



DESPITE the National Wage Agreement which was designed to stifle trade union militancy, especially with its severe restrictions on the right to strike, anger is steadily mounting among ever larger groups of workers about the lowering value of real wages as prices continue to soar.

The most immediate manifestation of this anger is, of course, the determination of the building workers' group of unions to press their demand for a special payment agreed by the unions and employers concerned but effectively vetoed by the Government, through the Labour Court.

The building workers' case is overwhelmingly a just one, and it is a mark of the intransigence of the Government that they should attempt to veto an agreement freely entered into by the two sides of the industry concerned.

The reason for the Government's stance is that the payment undermines the whole credibility of the national wage agreement method and emphasises to workers that they could do much better through free collective bargaining, using their industrial strength to force concessions from the employers, as the building workers did.

Another sign of widening resentment at Government policy and the economic situation is the threat of another strike by the bank officials. The officials have had their position considerably weakened however by remaining outside the I.C.T.U. This lack of a preparedness to recognise their duty to other workers is reflected by a corresponding lack of sympathy for their struggle on the part of organised Labour.

But it should be emphasised that the economic management of the country—in the interests of foreign speculators and financiers—affects all workers.

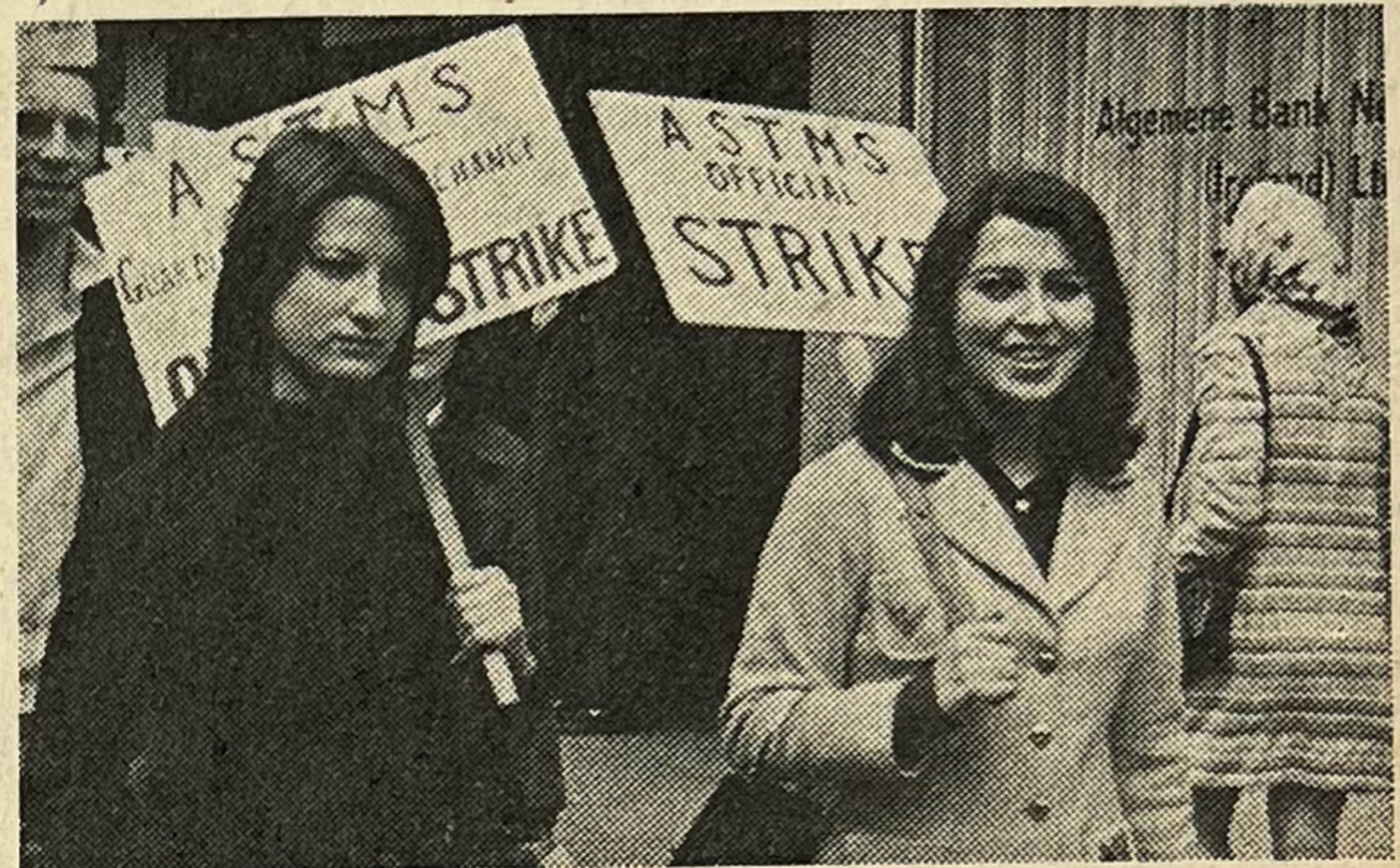
Wages anger rising high

What has contributed more perhaps to the general anger than any other single factor is that the Government sold the agreement to the Unions—after a previous agreement had been narrowly rejected—on the base that inflation would be controlled and brought down.

Before the "ink with which it were writ were dry", the Government had broken the agreement by sanctioning a whole series of price rises, in bus fares and ESB charges, food increases in butter and beef and many other commodities.

The workers had been duped. And among those who felt bitterest were those who had argued for the agreement.

It is not enough to just feel angry about the situation. A return to free collective bargaining would restore the power of unions to fight for their members' interests and resist cutbacks in real wages.



● Only the industrial strength of workers—including the right to strike—can defend and improve conditions.

Weaker members benefit from the cumulative effect brought about by successful struggles on the part of the stronger ones. That is the essence of the principle of trade

union solidarity. But with their hands tied behind their backs by wage agreements the workers can only see their strength dwindle, and their conditions worsen.

May Day greetings

May Day is a great workers' festival, a day of international solidarity of the working people of the whole world. At this time when the capitalist system is in crisis, while the socialist world grows ever stronger, and when imperialism intensifies its assaults on the working people of Ireland, it is more right than ever that the working class should stand out proud and defiant.

Only a socialist transformation

of our society will rid us of the ills caused by capitalism, but the paths to that revolution are outlined in the statement of principles issued by the United May Day Committee.

The Communist Party of Ireland wishes all workers a pleasant May Day, and pledges itself to continue to work towards building the unity of all progressive and anti-imperialist forces for peace, unity, independence and socialism.

THE LOYALIST BLUFF MUST BE CALLED



● During the U.W.C. lock-out, British soldiers openly fraternised with and assisted Loyalists blocking roads.

THE BRITISH, it appears, have little immediate aims in the Northern situation and are prepared to just let things drift, so long as they drift in the general direction of British long-term strategy, the maintenance of imperial domination over Ireland with its economic benefits to her financial interests and its strategic benefits to her military sections.

There are marked differences of emphasis between these two interests, however, with many of the military—politically on the far right—convinced that the original "liberalisation" policy was ill-founded. These divisions are reflected in the British Conservative Party between Heath and White-law, on the one hand, and Thatcher and Neave, on the other.

The overall point of agreement between all sections of the British ruling class—including the Labour Party Government—has been that the violence generated by the in-

stability of the Northern situation should be contained and brought down to "an acceptable level"—acceptable to Britain, of course.

That means a reduction to minimal levels of troop casualties, the Ulsterisation of the combat forces as much as possible, and an elimination of bombings in Britain itself.

This has by and large been achieved, and the continuation of the Provisionals' campaign only serves to provide Britain with the justification to carry on with its policy of leaving the North to the control of its Army.

The Army, of course, has leant heavily in favour of the Unionist forces. But these are by no means united. While the Army disagreed with—and sabotaged—the power-sharing policy, it does not have unlimited power to reach an agreement with the fascist Right.

Further, it does not appear that the Army has any marked desire to change the current situation which leaves them in effective

control of policy and with added importance in British society.

To this extent the situation is completely different from the time of the U.W.C. lock-out. An effective Army mutiny—curiously ignored by official Irish Government spokesmen—forced the British Government to abandon its policy and its promises, not for the first time in history, of course.

The shameful acquiescence of the Irish Government, and the equally shameful reticence of substantial elements of the British Labour movement, in the face of the Loyalist blackmail has, of course, only led in the long run to more and more violence. This violence is now slowly but inexorably spreading to engulf the whole island.

Nor can any change be expected in this situation until the Loyalist bluff is firmly called. It was not until Heath—under the general pressure of the political situation—laid it on the line to Faulkner

that the leopard changed his spots and accepted power sharing.

While power sharing was a compromise designed to maintain British control over Ireland and to divert the nationalist feelings of the population away from struggle against imperialism, it was also a retreat by Unionism from its entrenched "we are the people" arrogance.

The success of the U.W.C. lock-out, aided by the connivance of the British Army, temporarily restored their confidence, so that the old Unionist intransigence has reappeared.

The Loyalists cannot be allowed to exercise a permanent veto over progressive and democratic advance. The trade union movement, here and in Britain, should bring pressure to bear on the Governments concerned to call their bluff and set about a thoroughgoing reform of the Northern political system.

Democracy and civil rights, a declaration of Britain's ultimate commitment to withdraw, a genu-

ine policy of peace are the ways to end the crisis, not appeasement of Loyalist intransigence.

INSIDE THIS MONTH

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IRISH SOCIALIST

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Conditions in Portlaoise

It is a matter of profound relief that the hunger strike of the Port Laoise prisoners ended without a fatality, although it is inevitable that some, at least, of the strikers will have suffered serious injury to their health, injury which may not become fully apparent for some years.

It is a cruel and vicious indictment of our system of 'justice' in the 26 counties that men resort to such a barbaric weapon in order to voice their grievances, and a mark of the extremism of the Government that they persisted in driving men to it.

For there is no doubt that the action was provoked by sheer bloodmindedness and desperate conditions, with arbitrary and repeated strip-searches high on the objectionable list.

It is also, however, a mark of how the Provisionals have sunk in public estimation—as a consequence of their anti-civilian bombing campaign and the mindlessness of their violence—that public sympathy was invariably muted and prefaced by strong disavowals of support for their organisation as such.

It is too much to ask the Provisionals to take note of that genuine revulsion in their methods which, objectively, have led to a strengthening rather than a weakening of the imperialist grip over Ireland?

