



THE STARRY PLOUGH

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An Camchéachta

FEABHRA 1976

THE REAL TERRORISTS



GET THEM OUT

The Starry Plough would like to join the Ard Comhairle who, on behalf of the entire I.R.S.P. offer condolences to the family, relatives and friends of Comrade Hugh Fergusson. Ta a naim i measc na laoch.

Mr. & Mrs. Fergusson and family deeply regret the death of Hugh 'You are always real in our hearts'.

Mr. & Mrs. McArton and family sadly recall the murder of Hugh Fergusson.

Tom, Harry & Ronnie offer their condolences to the friends, relatives and family of Fergie; in life you inspired us, in death you cemented our commitment.

Deeply regret the death of a revolutionary and comrade - Willie Smyth.

Mrs. & Mrs. A. Dornan deeply regret the murder of a friend and patriot and send commiserations to all his family, relatives and friends.

Deeply regret the death of Hugh, a true brother and comrade. In your memory your comrades re-dedicate themselves to national liberation and socialism - Michael Fergusson, Long Kesh, Campus 6.

Just one year ago this month the I.R.S.P. lost its first comrade to the murderous bullets of the Official I.R.A.

Hugh Fergusson was only 19 and had been involved in revolutionary politics since the age of 14.

Hugh was born in Whitehook, Belfast into a family of ten. He became the family's only breadwinner, the rest of the family being unemployed, a situation which is not untypical in Whitehook. Having witnessed the pogrom of 1969 and seeing the Northern State oppress the nationalist population he joined Na Fianna Eireann (Official) in 1970. He was only 14. Even at this young age he saw the need to oppose British imperialism - that full freedom for the people meant fully opposing British economic and political control in Ireland. He studied and learnt as much as he could and went about putting theory into practice, at all times understanding that there was a need to

The Markievicz Cumann IRSP Dun Laoghaire offer their condolences to the family, friends and relatives of Hugh Fergusson on the anniversary of his murder by counter revolutionaries.

Cork Comhairle Ceannair of the IRSP offer their sympathies and condolences to all those who knew Hugh Fergusson and especially to his family. His sacrifice is not forgotten.

All Dublin members of the IRSP have expressed their commiseration to the family and friends of Hugh Fergusson through the Dublin Comhairle Ceannair.

Derry IRSP members offer their condolences to the family, relatives and friends of Hugh Fergusson murdered by agents of British Imperialism.

Sympathy notices were also received from Derry City, Armagh, Newry and South Derry offering their sympathies to the Fergusson family, relatives and friends.

All Carlow members of the I.R.S.P. deeply regret the murder of Comrade Hugh Fergusson. 'His commitment to the I.R.S.P. is an inspiration to all.'

Wicklow Comhairle Ceannair on behalf of all I.R.S.P. members in the Wicklow area offer their sympathies to the relatives and friends of their comrade Hugh Fergusson.

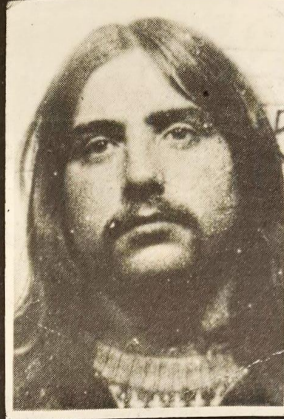
Joe & Mary Heaney and family deeply regret the murder of their friend Hugh Fergusson.

continue the opposition to British imperialism.

'Fergie' as he was known to his friend, was as deeply involved in his community. He organised a bus run to Terril beach for the youth of Whitehook and, as it was not his nature to refuse anyone, the initial number of 500 increased to 800. On many occasions he bore much of the cost himself. He was always attempting to organise his community to control their own lives. It was Fergie who organised the Whitehook Housing Action Group whose agitation was the main reason for the Northern Housing Executive agreeing to carry out extensive renovations in Whitehook for the first time in forty years. The Housing Group was also instrumental in having local labour employed during these renovations. This success was the catalyst for other areas doing the same thing.

By this time he had become chairman of the Clarke-Larkin Republican Club in

'HE DIED SO THE IRSP MIGHT LIVE'



Whitehook which also became involved in local elections, the formation of co-operatives and other activities. At all times however he saw that the problems of his community could only be solved under a socialist society. When his organisation became reformist he saw this as incompatible with a revolutionary organisation and openly opposed it within his organisation. This eventually brought him into conflict with the leadership of the Official Republican Movement.

He was quite willing to take part in elections for tactical reasons but he disagreed strongly with total involvement in reformist elections as he understood that socialism could not come about through the ballot box alone.

He did not give up and became involved with the I.R.S.P. as an alternative to the Officials, from which he resigned.

Unknowningly, Hugh Fergusson was working on the roadside with two of his

ex-colleagues in what was a carefully laid plan to murder him. As he worked his 'colleagues' watched as their fellow conspirators came up behind Hugh Fergusson and shot him twice and a further three times as he fell to the ground. His murderers had been ordered by the leadership of the Republican Movement to kill him to dissuade others from joining the I.R.S.P.

Hugh Fergusson died so that the I.R.S.P. might live, grow, and become the revolutionary party that would lead the Irish people to National Liberation and Socialism.

Hugh, we, your comrades, salute you. Your death will not be in vain . . .

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SÚL THART

ráilí Ollscoile le hárdú arís i mbliana Cuireadh in airde 25% anuraidh iad agus tá síd le hárdú 20% eile i mbliana. Mar atá sé níl ach fíor bheagán de lucht oibre na tíre seo gur féidir leo oideachas Ollscoile a bhaint amach agus ní de bharr espa cumais é seo ach toisc nach acmhainn leo é. Má leanann na hárdaithe seo ar aghaidh is faoin mhéad aicme agus an uaisle ar fad a bheas cursaí Ollscoile na tíre seo. Tá sé in am ag rialtas scéim ceart deontais a chur ar fáil dóibh síd nach acmhainn leo féin ioc as cursaí Ollscoile. Níor chóir go mbrathfeadh oideachas ar an méid airgead atá ag duine ach ar a chumas intinne féin agus ar a tholl chun staidéir. Faisníos leis an bhféidir ó thaobh an status quo go dtarlódh réabhlóid i gcúrsaí oideachais na tíre seo dá mbéadh fáil iomlán ag lucht oibre ar an gcóras sin, mar is ar mhalthe leis an status quo go hionnán a fheidhmiú curais oideachais na tíre seo i láthair na huairé.

AN CHAINFHAISNEIS

Foilsíodh Chainfhaisneis an rialtais le deireannas. Mar is gnáthach is ar an lucht-oibre a ghoilleann an Chainfhaisneis seo. Deirtear linn go bhfuil gearchém airgeadais ann agus go gceithfidh na hoibrithe cur suas d'árdaithe pd. Céin fáth go gceithfidh? Má dheineann sé an rud a tharlódh ná go mbéadh níos mó brabhaigh ag na boic mhóra. Ní gearchém airgeadais ann arís i ndáiríre ach gearchém sa gcóras caipitilach. Tá an taigeadh ann

ach é a úsáid i gceart agus é a roinnt go cothrom. Cé gur cineál cliché é ag an bpointe seo, ní lú is fíor é go bhfuil 75% de mhaoín na tíre seo i lámha 5% des na daoine. Ach nuair a bhíonn chainfhaisneis a ullmhú ní thugtar árd ar bith ar an 5% seo. Ní thig le Chainfhaisneis laistigh den gcóras atá againn - faoi láthair, tada a dheanamh ar mhalthe le lucht oibre na tíre seo, is cuma cen cineál chainfhaisneise. Ní h-án Chainfhaisneis a chaithear a athru ach an córas. Caithear cur chun roinnt an airgid agus an tsabhair, naisníúil saibheas aiceanta na tíre - mianraí, ola, gás, aibheacha agus araille, agus caithear a chinnfí gur baid an lucht oibre a bheas ag sturadh a gcursaí féin. Athraithe bunúsacha atá de dhíth orainn, coras a bheadh ann le cearta an lucht oibre a chosaint seachas lucht oibre a bheith ann le saibheas a chothu do bhoic mhóra an chorais.

