

## MARXIST PAPER FOR WORKERS UNITY AND SOCIALISM

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# FIGHT PRICE RISES

The recent spate of price rises in the 26 Counties sent up the cost of basic foodstuffs, transport and electricity. Fuel and light went up by nearly 14%, bus and rail fares by 20%. Charges for gas in Dublin went up by 11% in May and a further 14% in August. In the 12 months to mid August the Consumer Price Index rose by 13.6%. Mortgage rises, which are not included in the CPI, are in the pipeline.

### FOOD INCREASES

The question now foremost in the minds of most workers is, when will it stop, or will it stop? This is an issue which the trade union movement should now take up. O'Malley, the Fianna Fail Minister for Industry and Commerce, is nodding-through each proposed price increase which comes his way. As far as the Government is concerned, profitability of business must be increased, but at the expense of the working population.

The Unions must resist this attempt to shift the crisis of profitability onto the backs of workers and their families. The Consumer Price Index

should be drawn up by committees of trade unionists and housewives. Real supervision of prices can only be carried out in this way. The Index, as it presently operates, does not reflect the real increases in living costs for working class families. Luxury goods, included in the official Index, play a very small part in workers' lives. On the other hand, rents and mortgages, which have risen considerably over the past 12 months, are excluded from the official CPI. By far the highest proportion of pay packets goes on food, one of the areas where price increases have been most acute in recent years.

### PLANNED APPROACH

On the basis of a price index drawn up by the trade union movement and housewives, collective agreements on wages should assure an automatic rise in wages in relation to the increase in price of consumer goods - a sliding scale of wages.

Government subsidies on certain goods are no substitute for a policy of controlling the economy. A planned approach to prices and wages is only

possible on the basis of an economy where all major industry and the banks and finance houses are nationalised under democratic workers' control, and a state plan of production put into operation. As long as the economy is run along capitalist lines real price control is a farce. The owners of industry use the argument that price increases are necessary to maintain their profits.

Their class representatives in the Dail Fianna Fail, endorse and publicise this argument.

But in a society where the production of goods would be based on peoples' needs, and not on the profit greed of the minority, prices could be controlled. It is this approach which distinguishes the Labour Party and the trade union movement from the representative bodies of capitalism. The

Party leaders and the ICTU should campaign around the question of rising prices - not from the point of view of suggesting utopian schemes to the Fianna Fail government, but rather in order to build a movement of workers and their families to transform society along socialist lines.

**Finn Geaney**

**Dublin Council of Trade Unions**  
(In personal capacity)

# 2,000 JOBS LOST IN ONE MONTH

In September Courtaulds sacked 493 workers in Carrickfergus, Larne and Derry. At no time since the 1930s has the future looked worse for young workers in Northern Ireland. Over 70,000 people are now on the dole. In the past month alone, over 2,000 lay-offs have been announced. School leavers are competing for work on a job market which, by and large, does not really exist.

At one time young workers in Belfast could rely on the shipyard. In the 1950s Harland and Wolff employed 25,000. This has now shrunk to under 8,000. 630 jobs were axed in September, with management threatening that another 1,200 workers might go next year.

Industrial centres are literally becoming wastelands. In the shipyard an engineering shop stands half demolished, to save the cost of removing it from the site.

In the late '60s there was an influx of firms like Courtaulds supposed to replace jobs being

drained away in such traditional industries as textiles and shipbuilding. Yet it is precisely these industries that are now sacking workers.

The bosses are determined to impose mass poverty to protect their enormous profits. They claim poverty. Yet Courtaulds is a giant multinational, with 400 factories in 25 different countries. In Britain alone, in the year ending March 1978, they made an after tax profit of £36,100,000.

Unfortunately, many trade union leaders blindly accept the employers' tale of poverty.

Instead, they should demand that their books be opened to trade union inspection. Let the workers see where all the money made over the years has gone.

Lay offs on this scale will have a disastrous effect on workers' living standards. It is futile to rely on redundancy payments. 400 men recently left Harlands at the same time. Payments to them averaged a miserable £500! A man in his 40s in Harlands, with 15 years of labour behind him, is entitled to only £3,500. With the prospect of the rest of his working life on the dole this is a pittance.

Furthermore, the jobs are lost for future generations as well.

It is time that the trade union leaders in the North gave a lead in opposition to redundancies. The power of the movement must be used to resist the bosses.



Photo: Derek Spillers (EFL)

If any employer attempts closure the trade unions must stop the movement of machinery.

Any firm still threatening lay-offs should be nationalised with minimum compensation. Socialist planning must replace capitalist anarchy.

There is no alternative to challenging the power of capital. Some trade union leaders have attempted to avoid the issue by talking of import controls - additional taxes on foreign goods to make them too expensive and thus increase domestic sales of home produced goods.

This would only make the situation worse! Heavy industry depends on access to international markets - very few Northern Ireland businessmen want to buy huge oil tankers. Any move to establish even limited import controls would eventually lead to general retaliation. It would raise prices for working class families, leading to an orgy of profiteering. Certainly would not encourage the bosses to part with more money for investment.

The reality is that so long as a few bosses make the economic decisions they will do so on the basis of how best to make a profit. This power must be taken from

their hands. In addition to facing up to this, the trade union leaders must face the question of political representation. Tories misrepresent the North at Westminster. Redundancies suit their Big Business backers. The unions must fight their plans on all fronts - resisting lay-offs, campaigning for nationalisation and a socialist economy. They must campaign for the return of a Labour Government committed to socialist policies, and create a party of Labour in the North to further that struggle.

**Billy Lynn - Belfast**  
**Trades Council Executive**  
(personal capacity)

## Inside

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BRITISH LABOUR CONFERENCE

The prospects for the British economy are grim. The National Institute of Economic and Social Research says the economy will only grow by 0.5% this year, that manufacturing investment will only be up by 1%, and down by 2.5% next year. Inflation, despite the Tory spending cuts, will stand at 16%, and they predict that unemployment will rise from 1.35m, to 1.6m next year. Not surprisingly the National Institute is 'sceptical about the operation of market forces'. British capitalism is staggering from stagnation to slump, from the frying pan into the fire.

Against this gloomy background the Labour Party conference meets and in the minds of the activists two issues predominate: the fight against the cutbacks, and party democracy. In reality, however, they are but one issue, the latter is the means, the former, the end. The rank and file must turn the party away from the disastrous policies of the last Labour Government, policies that lost the last election. For it was a Labour Government that initiated the public spending cuts that the Tories have taken up with such glee. Under 'Labour', between 1975 and 1976, the share of wealth held by the bottom 50% of the population actually declined from 6.7% to 5.6%, and it was 'Labour' that attempted to impose wage curbs and fought the low paid local authority workers.

