all of it into the pockets of those who stand solidly by Sunningdale.

TOURING

The 'peace and stability' men of the Executive are busy touring the world in a desperate attempt to attract more of these parasites. John Hume, who recently said in the Assembly that "there can be little doubt that the eyes of industrialists in Western Europe and America as well as in Great Britain will be upon us to see if we can pull together", has been boasting to American bosses that Northern Ireland can offer them a vast supply of cheap and well disciplined workers if they would only come and set up business here. He was opening a trade drive in Chicago at the time.

Faulkner told a gathering of super-bosses in London that they could obtain from the Assembly grants of 'up to 73 per cent of the capital investment'. Not only are the profits massive, but those who want them have to lay out hardly a penny of their own money. The tax payers will provide it for them. The workers themselves have to pay for the privilege of being exploited!

Is it any wonder that in 1973 almost 100 representatives of foreign firms visited the Six Counties to see for themselves the potential for making a big kill? That was twice as many as in 1972. With 'peace and stability' the number is hoped to be doubled again by next year.

INTENTION

Add to all this Merlyn Rees's statement on the Council of Ireland, and we have a nicely rounded picture of the real intentions of the British rulers in Ireland. "The basic reason for the establishment of a Council of Ireland", Rees told a packed House of Commons, "is to provide the means of improving co-operation between North and South on a wide range of common interests - to utilise scarce skills avoid unnecessary duplication of effort in the interests of economy and efficiency, and to ensure complementary rather than competitive effort in the fields of agriculture, commerce and industry."

So while the Loyalists continue to declare that the Council of Ireland is a sell out to republicanism and the SDLP paint it as the means of fulfilling the 'national aspirations of the minority', the British ruling class - that same minority who own and control the wealth - is quite clear that it sees the Council as

nothing more than the means of stabilising and integrating its economic stranglehold over this island.

All the current wrangling about Sunningdale, power-sharing, the Council of Ireland and so on, is simply a battle between various ideas as to how the interests of the British ruling class can best be preserved in Ireland. No-one is actually questioning their 'right' to exploit the Irish working class. They are fighting about who can defend that 'right' best.

The tragedy is that large sections of the working class, the class who suffer most from that exploitation, are prepared to argue on the same basis. The real issue facing workers, North and South, is how best to get rid of all exploitation. Those who have been fighting against imperialist repression for the last five years have not yet raised this question in a way which could significantly advance the struggle. There is in fact only one alternative to rule by British big business, and that is rule by the working class. That means a struggle for socialism throughout Ireland. It is only on the basis of such a struggle that working class unity can become a reality and the handful of parasites who live off the sweat of Irish workers be overthrown.

MIKE MILLER

WORKERS AT the three Fiat plants in Dublin brought all work to a halt one day in April when everybody stopped to demand the re-instatement of a shop steward who had been suspended.

The steward had been suspended from his job at the service division in Grand Canal Street following a bit of "horse-play" which ended in a punch or two thrown. The two men involved got over it quickly enough, but one of the managers, who have it in for the steward, decided to suspend him.

The steward at the service division in Kylemore Road was notified of the

suspension even before the "suspended" was, but it was also too late in the afternoon to do anything about it. The next day the A.G.E.M.O.U. members, whose steward it was had been suspended, put up pickets on the three main plants. Not one person passed them. Even supervisors and foremen stayed out.

The Fiat Management who had partly succeeded in dividing worker against worker at the time of the previous stoppage concerning a claim by clerical workers, were given a much needed demonstration of basic solidarity.

VISIONS

Although we have said above that Sinn Fein (Gardiner Place) deserves a vote it should be a vote without illusions. For instead of presenting themselves as revolutionaries out to bust the system, Sinn Fein have been trying to slip into the done. By concentrating not on the power of the masses but on the personalities who lead campaigns. Sinn Fein are falling into the same trap that sincere members of the Labour Party have fallen into over and over again: the dangerous trap of thinking that problems are solved by changing the people at the top. What happens is that these sincere people change when they get to the top.

