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**Marxist  
Leninist  
QUARTERLY**

## THE COMMUNIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN (MARXIST-LENINIST)

The C.F.B.(M-L) is an organisation of Communists whose purpose is to help create the conditions to form a revolutionary party. The rising level of struggle against all oppression in Britain will not effectively challenge the ruling-class until the lessons of these struggles are widely understood by the working-class and its allies. A disciplined party guided by scientific socialism is needed to lead in this process of raising the struggle to a conscious political level.

No such party exists. The historical contradictions leading to the split in the international Communist movement in the early 1960's have not yet been resolved and the lessons applied to the actual conditions existing generally in Western Europe. Without this being done there will be no guiding political line and programme and no unity within the Marxist-Leninist movement.

The C.F.B.(M-L) is comprised of groups of Marxist-Leninists who have been working together since 1967 to aid in this vital task of forming a party. It has consistently worked to achieve this goal by combining two forms of political work.

FIRSTLY: We study the main problems facing the British people and the world revolutionary movement, applying the scientific socialist method developed by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung.

SECONDLY: We engage in immediate struggles on the main issues of exploitation and oppression.

We believe that only in combining the lessons of both these forms of political work can a correct line be developed. Without such a guiding line and programme the struggles on all the vital and immediate issues will continue to demonstrate the treadmill characteristics of the last 150 years.

In developing this line we recognise the need to destroy the influence of social democracy, revisionism and Trotskyism - the main defeatist ideological trends which act to disarm the working-class.

We understand that as all these tasks are increasingly achieved it will become possible to build a mass revolutionary movement capable of withstanding ruling-class attacks and finally of overthrowing and smashing the present system and its State machine. The working class and its party will then implement its own dictatorship over the present employing class to build socialism and prevent the restoration of capitalism.

Our basic policy document is 'The Marxist-Leninist Movement in Britain; Origins and Perspectives' published in 1969. Readers wanting to know more about our policy and political work should contact their local group or the Secretary of the C.F.B.

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Signed articles in M.L.Q. do not necessarily represent the political line of the C.F.B.(M-L)

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## EDITORIAL

We carry in this issue three long but valuable articles for the British Marxist-Leninist movement. The first sets out some of the arguments and evidence in support of the case that the Soviet Union is a Social Imperialist state.

The other two articles continue the important debate we have begun in MLQ 4 and 5 on the policy of British Marxist-Leninists towards the struggles in Northern Ireland.

Rising costs have made it too difficult at the present stage to continue printing MLQ and it is necessary for us to be realistic about this. The present issue is therefore published in a less expensive but we hope just as functional a style. Bearing in mind that the contents and aims of the journal are its reason for existence, we hope readers will understand and accept this change in presentation.

# SOCIAL-IMPERIALISM

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years many communists have been disturbed by the policies of the Soviet Union. The introduction of capitalist economic methods internally, the severe political repression, the abandonment by the Soviet Union of proletarian internationalism and increasing use of bourgeois power-politics have all provoked criticism.

In 1968 the Communist Party of China (C.P.C.) described the intervention of the Soviet Union in Czechoslovakia as 'Social-Imperialist' and two years later, in celebration of the Lenin centenary, the C.P.C. published 'Leninism or Social-Imperialism', in which they argued that the policies of the Soviet leadership, camouflaged to some extent by the socialist rhetoric accompanying their actions. The C.P.C. also argued that a new bourgeoisie had seized state power in the U.S.S.R. and were restoring capitalism.

This analysis has been accepted by the majority of the world's Marxist-Leninists, including the party of Labour of Albania. A minority of Marxist-Leninists do not accept this analysis, as do not the majority of the broad labour movement. This article will accept the term 'Social-Imperialism' as a working hypothesis to describe the present social system of the Soviet Union, and then proceed to see how that hypothesis conforms to reality.

To describe the Soviet Union as 'Social-Imperialist' is obviously to consider that the proletarian state power established in 1917 and the socialised economy subsequently built have been abolished by a capitalist restoration. The questions of the degeneration of the Soviet Union and the bourgeois counter-revolution are of importance but are outside the scope of this article, which will consider Soviet policy only over the past eighteen years or so. (For a preliminary discussion of these questions, see MLQ nos. 2, 3 & 4.)

Most of this article will consider Soviet policy externally, but we shall begin to test our working hypothesis with a brief look at internal economic developments since the death of Stalin.

## THE SOVIET ECONOMY

Socialism is the period of transition between capitalist and communist society. In this transitional period it is the function of the proletarian state to exercise dictatorship over the bourgeoisie and their allies and to develop the productive forces in order that the economic basis of communism can be built. During the period of the development of the productive forces the capitalist economy is gradually eliminated by the planned elimination of commodity production and the law of value and their gradual replacement by a planned socialised economy.

It is important to realise that a socialised economy cannot be legislated into existence. Commodity circulation and the law of value are historically necessary for a long period in the growth of the productive forces. In the Soviet Union, due to

economic backwardness, commodity money relationships existed in an only slightly restricted form until the beginning of the five-year plans. Subsequently commodity production became restricted and of less importance as production became increasingly socialised.

Within a few years of the death of Stalin, Soviet economists began to attack the theoretical base of the Soviet economy by asserting that commodity production and the law of value, far from being a foreign element in socialism, were in fact a necessary and integral part of it. In 1958 a Soviet economist stated:

"The idea gained currency in recent years that commodity circulation is incompatible with the prospects of going over from socialism to communism. Such a formulation is basically wrong. The dialectics of the socialist economy consists precisely in the fact that we shall arrive at the withering away of commodity production and money circulation in the highest phase of communism as a result of the utmost developments of commodity-money relationships in the socialist stage of development. (1)

The acknowledged leader of Soviet economists, Professor Liberman, had this to say;

"The significance of profit was underestimated owing to a certain disregard for the law of value. Some Soviet economists incorrectly interpreted the law as an unpleasant leftover from capitalism and said that we had to get rid of it as soon as possible." (2)

These quotes are typical of the thinking of Soviet economists since the late 1950's. Their views are a reflection of the 'economic reforms' which have been instituted over the past twenty years.

Under these 'reforms' the socialised economy has been constantly eroded. Enterprises increasingly determine their own production targets, investment ratios, wage levels and engage in competition with each other in the so-called 'socialist market'. Profitability has become the main criterion in the determination of production. By making profit the key indicator of economic performance, the 1965 'reforms' gave the means of production employed in the enterprises the character of capital and gave the labour-power utilised the social character of capitalist wage-labour. The enterprises no longer produce use-values for the Soviet people, they rather produce surplus-value to be appropriated by the enterprise and the state.

The 'reforms' mean that:

"Enterprises have the authority to own, use and dispose of all property in their enterprise ..... to sell surplus equipment, means of transport, raw materials and fuel ..... to let premises, warehouses, equipment and means of transport ..... to write off fixed assets ..... to use funds at their disposal for capital construction outside the plan and materials of their own to fulfil orders taken outside the plan." (3)

## SOVIET AGRICULTURE

During the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat the land was transformed from purely privately owned land to collective ownership by the peasantry, a transitional form of ownership prior to social ownership.

In the early 1950's a debate arose in the Soviet party on the way forward for the collective farms. The Marxist-Leninists argued that the collectives were now ripe for socialisation and should now become state property. Then, in the words of Stalin;

"Instead of the basic production sectors, the state sector and the collective sector, there will only be one all-embracing production sector, with the right to dispose of all the consumer goods produced in the country. Commodity circulation, with its money economy, will disappear, as being an unnecessary element in the national economy." (4)

The revisionists argued against this and said that a further extension of commodity circulation was necessary. As part of their plans they suggested that the machine and tractor stations should be sold to the collectives. The machine and tractor stations had been established during collectivisation and provided advanced agricultural machinery and scientific and political advice to the collectives. They were of course state owned.

Within a few years of Stalin's death the machine and tractor stations *were* sold to the collective farms and the plans for the socialisation of agriculture were abandoned. Subsequently the restrictions on private plots and private livestock were relaxed. The sale of the machine and tractor stations and the relaxations on rural private production meant a great increase in commodity production. This is vividly illustrated by the share of total agricultural production enjoyed by *private* producers. By 1966 private production accounted for 60% of the potato crop, 40% of meat, 40% of green vegetables, 39% of milk and 68% of eggs. (5)

## MATERIAL INCENTIVES AND COMMUNIST LABOUR

Material incentives in themselves, like commodity-money relationships, are vestiges of capitalist society. In all societies men will labour only for material reward. In capitalist society this material reward takes the form of wages, the price of labour-power. Because the worker is alienated from the product of his labour, wages are his only incentive to labour. This fact is one aspect of the contradiction in capitalist society between the relations of production and the forces of production, in that the wage-labourer has no interest in the development of the productive forces.

In socialist society, as commodity-money relationships are progressively eliminated and society increasingly controls the process of production, material incentives (in the form of wages) are gradually eliminated. As the worker's alienation from the product of his labour decreases, he will

be increasingly motivated by the drive to develop the productive forces, because he will see that this is in his own direct interest. As society enters the era of plenty, communism, it will begin to eliminate commodities and money completely and will run on the principle of 'from each according to his labour, to each according to his needs'. In socialist society then, (where men are rewarded according to work done, not according to need), a prime task is to progressively eliminate the predominance of direct reward through wages (material incentive) and to rely on indirect reward through increased production.

During the period of industrialisation in the Soviet Union material incentives were increased enormously. It was recognised that this was undesirable and the material incentives were only used because of the urgency of industrialisation. In China and Albania, where the pace of industrialisation has been much more leisurely, it has been possible to use material incentives much less and rely on increased production to reward the workers. Through increased production and the gradual elimination of wage differential it has been possible to constantly lower prices and thus real wages have been increased and the higher paid workers have thus not resented the narrowing of differentials.

Let us contrast this picture with the Soviet Union:  
Professor Liberman says:

"Material incentives are not unknown in capitalist society ..... socialism has smashed the fetters of capitalist production and material incentives have become a powerful and permanently operating condition for the advancement of the productive forces." (6)

It is evident that the Soviet leaders consider that socialist society must increase material incentives, and indeed this is what has happened in the Soviet Union. Income differentials as great as 50 to 1 now exist in the Soviet Union. (7)

The Soviet leaders say that the Soviet Union is entering the era of Communism, and yet material incentives are conceived of as playing a 'powerful and permanently operating role.' This can only be a reflection of the Soviet proletariat's alienation from the products of its labour. In these circumstances the Soviet workers have no interest in the development of the productive forces and have to be rewarded directly through money wages. It is important to realise that wages are the price of labour-power and that labour-power is itself a commodity. The extension of material incentives and income differentials is a further example of the expansion of commodity-money relationships in the Soviet Union.

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It will readily be seen that the largely socialised industrial sector and the mostly collectivised agricultural sector of the Soviet economy extant in 1953 have been essentially eliminated by the great expansion of commodity-money relationships since that time. Commodity-money relationships do not in themselves indicate that the bourgeoisie are the ruling-class - the important point is why such relationships exist. Capitalist relationships were after all introduced in the New Economic Plan, these relationships were, however, recognised as a retreat by the socialist state, a retreat to be eliminated as soon as possible. The current

leadership present the new introduction of capitalist relationships as an advance on the previous economic situation. Engels, in his polemic with Duhring, dealt most explicitly with the place of the commodity and the law of value in history:

"Value, like the law of value, is an historical category connected with the existence of commodity production ... whenever commodities and commodity circulation exist, there the law of value also must exist ..... the law of value is precisely the fundamental law of commodity production, hence also of its highest form, capitalist production." (8)

## IS THE SOVIET UNION SOCIALIST?

Available evidence on economic trends in the Soviet Union indicate that the previously socialised economy has been replaced by a new form of capitalism. It will be immediately said that this cannot be so since there is no private property in the Soviet Union. This of course is not true in agriculture where it has been shown that private production accounts for a large amount of the whole. In industry there is no private ownership but private ownership is not synonymous with capitalism. Private production ceased to be dominant after the emergence of joint-stock companies in the nineteenth century. In the words of Engels:

"Neither the conversion into joint-stock companies nor into state property deprives the productive forces of their character as capital. The modern state is only the organisation with which bourgeois society provides itself in order to maintain the general external mode of production against encroachments either by the workers or by individual capitalists ..... the more productive forces it takes over as its property, the more it becomes the real collective body of all the capitalists, the more citizens it exploits. The workers remain wage-earners, proletarians. The capitalist relationship is not abolished; *it is rather pushed to an extreme.*" (My emphasis N.R.) (9)

This statement by Engels contains the essence of the argument that the Soviet Union is a capitalist state. It is not whether the state controls the means of production which determines whether a state is capitalist or socialist, but rather which class controls the state. The vulgarisation of Marxism by opportunists of various hues has led to the equating in many people's minds of capitalism with private ownership and of socialism with nationalisation. It is argued by the revisionists (and by the Trotskyists and social-democrats) that the state ownership of the means of production in the Soviet Union means that it is a socialist state.

As a result of the economic 'reforms' referred to earlier, each enterprise in the Soviet Union is increasingly responsible for its own production and administration. This is a return to capitalist economic methods. In this situation social ownership can be juridical only and the task of the Soviet state can only be to protect the de facto ownership of the productive forces by the Soviet bureaucrat-capitalists. The state will have degenerated from a workers' state to one having the functions described by Engels in the quote above.



