THE BOTTOM DOG

Friday July 23rd
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5p

"FOR OUR DEMANDS MOST MODERATE ARE --- WE ONLY WANT THE EARTH" (JAMES CONNOLLY)

THE WORKING CLASS PAPER OF NORTH MUNSTER

RENT INCREASES YET ANOTHER ATTACK ON WORKERS

When the Minister for Local Government attempted to increase the rent of all Local Authority tenants from July 1st by the sum of £2 to £4 on the maximum rent and by up to 600% on sickness and unemployment recipients, the National Association of Tenants' Organisations demanded an emergency meeting with his Department. At this meeting on July 7th, NATO informed the Minister that if the increases were not suspended immediately it would issue a directive to its members for militant action i.e. a national rent strike. Tully agreed that he would convey NATO's request to the Cabinet meeting of Friday July 9th with a view to securing a reply from the Government in time for NATO's National Executive meeting on Sunday July 11th. On Friday evening the Government Information Bureau announced the suspension of all increases. until negotiations with NATO were completed.

At the National Executive meeting NATO issued the following directive to all its members:- (i) that if members had already paid these increases they were to deduct them from future rent payments. (ii) that should the Minister try to introduce revised increases without agreement with NATO, on no account should any tenant attempt to pay these increases.

An example of the increases in maximum rents:- Carew Park - from £10.50 to £14.50, O'Malley Park - from £7.45 to £10.45, - Clancy Park - from £2.40 to £4.40. The message from NATO to Mr Tully is loud and clear, under no circumstances will it accept such vicious increases on the already overburdened tenants of this country. Such an attack on the sick and unemployed is without precedent. The Limerick NATO members of the National Executive also condemn this attempt by the City Manager to induce people to pay these increases pending the final outcome of the negotiations with NATO. If he was trying to impress the Minister that Limerick people were prepared to accept these massive increases without a fight, he has received his answer from the majority of tenants who have expressed through their organisations that on no account will these increases be paid.

NATO calls on the few areas that are not already organised to join NATO and fight these increases. The address to contact is:-
ERNEST FITZGERALD, 16 MAIGUE WAY, CAREW PARK.

ADVERTISEMENTS

In this space we carry advertisements for events and publications within the labour movement. We would encourage our readers to make use of this column. The fee charged is small but will help the Bottom Dog to continue publication at its present size and regularity.

Public Meeting

WOMEN AND SOCIALISM

Venue: Mechanics Institute

Hartstonge St.

Date: Wednesday 4th August

Speakers

Betty Purcell Aileen Dillane

Organised By The

MOVEMENT FOR A SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

BANSHEE

Journal of
Irishwomen United

Available from-
39 Elm Place,
Rathbane
Limerick

Family Planning Clinic

6 Cornmarket Row
LIMERICK

Tuesday	6.30 - 8.30pm
Thursday	10am - 12noon
Friday	7.00 - 9.00pm
Saturday	10am - 12noon

The Bottom Dog is not a platform for any individual or political group. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the Editorial Board of the Bottom Dog.

Your Rights

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT

WHAT YOU ARE ENTITLED TO

When are you eligible?

(a) If you have at least 26 stamps on your insurance card in the previous contributary year.
(b) You are available for work if a job is offered to you.
(c) You have reason for not doing a course run or approved by AnCo.

How long does U.B. last?

(a) If you are under 65 years old you will be paid for 312 days. However if you are under 18 years old or are a married woman and maintained by your husband your U.B. will only last for 156 days.
(b) If you are over 65 years, have at least 156 insurance stamps you will be paid U.B. until you are 67.
(c) If, after drawing U.B. for 156 days you then get a job and get 13 insurance stamps on your card you may claim again for U.B. This applies to all persons mentioned above.

Where and when do you claim?

(a) Make your claim as soon as you become unemployed you may have to wait 3 days before payment begins.
(b) Claim at the local employment exchange
(c) If you intend to go to another E.E.C. country and you have been entitled to U,B. here in Limerick for four weeks, you will be entitled to U.B. in that country for three months. However, before leaving, make sure you get all necessary documents from the Employment Exchange.

