

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

Government gives green light to... **GARDA** **BRUTALITY!**

THE Dublin Government has been rocked by the revelations of garda brutality in Cavan and Kerry. It has expressed its "concern" and announced its "inquiries". Sheer hypocrisy. It has no more intention of curbing garda power than it has of doubling the dole money.

The garda like the RUC in the North, frequently batter people within an inch of their lives in order to extract "confessions". What happened in Cavan was that they went an inch too far.

In the Joanne Hayes case in Kerry they were only found out when blood tests PROVED the Hayes family hadn't committed the crime they'd confessed to.

But such incidents are a dime a dozen. They go back to the Heavy Gang in the mid-70s and beyond.

Governments have known all about them. Some—like the case of Nicky Kelly and his co-accused—have been widely publicised. But no government ever moved to do anything about them.

Because governments have approved of garda brutality.

Indeed, the Criminal Justice Bill, which will allow gardai to imprison people for "questioning" for 48 hours without bringing any charge, is specifically designed to make it easier for the cops to use the third degree on "suspects". Its implement-

ation has now been "postponed"—but only until some phoney fig-leaf of a "complaints procedure" is dreamed up and, no doubt, until the fuss over Cavan and Kerry dies down.

The basic intention of the Coalition Government—and they have the general support of Fianna Fail on the issue—is to give the police force more power over the people.

The reason is that all of them, and the class they represent, are arming themselves to hammer any op-

position or protest against the effects of the policies they are forcing through.

This applies to two main areas—the economy and the North.

The Coalition's economic policy is a disastrous sham. The recent "national plan" involves vicious cut-backs on health and social welfare and a clamp-down on public sector pay. At the same time, it holds out no hope whatever of a fall in unemployment. Instead it envisages an increase in the dole queues

of 27,000 in the next three years.

They are terrified that the working class will fight back against this attack on its already low living standards, the recent minor riots in Cabra and Finglas could become politicised. Or that workers fighting to protect their jobs or to win a wage rise that keeps pace with inflation will refuse to be held back by the abject pleas for "moderation" and go instead on the offensive.

They look at the miners'

strike in Britain and wonder, could it happen here? They know that Irish workers have suffered defeats, but that's still plenty of fight left in us. And they want to have strong measures ready when that fight comes out in the open.

On the North their policy of cuddling up to Thatcher in the pathetic hope that she'll smile on them has collapsed in humiliating ruins. As a result, their strategy of trying to prove that "constitutional nationalism" could deliver the goods to the Catholics in the North has been shattered.

There is no end to the violence in sight, and no end to the possibility that it will "spill over" into the South. If that happens, their only option is to put the boot in hard on Republicans and other opponents of imperialism. The Criminal Justice Bill is intended to put a steel toe-cap on the boot.

The problem does not have to do with a few "rotten apples" in the barrel. Politically, the whole barrel is rotten. The professional liberals and the editorial writers who have suddenly discovered that there's something drastically wrong won't face up to that aspect of the current controversies.

In the end, only socialist politics can provide the answers.



Fight back at Waterford Glass— page 6

PLAN TAXES CREDIBILITY

THE Dublin government's recently launched national economic plan — "Building on Reality" — has caused much controversy among bourgeois economists.

Many have argued that the government's forecasts on the world economy are inaccurate and on that basis, their projections for the Irish economy are way out. Whoever is right or wrong in this argument there is no doubt that what is on offer for us from both sides is continuing unemployment, wage restrictions and cuts in services.

In the opening sentence of the plan it states that "the most serious problem facing the country is unemployment" and then goes on for 172 pages to explain how by the end of 1987 unemployment will still, at best be around 210,000!

We've come along way from the Coalition's original programme to reduce unemployment from 170,000—a figure they then considered "unsustainable". The proposals for job creation in the plan are intended to maintain the present level of unemployment. Most of the jobs proposed however are in short term; training-type jobs.

The main attack of the plan is in the area of public sector pay and jobs.

On pay, a virtual freeze is proposed for 1985 with small increases for '86 and '87. On the government's own figures for inflation, this will represent a pay cut of near on 20%.

On jobs, it is proposed to extend the embargo on public sector recruitment, which has already caused the loss of 3,000 jobs, to the local authorities, Health Boards and state sponsored bodies with the consequential loss of a further 5,000 jobs.

However, the day after the Plan was published, Barry Desmond announced that 3,000 of these would be in the Health Services. Many economists are saying that the job loss will be closer to

9,000. Professor Barry Ferris, a consultant at the Cork Regional Hospital has this to say on the proposals — "The present cutbacks will achieve a relatively small financial saving at a devastating cost to patients and medical standards in our region" —

Other cuts that are proposed include:

- * the halving of food subsidies.

- * taxing short term social welfare benefits and children's allowances.

- * increased rent on local authority housing together with the ending of routine repairs and maintenance of these houses.

- * Fees in third level colleges to be increased substantially more than the rate of inflation.

The response to all of this has been fairly predictable. The Workers Party has organised petitions against the cuts. Whilst these show that many people oppose the cuts they do very little to organise that opposition. They serve merely to give the impression that the Workers Party are doing something about the issue.

The trade union bureaucrats have all, of course, verbally opposed the cuts but they are proposing no action against them. The ITGWU have, for example, pledged to resist the proposals strenuously. However the most "strenuous" activity they propose is a lobby of TDs, senators, and local councillors on the need for a major reappraisal of economic and social policies.

The present economic crisis was not caused by workers, but it is us who are asked to pay for it. A campaign against the government's proposals will be very difficult but a start can be made by blacking the work of unfilled jobs and by organising for a decent pay increase for '84-'85. Only in this way will the Reality of Misery proposals be stopped.



Greasy poll

ON November 6, US voters elect a new President. At the time of writing Ronald Reagan looks certain to win.

Since Reagan was elected in 1980, the rich have got richer and the poor poorer. It is estimated that there will be a million millionaires in the US by the end of this year—twice the number there were when Reagan first became President. Meanwhile Reagan has reduced the poor people's share of the nation's wealth; the percentage of black people in the labour force has dropped from 80% in 1945 to 60% to-day; black unemployment is double that of whites; and blacks are three times more likely to be living below the poverty line.

Why then do people vote for Reagan? The truth is that most people don't vote for him. In 1980, of all those eligible to vote only 52% did so. And of this 52% only 52% voted for Reagan, giving him 27% of the total electorate.

Put another way, 73% of the American people did not vote for Reagan in 1980. When we look at the groups who have to take the weight of his policies, this point is even more remarkable.

Within the US those who are at the bottom of the pile tend to be excluded from politics. Apart from the bosses' obvious control of the mass media and of education

and social institutions, there is the subtle way the US electoral system works.

In most states voter registration usually stops three months before elections—just as people are becoming interested. In many states registration has to be done in person; you cannot register by post. Recent attempts to register more blacks have been countered by white supremacists purging "electoral registers. Even the Democrats have been slow to release funds for black registration because of the threat to white Democrats.

These difficulties and a change in the political mood have meant that there has been a massive drop in the number of people voting. In the 1980s 18 million former voters (as opposed to those who never voted) "dropped out" of the elections. These came mainly from low-income groups. The result of this trend can be seen in the fact that only 56% of people earning under 5,000 dollars a year take part in elections—as against 77% of people earning over 28,000 dollars.

