

# WORKERS REPUBLIC

WORKERS OF ALL LANDS UNITE

MAY/JUNE 1968

SIXPENCE

SERIES 2 NO. 1

## FIFTY E.S.B. WORKERS

### JAILED

As a result of a strike in E.S.B. power stations in 1966 the Fianna Fail government brought in the E.S.B. (Special Provisions) Act. This act prescribed large fines for trade unions, union officials and strikers who might "endanger the power supply" by withdrawing their labour from the E.S.B. The right of workers to strike, the only working class weapon against the bosses was taken away.

As far back as last August a claim was submitted to the E.S.B. on behalf of semi-skilled and unskilled workers in power stations demanding the restoration of the differential which existed between the pay of these workers and of mechanical fitters which existed prior to 1966. The claim dragged on and on; the Board hiding behind the Act, thinking that the men would not strike; and the E.S.B. Group of Unions, spineless as ever, with an eye on the £5000 a day fine, dragging their feet. The E.S.B. were also under pressure from outside private capitalists to resist the claim since their employees would then be on a position to claim parity with the E.S.B. workers. It has always been the policy of the capitalist Free State government that wages in state companies should fall after outside rates in order to keep down wages as a whole.

### FRUSTRATION

As frustration built up in the power stations the unofficial E.S.B. Day Workers Association was set up to press the claim and co-ordinate activities in the stations around the country. Still the Board and the Unions stoned-walled. The claim only reached the E.S.B. Manual Workers Tribunal when it became clear that strike action would be taken. They immediately referred it to the Labour Court. Strike notice was served on behalf of the Association and pickets were placed on Tuesday 26th March.

The vast majority of the workers in the stations refused to pass the pickets. The Minister of Labour made an order bringing the E.S.B. Act into force. The bosses of private industry shut down much more quickly than was necessary in an attempt to turn their workers, who were laid off, against the strikers. The Labour Party leaders attempted to break the strike by urging the men to go back to work. The E.S.B. Group of Unions, which includes most of the big unions and the E.T.U., instructed their members to pass the pickets.

The pickets were summoned and appeared in court in Dublin and Cork. Fines were imposed. On principle the men refused to pay the fines, and fifty two strikers were lodged in Limerick Jail and Mountjoy. There were great scenes of solidarity with the men in the court room in Cork, when one man about to be jailed asked the judge how he would like to live on £12 a week, and another man with ten children pointed out, that the only weapon they had—strike action—had been taken away from them.

At this stage the bosses' penny boys in the Irish Congress of Trade Unions showed true to their colours. Even though they had been instructed at the last two congresses to oppose and demand the repeal of the E.S.B. Act, when the chips were down, with strikers in jail, they issued a statement saving that the matter was not one

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# FIANNA FAIL UNMASKED AGAIN

The attempt to abolish Proportional Representation, the recent jailing of strikers and proposed draconian anti-trade union laws, are some of the measures considered by the representatives of the Irish capitalist class to create "stable government."

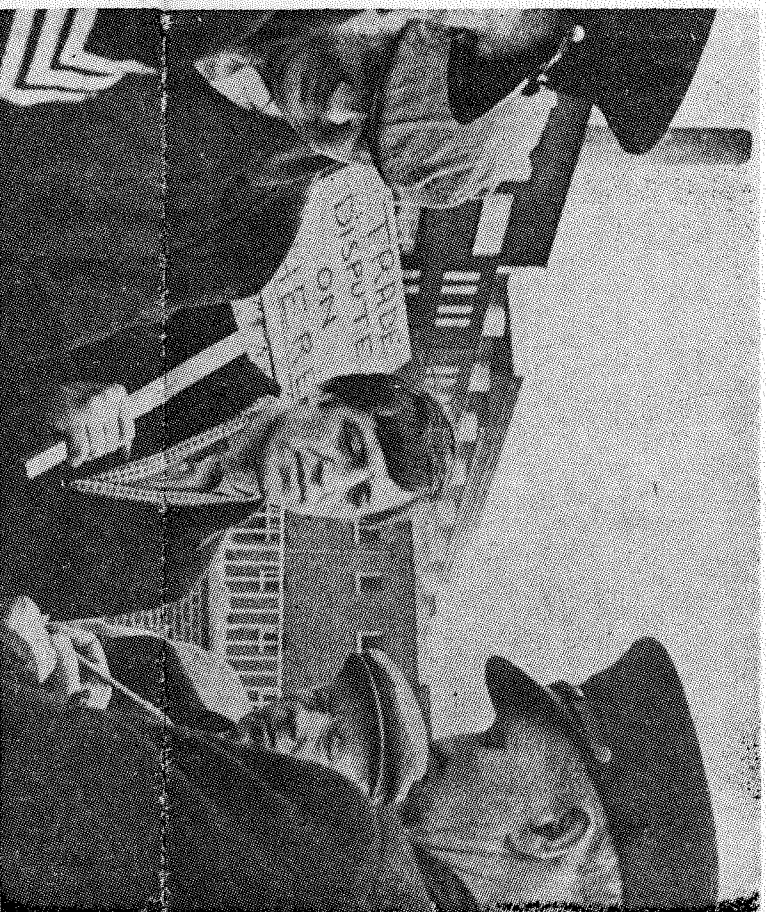
Behind the smooth talk and velvet glove of every capitalist political party there lurks an itchy mailed fist. Ready at all times to smash out at the workers and their organisations if they develop any "uppish" ideas. Ready to ensure that it is the working class that must bear all the burdens in the recurrent recessions of the outmoded, exploitative and ridiculous capitalist system. When it comes to using the big stick against the workers you want find our main local gombest's party Fianna Fail trailing far behind any other boss class party in the world.