B'í 1975 bliain idirnáisiúnta na mban. Bhíothas ag súil go ndéanfaid go leor le linn na bliana sin, ach go h-áirithe, leny gcearta dlísteineacha a thabhairt dos na mban. A mbliain féin a bhí ann agus súile an domhain uile dírithe ar cheist na mban - an bhliain ab fheidhniúil le hathraithe a thabhairt i gcrích. Ach níor tharla tada. Bhí sé soiléir ó thús nar suim leis an rialtas an ocaid ach gur bhraith siad go mba gha i a cheiliuradh toisc go raibh an domhan uile á dheanamh.

Bhí tuarascail an choimisiúin ar stárus na mban ar fáil ag tús na bliana inar deineadh suas le leathchéad moladh faoi na nithe gurbh gha a athru lena stárus ceart a thabhairt do s na mban. Ghlac an rialtas agus an freasúra go fonnmar leis an dtuarascail seo agus gheall siad go dtabharfaí athraithe isteach dá réir. Bhí moltaí ann faoi phá cothrom, muna agus an dlí, oideachas, mna sa mbailé, frithghníúint agus go leor eile nach iad. Is baag a deineadh chun dlíthe a ghoill ar na mna a athru go háirithe sna poistí ba thábhachtaí, pá cothrom agus frithghníúint. Athraithe ar bith a tugadh i gcrích deineadh é de bharr brú ó eagraíochtaí na mban féin agus ní raibh ionntu sin ach mion athraithe.

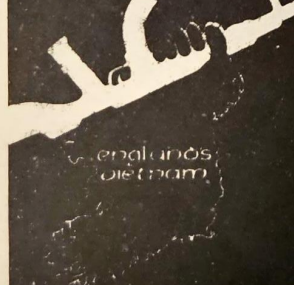
An cnámh spairne is mó ná ceist an phá chothrom. Gealladh go dtabharfaí é seo i

bhfeidhm roimh deireadh 1975. Ag deireadh na bliana bhíothas ag-caint faoin ngearchém airgeadais agus narbh acmhainn leis an rialtas ná leis na comhluchtaí próbháideacha a gcearta maidir le pá a thabhairt dos na mna. Sin mar a tharláinn i gcearta faoin gcóras caipitilach, an té a bhíonn thíos buailtear cos air. Cuireadh go láidir in aghaidh na moltaí le pá cothrom a chur siar níos faide agus faoi dheireadh bhí ar an rialtas cíul beagan. Níl pá cothrom ar fáil go fóill afach ach amháin ag daoine pósta. Caitheadh ghluaiseacht na gearch-chumann cur go léidir in aghaidh an idirleathu nua seo idir daoine pósta agus daoine nach bhfuil pósta agus a gcearta iomlán a eileamh dos na mna láithreach. Ní leor pá cothrom amháin, caithear stádas postanna na mban a athru agus an pá is ísle dos na mna a chur ar a laghad ar chymcheim leis an pá is ísle dos na fir. Níl mé ag iarraidh a chur i gceill go bhfuil a gcearta a bhfuil ag na fir. Is cinnte nach bhfuil faoin gcóras atá againn ach is ceist eile ar fad i sin. Níor choir a cheapadh gur baid na fir naimhde na mban. Is é an córas an namhad.

gas prices to increase

THE PEOPLE OF BELFAST will be paying twice the price of Gas in Britain when the proposed 25% increase comes into effect. This means that gas will have increased by 140% in the last two years. Rents and electricity charges are also to increase. The reason for these increases are the loan charges paid by the N. Ireland Housing Executive to the banks in the past four years which amount to £79.3 million. The N.I. Electricity Service recently paid £24.6 million to the banks also in loan charges. Meanwhile 38% of housing Executive dwellings are in need of urgent repairs while 65,000 dwellings lack basic amenities.

It is the lower paid workers, the unemployed and pensioners who will be hardest hit by these increases, as the banks accumulate record profits. Gas in the 26 Cos. has been increased by 11%. Kinsale Gas could provide gas needs for Ireland for 100 years, but the Irish government have sold the exploration rights to Marathon Oil for £500.



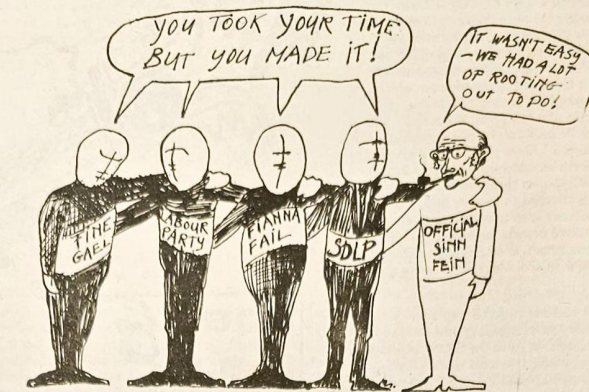
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► One thing that immediately comes to mind concerning the recent Official Sinn Féin Ard Fheis is the fantastic amount of publicity it received. If one relates this to what came out of the Ard Fheis it is not surprising.

Besides the usual motions on economic affairs calling for more state participation, nationalisation of certain industries and our natural resources, better educational facilities etc., motions totally condemning all military groups in the North (excluding of course the Official IRA!) were passed. In this there is little difference between the Officials and the Labour Party. Their political programme has gone totally reformist i.e. they think that socialism can be attained on a peaceful road through the Dail. Indeed the Officials are determined to become the respectable moderate left-wing party so as to fill the vacuum left by the Labour Party, so discredited since they partook in the Coalition. The media recognise this and are quite prepared to assist them in finalising that lurch to middle-class politics.

Besides the Officials opportunistic respectability is their total failure to understand the way to defeat what they call 'British Imperialism, U.S. Imperialism and Multi-National Corporations'. This can be seen in their total condemnation of any group involved in the national liberation struggle instead of understanding its importance, while reserving the right to criticise incorrect tactics used by any national liberation force. They seem to be taking part in some inter-party contest with the Coalition and F.F. on who can denounce such forces better and most frequently.

No successful struggle can be waged on the questions of the control of wealth by workers in a country divided by sectarianism and under the oppressive heel of ruthless imperialist troops, whose very



presence opposes the division of wealth. This is the basic fault of the Officials - their failure to realise that the national question and the class question are one struggle whose pattern may not always be to the liking of anti-imperialist forces. But ignoring it or capitulating to it will not make the problems go away.

The Officials' rank and file must be deeply disturbed at the recent 'developments' in the party which has abandoned all the constructive traditions of Republicanism in its attempts to become a replica of the Labour Party of the late sixties (except that the Labour Party had no Official IRA to murder its opponents). Certainly morale is low with the formation

of the IRSP (which took many of its political activists), the two 'feuds', the disastrous involvement in the Galway Bye-Election and the Convention elections and the recent defection of the majority of the Dublin Comhairle Ceannair of the Officials to the Communist Party of Ireland.

The open boasting by the leadership of their successful 'rooting out' of opponents within the party and their promise to be just as 'ruthless' in the future should the 'need arise', will not help encourage the perturbed rank and file to voice their apprehensions. They remember the murderous onslaught on the IRSP in

Belfast and the attempted assassination of Seamus Costello.