UNITED STRENGTH

The only way to change the system is for the working class to rely on its own united strength - in tenants' associations, in local agitations, and above all on the factory floor. Small changes may be brought about through the local councils; but for those who are fighting to change the whole system, to fight mainly through the Dail and the local authorities is to fight on the ground the bosses have chosen. The power of industrial workers lies in numbers in the factories, that is the main ground they should choose to fight on.

JOBS LOSS ON THE INCREASE

WHATEVER HAPPENED this Coalition promises about dealing with problems of redundancy and unemployment? Redundancies are with us in a big way again, and a recent issue of the bosses' magazine, 'Business and Finance', suggested that the redundancy figures might for 1973 be higher than they were for 1972 — and that was a year when everybody was panicking about crisis and record redundancies and so on. It is no small tribute to the way in which the Coalition have managed to bamboozle people that so few have noticed what is really going on.

1974 started badly. Following in the wake of the closure of the Hammon Lane foundry, Waterford Ironfounders have been slicing off jobs a dozen or two at a time. Also in Waterford, Torsion Balance, an American firm, closed down throwing 80 people out of work. Now, the Waterford plant of Irish Dunlop is due to close, as we report elsewhere in this issue.

In Dublin, Court Cabinets, of Cork Street closed, with 50 redundancies; Rolon Caravans put 40 out of work when they closed. Hennessy's sacked 30 at their cognac bottling plant.

In Shannon, Hamilton International an American company, made their last five workers, out of an original forty, redundant when they closed.

Also in the detergents field, Albright and Wilson who have a factory at Dun Laoghaire, recently announced that they will no longer be processing Proctor Gamble synthetic detergents there. Like Lever Brothers, they will be importing directly from Britain. The company expect redundancies, but are trying to play the numbers down.

One industry with a permanent redundancy threat over the heads of the workers in it is the car assembly industry. Not so long ago there were dramatic headlines in the evening papers announcing how car workers had set up an action



Motor assembly workers—their jobs are threatened

committee to resist redundancies in the trade. But that "action committee" — which could and should show the way to fight redundancies from the factory floor — has taken no action.

It is badly composed in the first place, only including members of the vehicle builders branch of the Amalgamated Transport Union (A.T.G.W.U.) and not car workers who happen to be in the I.T.G.W.U. or A.G.E.M.O.U. It's limited to Dublin too, although there are over a thousand car assembly workers in Wexford and Cork, and many more in related trades.

150 workers lost their jobs when Dart (Ireland) Ltd., of Tuam, also a subsidiary of an American company closed in April. Two years ago we reported redundancies at this computer data plant. In May 1972, 40 of the original 180 staff were laid off. This followed closely on the loss of 135 jobs at Anglo-Irish Weavers in the same town.

We wrote: "The close of Anglo-Irish weavers and the insecurity at Dart demonstrate clearly that government grants (Dart got £120,000 for equipment and training) do not necessarily provide jobs but rather a chance for some industrialists to make a "fast buck" and then clear off." We are often told we are always prophets of doom. Well this time we just happened to be right.

The article in 'Business and Finance' which pointed out how high the level of redundancies is, also stressed the point that "improved productivity was a very real factor." Only about 10 per cent of redundancies come from factory closures.

So, most of the cases we have referred to above are the exception. Much more usual is the gradual eating away of jobs. And a lot of that has come through the kind of productivity dealing which has become so fashionable. What should be a dirty word in the working class movement because it means attacks on jobs and conditions is becoming increasingly acceptable. The union officials who advocate co-operation with the bosses love this method, and are able to hold out carrots of improved money as a price for jobs and rights.



The trade union leaders have given up fighting in favour of this co-operation, so we will have to take up the fight. We will have to expose the way in which the Coalition government, the National Wage Agreement have laid the groundwork for redundancies. We must oppose every rationalisation measure which leads to redundancies and advocate industrial action to stop closures.

STRIKE IN SUPPORT OF STEWARD

FOR THE SECOND TIME in six months, the workers at Marlin Communal Aerials are out on strike. This time it is in sympathy with their shop-steward Mick Claxton who was recently suspended. More serious however, is the victimisation which he experienced by being "demoted" in his job.

Ever since they returned to work after the six-week strike last October relations between management and employees have been strained at M.C.A. the quick "patch-up" job done between Mick McEvoy Branch Secretary No. 7 branch I.T.G.W.U. and Mr. Kelly, the manager, didn't work very well. The effects of this can now be clearly seen.