### FREE TRADE

Irish capitalism is once again running into trouble. The Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement and the probable entry into a Free Trade Europe are setting up a tidal wave that will cause big upheavals in the Irish Economic backwater. The dislocation of industry with the attendant unemployment and emigration, the acceleration of rural depopulation will all set up dangerous stresses and strains inside the capitalist economic framework. At the present time the workers and small farmers are getting the crumbs on the floor from the rich man's table. In times of economic crisis when the crumbs get scarcer and scarcer, more and more workers lift their eyes from their toes and a fair share of them set eyes on the cake. It is then that the likes of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael begin to sweat and in a panting panic to reach for the big stick. Fianna Fail's attempt to abolish P.R. must be seen in this light.

### STABLE

Childers, the Fianna Fail Minister of Transport and Power speaking recently on P.R. at the Dublin Institute of Adult Education (Brainwashing Centre) let the cat out of the bag in public and told us officially what we had known all along. He said concerning P.R. that "the process of reaching complete Free Trade was going to be so difficult and so complicated that it was necessary to have a strong, stable government. The strictest economical control would be necessary and would involve the government continuously in disciplinary action. No coalition government could ever exercise such discipline and in the 1951 and 1957 economic crises there was a complete absence of the required moral courage in difficult circumstances." There you have it in a nutshell, P.R. is to be abolished, so that a "strong government" with "moral courage" will be elected which in the "difficult circumstances of the Free Trade" will use "disciplinary action continuously". Only the most



Above: E.S.B. pickets arrested. The first time in sixty years that trade unionists have been arrested and jailed in Ireland or England for picketing.

simple minded could not know against whom all the disciplinary action will be taken. The simple Fianna Fail plan is to scrap P.R. have themselves elected with an overwhelming majority, then begin to introduce Anti-Trade Union Laws and to whip the workers into line.

Fianna Fail, by its continuous attempts to junk P.R. reveals not only its well known Tory nature, but the less known and understood fact that "Parliamentary Bourgeois Democracy" everywhere is nothing more than the barely disguised dictatorship of the capitalist class. When faced with any threat to their position the capitalists have always shown their preparedness to rule by other and any means. If the election game does not give the desired result, the capitalists soon try to change the rules (as F.F. are now attempting) and if this does not work, they quickly scrap the whole game and rule by naked force if necessary. In France De Gaulle came to power by an armed coup d'etat and although he does allow a parliamentary hor-air safety valve, he does have at all times his thumb on the windpipe of parliamentary democracy in the fact that Article 16 of the 1958 Constitution allows him to override the National Assembly any time he wishes. In Greece, a handful of army officers representing the most aggressive, ambitious and ruthless of the Greek capitalists last year grabbed state power in accordance with a pre-conceived N.A.T.O. plan at the sheer possibility of a liberal government in Britain Sir Halford Redditch spoke for the British capitalists when he said "Parliament for as long as it lasts". While Cecil King, Lord Beeching and Lord Robens wait in the wings in case it doesn't. Many of

the underdeveloped countries throughout the globe also have a "strong man" ruler. Most illustrative of all was the experience of the German workers in the 1930's in the Weimar Republic; where the capitalists supported the Nazis to power to head off a workers revolution in the aftermath of the great depression.