One wonders if the Officials now intend to disband the Official I.R.A. which is the logical conclusion of their position relating to 'terrorists'. On the other hand it might be the Official's intention to influence the Official I.R.A. to put away their guns and pick them up only when they are to be used against dissident party members or other patriotic or revolutionary forces.

Of course one must make some reference to the attitude of the Joint General Secretary of the Officials, Mairín de Burca who opposed a motion calling for strong opposition to any attempts to remove political status from prisoners in Irish jails. De Burca's amendment is an exact echo of the position being adopted by the British government who are trying to portray all political prisoners as mere criminals. The logical conclusion of such an argument is that the working class and the nationalist population should be left to the mercy of the murderous guns of the British Government and Loyalist killer gangs. The remaining leadership of the Officials while agreeing to the same thing, like to pretend otherwise publicly, in an attempt to retain some republican support.

No amount of publicity or platform gymnastics at Ard Fheiseanna can hide the fact that the Officials have led themselves up an historical cul-de-sac which will leave them helpless to intervene constructively in the struggle for socialism. No amount of left-sounding phrases can make their politics revolutionary. The Officials may well have a career in middle-class politics, in fooling the working class and getting a few Dail seats but the needs of the Irish working class will leave them stranded in the history pages with the other opportunistic parties, Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, Labour Party and S.D.L.P. ◀

natural resources

The Irish Government continues to claim that Ireland is a poor country at the mercy of inflation, escalating oil prices, accompanied by greedy workers. These are the main reasons for our poor living standards. We have natural resources which could change the whole face of Ireland such as gas, timber, minerals and fisheries which could cause an industrial revolution, but they are either ignored or sold to foreign multi-national corporations. In the last issue of the *Starry Plough* we dealt with just one such resource - the gas off Kinsale. In that article we showed how, if nationalised, and competently managed it could provide Ireland's gas needs for up to 100 years as well as giving full employment. We also showed how this could only come about under a socialist government.

In this article we intend dealing with one of our most obvious natural resources - fish. Again we will show that if properly farmed and under proper management it could by itself substantially increase the living standards of the Irish working class. Taken in conjunction with other essential socialist economic measures our neo colonial existence is exposed.

The Irish Government never thought the fishing industry to be of particular importance although many reports have been commissioned and are gathering dust. That is why they agreed to the EEC's Common Fisheries Policy which allows foreign trawlers unhindered access to our very beaches by 1982. France and Germany realised this and pushed through the agreement, while granting a few 'concessions' on agriculture. The Irish government fell for this lock, stock and barrel.

If half the amount of government aid given to agriculture had been ploughed into the fishing industry it could quite probably have been our most successful industry today. It is reckoned that for every one man at sea five are sustained in industry on shore. However with more investment, a better fishing fleet, a 200 mile limit, competent fish stocking, processing plants, and an adequate fisheries protection fleet, this could be substantially increased.

While one must welcome the ordering of a second all-weather fishery protection vessel from the Cork Verholme dockyard one must also realise that it will not be ready until 1977. This will leave the entire Irish coast and our waters to be patrolled by the Deirdre. If our territorial waters are extended to 200 miles (which they should) our present situation becomes farcical.

When the Common Fisheries Policy was agreed to the following was ignored: The escalating cost of fuel, spiralling boat-building costs, drastically reduced fish stocks, and the very fact that unless we can defend our natural resource we are unlikely to retain it. Bord Iascaigh Mhara's policy is to build big boats for middle water



fishing in already low fish-stock areas. Meanwhile middle-water and inshore fishing has slowed up due to lack of funds and also the shore facilities did not expand sufficiently to cater for the bigger boats. The lack of confidence in the B.I.M. could result in the closure of their boatyards in Baltimore, Dingle and Killybegs. Only £4.2 million was allocated by the Government to the development of both inland and sea fisheries in 1974. There is a need for state training

of fishermen as well as research ships to find new fish stocks.

The 1962 Programme for Sea Fisheries Development ended any state control in the commercial trading aspect of fishery development which has since been taken over by private enterprise resulting in an underdeveloped fish processing industry, bad marketing system and a weak transport system necessary for the proper exploitation of certain types of shellfish.

FISHING COULD BE TOP INDUSTRY

There is also pressure on the government from this same private sector to hand over completely B.I.M.'s boat building yards.

There is a growing demand for fish worldwide due to the over-killing of 'wealthy' countries of their own stocks. Their only answer is to encroach upon the rich fishing grounds of underdeveloped countries such as Iceland and Ireland. It is to be hoped that Iceland can hold off and protect her fishing grounds from the marauding mechanised fleets and the bullying British navy. These same fleets have almost plundered North Sea fish stocks into total extinction. The lack of attention given to this industry by the government is typified in the way they allow fish that spawn in many of our sheltered bays and estuaries to be caught in bulk while immature, thus destroying fish stocks. Such areas must be safeguarded. There is also need for a proper state department to give its full attention to this industry.

Fishing could be moulded to become an important Irish industry, not only providing food, but jobs as well. Capitalism cannot provide the necessary expansion as it plays a subservient role to the big nations of Europe and its gigantic cartels, despite the fact that it could provide thousands of jobs and, through that, increase the standard of living of Irish workers. Ireland has the richest shallow fishing grounds in the North Atlantic yet we catch only 8% of these fish. That means the Irish people are being deprived of the wealth that could accrue from the other 92% of fish caught.

* As we go to press fishermen have been complaining of the very low catches during the herring season, the worst for many years, due to incursions by foreign trawlers.

TO ALL CUMAINN

Cumann affiliation fees must be paid immediately i.e. £10 for established Cumainn, £5 for new Cumainn and £3 for any Cumainn with less than 5 members. All members must pay an individual affiliation fee of 50p. Membership cards for 1976 will be issued shortly.

The Bessbrook killings were a god-send for the British government who had obviously decided prior to the massacre to re-enforce the S.A.S. in the north and were only awaiting the opportune time. This is borne out by the fact that S.A.S. men of the 22nd Regiment were told of their posting before they took their Christmas leave. The British Government's reaction was totally opportunistic as they directed all their propaganda in the media at the incident and again deluded the public into thinking that the Provos are behind all violence in the North. The violence of unemployment and bad social conditions was not created by the Provos, nor were the pogroms of '69 nor the massacre of Bloody Sunday and many of the killings since. While we condemn the Bessbrook killings, we must not allow that incident to cloud Loyalist violence which in the last 5 years has resulted in the murder of hundreds of innocent Catholics.

Of course the S.A.S. have been in the North in the past few years. It was the S.A.S. who were involved in the torture of prisoners after the introduction of Internment, which was later whitewashed as "interrogation in depth". Since 1971 it is known that at least 50 S.A.S. officers and men served in the North on attachment to other British Army units. What is not known is how many other SAS men have served in the North or what their duties included. Even if an S.A.S. man is attached to another British Army unit, there is no telling what activities he carried out unknown even to his fellow soldiers. It is known however, that the S.A.S. have been involved in sectarian killings, political assassinations and tortures, bank robberies and other crimes, in attempting to discredit Republican forces and to keep the North on the brink of civil war, thus excusing the British presence and British repression.

The S.A.S. was assigned to Malaya in 1952 and withdrawn in 1959. In that time the S.A.S. were primarily instrumental in defeating the nationalist insurrection by the use of such horrific methods that the British government banned the use of the S.A.S. in Britain (a decision which has since been rescinded). After Malaya the S.A.S. were assigned to Kenya, Cyprus, Aden, South Arabia and Borneo. Frank Kitson (who devised the torture methods used in the

North) was an S.A.S. captain in Kenya where he led killer squads against Kenyan freedom fighters. In Aden the S.A.S. specialised in ambushing two local liberation groups (the F.L.N. and F.L.O.S.Y.) in such a way that each was convinced the other was responsible.