## SUMMARY

The introduction of capitalist economic methods in the Soviet Union and the virtual elimination of the previously socialised economy indicate that a new bourgeoisie hold state power in the Soviet Union. If this is the case, irrespective of state ownership of the means of production, a form of capitalism exists in the Soviet Union. In these circumstances, and taking into account the lack of bourgeois democracy, there seems little doubt that the formulation used by Mao Tse-tung to describe the class nature of the Soviet Union is correct;

"A dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the German fascist type, a dictatorship of the Hitler type." (10)

## THE EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL-IMPERIALISM

The foreign policy of the Soviet Union over the past few years has increasingly resembled that of traditional imperialist powers. The intervention in Czechoslovakia, the betrayals of the peoples of Indo-China, the displays of bourgeois power-politics in Cuba and Berlin in the early sixties and the imposition of peace settlements in the middle east all spring readily to mind.

The rest of this article will make a broad survey of the activities of the Soviet Union internationally and examine some theories of the Soviet leadership.

## THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE

The countries of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic and, to a lesser extent, Romania are all considered to be within the Soviet 'sphere of influence'. Yugoslavia and Albania also once were, but broke away for different reasons and in different directions. Since the defection of these two countries the Soviet Union has indulged in a little sabre-rattling (and direct intervention once) whenever one of its 'allies' has shown signs of recalcitrance, presumably to remind them of the fate of Czechoslovakia. The most notable example is the military manoeuvres regularly held on the border of Romania. In order to justify these activities the Soviet leadership has invented the theory of 'limited sovereignty'.

## THE THEORY OF 'LIMITED SOVEREIGNTY'

In the early part of 1968, in the so-called 'Dubcek Spring', the leaders of the Czechoslovak government and Communist party began to institute certain political and economic 'reforms'. Under the influence of these 'reforms' voices were raised questioning the place of Czechoslovakia within the Soviet bloc. So insistent did these voices become that there seemed a real possibility that Czechoslovakia would leave the bloc.

This was the background to the Warsaw pact countries' military intervention in Czechoslovakia and the subsequent installation of a puppet regime subservient to the Soviet Union. As a justification of the intervention the Soviet leaders said that a capitalist restoration had been taking place in Czechoslovakia and that they had intervened to prevent this. They were probably correct in this, but as similar 'reforms' to those in Czechoslovakia

were taking place in the Soviet Union itself, and more far-reaching ones in Hungary, this explanation does not seem very credible. The crucial difference between the 'reforms' in Hungary and those in Czechoslovakia was that the former country remained politically subservient whilst the latter did not. This was the real reason for the military intervention.

As an ideological reason the Soviet leaders produced the theories of 'limited sovereignty' and the 'international dictatorship of the proletariat'. The Soviet Union claims that it has the right to determine the destiny of another 'socialist' country, including the "destiny of its sovereignty". (11) They claim also that they have the right to "render military aid to a fraternal country to do away with a threat to its socialist system." (12) In classic revisionist fashion they invoke Lenin to support their actions, quoting his vision of an "international dictatorship of the proletariat".

A proletarian international dictatorship would exist for the purpose of promoting and supporting proletarian internationalism. The 'international dictatorship of the Soviet type' is not such a dictatorship but rather a dictatorship of the Soviet Union over its client states in eastern Europe. An examination of the economic relationships between the Soviet Union and its eastern European allies will be useful in determining the reasons for the political relationships.

#### THE COUNCIL FOR MUTUAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (COMECON)

COMECON was founded in the late 1940's as an organisation through which the socialist countries of eastern Europe could render each other fraternal economic assistance. Virtually from its inception there tended to be a dominance of the Soviet Union over the other countries. In recent years this dominance has undergone a qualitative change and become manipulation by the Soviet Union.

According to the theory of the 'international division of labour' the various member countries are expected to specialise in various economic roles all geared to the needs of the Soviet Union. This country manufactures machine tools, that country motor vehicles, another is to remain predominantly agricultural. The whole of COMECON has become a giant production/consumption unit to serve the needs of the Soviet economy. The member countries process raw materials for the U.S.S.R. in Soviet controlled factories and sell the finished goods back at prices far less than their value on the international market. They serve also as outlets for Soviet finished goods at vastly inflated prices. Poland and Bulgaria have had their development so restricted by this process that they have remained predominantly agricultural with a chronic unemployment problem. As a concrete example of Soviet dominance over COMECON we shall examine the relationship between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. (13)

From 1960 to 1970 Czechoslovakia provided the Soviet Union with credits to the tune of 2,000 million rubles, to enable the Soviet Union to exploit Czech natural resources, such as

iron ore, petroleum and natural gas. The Soviet Union is now selling this gas at a vast profit to western European countries. Czechoslovakia has become almost totally dependent on the Soviet Union for its fuel supplies, despite their considerable natural resources. Using this fact as a weapon with which to blackmail the Czechs, the Soviet ambassador recently said:

"We hope that our partners in the socialist countries are able to understand that if their home market is not open to Soviet machines and equipment, it would not be possible for the Soviet Union to develop further economic ties, for our potentiality to supply fuel and natural resources is limited."

In plainer, less polite and euphemistic language - unless Czechoslovakia buys its machines and equipment from the Soviet Union their supplies of their *own* fuel will be cut off.

There has been a tendency in eastern European countries to attempt to resist Soviet dominance by looking to develop their economic ties with the West. For example, Czech trade with the West rose from 7% of total trade in 1965 to 11% in 1971. Puny as this trade appears in contrast with the massive slice of Czech trade enjoyed by the Soviet Union, it is nevertheless seen by the Soviet Union as a threat to its economic domination of Czechoslovakia. The volume of Czech trade with the U.S.S.R. is a clear reflection of Soviet dominance, but the Soviet Union does not consider it sufficient and makes thinly veiled threats about Czech trade with the West, saying that such trade is harmful to the 'socialist community'. This pious concern with the needs of the 'socialist community' has not stopped the Soviet Union from increasing *its* trade with the West by 61% from 1964 to 1971. This concern leads the Soviet Union to demand that:

"Czechoslovak concerns should, whilst planning their production, make a special study of the Soviet market and its needs, so as to make Czechoslovakia production co-ordinate with the needs of the Soviet economy."

Clearly, it is the needs of the Soviet economy that motivates Soviet concern over trade with the West, and not the needs of the mythical 'socialist community'. Czechoslovakia used to specialise in the production of locomotives and trolley-buses for the Soviet Union. The Soviet leaders now demand that the Czech factories switch to other production. Why? Because as the Soviet ambassador says:

"The Soviet Union has completed its plans for the electrification of railways, and trolley-buses no longer fit in with the principles of urban communities in the Soviet Union."

Could anything more clearly demonstrate the reactionary nature of the theory of the 'international division of labour'? This theory can be clearly seen as an attempted theoretical justification of the subservience of the eastern European countries and the Mongolian Peoples' Republic to the Soviet economy. The relationships between genuinely socialist countries would be based on "complete equality, respect for state sovereignty and independence, non-interference in each others' internal affairs and on proletarian internationalism and mutual support and assistance." (14) The relationships between China and Albania are a splendid example of this type of co-operation. Particularly the disinterested aid

given by China to Albania to enable her to build an independent national economy.

Can anyone claim that such relationships exist between the Soviet Union and the other COMECON countries? The Soviet Union has, on the contrary, made the COMECON countries economically, politically and militarily dependent on her. Trade between socialist countries should be on the basis of "equality and mutual benefit" and should "promote the growth of an independent national economy". (15) Trade between the Soviet Union and the rest of COMECON is not on this basis, but rather designed to strengthen the Soviet economy at the expense of the other countries.

## SOVIET POLICY AND THE THIRD WORLD

From the time of the October revolution the proletariat in the metropolitan countries and the oppressed nations of the Third World have been allies in their common struggle against imperialism. In the third world itself alliances have been forged between the proletariat, the peasantry and the national bourgeoisie against imperialist oppression and for the completion of the democratic revolution; the most notable example being the Chinese democratic revolution of 1949.

Because of this common struggle against imperialism, and because of the tremendous assistance given by the Soviet Union to the Third World countries in the Lenin/Stalin periods, a great fund of popular goodwill towards the Soviet Union had been built up in the Third World countries by the early 1950's. The nations involved in the post-war national liberation movements naturally looked towards the Soviet Union for help, advice and support.

Unfortunately this support has not been forthcoming over the past twenty years and one betrayal after another has been perpetrated by the Soviet leaders. Their policy has taken the form of attempting to stop wars of national liberation and where this has not been possible, as in Vietnam, of attempting to ensure that these struggles are controlled by the Soviet Union and do not conflict with their long-term strategic aims.

The Soviet leaders have advanced the theory of 'peaceful co-existence' and 'peaceful competition' between the socialist countries and the West and between the oppressed and oppressor nations as a means whereby oppressed nations may liberate themselves. The oppressed nations were simply to wait until the Soviet Union had outstripped the West economically and then the imperialists would become convinced of the virtues of socialism and voluntarily cease being imperialists - the leopard would change his spots! In the words of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (C.P.S.U.):

"In conditions of peaceful competition, new important victories have been scored in recent years in the class struggle and in the struggles of the peoples for national freedom. The world revolutionary movement is developing successfully." (16)

This is not the place to discuss the differences between the revisionist and Marxist-Leninist lines on peaceful co-existence. Suffice it to say that the line of the C.P.S.U. is a prostitution of Leninism and is aimed at ensuring that the oppressed nations and classes do *not* gain their freedom. In order to further their designs the Soviet leaders put forward the theory that the *nature* of imperialism had changed and that the imperialist powers could participate in the task of emancipating the colonial and neo-colonial peoples. In the inimitable words of Khrushchov:

"Your (referring to the U.S.A. (N.R.)) and our economic successes will be hailed by the whole world, which expects our two great powers to help the peoples who are centuries behind in their development to get on their feet more quickly." (17)

Since the fall of Khrushchov these views have been modified and the current Soviet leaders tend to be more circumspect, mainly because it is easier to hoodwink the Third World countries if one uses the vocabulary of socialists rather than imperialists, and also because contention is the predominant aspect of the contention-collusion contradiction between the Soviet Union and the United States, whereas in Khrushchov's time collusion was the predominant aspect.

This article will concentrate on Soviet policy in the Indian sub-continent and in the Middle East.

#### INDIA - A SOVIET NEO-COLONY (18)

Since 1955, when the first economic agreement was signed between India and the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union has provided India with credits worth 10,200 million rupees and has become the number two creditor of India. This credit is, like the 'aid' given by imperialist countries, overtly given as assistance to the developing country. Its real purpose would appear to be economic penetration and the welding of India to the Soviet economy.

With the assistance of these credits the Indian government has built basic industries controlled by, and run in the interest of, the Soviet Union. The U.S.S.R. controls 30% of Indian steel production, 25% of oil-refining, 20% of electric power, 60% of electrical equipment, 85% of heavy machines, 75% of electric motors, 80% of oil extraction and exploration and 25% of aluminium output.

The purpose of this Soviet build-up of basic industry in India is to turn India into a processing plant geared to the needs of the Soviet economy. Engineering products made in India for the Soviet Union in Soviet owned factories increased four-fold in quantity from 1967 to 1969. The Soviet-Indian trade agreement stipulates that India will supply to the Soviet Union annually 150,000 to 200,000 tons of rolled steel. A Soviet controlled pharmaceutical plant in India produces ten times as much medicine as India actually needs. The surplus is bought by the Soviet Union and subsequently sold elsewhere at much higher prices. The Soviet Union buys cotton from the Sudan, sends it to India to be processed in Soviet owned factories and sends the finished textiles to the Soviet Union.

The scale of Soviet investment in India is so great that the U.S.S.R. now controls 25% of Indian productive capacity and is responsible for 40% of foreign investment in India. The Soviet Union finds in India a valuable source of cheap labour where the average worker's wage is only one twentieth of that in the Soviet Union.

Trade between the Soviet Union and India, which is supposed to be conducted on the basis of mutual benefit, has in fact a very one-sided benefit. The Soviet Union sells to India second-hand and obsolete machinery at prices 20-30% above those on the international market, whilst it imports from India raw materials and finished goods at prices 20-30% below those on the market. Over 85% of Soviet exports to India consists of machines and equipment, (mostly for use in Soviet controlled factories) whilst over 65% of Indian exports to the Soviet Union are things like leather, tea, cotton fabrics, oil, mica etc.. This is entirely in accord with the theory of the 'international division of labour'. For example, Kosygin says:

"This co-operation enables the Soviet Union to make better use of the international division of labour. We shall be able to purchase in these countries increasing quantities of their traditional export commodities - cotton, wool, skins and hides, dressed non-ferrous ores, vegetable oil, fruit, coffee, cocoa beans, tea and other raw materials and a variety of manufactured goods."

It is obvious that the Soviet Union regards the under-developed countries of the Third World mainly as outlets for capital and commodities and as sources of raw materials, in the same way as do the traditional imperialist powers. Soviet policy towards India is further evidence of the reactionary nature of the theory of the 'international division of labour'. It is an attempted justification of the Soviet Union's exploitation of the Third World countries and is intended to ensure that they remain under-developed and in no position to challenge their domination by the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union is prepared to tolerate some industrial development, provided that such development serves the needs of the Soviet Union. The heavy industry referred to earlier in this section is evidence of this type of industrial development. Under the provisions of the Indo-Soviet treaty of peace, co-operation and friendship of 1971, Indian industry will be even more closely geared to the needs of the Soviet economy. (20) It is proposed that the Indian and Soviet five year plans be integrated. A team from Gosplan (the Soviet state planning agency) has undertaken a preliminary study and submitted proposals to achieve this. (21)

A recent development of great significance is the Soviet proposal to establish joint-stock companies in India. The C.P.S.U. journal 'Communist' stated in 1973 that the "new form of joint-stock companies had taken priority in India." (22) These joint-stock companies will mean that the Soviet Union will be *directly* exploiting the Indian people by the investment of Soviet capital in India. This is the classical form of imperialist exploitation.