### JAILINGS

Our local capitalist curs F.F. have over the years kept their teeth well shiny and sharpened. The draconic Offences against the State Act and, the jailing of the telephonist strikers and Republicans, the Electricity Special Provisions Act and, the recent jailing of fifty three E.S.B. strikers all too plainly show what the F.F. boss class government are capable of. But these are but molehills compared to what F.F. wants. This is what the P.R. Referendum is all about.

### HOODWINK

Between now and the referendum, it is likely that the lessons of the Wicklow by-election will have seeped through to Fianna Fail, viz.—that they may be over stepping themselves in abolishing Proportional Representation altogether. They may thus take Paddy Norton's advice and content themselves with the single seat-transferable vote system.

The proposed rural bias in the distribution of seats is both an attempted blow at the Labour Party and an attempted hoodwink of the West. Instead of doing something to help the West, Fianna Fail are giving them a disproportionate amount of seats to

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# WORLD GOLD CRISIS

By MICHAEL MORAN

The gold crisis has spotlighted the financial instability of the world capitalist system. The delicate mechanism upon which hinges the development and expansion of world trade is faced with a crisis of confidence. Since the major capitalist countries were forced off the gold standard owing to the increase in commodity production, and the limited supply of the precious metal, paper currency ceased to be one hundred per cent backed by gold and the epoch of modern inflation was born. This inflationary process received a great fillip with the advent of the first world war with the augmented introduction of paper money to meet the costs of the predatory marauding. Inflation is endemic in the circulation of fictitious paper currency, as there is constantly occurring an increase in international costs at the expense of currency. There is creeping inflation which is inevitable and galloping inflation which signifies the complete break down of the system; this latter form has not yet overtaken the United States.

## CONVERTIBILITY

A word about convertibility; as is generally known, dollars and sterling are world currencies. They can be only such because of the confidence reposed in them. Theoretically most of the currencies of the advanced European capitalist states are convertible, but you don't find nations holding their reserves in francs or marks. Because Germany and France have had a long history of financial instability these states lack credibility. Of course sterling suffered a serious reverse owing to the recent devaluation. To put it simply let us state that if a man wants to know something about Marxism

you will not find him consulting a Stalinist—unless he is having him on. As the Stalinist has for forty years been hawking a ghost story he does not possess a shred of credibility. States need to have reputation and inspire confidence as well as having big reserves and surpluses in their balance of payments. In this respect Britain and the United States are the countries which have never defaulted. When De Gaulle says sterling should cease to play a world role, he is merely saying to the nations: "stop holding your reserves in Anglo-Saxon paper currency."

## FICTITIOUS

Gold price has been fixed at thirty five dollars per ounce. But Karl Marx says that gold has no price as it is the money-commodity in which all other commodities express their value. Now of course gold has been replaced by fictitious paper currency and it is necessary to arbitrarily put a price on the precious metal so as to give some credence to a rickety substitute for real money. The almighty dollar which for the past twenty years was considered as the equal of gold among the reserves of the central banks has become so debauched that at a high point in the recent crisis travellers cheques for dollars were not accepted.

It is not easy to visualize how the currency of such a mighty power with the largest gold reserve in the world and, a productive capacity equal to all of Europe should become so debased. Out of seventeen of the past eighteen years America has had a deficit in her balance of payments. She usually has a surplus in her balance of trade, but, when one considers her

foreign loan programme, investment overseas, the amount spent abroad by American tourists and last but not least the thirty billion dollars a year that the Vietnam war is costing, it all adds up even by United States standards to a colossal outlay out of which there is a very small reimbursement. This is small fry compared to her squandering on armaments of mass destruction and the moon race. Sometimes she succeeds in selling some of the armaments overseas but, that is not a lot compared to the vast state expenditure which in the current year is estimated to exceed taxes by twenty billion dollars. Apart from this inflationary budgetary deficit and the increasing indebtedness of the state there is the amount given in hidden subsidies for the perpetuation of uneconomic parasitical strata. As a consequence there is much more money in circulation than there is of saleable consumer commodities; true there is no shortage of such commodities but because there is an excess of money, their market value has risen above the real value. A spending spree takes place, a flight before money which has lost its value. Industry works at full blast, expanding on credit. More and more money is pumped into the economy, as inflation has a tendency to feed on itself.