Be that as it may, public disquiet over conditions in Port Laoise was only aroused by the hunger strike. Too many of us have for too long been content to decry the Provisionals and ignore the barbarism of the Government here, whose pursuit of Britain's record of torture at the Strasbourg tribunal is impaired by these revelations at home.

Above all it is important not to let the matter rest and allow the old conditions to be continued in Port Laoise. A call for a public inquiry into the conditions of the prisons should still be made until the Government yield or make changes.

We must not allow a situation where Government extremism might provoke serious violence in this part of the country, violence which could only strengthen reaction and ruin whatever quality of life we have managed to extract from the capitalist system.

Padraig Pearse

It has become fashionable to rewrite Irish history so as to decry the Easter Rising and the War of Independence, and to laud the "constitutional" path of accommodation with imperialism.

The purpose of this is to make our people more amenable to the loss of independence involved in E.E.C. membership and apathetic about continuing and completing the struggle to break the link with imperialism.

A spur to this has been given by the Provisionals' campaign, as the defenders of imperialism attempt to equate the elitism of the Provisionals with the popular struggle for national freedom of which 1916 is the great symbol.

The latest of these attempts is a supposed biography of Padraig Pearse by Ruth Dudley Edwards, "The Triumph of Failure". Apart from a number of unfounded personal slanders against Pearse, the main charge she makes is that Pearse's strategy was a diversion from the path of constitutional progress.

It is a theme presented by Conor Cruise O'Brien before, but it gains no validity by being repeated again.

We can expect a lot more efforts at debunking Pearse and the Easter Rising. And after that perhaps it will be Connolly's turn who has already been denounced by various pseudo-left organisations.

We should recognise these "historical" contributions for what they are: apologies for British imperialism in Ireland.

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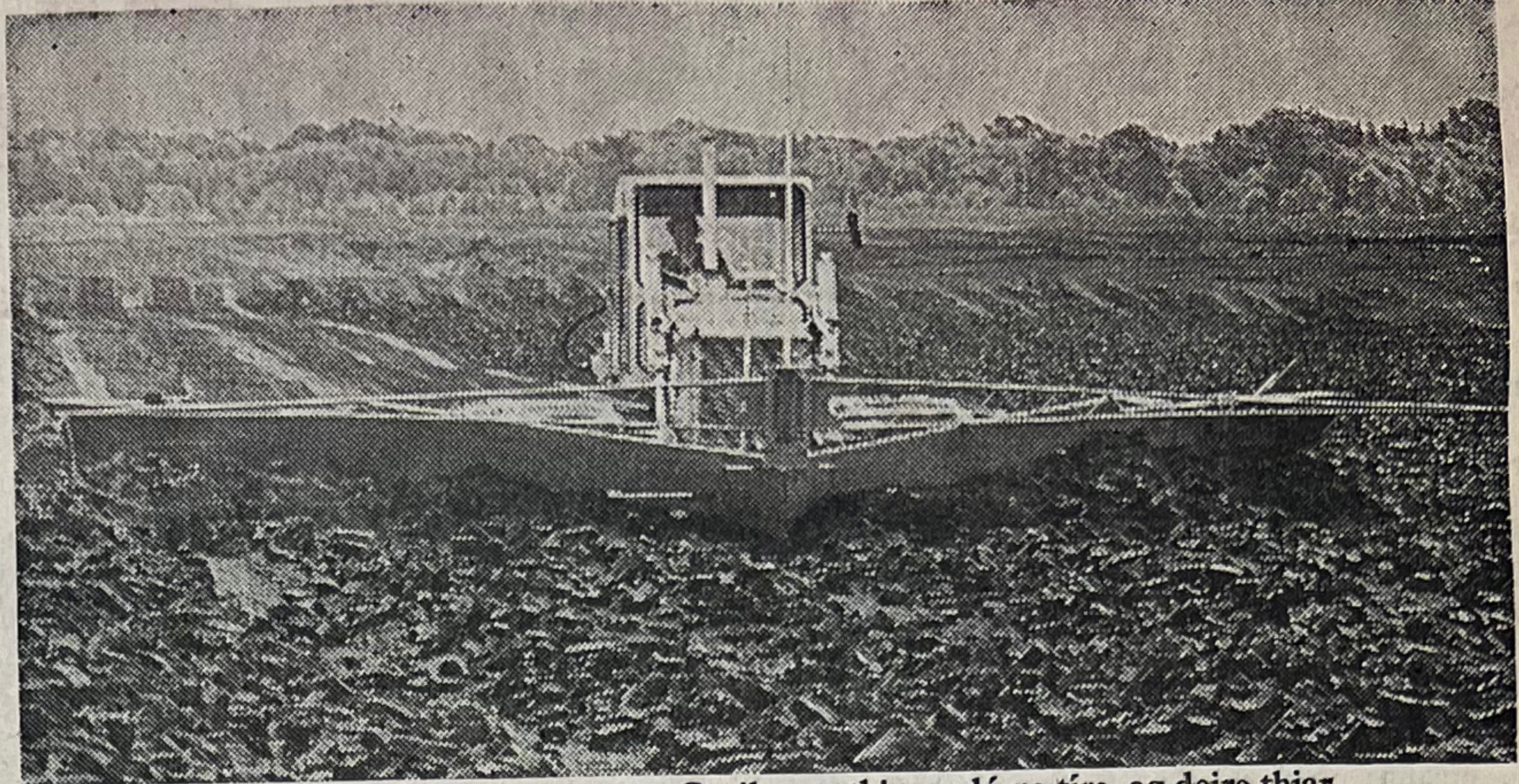
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● Braitheann athbheochan na Gaeilge ar thionscalú na tíre, ag deire thiar.

Conas stop a chur le meath na Gaeilge

TÁ sé ráite chomh minic sin anois, agus tá sé chomh fíor leis, go bhfuil an Ghaeilge ag meath go tubaisteach gur beag áird a thugtar ar an gcaint sin anois. Ní galar marfach atá ag cur as don teanga ar ndóigh, ach ní thioctaidh fear lia fána coinne.

Mar tá 'speáinte i súirbhéanna le déanaí, tá báidh ag an bpobal i gcoitinne don Ghaeilge. Ag cloisint na cainte sin ag cuid mhór againn ligeadh osna suaimhnis: dhera t gach rud ceart anois, mairfidh ár nGaeilge slán!

Ach níl aon fhorsa ag an mbáidh sin. Ní chuirtear brú ar bith ar rialtas, comhairle contae nó údarás ar bith eile rud ar bith a dhéanamh ar shon na teanga. Cineál báidhe neamhsuime atá ann.

Ní ceist milleán é, is níl locht ar an bpobal fré chéile mar gheall ar an neamhsuim seo: má tá cúrsaí Gaeilge go dona, is orainn, Gaeilgeoiri—is go háirid sinne Sóisialaigh leis—atá an locht agus milleán cruá na staire le theacht.

Ach mar adúirt Máirtín Ó Cadhain, "as deire na cúise is marfaí neamhsuim... ná namhadas ar bith". Is marfaí mar spreagann an namhdas soiléir cosaint, agus as cosaint tagann ionus.

Maidir le báidh an phobail don Ghaeilge, tá sé ceart go leor a bheith ag caint faoi 'bháidh' ach déan moladh faoi clár Gaeilge ar chur ar an telefís ag am tabhachtach is ní chluinfear deire le scréachail is geónail.

Ach má tá 'báidh' ag an bpobal don Ghaeilge cé hiad a dhéanas no a spreagas an gearán? Rud oifigiúil atá ann go bunúsach, iriseoirí nuachtán atá ag freastal ar chlaonbhá a gcuid máistrí, RTÉ ag crith le heagla roimh sraoth is broim an Bhrianaigh.

CINSIREACHT

Mar an gcéanna le cinsireacht polaitíochta is amhlaidh don ionús ar an nGaeilge. Mar adúirt urlabhraite de chuid an NUJ ag seimínéar dá gcuid ar an gcinsireacht, is iad na hiriseoirí féin a dhéanann an chinsireacht.

Tá samplaí de sin le feiscint gach aon lá, sna nuachtáin. Ní fada ó shin, le cur i gceas, gur mhaígh alt san Irish Press nach raibh lucht féachana sách maith ag cláracha Gaeilge, ionas le rá nach ceart iad a bheith ann dá bharr.

Ach tá ceart ag Gaeilgeoiri ina dtír dhúchais féin cláracha Gaeilge a fháil. Sé éileamh Chonradh na Gaeilge ar an gceist seo an t-éileamh is lú ar féidir a dhéanamh, sé sin clár amháin gach aon oíche do dhaoine fásta is clár eile do pháistí. Faoín choras dhá chuile is mó ná sin i bhfad cláracha Gaeilge a bhéadh dlíte.

Chuir sin té feachtas ag Gaeilgeoiri aonaracha le tamall ioc a gcuid taillí ceadúnais a dhiúltú, is tá tacaíocht oifigiúil de chuid Chonradh na Gaeilge taobh thiar dhe sin anois.

Tá buncheart Gaeilgeora á thruallú is á shárú ag údarásaí an stáitín seo is ní dócha go bhfuil bealach eile as ach feachtas mar atá ag an gConradh le brú a chur ar an rialtas agus báidh an phobail a thiontú ina gníomh an rialtais.

Ó thaobh na heacnamaíochta dhe, tá sé tábhachtach freisin brú a choinneáil ar an rialtas maidir le tionscalú na Gaeltachta: Mura ácuirtear jobannaí ar fáil insan Ghaeltacht imeoidh an pobal is imeoidh an Ghaeilge leo. Má imíonn an Ghaeltacht imeoidh tobar an dúchais, is fiordhóchas na dtodhchaí.

SOP

Agus chífear ag deire an scéil go bhfuil an stát go bunúsach i gcoinne na Gaeilge, mar is rialtas soip de chuid na himpireachta atá is a bhí ariamh sa stáitín seo.

Tá siad namhadach don Ghaeilge, cinnte. Ach ní namhadas díreach é i gcónaí, mar dá ndéanfai an Ghaeilge a athbheochan ar fud na tíre is suim an phobail a dhiúrt ar an teanga is ar an saíocht a bhaineann léi thioctai i gcoinne meoin an impiúilachais atá ag iarraidh cuimhne pobail is náisiúin a dhfirt.