Yet such a picture is misleading. At no time did the rank and file of the party acquiesce to such policies, on the contrary, they opposed wage controls and spending cuts. Previous conferences had called for widespread nationalisation, and, furious at the refusal of the Labour Government to implement party policy, the rank and file raised the question of the acceleration of all Labour spokesmen to the movement. Supported by the TGWU and the bulk of constituency delegates they pressed for automatic reselection of MPs. Had Hugh Scanlon not 'accidentally' miscast the votes of the AUEW the motion would have been passed.

The role of the Marxists in the Labour Party, supporters of the paper 'Millitant', will be important in these developments. Their influence has grown in the party with the growth of the Labour Party Young Socialists whose overwhelming majority support Marxist ideas. Last year, indeed, a 'Millitant' supporter successfully proposed the key resolution opposing wage restraint. This year too they will propose resolutions calling for a programme of fundamental social changes in society, a return to the ideas of Clause 4 of the party constitution, which asserts the right of workers to control the means of production, distribution and exchange.

Thus the battle will be fought between those who seek to direct the Labour Party away from its traditional outright opposition to capitalism, and those on the left who want to pose a socialist alternative to the Tories. If Labour launches a campaign with the TUC against unemployment and the Tory cuts, and argues for a 35 hour week without loss of pay it can win back very quickly the ground that it has lost.

SILE De VALERA

Fianna Fail is the major party of big business in the 26 Counties. Their election campaigns are funded by the owners of industries and banks. They return this favour by legislation which serves the interests of the wealthy. Wealth tax has been abolished, Corporation tax on profits has been reduced.

Sile DeValera represents Fianna Fail in the European parliament. In a recent speech she spoke of the need for Fianna Fail to return to the aims of the original party, her grandfather Eamon De Valera. But it has never changed from what it always was a right wing sectarian party of business, like Fine Gael. In 1967 Fianna Fail imprisoned trade unionists for going on strike. During the war, DeValera introduced legislation making it illegal for British based unions to operate in the South. The same cry is being taken up today by leading members of the party.

In 1937 DeValera introduced a sectarian constitution which outlawed divorce and made the Catholic church the official religion of the state. Today's government went further, by restricting the availability of contraceptives - thus blocking a loophole in that constitution.

In her speech Sile DeValera paid homage to Sean Lemass, another of the founders of Fianna Fail. It was he who, as Taoiseach in 1959 opened the floodgates of the country's economy to foreign investment capital, through a policy of massive grants and tax concessions to big industry. When Lemass himself resigned in 1966 he became chairman of three of Ireland's biggest companies and a director of several others.

As for the North; Fianna Fail's only interventions here were divisive and aimed at diverting the Labour movement. It brought in a plethora of repressive legislation, as well as internment without trial under DeValera's successor. Again during the reign of the great 'hero', republican prisoners were allowed to die in Southern prisons, while other opponents were shot in the streets by his special police.

Only the organised labour movement, uniting workers North and south is capable of solving the issue of partition. Those Parties like Fianna Fail and Fine Gael which are based on a determination to maintain the capitalist system are incapable of uniting the country. The last Lynch, DeValera and Co. was a million and a half people from the North demanding jobs and decent living standards from their government.

The capitalist press has been pouring out acres of newspaper about a split in Fianna Fail, the 'traditionalists' who are supposed to be gathering around Sile De Valera and the 'modernists' who are supposed to be proliferating around Lynch. But this is a wild exaggeration. There is no such simple division only a cynical attempt to pretend to young people who desire to change society, that Fianna Fail represents their interests.

Equal Pay Act  
a Sham



ary to do certain jobs. For the 1971 Leaving Certificate, only 14% of the students taking applied mathematics, chemistry or physics were girls; but 99.7% of these taking home economics were girls. AnCo is very pleased to point out that they are now inviting applications from young women as well as young men for apprenticeships and various training schemes. But it will take more than that to overcome the expectations of girls and boys fostered by the educational system. In 1976 only 4.4% of female school leavers who found employment went into apprenticeships, compared with 26.5% of boys. On the other hand, 39% of the girls, but only 9% of the boys, went into offices.

Today women earn, on average, less than two thirds of the amount earned by men. Yet over the last few years several laws have been passed supposedly to end discrimination against women, not only in pay but in a variety of other areas as well. These laws were welcomed by women as being long overdue. But to what extent they made women really equal?

The Anti Discrimination (Pay) Act 1974 came into operation on the last day of 1975. Equal pay has thus been 'law' for nearly four years. Women's hourly earnings last year were 64.2% of men's. Even before the Act was in operation they were 60.7% of men's; and in the first six months of 1976 the percentage actually declined slightly. Actual weekly wages are an even lower proportion (55%) because women tend to do less shift work and overtime.

A majority of employers campaigned to prevent the Act being passed in 1974 because they 'couldn't afford it' - in itself an indictment of capitalism. Now law or not, there are clearly plenty of bosses who are still determined not to incur the extra costs of equal pay for as long as possible. As an indicator, there were 68 cases being dealt with under the Act in November 1978 alone; and these were a small fraction of the women who are still denied equal pay.

But in any case, if equal pay were fully implemented women would by no means receive equal earnings. Most women workers (85%) are concentrated in low paid jobs in low paid industries - for example they

are machinists, domestic workers, nurses, typists, shop assistants or canteen workers. The chances are that there are no men doing 'like work' to be compared with. Or, if there are, the equality would just be a matter equally low wages. Women are also concentrated in the lower grades of jobs even where 'equal pay' formally exists. For instance, 68% of civil servants are women. But two thirds of them are in the lowest grade and only 8% are Higher Executive Officers, or above.

BIAS CONTINUES

The Employment Equality Act 1977 made it illegal to treat people less favourably on grounds of sex or marital status in employment. The onus of proof, however, is on the woman or her trade union who must refer to the Labour Court for investigation. So far, it has been taking almost six months on average to process a claim. But the major limitation of this Act is that it refers to employment only.

Education, for example, is excluded. Co-educational schools are still a rarity which makes it even easier for the subjects studied by girls and boys, and the methods of teaching them, to be different. Traditional ideas about 'appropriate' work for men and women (both inside and outside the home) are thus easily maintained; and in some cases are enforced by not giving girls (or boys) the opportunity to take the qualifications necessary

TRADE UNIONS

The laws on women's equality have represented a step forward. In themselves they are by no means the answer to discrimination, although they have provided a lever by which some women have been able to improve their position. What they have done, however, is to raise the expectations of thousands of women workers. They have hardened the determination of women to join trade unions, to play an active role and to fight for improvement. And they have sparked off discussions in work places up and down the country on equal pay and other trade union and political issues, often for the first time.

