VOICE OF THE YOUTH

## No to the Apartheid-style Anglo-Irish Agreement !

# UPHOLD DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLE !

## Youth of All Ireland, Unite !

**Published by**
**'Voice of the Youth'**
**August, 1988**

**P.O.Box No: 695,**
**Dublin 8**

# WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS IN OUR COUNTRY AND HOW CAN THEY BE SOLVED?

## The approach which 'Voice of the Youth' takes to the task of addressing the problems facing the youth and people

'Voice of the Youth' is publishing this pamphlet as a contribution towards the solution of the problems in Ireland, and in particular to help mobilise the youth, who represent the future of the country, to take an active and politically conscious role as part of the entire people in sorting the problems out.

This pamphlet is addressed to **all the youth of Ireland** (and of course to any older readers as well) **without any prejudice whatsoever**, i.e. making none of the distinctions which are so constantly imposed upon us in Ireland - especially since the Anglo-Irish Agreement - as being members of (allegedly) 'two opposing communities and traditions'.

We ourselves do not accept the right of anyone, no matter who they are, to label people in this communal fashion and we are sure that this is the sentiment of the ordinary people of Ireland, one and all. We are all individuals, of various different backgrounds in Ireland by region and socially of course as a matter of fact. In our case, we have consciously united and got organised and politically active on the basis that we are human beings living in Ireland and must as youth face up to the problems which the youth and people in Ireland face.

In our view, what is sectarian in Ireland is not the Irish people nor the issue of religion itself. It is those handful of reactionaries who take it upon themselves to try to find a way - (it could be any way, for instance, language, colour, race etc., this divisiveness just happens to use 'religious'

labels in the case of Ireland) to stop people uniting to solve the problems in the country.

Conforming to this approach, 'Voice of the Youth' is undertaking to go to all the areas throughout Ireland in a planned way between August and December this year so that this pamphlet reaches young people whatever their background and whatever the political views which predominate in the environment in which they happen, by chance of birth, to have been brought up.

## Prejudice is only an obstacle to the solution of problems

We feel that it is a matter of democratic principle and universal practical experience that problems, and particularly political problems, should be discussed from the point of view of objective realities and in a principled way otherwise discussion of problems cannot be from the point of view of solving them.

In this pamphlet we in 'Voice of the Youth' are sincerely addressing the problems which face the youth and people in Ireland as we see them. At the same time we are putting this pamphlet forward as a basis for young people - should they agree with the analysis - to unite with us in tackling these problems and playing a role in bringing about a solution in practice, through taking up struggle shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the youth and people of Ireland to bring about change.

But, since this pamphlet is about the problems facing the youth and people in Ireland and there is no shortage of views on these questions being floated around society, many of them quite sharp and notably antagonistic views, it is essential that we explain our standpoint of opposition to prejudice right at the start. For we in 'Voice of the Youth' in the first place do not want to be slotted into one or other of these categories, as people in Ireland are being labelled by reaction incessantly (and quite artificially, arbitrarily and falsely). Neither would it be right or just that our pamphlet be approached in any spirit of prejudice on any other kind of anti-scientific basis.

Either way this would mean that people who allow themselves to remain blindfolded by such prejudices would either not even bother to read or would not read properly what we have to say, or else would waste the whole time in reading the pamphlet on the ridiculous exercise of trying to work out whether the authors and the organisation are so-called



'nationalists' or 'unionists' . . . . or any other kind of 'ist' for that matter. For this would mean such people not reading this pamphlet with a view to seeing and considering what 'Voice of the Youth' actually has to say.

## Practising what we preach

Specifically with this pamphlet 'Voice of the Youth' is striving to make a contribution to change in Ireland by advancing the work to mobilise young people and build actual organisation to fight for change. The pamphlet is to launch our **All-Ireland Youth Campaign for Unity and Freedom** in order to **Prepare the Founding of the Communist Youth Union of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist)** this coming **December 1988.** *( Note : For more details about this campaign and the general programme and aims of" Voice of the Youth" see advertisement section at the end of the pamphlet).*

We are confident that the masses of young people throughout the country will be interested to find an approach to them which is itself unprejudiced and refuses to label them in boxes. And we feel sure that the youth, who hate such prejudice because they know it represents the dead hand of the past which oppresses them, divides them and denies them a future, will welcome a discussion about the problems in the country which does not start from prejudice.

The following sections of the pamphlet summarise the problems in Ireland and move on to unravel the tangle which has been made of this complex of problems, often referred to as a whole as the 'Irish Question'. The approach is to put some of the main 'solutions', which are being applied under the microscope. The prime example of such 'solutions' these days (and a 'democratic solution' no less! according to its authors - the British and Irish governments) is the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

In fact, this is also one of the clearest examples of the problems with the 'solutions' to the Irish Problem! There has been much 'debate', indeed contentious debate about the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Such prejudiced slanging matches by the so-called 'elected leaders of the people' constitute one of the factors in the problems in fact.

If we can analyse what is wrong with the false solutions, this must help at least find the right approach to a solution which does solve the problems, i.e. an approach which, unlike so many past 'solutions', does not make matters still worse, as has been the case. The most important concern we have in this pamphlet is to make some contribution to making genuine democratic principles clear. For it is only on the basis of consciously

grasping the democratic principle that the people of Ireland can overcome the divisions and unite to solve the problems which are common to us all.

## Summary of the complex of problems referred to as 'The Irish Question'

There are a whole host of different problems afflicting the people in Ireland, north and south. Although most of these problems have been long-standing and have had the appearance of a whole complex of individual problems in themselves (for instance, many of the social problems, including problems facing the youth, such as inadequate educational opportunity, low wages and exploitation, inadequate housing, poverty, unemployment, emigration etc.), speaking generally, these same problems have all been severely exacerbated during **two main developments over the past 20 years** and have become increasingly clearly linked up together by these two developments, which themselves are inter-connected.