In the '70s black voter registration scarcely reached more than half of those eligible, and only a quarter of the unemployed of all races bothered to vote. The turnout in 1978 for the mid-term elections for governor were

CORK LAID WASTE

The people who founded and built Cork as a settlement and trading place were the Vikings, long vilified in Irish history as horny people who raped, pillaged and destroyed everything, especially things Christian.

It took the multinational firms of the twentieth century to lay Cork waste in the way that the Vikings are supposed to have done.

Fords have closed laying off 800 workers in a city of 180,000. Dunlops closed last year throwing 380 workers on the dole queue. Verolme Cork Dockyard had as many as 1,100 workers in 1982. Now it's only got 300 and

they cannot last much longer as there are no orders on the books — the Government having cancelled orders for three ships.

There was a fight against redundancy at Dunlops but it was too little and too late. Fords paid just enough redundancy money to forestall any kind of militant action.

The Cork Unemployed Action Group has existed for over two years and at one point sold 3000 copies a month of its paper "The National Crumb". Now it has no paper and poor attendances at its meetings. The Workers Party recently

initiated a Right to Work march through Cork county and city but there were never more than a dozen people on it.

Unemployment is a product of the long slump in capitalism. For capitalism it is a crisis of profitability. But it does have benefits for them. It breaks up units of working class power by closing down factories and creates a mass of individualised and generally passive consumers.

The state provides a minimal income through the welfare system to allow them to carry on consuming the

goods produced by an ever dwindling workforce. There is the chance of picking up a "foxer" or "nixer" in the black economy, so beloved of free-booting capitalism.

For the bosses of the black economy there is no tax, no unions and a submissive workforce. Thus unemployed people can very quickly lose any class solidarity they may have had and become easy victims of the me feign individualistic ideology of capitalism.

Cork has not yet begun to fight back against the system which has put 25 per cent. of the workforce on the dole, including 50 per cent. of all building workers.

There is certainly more unemployment to come as the Government and capitalist class generally prepare for a fresh assault on hard-won rights in the areas of health, education and welfare. They are seeking to raise profitability by attacking working class living standards.

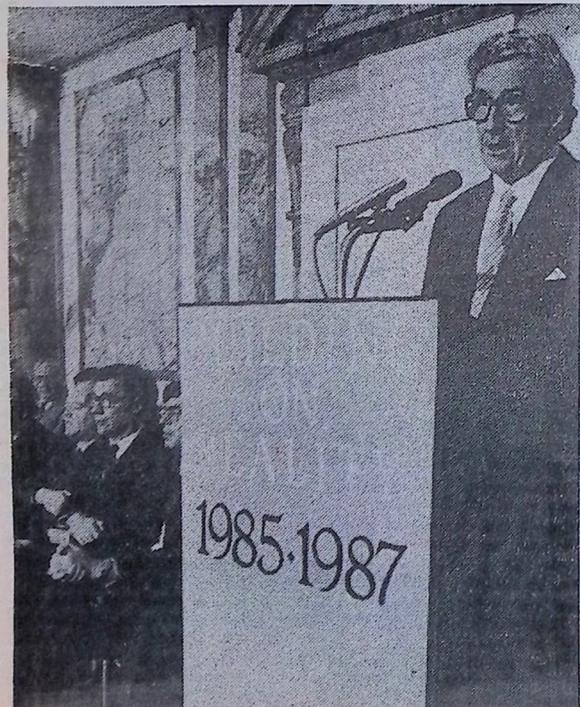
But the fightback will come.

At a time when socialists and trade unionists were speaking of a "downturn" in working class activity in Britain, the miners emerged with one of the hardest fought strikes in working class history.

For the moment nearly every workplace in Cork is collecting on a weekly basis for the miners through the Cork Council of Trade Unions.

In Cork — and in Ireland — the fightback has yet to come.

— JIM BLAKE



Split rocks WP

THERE has been a major split in the Workers' Party in Waterford.

Former Euro-candidate, Mick Dunphy and one of the chief figures in the Ballybeg branch have both resigned. Up to ten others have either resigned in sympathy or been expelled.

One of the local election candidates, John Halligan was informed that his application for membership of the party had never been accepted in the first place! The line from party head office is that the resignations have simply been the result of "re-organisation decisions".

But there is more to it. Over the last few months the Workers' Party nationally have attempted a "left-turn". Their members are now participating in unemployment groups in

Dublin. In Cork they have tried to organise a March for the Right to Work, and they have advocated marches and sit-downs on the food subsidy issue.

The left turn is totally fake. It is designed to ward off the threat from the Provos and others. The focus is still on building up the parliamentary machinery through clinic work—the added street politics is only a modification of the strategy.

But even the modification is causing problems in the Waterford branch. There, many of the party's rank and file have taken the new turn seriously and played an active role in the campaign against water rates. They wanted their councillors, Paddy Gallagher and Davy Walshe to go hammer and

tongs against the Waterford City manager and the corpo officials.

But Gallagher and Davy Walshe rely heavily on the same officials to get jobs done for the voters. Both have built up a sizeable reputation on getting new back doors in or having the windows fixed in Corporation houses. They dare not jeopardise their relationship with the city manager and his officials.

As a result they have gone distinctly soft on the campaign. In the past Gallagher and Walshe have voted for the cuts in services from the Corporation.

The split in Waterford shows clearly the difficulties the Workers' Party face when they make the attempt to jump from electoral mania to any kind of even vaguely militant policies.

the lowest (38.5%) since 1810 when there was a strict property qualification.

The shrinking electorate has boosted the impact of the single-issue Political Action Committees (PACs) using specialised "direct mailing" firms.

The large-scale direct-mail solicitations much favoured by the PACs was one of the most important innovations of the 1964 campaign of the extreme right winger Barry Goldwater. Today its master practitioner is Richard Viguerie, an unrepentant admirer of Senator Joseph McCarthy.

Viguerie has recently boasted that "the liberals are eight to ten years behind us in the technology of politics". When it is considered that Viguerie's 300 non-union employees send out more than 100 million pieces of mail each year, using mailing lists that contain the names of 25 million Americans, their impact on US politics is big.

It would be a mistake to try to understand Reagan's electoral support purely in terms of voting systems etc. although these can be important barriers to mobilising ordinary people. The differences between Mondale and Reagan are about how best to serve business.

While Mondale hides behind words, Reagan is open about his hatred of those representing the poor and exploited. Reagan's election will mean more pork from the barrel for the rich, more hunger and abuse for the rest of us.

Hit apartheid where it hurts

THE massive unrest of recent months in South Africa has shown that the black working class has been growing in confidence.

The gold-miners' strike, the huge student demonstrations and the riots in the townships have all shown that blacks are both angry and determined.

But the vicious response of the state, shooting over 70 people dead and jailing hundreds, demonstrates that the regime is just as determined to keep the blacks down.

What can the rest of us do to help? We in Ireland and the rest of the world can do something. However the tactics of most of those in the Anti-Apartheid Movements have proved ineffective.

They have looked for solutions in bureaucratic institutions like the UN or the EEC.

They've looked to governments and the media. But the job of strangling the racist regime by outside pressure cannot be done unless it actively involves those who have the power to hit South Africa where it really hurts — in the profits.

That means talking to the crane-drivers, the dockers, the lorry-drivers, the shop-workers who have the power to stop the flow of South African goods. Apartheid will not be defeated by writing letters to The Irish Times.

If the campaigners are serious, then instead of chatting to well-meaning dignitaries

A BELLYFUL OF CAPITALISM!