No sooner had the workers returned to work than two servicemen were made redundant due to "reorganising" within Marlin. When the two workers notified Mr. McEvoy at Liberty Hall about their dismissal, they were told that they had to comply with the rules of the firm which did things on a "last in — first out" basis. As Mr. Kelly had stated that both servicemen would be re-employed at the first available opportunity McEvoy said that he could not treat it as a case of victimisation. They are still waiting to hear from Mr. Kelly.

Recently a young worker, Liam Mooney forgot to clock into work (the clock having been introduced after the strike) As a result of this he lost one day's pay. Despite the assurances of his workmates and his foreman that he was at work, Liam was not allowed the benefit of the doubt. When Mick Claxton heard about this he immediately went to see the engineer over the cablemen. A heated debate developed between them both, during which Mick was provoked into hitting the engineer.

Shortly after they had both apologised Mick was called in to see Mr. Kelly who informed him that he was to be suspended for a week. Worst of all he was also being "demoted" from foreman to cableman. Loyal to their shop-steward the rest of the workers immediately ceased work and walked out.

The strike is now into its eight week and is official. The same old scabs continue to cross the picket line daily i.e. the office staff, except for three office girls who must be commended for their sympathy with their striking brothers. The lads are determined not to return to work until they see Mick Claxton reinstated in his former position of foreman.

There is also the matter of promises which were not fulfilled by the management since the previous dispute — the driving allowance and the meal allowance which were never implemented. Meanwhile Mr. Kelly sits in his office as pig-headed as ever, refusing to negotiate, while Mr. McEvoy sits in No. 7 branch office in Liberty Hall finding it difficult to leave his other business to deal with the dispute at M.C.A.

LETTERS

Below are two of the several letters we received from Doncaster in reply to the anonymous 'knocker' in our last issue

Dear Sir,

Do not let the letter in April's 'Worker' from Doncaster put you off your good work. Keep it up.

I. Hodgson
Thorne
Yorkshire
England.

Dear Comrade,

This is just a short note to let you know that at least one person in Doncaster reads THE WORKER and does not burn it.

Keep it coming, and do not listen to the drivel that anonymous writers send.

Philip Seal
Wiltshire Road
Doncaster

Looking after their image

IN ITS ELECTION manifesto, the National Coalition declared one of its aims to be to stamp out poverty. One year later they have made the first step; they have appointed a committee to fight poverty with the monstrous sum of £100,000. Government spokesmen have admitted that some 25% live below subsistence level in Ireland. Is this pathetic amount of money a bad joke — or an insult to our intelligence?

Over the committee they have put the head of the Kilkenny Social Service Centre, Sister Stanislaus, who has already said: "No one project is going to eradicate poverty" (Sunday Press 21/4/74). In fact no number of projects of this nature will eliminate poverty. For it is painfully obvious that it is impossible to rid society of poverty as long as society is basically unequal.

£100,000 would do little to stamp out poverty in a small town, even if it were handed out to the unemployed; it would certainly do nothing on a national basis. However, it is not going to be used in this way; the money will go to pay trained people to examine what can be done to eradicate the problem.

Little research has been done in this area, but what are these investigations likely to propose to deal with it? No doubt they will come up with a lot of short-term measures which will whitewash the blotches on the governments "just society" but what it will not effect are the root causes of want in Ireland.

Unemployment and redundancy — major causes of poverty — will not be halted; under the present system they could never be, for industry is motivated to profit and not to people. In the past few weeks, the Minister for social welfare himself personally sold a redundancy package to the 300 constituents of his employed in Fine Wool Fabrics.

Though both he and the rest of his cabinet have known for some time that

the factory was in a position dangerously near to liquidation they saw fit not to warn the workers of their impending fate, but rather have quelled any idea of resistance with promise after promise of new jobs. The usual talk of retraining has also been aired; that's a great help to a 40 or 50 year old man, with a wife and family to care for.

Without any research the government knows that low wages and low social security payments are also major causes of poverty. But for all their pious talk, the government shows no sign of tackling them in the only way possible — a national minimum wage, and social welfare benefits fixed at the same level. The fact is that organised pressure to get the unions fighting for this would do more to combat poverty than any government-appointed committee.