Firstly, there has been the chronic and apparently unending political crisis in the country (of course all the more serious since it has included armed conflict in the northern 6 Counties with all its attendant tragedies and suffering). This crisis, which of course has a long history, re-emerged once more in our generation with the 1968 Civil Rights Movement. Often referred to as 'the Northern Ireland troubles', the political crisis derives from the still unresolved national question in Ireland. This crisis - especially since it has lasted so long, twenty years, and involved so much suffering - has, of course - once again in Irish history - made peace a question of utmost concern to people in Ireland.

The second main development has been the economic crisis of world imperialism, a crisis which began around the time of the 1974 international oil crisis, but which has deepened again since 1980, recently precipitating the biggest crash on stock exchanges on the world scale in history on October 29, 1987. This has now marked down the period we are living through as a repetition of the Great Depression of the 1930s. There appears - as yet - to be no end to this crisis either. Certainly not in the case of Ireland, which has been particularly hard hit, as have all other small dependent economies such as those of the two states in Ireland.

The Irish people have been afflicted with much suffering over the last twenty years, with the people in the north particularly affected by much tragedy as a result of the armed conflict in the north, but with the people in the south also suffering from their problems too. The youth have been



affected in their own way, and in some respects particularly harshly. In the north the youth have inevitably been the people drawn first and foremost into the situation of armed conflict. They have been lifted and jailed in their thousands, and many hundreds of the youth, amongst people in general, have suffered terrible deaths. At the same time large numbers began to stream out of the north in emigration in the 1970s as a result of dead-end job prospects, the continuous company closures, government cutbacks, to seek education and jobs in Britain and other countries abroad etc., as well as in response to the apparent hopelessness of the prospect of peace in the north. This emigration from the north is still continuing. Now, since the early 1980s, another flood of emigration has emerged from the south where the crisis, government cutbacks and company closures have undermined the faith of the youth in securing a future in their own country.

The question is: **How can all these problems be solved and a bright future opened up for the youth and people of Ireland?**

## The Anglo-Irish Agreement

The Anglo-Irish Agreement, signed at Hillsborough Castle in Northern Ireland on November 15, 1985, has been hailed by its signatories, the British and southern Irish governments, as the most ambitious initiative to date to put Ireland as a whole on the road to solving her problems.

The stated objective of the Anglo-Irish Agreement has been 'to end the Northern Ireland troubles' as the starting point, but tackling all the other questions involved in the total 'Irish Question' at the same time, i.e. not only on the political front, but also economic and social fronts as well, and south as well as north and so on.

But, as we approach the forthcoming review of the Anglo-Irish Agreement this coming November, 1988, can it be said that it has made any contribution to actually solving 'the Irish Question'?

Quite the opposite! Instead of the central claimed objective being achieved - so-called 'reconciliation between the two communities in the north and in Ireland as a whole' - the Anglo-Irish Agreement has been used to incite still more sectarian division. Instead of 'unblocking the political log-jam' in the 'democratic process' - non-co-operation between the political parties in the north and between north and south - intransigence and refusal of co-operation between the parties of unionism and constitutional 'nationalism' in the north has, as everyone knows, become the talking-point in the newspapers and mass media, to the virtual exclusion of discussion

about the real problems in the country. (No accident!). Peace has not been brought about. The economies of both north and south have gone on sliding downhill all the time, if anything at an increasingly rapid pace.

**Yet the amazing thing is that, despite such obvious facts, the two governments are, if anything, still more exaggerated in their regular, enthusiastic communiques about the 'success' of the Anglo-Irish Agreement!** Why they are so euphoric is a matter to which we shall come back shortly.

For the moment we can say without fear of refutation that what the ordinary people throughout Ireland, north and south, think of the Anglo-Irish Agreement is clear enough.

Actually, one of the best indications is how the youth themselves see the situation in the country after 3 years of the working of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Emigration itself acts rather like a barometer registering the changes in the climate of public opinion, especially amongst the youth, about their prospects for a decent future in Ireland, and the youth are making their 'democratic' choice clear. They are showing what they think of the 'greater democracy', 'economic regeneration' and 'bright future' ushered in by the Anglo-Irish Agreement by voting with their feet!

People are saying: 'So what's so new about the Anglo-Irish Agreement after all the promises!' The same stale old 'analysis' about 'the Irish Problem' as the British government and politicians like to call it; the same stale old 'solutions'; the same stale old platitudes about 'of, course it will be a long struggle, but progress is coming at last' etc., etc. What progress?!

In fact, it has become one of the features of the operation of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, especially its 'international dimension' - the co-operation of other governments in backing the Anglo-Irish Agreement, such as the U.S.A. and Australia (not to mention Britain itself or the E.E.C. which allow free movement of Irish labour anyway) - that one of the oldest of old 'solutions' is being promoted once against today - this very **emigration!**

So much for the Ireland Fund and all the lavish promises about economic regeneration in both parts of the country . . . . revert to plan (b) drive the Irish out of Ireland!

The youth, whether forced into exile or lingering at a dead-end at home, are smouldering with hatred at the hypocrisy of the whole system, at the condescension of the powers-that-be, at the swindling politicians and all their rotten, lying sectarian parties!