## DOMESTIC

Mr. William McChesney Martin jr. the chairman of the American Federal Reserve Board has just said that America was in the midst of the worst financial crisis since 1931. The international gnomes would agree with him. Of course domestic inflation makes commodities uncompetitive in the

# YOUNG LEFT IN IRELAND

There was a time when the only young socialist organizations in Dublin and indeed throughout Ireland were to be found in the universities. One of the most heartening developments in the last few years has been the shift of the focal point of this activity into the hands of the working class, combined with a further growth of the student groups. The main proletarian movements at present are the Connolly Youth Movement, (C.Y.M.), The Young Socialists (Y.S.), both in the Free State and in Belfast we get the Young Communist League, and in Derry yet another young socialist group. The student movements are the Irish Association of Labour Student Organizations (I.A.L.S.O.), The Internationalists, The Irish Student Movement (I.S.M.), and The Progressive Womens League (P.W.L.).

## LABOUR STUDENTS

I.A.L.S.O. was the first student movement to the fore. This organization is still full of life and vigour and is gaining momentum all the time. It is composed of the university branches of the Labour Party in Dublin, Cork, Galway, and the

Queens Belfast Labour Group, the Trinity Fabians, Magee College Derry Socialists and the Kevin Street College of Technology Fabians. The Kevin Street lads seem to be in great difficulty with the College Principal. But I am sure Brendan Halligan the L.P. Secretary will help if his famous saying is any indication—"The students of Kevin Street will be moving into the middle class when they finish". A good feature of I.A.L.S.O. is its all-Ireland character. Its main activity is the running of some quite instructive weekend schools. They now hope to launch a new theoretical magazine. Most important of all I.A.L.S.O. is making valiant efforts to link up with the working class movement outside the Colleges. It involves itself in struggle against anti-union laws for instance. Its aim is to struggle for a workers republic throughout the 32 counties. Some elements in the organization are afflicted by the plague endemic among many student socialists, which is lack of seriousness and dilletantism. May be an aspect of this is the wierd view held by some of its members—that Cuba, China, and Russia are state capitalist countries! For the most part, however, the organization is healthy and groping in the right direction.

## WHAT WILL THEY BE WHEN THEY GROW UP?

However, the same cannot be said about the student grouping called "the Internationalists". This group is relatively small in numbers (being mainly confined to Trinity College). They nevertheless have a rather fat bank book—and thereby hangs a tale. This grouping draws its inspiration from the great Helmsman, Inspirer and Illuminator, Chairman Mao and is addicted to the perusal and flaunting of the Little Red (coloured) Book. Their waving of these little books and their exaltation of Chairman Mao on a recent Anti-Vietnam War Demonstration in Dublin could only have sprung from some infantile disorder. It is essentially a petty bourgeois idealist movement steeped in subjectivism and superstition, and highly sectarian in outlook. On demonstrations they wear out their vocal chords shouting the likes of "Chairman Mao, the Lenin(!) of today" and "American imperialism is a paper tiger", which only goes to show how little they know about Lenin, and how little for that matter also about Mao. This chanting of ridiculous and sectarian slogans is having a detrimental effect on the solidarity line with the N.L.F. (Vietcong). Since the Maoists also agree

world market; the United States is supposed to adopt tough fiscal measures to correct the balance. The ending of the Vietnam war would not of itself be enough as such an act cannot be isolated from the general crisis of world capitalism. If the United States could write off its national debts—something that no capitalist government will do—it would be the most important step in any deflationary policy which she may embark on in the future. Of course there is a precedent for very courageous deflationary measures being embarked upon by a capitalist government; Germany during 1921 succeeded in wiping out all her debts both internal and external by the simple device of inflating her currency out of existence. The debts became too unwieldy to collect. It was a case of to deflate it was first necessary to inflate.

## UNBALANCE

The capitalist internationalist monetary system can only be presumed to run smoothly when the fictitious paper money which it uses inspires a certain confidence. An unbalance is created when the commodities of one country are much dearer than the others. Because of the rampant inflation that is the case at present with the United States, by all the laws of creation she should devalue. But by devaluing she would help the gold-possessing countries, namely the Soviet Union and France. France is doing its best to prevent American capital from swallowing up Europe. But a recession in America would shake France and the rest of the capitalist world, so, any opposition to America from any capitalist source can only be of a limited nature.