The Chairman has, of course, spoken of the necessity for a large scale redistribution of wealth, but that has never been possible within the private enterprise capitalist system. It will take a lot more than an advisory committee or a series of "pilot schemes" to combat poverty; it will take a revolution to eradicate it. In a society where it is necessary to keep people on the bread-line to hold wages down and profits up, the building of a socialist organisation to change it is the only answer.

"The commission will need to be radical and imaginative", Sister Stanislaus considers. Much more radical than any made of clerics, local administration officers, and academics could ever be! Much more imaginative than the government, which is trying to improve its image, would want it to be!

F.M.

WHAT WE STAND FOR SOCIALIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT fights to unite the working class irrespective of religion and sex in struggles to cut back exploitation and improve living conditions. We fight to make the

workers' organisations, the trade unions, completely independent and democratic in order that they may play an effective part in these struggles. As immediate aims we fight for a minimum wage of £30 for a 35-hour working week, for rank-and-file control of the trade unions, and we oppose all anti-trade union legislation. We oppose redundancy, unemployment and lay-offs.

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

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

REPRESSION & RESISTANCE IN CHILE

International News

DURING THE seven months since their bloody takeover, the generals who rule Chile have been directing all their energies into smashing the working class, and destroying any political or economic gains it had made under Allende's government.

The Junta has need to suppress any opposition in order to achieve its aim of stabilising the economic life of the country, and attracting foreign investment. It has been aided and abetted on both counts by the imperialist powers who know that the oppression of Chile's working class is a blow to the class struggle in all countries; Hawker Hunter jets have been delivered to the Junta from Britain and America. Big business concerns realise that the Junta's staying in power means gigantic profits for them; the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and 'friendly' governments have granted the Junta credits of nearly 500 million dollars.

Normality

In the past six months the Junta has tried to give the impression that the country is reaching some kind of "normality"; all Allende's reforms have been wiped away; many factories have been returned to private owners. In consequence the workers are suffering tremendous economic hardship; massive redundancies, caused by sacking of political suspects, and the closing down of industries by the

Generals, mean that 30,000 workers are now unemployed, and workers' wages have lost nearly 40% of their purchasing power. The country is faced with soaring inflation; for example, before the coup, milk was seven escudos a litre - now it is 60.

The Chilean workers have been bearing the brunt of the economic chaos brought about by the Generals. A large number of unemployed workers, desperate for jobs is, of course, an attractive prospect for foreign investors. But the workers are suffering more than just having their standards of living forced down - they are also being beaten and terrorised into submission.

It is estimated that over 50,000 people have been murdered since the coup, and 40,000 more are missing or dead; about 50 political murders take place each week. The MIR, the main revolutionary group in Chile, issued a statement in March saying that there is widespread torture of left-wingers, and of anyone opposed to the coup, doctors, rank-and-file soldiers, and ordinary workers. One of their reports is of a young man of 17, who came from an industrial district.

"He was tortured for ten days by the Air Force Intelligence, who broke both his legs and an arm, burned his body all over, castrated him, and then let him bleed to death"...

Brazilian police have been brought into Santiago to instruct their Chilean counterparts in the refinement of torture.



Above: Pinochet, leader of the junta. Right: military guard a prisoner



Apart from the openly brutal methods of torture and killing, the Junta gets rid of political suspects by making them unemployable; suspects have to sign a form renouncing their views, or be sacked.

The repression of the working class and its politically conscious leaders has outlawed the CUT (Chilean equivalent of the ICTU), and has forbidden any kind of political activity. The military attend all classes in schools and universities to ensure that there is no discussion of socialist ideas.

Workers resist

The picture of Chile in the past six months is a black one for the working class. But reports from Chile since the coup shows that although they suffered a terrible defeat, the workers are attempting to resist the dictatorship. The Junta had to admit that there is resistance in the coal and copper mining regions of El Teniente and Concepcion.