To join the S.A.S. one must have served with the British Army for a number of years and be either an officer or a senior N.C.O. Only approximately 5% of applicants are



TERROR - THE BRITISH STRATEGY



The present aim of British policy in the 6 Counties is to cause the maximum amount of terror and confusion with the minimum of direct British involvement. It is in this context that all the British governments' political and military actions must be understood.

Since the U.W.C. strike brought down the power-sharing executive Westminster has abandoned its aim of bringing the Catholic middle-class into a six counties government. Rather than confront the Loyalists it would prefer to set up a powerful loyalist government at Stormont. Real economic and political power would of course remain with Westminster but the new arrangements would have the advantage of allowing the British government to appear uninvolved in what would be presented as a purely sectarian squabble. This is the main reason why the British government was so enthusiastic about Craig's 'voluntary coalition'. It would have forced the S.D.L.P. into supporting the R.U.C., brought them into a Loyalist government, and given a cloak of respectability to Britain's

plan for the North.

Immediately after the U.W.C. strike the British began a massive recruiting campaign for the R.U.C. and U.D.R. This was the first step in an ongoing propaganda campaign designed to "depoliticise" the situation in the North. The next step was to arrange a ceasefire with the Provos despite its disadvantages. If there were no British soldiers being killed the British propaganda machine could convincingly deny they were involved in a colonial war and present the conflict as pure gangsterism.

In an attempt to deny that there are political prisoners the British are now trying to withdraw special category status from Republican prisoners. One of the main points in this strategy of "depoliticising" the situation is a tacit encouragement of the present campaign of sectarian murders. The campaign has the advantage of terrorising the Catholic community while at the same time the British government does not have to face the backlash it would face if this work was being carried out openly by the British Army. The British also hope that the campaign will provoke indiscriminate retaliation and therefore alienate

The Coldstream Guards Regiment based at Fort Monagh in Belfast have been subjecting the nationalist population to increased harassment in the last month. The following incidents portray the daily misery suffered by the nationalist population at the hands of occupying imperialist troops.

IVEAGH DRIVE: Brits stopped and were abusive to a man and woman and struck the woman's father when he intervened. They then arrested him for assault as four more land rovers and four armoured cars arrived to reinforce the Brit patrol. As crowds gathered the Brits pointed rubber bullet guns into their faces and threatened to shoot them all unless they left. The man who was being arrested for assault agreed to go with the Brits rather than have any of his neighbours shot and was taken to Springfield barracks and charged with 'assault'.

ANDERSONSTOWN: A young man was stopped by members of the same regiment as he entered the Red Barn Chip Shop on the main Andersonstown Road. When he

refused to give any further information than his name he was buffed in the face by a corporal and kicked and punched as he fell, taken to Fort Monagh where he was again beaten and his arm twisted behind his back until he collapsed from the pain. As he was being photographed by his captors he was threatened with a beating unless he smiled. When he refused he was in fact beaten. Having been charged with assaulting two soldiers he was asked to sign a form stating that he had not been ill-treated during custody. When he refused he was threatened. When it was discovered that the man couldn't sign such a statement, even if he wanted to, as his right arm was swollen and discoloured, he was released. On arriving in hospital the nurse described his injuries as "appalling".

SPRINGFIELD ROAD: Patrons leaving a bar on the Springfield road were attacked by members of the Cold Stream Guards who injured many and arrested several. To show the viciousness of the Brits it should be stated that one

international support from the Irish struggle.

Apart from the humanitarian aspect it is for this reason that Republicans must condemn the indiscriminate retaliation for Loyalist atrocities which has occurred recently. It is also necessary to bring an end to friction between Republican groups or at the very least to establish machinery for quickly settling disputes, since any such dispute helps the British strategy of posing as peacemakers.

Faced with this new turn in British policy it is necessary to mount a campaign at national and international level to expose the role of the British Army and demand its immediate withdrawal. It is also important to resist any attempt to withdraw political status from political prisoners.

In a situation where the Loyalists have achieved the maximum amount of political and military unity, it is vital for Republicans to be united in support of immediate basic demands. If one certain political prediction can be made, it is that the coming year will be the toughest yet for the minority in the six counties and for the anti-imperialist population.



At the beginning of December last we opened an appeal fund for IRSP Political prisoners and their families. We set a modest target of £200. The fund now stands at £87.85.

You can support I.R.S.P. political prisoners by making donations no matter how small, or buying prisoners handicrafts, a new batch which has just arrived from Long Kesh: coloured wooden plaques £2.50; leather wallets £3, wallet cum purses £4 and leather handbags £15.

accepted and meticulously trained to rely upon their own initiative with a licence to kill - even British soldiers, if circumstances warrant it. S.A.S. men work on their own, in twos or in threes but never more. They are trained to become inconspicuous to both the public and the regular military forces of the State. Their training includes improvisation of bomb making equipment,

The following are particular incidents which show the brutality and ruthlessness of the S.A.S. and proves that their open introduction into the North is an admission by the British Government that they intend pursuing the military solution. This can only mean further death and harassment for the North's working class and particularly for the nationalist population. In no way will the S.A.S. end sectarian killings. In fact the opposite will be the case.

★ Aden 1967: An Ex-British officer tells how his patrol was called in to allow the S.A.S. complete freedom that night. Next morning his patrol came across two bodies, shot in the back. The S.A.S. men were arrested and later released and the local British Army regiment publicly took the blame for the two "accidental deaths". Two days of rioting resulted and over 30 people were killed.

★ Plainclothes S.A.S. men ordered the R.U.C. to open fire with machine guns on a crowded street in Newry last month. Their target was a youth who had snatched a handbag! Miraculously no one was hurt.

political assassinations, days and even weeks of surveillance, and the art of murdering and putting the blame on someone else or a political organisation. They are also given comprehensive political briefings to completely familiarise them with the current political situation in any area of operations.

★ In December 1972 two busmen died in an explosion at Sackville Place, Dublin while a second bomb exploded at Liberty Hall. 126 people were injured in all. Even Jack Lynch (who was Taoiseach in 1972) in a subsequent interview, admitted he suspected that there was a British involvement. The bombs were placed to force through the Offences Against the State Amendment Act which allows a man to be jailed on the word of a garda Superintendent.

★ At the height of the campaign of sectarian killings in 1972 and 1973, mainly aimed at the nationalist population, British Army plain clothes men were on

occasions cornered after a sectarian killing by angry locals and had to be rescued by the British Army. Later the Brits claimed that the victims had been 'armed' and had 'fired first'. Cars carrying sectarian killers were often seen speeding through British Army checkpoints unhindered. On one such occasion a car was stopped and turned out to contain armed Brits in plain clothes.



★ Albert Baker is a self-confessed ex-S.A.S. man who was involved in bank robberies, political and sectarian killings in Belfast from July 1972 to February 1973. When he 'confessed' he was sentenced to life imprisonment. The 'Sunday World' ran a fascinating exposure of his activities which, not surprisingly, has been ignored by the mass media. Basically the Baker File shows how this S.A.S. man was involved in sectarian killings on his own, how he organised Loyalist killers squads, went across the border "two jobs" (murders? robberies?) - all with British Government

approval. He tells how the UDA and other Loyalist groups were infiltrated by the British Army, how UDA leaders are immune from arrest as they have promised to keep quiet about the U.D.A. - British Army connection, how the SAS were involved in the Dublin car bombs, how Tommy Herron (UDA leader) was assassinated by the S.A.S. Baker's family, on visiting him, claim he arrives in plain clothes but is in prison clothes when they talk to him. They tell how he wrote them a letter from 'an English prison' which was posted in Co. Down! It appears that Baker split the beans to prevent his own assassination by the S.A.S. and is still being used by the S.A.S. and is perhaps not even serving any prison sentence, despite the fact that he was sentenced to 92 years plus four life sentences for carrying out official British Government military policy.