OVER the last few weeks, TV viewers have seen the obscene side of capitalism.

Almost every newscast has included pictures of the famine in Ethiopia. We've seen a three-year-old child die in front of the cameras. We've seen mothers trying to get milk from their under-nourished breasts for their babies.

It's been one of the best arguments for smashing capitalism seen for a while. Because it's the capitalist system which is allowing these children, and their mothers and fathers, to die of starvation.

The reason for the famine, we're told, is the continuing drought in Ethiopia. It's true that the drought has meant crop failure in Ethiopia. But that doesn't mean that millions have to go hungry and die.

Every year 15 million children die from starvation. That's more than 40,000 children every day of the year dying in pain and hunger.

At the same time we hear regularly about the "problem" of the EEC food mountains—beef, milk and butter moun-

tain and wine lakes. At least these are stored. Fruit and vegetable "surpluses" are simply destroyed.

Everybody from old-age pensioners to infant school-children has joined in raising money for the famine in Ethiopia. And no wonder after the horrific pictures of starvation and death on television. But the famine is not a "natural" phenomenon. There is plenty of food in the world to feed all of the starving millions. It's the system, capitalism, which keeps millions in hunger while in the West food is deliberately destroyed for "economic" reasons. And the so-called "communist" countries play cynical games of power politics.

DAVID McDONAGH

and GORETTI HORGAN look at the background.

In the US farmers are subsidized to leave land idle rather than increase the grain surplus.

In Britain, the government paid farmers to destroy about 2 million tons of foodstuff in one year alone so that prices wouldn't fall.

The crime of destroying food while millions starve is caused by the simple fact that food, like every other product is produced for profit, not need. Food prices can be kept artificially high because people will — have to — go to desperate lengths to pay for it. Those that can't afford it simply starve.

What's happening in Ethiopia at present is no more than the poisonous logic of capitalism. They can't pay, so they don't eat. Because of the crisis in the world economy more and more countries that can't produce enough food can't afford to pay for it.

That's what the bosses' magazine the Economist meant when, at the start of October, it explained the growing stockpiles of EEC farm products by saying "This partly a result of slack world demand, particularly in developing countries". The Ethiopian famine shows that it has nothing to do with demand and everything to do with ability to pay.

And groups like Trocaire, Gorta and Oxfam acknowledge this when they appeal for money to buy food for the starving millions.

One of the lessons to come from the Ethiopian situation is just how unsocialist the "socialist countries" are.

Ethiopia has until now been denied direct government aid from the US and Europe as it

part of Russia's "sphere of influence". But being part of the so-called "Communist bloc" has not given it equal access to the wealth of the countries which make up that bloc.

That's because the countries of Eastern Europe are as much a part of the international capitalist system as the EEC. So they are just as unwilling to share their food unless they get something in return.

The horrible truth is that hunger and famine will continue as long as the capitalist system — East and West — ensures that food is produced for profit, not need. Only when capitalism is overthrown will all the children of the world go to bed with full stomachs.

USSR BACK OPPRESSION

IF YOU think Russia is socialist take a look at what's happening in Ethiopia. There the People's Liberation Front (EPLF) is fighting to free Eritrea from Ethiopian rule.

Now socialists have always supported national liberation struggles even though we may criticise the tactics used. However, "Communist" Russia is on the side of Ethiopia's ruling council.

The EPLF have been fighting for 21 years. Eritrea had been put under the control of Ethiopia by the UN in 1952, but had considerable autonomy. Ten years later Emperor Haile Selassie absorbed the territory into Ethiopia and in 1963 the Eritreans began their guerrilla war. The EPLF called themselves Marxists and were



and is partly inhabited by Somali nomads. In 1977 Somalia invaded the region. Mengistu, who had then only recently come to power, appealed to Russia and Cuba for help. The following year the Somalis were pushed back across the border.

Meanwhile the EPLF and the Tigreans continued their fight while another ethnic group, the Oromos, also launched a guerrilla campaign.

The Socialist Workers Movement supports these struggles while contending that guerrilla warfare is no substitute for working class action. But Russian leaders, despite their "Communist" rhetoric, are quite clearly on the opposite side. Their role in Ethiopia confirms what we always say about Russia — it is not socialist but state capitalist. The bureaucracy oppresses workers while the state competes with the US in a frightening arms race.

In fact the US is involved in the Ethiopian situation on the side of Somalia's leaders — And Reagan is certainly not a socialist — despite the fact that the Somali leaders style themselves socialist!

What it all boils down to is that in places like Ethiopia the opposing interests of Russia and America must not be mistaken for a fight between Left and Right. It is part of the overall struggle for supremacy between the super-powers. Both powers oppress workers and bring us closer to nuclear destruction. Workers must forget the idea that Russia is socialist and fight for their own freedom and power — both East and West.



— MARK LYNCH

What we stand for

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

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

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

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

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

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

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

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

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

A SOCIALIST ANSWER TO THE NATIONAL QUESTION

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

The slow task of building working class unity against imperialism must be begun. However imperialism must be fought in the here and now and we support all forces engaged in that struggle regardless of our difference of programme.

We stand for: Immediate withdrawal of the British Army. Political Status now. The disbandment of the RUC and the UDR.

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

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

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

FOR A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT

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

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

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

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

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

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

I would like more information about the SWM

Name.....

Address.....

Women and Socialism

Roots of oppression

IT'S about six months since 15-year-old Anne Lovett died, giving birth in secrecy to her baby.

A couple of weeks after her death, two dead babies were found in Co. Kerry.

We wouldn't have heard about Anne Lovett had she not died. We wouldn't have known Joanne Hayes' story if the Gardai hadn't harassed her into confessing to a murder she couldn't have committed.

We only hear the stories of the few because they are the extreme examples of the oppression which women suffer under capitalism. The day-to-day oppression of women is seen as normal—the way things are and even should be.

There are now women bus-drivers, women judges, even women Cabinet Ministers. But the message that had gotten through to Anne Lovett and Joanne Hayes about what women should be was very much the old one. They knew that they had no right to sex outside marriage (it's alright for the blokes, not for them); and that they shouldn't be having babies outside the family situation.

WOMEN'S WORK

And they half accepted these ideas, so they didn't use contraception when having sex and didn't tell anyone about it when they became pregnant.

They saw the extreme end of women's oppression. Most of the time it's a lot less blatant. Women's work, both outside and in the home, is downgraded. Women are regarded—and sometimes regard themselves—as being a little like children, needing to be "looked after", not having to be financially independent, or indeed independent in any way. Women are educated to see themselves as housewives and mothers rather than as workers.

"But", this argument is often answered, "women are only too glad to be all these things, sure doesn't it mean she's the boss when it comes to the family?"

It's true that for many women the family is the only place they find security and fulfilment. But it's also the very place their oppression springs from.

Like most institutions, the family is not unchanging. Quite the opposite. Anyone who has looked through the history books that 13 and 14-year olds use at school will know that the family in, for example, feudal times was very different to the family of the industrial revolution in the last century. And at both these periods "family life" for the peasant or worker was very different indeed from that of the lord or the factory owner.

PRODUCTION

This is because changes in the system by which goods are produced affect every aspect of human existence—including relations between women and men or adults and children.

For example, in feudal times, the peasant household was like a mini-factory producing all kinds of everything from bread, butter, cheese and meat to cloth, pots, pans and furniture. Everyone—mother, father, children—worked together at home and on the land.