The workers are at present resisting by not co-operating; there are reports of mass absenteeism from work, and of low productivity. A bread shortage in Santiago, for instance, has been caused by almost total absenteeism among bakery workers. In many areas workers are refusing to accept the low standard of living being forced on them, and they have mobilised to demonstrate this. At the end of January building workers went on strike for several days in Santiago. February saw workers killed by the military during a strike at a textile factory. The Santiago bakery workers stayed out in protest over low wages, a fact admitted by the Junta and the bourgeois newspaper 'El Mercurio'.

Obviously, the Junta has failed in its objective of completing smashing the working class. Even though the strike actions reported to not indicate any long-term perspective to fighting the Generals' dictatorship, they show that Chilean workers are still prepared to enter into direct confrontation with the state forces. The regime's attempts to step up exploitation of Chilean workers, and increase productivity, are being resisted by industrial action, one of the main weapons in the hands of the working class.

"The Chileans can be expected to embark on a people's struggle, and they will make the fascist's task extremely difficult; sabotage of all sorts has begun, and the people do have arms."

These words, taken from a report which came from Chile, indicate that there is a strong hope that the organisations of the Chilean working class will be able to regroup and lash back at the brutality of the military junta. Some groups of workers are armed; the Junta's Defence Minister stated on February 10th, in Santiago that opponents of the Junta had explosives, and about 10,000 weapons which they had seized since the coup.

The Junta has not stifled the traditions of the Chilean working class, which have been built up through years of suffering; they are putting up a fight. It is up to working class organisations in Ireland and every other country to give them as much support as possible, for their fight is our fight.

GRETta MULROONEY



ARLETTE LAGUILLER, last month leader of striking bank workers in Paris, this month a candidate in the French Presidential elections for *Lutte Ouvriere* (Worker's Struggle). She stood, she said, "to insist on the right of all working men and women to be involved in politics, to be involved in their own politics, whatever the difficulties and whatever the obstacles."

These politics, the politics of the working class, she explains, can only be revolutionary. "It confronts not only the government but the whole social and economic system. We say we should work to satisfy the needs of the people and not to let a minority run everything and make profits". *Lutte Ouvriere*, the Socialist Worker Movement's fraternal organisation in France, points out that Arlette, a 34-year old bank clerk and trade union activist, is not only the first woman to stand in elections such as these but also the first rank-and-file worker.

L.O. called for votes for Arlette in the first poll (5th May) as a means for workers to demonstrate their rejection of "left" and right bourgeois

Portugal: ruling class changes mask

LATELY we are becoming ever more familiar with the word junta. Last year it was the Chilean army that staged a coup, this year it's the Portuguese. On the face of it the two situations seem to have little in common. The overthrow of Allende meant a drastic lurch to the right while the exile of the Portuguese dictator Caetano and his replacement by General Spinoza might appear to be, if not a move to the left, at least a step forward.

Spinoza is committed to ending Portugal's colonial wars on the African continent, the introduction of "free elections" and various other liberal measures. Although this may make it a little easier for socialist, working class forces to be active, the Portuguese officer class, like the Chilean, has simply directed its army in its own interests, the interests of capitalism.

Warmed

Spinoza has hardly warmed his new seat when he was announcing that he had no intention of giving up Portugal's colonies. He may end the military action but not until he finds a political solution in which they will remain exploitable. As in Northern Ireland when the Ruling Class find that they cannot achieve their

which to retain their control, and Spinoza is no less a member of that class than Faulkner or Fitt.

After more than forty years of dictatorship, sections of the Portuguese ruling class realised that the old ways were not working as well as they used to. Censorship and police terror at home and massacres in Mozambique were proving "counter-productive". It was time to put on the mask of liberalism and democracy, so Caetano had to go. It's worth noting that in the last hours of his regime Caetano himself made an offer to Spinoza to hand over power smoothly lest the country fall to "popular action".

Under their new "liberal" leader the workers of Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Portugal itself will be free to be exploited as thoroughly

as ever, unless they themselves do something to prevent it. The transfer of political power from one section of the ruling class to another, whether by an army coup or through parliamentary "democracy" does not interrupt the economic exploitation of the workers.

Unleashed

Spinoza may yet have unleashed forces he cannot control, however. As in Northern Ireland, the shift to "normal" rule may not run smoothly. It is up to the socialists in the Portuguese working class movement to take advantage of this situation. It is up to us to support their efforts.