How much do you get?

(a) You claim for yourself the amount will vary depending on the number of stamps above 26 you had in the previous year.
(b) A married man can claim for his wife if she is being mainly maintained by him.
(c) A married woman can claim for her husband if he is an invalid or being maintained by her.
(d) A widower or unmarried man can claim for a woman who is looking after his children and being maintained by him.
(e) A father can claim for each child under 18 years of age.
(f) A mother can claim for the children if (1) her husband is an invalid or being maintained by her, (2) her husband is not supporting her, (3) if she is a widow, deserted wife or an unmarried mother.

Ferenka

A HISTORY OF STRUGGLE

In the second half of the 1960s, the area now described as the Mid Western Region was still in the early stages of industrialisation. The Shannon industrial Estate was not yet 10 years old and none of the estates which are now scattered around Limerick, such as Galvone and Raheen were built. In Shannon, the biggest single employer was E.I., which gave work to about 800 people, while in Limerick, Krups headed the employment table with some few hundred workers less than E.I. The main source of employment was still in the traditional industries such as footwear and clothing, as well as distribution and the services.

Pat O'Connor

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It was in this climate that the idea of a £20M plant to be built near Limerick, somewhere in Annacotty, was first mooted. It is no surprise that this venture was hailed by all and sundry as the panacea for all our ills. The continuous predictions that foreign investment would herald a whole new era of prosperity were now confirmed in no uncertain manner. The perspective for developing an industrial base in Ireland initiated by the Lemass Government was beginning to show dividends and was producing what for many was secure employment.

It mattered little that this entailed a very intensive method of production. It introduced shiftwork and was to change the social patterns of thousands of workers. However, wages were good when compared with what one could earn in a department store or for many of those that eked out an existence from the land. This situation led to a mental attitude of welcoming foreign industry, because it was "at least providing employment". The industrialists that set up here had a very hostile attitude to Trade Unionism. Whereas, in their own countries (U.S., Germany, Japan etc) because of, in most cases, the organised strength of labour and the high level of economic development, their profits were not as great as they would wish them to be. Countries, where the economy was underdeveloped were much more promising and this was the market angle that the Industrial Development Authority used as bait.

In the workers resistance to this type of regime E.I. acts as a landmark in the workers efforts to unionise. In a long and bitter strike, management were forced to concede and a partial victory was won - E.I. is not yet fully unionised.

As the E.I. strike was winding down, construction was beginning on the Ferenka site at Annacotty. From the very beginning, the name Ferenka was associated with strikes, as workers when faced with problems of bad conditions and inadequate wages resorted to the traditional method of the Labour Movement when employers stubbornly refused to improve the situation.

This new militancy born of the new industrial development, could not be understood by local businessmen who were gaining a commercial backhand and so they rallied to the cause of their "giant neighbour" by creating an atmosphere of witch-hunt against the Ferenka workers. Around this period also, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions introduced its two tier picket and so by making strikes unofficial, they attempted to police the union members for Ferenka and isolate the militants. When production finally began, Ferenka had the experience of "dealing with strikes" and so, at present the conditions as outlined in Bottom Dog No. 67, June 25th can be easily understood.

However, the organised workers at Ferenka (with 1200 workers in a single plant - the largest in this area), are an important section of the local working class. When they suffer a defeat it is a body blow to the Trade Union movement in the region, or in the language of the employers "that will teach them not to try it again". For this reason it is important that solidarity be built up and extended in the case of the 35 workers recently suspended in Ferenka for taking unofficial action because of the heating conditions in the plant.

This current dispute and its ramifications for worker - union - employer relationships is of vital importance. For this reason it will be the topic of a major article in the next issue of the "Bottom Dog".

redundancies

Why they happen
How to fight them
A Bottom Dog pamphlet

This pamphlet explores the backgroumd to these attacks on workers with particular reference to Ireland and puts forward the perspective in which redundancies must be fought and a strategy with which workers can inflict defeat on the bosses, whether they be native capitalists or the tycoons of foreign multi-nationals.