Aris níl aon bhealach le athbheochan na Gaeilge a dhéanamh ach tré gníomh is tacaíocht an

stáit—sa choras oideachais mar shampla—is tríd tionscalú sa Ghaeltacht. Is ní féidir é sin a dhéanamh faoin gcoras caipitealach, go háirid insan Ghaeltacht, áit ina bhfuil caipiteal gann, taithí ar obair tionscail deacair le teacht air.

Ina leithéid de chás ní mor tionscail atá bunaithe ar ár maoin nádúrtha—próiseáil éisc is bia, tionscail leathair, adhmaid, trosscáin is eile. Tionscail leictreónacha éadroma mar shampla. Is ní chuirfeadh a leithéid ar bhunús ceart ach amháin a gcomhthéacs pleán stáit—athrú bunúsach sa choras eacnamaíochta.

Ach sé tuiscint na faidhe an chéad chéim i dtreo a sáráithe. Táim ag feitheamh le suim fé leith mar sin seimínéar ar an 13-15 Bealtaine ar staid chultúrtha na hÉireann, atá dhá reachtáil mar an Dara Seimínéar Bliantúil i gCuimhne Eirí Amach na Cásca i Halla na Saoirse.

Ar na cainteanna suimiúla—a bhaineann leis an gceist seo—beidh Pádraig Ó Snodaigh ag labhairt ar 'Gluaiseacht na Gaeilge agus an Ghluaiseacht Náisiúnta' dé hAoine 13ú ag 7; agus Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh ag labhairt ar 'An Ghaeltacht Inniu' maidin dé Domhnaigh.

Tá eolas faoi na cainteanna eile is an seimínéar go léir le fáil ó Chonradh na Gaeilge.

LABOUR HISTORY — ignored far too long

THE founding of the Irish Labour History Society in 1973 has evoked much public interest in a subject which up to then seemed to interest only the few keen Labourites who had acquainted themselves with the comparatively meagre published work in Irish Labour History. They were the few enthusiasts who could quote Connolly, the two Ryans, and perhaps the British social historians Beatrice and Sydney Webb.

Up to the founding of the society the academics in modern Irish history had done little to stimulate interest in the subject. True, a few of them, notably the late George O'Brien, had written valuable work in economic history. Perhaps the most notable example in this field would be O'Brien's 'The Act of Union, to the Famine'. "Economic History of Ireland from However, the general intent in these works by the academics has been to trace changes in Irish economic life—brought about in the main by deliberate government policy. Thus, O'Brien's main work shows how the Act of Union (1800) abolishing the Irish Parliament had the effect of exposing several important sectors of Irish manufacturing to the successful competition of the better developed manufacturers in Britain. This ruined several of our industries, included in these were textiles and leather manufacture. Then, at the famine time, the Repeal of the Corn Laws

THE WORKER AND THE LAW

We regret that due to pressure on space we have had to hold the next part in this series until next month.

(Continued on page 3)

W.U.I. to monitor Labour Party's performance!

THE Workers' Union of Ireland have decided to hold a Special Delegate Conference every two years to review Labour Party policy and performance in the Dail and to see how it measures up to WUI policy.

This was the main decision which emerged from a Special Conference of the Union on the 24th of April. The proposal to hold such an exercise on a biennial basis was unanimously adopted by the delegates.

While another resolution, asking that the affiliated unions to the Labour Party should push for withdrawal from Coalition, was defeated, the mood of the Conference was on the whole very critical of the performance of Labour in Government.

The Conference should serve to remind the Labour T.D's, many of whom receive large grants from the Union to help their election

campaigns, that the workers who put them in the Dail can put them out again as quick.

Mr. Denis Larkin, General Secretary of the WUI retired from the Union on 27th April. At the Conference delegates gave a standing ovation to Mr. Larkin as he made his farewell speech in which he reviewed his long years of activity in the WUI.

With the departure of Mr. Larkin comes the end of an era in the Irish trade union movement, as for the first time since its foundation there will not be a Larkin at the helm of "Larkin's Union".



● Improvements in conditions should be high on a list of union demands.

Let Trade Unions visit prisons

THE conditions in Portlaoise prison which gave rise to the recent hunger strike would not have been allowed if there had been a representative of the trade union movement on the prison visiting committee. This was the feeling of many of the delegates to last month's Dublin Trades Council meeting at which a resolution from the NUJ was passed asking that a trade union delegation be allowed access to the prisons and prisoners in Ireland to prepare a report for Congress on conditions; and that trade union representation be written into the constitution of the Prison Visiting Committee.

Support for the resolution is also being sought from the Belfast Trades Council.

A resolution from the ATGWU seeking a meeting with the Minister for Health and Social Welfare to ask him to amend the Health Acts to end the present discrimination against those categorised as manual workers who earn over £3,000 per annum, was also given strong support by the delegates.

The Council decided to send its President, Gerry Fleming, to the International Peace Meeting to be held in Warsaw. There he will be joined by Joe Cooper of the Belfast Trades Council and other Irish representatives.

Delegates gave support for an official speaker from the Council at the May Day public meeting organised by the May Day Committee.

A worker's charter for better conditions

How to get Equal Pay

HOW to get Equal Pay; Married women working; Apprenticeships for women; Training and re-training; the Anti-Discrimination Employment Bill; these are just some of the topics which will form part of a day-long seminar to be held on 25th June.

The overall theme of the Seminar, which is being organised by the Trade Union Women's Forum (TUWF) in co-operation with the Dublin Trades Council, is, "Women In Employment — A Challenge to the Trade Union Movement".

During the morning session the overall picture will be given by prominent women trade unionists. In addition Senator Michael Mullen, General Secretary, ITGWU, will speak on the need for male trade unionists to be involved in the struggle for equal rights.

The seminar is open to all those interested, men and women, irrespective of whether they are at present trade union members or not.

A significant negative aspect of successive national pay agreements in the South, and social contracts in the North, has now been the restrictive clauses covering conditions of employment. As a result of this little progress has been achieved in this area over recent years. An obvious example is the fact that the overwhelming majority of Irish workers still have an entitlement of three week's holidays which is the legal minimum.

What can be done to improve the situation? One way, which has already proved successful in a number of employments, is to submit a draft employer/union agreement, covering workers' conditions of employment, and emphasising workers' entitlements, to the employer.

Many employers are more receptive to claims submitted in an agreement of this kind than to claims served in the traditional manner which immediately exposes them to the restrictive clauses of the National Agreement or Social Contract. Moreover, the concept of a written agreement has great appeal to most employers, and this can be exploited by workers and their unions.

courses during normal working hours and without loss of pay.

The agreement should include clauses covering basic pay, bonus, shift, deputising and "call in" allowances, working hours, overtime rates, holidays, sick pay schemes, pension and life assurance schemes. It is difficult to make progress on many of these traditional issues, but not impossible. Progress has recently been achieved by workers under many of the above headings, e.g., basic pay, working hours, overtime rates, holidays and sick pay schemes. Immediate objectives should include the establishment of a maximum working week of 35 hours. Many non-manual workers already work a 35-hour week or less.

With the appalling level of unemployment in both parts of Ireland, overtime should be reduced to an absolute minimum. This can best be done by increasing the overtime rates to a minimum of double-time for week-days. Workers should establish the option of claiming overtime pay or taking time off in lieu equal to the relevant rate of overtime. It should be stated that overtime can only be worked on a voluntary basis.

Many non-manual workers already have a minimum of 4 weeks holidays. This should be the minimum demand of all trade unionists.

A relatively recent claim, which arose from the demand for equal pay, is maternity leave. Significant progress has already been achieved, and paid maternity leave of up to 20 weeks has already been secured by some female workers. Paternity leave and marriage leave, with pay, are also now on the agenda of agreements, and some progress has been achieved, particularly in relation to marriage leave.

VITAL

Equal pay is, of course, a vital matter, and the demand should be for nothing less than the male rate. A growing number of women have already won this right.

One of the most important clauses in an agreement should be that the employer shall not alter the workers' working practices or conditions without prior consultation and agreement with the union.

Nothing should be written into an agreement which would undermine the right of the union to strike.

IMPERATIVE

It is imperative that the agreement be drafted by trade unionists, and not by the employer. This is an important advantage in negotiations as it puts the employer in a negative position. The employer will, naturally, be trying to "water down" the agreement. The reverse is also true. If the employer writes the agreement the union will be in a negative position trying to amend restrictive clauses.

In writing the draft the union is in a position to lay emphasis on matters of importance to it, and to exclude some issues which the employer might be likely to be seeking. Many of the issues the employer is concerned with will be raised during negotiations but these can be amended, or traded, for concessions being sought by the union.

What issues should be contained in this kind of employer/union agreement? Union members must establish the right of their committees to meet in the employer's time, and at the employer's expense. Workers must also have the right to attend trade union

BREAKTHROUGH

... on equal pay

DESPITE the restrictions of National Wage Agreements equal pay has been coming in recent weeks of progress towards new pay in a number of jobs. These should provide encouragement to the thousands of women workers who have not yet made the breakthrough.

Women workers at C.B. Packaging in the supervisory clerical grade will no longer have to work for less, indeed the extent of the discrimination practised up to now can be judged from the size of the increase secured by the union—£19 per week.

...Some time earlier women clerical workers at Philips of Clonskeagh negotiated equal pay with the help of their union. Here also the female scale was abolished giving an average increase of £1 per week back-dated to 1st July, 1976.

An equal pay deal negotiated for female clerical workers at Bush provided an average immediate increase of £2 per week, with an of that to follow in 1978. All these increases are additional of course to normal increments and other wage increases.

Four female scales were consigned to antiquity at Telecommunications in Finglas where the women also achieved equal pay. Here lump sum payments of £65 per worker were made, equal to £1 per week from the date of the Act.

Our congratulations go to all these workers for their success and to their union, No. 2 Branch ITGWU.

We would be glad to hear of any other Breakthrough towards equal rights for women workers or any other significant settlements.

LABOUR HISTORY

(Continued from page 2)

by the British Parliament, in 1846, ruined the Irish milling industry.

While much of the social change, the impoverishment, the miseries of the Poor Law, the emigration, have been recorded by those economic historian writing of the last century, little has been published in the domain of what we could properly regard as Labour History. In our educational regarded as being worthy of men-institutions the subject is not even mentioned. There is not even one lecture-ship, much less a professorship or a chair, in Labour History in any of our universities.

One of the aims of the Irish Labour History Society is to fill this vacuum in our educational programmes. We have called for the subject to be taught in our Primary, Secondary and Vocational Schools as well as being properly taught in our higher institutions of learning. As to defining recognised in our higher institu-

be defined as the account of people the subject: Labour History may at work and more particularly of their efforts to determine the conditions of their work. A logical extension of the definition would embrace a study of the efforts of people at work to determine how best their work may serve the welfare of the community.