Due to the receipt of Soviet 'aid' India has now become so indebted to the Soviet Union that their budget for the financial year 1971/72 provided for the repayment of loans worth 400 million rubles. To service these loans the Indian government has had to take a new loan of 200 million rubles. (23) The technique of making a country politically dependent by making it financially indebted is a further classical imperialist method.

The Soviet Union's objectives in this area are strategic as well as economic. It was primarily the support of the Soviet Union which gave encouragement to and prompted Indian aggression against Pakistan. The invasion of Pakistan by India in November 1971 came only a few months after the signing of the Indo-Soviet pact in August 1971. The months inbetween were used by the Soviet Union to send an unprecedented flow of arms to India in preparation for the war. (24) The Soviet Union and the United States have been contending for supremacy in this area for many years, both seeing the area as of vital strategic importance in their contention with each other and in their attempts to encircle Peoples' China. This has been reflected in the twists and turns of the various countries in the sub-continent. For example, Pakistan's vacillating attitude towards the C.E.N.T.O. and S.E.A.T.O. pacts and the supply of arms to both combatants in the recent war by the United States, India's shifts in allegiance from the U.S.A. to the U.S.S.R. and the similarly shifting allegiances of Ceylon.

The Soviet Union's firm handling of the situation in 1971 gave them a decisive advantage and virtually consolidated the position of India as a Soviet neo-colony. The dismemberment of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh was a further economic and strategic victory for the Soviet Union, in that it weakened a state friendly to China and brought another state into the Soviet sphere of influence. 'World Marxist Review' of July 1973 talked of Bangladesh 'building socialism', one suspects that this is a euphemism for a similar process to that which has taken place in India, and preliminary reports indicate that this is so. (25)

A major strategic aim of the Soviet leadership is the encirclement of China and the events in Bangladesh were a great victory in this respect. The Soviet Union is now advocating, after its successful expansion in this area, an 'Asian collective security system', which is intended to be a military pact aimed at China. Fortunately the Soviet proposals have been given short shrift by the governments of Pakistan and Ceylon.

## SOVIET POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

This area is probably the most acute area of confrontation between the two superpowers. The Middle-Eastern countries are of immense strategic importance. Firstly, because of the oil-rich Arab states and secondly, because of the importance of the Suez canal, the Persian Gulf and the Bosphorus as international waterways. It is in this also that the spheres of influence of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. meet and in some cases overlap. The contention between the Soviet Union and the United States in this area is clearly reflected in the political complexion of the states there. In many cases neighbouring countries are client states of the contending powers. Apart from the obvious example of Israel

and Egypt, there are Jordan and Iraq, Turkey and Syria, Iran and Iraq and Saudia-Arabia and the Southern Yemen.

The Soviet Union, ostensibly supporting the legitimate struggles of some of these states, is in reality making use of these struggles for its own tactical and strategic purposes. This is best illustrated by the Soviet Union's attitude towards Israeli aggression.

Prior to the last war the Soviet Union had been the principal supplier of arms to most of the Arab states, especially Egypt, Syria and Iraq. It has though ensured that these states have not had sufficient arms to defeat the Israelis. Both superpowers have a vested interest in the maintenance of a 'no war - no peace' situation in the Middle East. All the arms supplied by the Soviet Union have been of a defensive nature and the conditions on which they were sold were designed to ensure that the stalemate continued. For instance, the Soviet Union has insisted that the arms should not be used to recapture the lost territories. (26) Needless to say the sale of arms has not been without strings, the Soviet Union has demanded in return the use of military bases and the right to exploit natural resources, principally oil. (27)

Whilst supplying the Arab states with arms and equipment, the Soviet Union has been providing Israel with an equally valuable asset - manpower. In 1972 alone, over 30,000 Soviet Jews were allowed to emigrate to Israel, and now, in return for a promise of 'most favoured nation' treatment from the United States, the Soviet Union has agreed to lift its education tax on people wishing to emigrate to Israel. (28)

The Soviet Union's actions in the Middle East are aimed at perpetuating the state of tension there and ensuring that the Arab states stay in need of assistance. This in turn ensures that the Soviet Union is in a strong position when bargaining for oil and military bases in the area. The Soviet Union is even now building a military base on Iraqi territory at the head of the Persian Gulf, in a position vital to the supply routes of the United States. (29) The Soviet Union has in recent years acquired a lot of low-priced oil and natural gas from the Gulf area. It will not pay cash for this oil and gas but insists that they are used as repayment for loans. (30) The Soviet leaders have an impeccably imperialist attitude towards the rights of the Arab states, in March of 1973 Kosygin said:

"Despite the fact the Arab oil is - in form - Arab property, actually it is in fact international property." (31)

The Soviet Union apparently feels that the Arab oil is not even international property, but rather their own property. The low-priced oil referred to in the preceding statement is actually bought at 18.6 pence per 1,000 cubic feet and resold in western Europe at 40 pence per 1,000 cubic feet. This activity made the Soviet Union a profit of 50 million dollars in one year. (32)



The behaviour of the Soviet Union during the recent Middle East war was a naked display of bourgeois power-politics. As soon as the war broke out the 'hot-line' between Moscow and Washington became red-hot with hurried consultations. The Soviet leaders, instead of supporting the just struggle of the Arab states against Israeli aggression, did their utmost to stop the conflict. Kosygin said that the situation was "seriously menacing the maintenance of world peace" and had "run counter to the easing of tension." (33)

After a fortnight of frenzied consultations the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. produced a joint resolution at the United Nations on a 'ceasefire in place'. Not once were the countries involved consulted about the resolution. No socialist country would so flagrantly ignore the rights of a smaller country and ally itself with another power to impose a peace settlement on an unwilling country. The actions of the Soviet Union during the recent war are a perfect example of how they manipulate and control smaller countries in traditional imperialist fashion.

### SOVIET MILITARY POLICY

A socialist country needs armaments. This statement is not as uncontroversial as it at first appears. There are those who consider that a socialist country should unilaterally disarm. Hence the criticisms of the Soviet Union for building up its military capability in the 1930's and the contemporary criticisms of China for building their own nuclear deterrent.

Having said that a socialist country needs armaments, the question remains; what arms and what for? The first question is answered by the second. A socialist country needs arms to defend itself against aggression; it needs whatever sort of arms are necessary to serve this purpose.

If a country claims to be socialist, possesses arms greatly in excess of its needs, engages in military competition with imperialist powers, has vast armies of occupation in foreign countries, has fleets of ships sailing the seven seas, forces military bases on smaller countries and engages in military blackmail and bullying, then the claim of that country to be socialist is, to say the least, questionable.

This section of the article will attempt to show that the Soviet Union engages in all these activities.

### THE SOVIET UNION'S POLICY ON NUCLEAR ARMS

Ever since the seizure of power by the revisionists the Soviet Union has used nuclear blackmail to prevent and control revolution and wars of national liberation. Khrushchev said:

"There can be no doubt that a world nuclear war, if started by the imperialists, would inevitably result in the downfall of the capitalist system, a system breeding wars. But would the socialist countries and the cause of socialism all over the world benefit from a world nuclear disaster? Only people who deliberately shut their eyes to the facts can think so. As regards Marxist-Leninists, they cannot propose to establish a Communist

civilisation on the ruins of centres of world culture, on land laid waste and contaminated by nuclear fallout. We need hardly add that in the case of many peoples, the question of socialism would be eliminated altogether because they would have disappeared bodily from our planet. (34)

In short, nuclear weapons have rendered obsolete Marxist-Leninist conceptions of war and peace and one should do anything to avoid war, because such a war might lead to the use of nuclear weapons and the consequent end of mankind. As Pravda put it:

"What is the use of principles if one's head is chopped off?" (35)

This viewpoint naturally leads to the idea that the two big powers, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. should collaborate to prevent war. Thus Khrushchov said:

"We (the United States and the Soviet Union) are the strongest countries in the world and if we unite for peace there can be no war. Then, if any madman wanted war, we would but have to shake our fingers to warn him off." (36)

Now it is evident that nuclear weapons are weapons of immense destructive power and no Marxist-Leninist is in favour of their use. Does this mean though that the oppressed classes and nations should meekly lie low in the face of nuclear blackmail? Of course not. To do so would be blatant capitulationism and a betrayal of the objective interests of the oppressed classes and nations.

The Soviet Union signed a nuclear test-ban treaty with the U.S.A. in 1963 banning tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and underwater. In 1968 a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was signed, also with the U.S.A. In 1972 a series of agreements limiting nuclear weapons were signed at the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT).

One might be forgiven for thinking that the signing of all these agreements would have caused some disarmament to have taken place. Not so. (37) In the ten years since the signing of the 1963 treaty the Soviet Union has conducted as many nuclear tests annually as before the treaty, except that they are now underground. As the Soviet Union had finished its atmospheric tests prior to the treaty this hardly merits praise. At the time of the treaty the Soviet Union had only 100 inter-continental ballistic missiles, it now has 1,500. Since the 1968 non-proliferation treaty the number of Soviet nuclear submarines has risen from 7 to 39. Since the signing of the SALT agreements the Soviet Union has carried out more tests of missiles than before.

It is evident that the disarmament treaties are worthless bits of paper, designed to dupe the peoples of the world into thinking that genuine steps towards disarmament are taking place and at the same time to serve the nuclear monopoly of the two superpowers.

## THE SOVIET ARMED FORCES

Although the Soviet Union has been preaching its distorted version of peaceful co-existence for many years, this has not prevented them from engaging in military expansion surpassed only by the United States.

The Soviet Union has troops, military installations and nuclear bases in the Warsaw pact countries of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic and Hungary. The Soviet Union's strength in these countries is currently estimated at 8,700 tanks, 13 airborne divisions of troops and 4,180 airplanes. (38)

Over a quarter of the Soviet army is now deployed on the Chinese border, with 44 divisions of troops stationed there. (39) These troops are equipped with nuclear weapons with a range of 2,500 miles. The Soviet Union is so obsessed with China that it is reported to have made a proposal to the U.S.A., in June 1970, that they should make a joint pre-emptive nuclear strike against China. (40)

The Soviet fleet, which in 1960 consisted of a total of 450 conventional submarines, 3 nuclear submarines and 10 surface ships, consisted in 1970 of 300 conventional submarines, 70 nuclear submarines and 170 surface ships equipped with guided missiles. (41) Soviet ships, which had used to be defensive ships operating in coastal waters, now are divided into several fleets and operate in all the waters of the world.

The Soviet Union now has only 200,000 less men in the armed forces than the U.S.A., but in the actual fighting sections the Soviet Union has 650,000 *more* than the United States. The U.S.A. still has more missiles than the U.S.S.R. but whereas in 1960 they had 850% more, in 1970 it was only 40% more, which means that the Soviet Union's missile strength has increased from 200 to 1700 in that time. (42)

The military capacity of the Soviet Union is clearly far in excess of the needs of a socialist state. This can be seen more clearly when contrasted with the Chinese armed forces. China has armed forces of a purely defensive type, has no troops outside her own territory or ships outside her territorial waters and is the only nuclear state to publicly declare that it will never be the first to use nuclear weapons.

The military policy of the Soviet Union appears to be of an imperialist nature and if we look at the relationship between its military policy and its economic interests we can see that it actually is so. The large numbers of troops and equipment in Eastern Europe protect the economic and political dominance of the Soviet Union over these countries, as the intervention in Czechoslovakia clearly shows. The even larger amount of troops and equipment on the Chinese border is aimed at intimidating and blackmailing the country which the Soviet Union regards as its major *political* enemy. The Soviet fleet started sailing in the Mediterranean in 1964 after it gained its first economic foothold in that area. After the 1967 war and the further Soviet expansion in the area the Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean increased greatly in size. Similarly the Soviet fleet in the Indian ocean first appeared on the scene a few months prior to the Indo-Pakistan war of 1969. The Soviet Union would be able to encircle

and blockade Europe with its Mediterranean, Baltic and Northern fleets. Europe is of course an area of great contention between the superpowers.

Evidence suggests that the Soviet armed forces are being used for the same reason as those of the traditional imperialist powers - to protect economic interests and to compete with other imperialists. In fact Soviet leaders virtually admit that this is so:

"Our country has ocean-going fleets now which can reliably ensure our state interests on the seas." (43)

"..... the Soviet navy has turned from a fleet for coastal action into an ocean fleet armed with nuclear weapons, submarines and aircraft." (44)

"Today the naval flags of the Soviet Union are flying over the seven seas of the world. The United States will sooner or later have to realise that the United States itself is not the only mistress of the seas." (45)

## CONCLUSIONS

This article does not pretend to have produced a full or final analysis of the nature of the Soviet state. The article is intended to open a debate on the question within the Marxist-Leninist movement and, hopefully, within the broad labour movement. The survey has, of necessity, been brief and only partial, nevertheless the evidence presented indicates that the term 'social-imperialism' is a correct description of the Soviet Union.