It is available from any of the addresses given in the Bottom Dog at 10p each.

CONNOLLY ON THE WOMENS' QUESTION..

"The Worker is the slave of Capitalist society, the female worker is the slave of that slave".

These are the words of James Connolly taken from a chapter on women in the "Re-Conquest of Ireland". In it he speaks about the position of women in Irish society in the early part of this century. He outlines how the mass of Irish women, peasants and workers, are oppressed both as members of the lowest class and as women.

Poverty at this time was very severe. Thousands of Irish peasants were forced to emigrate to Britain and America, with nothing in their possession except perhaps hope for better things to come. In Belfast, children were made to work for a mere pittance, at the same time adults were told that there was no work available; while in Dublin even the Corporation admitted that 28,000 citizens lived in dwellings unfit for human habitation. Needless to mention, within the United Kingdom, as it was at that time, the social conditions and rate of literacy etc., were far superior in any part of Britain than they were in Ireland.

Against this background of national and class oppression, the women of Ireland were subjected to further oppression as serfs. This oppression has its roots in capitalist society. It was after all, only with the advent of industrialisation and the emergence of the capitalist mode of production, that the modern family originated. This was to reduce women to servants of servants. Husbands worked all day under severe conditions for little reward. On their return home in the evening they often made their wives suffer the scorn and contempt which they felt for the employers. There was no place for women in production, except during their youth when they were the victims of super exploitation until they were married, when they were confined to the home and with it the role of child-bearer and servant for all within it except daughters, who themselves had a specific slavish function.

Connolly graphically describes the attitude of the Irish peasant to his daughter:

"The peasant in whom centuries of servitude and hunger had bred a fierce craving for money, usually regarded his daughter as being sent by God to lighten his burden through life ..... The Irish peasant, in too many cases, treated his daughter in much the same way as he regarded a plough or a spade - as tools with which to work the farm."

This was the atmosphere in which women lived in the 1910s. This role was accepted by them as they were met with it wherever they went or whoever they came in contact with. They were preached at from the almighty pedestal of the pulpit, women had a duty to their husbands, to their children and above all to God. They were never given an alternative. Even in 'respectable families', though the woman was much better off materially, she had still to be content with an inferior position to that of her husband and to be completely subject to his judgement in all things.

However, a movement was developing mainly among middle class women - one that would later gain the right to vote for women. Connolly refers to this in the "Re-Conquest of Ireland" and observes that if it (the vote) had been granted "as readily as political wisdom would have dictated, much of the revolutionary value of woman's enfranchisement would probably have been lost". In its blindness to maintain the complete subjugation of one half of humankind, the "political wisdom" Connolly speaks of was ignored and as is always the case it was left to those who felt the bitter taste of oppression to struggle and gain for themselves what the capitalist politicians tried to deny them.

Connolly placed great emphasis on the links between the Labour Movement and the Womens' Movement. He argued that all those who support the cause of Labour could only do so if they stand for the liberation of women. He saw the militant struggle of women as being a dynamic which would contribute to the liberation of all.