Although, with few exceptions, the old hands in the hierarchies of our universities have been slow to promote Labour History study, some of the young academics have shown themselves more enterprising in the subject. It was a few young academics first took the initiative to start the Society. Fired by their enthusiasm, some of us, old hands in the trade unions and with the required educational interests, were glad to help in getting the Society going. We have some thirty of our principal trade unions and local Trades Councils, including the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, affiliated to our Society.

JOHN SWIFT

ACT NOW — JOIN THE Connolly Youth Movement

For more information write to General Secretary, Connolly Youth Movement, 37 Pembroke Lane, Dublin.

CONNOLLY YOUTH MOVEMENT

YOUTH HOLIDAY 77



A.C.R.A. push on ground rents

by EDDIE GLACKEN

EARLY last month the Association of Combined Residents' Associations held a public meeting in Donaghmede to report to the local Residents' Associations on ACRA's campaign against Ground Rent and Rates.

Much of the discussion centred around the new Landlord and Tenant Bill which is at the moment before the Oireachtas. ACRA have already drafted 60 to 70 amendments and have sent these to Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, and the Labour Party seeking commitments of support for these emandments.

The Chairman of ACRA, Mr. Keely, stated that his organisation was determined that the Bill, with their amendments, should become law before the forthcoming General Election.

The main purpose of the proposed Act will be to stop the creation of new ground rent, and it certainly would never have seen the light of day without ACRA's campaign over the years.

However, the Bill does not propose to interfere with existing ground rents. ACRA are demanding that all ground rents be phased out within a period of 3 or 4 years at most.

Already under the 1967 Act, house-owners can "buy-out" their ground rent by paying to the ground landlord a sum which, if invested in the latest National Loan, would yield interest per annum to the landlord equivalent to the present ground rent.

This situation is farcical for several reasons—first of all, the landlord will obviously invest in an area which will yield higher interest than the National Loan; and secondly, and most important, the measure is designed to shut off protest while leaving the privileges and profits of capital intact—a classic capitalist "reform".

Mr. Raphael Burke, T.D., of Fianna Fail, who attended the meeting, could with an easy conscience support such legislation, for it does not interfere in the slightest with the welfare of the coterie of landlords, developers, solicitors, auctioneers, etc., in the Fianna Fail Party, of whom he himself is a typical example.

Likewise the monied interests of the Fine Gael Party can sleep easy in their beds.

But when, at the meeting, a speaker from the floor pointed out some of the home truths of ground rent (how it was an invention of British landlords designed to give a retrospective legal veneer to their plunder of Irish lands. Mr. Burke started to lecture the audience on the sacred, God-given, constitutionally guaranteed rights of private property.

In other words the wealthy and their agents in the Oireachtas say—"yes, we are robbing you, but if you want us to stop robbing you, you must pay for that privilege". Now, isn't that a great bargain entirely?

APOLOGY

LAST month we published a leaflet from the Irish Council for Civil Liberties on what to do if arrested. The document, however, was only a draft and was handed out at a recent press conference for information only.

We apologise for any embarrassment our inadvertent publication of the draft may have caused.

The finished leaflet will be available shortly from the I.C.C.L. at Liberty Hall, Dublin 1.

The solution for working people who wish to rid themselves of the burden of this criminal rent is not to be conned by schemes which will further enrich the landlords and for which we will have to pay, but to organise in their areas in support of ACRA's campaign for a complete end to all ground rents.



● The major issue in the election will be jobs for the unemployed.

Ballyfermot needs more jobs and strict price control

IN producing solutions to the problems of Ballyfermot you produce solutions to the problems of people all over the country since all are manifestations of national problems.

Ask any working family and they will tell you about the cut-backs they have had to make because the real value of their income has fallen. For many this has been aggravated by one or more of the family's wage-earners being thrown out of work.

The Government must be forced to declare a national employment emergency and make funds available for job creation. When the Government told us that the institutions of the State were threatened, money was quickly found to re-equip the army and increase its strength to a record level, yet when the welfare of Ireland's working people is threatened through an unemployment crisis we are told that the money is not there.

Many parents who spent years fighting for housing for themselves now see their group-up sons and daughters starting married life with the same problem. Their lack of success in finding a place of their own to live has resulted in severe overcrowding in many homes.

We can no longer tolerate the uncertainty of leaving the vital task of house-building in the hands of speculators and profiteers.

This is a job which should be entrusted to the Department of Local Government. All building land should be nationalised and a major building programme set in motion. Local Authorities could carry out the work in each area, using direct labour schemes. In this way cheaper and better houses could be produced by cutting out the middleman and much needed work would be provided in the building industry.

Rising prices are a constant source of worry to working people. Stricter controls must be introduced if we are to even maintain present living standards. The existing price regulations are totally ineffective.

The business community can easily side-step them or find loopholes in the law. Strange, how no such loop-holes are to be found in the National Wage Agreement, which might allow workers to improve their wages.

The medical service needs a complete overhaul—doctors should serve the people, not exploit them. We need a comprehensive Health Scheme funded from National Insurance contributions. Drug companies and drug distribution should be under public control and form an integrated part of this scheme. Hospitalisation, all medical care and advice (includ-



● Johnny Montgomery... Communist Party candidate in Ballyfermot.

ing choice of doctor) should be available without charge. No one should suffer ill health because of lack of money.

Heavy industrial traffic is a constant danger to the people of Ballyfermot, particularly to the very young and the very old. Motorways should be built around housing schemes, towns and villages, not through them as in the case of Ballyfermot. Overhead gantries or underpasses should be built at all major road crossings.

We have heard a lot of chatter about vandalism and suggested remedies to this problem. Local traders (very few of whom live in Ballyfermot) have called for various forms of punishment for the wrongdoers. Surely it is more important to prevent young people becoming involved in these activities. This could be done by providing them with productive and creative outlets for their energies, something that has never been done on the scale necessary. There is no cinema in the area and though the youth clubs work hard the inadequate space and facilities at their disposal makes their task impossible. Private enterprise will not provide these facilities, since there is no profit in it, so the Corporation must take on the job. Convicted vandals could be made do public work in their own area. As well as being useful this would be a deterrent because of the embarrassment it would cause. At present punishment is a heroic badge to be worn in front of one's mates.

High bus fares to and from housing schemes imposes a considerable burden on working-class

families and the quality of the service leaves much to be desired. A city rail service is an urgent necessity as it would help in providing a better and cheaper service.

The private operators at present milking the profitable sections of what was once C.I.E. should be given the boot and these operations returned to public control.

We need more school space and teachers. The issue of the new college should be settled once and for all in the interest of the people of the area. The education of our children must cease to be the plaything of vested interests who serve their own selfish ends rather than care for the children. The Department of Education

must take greater control of and ensure that our schools are run on democratic lines.

Parts of Upper Ballyfermot suffer from an inadequate water supply at all times. In summer this problem becomes intolerable. Apart from the terrible inconvenience it is a major health hazard and one which can and must be eliminated. More reservoir space and the re-piping of some city areas is required—the Government should set about this task immediately.

These are only some of the problems of Ballyfermot but if even they were dealt with the quality of life for the people of the area would be greatly improved.

I.C.C.L concerned at prison situation

THE Irish Council for Civil Liberties is concerned at the allegations against the procedures used for the treatment of prisoners and the capricious application of the Prison Rules designed to facilitate the rehabilitation of the offender. In particular, and because of the serious threat to human life arising out of the present hunger strike against conditions in Portlaoise Prison, the Council considers it necessary that the Government take immediate action to allay public concern regarding the issues raised by the hunger strike.

As an organisation involved in the protection and enhancement of civil liberties and human rights, the Council opposes extremism from private and official sources and totally rejects the pretensions of any organisation to decide whether people should live or die. But the Council also feels that there cannot be any differentiation between one category of prisoners and another, and basic civil liberties must be applicable to all, irrespective of the behaviour of some claimants for such rights or whether the conditions complained against were induced by previous breaches of prison security and order. Finally, the Council considers it necessary to point out that the political and military associations of the hunger strikers should not provide an excuse for silence for those who care about the administration of our prisons.

The Executive Committee of the Council therefore requests the Government to institute a public inquiry into conditions at Portlaoise Prison as an urgent necessity. Such an inquiry is necessary because the public has no impartial way of knowing whether the allegations made by prisoners,

their families and others are well founded or not, because in each case the Minister for Justice has contradicted such statements. It is the Council's view that an all-party Oireachtas Committee would be the quickest and most efficacious method for conducting such an enquiry.

Conversely, it is the Council's view that political leaders representing the interests of the hunger strikers should show their concern for human life by inducing the hunger strikers to call off their hunger strike immediately.

The Irish Council for Civil Liberties—a no-party, non-political association—expresses its willingness to assist in the settlement of this very serious dispute. The Council's sole reason for intervention is motivated by a desire to preserve human life while at the same time recognising the right of the Government to take measures, consistent with the maintenance of civil liberty, to preserve order and to protect the lives and the safety of all our citizens. There is therefore a serious compulsion on all parties concerned not to allow any further escalation of the dispute.

IN 1959 the first hydrocarbon strike in the North-Western European oil province was made in Northern Holland, near Slochteren, in the form of a massive onshore gas find. This inspired a large amount of interest in exploration in the area, which resulted in the well-known North Sea finds and the subsequent interest in Irish hydrocarbon potential.

The first company to show an interest in Ireland was Ambassador Irish Oil, a wholly owned subsidiary of an American multinational. They opened negotiations with the Government in 1959 and secured an undertaking to be issued an exclusive petroleum licence under the Petroleum and Other Minerals Development Act, which had yet to be passed!

On the 10th March, 1960, the Act was signed, and Ambassador's licence was issued on the 29th. This notorious £500 licence gave Ambassador the exclusive right to search for oil and gas in the whole area under the jurisdiction

of the State, and was to last for 20 years, with the surrender of quarter of the area every five years. A petroleum producing licence was guaranteed if oil was found.