Yes, this is the same old policy of British governments of yore, this forced emigration under the Anglo-Irish Agreement . . . . the transporting of the Irish by Cromwell as slaves to the West Indies in the Seventeenth Century,



the expulsion of the Wild Geese (by treaty with the defeated patriotic armies), the massive emigration, especially of protestant dissenters from Ulster at that particular time in the Eighteenth Century, the press-ganging of hundreds of thousands of Irish as enslaved cannon-fodder for the British Fleet and Army during the Napoleonic Wars and later recruitment on the basis of poverty throughout the Nineteenth Century, the transportation of tens of thousands of Irish prisoners to Australia, 'assisted-passages' for a whole million during the Famine time in the 1840s and subsequently, and on and on . . . the 1930s, the 1950s and now the 1980s . . . and this under the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the means by which the two governments were going to make Ireland 'the Promised Land' itself!

## Why has the Anglo-Irish Agreement not achieved its claimed objectives?

The reason is because those who drafted and negotiated the Anglo-Irish Agreement amongst themselves and then **imposed** it on the Irish people never started out in the first place from democratic principle. Therefore they have posed all the questions concerning the problems in Ireland from an unprincipled and erroneous standpoint. Instead of untying this Gordian knot - which is how the Irish problem is constantly presented by reaction, as 'an insoluble problem' as the British Daily Telegraph recently lectured us once again - the Anglo-Irish Agreement has tied up the inextricable tangle of interrelated issues still more tightly.

Let us look for a moment at the 'logic' of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Perhaps this itself can explain how things have developed since 1985.

The central declared objective of the Anglo-Irish Agreement has been 'to encourage reconciliation between the two opposing communities and traditions in Ireland' on the basis of encouraging each community to recognise the right to the existence and the 'political aspirations' of the other community - i.e. one 'community' for a united Ireland, the 'other community' to remain 'united' to Britain and divided from the rest of Ireland.

According to the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the two governments, if policies on what the signatories call 'the security front' were combined with the Ireland Fund, the Fair Employment Act etc. 'to bring increased employment to the catholic nationalist minority', this would end 'alienation' in this 'community', especially of the youth. This in turn 'would isolate and disarm (what they like to call) the 'extremists', 'men of violence' or

'terrorists' in that community', this in turn would lead to 'the extremists' in the 'unionist community' dropping their arms. So peace would break out and Ireland, both north and south, would become more attractive to foreign investment, jobs would be created and prosperity ushered in. The Irish Question would be solved!

But there is no 'fresh thinking', no 'new approach to an old problem', as the authors of the Anglo-Irish Agreement have claimed. No, there is nothing new in any of this. It is the same old policy of the British government in Ireland at least as far back as the Nineteenth Century, typified by Gladstone and the Whigs - the combination of concessions on some minor 'democratic' rights, dragged-out 'reform' in terms of the economy (such as the old Land Acts), and **Coercion Acts** - the saturation of Ireland with armed police and the British Army. Not forgetting the systematic incitement of religious differences and sectarian animosities through the many means of British imperialist Black Propaganda and disinformation; through British Military Intelligence's sinister undercover war of terror against the people in the north; through their paid-assassins of the British Army S.A.S.; through the fascist gangs of the U.D.A., U.V.F., U.F.F. etc., which they man, arm and assist directly with training and the supply of intelligence through the official 'security' forces, such as the R.U.C., U.D.R. and, again, through the universally-loathed British S.A.S.

But the most significant clue to the real purpose of the Anglo-Irish Agreement (as opposed to the waffle about 'reconciliation') is in the tail of their 'logic' - the aspiration that 'Ireland, both north and south, would become more attractive to foreign investment'.

## The fraud of 'economic development'

Cut away all the demagogy about security measures, anti-discrimination, regeneration of the economy north and south, reconciliation and peace, and what are you left with? Nothing but another scheme to increase the possibilities for foreign imperialism to exploit Ireland and the Irish people in as peaceable conditions as possible - conditions of the kind that Reginald Maudling a prominent Tory M.P. in the early '70s, cynically and quite publicly stated as the aim of the British government in terms of 'peace' - 'an acceptable level of violence'!

If we look at the historical track record of English colonialism, its past economic concerns in Ireland have been far-from altruistic. All the wars of conquest and re-conquest, the truly genocidal decimation of Ireland's



population on two seperate occasions in the 1640s and 1840s, cannot just be put down to the "savagery of the English" - but to the overriding motive of economic gain which domination brings.For it has always been the insatiable greed of the ruling classes in Britain, the greed of the Norman or English monarchy, barons and aristocracy, and later the British capitalists; the greed of the colonial freebooters, the English capitalist landlords and rackrenters, and finally today's British monopoly capitalist class, which has motivated everthing to do with British policy towards Ireland. Whilst of course other considerations such as military strategic interests, in holding onto control of Ireland are also important , nevertheless the economic stranglehold on Irish affairs is just as important today as it ever was.

It is also a generally recognised historical fact that the 'golden' years of the British Empire, the opening of the colonies in Africa, Asia, India etc were years of unparallelled plunder of the natural resources of those countries and the barbaric enslavement of the indigenous peoples there . But after the second world war and the defeat of the fascist powers and the rise of the struggles for independence in these old colonies - colonialism and its open robbery of the riches of other nations became totally exposed and officially outlawed even in the Charter of the United Nations. But of course this did not end the practice of plunder and enslavement - it merely assumed more concealed and sophisticated forms. For example the British government today talks about the historically undeniable fact of the rape of Ireland and the draconian treatment of the Irish people as something which occurred in the dim distant past. But today the outlawed colonialism has assumed new forms and new names. The colonial armies of invasion are today called 'peacekeeping forces'. Foreign 'investment', 'credits' ,'loans' etc. are merely the modern terminology for the continued exploitation of the resources of the dependent nations. And this 'investment' has always been accompanied by a thousand and one conditions which turns the recipient nation into a political slave of the 'benefactor'. This, for example, is the economic policy of the successive southern Irish governments which has led to such a disastrous situation for the people there. It has led to the wiping out of indigenous industry and made the state dependent on the cheap labour policies of the multinationals and their short term race for superprofits with no thought of the permanent economic development of the country. This is the case with any nation you can think of which has accepted the 'foreign investment' of the imperialist powers.