G. KERRIGAN

the worker

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

NAME

ADDRESS

DUNLOP TO CLOSE WATERFORD FACTORY

J. CLOON,
DUNLOP SHOP STEWARD

AT THE END of May production of slippers at the Dunlop footwear factory in Waterford will cease. This will mean total closure and the sacking of 36 workers. Thirty-six more workers will join Waterford's ever-increasing dole queues. It will mean more families suffering the hardships and insecurity of unemployment, more families struggling even more to make ends meet.

This is not the first time that the workers faced redundancy. In 1972 twenty-one workers were sacked. However, the workers decided to resist. Waterford had been having more than its share of redundancies and almost every family had been feeling the pinch. Redundancy does not discriminate; men with families, working wives, brothers and sisters — all were affected.

RATIONALISATION

Dunlops had embarked upon a policy of rationalisation which was to be the key weapon in the company's efforts to push up profits. But why should we lose our jobs and livelihoods when Dunlop were making huge profits? They were able to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds sponsoring sporting events such as golf, table-tennis, cycle racing etc. They also sponsored the publishing of books on golf and restaurants and were able to give over £20,000 to the Tory Party funds in Britain.

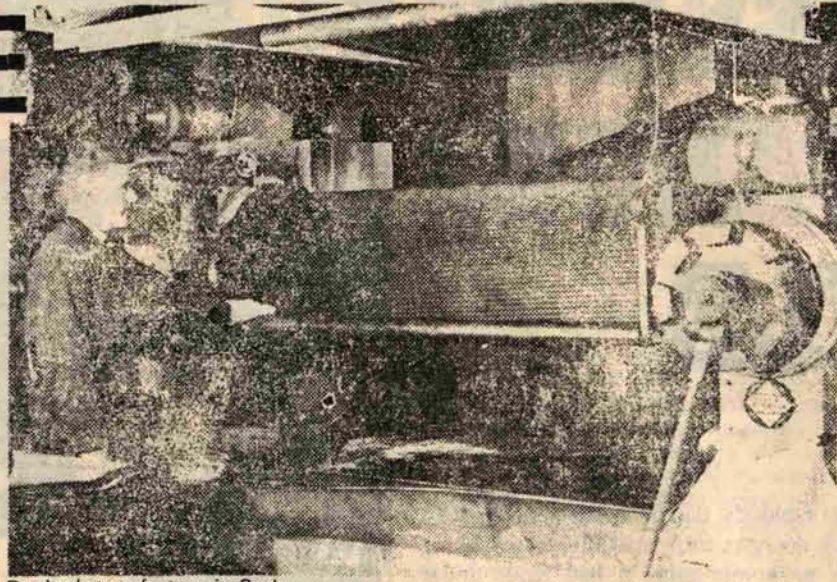
We had hoped to win the support of all other Dunlop workers and of the local workers in Waterford. However, after a fourteen week strike we were defeated. Not by a lack of determination or fighting spirit on the part of the strikers but because the vital support from other Dunlop workers throughout the country never materialised. In Dublin and Waterford pickets were passed, and in Cork the local ITGWU officials and Dunlop convenor shepherded the workers past the picket and this in spite of the fact that they too faced a redundancy threat.

They should remember that it is not the effort, skill, or sweat of individual directors or shareholders that makes the profit. They are not the ones who have to work in the racket and tension of a machine shop or try to keep pace with a fast-moving production line.

Workers invest their lives in industry while employers invest only their money — money gained by the exploitation of our labour. We are making the greatest investment and we have most to lose by co-operating with those who own and control industry. We lose nothing, and can make gains, if we stand up against them.

In the light of what happened in 1972 it is not surprising that this closure may not be resisted. Most of the workers are bitter and possibly disillusioned. Having failed to get the support they needed on the last occasion they may not want to risk isolation again.

Dunlop's rationalisation policy means they will cut back production in Ireland, Britain and other countries with organised labour movements and increase investment in fascist-type countries such as Spain, Greece, Turkey, Brazil. They are also shifting production to Asian and African countries, where workers are denied the most elementary trade union rights and labour is very cheap. This is



Dunlop's tyre factory in Cork

bound to mean an even bigger loss of jobs in Ireland and Irish workers can only prevent this by maintaining solidarity.