It must be understood that it is not being claimed that the Soviet Union is a traditional imperialist power of the type of the United States or Britain. There are specific differences between classical and social imperialism. The principal differences are that there does not appear to be a financial oligarchy in the Soviet Union and that, consequent upon this, the export of capital is of less importance than in traditional imperialist countries.

It would be idealist to take Lenin's definition of imperialism and use it to either attempt to make the Soviet Union fit this definition or to say that the Soviet Union is not imperialist because it doesn't fit the definition. Lenin was describing the newly emergent imperialism of the early nineteenth century and could not possibly know the features of social-imperialism. Marxists evolve theories to explain concrete phenomena, they do not take theories as eternal verities and try to make phenomena fit the theories.

The article then has argued that a new type of bourgeoisie has seized state power in a country which once had a socialised economy. It is this which accounts for the differences between social and traditional imperialism, in that traditional imperialism evolved out of nineteenth century laissez-faire capitalism, which produced the dominance of financial capital over industrial capital.

The article has further argued that economic trends in the Soviet Union indicate that the new bourgeoisie are restoring capitalism in the Soviet Union. Whether the form of capitalism will ever develop into that which exists in the West is a separate question, outside the scope of this article.

The evidence concerning the Soviet Union's external relations shows that the Soviet Union is exploiting and oppressing various countries by unequal treaties, by 'aid', by military aggression and occupation, by nuclear blackmail, by great power collusion with the U.S.A., by integration of subservient economies, by unequal trade agreements and by some export of capital.

It is of immense importance that these facts are appreciated by as many people as possible. The identification of the Soviet Union with communism in many people's minds is a great impediment to the understanding of communist ideology. In the period 1917-1945 an immense fund of popular goodwill for the Soviet Union was built up. This fund has now been almost totally eroded, and people react violently against communists and communism. We must fight a relentless fight against this equation of the Soviet Union with communism.

Equally important is the rejection of the 'defence of the Soviet Union' syndrome. This is mainly prevalent amongst the Trotskyists who claim that they are defending the allegedly socialised economic base which prevails in spite of the 'Stalinist bureaucracy'. This attitude still has a few adherents in the Marxist-Leninist movement. We must firmly fight against this policy, whilst pointing out the reasons for the Soviet Union's degeneration. In the not altogether unlikely event of war between the West and the Soviet Union it would be imperative that we reject all notions of defending the Soviet Union and clearly and unequivocally state such a war to be imperialist.

Of more immediate significance is the effect that social-imperialism has on the international balance of class forces. We can no longer speak of a 'socialist camp' embracing one third of the world. We now live in an era when two superpowers contend and collude with each other on a global scale.

Opposed to these superpowers are firstly the two socialist countries of China and Albania. Less firmly opposed (because of apparent illusions about the Soviet Union) are the other two socialist countries of north Korea and north Vietnam. There are the many Third World countries who inevitably vacillate in their opposition to imperialism, but are a major part of the world anti-imperialist front. Even less reliable, but still capable of participating in an anti-imperialist front, are the countries of the second intermediate zone. Finally, but not least, are the proletarians of the metropolitan countries who will come more and more into conflict with their own bourgeoisies as the crisis of imperialism deepens.

Provided that these world contradictions are correctly understood there is every hope of social-imperialism being defeated and the Soviet Union once more playing the glorious role that it did in the days of Lenin and Stalin.

N.R. December 1973.

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# IRELAND - STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY AND INDUSTRIALISATION

## INTRODUCTION

At present in M.L.Q. there is a debate in progress about the nature of the struggle in Ireland. There are two lines being put forward. One line, which could be called the anti-imperialist line, claims that Ireland (both North and South) has been and is being economically exploited by the British nation and that the bourgeois democratic revolution has not been completed in Ireland and that this is due to the involvement with Britain. The second line, which could be called the two-nations line, claims that there is no national exploitation of Northern Ireland by Britain. People advocating this line claim not to have done enough study on the Republic to comment - thus ridiculously not examining the whole of Ireland in the context of the development of British imperialism. This line also claims that due to the economic development of Ulster with Britain, there is now total integration between the two and no national exploitation. Finally, this line claims the bourgeois democratic revolution to be complete.

## THE FORCES INVOLVED

The method by which Marxists deal with social phenomena is known as "historical materialism" which is a process of collecting observed data of the phenomena and analysing these in the light of their historical development.

The starting point for observed data for any struggle is the programme of the forces involved in that struggle. What follows is a very brief outline of the main forces.

## OFFICIAL SINN FEIN

The document of the Officials to be looked at is the "Manifesto of the Irish Workers' and Farmers' Republic" - 2nd. edition April 1971. (It is now being redrafted.) This programme accepts many ideas of scientific socialism but the needs for the dictatorship of the proletariat and a revolutionary party have not yet been realised. The document states:

"We declare that the aim of the Irish Republican Movement is the establishment of a Workers' and Farmers' Republic in a United Ireland as the basis for the construction of a socialist society ..... The Irish Workers' and Farmers' Republic will be one in which the state is run in the interests of all those who work .... and in which the means of production and distributing the wealth of society are in the hands of those who labour" (1)

In their theoretical magazine called 'Teoric' they debate subjects of basic Marxism as well as subjects of special interest to the Irish struggle. Many of these articles show a serious attempt to understand and apply Marxist methods of analysis to the struggle as they see it. Through all their writings now there is discussion on the end of imperialist exploitation leading to the Workers' and Farmers' Republic which is the first step towards socialism.

## PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN

One of their main documents is "Eire Nua - the Social and Economic Programme of the Sinn Fein", published in 1971. The programme states:

"The constitution of Sinn Fein advocates not merely the complete overthrow of English rule in Ireland but also the setting up of a Democratic Socialist Republic based on the proclamation of 1916." (2)

It is a democratic programme which recognises the role of foreign, and mainly British, capital, in the country as a hindrance to the development of the country and sees the setting up of a 32 county republic under the control of the Irish people as the only way to correct this.

In the section entitled "Economic Resistance" they state:

"Why does Britain pay the subsidy? Because she considers it worth her while to pay out British taxpayers' money to keep Ireland divided and safe for British investors to draw profits. Also, by keeping Ireland divided, and by the device of imposing a unified financial system, she ensures that the bulk of the Irish economic surplus is syphoned off and used to develop the British economy." (3)

The programme points out that there will also be a struggle against the pro-imperialist bourgeoisie:

"Thus the nature of the connection goes much deeper than simply the occupation of foreign troops. It is therefore necessary to resist the forces of the connection in whatever form they manifest themselves; to broaden the scope of the national movement to include a conscious, organised economic resistance to the laws of imperialist economics which are keeping our country underdeveloped." (4)

They continue in further sections to show how industrial development has been hindered by financial, industrial, agricultural, planning, etc., control by foreign (predominantly British) capital.

The two programmes of the republican movement show that they are progressive (although there can be no doubt that the Officials are further to the left) in that both see the nature of British imperialism and the obstacles to the development of Ireland and that both wish to see an extension of democracy in Ireland as a whole. There is no doubt that there are differences in tactics and theoretical development between the two wings but this is not of vital importance to our support of these forces.

In contrast to these forces stand the Loyalist organisations. There are three main ones to be examined:



## ULSTER VANGUARD

This is the organisation led by Craig. In "Ulster - A Nation" (published April 1972), they talk about an "Ulster Nation" but wish to remain as a federal part of Britain. They see definite contradictions between the British ruling class and themselves. They seem prepared to declare U.D.I. if Britain refuses to adhere to their demands. The document says:

"It is well that Ulster people should be under no illusion about the foundations on which their constitutional guarantees rest. Ultimately, they rest on the changing mood of the people of G.B. as reflected by their political representatives at Westminster. In the end national self-interest, as interpreted by the politicians in power, determines what national honour requires in regard to any guarantee." (5)

It adds:

"Disenchantment with union gives Westminster no right to settle the destination of Ulster. If they wish to divorce Ulster in the long run that confers on them no right to choose Ulster's future partner." (6)

## ULSTER VOLUNTEER FORCE

They pledge loyalty to Britain and primarily to the Crown. They are violently anti-republican as they point out in a statement of August 1972:

"We are prepared to take into our ranks anyone who is prepared to fight Republicanism which would deprive us of our British way of life. We would die rather than accept an all-Ireland Republic." (7)

They also point out that they would, if necessary, break with Britain to form an independent Ulster:

"The last thing we want or indeed anticipate is any type of conflict with the forces of the Crown. Should this, however, become inevitable we will not shirk our duty." (8)

## ULSTER DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

This is another para-military organisation which claims that if Britain lets them down they too will support the setting up of an independent Ulster and will fight all the way against a 32 county Irish state.

"The U.D.A. are not responsible for the whole mess, the ineptitude of British politicians is to a very large extent to blame. It is totally dishonest of British politicians to blame the U.D.A. They are only proving how sound our judgement is in refusing to trust the British Government any longer. We have proved it cannot be trusted at all." (9)

What links all these loyalist organisations together is seen in the following statement by Wm. Craig on behalf of the 'United Loyalist Council' representing Ulster Vanguard, Loyalist Association of Workers, U.D.A. and Loyalist Defence Volunteers:

"The loyalty of British people is not to a government as such, but to our traditions enshrined in the monarchy. This is precisely what Ulster Loyalists will maintain - should all others seek to betray them.

As British citizens we have a right to all the provisions and protection of any other part of the realm. It is because we have no guarantee of these that the Ulster Loyalist demands his own Parliament with powers to maintain the Union. If Westminster does not want the Union then Northern Ireland has a moral right to opt for terms which will maintain its heritage." (10)

What distinguishes the different brands of Loyalists is the extent to which they will go when Britain lets them down.

## POLITICAL PARTIES

A few words on each of these parties will suffice as they may claim to have vast differences but by their actions show that they are in fact reactionary pro-union forces.

### NORTHERN IRELAND

#### UNIONIST PARTY

They have ruled Northern Ireland ever since Partition. While supported by many protestant moderates, this party is under the control of the Orange Order - 99% of all Unionist M.P.s are Orangemen. This organisation is very reactionary and pro-British.

#### NORTHERN IRELAND LABOUR PARTY

It is a branch of the British Labour Party, and is not very strong (before Stormont was abolished it only had one M.P. and it only has one representative in the new Assembly). It has always been Unionist on the question of Northern Ireland remaining part of Britain. It has some limited support amongst the working-class, and has tried to be in the forefront of anti-sectarian economic struggles. It is more or less insignificant.

#### THE NEW ALLIANCE PARTY

This is claimed to be a non-sectarian organisation, which was to be the answer to Ulster's problems. The only problem was that its leadership was unionist dominated. Their con did not work and they failed miserably at the recent elections.

## SOCIAL AND DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

This tends to get support from the Catholics and the Catholic areas. It is a reformist party, perhaps its nearest equivalent in Britain being our own Labour Party. It claims to be against Partition and for an all-Ireland Republic but wishes a gradual, peaceful phasing out of Partition. It is thoroughly opportunist, selling out and displaying their true nature in the new Assembly.

## SOUTHERN IRELAND

### FIANNA FAIL

This originated from amongst those who were opposed to the treaty which partitioned Ireland. It has increasingly come closer, mainly due to British economic control of the country, to accepting what the British say and want. From 1932 until the recent elections they were only out of power for 6 years. There is no doubt that they now represent the pro-British bourgeoisie.

### FINE GAIL

This party originated amongst those who supported the Partition Treaty. It gets support from the Protestants in the south and from the upper classes. It has a strong conservative wing and tends to be more right-wing than Fianna Fail.

### LABOUR PARTY

They have two predominant wings - a right wing and a liberal wing. They are strong political critics of the I.R.A. and its significance in the South. Also thoroughly reactionary.

I have tried to briefly describe the forces in the conflict. It is from here that Marxists must start their analysis. Any other starting point will be subjective and will lead to false conclusions. The observed data shows us that in Ireland there are people fighting against British imperialism and its army. There are also people in the same territory who regard themselves as British or 'Ulstermen', depending on the situation, and pledge undieing loyalty to the British Crown. They wish to remain part of Britain on their own terms and threaten to leave her if these are not satisfied.

The former have a section in the leadership that is pro-Marxist and their support tends to come from the more progressive sections of the population.

## TWO-NATIONS THEORY

The basic concept of Ireland consisting of two nations is not new and exclusive to M.L.Q. It has been stated in a slightly different form before but with similar conclusions and Marxists have always struggled against it.

## ROSA LUXEMBURG

She ironically put forward the viewpoint that if one were to raise the slogan of the independence of Poland, one should also put forward the slogan of independence of Ireland. The integration of Poland with Russia and Ireland with Britain was the basis of her viewpoint. Lenin replied to this viewpoint in 1914 in "The Utopian Karl Marx and the Practical Rosa Luxemburg", in which he pointed out that Marx's position on the Irish question was very clear. He stood for the separation of Ireland from Britain. At first he thought that this was only for the good of the Irish themselves but later he changed his ideas a little:

*"it is in the direct and absolute interests of the English working class to get rid of their present connection with Ireland .... The English working class will never accomplish anything until it has got rid of Ireland ..... English reaction in England had its roots in the subjugation of Ireland."* (11)

Lenin goes on to show how Marx was not in fact "utopian" but always took a proletarian standpoint on the Irish question and that Rosa Luxemburg was selling out to chauvinism and to the British ruling class. Fortunately, the Marxist line prevailed in the international movement.