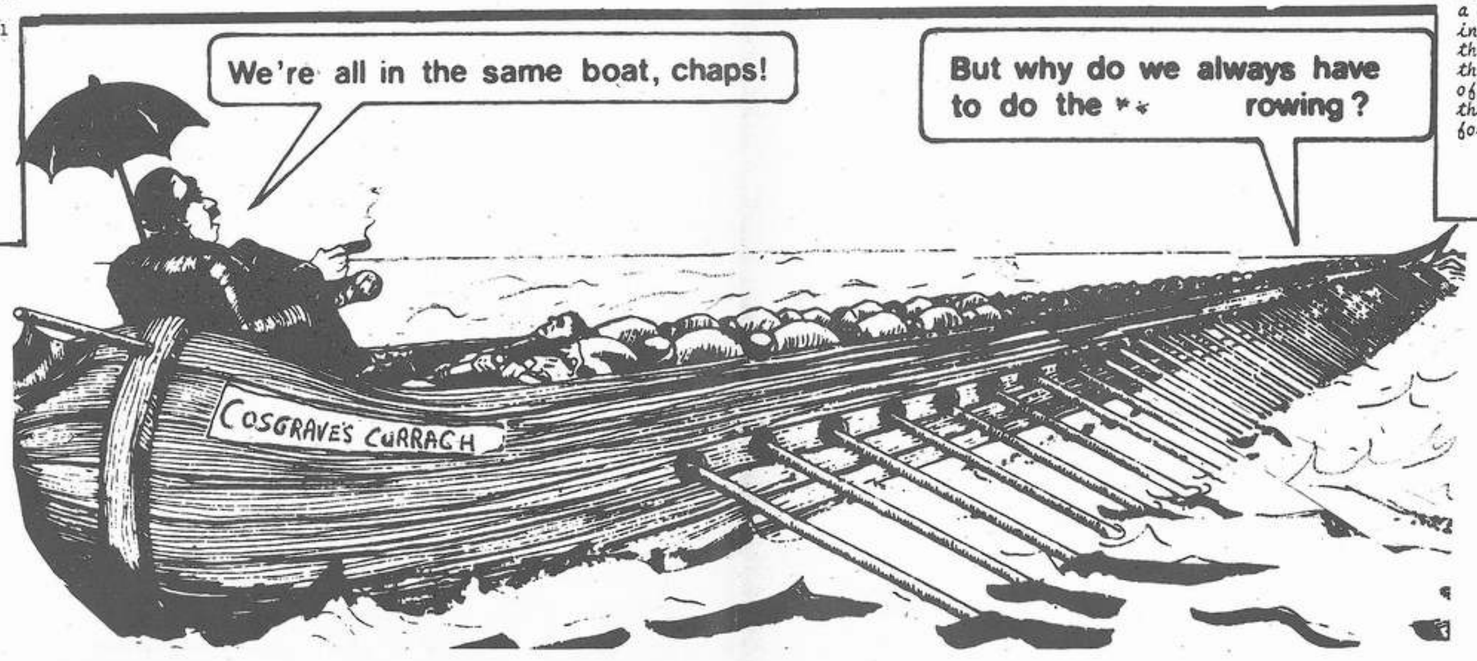
In Ireland today women have the right to vote. But in overall terms, taking into account the material advancement which has occurred, and the working class because of its own strength has a bigger share of society's wealth than it had in Connolly's time, has the position of women in society radically altered? The answer must be no. Any advance that has taken place has been due again to the efforts of women, who by organising forged this advance.

Women are still confined to the home in the Ireland of the '70s and the 'mental attitude' that existed in Connolly's time still prevails today, but this time it is being challenged by a growing and radical feminist movement.

Because women are oppressed as a sex and because of the role of women in the isolation of the home is central to the capitalist society an autonomous womens' movement is vital if this situation is to be ended.

In the Labour and Socialist Movements, this necessity is dismissed in a very heavy handed and dogmatic manner, the worst examples of which in recent times have been the denial of the right to speak to the womens' movement especially on the platform of the May Day march in Dublin - thus denying radical women the right to solidarise with the struggles of the whole working class. This contrasts sharply to Connolly's position on the struggle for the emancipation of women when he wrote:-

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



BANK STRIKE

In the Limerick Leader of July 17th Tom Joyce, President of Limerick's Trades Council, called upon the bank officials to end their strike pending the findings of the Government appointed arbitrator Maurice Cosgrave. Joyce said that "Undue hardship is being caused to workers, small traders, shop keepers, and so on, as well as wholesalers..."

The same article carried an appeal from Tom Morris, president of the Limerick Chamber of Commerce, for the IBOA to return to work. He also made the point that the business community were having difficulties in carrying on their operations.