Above all, women are learning that real equality must be fought for, however many laws are passed. And that means mobilising women in the Labour movement and drawing them into the struggle for socialism.

By Vivien Seal

[ to be continued ]

Capitalist  
'Justice'

An Antrim Court judge gave a 23 year old woman, who had no criminal record, two years probation in what he explained was 'in the nature of her last chance for a serious offence that the public could not put up with'.

At the time she had committed the offence her husband had separated from her and she was unemployed. What had she done to society but on trial for her freedom? On April 24th she had taken her two week old baby to the health centre. When she came out it was raining and she was carrying the child as she

who has just gone through the trauma of child birth, separation and unemployment is then punished for being poor and desperate. Under the capitalist system of so called 'justice' the 'guilty' must be punished. The basic essentials for raising a child should be provided for everyone and their manufacture and distribution not left in the hands of a few private individuals who charge high prices. Working class people are fed up paying through the nose for a painted tin box on four wheels!



# SA: Economy is slowing down



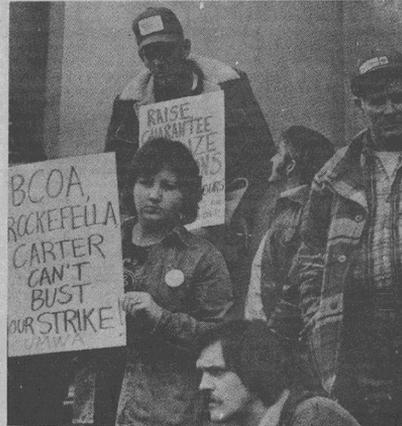
The second major economic recession of the 1970's is now starting in the capitalist world. The so-called 'stability' of capitalism has been shown to be false. It is no longer possible to solve any of the major problems facing society inside the framework of capitalism.

This crisis arrives when the capitalist world has never fully recovered from the crisis of 1974-75. Recovery, particularly in America, came from spending by consumers, not from investment. When consumer spending slowed down so has the economy.

The economy only recovered in fits and starts, and very weakly. Inflation in all the major capitalist countries was an average of 8%. Mass unemployment continues in all main countries. Even in economic recovery, the so-called 'miracle' economy of West Germany can't get unemployment below one million.

The recession is starting in America first. This is the strongest economy of world capitalism. It powered the boom after the war. The US dollar is the major currency of world trade. It accounts for over 20% of world manufacturing exports. Its Gross National Product is three times that of the next strongest capitalist power, Japan.

In the second three months of 1979 the Gross National Product (adjusted for inflation)



## NEWSWEEK -

**'Most economic indicators, from slumping factory orders to the worrisome build up of business inventories mean a further decline is now underway'**

number of spheres, including machinery production. Production is declining sharply. From January to June of this year there was 29% fall in monthly orders for the American steel industry. In the same period there was a 28% fall in steel imports. The amount of steel being consumed in the economy is plummeting.

## DECLINE

There are other signs of what is going to happen. Chrysler Motors are threatening to go bankrupt. Chrysler is the third biggest car maker in America, and the tenth largest industrial company. It employs 110,000 workers. A bankruptcy by Chrysler would bring down several banks and other industrial companies. It would be a major blow to business confidence. As this is being written it appears that 'Big Business' has backed down, due to the possible repercussions. But this threat of a major bankruptcy has arrived with the very first advance shocks of the recession. In the recession itself a whole number of major companies will go to the wall.

America is, relatively, in economic decline. It can no longer dominate world capitalism. The dollar has become a shaky currency. Between 1960 and 1976 its share of world manufacturing exports went down by 20%. The U.S. has caught the 'British disease' of low investment by Big Business. Productivity growth - which can only be brought about in a serious way by investment - has been an average of less than 1% per year for the past five years. For 1979 America will have the lowest productivity growth of any developed country.

Economic decline has already had its effects on the lives of American workers. In 1960, American workers were the best off in the world. Now, they have slipped to fifth.

Neither of the other big capitalist powers, Japan or

Germany, has the power to pull the world economy out of recession, they have serious home problems of low investment and nagging inflation.

The main factor in this recession has been the decline in the rate of profit. Marxists have shown this to be an inbuilt feature of capitalism. In America, the rate of profit - that is, the percentage return on capital investment - has gone down by over 20% in 20 years. Germany and Japan have had worse falls. Therefore capitalists are stopping investment in manufacturing industry.

## ECONOMY

By Anton Mc Cabe

## NUCLEAR POWER

By Betty Traun

The effects of this recession will be greater than the last one in 1974-75. That recession was the first recession since the war that hit all the main capitalist economies at the same time. During it, production fell by an estimated 1% to 1½%. This recession will see a fall in production, it is estimated by capitalist commentators, of 2½% to 3%.

Recovery was badly hit last time. It will not be immune now either. 57% of new industrial jobs in the South last year came from foreign companies. 12% of jobs in manufacturing industry in the North depend directly on American investment. Irish workers thus have a very direct interest in world events.

## LABOUR FIGHTS BACK

The last recession sent revolutionary storms through Portugal, Greece, Southern Africa and Spain. Already this time round, the Shah's regime in Iran has been swept away. In the summer of 1978 it seemed very stable!

There will be a massive attack on living standards everywhere. Many of the comforts workers have taken for granted are being taken away. Mass poverty and unemployment will be a part of the situation. Above all, there will be massive resistance on the part of the working class.

Already, the giant of the American Labour Movement is beginning to waken up. The Teamsters Union, even though it is still led in some cases by people who are literally

hostility as might ordinary passers-by. One man maintained that heavy investments in non-nuclear power sources were preferable to taking even the slightest risk of an irreversible catastrophe. The manager said that research projects awarded by Uncle Sam had 'proven' these sources impractical.

## WORLD CRISES

This crisis will shake the capitalist world to its foundations. It will lead on to a period of worse crises, and weaker economic recoveries.

But capitalism will not collapse by itself. It must be overturned. Otherwise, it will stagger on from crisis to crisis. As in Chile, mad military police dictatorships will rise. Humanity will be faced with the possibility of being destroyed by these crazed generals and colonels.

The mass organisations of the working class, the trade unions and Labour and Socialist Parties, will be forced to take up the class struggle. As never before in world history, the socialist transformation of society will become more and more possible. The task of serious socialists is to arm these organisations with the ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, to create a socialist society free of the misery caused by the economic chaos and crisis of capitalism.



Jimmy Carter - the going gets rough

fell by an estimated 2.4% on an annual rate. This is the beginning of worse. *Newsweek* says (August 13th) 'Most economic indicators, from slumping factory orders to the worrisome build up of business inventories suggest a further decline is now under way.' In June, industry was working at only 86% of capacity.