Lenin understood very well the changing tactics and manoeuvres of the bourgeoisie and how they will do anything to keep control over their colonies. He pointed out that we do not have to accept frontiers or borders drawn up by the bourgeoisie:

*"..... the philistines of all countries, colours and languages hurry to declare as "utopian" the idea of changing the frontiers of states that have been established by the violence and privileges of the landlords and bourgeoisie of one nation."* (12)

Lenin summed up his attitude to these ideas of Rosa Luxemburg and other "philistines" when he pointed out:

*"Should the Irish and British proletariat not accept Marx's policy and make the secession of Ireland their slogan, that would be the worst sort of opportunism, neglect of their duties as democrats and socialists and yielding to British reaction and the British bourgeoisie."* (13)

## BRITISH AND IRISH COMMUNIST ORGANISATION

Over the last few years a somewhat sophisticated two-nations theory has been put forward by this organisation. To put it briefly, the B. & I.C.O. claim that the reason why the development of Ulster was different from that of the rest of Ireland was not because of any definite policy of the British ruling class but was because:

*".....the Protestant tenant-farmers acquired coherence as a class, and forced the landlords to recognise tenant-right through class struggle, before the Catholic peasantry did do."* (14)

They thus come to the conclusion that the industrial development was brought on by the Protestants themselves, on their own.

There can be no doubt that the Protestant ethic was a factor in the decline of feudalism and the rise of capitalism but to place it as the *primary* factor is to fall into idealism. Ulster tenant-right was a right granted to the Protestants which made their land holding much more secure. It was an inducement to settlers to go over. In the rest of Ireland, the Penal Laws kept land tenure less secure and thus the decline of feudalism was faster in the North East and the way was open, with Britain's "blessing" for the development of capitalism. What we have to stress is that this was a deliberate policy of the British ruling class who, realising that in the North were people who were brain-washed into regarding themselves as British, started what became a symbol of British rule wherever she went - pitting sections of the country against each other and diverting the struggle from the main enemy, British imperialism, - *Dual Tactics*. Apart from Ireland this policy has worked outstandingly for British imperialists in India with the Hindus and the Muslims. However the B. & I.C.O. play up to this chauvinism by saying that it was not really a tactic of British colonialism but something won by the Protestants. They play to the chauvinist feelings of the Ulster Protestants, who believe that they are in some way superior to the Catholics. Thus we would reject this theory both because of its incorrect historical analysis and for its chauvinist leanings.

D.B. IN M.L.Q.4.

This latest two-nations line admits that industry only developed in and around the implanted area, but due to lack of analysis of the South, D.B. doesn't go into the objective reasons for this uneven development. We just have to accept these tactics of British colonialism and start our analysis from there. This is, in fact, the precise point of view that Lenin was criticising in quote (17) above. D.B.'s line, indeed is very similar to that put forward by Rosa Luxemburg. These latter-day Luxemburgists start from a subjective premise and come to conclusions similar to Rosa Luxemburg's - they believe that Northern Ireland is a part of the British nation state and that it is wrong for socialists to bring forward the question of exploitation of Northern Ireland by the British nation state. The very first paragraph in D.B.'s article shows his general line:

"Some of us have come to believe that the line generally held by the British left, that a national struggle is necessary in Northern Ireland is incorrect, and that it should be replaced by a line recognising the importance of struggling for bourgeois democratic rights, and which bases the main struggle on the fight for socialism." (15)

How like the "practical" Rosa Luxemburg this is! She also accuses Lenin of forgetting the class struggle!

Before we pass on to the real questions it will be enough to mention here that standing on the same premise the B. & I.C.O. and Comrade D.B. reach different characterisations of the Protestant population in Ireland. According to the B. & I.C.O.'s latest position the Protestants are an "Ulster Protestant Nation" (see "The Working Class Solution to the National Conflict in Ireland") but according to D.B. they are a part of the British nation!

## THE REAL QUESTIONS

It is very dangerous for us in Britain to get bogged down in academic debate and to lose sight of the two main questions facing us regarding Ireland. Firstly, - How can Ireland as a whole industrialise and why hasn't this happened before? Secondly, - How does Britain exploit Ireland? The two questions are linked and Ireland as a whole must be looked at if the tactics of British imperialism are to be unravelled and examined.

D.B. argues that industry developed in and around the implanted area and that this led to two bourgeoisies and two markets. He doesn't however, say why. But it is not difficult to understand why, as it would be impossible without an analysis of the South, which D.B. has not made. He maintains that his opinions are the facts and that communists have to accept them. We also have to accept the total dependence of the markets in Ireland on the British market. These markets are in fact totally integrated but this does not prove that there is no exploitation. It proves the opposite! India's market was totally integrated into the British market in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and we can assure D.B. that there was plenty of exploitation there. In fine academic debate over whether Northern Ireland fits D.B.'s dogmatic definitions of a colony or neo-colony or nothing, the central questions are missed or avoided.

## QUESTION OF NORTHERN IRELAND'S EXPLOITATION

Comrades D.B.'s and E.K.'s (see M.L.Q.5) proofs that Northern Ireland is not exploited are split into four main parts. The first argument is that Northern Ireland does not fit the definition of a 1930 C.P.G.B. pamphlet or Marx's definition of a colony as used for America in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (16) This is utter academicism! When no orthodox definition of a colony could be found to fit South Vietnam, the Vietnamese comrades did not say that that meant South Vietnam was not being exploited but instead, called it a 'special type of colony' (Le Duan: "The Fundamental Problems and Essential Tasks of the Vietnamese Revolution"). The East Bengalis put forward a similar concept for East Bengal when some people suggested that West Pakistan was not exploiting East Bengal as West Pakistan was not a monopoly-capitalist state, (Strategy and Tactics of the Communist Party of Bangla Desh during the War of 1971). This is again academicism of a similar type to D.B.'s. The question of what *type* of colony Ireland is, is not the main question to us in Britain. This question is of vital importance to revolutionaries in Ireland fighting British imperialism, as their tactics will depend on it. But to us in Britain the listing of types of colonies and seeing which 'fits' Ireland is an academic debate. The question of *exploitation* is the main debate. We can well now see what happens when we engage in this debate over past Marxist definitions of colonies. We fall into the error, as D.B. has done, of not exposing British imperialism as it stands today.

D.B.'s second argument for Northern Ireland not being nationally exploited by Britain is that Northern Ireland shows symptoms of depression much the same as other parts of Britain. D.B. then carries out his comparison between Northern Ireland, a part of a country partitioned by the British ruling-class and

the Orange Order, and Durham, traditionally a part of the British nation-state. The percentage of industry owned by outside interests, percentage of people employed etc. are compared and found to be very similar. Their goods are also found to have a similar market. The conclusion arrived at from this brilliant piece of investigation is that:

"Northern Ireland is not a colony but a part of the U.K. economy and state." (17)

There is no doubt that this is nothing but economic determinism - accepting that if the economies are totally integrated there is no exploiter-exploited relationship, disregarding the political factors. This approach is mechanistic and could easily be applied to many other countries - e.g. India in the 19th century and the Republic of Ireland now. With this sort of argument almost any imperialist country can stop being imperialist by "integrating" the economies of the exploited country with that of the exploiter country and by there being similar conditions in both countries. D.B.'s theory is indeed an excuse for imperialism. Would we accept that if it could be proved that there was more investment by people from outside Texas in Texas than there was by the U.S.A. in Vietnam, then there is no longer any reason for calling Vietnam a colony and that we should accept that Thieu has a right to become part of America if he wishes or believes himself to be? D.B.'s whole argument is utter nonsense.

Stalin pointed out in "Marxism and the National Question" what he believed to be the characteristics of a nation:

"A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture." (18)

However, Stalin stressed that this cannot be applied dogmatically. If a nation conquers another nation, implants it with settlers and integrates the markets, then we have to realise the twists and turns of imperialism in the context of the imperialist bourgeoisie wishing to exploit the colony. Our analysis must therefore partly rest on what the imperialists have done to hinder development in Ireland.

D.B.'s third 'proof' is his application of the principle of self-determination to the 'rights of the Protestants to secede'. He is quite right to point out that Lenin supported the 'right to secession' (19) but he forgets that Lenin was dealing with the duties of the proletariat of an oppressor nation towards the oppressed. The right to secede is available to the *oppressed nation only* to overcome hindrance to its national socio-economic development. As Marxist-Leninists we must support the secessionist movements of *all* those oppressed by Britain and other exploiter nations. The Protestant population in the North of Ireland is *doubtless oppressed* (despite its differential privileges over the Catholics), *not* by the 'Catholic nation', but by *British imperialism*. So if the Protestants are to secede, they must secede from Britain and not from Ireland! Our best support to the Protestants, and indeed to the whole population of Ireland, will be to demand complete separation from Britain.

D.B.'s fourth reason for claiming that Northern Ireland is not a colony of Britain is because of the completion of the bourgeois democratic revolution:

"There is no basis for a national movement in Northern Ireland because the bourgeois democratic revolution has basically been completed - as part of the British nation and state." (20)

In fact this is not the case. The economic situation and statistics shown below suggest that Northern Ireland is not an industrially developed society, but even leaving this aside, basic rights which can be granted under the bourgeoisie have never been granted. These rights tend to be of the type of no discrimination of one part of the community on the grounds of colour, race, religion etc. (These rights are, of course, hypocritical and merely tactical as they are granted under extreme economic exploitation.) In most capitalist countries in the world we are witnessing, in the decline of imperialism, the degeneration of these rights and the move towards the corporate state. -In Ireland the final stage of democratic rights *has not yet been reached*. The ruling Unionist Orange clique discriminated against the Catholics in most matters and they have never had equal rights with the Protestants - hence, Civil Rights campaigns. D.B., in fact, contradicts himself, as he says also in his article that we should support the fight against Catholic oppression in the North. He cannot have it both ways, and he must show us at what time the Catholics have ever had equal rights. The Unionist bourgeoisie ensured that their rule was continued by not even allowing a bourgeois parliamentary system, such as we have in Britain, to function. They did this by putting forward at every election from Partition until the dissolution of Stormont and again at the recent Assembly elections, the question of remaining part of the British nation or not. Thus, while since 1920 in Britain there have been 6 Labour governments, some coalition governments and the remainder Tory governments, in Northern Ireland the ruling party has always been the ultra-reactionary Unionist Party. This is not, and never has been, bourgeois democracy.

#### TWISTS AND TURNS OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM IN IRELAND

This is one part that D.B. does not understand. He tends to under-estimate the past and present ruling-class. Having found that they are losing their colonies abroad, in the age of the final defeat of imperialism, the British ruling-class are desperately striving to hold on to Ireland in some form or other. They are not stupid and they, like Marxists, learn from history. They have developed fine tactics for Ireland. The Irish Independence and Home Rule Movement of the late 19th century and early 20th century was a threat to them. If a national bourgeoisie had taken over the whole country, the British ruling-class would have lost the whole of Ireland and their dual tactics would have gone to waste. They tried hard to achieve a United Ireland under comprador classes but could not achieve this due to the fear of the Northern Orange ruling-class that they would be a minor part of the united country and would lose their economic and political power to the Nationalists in the South. Thus, what Lenin called the empty threat of the 'Black Hundreds' was in fact a reality and the



country was partitioned. This was only a makeshift solution by British imperialism, whose interests still lie with a United Ireland under comprador classes, but it ensured that the South could never develop industrially by *depriving the country of the Belfast nucleus of industry*. After Partition Eire's major industry was comb-making!

## STATISTICAL EVIDENCE OF EXPLOITATION

Having examined the forces involved and taken a brief look at its historical development, it is now time to look at statistical evidence of direct economic exploitation of Ireland. I believe that the data presented below suggests that Ireland is predominantly unindustrialised and that through living under one of the richest nations of the world, Ireland has remained one of Europe's poorest. It is necessary to look at Ireland as she is in her two parts. It is also important to point out that statistical evidence should be used in addition to, and not instead of (as D.B. has done) investigation of the objective forces involved.

### REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

This is one of Europe's least industrialised countries. *The figures here refer to 1971.* The top figure in each case refers to the percentage involved in agriculture and the bottom figure refers to the percentage involved in industry.

U.K.:	2.7 45.7	NETHERLANDS:	6.9 38.0	GERMANY:	8.4 50.1
U.S.A.:	4.3 31.0	AUSTRALIA:	8.0 38.0	DENMARK:	10.9 37.2
BELGIUM:	4.4 44.2	SWEDEN:	7.8 37.0	FRANCE:	13.4 38.6
NORWAY:	13.9 37.3	ICELAND:	18.8 36.8	SPAIN:	28.6 37.5
JAPAN:	15.9 36.0	ITALY:	19.3 44.1	PORTUGAL:	31.1 36.3
AUSTRIA:	17.3 41.9	IRELAND:	26.5 30.9	GREECE:	37.3 24.6

(All these figures are reproduced from "Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Survey on Ireland") (1973).

It is interesting to break these percentages down into figures for the Republic and this is done in the same source.

TOTAL LABOUR FORCE = 1,139,000

Total Employment	=	1,071,000
Agriculture and fisheries	=	292,000
Industry	=	328,000
Manufacturing	=	222,000
Construction	=	82,000
Other	=	481,000

These figures show us that the Republic has a smaller percentage of its population engaged in industry than every other country in the table, with the exception of Greece and that only Spain, Greece and Portugal have a higher percentage involved in agriculture. This is not the hallmark of a modern industrialised state but is an excellent (*if pathetic*) example of an unindustrialised state, which has never been given the chance to develop. Even the percentage involved in industry is misleading, as the breakdown of figures shows us. The number involved in construction industry (i.e. heavy industry) is only 82,000 or approximately 7.6%.