How then is this to solve the problems in the north of Ireland which also has its experience of multinationals setting up, grabbing the grants, making their profits and then leaving to find cheaper labour elsewhere ? But this is

the same "economic development" which the present British government is holding out to the people in the north and indeed to the south as a feature of the Anglo-Irish Agreement - but it is economic development which is in actual fact a complete fraud.

In the first place it is yet another scheme to increase the possibilities for foreign imperialism to exploit Ireland and the Irish people in as peaceable conditions as possible. In the second place the promise of employment to the hundreds of thousands out of work is a cruel joke, which they have no intention of implementing. For world imperialism is suffering the most profound economic crisis.Even the economy of the richest nation in the world, the U.S., is in deep crisis with a huge national debt, with millions unemployed and millions homeless. And at the root of this crisis is this same pursuit of superprofits and the anarchic nature of the capitalist economic system which inevitably enters the spiral of overproduction/ factory closure/ unemployment/decrease in consumer spending/ shrinking market/ more unemployment etc. etc. And in these conditions the rich offload the effects of this crisis firstly onto the backs of the people of the colonies and dependent nations and then onto the working class of their own countries.

If the facts are faced the colonial status of the north of Ireland is quite obvious - suffering as it is the worst effects of the imperialist economic crisis. If anyone should doubt this - compare the relative statistics on all the important areas of social concern for the people in the north and "mainland" Britain such as unemployment, housing, wages etc. and the glaring inequality of treatment will become apparent. This is not to say that the working class of Britain are not also being exploited and impoverished, but as yet the very worst effects are being reserved for the Irish. This is not because of some sentimental policy on behalf of the British ruling class, but hard headed expediency - social unrest in Ireland is one thing, but social unrest at home is a much more serious question, as this directly confronts their position as the rulers of society. But such is the demise of the British imperialism the "sick man of Europe" as its European rivals have nicknamed it, that all the time it is preparing for the inevitable rise in social discontent at home, as the crisis worsens.The Thatcherite policies are unrelentlessly increasing the fascisation of the state in Britain - the attacks on the trade unions, the increasing of police powers, the fomenting of racial strife in an attempt to divide the British working class, the attacks on the unemployed , the warmongering, jingoistic adventures, such as in the Falklands etc. etc. This then is the true demise of British imperialism which is preparing for greater crisis still. It is a far cry from the rosy picture being



presented of 'economic development' for Ireland !

A contemporary writer at the time of Ancient Rome once coined the epigram: 'The Romans create a desert and call it peace'. Has this not been what British policy in Ireland has been all about, and for hundreds of years? Is this not how the Anglo-Irish Agreement is operating today? Is this not what the 'Irish Problem' is all about.

Actually, the 'Irish Problem' really consists of two different problems. The problem, as far as the Irish are concerned, has always been their impoverishment and the injustice, savagery and anti-Irish barbarism of British governments in Ireland. It is the problem of **how the Irish should organise to unite in the face of the British imperialist policy of 'Divide and Rule'**. On the other hand the problem for the British ruling class has always been, how to put the Irish down, increase their plunder and prevent the Irish from organising and uniting - as they quite rightly have always done with each generation - to throw British rule out of Ireland.

The British ruling class' headache in Ireland - their 'Irish Problem' - is still today, just as it always has been. How to keep one step ahead of the posse. How to recreate the basis anew once again to divide the Irish people in conditions where, repeatedly, the Irish strive to overcome and actually succeed, periodically, in overcoming past disunity in order to achieve their liberation **so that they can themselves solve any remaining problems in the country by building a secure and prosperous and peaceful New Ireland in independence.** The 'Irish Problem' for the British government is how to solve the crisis, including the economic crisis of British imperialism, by shifting the heaviest possible burden onto the backs of the Irish people in preference to having to take the same measures in Britain (i.e. including the overt fascist repression which a colonial-type policy obviously necessitates), where they have to face directly the discontent (and worse) of the British working class in their own living-room.

Of course, the best solution to the 'Irish Problem', as far as the British ruling class are concerned, is how to refurbish their system of 'Divide and Rule' in Ireland and make the Irish people pay for the crisis, whilst creating the illusion that they are 'bringing about reconciliation, peace, progress' and 'even jobs and prosperity in Ireland and for the Irish'. That way their policy is made to look like 'the solution to the Irish Problem' from the point of view of the Irish people at the same time!

Is this not - in a nutshell - what the Anglo-Irish Agreement is all about?

# What kind of 'democratic' principle is the Anglo-Irish Agreement based on?

The clearest indication of the sinister nature and motivation behind the Anglo-Irish Agreement can be found from looking more closely at the kind of 'democracy' which the Anglo-Irish Agreement is attempting to impose on Ireland, and this is not just on the north which they occupy under their military colonial regime, but on all Ireland as a whole, with the active assistance of their neo-colonial regime in Dublin.

After all, the basic platform of the Anglo-Irish Argeement, which the authors - the two governments - have quoted as the main recommendation for people in Ireland to accept their good intentions and co-operate in its implementation, has been that it promotes democracy in Ireland.

Without seeking to over-dramatise the situation in Ireland, if we are to look for a concept of 'democracy' which most clearly parallels the 'logic' of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in some other country today, we inevitably come up with the concept of 'democracy' being advocated by the racist regime in South Africa - **apartheid**.