The way the recession is speeding up is reflected in government surveys of the economy. In July a survey predicted 6.9% unemployment for 1980, then the official mid-year economic survey in August predicted 8.2% unemployment. Finally, by late August, government spokesmen were saying privately that predicting 8.2% unemployment was 'a bit optimistic.' *Newsweek* August 27th.

Inflation is now one of the major problems. By August it was running at 14%. The Carter Government has just announced its fourth war in three years against it. All have totally failed.

Steel production is a good measure of the health of a developed economy. Steel is the basic material in a large

# Nuclear power questioned

Suffering a crisis of credibility the big American energy corporations are desperately trying to persuade people that all is satisfactory.

The corporations have tried to get their own staff to do PR for the firm. The *New York Times* recently reported what happened after one firm, Consolidated Edison of New York, had given a slick video show to some of its employees.

A burly mechanic in the front row was the first to speak. 'This is bull. Let me tell you something: When I was in 'Nam, they gave us horse pills saying it was for malaria. Now we find out that we were just guinea pigs to see how many of us could get the runs and still shoot a gun.'

Right here in New York the army was pumping all kinds of junk into the subways (tubes) to see how many people would get sick.

'Nothing doing. I believed them then, but I'm not going to believe you guys now.'

The educational process had gotten off to a shaky start.

The general manager adopted a sympathetic tone and answered the man that he too was at one time a septic.

Then the lone black employee in the room spoke: 'How do you think I'm going to tell this shit on the street? You don't know. You guys sit in an office all day. When we're down in the South (Bronx) my own people throw bottles at us.'

'How am I supposed to tell someone about nuclear energy when you've got a stick in one hand and a turn off notice (shut off electricity) in the other?'

There was laughter and more general dissatisfaction, the employees were reacting with the same suspicion and outright

Someone pointed out that the contracts were routinely awarded to utilities, and companies and others in whose interest it is to make these alternative energies as impractical as possible.

The Vietnam veteran raised his voice again: 'Sure, more nukes, right? How'd you like to live near one? Those folks next to Three Mile Island can't give their houses away.'

The question of wastes and where to put them came up. The general manager said that they are hauled to Federal repositories at remote sites and buried a mile under-ground in inert salt beds. 'Where are these holes?' someone asked.

'In this area of the country, all spent uranium is carted to South Carolina,' was the quick reply.

'Oh no!' the black worker groaned. 'My mother and father are still down there. They don't know nothing about that... ' That brought the roof down.

The governor of South Carolina is now deep in trouble with South Carolinians because the radioactive stuff is bubbling up.

The beleaguered general manager quickly fielded a few more questions, anxious to end what must have been a truly uncomfortable session. Looking at his watch his parting comments smacked just a shade of desperation.

'You fellows are sure a tough bunch, and there are equally rough times ahead, and we'll need each and every one of you to help us keep the company afloat.'

The killing of Lord Mountbatten, among others, at Mullaghmore and the deaths of 18 soldiers near Warrenpoint have focused attention on the campaign of individual terror being waged by the Provisional IRA. In Britain the popular capitalist press has foamed at the mouth in its cries for revenge. The *Provos*, on the other hand, have proclaimed these incidents as proof of their 'invincibility' and as a vindication of their methods of struggle.

Socialists will evaluate these two incidents in a very different manner. In terms of the effect they will have on the class struggle in Britain and Ireland.

### MARXISM

One of the theoretical foundations of Marxism is its opposition to the tactic of individual terror. In Russia, for example, the early Marxists sharpened their theoretical armoury in the unrelenting fight against this false method of struggle. At all times the Russian Marxists counterposed mass action by the working class to often heroic but always foolishly methods of the terrorist groups. In 1917 history vindicated their stand. Marxism, in the form of Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks, placed itself at the head of a mass revolutionary upsurge and succeeded in accomplishing what decades of terrorist activity had failed to do.

In 1972 the first copy of this paper carried a major article headed: 'Provisional IRA strategy will not defeat Imperialism'. Today, while the dust raised by the Mullaghmore and Warrenpoint bombings, obscures the sight of many people, we entirely stand over our past analysis.

British imperialism, which is an economic as well as military system, can only be overthrown by the united mass action of the Irish working class. Far from leading towards such action, the activities of the *Provos* and of their shadows in the INLA point in the opposite direction.

### CLASS STRUGGLE

Individual terror does not raise the sights of workers to the goal of a socialist revolution. Instead of demonstrating the need for activity by the working class the individual terrorist substitutes his 'heroic deeds' for such actions. If anything is 'demonstrated' it is that the working class and their organisations do not appear to be necessary.

But there can be no substitute for the class struggle! This iron law of history will not be bent as organisations like the *Provos* must learn to their cost.

Capitalism cannot be shocked into non-existence by the noise of explosions, no matter how loud. Nor will the loss of a few of its representatives near the *downfall of the system itself*. Those who applaud and rely on the style methods are blind to this fact. They confuse individual representatives of the system and individual blocks of property with the system itself.

The real legacy of their actionlessness and until they are superseded by the movement of the working class, is not the weakening but the strengthening of the apparatus of the state and the increase of repression. Invariably the ultimate fate of such groupings is isolation from any mass support and, in real terms, military defeat.

# MASS ACTION



In 1976 trade unionists throughout the North mobilised in the 'Better Life For All' campaign.

# NOT INDIVIDUAL TERROR

Added to such arguments which weigh against the adoption of the tactic of individual terror in any, particularly any advanced capitalist country, is another factor which applies to Northern Ireland. This is the plain fact that the effects of the *Provos' activity* is to increase sectarian tension and further divide the working class.

The death of Mountbatten and the killing of the soldiers actually underlines all these arguments against individual terror.

A specially expanded edition of the *Provos' newspaper* after the recent killings boasts that this campaign has been demonstrated to be succeeding. They quote the confidential British Army document 37 as admitting that the *Provos* cannot be defeated. They hail the death of Mountbatten as a firm thrust into the flesh of imperialism.

### MOUNTBATTEN

Marxists must soberly examine such claims. Lord Mountbatten was a former representative of imperialism who presided over such 'achievements' as the partition of India and the subsequent programs in which 200,000 people died. He was also a relation of the monarchy. But he was not the first establishment figure to have fallen victim to the bomb or the bullet of a guerrilla organisation. In 1881 the Russian terrorist group 'People's Will' blew to pieces, not a 79 year old retired representative of imperialism, blood related to the throne, but the self styled, 'semi-divine' ruling Tsar of all the Russians himself. And what was the result? Another Tsar! Increased repression! The arrest of those

responsible and a huge step towards the isolation of their organisations! If a Tsar is expendable how much more so is the occasional aghed earl. If the system can afford an earl or two it will not be too severely weakened by the loss of a platoon of mere 'foot soldiers', even if they come from the elite of the army - the paratroopers.