When we look at the trade of the Republic, we also find some interesting facts, although with our previous knowledge of British imperialism they should not seem so startling.

#### DOMESTIC EXPORT

Total for 1972 = £634.74 million

##### Exports go to:

U.K.	-	£385.22m
W.Germany	-	29.85m
U.S.A.	-	59.60m
France	-	28.85m

Direct Agriculture	=	£220.91m
Metalliferous Ores and soaps	=	20.97
Chemicals	=	34.86
Textiles	=	39.49
Machines (electric)	=	15.89
" " (non-electric)	=	19.80
Transport Equipment	=	15.11
Clothing and Footwear	=	30.62
Miscellaneous	=	237.09

#### DOMESTIC IMPORTS

Total for 1972 = £842.58 million

##### Imports come from:

U.K.	-	£429.07 million
U.S.A.	-	64.44m
W.Germany	-	63.81m
France	-	28.40m

(Quarterly Economic Review  
Ireland No.2 - 1973.  
Appendix 2. Imports and  
Exports)

These figures show the near total economic dependence of the Republic on Britain. We don't have to go into lengthy debate over what type of colony the Republic is, but what we have to show is that the Republic is predominantly unindustrialised and relies almost totally on Britain. These two facts are linked.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

Figures for the North tend to be harder to come by as many figures are included with the U.K. figures. However there are some:

As far as agriculture is concerned, the figures suggest that the North is less industrialised and far more agriculturally backward than the British Isles:

### NO. OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BY SIZE OF HOLDING (ACRES)

Size of holding in acres	G.B.	N.I.
1-4 $\frac{1}{2}$	26,817	4,038
5-14 $\frac{1}{2}$	39,124	14,552
15-49 $\frac{1}{2}$	59,633	28,556
50-99 $\frac{1}{2}$	50,871	9,970
100-149 $\frac{1}{2}$	29,312	1,861
150-299 $\frac{1}{2}$	35,490	697
300+	20,519	136
Total:	G.B. - 261,766 N.I. - 59,810	

(Abstract of Regional Statistics 1972. printed by the Central Statistical Office.)

These figures show us that in the North there is approximately one-quarter the number of agricultural holdings as there are in Britain, yet the population of the North is only one-fortieth the population of Britain!

Also, we find that in Britain the majority of farms are fifty acres or above but in Ireland the majority of holdings are below fifty acres. When we look at large farms (300 acres or above), we find that in Britain approximately 8% of farms are in this category but in Northern Ireland only 0.25%, or one in 400 of the farms are large. Of this total number of units (i.e. 59,000) 40,000 are considered 'significant' and approximately 17,000 are viable going concerns.

The number of people employed in agriculture in Northern Ireland is approximately 77,000 and in the U.K., as a whole, there is approximately 700,000 (i.e. 2.7% of the total working population). This means that approximately 9% of the people in the U.K. involved in agriculture come from Northern Ireland. Yet the population of Northern Ireland is one-fortieth of that of Great Britain!

These figures show, I believe, that Northern Ireland has not developed as the highly industrialised part of the U.K. that D.B. and similar "two-nations" people would have us believe, but is rather agriculturally backward. However, this is something that there should be no need to prove by figures. All one has to do is go over to Northern Ireland and one can see with one's own eyes, that the only industry is in Belfast and a small zone around Belfast. This is borne out, again by statistics:

<u>TOTAL LAND AREA</u> of NORTHERN IRELAND	=	3,489,000 acres
<u>TOTAL AGRICULTURAL AREA</u>	=	2,840,000 acres
∴ Total Area for non-agricultural use	=	289,000 acres

("Abstract of Regional Statistics 1972" - published by the Central Statistical Office.)

Northern Ireland is the one area of the U.K. that produces separate trade figures. A detailed list is presented:

1971	Imports	Exports
Live Animals and Food	168,442,000	167,233,000
Animal & Vegetable Oils & Fats	1,082,000	886,000
Beverage & Tobacco	47,758,000	1,569,000
Crude Materials, inedibles	27,996,000	46,258,000
Minerals; Fuels; Lubricants	52,913,000	1,770,000
Chemicals	51,267,000	3,579,000
Manufactured Goods	244,573,000	247,938,000
Machinery & Transport Equipment	228,854,000	132,035,000
Miscellaneous	<u>64,439,000</u>	<u>241,731,000</u>
TOTAL:	<u>892,323,000</u>	<u>843,020,000</u>

(Quarterly Economic Review (Ireland No.2 - 1973))

These figures show that approximately 20% of Northern Ireland's imports and exports are made up of agricultural products. Hardly the sign of a fully industrialised economy!

When we look at where the North trades, we find that approximately 71.5% of the imports (654,290,000) comes directly from or through Britain. The other £238,033,000 comes directly from countries outside the U.K. 12.6% of the total comes from the Republic. As far as exports are concerned, we find that £738,732,000 or 86.5% goes to, or through, Britain. The remaining £109,288,000 goes directly to countries outside the U.K. The amount that goes directly to the Republic is 1.8% of the total. (Quarterly Economic Review (Ireland No.2 - 1973)).

Thus, although the Republic and the North both produce goods that the other needs, they have to do the bulk of their trading through Britain. This is, of course, aided by the fact that Britain controls the banks, the insurance, the stock-market, indeed all that is necessary for the capitalist system to work efficiently.

What I hope these figures show is the Britain *exploits the whole political entity of Ireland.*

### WHY HASN'T IRELAND INDUSTRIALISED?

Approaching the question of how Ireland can industrialise, we have to examine why she could not industrialise before. The answer to this is not too difficult. The British ruling-class only allowed a pocket of industry to develop around Belfast and they kept down industry in the rest of Ireland.

Ireland is Britain's oldest colony, first invaded in the 12th century. Probably the most significant step taken by the ruling-class was the implantation of the Scots into Ulster under James I.

"Because the Irish and English-Irish were obstinate in Popish superstition, great care was thought fit to be taken that these new colonies should consist of such men as were most unlike to fall to barbarous customs of the Irish, or the Popish superstitions of the English-Irish, so as no less cautions were to be observed for uniting them and keeping them from other than if these colonies were to be led to inhabit among the barbarous Indians." (21)

In other words, what was wanted was for the people implanted not to make any contact with the natives but to try to keep them tied to Britain. If they feel tied to Britain and feel themselves British, they will not try to separate from Britain and British interests will be saved. Thus Britain granted the formation of capitalist concerns and relations in this implanted part of Ireland but at all times in the rest of Ireland industry was kept down. Even in Cromwell's time the beginnings of a small textile industry were crushed so as not to compete with the British industry and in the North, only, did a small textile industry arise. Marx, of course, realised this and wrote:

"Every time Ireland was about to develop industrially, she was crushed and reconverted into a purely agricultural land." (22)

After the loss of the American colonies, British colonialism found new tactics for keeping control over its colonies. In India this was done through the division of Hindus and Muslims. It was easier nearer home in Ireland, with the division between Protestants and Catholics. With the granting of Ulster Tenant Right and the uneven development leading to industrialisation in the North East, these *dual tactics* became a handy tool to exploit the country. Because of the facts shown above, it became unnecessary to obstruct the industrialisation in the North East. But in the rest of the country it was kept down. It is not necessary to go into this in any greater detail in this article. It is plain that what has happened in Ireland is that the British tactics have worked better than anywhere else.

## HOW IS IRELAND TO INDUSTRIALISE?

This is perhaps the crucial issue to revolutionaries. It would be very hard for a small country like Ireland to industrialise from nothing but she already has a nucleus of British-owned industry in the part politically annexed to Britain. For Ireland to industrialise and the way to be open to socialist construction then, these industries must be taken out of the hands of foreign owners (who take advantage of the 10 year tax-free profit incentives to invest in Ireland and then take the money out to Britain, ensuring that it is not reinvested) and reinvested in Ireland *as a whole*. The reason for keeping Ireland predominantly agricultural is simple - it is easier to maintain control over a predominantly agricultural country.

## CONCLUSION

All through this article there has been references to the development of North and South Ireland and to the tactics of British imperialism with reference to *both parts of Ireland*. The reason for this is that it is necessary to examine the tactics of British imperialism in the context of the wishes of the British ruling-class to exploit *the whole of Ireland*. But D.B., in his article suggests that he does not accept this approach. His approach is to examine the two separate parts of Ireland in relationship with Britain, and with total disregard for their inter-relationships. Thus he has just looked at the North and Britain. He claims:

"The argument that the Irish Republic is a neo-colony is certainly one to be studied carefully, but on the other hand, the claim that Northern Ireland is a colony is not supported by any serious Marxist analysis ....." (23)

By splitting like this, D.B. in fact shows that he is not engaging in any serious Marxist analysis! He is falling into the trap that makes his article social-chauvinist and a left apology for the British army and British imperialism staying in Ireland to combat "the terrorist campaign" (24) of the people fighting them. This is indeed an argument of the bourgeoisie! What his line claims is that if implantation of part of a colony takes place and the market can be integrated into the imperialist market, then the imperialist relationship can eventually vanish if a reactionary force so desires.

There is no doubt that this subjective, economic determinist, pro-imperialist line must be countered and I hope this article has gone some way to do this. Unfortunately this line is very attractive to some sections of the working-class both in Britain and Northern Ireland who, duped into chauvinism in the heyday of the Empire in the late 19th century and early 20th century, also accept that Northern Ireland is a part of the British nation. When Marxists begin to believe this, it shows how influential and successful the tactics of the British ruling-class have been. However, the duty of Marxists is not to pander to chauvinism (neither British nor Ulster) but to smash it. Perhaps it is correct to end this article with a quote from Lenin, who spent much time combating the type of social-chauvinism that D.B. falls into:

"The proletariat must demand the right of political secession for the colonies and for the nations that "its own" nation oppresses. Unless it does this, proletarian internationalism will remain a meaningless phrase; mutual confidence and class solidarity between the workers of the oppressing and oppressed nations will be impossible; the hypocrisy of the reformist and Kautskyan advocates of self-determination who maintain silence about the nations which are oppressed by "their" nation and forcibly retained within "their" state will remain unexposed."  
(25)

H.M.

#### NOTES

1. Manifesto of the Irish Workers' and Farmers Republic (2nd edition) p.1.
2. "Eire Nua - the Social & Economic Programme of Sinn Fein" p.3.
3. Ibid. p.7.
4. Ibid. p.7.
5. Ulster - A Nation, April 1972, p.4-5.
6. Ibid, p.12.
7. "Orange Cross", 25th August 1972, p.8.
8. Ibid, p.8.
9. U.D.A. News, 31st July 1972, p.5.
10. "The Future of Northern Ireland", last page.
12. Ibid, p. 208.
13. Ibid, p. 208.
14. "Economics of Partition", p.7.
15. M.L.Q.4, p.18.
16. Ibid, p. 25-26.
17. Ibid, p.26.
18. "Marxism and the National and Colonial Question", Stalin, 1935 Moscow Edition, p.8.
19. M.L.Q. 4, p. 25.
20. Ibid, p.23.
21. D.B.Quinn - "The Elizabethans and the Irish", p.119.
22. "Karl Marx and Frederick Engels on Ireland", p.132.
23. M.L.Q.4, p.25.
24. Ibid, p.24.
25. Lenin, "On the National and Colonial Questions", Peking Edition 1970, p.7-8.
11. "The Utopian Karl Marx and the Practical Rosa Luxemburg", Printed in 'Lenin on Britain', Moscow Edition, p.207.

## FOR WORKING CLASS UNITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

In the debate on Ireland now developing within the CFB, two opposed lines have emerged. One line maintains that there is a *national* contradiction between Northern Ireland and Britain and that the struggle now taking place is a direct result of that national contradiction. The opposing line maintains that there is no significant national contradiction between Northern Ireland as a whole and the rest of the United Kingdom, and that the principal contradiction in Northern Ireland is a *class* contradiction between the working class and the ruling monopoly capitalist class. A more detailed exposition of the first line can be seen in the article by T.S. in MLQ 5, and in the article by H.M. in this issue; the other line is dealt with in the articles by D.B. in MLQ 4, and E.K. in MLQ 5. For the sake of convenience (though not necessarily accuracy) we shall refer to these two lines as the "National Liberation" line, and the "Socialist Struggle" line.

In terms of the practical implications of the two lines, it might be thought that the differences between them are not great. Both lay stress on the need to combat and overcome sectarian divisions in the working class, and to fight for full democratic rights. However, both the methods proposed for bringing this about and the long term perspective of the two lines differ sharply. The purpose of this article is a critical examination, from the standpoint of the "socialist struggle" line, of the view that there is a national contradiction between Britain and Northern Ireland, with particular reference to H.M.'s article. The intention is to isolate differences and to identify points of agreement. This is important in order to avoid the two sides arguing completely past each other and at cross-purposes, and also so that the differences may be looked at frankly and straightforwardly. Only in this way will we move to a higher stage of unity, since "unity that comes through struggle will live - unity that comes through yielding will perish."

### SOCIAL CHAUVINISTS AND NATIONALIST PHILISTINES

A major criticism levelled at the "socialist struggle" line is that of Social Chauvinism. It is to be welcomed that the criticism has been made, and certainly it is one of a number of weaknesses that we, as Communists in an imperialist country, must be careful to avoid. Before answering this criticism, however, we would make a counter-criticism.