When thousands of people were forced off the land and into the towns during the industrial revolution, all this changed drastically. Families hardly ever saw each other

The Ann Lovett and Joanne Hayes cases have highlighted the oppression in Ireland. But how is that oppression to be ended. By women of all classes coming together against "male domination". Or by working class action to overthrow GORETTI HORGAN looks at the arguments.

because they were working up to 18 hours a day. Women often had their babies between the machines in the factories. The new baby would be left with one of the children who was too young to work. Most kids started to work among the dangerous machinery of the mills and factories at five or six years of age.

As technology progressed the needs of capitalism changed. It no longer required little kids to climb about the machinery, or down mines, or up chimneys. What came to be needed was a well-educated workforce which could handle complicated equipment and which would know about design, be able to read drawings, calculate angles, use computer controlled machine tools or cash registers, operate word processors and programme computers. So, over the last 100 years or so, children have gradually been getting more of a childhood so they can reach the level of education which capitalism now requires of workers.

Today the working class family ensures that the next generation of workers will be born and reared at the least possible cost to the system. The full responsibility for feeding, clothing and educating each child is left to the family. The state helps little with the miserly children's allowance, but the myth of free education for example has long ago been seen as just that as parents have to shell out huge



amounts of money for school uniforms, books buses etc.

It is also the family which keeps adults ready and able to work—feeding them, looking after them when they are sick etc. And the reasons the average family is able to do all these things is that the mother sees it as "her duty". Usually, the woman sees her primary role as housewife and mother—whether or not she works outside the home.

Things have always been different for the families of the ruling and middle classes. In feudal times, their children left home at an early age to live at the court of other noblemen. While children of five or six were working in factories beside their pregnant mothers, the women and children of the bosses were always regarded as "delicate" by virtue of their age or sex, needing constant care and unable to lift a finger to pour their own

How things are

- * Women make up only 28% of the workforce in the 26 counties, 32% of the workforce in the six counties.
- * North and South, 90% of part-time workers are women;
- * In manufacturing industry women earn an average of £2.55 per hour, men earn £3.73;
- * The success rate for women in the South taking a case for equal pay dropped from 80% in 1981 to only 36% in 1982!
- * Women are now being denied equal pay on the grounds that they do work which is not equal but SUPERIOR to that of their male colleagues (this happened to women Post Office workers and to a woman working for Guinness).
- * 75% of working women are of childbearing age yet there are no state funded child-care facilities in the Twenty Six Counties while in the North only 28% of children are provided for:
- * It's small wonder then that only 30% of Southern women workers are married — 50% of Northern women;
- * Maternity leave is coming increasingly under attack as bosses claim "inability to pay".
- * There is no country in the world where women have access to free, legal and safe contraception and abortion on request.

Road to liberation

THERE can be no socialism without women's liberation. After all, when we talk about socialism we mean workers, women and men, together making the decisions which affect their lives—every aspect of their lives. That clearly means emancipation for women.

There can be no women's liberation without socialism. Women can be liberated only when the working class makes the revolution. Such a revolution would overthrow the material basis of women's

oppression and lay the basis for freedom for women through the socialisation of housework and childcare, the provision of free, safe contraception and abortion, full employment, etc.

For the vast majority of women there is no other road to freedom. There is a theory—that of feminism—which says that men are the problem. (To be fair, listening to the ravings of some of the men in this country, it often seems that they may have a point!)

Seeing men, rather than the rotten system we all suffer under, as the problem, encourages the feminist idea that all women must work together, that working class women have more in common with other women, whatever their class, than they do with working class men. Margaret Thatcher and her counterparts in this country, Nuala Fennell, Gemma Hussey, Alice Glenn, etc. have shown this view to be a load of rubbish.

CLASS

Women are divided by their class interests just as much as men are—more so given how much more women have to gain from socialism.

Working class men too have much to gain from freedom for women. It does not seem like that—as James Connolly pointed out, "the worker is the slave in capitalist society, the female worker is the slave of that slave". It would not seem to be in the slave's interest to lose his slave..

But the working man would lose nothing if good, collectively operated canteens begin to provide him with excellent meals (excellent—not today's canteen fare). He would not suffer if a 24 hour nursery scheme takes away from his wife the constant burden of worrying about the children.

REVOLUTION

Looked at like that, it can not be said that working class man has any material stake in the oppression of women. The advantages that he might have in the present set-up compared with his wife are nothing to what he would gain if the set-up was revolutionised.

And as, at a time of revolution, workers began to exercise control over the whole of their lives, they would no longer need phoney feelings of control. So the man would stop needing to feel that however much he's kicked about at work, he's still master in his house. And the woman would stop needing to feel that however

miserable her life generally, she's the boss when it comes to the kids. (Women's liberation would mean a better deal for kids too!)

And this isn't just a theory developed to cheer up women socialists. When working class people start to fight for their rights the divisions between them—black/white, skilled/unskilled, man/woman begin to break down. They start to see how much stronger they are when not divided by the nonsense of ruling class ideas.

Women become conscious of their second class status and start to fight against it. As one woman from the Relatives Action Committees in the North said:

"Probably the only good thing to come out of this heart-breaking war is the great change in the role of women. With things so bad we had to be active, and with that we've found a whole new identity for ourselves. No longer was the woman just a piece of property: your man's missus, your children's mother. As we've come more and more to the forefront we've discovered our own strength and power."

And the men begin to see that it's better to have the woman standing shoulder-to-shoulder with them in the struggle—on the picket line, in the occupations or whatever. For example, when the recent miners' strike started in Britain many of the miners were shouting very crude, sexist remarks to women supporters of the strike.

STRIKE

As the strike progressed, the women of the mining communities—the wives, daughters, sisters and friends of the strikers—started to get involved. They were active on the picket lines, in the soup kitchens, on the delegations. The men soon changed their tune. On many picket lines, page 3 pin-ups were torn down by the strikers. On at least one picket they were replaced by the British

How it could be

The advances which women have made are small and can be taken back at any time. But once for a short while things were different. In the months after the successful workers revolution in Russia in 1917 everything possible was done to lay the basis for women's liberation.

- * Women were given employment rights equal to men;
- * Equal pay became a reality;
- * Universal paid maternity leave was introduced for all women workers — part-time as well as full-time.
- * Divorce and civil laws were passed to make marriage a voluntary relationship;
- * The distinction between "legitimate" and "illegitimate" children was abolished;
- * Need ~~one~~ mention that women were given the vote?;
- * Child-care centres, kindergartens and schools took the burden of childcare from women;
- * Collective laundries and dining-rooms removed the burden of house work;
- * Abortion was made free and legal on request;
- * Adultery, incest and homosexuality were dropped from the criminal code.

Unfortunately, all these advances were lost in the Stalinist counter-revolution of the 1920s. All of which goes to show how much women's liberation IS linked to workers' power and how much the victory, or defeat, of one goes hand in hand with the victory or defeat of the other.

Socialist Worker's articles on women's liberation.

Similarly, the women who are on strike against apartheid in Dunnes Stores know that their pickets would be more effective, taken more seriously, if it was eleven men on strike instead of ten women and one man. The double chains of the woman worker and the effect that her oppression has on workers' solidarity confronts them daily on the picket line.

On the other hand the many trade unionists, male and female, who support the Dunnes Strike can never again say that women didn't take the union, or politics, seriously. These women are, after all, the first white workers in the world to strike in protest against Apartheid. Like the women whose march sparked off the Russian Revolution, they are streets ahead of most male workers.