Perhaps some workers who stint themselves to save, work overtime and deprive themselves of even the most minimum of essentials may be concerned about the future of capitalism with an eye for a safe investment. Let them go their miserly way, the general consensus of opinion to-day among all intelligent workers is, that the only safe sphere of investment in the future is with the revolutionary Marxist movement.

with the slogan "Victory to the N.L.F.," anyone else who chants this solidarity slogan tends to be treated with the contempt that only the "Internationalists" (sic) wretches deserve. Their adoration of Mao is equalled only by their fear of Trotsky and their ignorance of Lenin—the two leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution. Marx and Engels might well have been describing the "Internationalists" when they wrote in the Communist Manifesto concerning a German socialist tendency way back in 1848—"They wrapped their sorry 'eternal truths' (in a) robe of speculative cobwebs, embroidered with flowers of rhetoric, and steeped in the dew of sickly sentiment". Their idiotic factional capers lead me to believe that they should either grow up or seek their kicks outside the socialist movement.

However, the Irish Student Movement, an offspring seemingly of the Internationalists does have some sincere socialists. The aim of I.S.M. is to achieve student power in the universities, and to make the universities serve the needs of the people. Recent sectarian contortions by the I.S.M. lead me to believe that the umbilical cords joining them to the Internationalists are fast becoming puppet strings. The same holds for "The Progressive Womens League".

## CONNOLLY YOUTH MOVEMENT

More important than all these is the Connolly Youth Movement, which has been more successful in Ireland than any other socialist youth movement for years. Members of the Irish CONTINUED ON PAGE THREE

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## EDITORIAL

With every passing day the whole of mankind is made increasingly aware of the real nature and inherent instability of capitalism. The savage and genocidal war of the American Imperialists on the Vietnamese workers and peasants; The growing storm of revolt against racist and capitalist oppression in the American ghettos: The recent imprisonment of the E.S.B. striking workers: The financial crisis which threatened recently to bring the whole international commercial edifice crashing down into a resounding slump like that of 40 years ago. There are numerous other auguries of the great period of confrontation and clash of the classes that lies ahead and which will leave few if any of the existing power structures intact.

In the world of the Stalinist bureaucrats too, from China to Czechoslovakia and Poland there is tension, ferment and great danger for the ruling cliques. Thus the whole world, both of the western imperialists and the Stalinist bureaucrats, is a patchwork of regimes of crisis. The strains and stresses both inside the various countries and between them become ever sharper and unmitigable. The threads holding the whole together approach inexorably closer to snapping point. No one can say where the weakest thread will turn out to be, which of the patched up regimes will succumb the first.

The heroic, the dogged and indomitable millions of Vietnamese have shown and daily demonstrate that the alleged invincibility of the slaughter machine of the richest and most powerful of the imperialist predators is a great bluff, a pathetic piece of psychological poker.

Colossal struggles impend. The simple statement which seemed to many to have become a worn out cliché, is suddenly and strikingly rejuvenated as the crisis of world capitalism deepens. The high-priests and astrologers of bourgeois economy are overnight discredited. The rising tide of crisis in their allegedly crisis-proof Keynesian world belies them more than any argument of the Marxists. As the London Times pointed out recently: "If the rulers wanted to give a propaganda bonanza to the Marxists they could not have done better than 'allow' the financial crisis to develop!"

The Stalinist bureaucrats in this situation have nothing to offer the workers of the world. In fact all they can offer within their respective national fiefs is repression of the working class, and of the growing demand for elementary rights of expression and democracy.

In Ireland the hangers on of

bureaucratism crawl out of the woodwork to spread the same old reactionary and anti-marxist rubbish that they got away with in the thirties, the hay-day of Stalinist superstition and treachery. On the Vietnam issue instead of class struggle and militant internationalism they invoke the platitudes of U Thant and the prayerful poses and hypocries of the Bishop of Rome. They would have the workers believe here can be a polite transition to socialism: "Excuse us, your excellencies, Mon général, Messrs Money-Bags, may we pass over your prostrated forms to the Socialist future?" Thus they disarm the working class with the idea that talk of peace will end the war, when war is an integral part of capitalism and will end only when this system which generates conflict is smashed. The last thing they want to see is independant working class organisation and policy. In this the Centenary year of James Connolly the radicalisation of the Irish working class is growing, in response to the growing crisis of capitalism. The electoral "reform" is only the latest response of the ruling class to head off even a social democratic reflection of this radicalisation. For our part we must ensure that this growing awareness on the part of the working class is not corralled into a social democratic cul-de-sac, that it is not deflected or derailed by the local stooges of the Russian or Chinese bureaucracies, that it is not led up the garden path once again by the bankrupt petit-bourgeois "defenders of the nation".

The League for a Workers Republic has been founded out of a conflict in the Irish Workers Group, because of the opportunist zig-zags of the nominal Trotskyist leadership. We renounce these zig-zags and dissociate ourselves from all future contortions of this grouping.