The central weakness of the argument presented by H.M. is that it does not directly and seriously consider and then systematically refute the major argument of the "socialist struggle" line, that Northern Ireland, despite its residual problems, has essentially been *assimilated* by Britain.

Lenin is very clear that Marxists must know that assimilation does occur from time to time and be prepared to consider it when they come to analyse each case in its concrete details. Here is a passage from *Critical Remarks on the*



National Question (1913), Section 4 ('Cultural-National Autonomy') :

"The economic development of capitalist society presents us with examples of immature national movements all over the world, examples of the formation of big nations out of a number of small ones, or to the detriment of some of the small ones, and also examples of the *assimilation of nations*." (emphasis added)

From this we can clearly see that Britain is certainly one of the examples of 'big nations' formed "out of a number of small ones, or to the detriment of a number of small ones". It would be common ground between us that Britain has been successfully composed ("successfully" for the bourgeoisie) of *at least* Scotland, Wales and England (and perhaps also the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man). It would probably be common ground between us that the Welsh nation or nationality had been "successfully" *assimilated* by the British bourgeoisie. Thus, what Lenin describes is a very real phenomenon for us and one which we have to consider in our planning seriously.

What attitude should the proletariat take to such phenomena? Lenin describes this in a passage just following the one previously quoted:

"The proletariat, however, far from undertaking to uphold the national development of every nation, on the contrary, warns the masses against such illusions, stands for the fullest freedom of capitalist intercourse and welcomes every kind of assimilation of nations, except that which is founded on force or privilege."

There is much to be discussed in this in terms of how we apply it to particular *concrete* situations such as Northern Ireland, and merely raising the matter does not resolve the question. It is, however, vital to consider such points collectively and discuss to what extent they apply to the situation under consideration.

In fighting against one error it is often easy to forget the danger of another, opposite, error and thereby fall into it. H.M. has every right and a duty to warn against the danger of social chauvinism: however, it may be that he is not sufficiently aware of the opposite danger. Lenin describes this in section 3 of Critical Remarks on the National Question:

"What is left is capitalism's world-historical tendency to break down national barriers, obliterate national distinctions, and to *assimilate* nations - a tendency which manifests itself more and more powerfully with every passing decade, and is one of the greatest driving forces transforming capitalism into socialism.

Whoever does not recognise and champion the equality of nations and languages, and does not fight against all national oppression or inequality, is not a Marxist; he is not even a democrat. That is beyond doubt. But it is also beyond doubt that

the pseudo-Marxist who heaps abuse upon a Marxist of another nation for being an 'assimilator' is simply a *nationalist philistine*." (Lenin's emphasis in both cases.)

We do not frankly think that T.S. or H.M. are "national philistines" and we would not call them "pseudo-Marxists" but what we would say is that *they do not guard sufficiently against this danger*. They do not even recognise that this is a danger against which one should be on guard at all.

In 'The Right of Nations to Self-Determination' (1914), in section 8 ('The Utopian Karl Marx and the Practical Rosa Luxemburg'), the very section in which he is vigorously upholding the progressive nature of the Irish Nationalist movement in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Lenin puts the warning again in a slightly different way:

"The working class should be the last to make a fetish of the national question, since the development of capitalism does not necessarily awaken *all* nations to independent life."  
(Lenin's emphasis)

We would not call H.M. or T.S. "pseudo-Marxists" or "nationalist philistines", but a criticism of fetishism seems to be justified to the extent that in their handling of the debate they have not acknowledged that *applying* the principle of proletarian internationalism is not something straightforward, absolute and automatic but that its relevance and form must be considered *in each particular case*.

We will now consider the criticism that the "socialist struggle" line is a "Social Chauvinist" line, first in general and then in relation to H.M.'s article.

Traditionally, the term "Social Chauvinist" has been applied to those Socialists and Communists in Imperialist countries who have opposed national liberation struggles in colonial countries, usually on the grounds that they were a distraction from the "main" struggle inside the Imperialist country itself, the successful outcome of which would in any case resolve any national contradictions. Objectively, such a view is pro-Imperialist, and mirrors exactly the paternalistic attitude of Imperialists in oppressed nations. It was a standpoint criticised by Marx, in relation to the Irish question in the 19th century. More recently, a striking example of this particular deformation was the open opposition of the French Communist Party to the Vietnamese liberation struggle in 1945.

The question to be answered is whether this is a valid criticism of the "socialist struggle" line in Northern Ireland. We would argue that it is not. We are not saying that the national struggle in Northern Ireland must be subordinated to the struggle of the British working class, but that there is no national struggle in Northern Ireland. That is not to say that there is no problem in Northern Ireland in connection with the national question. There is oppression of a national minority and we support the struggle of that minority for full democratic rights. There is also regional oppression of Northern

Ireland as a whole, in the same way as there is regional oppression of Scotland and Wales, and although such regional struggle can only be finally resolved under a planned socialist economy, in the short term we would demand the establishment of regional administrative bodies. Such factors, however, do not determine our overall analysis and perspectives.

In our view there is no objective basis for national struggle in Northern Ireland, and this view is confirmed by the absence of popular support for any purely nationalist position in Northern Ireland. The points at issue are in the immediate sense the ending of sectarianism, and the fight for democratic rights, and in the longer term the struggle for socialism. Since we regard Northern Ireland as essentially an integral part of Britain, we regard that struggle not as subordinate but integral to the struggle of the British working class. In fact, the possibility is that despite the sectarian confusions of the recent period, Northern Ireland will prove a focal point in the attack on the British ruling class.

The general argument that in Britain, despite residual problems in connection with the national question, the only long term perspectives are socialist perspectives, was well presented a few years ago in a statement entitled "The national question and the struggle for socialism in Britain" by the Glasgow Communist Movement:

"Britain is the world's oldest capitalist country. The bourgeois democratic revolution was completed here ages ago and thus the democratic development of nations in Britain has long since ceased. Bourgeois democracy in this country is now in process of rapid decay and a corporate state is developing instead. All that can be achieved through bourgeois democracy has been achieved in Britain. So to proceed towards socialism there is no intermediate stage of 'People's Democracy' or 'National Democracy' for Britain - here all problems of revolution are those of direct transition to socialism."

## THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

When we come to consider H.M.'s argument there is an omission which although not at first very obvious, is nevertheless very significant. Although criticising us for social-chauvinism *he does not criticise us for violating the Irish or Northern Irish right to self-determination!* Yet what is a social-chauvinist except one who denies the right to self-determination of a people oppressed by the bourgeoisie of his own country? This is an inconsistency.

It is to be welcomed, and will speed up the resolution of this whole debate, that H.M. avoids indulging in vague appeals to the right of self-determination in the way the Trotskyists do. But it makes his argument weak. He accepts that for Marxists the people of Northern Ireland must be in a position to choose voluntarily which state they wish to be in, and he does not try to dismiss this by some sleight of hand. He has to go on from there, however, to argue the case, *in spite of*

the frequently and repeatedly expressed wish of the people of Northern Ireland to be part of the British state! An argument criticising social-chauvinism, which is not based on a principle of the right to self-determination but which in fact tries to further its case *in spite of* the right to self-determination, is indeed a very strange Marxist argument.

In "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (1916), section 4 (p.7 Peking edition), Lenin writes:

"The proletariat cannot but fight against the forcible retention of the oppressed nations within the boundaries of a given state, and this is exactly what the struggle for the right of self-determination means."

Now if this definition is correct, and if the people of Northern Ireland as a whole are not *forcibly retained* within the British state, then no violation of the right of self-determination has occurred. Secondly, no-one who declines to actively support their supposed movement to secede may consequently be called a "social-chauvinist".

To put it very simply another way: if the majority of the population of part of a state have repeatedly expressed, both violently and within the confines of bourgeois legality, their wish to be and remain part of that state, *there is a prima facie case that they have been assimilated*. Unless comrades are swayed by rhetoric and a strong but imperfectly understood sense of their Marxist duty, they will want this *prima facie* and obvious analysis comprehensively refuted before they are ready to grasp firmly the national liberation line.

#### WHY SHOULD THE NATIONAL WISHES OF THE PROTESTANTS BE IGNORED?

H.M. accepts that the majority of the people of Northern Ireland have repeatedly expressed their wish to be part of the British state, and argues that we should support a national liberation line *in spite of* their wish to determine themselves their national identity. To justify this he criticised very sharply the behaviour and stand taken by the Protestants. Let us say first of all that this is not a point of difference between us, that the Protestants have been led to take up a stand that is highly undemocratic and reactionary. Furthermore we would agree that they must be won away from this reactionary stand, and that doing so will and must involve criticism of such a position, provided it is done on the basis of an underlying unity with them as members of the *working class*. This, among other things, will be absolutely necessary to win them away from their bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaders.

But the fact that the Protestants have displayed many very bad and philistine qualities cannot allow us to discount their views about which state they have determined they will be a part of.

In 'The Right of Nations to Self-Determination' Lenin described a case where Rosa Luxemburg tried to discount the wishes of the Norwegians to separate from Sweden in 1905 on the basis of their petty bourgeois choice of a monarchy. Lenin rebuffs this argument, writing in section 6:

"Undoubtedly, in wishing to have a king of their own for their money, and in rejecting, in a national referendum, the proposal to establish a republic, the Norwegian petty bourgeoisie displayed exceedingly bad philistine qualities. Undoubtedly, Naprzod displayed equally bad and equally philistine qualities in failing to notice this. But what has all this to do with the case?"

And the same might be said about talk about the reactionary nature of the Protestants in Northern Ireland. Undoubtedly from the point of view of the struggle for democratic rights it is very important that the Protestants have taken up a reactionary stand; but what has this to do with whether we can *ignore or discount* their decision about which *state* they wish to be in? Obviously, nothing at all.

Let us look at another argument used to discount the national wishes of the Protestants, that the divisions in Ireland have to a very considerable degree been the result of British (and before that English) imperialism. Once again it is common ground that the history of Ireland cannot be considered separately from British and English oppression, and that differences in the population were played on and rendered antagonistic by the British ruling class. The most significant factor behind the Protestant settlements was the intention of the British to use the Protestants as a fifth column in Ireland, and that indeed is the role they have repeatedly played.

Certainly the British bourgeoisie did not fight by the Queensberry rules, but would we have expected it to? Would we expect any bourgeoisie, in the era of rising capitalism when each was trying to carve out its own national market and its own nation state, not to have attempted to manipulate the contradictions in its own favour as much as possible? When Lenin describes how big states assimilate smaller ones in the quotation from 'Critical Remarks on the National Question' already given, he does not imply that this process of assimilation takes place in some pure form separate from the inevitable class behaviour of the bourgeoisie. He does not imply that large states formed "unfairly", by the unscrupulous self-interest of the capitalist class are somehow not "real" national states *for that reason*. On the contrary, he specifically talks about examples of the formation of large nations "*to the detriment of some of the small ones.*" Is it likely that there is even a single nation state in Europe that was formed with complete "fairness"? Surely not.

The fact is that the carve-up of the advanced world into nation states took place with all the unscrupulousness and self-interest that the bourgeoisie displays. The end result was the product of the luck, strength and skill of the different national Bourgeoisies.

Thus, what was the result in the British Isles? The British bourgeoisie was unable to assimilate the major part of Ireland but it did succeed in holding the six counties. It is as simple as that. All the talk about the unscrupulousness of British imperialism merely fills in the gaps in the story, from this point of view.

### THE BOURGEOIS NATURE OF NATIONAL STRUGGLES

There is a valuable point of agreement between us over the question of analysing the relative strengths and stands of the bourgeoisie in different parts of the British Isles: we agree that by the turn of this century the bourgeoisie in Northern Ireland no longer had an interest in developing its own national market separate and free from competition from manufacturers in Britain proper. The means of production had developed to the size where they could no longer be satisfied by an Irish national market, even one protected from foreign competition; they had to have the British and imperial market to survive.

On page 18 of MLQ 5, T.S. puts it this way:

"By the beginning of this century ..... the bourgeoisie in the north-east ..... could only survive on the basis of the British market. Led by this bourgeoisie 500,000 people in Ulster opposed the Home Rule Act (1914) for Ireland."

Thus we agree that because of the way the means of production had developed in Ireland, the bourgeoisie in Northern Ireland were not oppressed by being kept against their will in the British state. On the contrary, it was essential for their interests actively to fight to *remain* within the British state, and they struggled to do so even when in fact this was not necessarily in the long-term interest of the British ruling class as a whole.

But at this point we come to a disagreement which needs clarifying. As we understand it, Communists consider as only *conditionally* and *relatively* important the particular ways in which the bourgeoisies of Europe have divided this continent and its peoples up into nations and nation states. Where there is no national oppression (involving the "*forcible*" retention of a people), and where the bourgeoisie is not economically oppressed, we are generally prepared to accept the verdict of history about the various forms the bourgeois democratic revolution has taken and the various shapes of the nation states that have been produced by it. Our concern is to press on from this point to the *socialist* revolution.

Lenin takes up this question in section 3 of "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination" where he deals with Rosa Luxemburg's complaint that if the right of self-determination is so important why then isn't it found in the programmes of parties in Western European countries? He writes:

If one interprets the Marxist programme in a Marxist fashion, not in a childish way, one will without difficulty grasp the fact that it refers to bourgeois-democratic national movements. That being the case it is 'obvious' that this programme 'sweepingly' and as a 'mere platitude' etc covers *all* instances of bourgeois-democratic national movements. No less obvious to Rosa Luxemburg, if she gave the slightest thought, is the conclusion that our programme refers *only* to cases where such a movement is actually in existence."