Paragraph 225 of the S.A.S. training manual states that S.A.S. men are particularly suited to the collection of information; (b) the ambush and harassment of insurgents (i.e. nationalist population); (c) infiltration or sabotage, assassination and demolition parties into insurgent-held areas (i.e. nationalist areas and the 26 Cos.) (f) liaison with, and organisation, training and control of, friendly guerilla forces (i.e. Loyalist paramilitary groups) operating against the common enemy (i.e. nationalist population).

BRITISH ARMY

BRUTALITY



soldier kept firing rubber bullets at point blank range injuring one youth in the groin. The Brits raided the pub earlier in the night then left, called up reinforcements and laid in wait for the patrons to emerge from the pub. Three of the patrons were subsequently charged with 'riotous behaviour'.

KASHMIR ROAD: Brit belonging to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders stopped an 8½ month pregnant woman as she came out of a chip shop and asked for her name and also wanted to search her. The woman, who had been stopp'd by the same soldier 4 times in the previous two weeks, ignored him whereupon she was assaulted and arrested. Her husband arrived and demanded to accompany his wife. They were then taken on a trip to the Shankhill Road where she was jeered by passers-by. The woman by this stage was naturally terrified. They were taken to Tennent Street RUC Barracks and ten minutes later were again subjected to the terrifying ordeal of a second trip to the Shankhill Road and from there to Hasting

Street barracks where she was thoroughly searched and interrogated. She was told her chips could have been a nail bomb! She was then photographed. She asked to go to the toilet and for a drink of water but was ignored. She was then interrogated again by the same Brits asking the same questions. Eventually she was released.

TWINBROOK ESTATE: Brits attacked a young married woman and beat and kicked her. A youth from the Summerhill area of the estate received similar treatment. Young girls are also being accosted by the Brits and asked to open their coats, presumably to relieve the frustrations of the Brits.

DIVIS FLATS: Belfast Coroners Court heard how 10 year old Stephen Coddie from Divis Flats was struck by a rubber bullet from point blank range as he sucked a lollipop. The boy later died in hospital. This is the second Belfast youth to die after being hit by a rubber bullet. No Brits have been charged in connection with either of these two murders or any of the assaults, intimidation and harassment detailed above.

TARGET £ 200

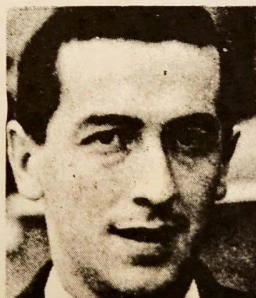
NOW £87

85p

Our thanks to: Nenagh I.R.S.P. £15; South Derry £15, £2.50 G. Gordon, Co. Wicklow, £15 Ennis I.R.S.P. and a special thanks to the workers of Braids Ltd. of Ennis who contributed £10.

Donations should be sent to Starry Plough prisoners Dependents Fund c/o 1a Essex Gate, Dublin 8.

HE COULD BE DEAD BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS



Frank Stagg

The IRSP Ard Comhairle in a statement said it "fully supports the demands of Francis Stagg and Gerry Mealey to be transferred to a prison in the 6 Counties".

Francis Stagg began his fourth hunger strike on December 16th last in protest against prison conditions under which Irish republican prisoners in Britain are suffering. He was also protesting about harassment by officials, being confined to solitary and wants to be transferred to serve the remainder of his sentence in the North.

Francis Stagg and Gerry Mealey were sentenced on 'conspiracy' charges in 1973. Stagg's "conspiracy" consisted of having a map of Birmingham in his pocket for which he received 10 years. Such is British 'justice'.

The IRSP's statement continued "The fact that a significant number of Loyalist prisoners were transferred to prisons in the 6 Counties with little difficulties, demonstrates the sadistic bias of the British administration when dealing with Irish republican prisoners".

The harassment of Irish political prisoners (detailed in January's issue of the Starry Plough) is an attempt to discourage any support for those involved in the struggle in Ireland.

Members of the IRSP participated in a picket being held on the British Embassy by the Provisionals in solidarity with the hunger strikers.

Deputy Governor Gadd of Wakefield Prison, England (where Stagg and Mealey have been on hunger strike for over 42 days up to the 26th January '76) is the brother of John Raymond Gadd who is a UDA member convicted in 1974 for smuggling arms from Canada. He was also employed in the prison service doing an efficiency study of prison work.

culture

The government finally published last month the long awaited report of the Committee on Irish language attitudes. The work of this committee began in 1970 under government direction and produced the first scientific survey ever carried out on peoples' attitudes to Irish. It was expensive, costing an estimated £¼ million and caused much controversy particularly in its early stages. There were reports of vast sums of money being wasted and wrong methods being used. A number of people resigned – including not only people employed by the committee but members of the committee itself. This need not cast any doubts on the findings of the committee but is worth bearing in mind all the same.

Although the publication of this report must be welcomed, it must also be stated that the publishing of a report in itself does little or nothing to help revive the Irish language or strengthen Irish speaking communities. If it did, the Irish language would be thriving long ago for, over the past number of years, there has been an endless stream of reports, studies, commissions, councils and white papers on the question of Irish. Although many of these produced much on paper, in real terms, they achieved almost nothing. An attempt has not even yet been made to implement the proposals of the white paper on the Irish language published in 1965. Up to now all these reports and committees have only been delaying factors. The present government and the Fianna Fail governments that preceded it did not want to do anything positive or constructive to revive the Irish language and hoped that these delaying tactics would keep the language enthusiasts happy.

For many years they succeeded in fooling the Irish language movement. It was only in the mid and late sixties that Conradh na Gaeilge and radical individuals in Gaeltacht areas began to understand the government's hypocrisy in this matter. Opposition to the government started springing up from Gaeltacht areas, particularly Connemara, under the leadership of Máirín Ó Cadhain through Misneach and then Gluaiseacht Cearta Sibhialta na Gaeltachta. Máirín's influence (he himself being an active Republican and Socialist) brought about an understanding in many people of the Irish language and Gaeltacht problem within the framework of the whole political and economic structures of our society. This engendered an opposition, not only to government policy on the Irish language, but to government policy in general. Although it showed promise in its early stages (remember for example the support gained by Gluaiseacht Cearta Sibhialta na Gaeltachta in the 1969 general election in a traditional Fianna Fail stronghold) this movement became weak and fragmented and failed at any stage to unite properly the different Gaeltacht areas. There are still some quite radical people doing good work in these areas but arising mainly from a lack of proper leadership and from a juvenile parochialism, at times, there is no true co-ordinated effort.

CONRADH – GOING RIGHT WING

The situation within Conradh na Gaeilge was different in many ways. The people who became radicalised on the Irish language question frequently had little or no understanding of that problem within its overall context of the corrupt and unjust system under which we live. They tried to tackle the problem on the purely cultural level but even their interpretation of culture was too narrow. In this way Conradh na Gaeilge remained a reformist organisation. It never became a revolutionary cultural organisation. It's make-up is not one which is easily radicalised – drawing its support almost exclusively from white collared workers, teachers, civil servants and government and state employees. Within the past two years or so Conradh na Gaeilge has been retreating from its gradual swing to the left and certain elements within its leadership are trying hard to get it back on its old right-wing path of respectability and conformity. One of the reasons for this regression is that some members felt that the new radical trends within the organisation were producing little effect. They failed to realise that bringing about change is always a long slow haul. It must be stated, however, that there are still some very progressive elements within its leadership and ranks.