Ambassador went into voluntary liquidation in 1961 and the licence was transferred to a consortium of three companies: Ambassador Irish Oil of Fort Worth, Texas; Continental Oil of Ireland (Houston, Texas) and Ohio Oil International (later renamed Marathon Petroleum Ireland Ltd.). In November 1964, Continental transferred its 37½ share to its two partners, and in

by FERGUS NOLAN

1966 Ambassador sold out its holding in the licence to Marathon for £230,000, which is a good indication of its real value. Marathon Petroleum Ireland Ltd. is one of the more important subsidiaries of Marathon, the eighth largest petroleum corporation in the (non-Socialist) world, and is controlled by the infamous Rockefeller family trusts.

The policy of giving over control of all Irish oil prospecting

to a single foreign-based multinational has been attacked by both bourgeois interests and by various progressive organisations and individuals. Among many sources which blamed the lack of activity in Irish offshore regions on the monopoly which the Government allowed Marathon retain until relatively recently was the "Financial Times" of 21st March, 1973, which called the grant, of over 26,000 square miles of the newest and most promising oil province in the world to a single company for £500, "peculiar". The grant was termed "an incredible mistake" in the "Irish

Times" of 11th May, 1974. An analysis of Irish oil policy in a Eurofinance Research report of 1975 concluded that the 1960 action was the result of "a rash decision".

Up to recently, the Government could fulfil its prime function as the front men and apologists for the oil multinationals quite openly, and in 1960 they could pass Acts to facilitate the giving away of our resources without having to make any allowances for public opinion. In formulating present resources policy, the Government and the multinationals have to conduct an elaborate charade in order to convince the public that we really have control over our resources and the wealth generated from them.

Marathon and the other multinationals may yet regret that their inactivity in the 'sixties ensured that some, at least, of our precious resources survive for the 'eighties. By then public pressure can ensure that they do not have things all their own way.

Exploration scandal off coast of Ireland

Our economic development

Part 1: The road to ruin

CENTURIES of foreign domination have left our country economically backward in relation to the advanced capitalist economies near us. And the consequence of this backwardness have been emigration and poverty, serious social abnormality in rural areas, the decline of our language and culture, and a vicious circle where economic weakness hinders the way to a solution which increases our weakness in the longer term as well.

The defeat of the struggle for national independence in the 1920s compounded these problems, since the artificial partitioning of our country cut off from the largely agricultural South the more industrially developed North, with its engineering potential for producing the means of production for industrial development throughout the rest of the country.

PARTITION

Partition also cut the Northern industrial base from its natural economic complement with which it could hope for a continuing rise in its production and prosperity. This is now being seen in the run down of Northern traditional industry — despite the imagined security to be given by the British link.

Partition, then, imposed by British violence and maintained by a system of discrimination and sectarian bigotry ensured Britain's continued domination over the country.

Even had the Southern commercial class—victorious in the civil war—been prepared to jeopardise their cattle trade, the division of the country's economic capability would have imposed great difficulty on industrialising.

As it was, apart from the important Shannon electrification scheme, the first Free State Government was content to let existing economic relations continue: the export of cattle and the importing for internal distribution of British manufactured goods was the mainstay of their supporters' personal prosperity, whatever its cost to the rest of the people.

It was left to Fianna Fáil under De Valera to attempt an industrialisation policy. But De Valera too was tied to the dogma of non-state "interference".

Instead of the Irish State using the period of tariff protection to build up Irish industry, De Valera preferred to rely on creating con-

ditions to stimulate private investment and entrepreneurial activity.

Relying on private initiative he had of necessity to allow private control over finance, and in the long run that was a contradictory policy. Private finance will naturally look for the most profitable area for investment, which inevitably leads to a drain of resources away to more developed economies—particularly since the traditional trading and finance links of Ireland were with Britain.

De Valera left his enemies in control of the sources of Irish industrialisation, and the would-be native manufacturing class proved most unequal to the task facing them.

Of course this was not due to any special inferiority on their part, but to the inexorable working of the capitalist system, where competition yields to monopoly and where late starters find the going infinitely more difficult.

The only way to defeat such a combination of factors was, of course, for the State to intervene decisively in economic direction. This would have required State control of all finance institutions—nationalisation of banks, building societies, insurance companies, etc.—the centralisation of trading abroad, to assist monetary control, and direct State initiative in productive industry.

ABANDONED

But such a programme, involving a serious assault on the bastions of privilege, would have meant mobilising and winning the support of the mass of the working people of Ireland for it, and De Valera and his small manufacturers had no desire to see the sleeping giant awoken.

Instead, under Lemass—though not without some apparent dispute—Fianna Fáil abandoned its half-hearted policy of self-reliance and threw in its lot with international capital.

Foreign capital has certainly flowed into the country, though at nothing like the rate that expatriated profits and tax-free export earnings have left it. The multinationals have in general established peripheral sections of their own international operations.

So, from being the producer of raw agricultural products, we have progressed to being a manufacturer of components for foreign industries—components which are tied to particular concerns and



● Women workers in state owned industry in the socialist countries enjoy stable employment in a balanced planned economy.

which could not be used elsewhere even if the firm was taken into Irish control.

These firms also have generally little or no direct linkages with the rest of the Irish economy. They import raw materials of semi-finished goods and export them again after a small further stage in the production process.

Such a peripheral and unstable system of industry has given us

no real basis for economic development. We must instead behave ourselves and smile politely at our betters who otherwise can throw thousands onto the dole queues.

When the fly-by-night whizz-kid operator goes we are back where we started, except with a hole in the ground where once there was wealth to lay the basis for a sound future.

Only by ending this superficial

method of industrialisation can we hope to make real progress, and it can only be ended through the State assuming wider and more detailed responsibilities in the context of centralised economic planning.

Next month we will discuss how Communists see the function of the State—North, South and in an all-Ireland context in the task of industrialisation.



SOLIDARITY FOR EVER

WHEN the union's inspiration through the worker's blood shall run
There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun;
Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one
But the union makes us strong.

Chorus:

Solidarity for ever, solidarity for ever, solidarity for ever
For the union makes us strong.

They have taken untold millions that they never toiled to earn,
But without our brain and muscle not a single wheel could turn.
We can break their haughty power, gain our freedom when we learn
That the union makes us strong.

(Chorus)

In our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold,
Greater than the might of armies magnified a thousandfold.
We can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old,
For the union makes us strong.

(Chorus)

BALLAD NOTE.—Sixty-two years ago, the famous poet, writer, artist and organiser for the Industrial Workers of the World, Ralph Chaplin, wrote "Solidarity Forever", to the tune of the stirring Civil War song "John Brown's Body".

At the time he was inspired by the great Kanawha Valley strike of coal-miners, in West Virginia, and knew only too well how to use the power of music and poetry to agitate and organise.

RACISM and SEXISM in the U.S.A.

by STEPHANIE ALLAN,
Chairperson, Commission on Women's
Equality, Communist Party, U.S.A.
No. California District.

MORE than any other capitalist country, the United States depends on racism as an ideological weapon to divide the working class. Every single progressive movement has succeeded or failed directly in proportion to its commitment to the struggle against slavery, racism and for black liberation. Women are no exception to this principle.

The oppression of Black women has been the measure of oppression for all women. But the resistance of black women has inspired the entire women's movement, setting standards of integrity, unity and clarity, helping to define the way to emancipation.

FIRST

The first U.S. woman to speak in public was Maria W. Stewart, a Black abolitionist and teacher, in 1832. The first white woman to speak publicly were Sarah and Angelina Grimke in 1837. They toured New England, speaking against slavery. It was to establish their right to participate in the abolitionist movement that first mobilised women to demand equality.

The first great male champion of women's rights was Frederick Douglass, a former slave and famous abolitionist. It was the debate in 1869 over support for the 14th and 15th amendments to the U.S. Constitution, granting suffrage to black men only, which first divided the anti-slavery

and women's movements. A section of the women's rights movement refused to support the amendments because they excluded women. Douglass pleaded with them, calling them the "culmination of one-half of our demands," saying they must now redouble their energy to secure . . . the same sacred rights without limitation to sex."

That racism was an issue was dramatically demonstrated by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the most progressive leaders of the women's suffrage movement. In answer to Douglass, she said, "I say no. I would not trust him (the Black man) with my rights; degraded, oppressed himself, he would be even more despotic . . . than ever our Saxon rulers are . . . if women are still to be represented by men, then I say let only the highest type of manhood stand at the helm of state." The movement split deeply over the issue, setting back efforts to win the vote for women many years.

The current women's movement also had its roots in anti-racist struggles. On Dec. 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a tired black woman in

Montgomery, Alabama, coming home from work, refused to give her seat on a bus to a white man as Southern segregationist laws demanded, and was arrested.

Her action and arrest sparked the Montgomery bus boycott, led by a young minister, Martin Luther King, Jr., and is generally recognised as the beginning of the massive civil rights movement which shook the U.S. to its racist foundations.

Young women, Black and white, from all over the country came to the south to take part in this epic struggle. They found their participation limited, as their predecessors had more than 100 years before. It was their determination to play a full part in the fight for justice and against racism which led them to demand that discrimination against women be ended.

However, today, the feminist movement, as it did a century before, has split with the Black liberation movement, placing so-called women's demands in a way which either ignores or misinterprets the needs of the most oppressed women in U.S. society.