The optimism of the youth who have been attracted to the banner of Trotskyism, of revolutionary Marxism, in Ireland will be vindicated in our time. For long the Marxists worked against the stream in isolation. Social democratic and Stalinist reaction and confusion lay heavily on the thinking of the working class and its best militants. History is on our side, it is doing much of our work for us. The fissures in capitalism and Stalinism, in fact all the institutions, that many took, to be permanent landmarks grow wider.

Through the fissures, East and West, seeking the light that gives growth, sprout the shoots of a new proletarian Spring. Let us go forward.

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promising group of young workers to come together in Dublin for years. It Workers Party started it and the Party was "kind" enough to give its headquarters almost completely over to it, though I should add that the I.W.P. insists that the C.Y.M. is completely free from it. This formal independence does not conceal the fact that the C.Y.M. is dominated by the I.W.P., whose politics are geared to serve the needs of the Russian Stalinist bureaucracy. It also contains a faction led by hard-line "left" Stalinists, whose politics are dictated by the needs of the Chinese bureaucracy. Nevertheless despite the rival (Tweedle Krushdum and Tweedle Maotse) Stalinists, the movement is still quite

healthy with a certain amount of room for open discussion. The rank and file are eager beavers and are very militant and constitute the most is to be hoped that these militants groping for a way forward will eventually realise the treacherous nature of the Stalinist leaders, and shake off the shackles of the parasitic bureaucracies. The lessons of Hungary in 1956, of Indonesia in 1965, of France and Greece after the second world war, of Spain and Germany during the thirties, of Stalins frame up Moscow trials and the butchery of the Bolshevik Old Guard, and the liquidation of Lenin's Central Committee must be learned well. We must learn why these took place because the fate of the workers revolution in



Berlin SOS, bearing a banner of Trotsky, march in solidarity with young Polish workers and students protesting against Stalinism and anti-Semitism. In our next issue, Sean Matgamna interprets recent events in East Europe. Also Bill Tone will continue his articles on the Irish Young Left.

## More profits for Capitalist Vultures

By OWEN DOYLE

Because of Ireland's essential economic dependence on England, it is necessary for Irish capitalists to follow closely in the wake of British Imperialism. Irish capitalism in isolation could not last one week. With European Free Trade on the horizon the Irish capitalists were forced to prepare themselves by creating favourable conditions for foreign investments, grants, tax concessions, promise of well disciplined working class etc. The next step of this perpetration was the conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement with Britain. Under this agreement the tariffs behind which small Irish industries were protected, were quickly whittled away. The small Irish shoe factories faced with foreign monopolist competition, cannot survive under these conditions.

Already Italian shoes are emerging victorious in the Irish market, despite the high tariff barrier against Italian goods. After the next reduction of the tariffs on British goods, English shoes will be in a position to undersell Irish products. Result: mass unemployment for the Irish workers engaged in this industry.

### TYLER

When a fire at Rawsons of Dundalk offered a beautiful excuse to close an already declining industry, the capitalists mopped up, the 500 workers were thrown out with a pittance, to do what? To go to hell or to England. The Tralee and Kilkenny shoe factories are reported to be in difficulty. The controlling interests in Munster Shoes Ltd. Clonmel, were held by Tyler, owner of a large English concern, and a chain of shoe

Ireland depends on it.

There is no doubt but that the C.Y.M. rank and file are to the left of the revisionist I.W.P. It must keep that way. But already there are some trends that need careful attention. Three of the committee of the C.Y.M. are in the I.W.P. and two of them, to my knowledge, are even on the executive of the I.W.P. A blight that must be eradicated forthwith is the "partition" between the C.Y.M. (based mainly in Dublin, and with links in several other towns) and the Y.C.L. in Belfast. This "partition" goes even to the extent of both organizations wearing different coloured starry ploughs as flashes on their jackets.

Bill Tone

stores in Ireland and England. Munster Shoes Ltd. became unprofitable and fell into debt due to competition from cheap Italian and English shoes on the Irish market. With the dismantling of the Irish tariffs, Tyler can produce shoes at a much cheaper rate in the home industry. Consequently he sold his shares in the Clonmel firm.

The factory has been taken over by Diamond and Buckley representing Murdoch's Ltd. Drogheda. These capitalists are out to make a quick buck. They got the shares for little or nothing. They are now slashing the workers' conditions to cut costs and boost their sweat profits. They told the union to "put the rule-book in their back pocket". In other words "The your hands behind your back while we fitch your purse". They say each side will have "to make sacrifices" and that they are accepting no salary for 18 months. Believe that if you are able. If not, demand to see the books! All indications are that there will be big sackings in the not distant future.