One point that should be mentioned here however, is that if Republicans and Socialists were willing to become active in the language movement, they could give it the necessary leadership and direction which it so badly lacks at the present moment.

This leaves that there is a weak language movement inside and outside the Gaeltacht – neither capable of successfully



neither read, write nor speak Irish could actually pass those exams.

Compulsory Irish in the Civil Service also took a knocking. 66% of the people were against an Irish examination for entrance to the Civil Service, and 57% were against the use of more Irish within it. On the other hand 71% felt that Irish speakers have the right to expect Civil Servants to be able to speak Irish with them. There is a clear contradiction here in that Civil Servants to be able to speak Irish with Irish speakers must have a certain standard of Irish themselves and be willing to use it and extend that use. Is there a suggestion in this that the present Civil Service position is satisfactory i.e. someone goes into a Civil Service office speaking Irish and the clerk behind the counter has to run frantically around the office searching for someone who will be able to deal with the problem in Irish. While the Irish speaker stands there feeling rather foolish and becoming progressively annoyed, someone comes

POSITIVE STEPS COULD BE TAKEN

There are many positive steps the government could have taken, which would have had a wide public support, but which they chose to ignore. Many of these are touched upon in this report. The most important of these is in the field of education, where the people feel the government is not doing enough. 81% feel that the government should encourage and support the publication of good Irish textbooks. This is a crucial issue – good attractive textbooks for people learning Irish but as well as that textbooks in Irish for all subjects to be provided for those people who receive their education through Irish. 64% support free Irish courses for adults – a need which Conradh na Gaeilge are trying hard to satisfy but which is very difficult to achieve through a voluntary organisation. 70% feel that the government should provide all Irish schools wherever the public wants them – we need only cite

the 'irish' report

counteracting a government policy which is not as strongly hypocritical as it is antagonistic. Since it came into office the present government has shown itself, among other things, to be anti-Irish, anti-National and anti-Republican. Any major policy changes brought about in regard to Irish have been negative e.g. ending compulsory Irish in the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate and doing away with Irish as a necessary requirement for entering the Civil Service. The report of the Committee on Irish language attitudes revealed that people felt quite strongly about these two points. Although the government have known the results of this survey for almost two years now they have chosen only to act on the negative aspects. All they have done is to send Tom O'Donnell running around the country trying to create a good public image for the government on the language question.

COMPULSORY IRISH

Compulsory Irish, while not necessarily wrong in itself, was a policy that had failed drastically, so it is no wonder that only 27%–34% of the people favoured the policy. There was no back-up to it and people got little opportunity and almost no encouragement to use or practice Irish outside of school. The teaching methods were bad and the curriculum was unsuitable. Teachers unqualified to teach Irish were teaching Irish. There was too much emphasis on the written language as opposed to the spoken word. The whole policy was for many years a source of ridicule. It antagonised people who felt many students were failing exams because they failed Irish. In fact the percentage was exceedingly small as the standard of pass Irish in the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate left that a person who could

back to tell him that the person who speaks Irish is sick, not in, or gone out for a few minutes, and that if they want their problem dealt with they must speak English. It happens on many other occasions that the Irish speaker is purely and simply insulted because he/she tries to exercise the right to do his business through Irish. In order to allow Irish speakers their democratic rights all Civil Servants should be able to do their business through Irish. In other bi-lingual countries, this is the normal practice.

MOST SUPPORT LANGUAGE

The most important point arising from the report is the fact that the vast majority of the Irish people support the Irish language and see it as an important element of National Identity. 65% of the people feel that without Irish, Ireland would certainly lose its identity. 68% feel that children should be required to learn Irish in school. 72% felt that no real Irishman can be against the survival of Irish. 72% felt that Irish traditions have a valuable contribution to make to modern life. These figures show a very positive support for the Irish language. The problem is translating that support into action.

It is generally accepted by socio-linguists that without the help and encouragement of the government (the so called leaders of our community) little progress can be made. This point is re-iterated in the report:

"Any activity or lack of activity on the part of the State, or statements by its representatives about Irish could have serious repercussions on attitudes and beliefs about the language. It is clear that the Irish language voluntary organisations do not enjoy that degree of public support that could allow them to effectively play a 'replacement role' to the State. In this context it is not possible for the State to be neutral".

The State machine over many years has not even taken a neutral stand but a hostile one.

The example of Ballymun where the people fought for almost five years before they finally got their all Irish school, to realise that the state system is highly unwilling to provide such schools. There are other sectors also in which more support is called for. 66% support government encouragement for more Irish on radio and television (something which would have been almost impossible if Conor Cruise's plans for "open broadcasting" had been accepted). 50% support the use of Irish in public signs, such as on buses and road signs – a policy which although law is not being complied with by the government. The Gaeltacht is another area where the government could have done much with the support of the people but did not. Attitudes towards the Gaeltacht are very positive among the population at large. 70% are highly supportive of the Gaeltacht. About 94% of the Gaeltacht people questioned feel that the government has not given the Gaeltacht people enough say in developing their own area. 67% of the population feel that the government should provide more jobs for Gaeltacht people. Although a Gaeltacht Authority has been promised by the government, there is no sign of it yet or no guarantee that it will be a democratic one. The amount of employment provided in the Gaeltacht is minimal and highly unstable.

The function of this report was not to make recommendations but to discover attitudes. It did, however, suggest "policy implications" arising from the results of the report. If an attempt is not made to implement these policy changes immediately the whole report will have been in vain, the question of the language revival will receive a further set-back and an already weak Gaeltacht community will be well on its way to total extinction. This would have a dire effect on the whole question of Nationality and the struggle for complete National Liberation – political, economic and cultural – in this country.

The coup d'état which overthrew the fascist government in Portugal in April 1974 was prompted by the failure of the Portuguese army to crush liberation movements in Portugal's African colonies after thirteen years of war. Two of Portugal's former colonies, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, have now achieved full independence under revolutionary governments. The third, Angola, is wracked by a bloody civil war which has left thousands dead.

It is not difficult to discover why. By contrast to the other two Angola is fantastically wealthy in minerals and oil. American and European corporations such as Gulf Oil have large investments in Angola and are determined to protect them by any means.

The three organisations involved in the current conflict are, on one side, the left wing Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (M.P.L.A.) and on the other side, the right wing National Liberation Front of Angola (F.N.L.A.) and the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (U.N.I.T.A.). The F.N.L.A. is mainly based in neighbouring Zaire (see map) which is ruled by C.I.A.-backed President Mobutu. Since the Vietnam war has left the American public in no mood to tolerate another foreign war, the U.S. Government has concentrated on recruiting mercenaries and sending arms and money to the F.N.L.A. At the same time Angola has been invaded from the south by thousands of South African troops.

The M.P.L.A. control the capital of Angola (Luanda) and most of the Northern half of Angola. This follows the recent rout of the F.N.L.A. this has allowed the M.P.L.A. to concentrate most of its forces against U.N.I.T.A. which control the southern half of Angola. In recent days the M.P.L.A. have been gaining much ground here also to such an extent the South Africans (which up to now was supporting the U.N.I.T.A. forces) are contemplating a retreat to Namibia border while UNITA forces are not ruling out talks with the M.P.L.A.

However great an achievement an M.P.L.A. victory would be, being a further blow to colonialism in Africa, it would still leave enormous problems to be faced. Angola would still have to overcome the legacy of Portuguese colonialism e.g. the neglect of schools, hospitals and the extreme poverty that exists.