Of course, there are differences anyone can see between the two situations, but **in principle** - if one could describe such 'democracy' as being based on any principle - apartheid between the races in South Africa and 'power-sharing' between 'the two opposing communities and traditions' based on sectarian division in Ireland are qualitatively the same.

In the case of Ireland 'democracy' for 'the nationalist community' and the 'unionist community' is a matter for the individual in each 'community' to vote for 'their own representatives'. It is a matter almost of separate elections, as it were, i.e. each voting for parties which represent 'their community', parties which are overtly founded in order to 'oppose the other community', or at least the parties of the other community.

The New Ireland Forum was one of the most graphic examples of this sectarian character of these parties. For this conference was openly proclaimed by the so-called constitutional 'nationalist' parties as a means for them to co-ordinate policies more closely between them, in order to 'put pressure on the unionist parties to accept change in the north', as they themselves put it. The conference was solely organised for constitutional 'nationalist' parties, i.e. to exclude the unionist parties. No wonder the unionist parties refused the 'offer' to attend 'to make submissions'! But anyway, 'to be fair to both sides' one can equally say that the unionist parties themselves provide the same graphic examples - for instance, their



refusal even to meet the constitutional 'nationalist' parties 'while the Anglo-Irish Agreement remains in operation'.

Even if there are different parties competing for votes in one constituency (in this case, we are speaking only about the north for the moment), these parties compete only for the votes of 'their community', not the other . . . in the main (let us not get bogged down at the moment with certain - claimed - 'exceptions', such as the Alliance and Workers' parties etc.).

As to the south, the situation for voters is in substance the same, but with the only 'difference' being that - in case of the south - the entire southern state has been fashioned since partition in the form of one of these 'two opposing communities in Ireland', with the remnants of the former unionist parties and politicians simply merging on partition into parties that were allegedly 'nationalist'. An easy transformation as it turned out, since they merely abandoned one party of national traitors and capitalist exploiters for another.

Thus the sectarian identification of the southern 'Free' state with one religion, regardless that people themselves actually vary in their views or even in whether they have any faith at all. All the bourgeois and opportunist parties dub themselves constitutional 'nationalist'.

Anyway. The point is that such a political system as operates in Ireland in the name of 'democracy', and which has really now been codified as a formal system precisely with this Anglo-Irish Agreement, actually does find its most exact replica abroad today - as a worked out 'system' - with the Republic of South Africa. There Botha is carrying out his own 'democratic reform movement', and on the basis of what he also calls a system of 'democracy'. This is South Africa's system of apartheid or 'separate development', with whites having their parliament, 'coloured' (mixed race and Indians etc.) to have their parliament or separate house of parliament, and with the blacks intended to have overtly tribal-type of assemblies to vote for in their bantustan 'homelands' (i.e. not in the places in South Africa, where the whites alone have 'democracy' - if such it can be called - but where the blacks actually have to reside if they are to work and maintain an existence).

Who would even stand as candidates for such parties **except individuals who themselves actively seek to maintain and incite divisions in society**, just in the same way that such individuals do in South Africa, and even in defiance of their fellow countrymen have put themselves up as 'representatives' of this or that colour, accepting this racist criteria!

How can politics organised on such a basis be democracy?!

# Democratic principle versus a fraud of 'democracy'

No, there is nothing democratic about such 'democracy'. In such a political system the rights of the individual to act freely as an individual are really denied to them. The individual exists purely as a member of some artificial group, by arbitrary definition, on the basis of birth. This cannot be democratic.

By written law - in the case of South Africa - or else by a partially written-down law, as in the case of Ireland (the constant reference to the existence of 'two opposing communities and traditions' as the basis of 'power-sharing', annotation of all individuals under these labels in official statistics, now under the Fair Employment Act by registration at the workplace, by officially-demanded stating of religion, by school, place of residence, national origin of family name etc.) the people are not allowed to live or act freely as individuals. In fact, they do not really have social identity or political rights as individuals at all, but only by virtue of conformity with the stereo-type of this or that 'community', on the basis of labels imposed on them, not by free choice, which is the basis of democracy.

No! Such politics and parties based on such 'principles' - if you can call racism and sectarianism principles - are not democratic at all. They do **not** in fact represent ordinary people at all, any more than another party notorious in history for being based on the race 'principle' - Hitler's Nazi party - was democratic or represented the German people. Such politics and parties in Ireland, which look for 'their constituency' in 'their community and tradition' really have more in common with such fascist parties than anything else (although of course they all claim to have the most 'democratic' credentials!). They are all organised for one purpose and one purpose alone, as the 'democratic' fraud of the exploiting ruling class (and foreign imperialists in Ireland and South Africa) to divide and subjugate the working people and the country to those who exploit them . . . and all in the name of these same enslaved people living in a democracy and exercising freedom!

# As to the question of 'the protection of religious freedom'

As the whole world knows, there are people in different religious groups



in Ireland. But is this a problem as it is made out to be? Is the fact that different religious groups exist in Ireland **the** basis of problems for democracy in Ireland? Does the fact that people have different religious affiliations even explain sectarianism carried out in the name of 'religion'?

The historical experience is clear. Yes, there have been all kinds of conflict in the name of religion, including even 'religious' wars. And no one can deny that religion has been a factor, and sometimes an important factor in the struggles in history. But if one looks at those wars in the light of modern scientific standards, i.e. with an objective eye, not as some kind of fanatic oneself, then it is evident, that even where conflicts and wars have been most heavily coloured by religious questions, or even where struggles have taken place for freedom of conscience of some religion, the substance of the conflict has always lain in some other factor.

For instance, some of the religious conflicts where the question of freedom of conscience has been at stake have been struggles between progressive, democratic forces versus feudal reaction, science versus obscurantism, reaching fundamentals with the struggle of the emerging bourgeoisie against the old order of feudalism, the struggle for capitalist free enterprise against feudal restriction of the advance of the means of technology and production.