Of course, the fact that women cannot have real liberation under capitalism does not mean that we should adopt a "wait until after the revolution, sisters" approach. That would be like saying that workers shouldn't demand higher wages because under capitalism those who

produce the wealth cannot get a just return for their labour.

That's why socialists support every and all the reforms which would make life under capitalism more bearable for the working class woman—higher wages, proper childcare facilities, free, legal and safe contraception and abortion on request, etc.

In "The Re-Conquest of Ireland" James Connolly summed up what should be every socialist's attitude to the fight for women's liberation. And he made it clear how, in the end, it would be won:

"None so fitted to break the chains as they who wear them, none so well equipped to decide what is a fetter. In its march towards freedom, the working class of Ireland must cheer on the efforts of those women who, feeling on their souls and bodies the fetters of the ages, have arisen to strike them off, and cheer all the louder if in its hatred of thralldom and passion for freedom the women's army forges ahead of the militant army of Labour.

"But whosoever carries the outworks of the citadel of oppression, the working class alone can raze it to the ground."

of women in organising oppression.



Today, the role of women Lady Di or Nancy Reagan or Mrs Smurfit is to produce "legitimate" heirs to their husband's wealth and power. Everything else is kicked after by maids, nannies and expensive boarding schools. But the family is not just an economic unit. It also has an important role in passing on ideas. So the idea that men are supposed to be decisive, independent and in control comes through and clear from the father's role in the family. And while girls are learning that this is how they should be, the boys are trained to be decisive, independent and in control—all the things that they are supposed to be. One of the ideas which is most encouraged is that sex is only in the family—up—or at least where there is the possibility of creating

a family. That's why women aren't supposed to be sexual outside of serious relationships.

Because the ideology of the family is so strong, anyone who doesn't marry and raise a family is marked out as a deviant. So the oppression of gay men and lesbians is a by-product of the oppression of women. Gay people break from all the stereotypes of man-woman relationships. That's why society makes them outcasts.

Socialists are against all oppression. Not just because we hate the misery it causes but because it divides workers—gay from heterosexual, black from white, women from men. It's in everybody's interests to end all oppression. It's in everybody's, men as well as women's, interest to fight for women's liberation.



Women strikers at Dunne's Stores in Dublin confronting the law while management hacks glower down.

OUT TO BREAK WORKERS

WATERFORD Glass workers have recently been labelled "indolent and belligerent" by bosses' magazine ASPECT.

Their hatred of the glass workers stems from one source: the factory has displayed a marvellously militant record over the years.

The local 11/64 branch of the ATGWU has become a legend in solidarity. They have raised thousands for the British miners with a weekly 50p levy. When the women in Dunnes Stores in Waterford were on strike, the glass workers swelled their picket lines. Last year they spear-headed the campaign on tax reform when the ICTU hung up its boots. They went on a one-day-a-week strike for several weeks and toured the country looking for support.

GROUND RENT

They have been the backbone of the local anti-ground rent protest. And when those refusing to pay their water rates were threatened with court action, the 11/64 branch was among the first to propose a one-day stoppage in the town.

However, the Glass factory itself is now coming under a tremendous offensive by the bosses. In August of this year, Avenue Investment, the holding company for the McGrath family sold their 20 per cent.

Workers all over the country are feeling the brunt of the bosses attack. The dole queue is now held up by the FUE as the key whip. But the bosses can be fought. The workers in Waterford Glass have had a long tradition of struggle.

They were among the first to strike on H Block and against unemployment. Here the Waterford branch of SWM look at the bosses offensive inside the factory and how it can be fought.

stake in Waterford Glass to Globe Investments making Globe the biggest shareholder in the company.

Avenue Investment withdrew for several reasons. Despite an upturn in profits this year, there has been a decline in the rate of profit in the Waterford Glass Group since 1979. In 1979 the profit margin stood at 13 per cent. By 1983 it had fallen to 7 per cent. On top of this Avenue had taken out huge loans and were facing problems servicing their debt. They also knew that Waterford Crystal was facing increased competition from low cost countries with new technology.

From the bosses' point of view these problems could only be sorted out by forcing through substantial changes at Waterford Crystal. This would involve introducing new technology, increasing productivity and cutting back on jobs over a period. Above all, it would mean taking on what appeared to be a very well-organised group of workers.

Globe investments believe that it is capable of just that. Globe is a British-based company with a long tradition of looking for a quick return on investments. More relevantly, they have also developed considerable experience in Britain in smashing previously well-organised groups of workers.

Their chief executive is David Hardy. He was appointed by the extreme-right-wing Tory Nicholas Ridley — one of Thatcher's chief advisors on the miners' strike — to the post of deputy chairman of London Transport at an annual salary of £13,000 for a one and a half day week. His job: to break union organisation and impose the Tory cost-cutting measures on London Transport.

Since Globe Investments arrived in August a number of changes have already occurred. The Board of Directors now meet in the factory once a month. One week after their September meeting they issued a memo to all workers complaining about the high level of absenteeism which they put down to a "malingering

minority". The memo had two purposes. First it aimed to create divisions within the workforce claiming, for example, that the "malingerers" were being "carried on the backs of the rest".

Second, it was an attempt to appeal over the heads of the shop stewards directly to the rank and file. This is now a familiar tactic that was pioneered by Michael Edwards at British Leyland. The aim is eventually to isolate the shop floor leadership by stirring up the fears of the rank and file.

Fortunately, the response in Dungarvan Crystal was fantastic. The memo was met with a one hour "down tools" and a protest meeting. But in Waterford Crystal the stewards confined themselves to expressing indignation.

The company was testing the waters. But they have already begun to focus on the weakness in the shop floor organisation in Waterford Crystal. The truth is that the Glass workers have had a militant tradition — but the militancy has rarely been directed at the company itself.

For 30 years virtual non-stop profitability allowed workers to make gains relatively easily to become one of the best paid workforces in the country.

But when the situation changed, the union leadership inside the factory was caught unprepared. 1983 was a year of several small defeats — without a battle against the company.

The factory settled for a 5 per cent wage increase when inflation was running at 12%. Short-term contract workers were allowed into the factory without an insistence on union membership. A productivity deal was introduced for general workers which gave no money in return — nor any guarantees on jobs. Forty to fifty jobs were actually lost through "natural wastage".

Now the company is shaping up to a much more serious modification / productivity deal for the cutting and blowing sections of the factory. As part of their strategy, the Branch Committee was taken over to Germany and America to be wine and dined and soft-soaped by management pep talks on their problems.

When they came back they immediately opened negotiations at top level without referring back to the shop floor. An attempt to force them to report back was defeated. Instead, some of the prominent activists lost a vote of confidence in their own sections and resigned.

The new management is carefully monitoring these developments. The memo on absenteeism was issued shortly after these incidents. The stage is being carefully set for the British Leyland strategy.



Building solidarity

How can they be fought?

The key weakness lies in part of the traditions developed at Waterford Glass. Because of lack of fight inside the factory itself, the shop-floor organisation became partially bureaucratised and distanced from the rank and file. The 40-50 shop stewards were given plenty of facility time. Two of their number were appointed full-time convenors with their own office inside the factory. The militants became isolated on the committees.

IN order to avoid the danger of the senior stewards being incorporated into management plans, the facility time they currently enjoy should be shared out. All shop stewards should be working on the shop floor. Every steward should be organising their section for a fight.