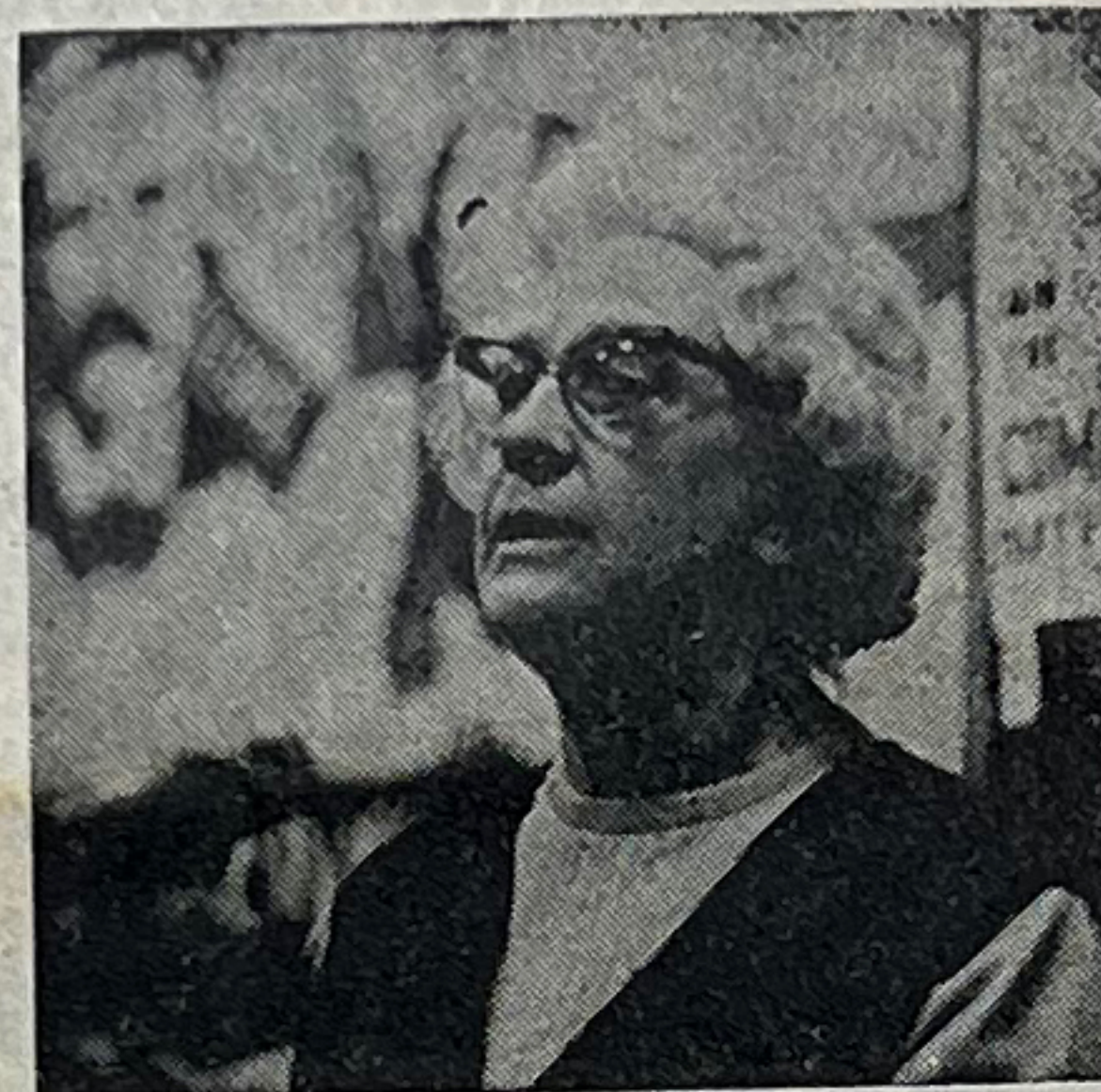
The failure to address the concerns of Black women is also tied to the feminists' inability to understand the class origins of women's oppression. For in their majority, Black women always were and are workers.

Thus, you see the demand for abortion, but little about the forced sterilisation of Black, Spanish-speaking and poor working class women. There are demonstrations for more women bank vice-presidents while Black women suffer the highest unemployment and lowest wages. The nuclear family is attacked as the instrument of oppression of women while the Black family is being destroyed. One-third of all Black families are headed by women alone.

DIVISION

U.S. Communists believe that racism is the most serious division of working people, keeping them from uniting to defeat their common enemy, monopoly capital. This same division exists in the women's movement. Liberation of women can never be achieved under capitalism which is based on exploitation, yet is possible and necessary to struggle for whatever gains can be won—not only to make life easier, but to make clear the limits of this system and the way to a better one. But gains depend on a united movement. Neither the working class or women can afford to be divided by racism. By speaking to the needs of our most oppressed sisters, we strengthen our whole struggle.

LIFE or DEATH? — end the nuclear threat



By BETTY SINCLAIR

THE last world war ended in Europe in May, 1945. The question of finishing the remnants of war in the Far East, where Japan was the main imperialist protagonist, was ready to be decided a few months later. The Red Army of the Soviet Union, as we then knew and called it, plus the resistance of the people of China and other countries, had already forced the Japanese to take the path of surrender and sue for peace. But the United States imperialists, with the assistance of scientists taken from Nazi Germany, had perfected the atom bomb and two of these deadly missiles were unleashed over Japan — without military necessity. This attack on the common people of an already defeated enemy was taken without any discussion with the U.S. allies in the war, including the Soviet Union, but with the connivance of Labour Prime Minister Atlee of Britain, on August 6th and 9th, over the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The American and British imperialists thought to retain the world as it had been before they encouraged Hitler and the German fascists to build a 'new economic order' which would include the destruction of the first world Socialist state, i.e. the Soviet Union. The fascists of Germany were not "biddable tools" and the Western imperialists were forced into an alliance with the Soviet Union in order to preserve their own national identities. But, all the while, their actions, strategy and policies were pointed towards the preservation of imperialism and the old empires. The U.S. rulers thought that, with the aid of the atomic weapon, they could bring the Soviet Union, which had lost 20 million people in the conflict against German fascism, and other countries to heel.

JAPAN

So, in Japan, the atomic bombs were unleashed. The result? More than 120,000 people were killed immediately. About 100,000 were severely injured and, until the present day, there are still people dying from the after-effects of the bombs dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki—the both cities were practically wiped out.

What is the attitude of U.S. and

British imperialism today—in face of the awful tragedy of August, 1945. The Warsaw Treaty powers have asked those who signed the Final Act in Helsinki in August, 1975, for detente, peace and progress to sign a draft treaty in which all parties would pledge themselves not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other. Although the appeal was addressed to all the 33 states who signed the Final Act, the reply came from the NATO powers—NO. They would not sign such a draft treaty and accused the Soviet Union and the other Socialist States of seeking to obtain an advantage! An "advantage" which would preserve life on this earth.

FACT

Whatever the rulers of the imperialist countries may say, or allege, about the Soviet Union and the other Socialist states, it is an irrefutable fact that the U.S. imperialists have been the only rulers to use atomic weapons against a practically defenceless people. The "free world" rulers were free" to destroy, with two blows, tens of thousands of men, women and children. To hold such a threat over mankind, for the foreseeable future, was their main aim. That they were not able to have their

way has been due to the fact that the Soviet Union was able, in a very short period of time, to master the secret of atomic power, assist a number of European countries to take the Socialist path and so build up a world Socialist system, i.e. the Soviet Union no longer stood alone. And since those eventful days of 1945 to 1948, the world Socialist system has been extended to four of the five world continents, i.e. Europe, America, Asia and Africa.

PEACE

The peoples of the world want, and will have, peace. They desire no further resort to wars to decide problems or plan for the future. More and more the peoples become convinced that what the Socialist states are asking for corresponds with their own wishes. The NATO powers thought they could by 1952, "settle accounts" with the growing might of the new world Socialist system, whatever the cost in human lives. But today—in 1977—the Soviet Union will celebrate 60 years of Socialist power and has the majority of mankind at its side. At the same time, the would-be world rulers, i.e. the imperialists, face an unprecedented economic crisis for which they can find no cure.

PORTLAOISE PRISONERS

A Chara,

The information from Portlaoise prison seems to leave no doubt that political prisoners are held there under conditions which are intolerable in a civilised society. Without unbearable provocation no prisoner will resort to the agony of a hunger-strike which may end in death and must result in impaired health. Already three Irishmen have died in English jails and disclosures about the treatment of Irish prisoners in England have caused deep concern among thoughtful Englishmen. How much more deeply should we be concerned about the treatment of Irish prisoners in Irish jails.

An immediate investigation, not a private investigation held in camera by the Department of Justice but a public investigation, is not merely desirable; it is imperative.

Peadar O'Donnell, Donegal. Maire Comerford, Wexford. Nora Connolly O'Brien, Dublin. Tom Maguire, Mayo. John Jo Sheehy, Kerry. Sighe Uí Dhonnchada, Dublin. Jim Moloney, Tipperary. Eithne B. Uí Dhonaill, Donegal. Michael Traynor, Belfast. Peadar Glynn, Sligo. Pax Whelan, Waterford. Tom Kelleher, Cork. Eamon Enright, Dublin. Sean Dowling, Dublin.

ECONOMIC REVIEW

Sir, — I was interested to read your critical review of "The Irish Industrial Revolution", produced by Sinn Féin the Workers' Party. Your reviewer might have given more attention to the curious economics of this document as these may be of interest to your readers.

In setting forth a plan to secure full employment in the Twenty-Six Counties state by 1986, the Sinn Féin document first adapts Brendan Walsh's projections to estimate how many jobs will be needed because of population growth. It then estimates the number of jobs needed for those leaving the land, a process which the Sinn Féin plan both welcomes and would seek to accelerate: "On the basis of our outline plan for 'land as a natural resource' a projected annual decrease of 10,000 per year in family farming would ensue." (Page 63.)

Adding these estimates together it comes up with a figure of



412,000 jobs needed in the decade to 1986. It then multiplies this figure by sums derived from IDA estimates of the capital investment needed per job in export-orientated, capital intensive, multi-national industry in Ireland, to produce a grand total of the investment needed for full employment, as follows:

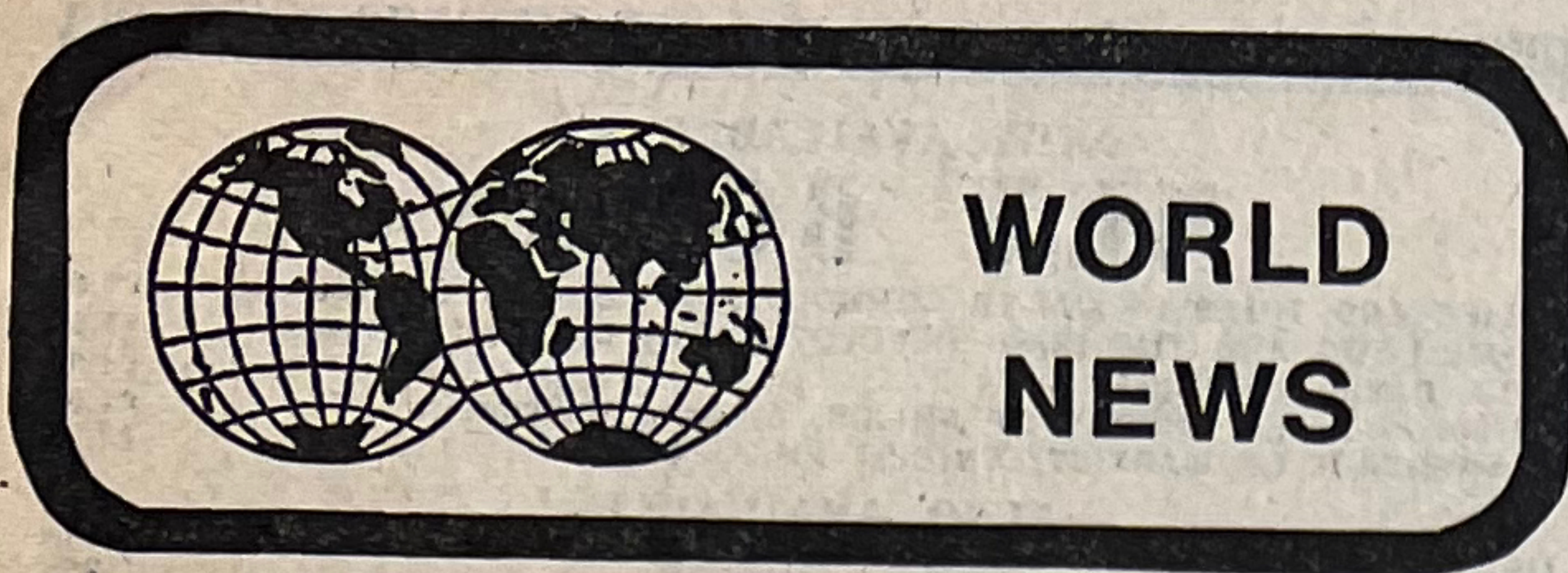
"Our calculations thus indicate an additional investment requirement of £11,400 million. The maintenance of our existing level of investment will require a commitment of £9,500 million, to give a total investment of £20,935 million in the ten year period. The development of this investment will be the task of the Industrial Planning Authority representing the interests of the working class. . . . The organisation of the economy to achieve an investment level approximately 120% higher than the present level is therefore essential if we are to get more on the road towards full employment in the next five years." (Page 68.)

The Sinn Féin document therefore calls for an average annual investment rate of over £2,000 million a year, at 1976 prices, over a decade, a sum equivalent to nearly half the Irish G.N.P.

So far as I know, no country in history has ever attained an investment rate of this level, not to mind sustaining it each year for a decade. And perhaps the most remarkable thing about this "plan" is that nowhere in the document is there an indication of where funds of this extraordinary magnitude are to come from.

The investment figures required are, as it were, plucked from the air. Detailed targets are given for desirable job creation in various industrial sectors. Abuse is thrown at those who question the self-evident superiority of basing development on export orientated, capital-intensive investment and the requirements of the multi-nationals, whom the document tells us are "objectively progressive". (Page 148.)

(Continued on page 7)



WORLD NEWS

Shift to Left in Brittany

ONE of the most interesting aspects of the swing to the left in the recent municipal election in France has been the position of the left in Brittany. The United Left has a majority in 9 out of 11 towns in Brittany with a population of over 30,000. Results of elections in more rural areas have shown a similar growth in strength of the left. Brittany can no longer be regarded as one of the strongholds of the right as has been the case up to now.

The Breton people have become increasingly aware that the economic situation in their country has been steadily deteriorating, particularly in the past ten years. It is Brittany that suffers most from the capitalist economic policy of the French government. It has the highest unemployment rate (an average of 10%, with up to 20% in some towns). The rate of factory closures has been highest in Brittany and some 20,000 young Bretons have to leave their country to find work every year. As well as this, the French government has consistently displayed a complete disregard for a separate Breton cultural identity. In spite of the fact that a recent survey has shown that 80% of secondary-school pupils and their parents would

like to see the language on the school curriculum, the government refuses to grant any such status to Breton, which has by far the greatest number of native speakers out of all the Celtic languages.

Much of the credit for the increasing awareness of economic and cultural oppression in Brittany has been due to the work of the U.D.B. (Breton Democrat Union), a party which, since its foundation in 1964, has consistently affirmed that self-determination for the Breton people can only come about in a meaningful way under socialism. Together with the Communist Socialist and other smaller parties it forms the United Left alliance. The success of the United Left in Brittany was in no small way due to the work of the U.D.B. Its members have been elected to 7 of the town councils mentioned above. One of its members has been elected deputy-mayor of Brest, a town which has had a right-wing council for 50 years.

The 13 point U.D.B. charter, published in the February issue of the U.D.B. paper, the *Peuple Breton*, shows that the aims of the party are a united democratic Brittany which will serve the interests of the working class and develop the national culture. It also affirms the solidarity of the U.D.B. with anti-imperialist struggle.



● MRS. THATCHER

Thatcher welcome for Peking Clique

THE extreme cordiality of the welcome given to the British Conservative Party leader, Mrs. Thatcher, by the Peking leadership in China illustrates the reactionary nature of China's foreign policy, even after the death of Mao Tse-Tung.

Mrs. Thatcher was so welcome in Peking because she is rightly seen as a virulent anti-Soviet war-monger. Peking, while paying lip-service to Marxism, have thrown in their lot with the most anti-Communist section of British society.

Indeed, as the British liberal newspaper, "The Guardian," pointed out, Mrs. Thatcher's Peking speech was so extreme that she could not even have made it at a Conservative Party meeting in Britain.

The struggle for peace and detente is under strong attack from those who hope to recover former imperial glory by a return to cold war rhetoric. In this struggle Peking is still aligned with the far right of the capitalist political spectrum.

O'Riordan tours in Britain

LAST month, the General Secretaries of the Communist Parties of Ireland and Great Britain, Michael O'Riordan and Gordon McLennan, spoke together at public meetings in Surrey, Manchester, Liverpool and Willesden (London).

The audiences of Irish emigrants and English trade union and

political activists listened to the two speakers presenting the situation in Ireland as a cause of common concern to the working people of the two islands.

Both gave many instances of the contemporary relevance of Marx's famous statement that "the people of a nation that oppresses

another nation cannot themselves be free".

At other venues at which Michael O'Riordan spoke—Birmingham, Bradford and Leeds—the supporting speakers included Irish activists in the British Labour Movement, District leaders of the British Communist Party and local trade union personalities.

SLIGO EASTER COMMEMORATION

THE Sligo Branch of the Connolly Youth Movement held its annual wreath-laying ceremony at the Republican Plot in Sligo cemetery on Easter Sunday last, April 10th, at 12 noon.

Socialist Youth Councillor Declan Bree, Chairman of the Sligo branch of the Connolly Youth Movement, delivered the oration and Mr. David Smyth, a member of the Sligo branch of the organisation, laid the wreath.

The ceremony concluded with Mr. Philip Conlon, a lone piper, playing a lament and the national anthem, Mr. Ciaran Rooney, Secretary of the Sligo branch of the C.Y.M., presided.



Reproduced from "Granma".

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Contd. from page 6)

An investment figure of £21,000 million in a decade is arrived at as the basis of this plan for full employment—and then forgotten all about. For this totally unrealistic figure is not once mentioned again and there is not a paragraph of discussion to indicate how it might be found. Without this being done, of course, the economic "plan" is meaningless.

There is later mention, on page 123, of a short-term programme which Sinn Fein advocates should be pressed on the Irish Government over the period 1977-78. This, we are told, would require the spending of £460 million of State investment, on top of existing investment, to create 55,000 new jobs in this period of time. There is some discussion of how such a sum would be raised—and it turns out to be by means of import controls and foreign borrowing!

This indeed is one of the surprises of a truly astonishing document, for throughout much of its length it is virulent in its abuse of "gombeenmen" and "archaic protectionists" who seek to foster internal demand and the Irish home market. Yet when it comes to detailing its own short-term proposals, they turn out to be an extreme of ultra-protectionism.

The document refers to £700 million of imported goods, many of which could be produced in Ireland and states: "Our strategy would be to restrict, by means of quotas, combined with a system of internal price controls, a range of these imports so as to raise a substantial proportion of the £460 million required." (Page 125.)

More astonishing still, this

highly protectionist scheme is to be carried out, seemingly, with the co-operation and assistance of the E.E.C.!

"We do not envisage withdrawal from the E.E.C. as a prerequisite of our economic plan. . . . We will force the E.E.C. to assist in the aim of full employment within the territory of Ireland. With this commitment secured we will proceed to negotiate whatever necessary temporary derogations from E.E.C. trade policy will be required to further the aims of the Short Term Programme. We will negotiate these agreements in recognition of the longer term commitment to free trade which we fully accept as being consistent with the long term plan for full employment. In sum, our imposition of temporary import controls will . . . be ultimately of benefit to E.E.C. trade." (Page 126.)

Plans for full employment put before the Irish working class by those who purport to serve its interests should be realistic and capable of achievement. The utopianism and lack of realism of these proposals speak for themselves. — Yours, etc.,

ANTHONY COUGHLAN,
Secretary,

Irish Sovereignty Movement.

SINN FEIN VIEW

Dear Friends,

The Irish Industrial Revolution" has been reviewed at length in the *Irish Socialist*. The reviewer is, of course, entitled to his opinion.

Perhaps it is as well to explain

that *The Irish Industrial Revolution* is the natural development of a series of detailed studies of the Irish economy carried out by Sinn Fein—The Workers' Party from the point of view of scientific socialism.

The studies are: *The Great Irish Oil and Gas Robbery; The Banks; The Public Sector and the Profit-makers; Tony O'Reilly—A Case Study in Irish Capitalism; Full Employment by 1986*; and now *The Irish Industrial Revolution*. Material from these studies has been extensively used by all sections of the Left in Ireland. Imitation is a sincere form of flattery—so it is often said—but the source of the information these people use is seldom acknowledged!

The fact that we do not receive credit for our work does not worry us unduly, but it is annoying when our material is used and then presented in a 'screwball' manner.

It is possible for us to say without fear of contradiction that Sinn Fein—The Workers' Party studies of the Irish economy are the most detailed and extensive carried out by any Irish organisation of the serious Left, or indeed any sort of 'Left' for that matter, in Ireland.

Our book is the result of original research; original works often shock—I suppose one could say—minds which are set in a conservative mould even on that side of the political spectrum.

Much ado is made in the review of the "Irish Industrial Revolution" on the absence from the book of traditional expressions of loyalty to the Irish People and their struggles, therefore we feel that there is no need to stress the point.

We are a working class party seriously engaged in working class political struggle, and because of this, we must take special notice of the growing power of USA imperialism in the Irish economy.

But the Irish working class will judge our economic studies and our political work. We see signs of ever-increasing support for our Party in the Irish working class . . . we are content to let that class write the vital review.

Signed:

Eamonn Smullen, /Director
30 Gardiner Place,
Department of Economic Affairs
Sinn Fein—The Workers' Party,
Dublin 1.