### PROVOS CAN'T WIN

It is perfectly true that the *Provos* can continue some form of operations for a long period of time. This was the evaluation given by the stolen army document. But whether imperialism can quickly defeat the IRA is scarcely the main point. For those who support the *Provos* the real question is not so much whether they can be defeated but whether

they can succeed in defeating imperialism. The answer is firmly no. Not in 1979, not in 1980, nor should they continue until the year 2,000 and after will they succeed in this.

### MORE REPRESSION

The real legacy of these bombings has to be provided the ruling classes, North, South and in Britain with an excuse to step up repression. The North is to have 1,000 extra police. In the South court operations are to be tightened so as to restrict

### 'MILITANT' ON IRELAND

A second enlarged edition of this pamphlet carrying important articles from the 'Militant' and 'Militant Irish Monthly' dealing with events in Ireland over

the rights of the accused.

In addition, a firm platform has been offered to all shades of bigotry. A boost to divisive anti-Irish sentiment has been provided in Britain. In the North the immediate result has been the re-emergence of the death squads of loyalist para-militarism. Above all, these events have, very temporarily, stunned the rising movement of the working class just at a time when the attention of all workers needs to be focused on opposition to the policies of the Tory Government.

It has been left to the Labour Movement to 'lift the bill' for these explosions.

There will, of course, be some Provisionals who would not lament a return to the bitter sectarianism of recent years. The Labour Movement can ensure that their ambitions and those of the loyalist bigots are thwarted.

### WARRENPOINT

In the North, despite these bombings and despite recent killings by loyalist bigots, the mood remains anti-sectarian. After the deaths at Warrenpoint there was a demonstration of over 1,000 people. This was called by middle class and religious elements but it was nonetheless significant in that it was probably the first demonstration of such size to have been held by the people of a predominantly Catholic area against the deaths of soldiers. Equally, the call by the trade unions for a two minute silence on the day of the Mountbatten funeral, despite its no less purely nature and despite its being called jointly with the Confederation of British Industry, was significant. The call was well supported, with demonstrations held in some areas. Also, it was a call to workers North and South, probably the first simultaneous call to action throughout Ireland made by the union tops since the days of partition.

### UNIONS MUST LEAD

Despite and in part because of the return to the streets of the killers the workers of the North are ready to respond to a call to oppose sectarianism. It is now up to the unions to give a lead and mobilise their ranks to action against sectarianism and against the poverty inflicted by capitalism. Mass demonstrations surpassing those of the Better Life For All Campaign could now be organised to oppose jointly the attacks of the Tories and the activities of the bigots.

Such mass action, along with socialist policies, can unite the Labour Movement throughout Ireland and provide the way to the overthrow of capitalism, North and South, and towards the socialist reunification of the country. The methods of the *Provos* point to division, isolation, despair and eventual defeat. The real legacy of Mullaghmore and Warrenpoint is that these methods should be abandoned.

By Peter Hadden  
South Belfast Branch,  
Labour and Trade Union

GROUP  
the past ten years. Essential reading for anyone interested in Irish politics. Price 40p each P&P extra

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Belfast

# YOUTH AND SOCIALISM

## STUDENTS FACE GOVERNMENT CUTS

**Cuts, cuts and more cuts! That is the future for education North and South under the capitalist system. The Tories and Fianna Fail are agreed that social spending is an extravagance, and they will see it reduced. But students will increasingly come to see the need for a massive campaign against the policies of these two reactionary Governments as facilities, academic standards and teaching jobs are being whittled away. These cuts are part of the general attack on the working class. They must be fought on the basis of a programme to transform not just education, but society as a whole.**

The expansion of education both North and South at the end of the 1960's resulted from the needs of industry and the demands of the Labour movement. Such concessions were possible only in the context of the post war economic upswing which has however turned into

its opposite. Cutbacks will now hit hardest at those sections of society which were only just beginning to gain access to third level education, working people and their families. In the North the cut in admission of 6% proposed by the University Grants Committee will deal a crippling blow to the aspirations of hundreds of young people. And the miserable grants system in the South as well as increasing fees will have a similar effect. The maximum grant in the 26 counties is £600 - this is less than half the Northern grant.

### USI

Fees in University College Galway, for example, have increased since 1968 by 383% in Arts, and 346% in science compared to increases in prices generally, over the period, of 45%. The last White Paper on the economy from the Govern-

ment promised a doubling of fees in the near future.

The Belfast Education and Library Board has been told to cut £1.5m (5%) off its budget before March 1980. For the Tories, this is just the thin edge of the wedge - school milk teachers' jobs, school transport are all threatened.

Against this background, studentism increasingly will look for a lead to the Union of Students in Ireland whose leadership plans to run yet another 'Grants and Finance' campaign. These leaders have fallen over the last few years to mobilise many enthusiasm at the colleges. A bold socialist campaign, on the other hand, explaining, not only the demands of the union for a comprehensive grants scheme, but also the nature of the crisis of capitalism and the Socialist alternative, can once again involve the mass of students in the struggle. Concrete links must be forged with the Labour movement. The Labour Party Youth in the South and socialists in the North will have to take up these ideas. Branches in the colleges, while involving



Students must march alongside the labour movement

themselves in the campaigns of student unions, must turn the attention of activists to the day to day struggles of the Labour movement, in the Trade unions and the Labour Party. Student Unions must seek affiliation to Trades Councils and to the other organisations of the official Labour movement. Demoralisation of the union will also be of key importance.

In the period ahead, enormous opportunities open up for socialists in the student movement. The Labour Party Youth can grow fast in the colleges, but it must grasp the nettle firmly now!

By Pat Smyth  
[Dublin South Central Labour Youth - in personal capacity].

## LABOUR YOUTH CAMPAIGN ON UNEMPLOYMENT

At its first meeting, the National Committee of the Labour Party Youth Section has agreed to embark on a campaign against unemployment and for the 35 hour week. The details of the campaign are being worked out at the present time.

The decision to start such a campaign is of major importance to the development of 'Labour Youth'. This campaign will really transform the present youth section of 200 or 300 members into a campaigning and active youth movement of thousands in the next period, with roots in the Labour and Trade Union movement.