The bosses don't recognise county or national borderlines so workers must also act on a national and international basis. What can be done by the workers still with Dunlop in Ireland? A National Combine Committee (North and South) must be set up and must establish links with the Dunlop International Combine Committee. The International Committee meets regularly to discuss problems facing workers in the industry and to co-ordinate their actions and pursuit of claims on an international basis, and to make sure the company does not play one country off against another.

The National Committee must work out a policy to fight redundancy

including demands for a shorter working week, longer holidays, and a higher basic rate in order to abolish the need for overtime. It should demand that any worker leaving the company or retiring should be replaced.

Combine committees can also work in the struggle for better conditions, equal pay, pension schemes etc. and should establish links with local shop stewards committees.

The setting up of a Dunlop National Committee will not be an easy task but it is certainly possible and absolutely necessary.

CORK SPARKS DEFEND JOBS

FOR THE LAST three weeks electricians have been in dispute with the management of Dunlop's in Cork. The electricians, members of the E.T.U. have been suspended by management owing to a refusal of members to carry out certain instructions which are contrary to their agreement.

The Cork branch of the E.T.U. has given the men full support and have pointed out that Dunlop's is the only plant in the country which is trying to by-pass electricians in the carrying out of certain work on electric motors. The dispute reached its present state when the E.T.U. members "blacked" a particular motor. Suspensions followed, 17 in all, and the remaining 3 members came out in sympathy with their workmates.

The Dunlop E.T.U. men are rightly holding firm on their stand, for a break-through here by the Dunlop management could lead to a further lowering of the status of the Dunlop E.T.U. men and then of others in the factory.

Take-over spells danger for Galway glass workers

THE ANNOUNCEMENT last month that Galway Crystal was being put into the hands of a Receiver marks the end to one of the few large Galway-owned enterprises in the city. The company was set up from the profits of many years of trading in shops around Galway. It was completely owned by local businessmen, chief among them Tom McDonogh. A couple of other prominent Galwegians were allotted shares, including Bobbie Molloy and Kevin Blaney.

The failure of the factory under this control only tells the story again of the weakness of Irish capitalism. That story explains why every single factory on the local industrial estate is owned by an American, British, Italian or German company.

Galway Crystal has cornered a fair slice of the cut glass market and recently expanded its sales operation in North America. However, it has been making a slight "loss" for the last couple of years. The bosses have not yet succeeded in getting the factory to run smoothly and quickly enough to line their pockets.

They had been trying to change that.

however. "Time and Motion" experts were brought into the factory shortly before the Receiver was sent in by the I.D.A.

The "losses" have certainly something to do with the fact that the gombeehmen who ran the place didn't always see eye to eye. The majority of them certainly did not see eye to eye with the one who diverted funds intended for the company into his own bank account.

The company's physical assets, machinery and plant, are worth a lot — state grants towards buying them came to nearly £¼ million. More importantly, however, the company has the asset of a "committed" (their words) work-force.

Many of them have put five years of their lives into an apprenticeship at Galway Crystal on miserable rates, and their skills would be little or no use elsewhere.

This will be an important part of the calculation for any new bosses. No doubt, they will be looking for a tight deal on manning and on speeds as part of taking over. Indeed, in order to make the buy more attractive the workers have improved their performances over the weeks prospective buyers are looking at the place.

A number of companies have made definite offers, both foreign and home-based. They must be told now that no worsening of conditions will be accepted, and that even an increase of a couple of quid on bonus payments would not sugar such a pill. The present work-force must be maintained.

The workers should make no concessions to anybody on the gains they have made over the past. No new set of bosses is doing them a favour by taking the place over. They are simply buying into an enterprise which they reckon will bring them big profits.

Tenants fight on

"WE AGREED to negotiation having being told that all court proceedings would be dropped." In stating this the Joint Council of Cork Tenants once again emphasised their determination not to enter any talks with threats of imprisonment, court orders and legal costs hanging over their heads. "We will not be blackmailed by the Corporation or the Minister. The only negotiations we will participate in are free negotiations," said Pat Bowman of the Joint Council of Tenants to "The Worker".