Reply

EDITORIAL BOARD: In his reply, Mr Smullen unfortunately avoids dealing with the arguments raised in our review or answering the questions posed. The major point we emphasised was that Connolly recognised British Imperialism—in its political as well as its economic presence—to be the main obstacle to social progress in Ireland.

While the USA dominates on a world scale, the directing centre which affects us is Britain, whose troops and administration can be physically seen in the North. With the vast bulk of our financial transactions being cleared through London clearing houses it is ridiculous to ignore British imperialism as our major enemy.

Mr. Smullen has not challenged our assertion that the document implies support for the E.E.C. We must again ask where Sinn Fein stand on this issue: are they

still opposed to E.E.C. membership?

Mr. Smullen also seems to imply that other left groups, possibly ourselves, are plagiarising their material. But the point of our review was to express our criticisms and disagreements with the views advanced. Perhaps Mr. Smullen could explain.

Certainly one of our complaints was that Sinn Fein's document did not give the specific source references by which figures could be checked—figures compiled by Government and other economic agencies for public use, and no way the personal property of Sinn Fein.

We take note of the points made in Mr. Coughlan's letter. They serve of course to emphasise our basic criticisms. However, pressure of space did not allow us to cover every point in detail, and in our original review we just stated that the source of the finance needed had not been explained.

In reply to Mr. Phelan (whose letter we published last month) we would only ask: is it wrong to unite the maximum strength against British Imperialism, which, despite its junior rôle on the world stage, is still the dominant political and economic presence affecting Ireland, and preventing the full realisation of the capabilities of our country?

The thrust of Sinn Fein's case is that foreign investment is laying the basis for serious industrialisation. We disagree, and argue that their type of industrialisation is peripheral and limited. That is why the State must intervene decisively in the control, as well as the direction, of finance and investment, and necessarily in manufacturing industry as well.



GIVE A PRESENT FOR MAY DAY

A question of dignity in the 1913 lock-out

"IT'S not just for me; it's for you and the kids as well; it's a question of dignity."

These words, spoken by "Fitz" in "The Risen People" by James Plunkett (Project Arts Centre) in many ways provide the key to the massive struggle of Dublin's workers and their families against William Martin Murphy and the Employers' Federation during the 1913 Lock Out.

The bosses, in their determination to smash the I.T.&G.W.U., at that time the most militant and advanced trade union in the world, issued the notorious "Pledge" to their workers.

The workers were to sign an undertaking not to join the Transport Union or, if already members, that they would leave. The workers refused.

On August 25th, 1913, the employees of the Dublin United Tramway Company walked off the job, leaving the trams and the Horse Show crowd stranded in the streets.

Six days later Bloody Sunday occurred, when the police ran amok in Sackville Street and baton-charged a mass meeting of workers. On September 3rd the 404 employers combined to lock out all members and supporters of Larkin's Union.

GAUNTLET

The gauntlet thus thrown down by the bosses, supported by State and Church, was defiantly taken up by the working class who for 6 months held out against the most vicious brutality and incredible suffering and starvation.

Often one hears this most glorious hour of the Irish working class described as a drawn battle. But this would be a very narrow view. Looked on now we can see that in fact it was historically a great workers' victory.

All the forces of reaction in Ireland and Britain could not stop the workers right to organise. In this great battle were laid the foundations for the powerful trade union movement of today, and from it emerged the first workers' army in Western Europe, the Irish Citizen Army.

From it Connolly drew further lessons which have enriched the theoretical legacy of the Irish labour movement.

The atmosphere of this epic struggle, the hope, the despair and above all the courage is dramatically captured in the play at the Project.

By
EDDIE GLACKIN

The cast, professional and amateur alike, are all excellent, and it is hard to single out individual performances, but for this writer the honours must go to John Murphy in the role of "Hennessy".

His sensitive portrayal of a man, not the strongest or most decisive of characters, who is under pressure to scab on his mates but who eventually comes through, is always true to life and at times very moving.

"Pat" on the other hand is very much the typical Dublin hardchaw—staunch, aggressive and rarin' to have a go—again a most convin-

cing performance from Mannix Flynn.

The beautiful singing of Mildred Fleming and the marked physical resemblance between Larkin and Gerry O'Leary (who plays Big Jim) also add to the atmosphere.

If any criticism can be made it is that the lighter, funnier scenes came over better than the more serious moments. On several occasions too much movement on stage tended to distract the audience from the actual content.

However, I certainly regard it as the best £1 I've spent in many a long day. Reduced rates are available for Trade Union groups and our readers should certainly try to get along with their friends. All credit to the Project Arts Centre for giving us the chance to see this fine play again. Go along and support them.

Two faces of the Catholic Church

A CHOICE OF EVILS by Jim Allen, a play recently shown on BBC1, showed Pius XII as a Nazi collaborator. His was the power to prevent the deportation of Jews as well as the reprisal massacre of 330 innocent Italians taken hostage after the Italian Resistance mounted an attack which resulted in the death of 33 Nazis in 1944. Yet he stood by at these events, concerned only with the territorial integrity of the Vatican and the visions he claimed to have in the hope of one day being canonised.

The play takes place during the hours between the attack and the massacre of the hostages. The central figure is a Curia Cardinal with qualms of conscience. One of the hostages is a priest, Fr. Berelli, a friend of his from the days of his left-wing youth. Fr. Berelli bitterly attacks the Pope and the Curia for their com-

plicity in the horrors of fascism and explains why he has taken the side of the Communists. He refuses to sign a paper disassociating himself with the attack and goes forward to his death.

At one stage in the story the prison veritably rocks with the strains of 'Avanti Populo' and one could not help feel the most immense admiration for those who risked so much in the Resistance and especially for the Communists who constituted its backbone.

The play was however marred by a scene in which the author tried to give the impression that Togliatti, Pollit, Stalin and other leaders of the Communist movement at the time were essentially playing the same game as Pius XII. One was meant to come away believing that the heroic men and women of the Resistance had been as much betrayed by them as by the Pope. This revealed more about the Trotskyist tendencies of the author than about historical reality and took away from what was otherwise a very fine play. **H. S.**

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Slavery's 'Roots'

"Roots" is perhaps the most absorbing and most discussed of the current run of RTE programmes. It is sub-titled, "The Story of an American Family" and is based on a novel by Alex Haley who traces his own ancestry back to Gambia in West Africa about 1767.

The central character in the first few episodes is Kunta Kinte who is shown being born, experiencing the transition ritual to manhood and being captured by the slave hunters.

Perhaps the scenes of life in Africa are a bit idyllic, but they nevertheless convey the idea of a culture with its own rhythm, its own vitality, its own justification. It gives the lie to the vague impression that these people were living a chaotic, barbaric life without rhyme or reason.

The series goes on to show Kunta Kinte being transported, sold into slavery, forcibly broken in and given a new name. In terms of the physical conditions of the crossing and his treatment on arrival, the programme did not really show how very degrading and utterly bleak the lives of many sold into slavery at the time actually were.

It does, however, effectively communicate something of the sense of profound cultural disorientation experienced by those who were harshly uprooted and forced into totally alien ways. But Kunta Kinte never quite becomes Toby.

In the course of the series there are deeply moving scenes: the repeated escape attempts resulting in beatings and dismemberment, the marriage of Kunta Kinte to Belle, the birth of their child, the cruel selling-off of their daughter

Kizzy which separates their family irrevocably and her savage rape by her new master.

There are unfortunately also scenes which are quite unconvincing. For example, the fifth episode shows Tom, the son of Chicken George, the son of Kizzy, reciting a rather high-flown and extremely stylised genealogy as his father rides off into the horizon. It is a bit difficult to swallow.

Nevertheless, whatever its defects, the series does succeed in bringing to the viewer a deeper and fuller understanding of the overwhelming injustice of slavery. It exposes the roots of racism in socio-historical development, rather than in imagined genetic inferiority.

It is to be hoped that it has instilled in its American audience in particular a wider sympathy and support for those who are still living with and fighting against its aftermath.

And if it has extended the horizons of its Irish audience, it has done us a service. It is certainly in a league above "Charlie's Angels". **H. S.**

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

WOLFE TONE SOCIETY MEETING—
"Republican Labour Unity—the Leading Force for National Independence"
—Speakers: Seán Garland, Sinn Féin; Tom Redmond, C.P.I. 29 MOUNTJOY SQUARE, DUBLIN, 8.30 p.m. 3rd MAY
CONNOLLY COMMEMORATION—Organised by C.P.I. ARBOUR HILL, 3 p.m., SUNDAY, 15th MAY
LECTURE ON GRAMSCI, sponsored by T.C.D. Communist Society. WEST CHAPEL A, T.C.D., 1 p.m., TUESDAY, 3rd MAY
CONNOLLY YOUTH MOVEMENT, SLIGO BRANCH. COURSE ON MARXISM, commencing TUESDAY, 10th MAY, at 8 p.m. and continuing each Tuesday for six weeks. All young people welcome—
TUESDAY, 10th MAY—"Marxism and the Development of Society."
TUESDAY, 17th MAY—"The Marxist World Outlook."
TUESDAY, 24th MAY—"The Nature of Capitalism and Imperialism."
TUESDAY, 31st MAY—"The State, Class Struggle and Revolution."
TUESDAY, 7th JUNE—"Socialism as the Basis for Communism."
TUESDAY, 14th JUNE—"The C.Y.M. and its Role in the Struggle for Socialism."

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THE MONTHLY FUND

There was a very good response to the monthly appeal for financial aid to help meet the difference between printing costs of the "Irish Socialist" and the income from sales. For April a fine total of £121.71 came in, and herewith we give the list of donations:
DUBLIN: J. Claxton £2; Friend 50p; J. Swift £1; Ballyfermot Branch 78p; P.D.D. £3.35; S. O'Kelly 60p; Anon 27p; K.M.P. £3; L. Kearney 21p; T.U. Friend £15; VOSPS £2; Anon £2; "Calendar" £16; Supporter 45p; M.K. £1; Cabra 50p; Aknefton 30p; P.T.M. 50p; P. Watt £1; M.G.D. £1; T. Justice 50p; P. Fanning £1; F. Doyle £1; J. Irwin £1; "Ned" £1.40.
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NOTTINGHAM: P. Connolly £3.
OXFORD: M. Leahy £5.

Thanks to all who helped make possible the fine total of £121.71 for April; the May Fund is now open and we hope we will be able to report an even improved total for the month.