The time has never been more ripe for this campaign. Fianna Fail are increasingly being exposed for what they really are - the bosses Party. As unemployment hovers around the 100,000 mark and 10,000's of young people not included in these figures, search for work, Fianna Fail could not care less. Their main concern is to cut back on wages and social services in order to increase profits for the wealthy few. They are not prepared to tell us how many are unemployed, but it is a known fact that 60% (14,000) of school leavers with leaving cert. qualifications who have not gone onto university have applied for a job with just one institution - the Allied Irish Banks. There's some measure

of the job crisis facing youth today under capitalism!

In the coming weeks youth branches will be holding public meetings to launch the campaign in their own localities. Leaflets will be distributed at the dole queues, schools and youth clubs. In this campaign, all the members of 'Labour Youth' will have an opportunity to explain the ideas of socialism to wide layers of youth. Not just the question of unemployment will be taken up but also all the other problems facing youth - wages, living conditions, educational opportunities and so on. On this issue 'Labour Youth' can strike a real chord.

By Tom Healy  
[Dublin South East Labour Youth - in personal capacity].

At this stage, it is crucial that each youth branch begins to discuss in detail what steps should be taken in their areas to get the campaign underway. Plans should be made for a systematic approach to shop stewards, trade union activists, the local Trades Council and TU branch secretaries with view to informing them of the aims and activities of the campaign and to enlist their support and cooperation. A list of factories and organisations could be drawn up and unemployed or student members of the youth section could go in teams of two or

three to visit shop stewards and TU officials.

As a result of campaigning in the localities meetings could be convened by each youth section to which, leading spokespersons of the Labour movement would be invited to address. If the work is properly carried out, the youth branch should be able to attract big numbers of young people to its ranks.

A national rally and demonstration will be held in the early part of next year. While this will be the climax of the present campaign, it will by no means signify its end. It will continue as part of an overall attempt by 'Labour Youth' to organise youth in the fight for socialism. All trade unionists and youth who want to join us in the fight for socialist policies to end unemployment should get involved now and contact their local Labour Youth Section or write to the:

The secretary,  
Labour Youth,  
16 Gardiner Pl.,  
Dublin 1  
Phone 788411

# 35 hrs now

## Northern Ireland

By Ciaran Crossey  
[West Belfast Labour & Trade Union Group]

Since the election of the Tory Government we have seen growing attacks on the benefits won by the working class over years of struggle. This combined with growing unemployment is affecting young people in particular in Northern Ireland.

It was against a growing reaction to the policies of the Tory Government and the failure of the sectarian groups in the North that the Labour and Trade Union Group decided to launch a Youth For Socialism Campaign, to attract young people to the socialist alternative to the present chaotic system. This campaign was formally launched at a press conference in Belfast on Sept. 1st.

Peter Hadden, who introduced the campaign on behalf of the Steering Committee of the Labour and Trade Union Group, pointed out that '... the present system condemns more and more people to poverty, from the cradle to the grave. Sectarianism offers no way forward. The energy and burning discontent of young workers must now be mobilised against the Tory profiteers and in the struggle for socialism.'

The other representatives of the Labour Group were Benny Adams, from the Ballymena Branch, and Manus Maguire, from the Youth Committee. They pointed out the numerous examples of the problems which young people continually face under capitalism. The Youth Campaign has been launched in order to spread the ideas of socialism among young

people in the dole queues, in the schools, at work and wherever young people gather.

We aim to turn youth towards the Labour Movement, from which our efforts have already provoked interest in the movement, securing sponsorship from people such as Michael D. Higgins, Chairman of the Irish Labour Party, Kevin Ramage, National Chairman of the British Labour Party Young Socialists and Joe Cooper, President of Belfast Trades Council. But we are appealing to the whole Labour Movement to sponsor the campaign through messages of support, financial donations and meetings in support.

We have set an initial target of holding a Youth For Socialism conference in Belfast on November 17th. Various other organisational steps have also been taken - such as the publication of 50,000 leaflets and several thousand posters. We estimate that the Youth Campaign will cost about £1500 in the first three months alone! This is money that we just don't have. We have gone ahead and now rely on our supporters seeing the necessity of raising the finance as a contribution to socialism in Northern Ireland.

All financial contributions, requests for speakers and motions of support should be sent to:  
Youth For Socialism Campaign, Labour and Trade Union Group, 18 Donegal Street, Belfast.  
Northern Ireland

# LABOUR — THE SOURCE OF VALUE



Lenin once remarked that it was once the great achievement of Marx to see in economics a relationship between people, and not just between things. Marxist economics shows the fundamental exploitation of class by class which lies behind the appearance of capitalist society.

From the very beginning of mankind, labour has been the key to society's development. As mankind progressed in the knowledge and technique of production, society was able to produce more than the minimum absolute needs of life such as food, clothing and shelter. This laid the basis for a social surplus which maintains an idle class. With it also comes the progressive division of labour into various parts such as toolmaking, tailoring, agriculture, etc.. More and more the products of labour become commodities - products bought and sold in a market.

Labour is the only thing that all commodities have in common, and is therefore the measure of their value. This is still the case today though modern day capitalism has greatly mechanised production. It is still the case that only commodities for which an equal amount of labour time has been used in production can be exchanged. This means that, for example, only one table which uses 5 hours of labour in its production is exchangeable with one bicycle that contains 5 hours of labour, all under conditions of average social skill and intensity of work. In this way the value of a commodity, or roughly its price when expressed in money, is directly determined by the amount of social labour time it uses.

## FIGHTING FUND NEW TARGET: £5,600

OLD TARGET: £4,500 RAISED SO FAR: £3,200.89

We are now entering our final enormous goodwill that exists quarter of 1979. As Autumn for 'Militant' into funds which approaches and the old year will make possible in the future begins its decline our supporters a bigger and more frequent must renew their efforts to paper to provide a better reach our targets. To be on service to the Labour movement we should now have event.

£4,200. That leaves us about £1,000 short at the present misprints in last month's time.

It is up to every supporter to total. The corrected figures are go all out now for these donat. given this month.

ions. We must transfer the  
Joe Higgins

AREA	August Target	Target	Rec'd
BALLYMENA		£150	£75.16
BELFAST		£750	£225.17
CORK		£150	£82.50
DERRY		£350	£27.85
DUBLIN		£1,550	£763.63
GALWAY		£150	£83.00
LARNE		£200	—
STRABANE		£300	£54.12
OTHERS		£2,000	£1,889.46

## Defend 'MILITANT' against court action

Militant Irish Monthly is a Marxist paper fighting for socialist policies in the Irish Labour Movement. Supporters of the weekly Militant paper in Britain carry on a similar struggle in the Labour Party and trade unions.

It is thus a matter of concern that it now faces a libel action from POEU sponsored Labour M.P. John Goding, which could result in crippling damages of up to £40,000. Militant is a 16-page weekly paper and is an invaluable weapon in the armoury of the Labour Movement against the bosses' press in Fleet Street! It has no rack backers. Losses on this scale would be a blow to the whole Labour Movement and set back the struggle for socialist policies.