In the case of some other religious conflicts - and this is widely understood - often competing ruling groups used religious slogans to manipulate the masses to fight their wars and die for their advancement and enrichment. Of course, one of the most graphic examples of this is amongst the many tragedies of the conflict in Ireland, where the Irish people were divided and fought each other over whether this or that claimant - James II or William of Orange - had hold of the crown of England and thereby the right to oppress Ireland.

Although William of Orange was fighting for 'protestant freedom' against the 'Roman Catholic tyrant, James II', he was actually - as a matter of fact fighting as part of a whole European-wide series of dynastic-type conflicts in an alliance of European states which even included the Papacy. The Pope even celebrated the Battle of the Boyne by holding a special Te Deum at St. Peter's.

But such historical facts have not prevented the name of Orange being attached to the most vicious, allegedly 'protestant', but actually fascist-type organisations, which were founded and still exist today solely to persecute Irish people if they happen to be born catholic.

The whole business of 'religious' sectarianism in Ireland, as in India and so many other places where the British ruling class have fixed their greedy

claws, is nothing but a doleful example of how religion has been cynically used by exploiters, whose sole god is really wealth either in land or capital, in order to rob those who actually produce the wealth of their living, their land and even their country.

Anyway, the British imperialists, despite their waffle about protecting religious rights, know that the fact that different religious groups exist side by side is not the cause of conflict. Otherwise, the Anglo-Irish Agreement is simply one big self-contradiction. Because the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which itself is supposed to be the very embodiment of 'democracy', is to ensure that different religions continue to exist side by side. Real democracy - according to the Anglo-Irish Agreement - would not mean an end to the division in the population in the north (and in Ireland as a whole) founded on religious differences. 'Democracy' a la Anglo-Irish Agreement would mean the institutionalising of this on a formally recognised basis. But of course this has nothing to do with 'protecting the religious freedom of the two communities and traditions in Ireland', but everything to do with inciting sectarian division and communal hatred. It has everything to do with British imperialism's age-old system of 'divide and rule'.

What - in this instance - does it mean to talk about religious freedom? The 'freedom' to be catholics, the freedom to be protestants . . . ?

O.K., people can voluntarily change their religion or even be forced to change it. But is religious freedom really the issue?! Surely, the technique of stereo-typing people in Ireland is no different than South Africa. And what would anyone say about Botha's democracy . . . . the 'freedom' to be blacks, whites or any other colour. Well, Botha and his fellow racists even do talk such fascist garbage . . . . but their talk of 'their democracy' has no more to do with democracy than the British government's 'protection of religious freedom in Northern Ireland' has to do with democracy . . . or indeed with the question of religion itself.

Such a 'democratic political system' as exists in the British and U.S.-backed racist Republic of South Africa is precisely what it is designed for - to facilitate exploitation of the working people and the natural resources of the country by the monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie, both native and foreign, i.e. by world imperialism.

This is precisely the system which the Anglo-Irish Agreement is designed to perpetuate in Ireland by means of institutionalising British imperialism's historic, age-old policy of 'divide and rule' in Ireland, revamped as 'greater democracy' with all the lying rhetoric of politicians and parties about 'promoting reconciliation between the two opposing communities and traditions', 'preparing for power-sharing', 'the possibility of peaceful



constitutional progress towards a united Ireland by consent' etc., etc. ad nauseam.

## The deliberate organising of politics in Ireland as a system to facilitate foreign colonial and neo-colonial exploitation

In the case of Ireland, this whole concoction that people in Ireland can be divided into 'two opposing communities and traditions' has been organised, historically and right up to today, by the British imperialists. But in their policy over the decades the British imperialists managed to groom internal forces, traitors to the people of Ireland, who have helped Britain in their age-old and notorious policy of 'divide and rule'. Their contribution has been to fashion the particular, modern 'democratic' form of deception to facilitate foreign 'divide and rule', namely by fashioning 'democratic' political parties on a sectarian basis, thus physically embodying the British-imposed division of 'two opposing communities and traditions in Ireland'.

The basis for such traitors emerging was the emergence of capitalism, imposed by Britain on Ireland in the period of its colonial rule over all Ireland. Because of colonialism the form of development of capitalism was bound to be distorted in the case of Ireland, compared to countries like Britain itself or France, where the bourgeoisie rose to power in their own sovereign territory, or compared to countries, like America, where the rising capitalist class overthrew foreign colonial rule.

The capitalists who acquired the greatest wealth in Ireland proved to be those who most closely tied their interests to foreign colonialism. The British ruling class themselves ensured, especially after the defeat of the Rising of the United Irishmen of 1798, that no indigenous capitalism developed which could compete with British capitalists. Irish capitalists were to be entirely subservient to Britain's overall world trading system (as it developed, the first world trading monopoly), or they would be not allowed to exist at all. Thus the Irish big bourgeoisie during the period after the Act of Union of 1801 developed - out of their own class interests - a particular political policy of collaboration with the British ruling class, a policy which they pursued not without friction (because they were after all pursuing their own class interests, and capitalist interests tend to clash in competition), but in general facilitating British domination and exploitation of Ireland because they had 'learnt' from the past 'who was boss'.

the people of native and planter background, were enjoined to command their protestant tenants join their sectarian landlord militia, the Orange Order, on pain of eviction or worse. The Orange Order, founded in 1795, thus was founded for one purpose and one purpose only: to force all protestant democrats to leave the United Irishmen.