Notice anything about the two statements? Of course you do. As near as damn it the views of the president of the trades council and the employers man are identical on the issue of the bank strike.

It is natural for the employers to moan and wail about the bank dispute because it disrupts the smooth running of business and impairs the efficency of profit making. Morris is speaking up for the interests of his own class. We can't expect any better of him.

However it is to be regretted that Joyce is not sticking up for the interests of the class he is supposed to represent-the bottom dogs of no property. His little heart is bleeding over the fact that the employers are having short term difficulties but he doesn't see the difficulties that the working class could have in the future because of the way the Government has used legistation to hold down the wages of bank workers.

Instead of pleading with the bank officials to end their action Joyce would be far better employed in building solidarity for the IBOA amongst the trades unions of Limerick.

SUPPORT BANK WORKERS

Dave Lee

The Governments Bill to control the wages of bank workers is a direct attack on trade unionism and free collective bargaining. The Government is using the Law to deal with an industrial dispute. A dangerous precedent.

If no hue and cry is raised against the Bank Act then it will give the State confidence to pull the same stunt on another group of workers in the future. By not supporting the bank officials against Government interference in wage negotiations trade unionists are cutting their own throats.

The Copper Room

The next time you go to the Capri Cafe and make a pig of yourself with a 32 pence worth bag of fish and chips kindly spare a thought for those in this world who are less fortunate than yourself.For in this very city of Limerick there are some of your fellow citizens who are so desperate for food that they will pay as much as £10 for a simple meal.

Unbelievable you might say.

But it is a fact that in this Christian year of1976 a poor starvling must cough up the equilvalent of a single man's weekly dole in order to buy a dinner so as to keep alive for a few more hours.

And where does this unsrupulous exploitation of the body's constant craving for carbohydrates,vitamins and proteins take place?

In the Copper Room of that doss house they call Jury's Hotel.

If you still doubt my word on the matter lets go through the Copper Room menu and have a look at the prices.

In such places one starts the nosh up with things they call Hors D'Oeuvres. According to whether lobster,oysters and mussels are in or out of season you have a choice of between nine to eleven of these Hors D'Oeuvres with prices ranging from 75p to £2.00.

For £1.45 one can have an Avocado Vinaigrette,which is a whole pear(yes a complete,fullsome,all there,Whole Pear) with vinaigrette dressing.

Or if you are feeling adventurous you can let six miserable snails slither down ypur throat for two quid.

Following these delicacies comes soup; five choices-Bisque D'Homard,Tortue Verte En Tasse and whatnot at 'reasonable' prices - 45p to 60p.

You may have already noticed that in the Copper Room its French dishes that are served.This is because French style cooking is considered the best in the World. Besides who wants to eat common working class muck like bacon and cabbage or beans on toast.And if its a bag of fish and chips you've come looking for then I am afraid that the Copper Room is definitely not for the likes of you.

A Right Bellyfull

By this time the connoisseur of French cusine has forked out something between £1.25 and £2.60 and the dinner proper is not on the table yet.

Naturally since the main course is the highpoint of the feed you can expect the prices of the fish and meat courses to be up in the clouds.

About 17 choices here.

Some examples:

Oven roasted duck,bones removed with apples and raisins stuffed up its arse- £3.95.

Feeling in a sadistic mood? Then you can have Sir Loin beaten,cooked in butter,onions and mustard and then have the poor thing set on fire with brandy.All for £3.25.

Now if you order any of these main

Shannon News

The management of St Senans National School have approached the teachers and the parents of the pupils in an effort to get them to paint the school. One would think that there is a shortage of painters in Shannon. Of course, this is not the case. There are plenty of painters on the dole in the town who would be only too willing to get a chance of some work.

The management of the school claim that there is no grant from the Department of Education for the undertaking of this type of work. But as we pointed out in a previous edition of the Bottom Dog, there was no shortage of funds for an orgy of drinking and belching in the Shannon Shamrock when the Minister for Education, Dicky Burke, came to open a new extension at the Comprehensive School recently. The bold Burke came to, and departed from the Shannon Shamrock in a helicopter. One would think he was a sheik from Kuwait instead of a minister of a potatoe republic that is in a big mess.