Goding's libel action arises out of a report of a British Labour Party NEC meeting in January. The report stated that he voted against a motion committing Labour to inclusion of the 35-hour week as an objective in its election manifesto. Rather than pursue the matter politically Goding has resorted to legal action in the bosses' courts, against the interests and traditions of the movement.

Militant will contest his claims of libel, but it cannot rely on the courts to accurately establish the events of last January. Money is urgently required for pressing legal costs, and to offset any damages payments. Messages of support are also essential and further information can be had.

Cheques should be made payable to Militant Defence Fund, and send c/o MIM Publications, 75 Mld Abbey Street, Dublin.

# UNIONS OPPOSE RACIST TOUR

At its September meeting the Dublin Council of Trade Unions agreed to organise a demonstration against the South African rugby team, should they come to the country. The demonstration was to be organised jointly with the ICTU, who also expressed their opposition to the proposed tour.

It is this form of action which best serves the interests of workers in Africa. The Fianna Fail Minister for Foreign Affairs has now stopped the tour. But the Fianna Fail government is not seriously opposed to the system of apartheid. South African firms operate here. South African goods are imported for sale in the shops.

In the last analysis apartheid is the system whereby the capitalist class in South Africa maintains its rule. The abolition of apartheid poses the abolition of the capitalist system itself in South Africa.

Since the early sixties the black working class has grown enormously in numbers, while at the same time occupying new strategic positions in production. During the 1970s the workers have shown their strength in wave after wave of struggle against the employers and against the state. The high points of this struggle were the Natal strikes of 1973, the unrest



in the mines and the political general strikes in 1976. These events went far beyond anything achieved before in the workers' movement in South Africa. Each strike, each protest brings the workers movement into direct confrontation with the apartheid regime. Each strike, each struggle exposes the bankruptcy of capitalism and the ruling class - its inability to develop the economy, to provide jobs and a decent living for the people, or to take society forward. The capitalist system can only suppress and enslave

society for the greed and profit of the rich and few. Apartheid is their method for doing this.

International action by the labour movement, such as that agreed by the Dublin Council of Trade Unions, and the ICTU who called on all trade unionists to boycott the tour is the only way to show solidarity with the black workers fighting apartheid.

BY PAT DUGGAN  
AUEW TASS - (in personal capacity)



### NO FLAT

Dear Comrades,  
I come from Strabane, which has over 30% unemployment but very little else. So I've moved to Belfast, thinking that surely it would be better. I've spent several weeks visiting estate agents and generally hunting for any old place to live.

There is a drastic shortage of rented flats. Ads usually specify a viewing time, but it seems that no matter how early you are there's an inevitable queue. I went to a place recently at 6.30 where viewing was supposedly at 7p.m. By 6.45, when I left, at least 15 people had been through the place, and had their names down on the list. Also, the landlords seem to have been watching a great many flat films stage bombard you with offensive questions - family background, job prospects, date of birth and your employer's name!

Conditions are often bleak. Cramped, damp little rooms for £10 a week. You could pay anything between £70 and £110 a month for a half decent place.

Now, supposing you get somewhere, how do you cope with the rents like that? The only answer is sharing - which means over-crowding, bad temper and the rest of it. Unless you know someone willing to provide a sofa as a temporary bed (as I do) then it must be impossible to move to Belfast and look for a flat.

A few greedy landlords are raking in a fortune. More and more flat ads now say that 'professional people only' need apply! Young workers, unemployed and students are presumably expected to pitch tents. Meanwhile, the Housing Executive is so much in hock to the banks that they cannot build enough. If they were nationalised - with debts cancelled, we would make some impact on the crisis.

Fraternally,  
NEARLY HOMELESS,  
Belfast.

### VICTIMISATION

Dear comrades,

In May of this year a magazine was on sale at my school in Dublin. The magazine had been produced by a six person editorial board elected by the Students Union. The afternoon after the magazine went on sale I discovered that I was one of three editors expelled. The reason given for our expulsion was that we had produced the publication 'without the consent' of the headmaster, and that we had not allowed him to censor it. The expelled were prominent members of the Irish Union of School Students - the other three were allowed to remain in the school because we were the so-called 'ringleaders and agitators'. Our Students Union opposed the expulsions and brought out a petition condemning the unjust action. Over 300 out of 500 in the school signed it. Yet the Head claimed to the press that he had the backing of the majority of the students in the school for his action. He also claimed that he had the full backing of the staff. It is transparent that some teachers had not even heard of the expulsions. A number of teachers sympathised with the petition.

The IUSS took up the case from the very beginning. A press conference was held. One student had his expulsion

commuted to a suspension. However, a few weeks ago he received a note from the head stating he 'did not fit in' - not meant in a physical way! I had to get a reference for my new school, but the head would not give one to me, but to the headmaster of my new school. That way there would be no way that I could check if he was giving me a fair reference.

That one person could have such power over another person's entire life shows how rotten and unjust this system is. Our entire educational system is dictatorial aimed at the suppression of democracy, and the isolation of student activists. This must be changed. Education should be under the control of the labour movement. The IUSS have a very important role to play in highlighting such issues as affect school students.

Yours fraternally,  
a school student

### JOB SHORTAGE

Dear Comrades,

Due to a shortage of public phone boxes in my area I recently had to use the phone in a local pub before opening time. When I found the phone it was off the hook so I replaced it and made my call. When I was finished I replaced it and it immediately began to ring. The barman came and told the person on the line that the job was filled.

Then he left the phone off the hook, explaining that he was sick of it as it never stopped ringing. That morning's paper had carried an ad for a job in the bar and hundreds of people had been looking for the job.

Fraternally,  
CIARAN CROSEY,  
West End Branch  
Labour and Trade Union Group.

# Omagh

# 4500 Demonstrate against Hospital Closure

4,500 people marched through Omagh on Sunday, August 19th in the biggest demonstration there since the days of the Civil Rights movement. The demonstration was organised by local community groups. Omagh Trades Council and local trade union branches also played a part.

The demonstration was against the plans to close the County hospital in Omagh, and to turn it into a geriatric hospital, a convalescent home and an out-patient service. People needing treatment would have to travel to Derry or Enniskillen, both 30 miles away. The small Omagh General Hospital is to be closed down completely.

These closures are a direct result of the cutting of public spending on hospitals. If the plan is implemented there will only be two hospitals effectively in the Western Health and Social Services Board's area. An area covering most of Northern Ireland 'West of the Bann'.