The key is to resist every single push from management. Management thinks long-term. Their aim is to build up a set of precedents that begin to sap workers confidence. That is why every little push from management has to be met with action — not words.

The example of the Dungarven workers in downing tools for an hour is an example all stewards should carry into their own section. To do that successfully means holding regular section meetings, to report back on steward's meetings and to discuss management strategy.

But the arguments for resistance ultimately rest on a political foundation. Seven or eight years ago, a hundred or so socialist papers were sold inside the factory. It is time to start up the sales again — because the socialist arguments will now connect up directly with the struggle inside the factory.

BUILDING solidarity in Ireland with the striking British miners is the job of rank and file shop stewards and workplace reps. That's who's taking up collections in Dublin and elsewhere.

Last month £33,000 was handed over by the Dublin Trades Council (DCTU) to a National Union of Miners (NUM) delegate at a benefit concert at Liberty Hall.

What the DCTU failed to point out was how the money was collected. The reason is the old story: they are afraid of embarrassing the union officials by letting it be known that the members themselves are doing on their own initiative, what the officials should be organising.

Some right wing officials are actually worried at the effect shop floor collections are having in challenging their misleadership. The DCTU has become so nervous that they have even changed their receipts from "strike fund" to "food fund".

The reason officials don't give full backing to miners' collections is the same reason they are not organising their own members to fight for jobs here in Ireland.

If they did they would be creating a militant trade union movement led from the factory and office floor instead of the rotten bureaucratic set up which exists at the moment. That's why it is pointless to expect any change from the top of the trade unions. The initiative of the rank and file in support of the miners — the canteen collections and so on — is what socialists should be fighting for.

Workplace collections on a regular weekly basis are into their third month in Dublin Corporation and are spreading to other workplaces. There is also the possibility of getting miners to visit your place of work by contacting the ATGWU Hall, Marlborough Street in Dublin.

It is through the present day struggle of our fellow workers such as the miners, and our support of them at shop floor level, that the change in the trade union movement vital for its very survival can begin.

— CHARLIE NOLAN,
Shop Steward UCATT,
Dublin Corporation

16 (051) 73711 (22 LINES)
M.S. "GLASSFACTORY" WATERFORD
10441



REGISTERED IN IRELAND
REGISTRATION NO. 78088
REGISTERED OFFICE: KILBARRY WATERFORD

Waterford Crystal Limited

WATERFORD, IRELAND

YOUR REF

OUR REF BR/AO'F.

MEMO TO ALL EMPLOYEES

Re -

HIGH LEVEL OF ABSENTEEISM

The level of absenteeism in the industry has again reached alarming proportions.

In November, '80, a Joint Statement was issued after a meeting between the Managing Director, Managers of the Company, the District Officer and Joint Negotiating Committee of the A.T.G.W.U.

This statement was made in an effort to combat the high level of absenteeism. It was required that no area of the factory, whether it be Skilled, Semi-Skilled or Unskilled, should have a level of absenteeism in excess of 7%.

Once again we have a very serious problem. The overall effects of the present high absenteeism is that we have huge levels of absence in some areas and we are now working not even the equivalent of 4 1/2 days per week.

Most of you will say - "Why should I receive this memo - I have a good attendance record". For the majority that is true, but it is important that the facts be put before you.

To those who have a poor attendance record we are saying to you - do something immediately about it, as you are now being considered as part of the 'malingering minority'.

It seems grossly unfair to the majority of ordinary decent people in this industry that they should have to carry on their backs a group of people who seem to have no sense of responsibility and are unconcerned with the Company's need for productivity.

Absenteeism is having very serious effects on the daily production of the industry and is causing production problems within Departments.

This Company cannot operate a production system with guaranteed delivery to customers without a reasonable guarantee that its' employees will attend work.

The Company is not prepared to tolerate the extraordinary levels of absence seen in some Departments and intend to take steps to have absence reduced to the required level.

Signed:

B. ROGERS
B. ROGERS
Personnel Manager.

27th. September, '84

Waterford Crystal's management attempted to go over the heads of the stewards.



SWM

The SWM organises meetings throughout the country. We meet in some of the following places.

DUNDA LK. "Why Russia isn't socialist"
Wednesday, Nov. 7th
Wine Tavern, Park St.

DUBLIN. Dublin SWM meets every Thursday. Anyone interested in the meetings phone 716932

CORK SWM meets Thursday in the Rob Roy Pub.

PORT LAOISE "Where SWM stands" Venue to be announced.

For information on Galway, Derry, Belfast, Waterford, Dungarvan please contact SWM c/o 41, Herbeton Park, Dublin 8 telephone 716932



IDATU—The limits of Left leadership

JOHN Mitchell — General Secretary of the union at the centre of the strike in Dunnes stores — is one of the new breed of trade union officials.

Ever since he took over the old Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, he has backed members who occupied their jobs. On one occasion, in BHS in Dublin, he joined the sit-in himself. The contrast with the old leadership of the IUDWC could not be more dramatic. They were renowned for sweetheart deals with management and for scabbing on picket lines.

Now however the union has set out on a militant road. It has changed its name to IDATU and has begun to recruit again. Nowadays, the bosses of the retail trade have targeted "macho Mitchell" as their number one enemy.

Many militants in other unions see John Mitchell as living proof that a union can be changed from the top. The SWM, on the other hand, has always argued against reliance on any official. We have never denied that there is a difference between left-wing and right-wing officials. Of course there is. The likes of Mitchell support rank and file struggle by and large; the old IUDWC dampened every spark of militancy.

MILITANCY

Nevertheless, the key is the militancy and confidence of the rank and file rather than the talent of the official. All union officials, whether left or right, are locked into a structure that sets out to bargain with the system rather than overthrow it. And that shapes their practice in the here and now.

The truth is that the new IDATU has not had an unblemished record of militancy. When Clery's workers were about to strike in September 1983, Mitchell sent an instruction to members calling on them "not to cooperate in any way with the dispute". He also attempted to recruit potential scabs into the union by offering the union's protection as long as they joined before the strike began.

When Ford announced its closure in Cork, the group of unions in the factory decided to spin out the closure date for as long as possible, and to extract the highest redundancy figure. But the ex-Trotskyist official of IDATU, John Daly, jumped the gun and settled before the rest of the unions for a deal which would have allowed Ford to leave earlier.

How do you explain this type of treachery alongside the support for militancy? The answer has to be sought in the role of all trade union officials. Whatever their rhetoric, their day-to-day practice is one of professional negotiators who set up deals and strike bargains.

SHOP STEWARDS

Unlike shop stewards, who also have to negotiate, they are cut off from the experience of struggle on the shop floor. In addition, they are not subject to the control of the rank and file. As a result they see "success" in terms of their own negotiating ability—rather



photo: MARK LYNCH

THE strike at Dunnes has now been going on for over three months without an end in sight. It began when a shop steward, Mary Manning was dismissed for refusing to handle South African goods. Ten other workers went on strike to defend her job.

The strike is important not only because of the Apartheid issue but also because Ben Dunne's management are trying to isolate the strikers in an attempt to break union organisations in his stores.

If these strikers do not win, then all workers at Dunnes Stores everywhere will face attacks on their unions, in order to make hiring and firing easier.

Their fight is your fight.

than as the result of the confidence and militancy of the rank and file.