The report of one of the British colonial commanders, General Knox, to his military superior, just before the 1798 Rising of the United Irishmen, shows how important was this Orange Order as the internal support of a foreign colonial regime, whose only basis in the country was naked force, not democratic support. It shows how the Orange Order was not itself an organisation of the people themselves, but simply a weapon in the hands of foreign oppressors against a clear democratic movement of the Irish people. It still has that character today:

***"I have arranged . . . . to increase the animosity betweeen Orangemen and the United Irish. Upon that animosity depends the safety of the centre counties of the North."***

At first matters were on a knife edge. The Orange Order was not sufficiently strong they could prevent the movement growing. In fact, the United Irishmen rose in revolt in 1798 with the most sizeable initial risings taking place in the north, in Antrim and Down, where tens of thousands of protestant dissenters rose shoulder to shoulder with their catholic neighbours. But ever after the subjugation of that rising, the Orange Order and the unionist parties which are simply the political wing of this sectarian and early form of fascist organisation have been loyally playing their role as stooges of the landlords and later of the capitalists as well - to terrorise people of 'protestant' background in the first place, as well as split and intimidate the population of Ireland as a whole.

**But, lest anyone should jump to a one-sided conclusion at this first stage of the story**, let no one imagine that this was the limit of British imperialist manipulation, or that it is 'the protestants who are the problem'. In order to divide the Irish people the foreign occupier had also to apply tactics to achieve the split from the other angle.

## 'Catholic' nationalism

The British imperialists worked - in a planned way, for instance through fabricating fake publications put out in the name of the 'United Irishmen'



etc. - to tarnish the just, non-sectarian struggle of the United Irishmen with the slander that it was really a movement of 'catholics against protestants'. By spreading fabricated accounts of the Rising in Wexford, the alleged slaughter of people 'because they were protestants' etc., the British colonialists were trying to ensure that the democratic, national movement of the Irish people should be painted in the colours of a sectarian, 'catholic and anti-protestant' movement.

At the same time the British colonial regime was manoeuvering in other ways. First, concessions were made to the religious rights of protestant dissenters (who had formerly suffered under the Penal Laws in much the same way as catholics), not out of any concern for religious toleration , but to split them from their former comrades. At the same time the penal laws were re-established against catholics. Second, an opportunity was presented for the British colonialists to intensify the sectarian identification of the national movement with Roman Catholicism. This came in the shape of the politics of Daniel O'Connell, the so-called 'Liberator'. Despite his much proclaimed 'pacifist principle' - 'the freedom of Ireland was not worth one drop of human blood' - O'Connell was actually a demagogue without real principles. With his shady background as a tout who had toured Dublin to point out to the colonial authorities the homes of United Irishmen and arms caches at the time of the Emmet Rising of 1803, O'Connell, who came to the head of the popular movement for Catholic Emancipation, made a particular point of talking in terms of being 'the leader of Catholic Ireland'. This was quite in violation of the spirit of the contemporary democratic movement.

The fact that Catholic Emancipation was taken up as a demand of the democratic movement was not itself the problem. This was a just demand which the United Irishmen had advanced before themselves. It was the way in which this slogan was advanced under O'Connell's leadership and the way the movement itself was organised, i.e. at the cost of obscuring the demand for Ireland's national independence, in opposition to the need for all Irish people to unite to achieve this, regardless of religious affiliation, and in opposition to the people themselves taking up arms for freedom, which laid the national movement open to the slander that it was 'a catholic movement'.

At the same time, O'Connell's opposition to the social movement of the poor - a movement to which the United Irishmen had given outspoken support - increased the sectarian character of the democratic, national movement under O'Connell's leadership, especially his outspoken reactionary opposition to the newly developing working class in Ireland and

Britain, in particular to the democratic right of workers to organise trade unions, opposition which O'Connell carried with him even into the British House of Commons, having been elected to Westminster on the back of the struggles of the ordinary working masses, including the workers.

## Constitutional 'nationalism'

With O'Connell emerged the trend of 'constitutional nationalism' which has overtly characterised itself as a movement of 'Irish catholics', not of the Irish people, and which even at times - most treacherously - has overtly promoted that their enemy was not so much foreign British colonial rule itself as people of protestant background in Ireland.

This has been the case all the way up through the Home Rule party of Butt and Redmond, through Cosgrave, O'Duffy (who tried to organise a crusade on a religious sectarian and allegedly 'Irish' basis to assist the fascist Franco in the Spanish Civil War) as well as De Valera, the author of the 1937 Constitution, a flagrantly sectarian document, right up to today's constitutional 'nationalists'. All of them have kept up their demagogy about their 'concern for catholics in the north' (an utter sham in any case), and posed questions as a matter of 'the two opposing communities and traditions' and never the one single, All-Ireland Irish nation, which no one has an interest to divide on such sectarian basis, except those who are exploiters and national traitors and benefit from such a system.

The democratic principle is that the people in Ireland who suffer the problems regardless of any such arbitrary and imposed divisions are themselves the only ones who can solve them. But this principle can only operate if the people are able to unite to solve the problems. If **by definition** they are divided into 'two opposing communities and traditions', with each being really obliged to maintain the viewpoint of 'their community and their tradition', which they never chose themselves in the first place - as though the political view of the individual is determined by birth and not by honestly examining the facts about reality in society - then there is no possibility, and could never be by definition, of people uniting and therefore no possibility of the problems being solved.