## PETITION

On Sunday, August 11th, local members of the Labour and Trade Union group collected 1,100 signatures to a petition in the centre of Omagh in just three hours. This petition was seen as a mandate for the local Trades union movement to act on the issue. That so many people signed so quickly shows the depth of feeling in the area. Over 700 copies of a leaflet explaining the socialist opposition to the cuts were also handed out.

Omagh's hospitals can only be saved if the trade unions act. The fight to keep a hospital service in Omagh must not be side-tracked into a struggle between Omagh and Enniskillen. That will happen unless the campaign also opposes the cuts in health spending. It will be Omagh no good if the cuts are transferred elsewhere. The people will get an overloaded hospital, as it would then get those who now go to Enniskillen.

Keeping Omagh hospital open also means that support is needed from outside, especially from hospital workers in Enniskillen and Derry. The Labour and Trade Union Group has called for Trade Unionists in the health service to refuse to implement the shut-down. This means that trade unionists in



Derry and Enniskillen hospitals would refuse to accept any services transferred from Omagh.

## STRIKE

The shutting down of hospital services has sparked off great anger in Omagh. The demonstration was a success: more than a quarter of the population of the town took part. There is still a feeling in Omagh for another protest. This has been hardened by the news of the £1½m cut in education locally! The Labour and Trade Union Group have called for a half-day General Strike in the town, with a march and rally organised by the Trades Council. People feel that the next protest should be on a working day, as this would be more effective.

This should be organised before the feeling begins to die down. It would have great support. It would also be a great chance for the Trade

Unions to show their strength, in an area where they have been fairly weak in the past. It would be the only way to unite the people of the town, as the local council is composed only of all the brands of sectarian conservative Parties. They, after all, support the cuts.

That this demonstration succeeded in Omagh is also a lesson to the Trade Union movement in Northern Ireland. Anger at the cuts has mobilised people in what used to be a fairly conservative town. The success of the demonstration shows how successful a province wide day of action against the cuts would be, if the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions set about organising it properly. Omagh has shown that the will to fight the cuts is there. It must be tapped now.

By a member of the Labour and Trade Union Group - Omagh

# Cork Gas Prices up 48%

On Saturday, August, 25th Cork Gas Co. announced that the price of gas in Cork would rise by 48% on Monday, August, 27th giving the consumer two days notice. The Fianna Fail minister O'Malley approved these increases. They were approved without any thought for the working class people who would suffer. No thought was given to the already overburdened and under supported members of this society such as the Old Age pensioners and unemployed. So what we are being told is that we the workers must once again pay for the comforts of the bosses. Maher, the managing director of Cork Gas Co, said that we may have more rises in the price of gas before we get the natural gas. This does not mean that we will get a reduction

when the natural gas does come. In fact if we are not careful, what the natural gas will mean is redundancies as has been the case in Great Britain. When the natural gas replaced naphtha eg, in a Welsh Gas works, the conversion to natural gas

By John Vaughan  
Mid Cork Labour Youth.

resulted in massive redundancies reducing the work force by over 95% leaving only six maintenance men. If this were to happen at the Albert Rd gas works in Cork (where I am presently employed) it would mean a loss of over 35 jobs and that is only plant.

'The Cork Examiner' reported rumours that the Cork Gas Co workers would be seeking bonus payment for hand-

ling the natural gas along the same lines as the claims made by the ESB workers. But a bonus alone is not enough. What the Gas Co workers should demand before handling natural gas is a rise in basic pay and security of employment. Maher also indicated to us through the press that there would be no question of Cork getting cheap natural gas. That is not surprising seeing as Mr Maher is a capitalist in a profit making business and is interested purely in making as much money as possible. The only way that we can ever get cheap gas in Cork or anywhere else is by nationalising the entire energy industry under workers control.

# Militant Irish Monthly

## McDONALD'S RECOGNISE ITGWU

As we go to press pickets have been lifted in the marathon Dispute between the ITGWU and Mc Donalds restaurants in Dublin. This follows acceptance by the management of a Labour Court Recommendation that the Union be recognised. The strike was in its seventh month at this stage. Negotiations are now taking place to agree terms for a return to work.

The recognition of the ITGWU is a major victory over this internationally infamous anti-Union company. Mc Donalds restaurants are run on a system whereby local capitalists are given the right to use the Mc Donalds name, for a fee of course. Not only the name, but the vicious exploitation of workers, hand-in-hand with a ruthless determination to resist unionisation has been exported to the parent company in the USA. Workers in Dublin were getting as little as 80p an hour for shift work. Kroc, who built this hamburger Empire in the states, once described his philosophy as 'this not Business, its war... its rat eat rat and dog eat dog. I'm going to kill them before they kill me'.

But the tide has now turned for Mc Donalds. They have been forced to recognise the unions now in California and in Dublin. Similar struggles will follow throughout the US and Europe. The Dublin strike is rich in lessons, not just for the Irish working class, but for workers everywhere. The question has to be asked 'What is the most powerful trade union in Ireland, which has 165,000 members, one third of trade unionists in the Republic, almost lost a dispute with two cafes.'

The decision by management to now recognise the union was in fact a complete surprise to the strikers and the union. It came at a time when the strikers were becoming demoralised and the pickets were often not manned. The pickets were manned were in reality having little effect because the union had completely accepted a court injunction restricting pickets to three people at a time. The pickets were being lifted at 10pm. - the best time

for business. Again there was failure to publicise the issues and the importance of winning the dispute throughout the Labour Movement. This is best illustrated by the fact that ADs for staff were run in the Irish Independent on behalf of McDonalds during the strike by trade union labour. When approached the ADs were blacked by the print workers. But it should never have happened in the first place. A Co-ordinating Committee in the ITGWU, was dissolved when the full time officials of the no. 4 branch which was the branch involved in the dispute, refused to attend its meeting.

Workers from other unions were turned away from the pickets. The union bowed completely to the terms of the injunction, even to the extent of handing the picket rota in to the Mc Donalds management. This was then handed to the police. In effect, names and addresses of union activists were handed to the special branch. Young workers, who had done picket duty were visited at their homes and in general harassed by these paid thugs of the capitalist class. These methods made many young workers wary of doing picket duty and clearly showed the links between the bosses, the courts and the police.

The strike in Mc Donalds could have been won in a matter of weeks. But only if the power of the Labour movement was fully mobilised. Pickets and mass demonstrations should have been organised, not just of ITGWU members, but of the entire Dublin Labour movement through the Trades Council. No recognition should have been given to the bosses courts. Strikes at Crown Control's, and at the Poolbeg ESB station, have shown that the police are incapable of enforcing these laws if opposed by the trade unions. A more detailed article on this dispute will follow in the next issue.

By Dermot Connolly  
I.T.G.W.U.  
(personal capacity)

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