ANGOLA

WACHETE-WAVING M.P.L.A. BACKERS IN LUANDA CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE AT MIDNIGHT RALLY



Another major problem will be the creation of a viable national state capable of overcoming tribal and regional differences. As in many other African states, the borders of Angola were arbitrarily drawn by exploiting colonial powers, without regard to the interests of the Angolan people. There is therefore no common language or sense of national identity. The only danger is that if a purely nationalistic approach is maintained while leaving the economy under imperialist domination it will lead to an eventual re-integration into the colonial system.

OIL, diamonds, copper and iron ore — these are the spoils that have brought South African troops and American mercenaries recruited by the C.I.A. to Angola. Behind their intervention stands the power of the big companies, British, American and European, that have systematically exploited Africa for the past 100 years.

amsterdam Ireland demo

Members of the newly formed IRELAND SUPPORT GROUP in AMSTERDAM recently protested at a festival organised by PRIMAIR a travel agency in Amsterdam, Holland. The festival was publicising 'peaceful Ireland'. The Ireland Solidarity Group leafleted the festival, exposing the sham of 'peaceful Ireland', pointing out that there was massive unemployment, low social security payments, robber y of our national resources in Ireland and continuous killings in the north instigated by Britain. 'It would probably be a bit difficult for the organisers (of this festival) to let you experience the effects of C.S. Gas or Rubber Bullets' stated the leaflet.

"You'll learn the word 'Sláinte' tonight but a more important word to the Irish people is 'Saoirse' which means 'freedom' concluded their leaflet.

DANNY LOUGHRANS BIRTHDAY MEMORIES

*Our lives are tinged with sadness
That tears the very heart
— towards took your life Danny
Because for Ireland you played your part
Always remembered by Sean, Eileen and Family*

*Proud we were to call you friend
Our deep grief now is mixed with pride
For the comrades who brought your sweet life
to an end
Were not fit to crawl by your shadow's side
Always remembered by Paddy, Kathleen and Family*

*Is it enough Danny to try and walk in your ways?
Fearless, honest, sincere — above every prairie
In the struggle to come we'll try to play our parts
Not least 'cause your spirit lives on in our hearts
never forgotten by Nancy, Johnny and Family*

**The Irish Republican Socialist Party
wishes to extend sincere sympathies
to the relatives and friends of
DANNY LOUGHRAN who was
murdered by the Official I.R.A.**

*What is the measure of a man
Fearlessness! Gentleness! Kindness! Fun!
Its hard to live through the lonely days
Now we've lost Danny, our beloved son
His memory revered by Danny and Sadie
his parents.*

*It's hard to gaze on the empty chair
And realise my Danny's no longer there
My heart aches with sadness yet still burns
with pride
I was privileged to stand by my brave
husband's side.
Never forgotten by his loving wife Margaret*

*Our hearts they were stricken — the sad news
we heard
No words could tell the pain
Our brave Danny to friends ne'er said a harsh
word
His memory forever remains
Always remembered by Joe, Mary and Family*

Cage 6 — Long Kesh Concentration Camp
remember Danny Loughran on his birthday
and every day "Forget! who forgets?
For his call goes out yet"

Danny Loughran — always remembered with
sincere regard by Harry, Tommy and Ronnie.

slaughterings may mean redundancies

The Irish beef process industry faces large scale redundancies in the near future as a result of the massive cow slaughterings during 1975. Due to the large scale reductions in farm incomes during 1974 farmers attempted to recuperate their losses by mass slaughterings. This has led to a large scale reduction of the country's breeding herd.

The export of beef, cattle, sheep and lambs reached an all time record of £300 mil. 21% of our total exports. Some 600,000 cows were slaughtered in 1975 and 140,000 calves and young cattle, which means that there may not be enough beef in the country to meet export demands in the years ahead or to keep meat factories in production at anything like full production. The practice of exporting cattle on the hoof deprives potential employment in Ireland. The unplanned nature of the cattle industry (the mass slaughter) means that 200,000 of our breeding herd which took five years to build up has been lost.

Farmers have been cutting back on their input of fertiliser and selling off some of their breeding herd to pay day-to-day living expenses. It is the large ranchers who are responsible for this loss of our breeding herd as it is they who fatten cattle and sell them on the hoof for quick profits.

Meanwhile small farmers continue to demand more land from the Land Commission (who at present are holding on to 104,000 acres, most of it in congested areas). Land speculation continues to escalate the price of land beyond the reach of small farmers and low paid farm labourers who need the extra land to make a living. Calls are also being made by the Small Farmers Defence Association for acquisition of Carton House and lands at Maynooth, Co. Kildare which contains 1,000 acres of prime agricultural land. The S.F.D.A. claim The land is ideally suited for the establishment of a co-operative farm which would increase the output of the land and also provide a decent income for many families.

Con man Richie Ryan has done it again. On the one hand he has agreed to introduce equal pay for women (although only a small percentage of the female work force will benefit due to the method of categorising jobs) while on the other hand he has introduced discrimination between single and married people doing the same work. This in effect reduces the amount of workers who would have benefited from full equal pay in the civil service from 35,000 to 9,500, saving the government £10 million. It demonstrates the cynical attitude of the coalition to the whole concept of women's liberation in International Women's Year.

1975 saw no advancement on the contraception issue, on the legal position of women, on the inequality re social welfare benefits.

It is important that this latest stab in the back for the cause of women's liberation should be resisted by all socialist organisations and other organisations struggling for the liberation of women. The coalition's con on equal pay should not be seen simply as a defeat for the women's movement in Ireland, insofar as there is one. This action should be seen as part and parcel of the Government's overall strategy to cut into the living standards of all workers in the present recession. The deferral of full equal pay and the attempted introduction of a pay pause are inter-related issues.

It is vitally important that workers, of both sexes, should not allow themselves to be divided on this issue of equal pay. If this happens, Richie Ryan and the F.U.E. will be laughing all the way to the bank. Some women workers may feel so bitter about the deferral of equal pay that instead of directing their attacks on the government, the F.U.E. and capitalism itself, that they will turn on their 'greedy fellow workers' who are 'demanding too much from the employers'. Such an attitude is counter revolutionary and constitutes a total acceptance of the dope peddled to them by the government and the F.U.E. via the media.

On the other hand male workers may

the con of 'equal pay'

unconsciously be conned into believing that the granting of equal pay will mean that there will be less of the (illusory) national cake for them. Many more may believe that the deferral of equal pay will prevent more joining the ranks of the 117,000 unemployed. Again this type of thinking demonstrates how effective the employers and government have been in peddling their anti-worker propaganda. It has led to a situation where one section of workers sees another as a threat to its standard of living and fails to see the employing class and the government which represents them, as the real reason for the low living standard of workers.

Women are not represented very strongly in the labour force or in the workers' organisations such as the trade unions, though this picture is changing rapidly. It is precisely because women constitute one of the weakest groups in the labour force that they are being denied the demands of equal pay that they were promised.

This should make women aware of the fact that to gain any improvement in conditions militant action is necessary. Demands, even minimal ones, have to be struggled for to be won. No amount of sweet reasoning with governments or employers re the justice of equal pay will work.

All socialist organisations, and those committed to the liberation of women should demand that the marriage pay differential should be abolished. This is not to say that the IRSP is not aware that the Equal Pay Bill would only increase the wages of a minority of women workers because of the job evaluation procedures attached to it. However the successful deferral of full equal pay would constitute a victory for the forces of a pay pause and a defeat not only for a largely unorganised silent section of workers — women — but also for all workers.

It is essential that in this situation that all workers should stand firm on the right of women to equal pay. A defeat on this issue for workers would increase the confidence of the employing class when they come to deal with the 'greedy' workers and try to impose a wage freeze or pay pause. The demands in this situation should be for unity among all workers against any pay pause and for equal pay now.