It is the same old story. No money available for wages or for the proper maintenance of schools but plenty of money available for orgies and for the State's maintenance of repression against unemployed workers groups, socialists and republicans.

CHILE

SHANNON CHILE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE.

The Shannon Chile Solidarity Committee would like to appeal through the pages of the Bottom Dog to trade unions and their branches throughout the country to consider the adoption of Chilean prisoners. Various British trade unions who adopted Chilean prisoners were eventually able to secure their release by bringing pressure to bear

at Jury's Hotel

courses don't expect spuds and veg to be thrown in with them.These accessories have to be purchased separately.Baked potatoes are 40p,Petits Pois a la Anglaise (peas to you) 35p,cauliflower comes at 45p.

So the wretched buggered duck plus all the bits and pieces won't leave you any change out of £5.15.

For afters howb about savouring the delights of Crepe Suzette at 90p a go.

When thats all gone and your eyes are bigger than your belly theres a choice of the cheese board at 75p.

Frenchified coffee-80p.

Tot up the pennies and pounds,add the 10% service charge and the wallet has been relieved of ten notes.

Then of course you have been knocking back the juice of the grape during the meal and a few bottles of that stuff is a triffle more expensive than a couple of cans of coke.With the wine the bill has shot up to the £13 mark at least.

O.K. Big deal,so what.

Orgies in Jury's Hotel!

Not so long ago the Limerick Weekly Echo was raving on about dole spongers and how some people are swindling the State out of £40 a week and working as well by doing tom jobs.In the same article industrialists were attacking the welfare system itself by saying it was a disincentive to work.

Of course for the vast majority of the people on the dole whose pay related is running out the real situation is far from rosy.

On flat rate a single man gets just under a tenner a week and a married couple with one child are rolling in about £20 a week.Out of these ill gotten gains rent has to be paid,food brought,clothes purchased etc.

It is certainly not the unemployed who can afford to go to the Copper Room and indulge in gastronomic orgies. There one person can,in one short hour spend more money than a single unemployed man has to live on for seven whole days.The Copper Room is strictly off limits for us bottom dogs.

Lets admit that some people on the dole are able to do tom jobs.But they are only doing it so as to provide shoes for their children.Certainly they won't be splashing their money on Grenadins de Boeuf Bernaise, let alone Chateau Briand Gastronome.

If the words spongers,parasites and swindlers have any meaning they should be applied to those businessmen,who,by creaming off the wealth produced by working people ,are able to guts themselves silly with food with fancy names like Entrecote au Poivre du Chef and who are able to have all the Crepe Suzettes they want.

As for Government ministers and industrialists insisting that the working class should exercise wage restraint in a period when prices are going up by an annual rate of 18% .Well they can stuff that rubbish up their roast duck.

Dave Lee

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on General Pinochet through their own government.

The moral of the Chilean working class and the political prisoners will be kept up when they see solidarity being expressed by the working class of every country on their behalf in their struggle against the junta of Pinochet. Chile is many thousands of miles away and it may seem to Irish workers that we have enough problems facing the working class here at home without having to be concerned with the situation in Chile. But we must remember that the giant monopolies that helped to finance the overthrow of the elected government of Salvador Allende in September 1973 (which led to the murder of thousands of trade unionists) have subsidaries in Ireland. These companies, like I.T.T. and General Electric, would take the same course of action in this country if their profits were in danger.

We call for the release of all political prisoners in Chile. Victor Diaz and Exequiel Ponce are just two of the many prisoners in Chile. If you wish your branch or section to adopt these prisoners or any other Chilean prisoner and so keep up their moral and perhaps win their freedom then you should get in touch with the Shannon Chile Solidarity Committee, c/o II Tradaree Court or any other Chile Solidarity Committee.