## The powers-that-be in Ireland are not interested in solving the problems in Ireland because they gain by them. They are the cause of the problems

# WE, THE YOUTH AND IRISH PEOPLE, MUST TAKE OUR DESTINY INTO OUR OWN HANDS!

Taken together, all the conflicting demagogy of those who support the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the British government and the 'Free' State and SDLP , **as well as the unionist parties, which allegedly 'oppose' it**, all amounts to achieving the same objective. In fact, both the advocacy of the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the 'opposition' to it have been directly orchestrated by the British imperialists themselves, since the incessant wrangling between the unionist and constitutional 'nationalist' parties itself contributes to confirming the central thesis of the Anglo-Irish Agreement - that the people in Ireland are divided into 'two opposing communities and traditions'. It also helps clothe naked British aggression and interference in the mantle of the impartial peacekeeper in Ireland. Thus the all-embracing tactics of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, of the 'nationalists' and the unionists all goes to 'confirm' the basic foreign imperialist deception and system of 'divide and rule'.

The British imperialists pose as 'the protector' of both the catholics and the protestants, to 'prevent them from attacking each other in a bloody civil war'. Why all the scaremongering about an imaginary civil war, except to concoct a big enough bogey to intimidate people to do nothing in the face of the **real war** which the British government themselves are actually waging to keep in subjugation the Irish nation, i.e. all the people in Ireland, regardless of religion! The British imperialists are the protector of British imperialism and nothing else in Ireland.

The whole Anglo-Irish Agreement offensive, in which this unionist 'opposition' plays an integral part, is being cynically staged to deceive the masses of ordinary working people throughout Ireland, actually re-inforce existing divisions and formally segregate them into the 'two opposing communities and traditions' which the British imperialists engineered in the first place. This 'initiative to bring greater democracy to Ireland' - the Anglo-Irish Agreement - is actually entirely fascist in its intention, just as

Botha's notorious 'reform movement' is in the case of South Africa, where this reform is actually formally part of the plan to develop apartheid.

In the case of the Anglo-Irish Agreement it is to strengthen the means to manipulate public opinion and prevent the people who are exploited from truly democratic discussion amongst themselves about their common problems. It is to prevent them from uniting in their own true interests against those who unjustly and criminally exploit them all in common, regardless of what so-called community or what side of the border they come from, and deny them their true democratic rights, both as individuals and as fellow Irishmen and Irishwomen, all members of the one Irish nation, to solve the problems which they all suffer together in common in their own country, Ireland.

But it is at this place in the puzzle precisely that we should tackle the solution to the problem of the Gordian knot - 'the Irish Question' - just as did the hero of the Greek myth - **by cutting through it**, instead of pulling it about, by upholding democratic principle instead of falling for the charade of democracy, the Anglo-Irish Agreement, or for the charade of the unionists and their sham 'opposition' to it. This is all the fraud of British imperialism and the national traitors in Ireland, of the foreign capitalist exploiters and the parties of Irish capitalism and subservience to foreign imperialism.

This way instead of young people getting drawn into the futile effort of 'solving the problems in Ireland' on the terms laid out by British imperialism and the native exploiters themselves, we prove ourselves to be the masters of our own destiny, the makers of our own future in Ireland, because we take our destiny into our own hands, and out of the hands of those whose sole interest in Ireland is to rob the country and her people of its wealth. In the conditions of Ireland, to uphold democratic principle can only mean that the youth and people should unite around their common interests in the struggle against their common enemies -- British imperialism and the national traitors - the Irish monopoly bougeoisie, both unionists and constitutional 'nationalists'.

**UPHOLD DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLE !**

**IRELAND'S FUTURE - ALL OUR FUTURES!**

**YOUTH OF ALL IRELAND, UNITE!**

**UNITY AND FREEDOM TO THE IRISH PEOPLE !**

# 'VOICE OF THE YOUTH'
# CALL TO THE YOUTH OF ALL IRELAND

## Participate in the All-Ireland Youth Campaign for

# UNITY AND FREEDOM

## Contribute to the work to found the Communist Youth Union of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist) December, 1988

**BUILD THE ORGANISATION TO UNITE THE YOUTH OF IRELAND UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE WORKING CLASS !**

## What 'Voice of Youth' Stands For

The future of youth (and we are not talking about some distant, remote future) lies with a new society, socialism. The old world is rotten for the ordinary people and the youth because it is capitalist, based on exploitation of the vast majority, of those who actually do the work moreover. Ireland itself is impoverished and divided because of capitalism, i.e. because British colonialism and later imperialism have conquered and oppressed Ireland in order to exploit her.

Only the overthrow of British imperialism and the liberation and re-unification of Ireland can provide the basis to solve the problems. 'Voice of the Youth' works for this objective, as this pamphlet shows. But it works also at the same time against capitalist exploitation now, shoulder to shoulder with the working class, and for the triumph of the working class in the class struggle, for socialism.

The main aim of the 'Voice of the Youth', then, is to unite the youth around the working class and under its leadership, so as to ensure the struggle for the New Ireland comes under the leadership of the working class itself. This will be the basis for ensuring that socialism is built in the New Ireland. The organisation itself embodies this by working closely with and under the leadership of the party of the working class, the Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist).

We fight against all exploitation and injustice, for instance the oppression of women, so socialist society really will be different. We are fighting for a new world, in which there is no more imperialism, no national oppression, racist regimes or fascism or threat of nuclear war from the two superpowers - U.S.imperialism and Soviet social imperialism.

In our struggle we take great inspiration from Socialist Albania and the Albanian youth who are building such a new society with success, having freed their own small country from foreign fascism and united their people after centuries of foreign 'divide and rule'.

If you are interested to find out more about the preparations to found the Communist Youth Union of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist) please fill in your name and address on this page, cut the page out and send it in to:

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For a detailed analysis of the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the operation of the tactics of 'divide and rule' in Ireland, organised by the British imperialist ruling class, with the collaboration of the native Irish monopoly capitalist class, the national traitors represented by the bourgeois parties both of unionism and constitutional 'nationalism',read the pamphlet of the Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist):

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**Date:** 1988