The IDATU has, however, made some attempt to involve the membership. They are for the members flexing their muscles so that the official is able to extract a better deal at the negotiating table. But like all officials they are inherently sectional. They are concerned about the deals they win for their own members rather than solidarity with the wider working class movements. That is why at Dunnes they support the fight; but at Clery's they backed their own reactionary members who wanted to scab.

The sectionalism of the

union officials is an obstacle to victory in every battle. Today more than ever solidarity is required to win. But the union officials who encouraged scabbing on Clery's will not be touring the stores looking for support for the striking Dunnes workers.

DUNNES

They may send out the odd circular. But a campaign to win the support of workers in all Dunnes shops, or indeed in any other shops, is a different matter. A campaign means setting up meetings with shop stewards; touring the shops in order to put the arguments; cutting across union barriers

to argue for spreading the blacking of South African goods. It means raising the stakes in order to impose a deal on the bosses—rather than then confining it to one shop in the hope of negotiating a half-satisfactory settlement.

That is why the strength of the rank and file is the key. Today very few strikes can be won by sitting it out on the pickets. You need solidarity to win. It is always up to the membership to use the backing of the union official in order to better organise themselves. Relying on the union to deliver the goods is always fatal—no matter how "left" the union.

— KIERAN ALLEN



Reports Car plants on crash course

IN the past ten years, 4,770 jobs have disappeared in the car industry.

In the 26 counties, there are just over two hundred jobs left in the industry. The anger and determination of those workers is making itself felt on either side of the road in Ballymount Cross, Tallaght. Just over the way from where Mazda's workers have occupied, the banners of the Austin Rovers workers proclaim their sit-in. Both groups of workers look set for a hard fight.

On October 3rd, the 59 workers at Austin Rover got suspicious when management began to shift cars out of the place. They were told that 51 jobs in the pre-delivery section were to go. Immediately, they decided on occupation and sent the management scurrying off upstairs. Finally the management realised what they were up against and tried to leave with the company's books.

The workers were having none of it. They made the managers walk home, keeping their cars so that none of the files could be taken off the premises. The managers' fancy cars are still sitting at the front of the factory.

The docks are key for winning their occupation. Shop stewards, Des Conway and Pat McGrath, have had assurances from all the docks—except Greenore in Co Louth—that no Leyland cars will get further than the quayside. As time goes on, they are also

going to need financial support from other workers. Assurances from the Trade Union officials in the ATGWU that the support is coming are not enough.

The workers themselves will have to go around the factories to win solidarity from other groups of workers.

MAZDA STRIKE

By Tony Rigney

LAST month workers at Motor Manufacturers Ltd., the car assembly plant on the Nass Road, Dublin, began occupying the factory in a bid to save their jobs.

The dispute was triggered by the action of the company in removing large stocks of cars from the complex while talks between management, the unions and the shops committee were still in progress.

In addition to this, the Company sent a letter to each employee saying that assembly would cease at the end of 1984. The letter added that settlement would be agreed by then. Noel Marshall of the shops committee described this as a "blatant effort to undermine the committee's attempts to save the jobs. The Company soon

managed to stoop even lower when they told the national papers that the dispute was about redundancy terms.

The workforce immediately issued a statement refuting this, but, not surprisingly, the press chose to ignore it.

However Larry Dunne, a shop steward with the ATGWU remained adamant: "We don't want the money, we want to keep our jobs".

What has really rubbed salt into the wound is that only one year ago the management along with the unions and shops committee went to the Department of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, in order to allow the Company to import the full range of Mazda cars.

The request was granted, subject to certain conditions, one being that the Company continue to provide full-time employment up to and beyond the end of 1984. The management was happy to give the promise at the time.

Now, however, all that has changed and the workers are digging in for a long fight. Nevertheless their morale is good and they are attempting to win solidarity from other workers in an effort to stop the importation of Mazda cars.

The whole episode should act as a warning to workers everywhere. No matter what the Bosses promise or to whom the promise is made, DON'T TRUST THEM!

SMURFIT PRAISES HIMSELF

MICHAEL Smurfit doesn't believe in redundancy payments. Not that he has any anything against redundancies, it's the payment end he has trouble with.

Last year he turfed 240 workers out of Waterford Ironfounders when he closed the company. In the same year he paid £2 million for a penthouse in New York. The workers, some of whom had worked there for 40 years, were given no holiday pay, no severance pay and no minimum notice pay.

The way Michael see it, these things only destroy the "work incentive" and he's got every reason to be worried about that.

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Smurfit Group, Garret Fitzgerald praised the "exceptional

leadership, the dedication and hard work established by the Smurfit family".

"The company" he said, "has blazed a trail that I hope will be followed by other companies in this country".

The Smurfit empire is dependent on 12,000 workers. It is the labour of these people, not the "dedication and hard work" of Michael Smurfit which is keeping himself and his family in the style to which they have become addicted.

Smurfit obviously thought the government would benefit from a little of his "exceptional leadership" when he decided last March to share his views on the National Plan with an audience of likeminded at the Irish Management Institute.

He said the dole should be cut to make work an

"attractive proposition". He'd also like to see wages brought down to lower the cost of employment for the bosses. He probably got a standing ovation.

Lamenting the erosion of the "productive base of the nation", he blamed such evils as pay-related benefits, redundancy payments, movement payments and "anything else they can get hold of". Such as the basic legal entitlements he prefers to deny workers.

In short, he'd like to squeeze the working class even more, to make sure that the bosses don't have to pay for the recession resulting from the greed of their capitalist policies.

But despite such stumbling blocks as paying wages, the Smurfit Group has survived to celebrate its 50th trail-blazing year. The trail mainly blazes out of the country. Only 12% of the Smurfit empire is now based here, with 67% in the US.

Praising the "courage and foresight" of the decision to get out of the country, Tony O'Reilly said that, "... each increment of success points the way for each worker to enjoy greater prosperity and a potentially richer life". Maybe Michael has an "if you're Irish, come into the parlour" sign on the door of his penthouse.

Or maybe Tony O'Reilly, Michael Smurfit & co, would like us to believe that the only way to improve conditions is to increase their profits by accepting the terms they dictate for the privilege of employment.

— JEAN CROSS

ESB FIGHT ON

59 shift and relief workers are still on strike at Poolbeg — no electricity is being produced there. The men — a traditionally well-organised section — are still in dispute with the ESB, principally over the company's flagrant disregard of agreed procedure relating to grievances and the suspension of the men from the payroll. The Labour Court has ruled that the ESB did not follow procedure, and the strikers are now waiting for the ESB's own arbitrator to fall into line with this ruling.

But while active picketing showed what support could be won, and how effective that support could be (what wouldn't the British miners give for power cuts last month?), the strikers are now staying at home pending the outcome of the bureaucratic shenanigans. In part they fear the effects of a smear campaign through the media, the like of which we saw last month when we were told that they earned £28,000 pa. In fact the figures were a con, and were inflated in all sorts of artificial ways, including a back-pay award that had accumulated over six years!

Agreed and established procedure, as part of basic trade union organisation must be defended. To win, the strikers must rely on their own considerable strength, and the support shown for their picketing last month, among other power workers. By linking their case with the demands of other ESB employees from whom they seek support, and not relying on the manoeuvrings of their full time trade union officials, Labour Courts and company paid arbitrators, the Poolbeg workers can win.

— MARY SMITH

Socialist Worker

GIVE THATCHER A WELCOME!

Brighton beautiful?

FEW socialists anywhere would have lost much sleep if the Provos had got Thatcher at Brighton.