### SOCIALISM

Ultimately the small shoe firms cannot survive in a capitalist Ireland under free trade conditions. When further efforts are made to close this and other shoe factories, the workers must demand immediate nationalisation under workers control, with no compensation to the former investors. The selfishness, and the inability of capitalism to work is becoming increasingly evident to the Irish worker. Socialism is the only viable alternative to this system. Under socialism the country will be run by the workers with people like Tyler attending to the local sewers and maintaining the public toilets. These people are quite content to throw workers with 30 years service onto the dung-heap of unemployment with only the boat fare in their pockets. Then they start the usual propaganda campaign through their daily rags, calling the workers lazy and selfish etc. The time will come when these leeches who live off the workers will rue the day they exploited us and subjected untold millions to a world of misery. Capitalism must go. Redundant workers must demand full wages until they are provided with an equally good job. Workers must be prepared to fight any attempt by the bosses aided by the corrupt trade union leaders to impose less than the above demand.

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## Strikers jailed

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of legislation but a "matter of industrial relations". No one should be surprised at this. These were the same people who sat down with the Minister of Labour and worked out the details of the proposed anti-trade union legislation and only withdrew when most of the items had been agreed in order to hide away from the anger of the rank and file. These traitors must be thrown out by the scuff of the neck at the next congress and people who genuinely represent the views of the members and are willing to carry them out, elected, in their places.

### MOUNTJOY

In Dublin the strikers placed pickets on Mountjoy. Due to the despicable activities of the official trade union movement, a group of rank and file trade unionists set up an ad hoc committee to "Defend the Picket" and demand the repeal of the E.S.B. Act. Popular support for the men in jail was growing. Immediately after they were left off, 150 workers from the Ballymun building site marched to Mountjoy in support of the jailed strikers. The "Defend the Picket" had called a mass demonstration for Sunday afternoon. The Government were coming under pressure from the capitalists who were losing money heavily. Hillery, the Minister for Labour, set out to get as good a settlement as possible with the help of his side-kicks in the I.C.T.U. He refused to negotiate directly with the strikers—in order to restore the authority of the union bureaucrats as he himself later admitted. The men refused to return to work until all the strikers were released. Under tremendous pressure from the unions the men agreed to return to work late Saturday night. The E.S.B. agreed to pay the fines and the men were released. Hillery agreed to revoke the order bringing the E.S.B. Act into force, but he stated that it was to be "held in abeyance" in case it would be needed in future. The claim would be heard in the Labour Court the following week. A public inquiry was to be held into "industrial relations" in the E.S.B.

### VICTORY

While it was great to see the bosses paying the fines, and this must be regarded as a small victory for the men, nevertheless the real battle, to have the E.S.B. Act repelled, is still not won. This Act can and will be used again if it is allowed to remain on the statute book! At the time of writing no settlement of the claim has been announced. However, it has been announced that the Board of the public inquiry is to contain no representative of the men or of the unions. It is to be composed of "experts in industrial relations" from other state companies, university professors and some eminent figure with "trade union experience". This is an obvious sham which any worker can see through.

As we go to press, the workers are hallooting on the ridiculous Labour Court offer of 6/8 a week extra after two years service. This will probably be rejected overwhelmingly. The test will then come for the union leaders. To make the strike official or to rat on the men once again.

In this dispute the traitorous role of the union bureaucrats can be clearly seen. The Government was clearly on the run. Mass support for the strikers among trade unionists was rising. Even after the strike was settled a sizeable number of trade unionists attended the meeting at Abbey Street corner on Sunday afternoon and later marched to the Department of Labour

# DROGHEDA TENANTS RENTS PROTEST

By LIAM BOYLE

The act of the conservative dominated corporation in Drogheda, by increasing the rents in the working class corporation estates has been met with indignation and militancy by the tenants. The rents have been jacked up by 15/- a week for almost 2000 tenants while a further 200 householders in Ballisgrove face a 9/- a week rise. With banners proclaiming "We won't pay" "We put you in and we can get you out" "To hell with dictatorship" fifteen hundred members of Drogheda Tenants and Residents Organisation marched in protest to the courthouse in April. The politicians and corporation officials had sneaked into the courthouse well over an hour before their usual time to avoid running the gauntlet of the tenants picket outside. Extra police were imported in for the occasion.