COUNCIL BUILDING INFERIOR HOUSES

A row has erupted in North Clare over the use of non union labourers doing the work of plasterers on a Clare County Council housing scheme. Although the Operative Plasterers and Allied Trades Society have complained to both the firm involved and Clare Co. Council nothing has been done to date to remedy the situation.

Danagher and Considine, a building firm based in Ennis, are employing labourers to do the plastering work on the houses they are constructing in Lisdoonvarna for Clare Co. Council. The secretary of the Plasterers Union approached the labourers on the site and asked to see their union cards. When they could not produce them he asked the foreman to stop them working but he refused. As a result of this the rest of the unionised plasterers walked off the site.

The plasterers are complaining that labourers should not be employed to do tradesmen work. The present plastering being done by the labourers is scandalous. It seems to be the opinion of the County Council that as they are only council houses for working class people that the condition of the houses doesn't really matter.

An immediate complaint was lodged

by the union to Clare Co. Council as all government building contracts are bound to hire unionised workers by agreement with the unions. The Co. Council promised to 'investigate the situation'. However, as our photograph shows, labourers are still continuing their plastering, despite the fact that they are unqualified to do so. The first complaints were lodged by the unions in November and three months later Clare Co. Council have still not acted.

In November last Mr. Patrick P. J. McMyler was appointed Co. Engineer. One of his first jobs seems to have been to allow second class houses to be built. Perhaps he thinks the working class of North Clare are second class citizens and deserve no better.

At the November meeting of Clare Co. Council the Chairman, Mr. Martin Cahill, was joined by all Council members in



Non-Union Labourers 'Plastering' Clare Council Houses

promising their 'full support and co-operation' to the new Co. Engineer. Now that they have refused to demand that union labour qualified for the plastering work, be employed on Co. Council houses, they have been true

to their word. Mr. McMyler, the new Co. Engineer, said at the same meeting that he "hope to live up to your expectations and I know that I have a very high standard to maintain..." Not on working class houses it seems.

The Irish economy is in a worst state than the British Economy, not surprising, as Ireland is a neo-colony of Britain. Ireland was a colony of Britain up to the Treaty of 1922. Britain then handed over the administration of the 26 Counties to the Irish capitalist class while still retaining control over Ireland's nerve centre - the economy. It is understandable that they should use our economy, industries and labour force to their own ends under such circumstances.

The Irish Government has been attempting to beat inflation and price rises by massive borrowing which has, naturally, only left them in a worse situation. Unemployment in the 26 Counties is running so high that it is impossible to put a figure on it. No sooner is a figure put on it than new figures are released. At the time of writing it stands at 117,000. The 6 Counties is faced with the prospect of over 20% of the insured work force being unemployed.

Britain, it is generally accepted, is in deep economic trouble with doubts that she may in fact recover. Britain is expected to borrow £12,000 million this year (which is regarded as excessively high) in the public sector. Now that figure corresponds to £480 million here. In 1974 the public sector borrowing requirement of the Irish economy was running at £500 million and £740 million a year in 1975. It is estimated that it will run at £1,100 million in 1976. The answer to all this, according to the capitalists who control our economy, is that 'greedy workers' are demanding too much and by so doing are speeding up inflation. The capitalist answer (so that they can maintain their profits) is to juggle equal pay, massively cut back on public spending and introduce a pay pause and encourage redundancies. In all of these answers it can be quite clearly seen that it is the worker who is meant to bear the brunt.

All of these 'answers' introduced together would cripple the worker. Yet the worker has no say in beating inflation, in price increases, in the running of the economy and little say as to the amount of his meagre wages. Meanwhile the bosses continue to make their profits and continue to enjoy their high standards of living. Millions of pounds continue to be stolen through our natural resources, and to be sucked by the banks and invested abroad. But of course it's all the workers' fault (well not all, after all the whole thing is world wide and can't be helped!!).

Meanwhile to further cripple the worker the interest on housing loans have been increased. Despite the fact that although it is extremely difficult for workers to qualify for a housing loan and that the interest on the loan is astronomical they are to be further increased by 1%. Local authorities have also had the interest on their loans increased by 2%. All this will increase the cost of local authority housing and cut back on their building programme, which is totally inadequate anyway.

Despite increased taxation this year, the government budget deficit is a record £258.9 million. Foreign borrowings are running at £168 million. Without taxation changes the government estimates that the budget deficit next year will amount to some £980 million pounds. The borrowing requirements faced by the government before the budget is £825 million. As their

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economy

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STEALING AT HOME & BEGGING ABROAD

estimates were wrong last year it will probably be considerably higher. State borrowing will increase at least by 40%. The total national debt now stands at £2,500 million, with a trade gap of £42 million.

Meanwhile the Confederation of Irish Industry estimates that some 20,000 jobs are in jeopardy, while in the North it is predicted that by October next, one person in five could be unemployed.

That then is the state of the Irish economy. Capitalism cannot improve it even with the envisaged 'answers' which would mean harsher suffering for Irish workers.

It becomes obvious that only socialism can improve the Irish economy, and the lot of the Irish working class, when one

considers that the Gas off Kinsale alone could provide full employment if nationalised and correctly administered and that further wealth can be gained from the nationalisation of banks, natural resources, building land etc. Workers, despite capitalist propaganda to the contrary, have nothing to fear from

* * *

The budget message from Tricky Richie was clear. It has been echoed in previous months by other coalition ministers. On budget day it became fact - workers and small farmers must continue to pay for our economic crisis.

The government budget was, as anticipated, a tough budget aiming the bulk of its taxation at the working class and small farmers. It viciously cut into their wages and there is no sight of any solution to the economic crisis in the budget. It cut public spending and increased taxes and V.A.T. on too many items to list here, the consequences which will be to increase practically all day to day items in a snowball effect. V.A.T. will be further increased in February. Naturally the budget offered the traditional measly social security increases which in effect are nullified by the Taxes announced.

Over 28,000 farmers will be effected by the cutting of the dole. In fact many will be cut off the dole completely. The petrol increases will severely effect small farmers who are fighting a daily struggle to stay on the land.

On top of these increases forced on workers and small farmers are the 'pleas' for a pay pause by the coalition government. If workers refuse to agree to a wage freeze, as they should, it will be enforced by law.

It is time that workers and small farmers asked themselves the following questions:

1. Why should we agree to a pay pause when we can hardly afford to make ends meet at the moment and when we know that prices will continue to escalate.
2. Isn't it true that we have no say in the economy so why should we bear the brunt of a crisis which we had no part in initiating?
3. Throughout this crisis, isn't it true that the profit makers still enjoy a high standard of living?

The answers to these questions are self-evident. It is time that workers and small farmers demanded:

1. An end to all redundancies
2. Massive increases in state spending, particularly in such industries as the building industry.
3. The full utilisation of all the natural resources of the ground and sea.
4. The nationalisation of the banks.

Of course we need go no further as no capitalist government could in fact grant the above demands. Their system entails allowing the private sector to accumulate profit to the detriment of the needs of society and in the process evict small

Socialism. Only the capitalist class and foreign imperialists and multi-national corporations, have anything to fear as their profits would disappear. It would be utilised to improve the standard of living of the working class to a level, that in the present context, workers can hardly imagine.

* * *

farmers, reduce living standards for workers and push them onto the dole queues, to ensure a ready labour force to exploit.

Socialism does the opposite, fully utilises all resources within our country, including its people, to ensure the highest possible living standard and substitutes the needs of the people as a whole for the selfish profit motivated actions of the few.

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Páirtí Poblachtach Sóisialach na h-Eireann

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