The woman is a war-monger who glories in bloodshed. She freely declares her readiness to kill millions with nuclear weapons. She made a holiday in her heart when the Belgrano went down.

She bears more responsibility than any other single individual for the continuing repression and violence in the North.

Far better that Thatcher should be targetted than some obscure UDR man delivering milk on a rainy morning in Tyrone. The war machine of which the UDR is part is her war machine.

That's the simple, socialist position on the Brighton bomb. But it is also part of the socialist position that assassinating Thatcher wouldn't actually achieve very much.

Tory leaders come and go. If Thatcher had got the final comeuppance somebody else would have taken her place within days. And the change-over would have been accompanied by a massive swing to the Right in Britain. In whose interests would that be? How could a swing to the Right be in the interests of the Left?

INTERVIEW

The IRA appears to have taken all this into consideration. In an interview in *An Phoblacht* (October 18) a "spokesperson authorised by GHQ staff" said that taking out a section of the British cabinet "would have led to widespread repression and major reprisals . . . [which] could have included internment, the proscription of Sinn Fein and joint action from the Dublin Government, possibly including the banning of your newspaper".

This seems to us amazing stuff. If we take it seriously and at its face value it means that the IRA was consciously and deliberately aiming at greater repression, even at "achieving" internment.

And if this plan had "worked", no doubt the rest of us would have been denounced if we didn't take to the streets to protest.

Of course the IRA had longer-term ideas in mind too. The spokesperson spelled it out: "From this political crisis, the inability of the British to cope with the situation, and the inestimable, expensive cost to their political system, would have dawned on them and led to a major and radical re-think along the lines of withdrawal".

So the plan seems to have been that, first, the Brits

would have put the boot in harder than ever before, but that after a time — the spokesperson didn't venture to guess whether this would be weeks, months, years or decades — it would "dawn" on them that putting the boot in wasn't very sensible. At which point they would begin to think about taking the boot out. And Bob's your uncle.

Put bluntly, this is just daft. It seems to be based on gazing into a bomb-damaged crystal ball. And it arises, not because the IRA spokesperson is him or herself daft, but because there is a deep contradiction right at the heart of Republican thinking.

Over the past few years the Republican Movement politically has moved to the left and adopted an electoralist strategy. Advice centres have been set up North and South, geared to winning support — in the first instance at the local government elections next year — by helping hard-pressed working class people solve day-to-day problems. At the same time there has been much greater concentration of trade union work.

This is all very well, and much to be welcomed. But side by side with it goes the IRA campaign — a war fought on behalf of "the Irish people" and clearly designed not to win power in Ireland for the working class but to win "independence" from Britain for all Irish people. It was that strategy which was summed up in Sinn Fein's central slogan in June's Euro election: "One nation, one people".

ENEMIES

Garret Fitzgerald, John Hume, Tony O'Reilly, Tomas O Fiaich and indeed Ian Paisley are all "Irish people". Also, they are enemies of the Irish working class. The slogan "One nation, one people" negates and denies the class divisions within the nation.

This is a reflection of something which is fundamental to Republican ideology: the idea that the most important line of political division is drawn between nations, not between classes.

The idea is an enormous obstacle facing members of the Republican Movement who want to take a clear class line on political issues.



Thus, even the community work which is carried out with great energy in working class areas North and South is not based on openly class conscious politics. It is of benefit to working class people certainly, in winning concessions from the system. And it can, quite reasonably, win a certain popularity for the organisations and individuals involved — a popularity which can be expected to show up in elections and in support for campaigns on other issues.

But it does not make socialists of people. It does not lead on towards an understanding that it is the class nature of our society North and South which is the never-ending source of the ills which afflict workers. And it is this class system which the British and their Irish collaborators are most concerned to shore up.

The Brits are not in Ireland because they like kicking

people about — although very many of them do — or because they like the scenery or have some sentimental attachment to the north eastern corner of the island. The Brits — that is, the British ruling class and its strong-arm agents — are in Ireland to prop up and preserve the capitalist system.

If capitalism could be better preserved by the Brits getting out they'd have been on the boat long ago. And stuff the Loyalists.

That's the fact of the matter. But it's a fact that does not fit easily into Republican thinking. Because of the implication of it is that the central thrust of anti-imperialism ought to be against the capitalist system. Which in turn means that anti-imperialism must be based on class politics, not "one-nationism".

Or to put it another way, on Marxism rather than Republicanism.

— EAMONN McCANN

THE Socialist Workers Movement believes that there should be a major demonstration in Dublin against Margaret Thatcher when she arrives in the 26 Counties for her "summit" meeting with Garret Fitzgerald

At the same time we acknowledge that the SWM, on its own, does not have the capacity to organise a demonstration of sufficient size. However, it can be

done in the time available if the various organisations opposed to what Thatcher represents both here and in Britain come together.

The SWM has therefore written to other Left and anti-imperialist organisations, including Sinn Fein, suggesting that we mobilise together for this purpose. The text of the letter is set out below.

Margaret Thatcher visits this country in mid-November for the Anglo-Irish Summit. There should be a massive demonstration against her. In her own country, Thatcher busily engaged in trying to smash the miners. If she is successful, the bosses both here and in Britain will gain new confidence to sharpen their attacks on working class living standards and jobs.

Her trip to Ireland has one purpose only: to harmonise arrangements for repression on both sides of the border. The Coalition may dress the summit up as a "breakthrough" in Anglo-Irish relations. It is nothing of the sort. Thatcher and Fitzgerald have no interest in weakening the hold of sectarianism and bigotry in the North. Both now see the border as an aspect of the "stability" they want to preserve. Both want extradition and co-operation on border security stepped up. Their only differences are about the best way to achieve this.

The Iron Lady brings nothing but more of the jackboot. The summit IS about improving Anglo-Irish relations — between the bosses in both countries. From a working class point of view, good Anglo-Irish relations are demonstrated vividly in the tens of thousands of pounds raised by Irish trade unionists for the British miners.

Thatcher's visit should not go unmarked. There should be thousands on the streets to bring home the message that we want nothing to do with whatever arrangements herself and Fitzgerald may arrive at. The occasion must be turned into a massive demonstration against the presence of Thatcher, of her troops and of what she represents in this country.

Too often, visits of this sort have been marked by a token picket. This time around it is vitally necessary to mobilise thousands on a simple platform of protest. We have already one example to go on. When Reagan visited Ireland in June tens of thousands took to the streets to show their solidarity with those fighting in Central America. Thatcher is far more actively engaged in Ireland in repression and murder. It would be a scandal if she received less of a "welcome" than Reagan.

The Socialist Workers Movement proposes that a demonstration take place in Dublin around the time of Thatcher's arrival. We believe that the demands of the demonstration should be as follows:

- (1) No extradition.
- (2) Withdraw the British Army.
- (3) Full support to the miners.

We propose that a simple ad-hoc committee be established between representatives of socialist and republican organisations. We propose that local groups be established as quickly as possible — open to anyone who agrees with these demands — to organise public meetings and to carry the message to the factories and communities. We believe that this type of united action could give confidence to thousands to come out to demonstrate.

Obviously there are considerable differences on how to fight back against Thatcher and Fitzgerald. However these differences should not stand in the way of united action. Nor should there be any attempt to gloss over or hide the differences. Every organisation has a right to argue from its own standpoint.

We hope that you will give these proposals the urgent attention they deserve.

Yours fraternally, Kieran Allen, National Secretary, SWM.