Adoption of a political prisoner involves writing to the prisoner and attempting to get him or her released. This is best done by trying to get him or her a home and job in your home town and getting government permission for him or her to enter the country. This may involve supporting their family and providing English lessons etc when they arrive.

THE PROFITS OF UNEMPLOYMENT

While workers are being told to accept pay restraint, company profits, given free reign, continue to increase. Nobody is demanding restraint of them.

Some examples :- The Jacobs Group have had record profits for the last financial year. Turnover was up I8% to £I8·9 million, and the profits before tax were up 28% to £830,000. Readymix profits were up 3I%. Bolands profits reached an all time high in I975-'76. Pre-tax profits were up 2I2% to £6I7,000. Waterford Glass profits were up 33% - from £3·4 millions to £4·7 millions. Newbridge Holdings profits were up 7%.

Those are only some of the countries I4 largest companys which have shown record profits for the past financial year with dividends reaching up to 65% and belies the suggestion that things are so bad that the boss and the rest of us are now in the same boat.

Workers are asked to make sacrafices so that employers can continue to make the maximum profits. Minimum wages, maximum profits is their motto. But then that is the nature of capitalist society. Profits must come first and profits come before people. The 'sacred profits' must not only be maintained but increased. And it is the workers who suffer in this frantic striving for greater profits. Work forces are reduced while those remaining are conned into increasing production by productivity deals. Instead of the factory being there for the workers the workers are there for the factory. To the company directors workers are just units of human machinery identified only by clock numbers. as the machines on the shop floor are numbered so are the workers. If a machine can do the same job as a worker faster and cheaper the metal machine will replace the flesh and blood machine. One piece of machinery replaces another. An added advantage of a metal machine is that it cannot organise like flesh and blood machines in unions and strike for better conditions. So company directors are overjoyed by National Wage Agreements which suit the employers more than the workers and blunts the struggle for better living standards. As we can see NWA's open the door to pay restraint and brings the worker a step nearer the machine on the factory floor.

and what is capitalist society doing to provide jobs for those workers the company no longer wants? It may be of interest to see what successive capitalist motivated governments have accomplished in eliminating unemployment Something that is promised at every general election for donkeys' years

In Ireland in I965 we had 4·4% unemployed, in I970 it had risen to 5·9% and in I975 it soared to 9·5%. It sure is a strange way of eliminating unemployment. In ten years the number of jobless has jumped 5·I%. Can we expect in I985 to have I0·2% more out of work than in I965?. You can see how the governments of Lynch and Cosgrave solve the unemployment situation - they increase it. And Ireland with the highest unemployment in the EEC is not alone with its problem of handling unemployment.- In Britain, it has risen from I·4% in I965 to 2·5% in I970 and to 4·6% in I975. In France the respective figures have been 0·7%, I·3%, and 4·7%. Even in Western Germany, the strong man of the EEC, unemployment which stood at 0·6% in I965 spiralled to 4·0% in I975. The number out of work in the EEC as a whole has risen from I·9% in I965 to 2·I% in I970 to its level of 4·8% in I975.

You can see that the EEC is not the answer to our unemployment problem. Instead of improving our lot the capitalist policies of the EEC has led to more and more people being made jobless as well as a deterioration in our living standards. The EEC, that land of milk and honey has turned out to be a bare and barren land. The 50,000 extra jobs the pro-EECers promised us have not materialised and now appears to be one of the many sick lies used to con us into EEC membership. It is only in socialist countries with planned economies that you will find no unemployment and living standards rising every year.

To overcome our present crisis drastic changes in government policy need to be made. Capitalist answers are seen not to work and only lead to more and more sacrifices being demanded of the workers.

Noel A Beville

Anyone wishing to have articles inserted in the Bottom Dog should contact any of the following:-

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Southill.

Aileen Dillane,
5 Glenview Tce.
Farranshone.

Jim Curtin,
11 Tradaree Court,
Shannon,

Our readers in the Ennis area can get in touch with the Bottom Dog at the following address -
- 26 Corravonne, Ennis, Co Clare