The Cork tenants over the past two years have justified Cork's claim to be the "rebel city". Jail sentences have been met with contemptuous defiance. Court orders and threats have been answered by demonstrations and hunger strikes, even more underhand methods — such as the issuing of false statements to the Press — have failed to undermine the tenant's unity of purpose.

The tenants are demanding a full public inquiry into the houses built by the National Building Agency in Toghery, Mayfield and the Glen. There were irregularities in the N.B.A. scheme from the beginning. Sisk System Builders got the contract to build the houses, but they were actually working on the site before the contract was signed. The initial contract was for £6.3 million, but went up to £8.3 million half way through

construction and the final figures for the schemes are not available! This is what the N.B.A. call "low cost housing!"

Right: Labour councillor Philpott carelessly ignores tenants on hunger strike

Officially, the number of houses built was 1812. However, the Joint Council of Tenants did a count of the houses and discovered that the actual number of houses built was about 20 less. This means that another £80,000 is unaccounted for.

Before the General Election the tenants met Fine Gael representatives in the Metropole Hotel. Vincent O'Connell is reported to have said: "In relation to the N.B.A. scheme, I was always suspicious of someone making a cool million, but now I believe it is a question of millions." Since the National Coalition victory Mr. O'Connell has said nothing in support of the tenants.

Another councillor who was very vocal in the past was Sean O'Leary. Prior to his election as Lord Mayor, O'Leary publicly stated: "The Corporation tenants of Cork are being milked." He said nothing while Lord Mayor and since then he has become a director of the N.B.A.

These facts alone would be sufficient to justify a public inquiry, even if the houses were up to Local Government standards, which they are not. Dampness has proved to be the major problem, causing an unhealthy black fungus to form on the walls. Sisk System Builders commissioned the Institute for Industrial Research and Standards to do a survey of the houses. The findings have been suppressed. But members of the Joint Council of Tenants believe Tully is aware of the findings.



THE WORKER would like to place on the record its congratulations to the Cork tenants' bodies for swiftly repudiating the anti-Semitic remarks directed at Alderman Gerald Goldberg during the tenants' sit-in at Cork Corporation. Alderman Goldberg is clearly no friend of the working class. But his religion and ancestry have nothing to do with the matter. "Christian" capitalists are equally enemies of the working class.

The tenant's second demand is for a fairer rent system. They want the rent assessed on the wages of the householder and not on his children's wages as well. They also object to the system whereby the rent can be re-assessed every three years to cover rising maintenance costs; these will be particularly high due to the inferior materials used in N.B.A. houses.

Rank and file militancy is high at the moment and if it is sustained will surely bring total victory. A six-hour emergency meeting of the Joint Council of Tenants ended in the early hours of 17th April; tenants were knocking on the Joint Council members' doors to make known their determination to fight on to the end. As Pat Bowman said, the tenants would like to bring the strike to a rapid and successful conclusion so that they can give their time to all the many other things they plan to improve conditions for everybody.

The courage and stamina of the Cork tenants has been an example to all workers. They must get the fullest possible support.

STRIKE FOR PENSION CLAIM

ABOUT FOUR years ago the Dublin Gas Company were very generous (so they say) and increased their pensions from 37/6 to the now present total of £3.50 per week. To receive this vast sum an employee must pay 30p out of his weekly wage as long as they work there.

But this all took an unexpected turn on Wednesday, March 20th, when several hundred men downed tools and proceeded to march on the Gas Company H.Q. in D'Olier Street demanding that the company implement a claim on pensions that has been in negotiation for several years.

After a two-day strike which won the full solidarity of all sections of the gas workers the company were forced to promise an answer to the pension claim within a few weeks. It is notable that the most militant sections of the gas workers were the younger men who at a general meeting previous to the stoppage were demanding an immediate strike on the issue.

What the fight for a just pension has brought to the gas workers cannot be reversed — and that is a thing called solidarity. Solidarity will be needed again when the company tries to divide the older men against the younger men in new proposals. We must beware the trickery of the bosses — unite and settle for nothing less than the original claim — two thirds of wages, plus the escalator clause.

GAS WORKER

Title: The Worker, No. 22

Organisation: Socialist Workers' Movement

Date: 1974

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