### DEPUTATION

The corporation eventually agreed to meet a deputation of tenants. This comprised of D. McRachnail, J. Byrne, P. Fallon and T. Jain, all of the D.T.R.O. together with some officials of the National Association of Tenants Organisations. Afterwards, at a meeting in the mall the tenants were addressed by the deputation members on the outcome of the talks. The long and the short of all the polite verbiage and clap-trap of the officials and politicians, is that the corporation does not want to budge an inch. All talk of "options", "differential schemes", "house purchase schemes" are just blinds to hoodwink, confuse and divide the tenants.

The tenants are hardly likely to be fobbed off by the town clerk rambling on about what he had the neck to

where a note was handed in demanding the repeal of the E.S.B. Act and all anti-trade union laws. If the I.C.T.U. had supported the jailed strikers as instructed, the E.S.B. Act could have been repealed and the claim won. However, they insisted on co-operating with Hillery—the bosses' mouthpiece, and on pressurizing the strikers to return to work without a settlement.

### WEDGE

To date telephonists have been jailed for picketing, farmers for agitating for a better deal, E.S.B. workers for striking and recently a Post Office worker has been dismissed for going on strike. The E.S.B. Act and the Offences Against the State Act are the thin edges of the wedge. And none too thin at that. As long as these precedents are allowed to stand, there is nothing to prevent similar acts from being passed against any worker who goes on strike. In addition there is the threatened anti-trade union legislation, which Hillery is going to bring in. All the proposed provisions are designed to concentrate power in the hands of these same trade union bureaucrats who played such two faced and threacherous role in this E.S.B. strike. The right of every worker to join a union, to strike and to picket must be defended unconditionally.

Paddy Fitzgerald



The Drogheda tenants protest march

describe as the "attractive aspects of the rent review". By all means let the rents of the old age pensioners be reduced, but let not this sop be used as an excuse to jack up the rents of the bulk of the tenants. If there must be "revision of rents", let all the revisions be downwards! But the tenants should also be wary of "leaders" like Mr. Roman of N.A.T.O., whose main concern at the meeting seemed to be to dissociate his organisation from the "vandalism" of some of the marchers.

### SLEEPY

The tenants must now press ahead with the struggle, refuse to pay all rent increases, make Peter Moore and the rest of Labour Party expose the rent rise as an open attack on the living standards of the workers, wake up the sleepy Trades Council and drag them into the struggle, and probe the possibilities of links and joint action with other militant tenants groups and especially with the Dublin Housing Action Committee.

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## Fianna Fail Unmasked

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fool everyone. (In any case there is already a surfeit of idler, hoodlum, and careerist politicians already in the West.) The whole proposal gives Fianna Fail unlimited opportunities to gerrymander. By installing the Stormont system of elections Fianna Fail hopes to model their control of the 26 Counties on the Unionist throttle hold of the Six Counties.

Labour Party militants must watch their leaders very carefully. The Delegate Conference was merely a publicity stunt. We had deliberate time wasting on the Secretary's and Treasurer's reports, which could have been circulated to delegates, and with endless discussion on needless details of the national collection. All these constituted a deliberate filibuster in order to limit discussion from the floor to one hour. All attempts to isolate the P.R. issue from the present, and proposed, anti-union laws of Fianna Fail must be resisted.

At the conference Tully made a significant speech in favour of co-operation with Fine Gael on the referendum. This combined with the fact that ministerial salaries have gone up to £6000 p.a. makes it highly likely that if Labour and Fine Gael combined have more dail seats than Fianna Fail after the next election, that the Labour Party leaders will sell out

their rank and file for the umpteenth time and clutch at a coalition with the Blueshirts.

The unions have a vital role to play this time as on the previous occasion. The Dublin Council of Trades Unions has already declared against the abolition of P.R. Trade Unionists must realize the anti-working class nature of the proposed change in the voting system and see how it dovetails into Fianna Falls plans to strengthen the repressive anti-union laws. Joint action must be taken with the Labour and Sinn-Fein parties to oppose the abolition of P.R., and to campaign for the repeal of the Electricity Special Provisions Act and the Offences Against the State Act. The referendum must be used to expose the anti-working class nature of Fianna Fail and not to sow illusions in bourgeois democracy. The Socialist alternative must be explained. All attempts by the bosses and their politician lackeys to load their problems on to the backs of the working class must be resisted. In this centenary of Connolly's birth every move to shackle the working class must be fiercely repulsed as a first step in the struggle for a Workers Republic for which he fought and died. Only in a Workers Republic can we settle once and for all with the bosses and their side kicks.

C. Hussey