The explanation for the confusion, perhaps, is that another important argument has obscured the issue, or may obscure the issue; that argument is about how in the era of imperialism, because of the vacillating nature of the national bourgeoisie, bourgeois-democratic revolutions have paradoxically to be led by the proletariat if they are to succeed.

Thus, Lenin writes:

"In our country the full victory of the bourgeois-democratic movement is possible only in spite of the 'compromising' liberal bourgeoisie....."

"The victory of the bourgeois revolution in our country is impossible *as the victory of the bourgeoisie*.

This sounds paradoxical, but it is a fact."

"The proletariat has laid upon it the task of pursuing the bourgeois-democratic revolution to its consummation and of being its leader."

(All quotes from pp.25 and 26 of "From Marx to Mao Tse-tung". Lenin's emphasis.

The truth of this can be seen of course today in the necessity for Marxist leadership in the national liberation struggles for example of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

But does this imply at all that such struggles are not in essence *basically and objectively bourgeois democratic struggles*? Does Lenin say anything here to contradict the previously quoted argument that "our programme (of self-determination for nations) refers *only* to cases where (a bourgeois democratic national movement) is actually in existence"? No, it is clear that cannot be argued.

Certainly the national liberation struggle in Vietnam is led by the proletariat through its Communist party, but it is still objectively a bourgeois democratic stage of revolution because the bourgeoisie has still not cleared away feudalism and is oppressed and prevented from building up capitalism by imperialist aggression. Here we take a very strong stand against Trotskyists, who muddle up the different stages of revolution with abandon, because they ignore the fact that at present in South Vietnam the petty bourgeoisie peasantry and the national bourgeoisie have important objective class interests which make them a progressive force in the struggle against feudalism and imperialism and absolutely necessary allies for the proletariat in *this* stage of the revolution.

Mao says very clearly, dealing with this very distinction between the proletarian leadership of national liberation struggles and their objective class character, the following:

"such a revolution in a colonial and semi-colonial country is still fundamentally bourgeois-democratic in its social character during its first stage or first step ....."  
"its objective mission is to clear the path for the development of capitalism."  
(Selected Works. Vol.II. p.344)

Therefore the necessity of proletarian leadership in such struggles cannot obscure their objective nature and the crucial difference between the bourgeois democratic stage of revolution and the socialist stage of revolution. We are firmly opposed to Trotskyists who in their typically idealist and subjectivist fashion wish to leap over objective tasks that must definitely be solved before we can go on to higher tasks.

But *on the other hand* if these objective preliminary tasks do not exist, and do not have to be tackled, what militant communist would want to spend time delaying the point where he starts working for the *socialist* revolution? Obviously, put this way, no communist would.

Thus, it is still "obvious" as Lenin says, that our programme exists *only where there is a bourgeois-democratic national movement.*

#### WHERE IS THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT?

So where are the signs of a bourgeois-democratic national movement already in existence in Northern Ireland? Among the minority community there is certainly a movement (though one more concerned with winning full civil rights rather than national independence) but the key question is whether there is a bourgeois-democratic national movement among the Protestant majority community. Of course, one should not ask for 100% patriotism before accepting that a genuine national movement is in existence - there will always be a traitor comprador section among a bourgeoisie - but are there any signs *at all* of a bourgeois-democratic national movement among the Protestant bourgeoisie?

We agree that they are not forcibly retained in the United Kingdom. On the contrary, we agree with T.S. that this bourgeoisie played a significant part in mobilising opposition to the Home Rule Act because it could survive only on the basis of the British market (p.18 of MLQ 5). True, there is a contradiction between some sections of the protestant bourgeoisie and the British Government, but does this arise because they want separation from the U.K. as an end in itself, or because they believe the British Government is too lenient with the minority in Ulster? All too often the left in Britain jumps to the conclusion on this question that it would like to believe, but there is a big difference between that and a conclusion that stands up to rigorous examination.



Firstly, the analogy is a poor one. We are not debating whether we should struggle for socialism or just give up: we are debating the *relative* validity of the arguments in favour of struggling, in the main, for the national liberation stage to be completed. Furthermore, there can be no doubt as to which is the higher level of struggle since that of national liberation is objectively only the stage of the bourgeois revolution: there can be no doubt about which struggle we should be more eager to embark on provided we were sure the conditions were ready for it - the struggle for socialism. The burden of proof, then, is logically on those who would hold back the stage of struggle to that corresponding to the bourgeois-democratic revolution. It must be argued what are the compelling reasons that should hold back the struggle for socialism - something that has not yet by any means been adequately done.

#### VOTES AND REFERENDA

Lenin certainly did not discount the relevance of votes and referenda when assessing which bourgeoisies the population as a whole had been induced to follow. He argues towards the end of section 9 of "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination" that the "right of secession presupposes the settlement of the question by a parliament (Diet, referendum etc.) ....." From this point of view there is no reason why a Leninist would want to criticise the recent Border Referendum; because it can be criticised not in itself but only if there are charges that it was fiddled, sprung on people, or that people were not aware of the issues. There have been, to our knowledge, no criticisms of this type. The only criticism is that the result and the truth of the result have been well known to all sides all along!

Supporters of the Nationalists refer, and have every right to refer, to the election of 1918 when Sinn Fein candidates succeeded in sweeping the board in the 26 counties. This and the preceding decades of parliamentary victories for the National party showed that Nationalism could in favourable circumstances win the support of the people. It did not in Ulster, because a bourgeoisie with quite different material interests led the people there in an altogether different direction. Similarly, one of the most telling and concise arguments of those who oppose US imperialism in Vietnam is the admission of Eisenhower in his memoirs that had free elections been carried out throughout the country in 1954 Ho Chi Minh would have won overwhelmingly. That cannot for one moment be said, in its equivalent form for Northern Ireland, and it is dodging the question to imply that on national matters we do not take account of the results of elections. (Why, even in terms of assessing mass opinion in connection with the struggle for socialism it is interesting that Lenin spent a considerable amount of time analysing the results of the elections of 1917 to the constituent Assembly.)

What objection can be made to pointing out the significance of the fact that the Nationalists lost heavily to the SDLP in the recent elections in Northern Ireland? The significance is that *even among the minority population* nationalism and the demand for separation from the UK is in decline?

Why should we make it a point of honour to ignore all these signs? Why should we hold back from developing the more important, higher, struggle for *socialism*?

We know that the working class of both communities in Northern Ireland respond readily to propaganda about their class oppression. Yet it is suggested that before developing this wholeheartedly we must insist to them that their *main* problem is first to get the separation of Ulster from the UK. How can this possibly be done? Lenin points out in section 5 of "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination":

"From their daily experience the masses know perfectly well the value of geographical and economic ties and the advantage of a big market and a big state. They will, therefore, resort to secession only when national oppression and national friction make joint life absolutely intolerable and hinder any and all economic intercourse."

Even the Officials do not make separation from the UK the main theme of their mass work - because they know it does not conform to the desires of the masses, they know this from practical experience.

#### INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

A key point in the whole analysis put forward by H.M. is whether Northern Ireland is an industrially developed society, and it is one that obviously must be looked at if differences are to be resolved.

Firstly, it is not clear whether he challenges the view that the North was considerably more industrialised than the South at the time of partition. As the second Irish representative said at the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920: "Ulster is the industrial centre of Ireland."

To talk about a pocket of industry around Belfast is to discount (in a number of ways) the degree of industrialisation that has been reached. Firstly, it discounts industrial activity elsewhere in Ulster (thus the shirt-makers of Derry had clear views about their desire to see their city remain part of the UK and ensure their ability to sell their products in the British market). Secondly, it ignores that even in an advanced capitalist country large sections of the land may remain mainly agricultural while most manufacturing gravitates to the city. How many major cities is a population of a mere 1½ million expected to support?

For instance, much of East Anglia is unindustrialised and agrarian, but should we talk therefore about mere "pockets of industry" in Peterborough and Norwich, and imply that the bourgeois-democratic revolution has still to be completed in East Anglia?

Some very strange statistics are used to support this case. Firstly, H.M. uses figures about the very small size of farm holdings as if unaware of the historical reason for this unusual situation - the enormous land reforms initiated by the British government to buy out absentee landlords and redistribute the land to small holders. Thus T.A.Jackson writes in 'Ireland Her Own' (p.359 paperback edition, chapter 28):

"Between 1870 and 1910, over 10,000 estates, comprising over 13 million acres, were acquired by under half a million tenants, at a gross purchase price of £120 million."

Secondly, he uses figures about the proportion of the population engaged in agriculture which, certainly it is true, compare unfavourably with Britain as a whole, but it is well known that Britain has an *exceptionally* low percentage engaged in agriculture.

He does not quote the actual figure for Northern Ireland. It is approximately 10%. It is worth comparing this with the figures for certain other countries which are commonly believed to have already gone through their bourgeois revolution.

Denmark	10.9%
France	13.4%
Norway	13.9%
Japan	15.9%
Austria	17.3%
Iceland	18.8%

(taken from the OECD table actually quoted by H.M.)

Surely if we want to look at the level of industrialisation we should for example go directly to the question of what proportion of the output of the area in question is agricultural and what is not. The matter is easily resolved.

In 1969 out of a total gross domestic product for Northern Ireland of £747 million a mere £64 million was produced by agriculture. (The reference is the Digest of Statistics for Northern Ireland March 1972). So how industrialised should a territory be before H.M. thinks we should lead the working class to start preparing for the socialist revolution?

## COLONIALISM AND NEO-COLONIALISM

One single point appears to present an insuperable objection to the use of this concept of "neo-colony" - that control by the alleged imperialist power is not *indirect* but is direct in this case. Surely direct rule has shown that the realities of power in Northern Ireland are such that we can either regard it as a colony or as a voluntary part of the UK, but we cannot regard it as a *neo-colony*?

Then the whole question of whether there is colonial oppression (of one form or another) in Northern Ireland has to be argued in an all-round way, and the strength of the evidence has to be evaluated. Thus, when we say that Ulster is a part of the UK in a similar way to the way Wales and Scotland are, this must be countered by something more than the assertion that 'everyone knows it is a colony'. It must be shown that there are objective *differences* in, for example, business ownership, wage rates, housing, unemployment, between Northern Ireland (which he says is in a colonial position) and these other territories (which are not).

#### WHAT KIND OF NATIONAL STRUGGLE

When we consider all these factors - the level of industrialisation in Northern Ireland, the essential identity of interest of the bourgeoisie in Northern Ireland and in the rest of the UK, and the actual nature of the struggle unfolding - it is difficult to see the attractions for Communists of the National Liberation line. Supporters of the line have been generally unwilling to spell out its practical implications. For instance, T.S. in his article in MLQ 5 maintains that the "main enemy of the people of Ireland" is "British neo-colonialism" (p.30), in other words, that there is a national contradiction between Britain and Ireland (North and South). However, he is not at all clear on the question of how to combat this main enemy or to remove this (presumably) main contradiction. He says that "any struggle that is *centred* on the border issue is misleading", pointing out (rightly) that the strategy of the British ruling class at the present time is the "re-integration of Britain and the whole of Ireland." He suggests instead a struggle for further democratisation and for the end of sectarian divisions. This process will lead on to the socialist revolution, and only then will the national question be resolved in Ireland:

".....the leap from democracy to socialism and completion of the national development of the Irish society will be a big step forward." (p.22)

What exactly is meant by this? If T.S. means that the only possible perspectives for revolutionaries in Northern Ireland are the perspectives of socialist revolution (that "all problems of revolution are those of direct transition to socialism"), and that only then can any residual national or regional irregularities be democratically resolved, then we are in basic agreement. We would, however, disagree that such developments can take place in isolation from the rest of the UK - as T.S. implies. Only a united revolutionary movement throughout the United Kingdom could hope to be successful, and to suggest otherwise is to pave the way for defeat and demoralisation. We would also argue that by insisting that the main contradiction is a national contradiction - even though it is effectively kept in the background - T.S. is not only being inconsistent but spreading confusion and making the practical application of the line almost impossible. The main strategic question we are faced with is whether the main

contradiction in Northern Ireland is a national contradiction or a class contradiction. It is this which determines our policy, both in Northern Ireland and throughout the UK. Although the link between class oppression and national oppression is an important one, they are not identical and to pretend that they are is to confuse the issue.

It is necessary then for the supporters of the National Liberation line to be clear as to its implications. There would appear to be a number of possible approaches, all of which contain difficulties. The crucial questions to be answered are: "What would be the class composition of any National Liberation movement?" and "What would be the likely end result?" We have already discussed how the bourgeoisie in Northern Ireland have an essential unity of interest with the British bourgeoisie as a whole. This is not seriously disputed. We have also argued that Northern Ireland is industrially developed and that in this respect there are no qualitative differences between it and the rest of the UK. It is thus not difficult to see why the call for National Liberation receives no ready response. The class structure of Northern Ireland "is an accurate reflection of the class structure of the UK as a whole" (MLQ 5 p.25), and the only class with an interest in revolutionary change is the working class. The implication then of the National Liberation line is that the working class of an industrially developed country should mobilise to carry out a revolution whose "objective mission is to clear the path for the development of capitalism." This, in the face of the opposition of the ruling capitalist class, and in spite of deep divisions in its own ranks on the very question of National Liberation.

The purpose of such an unlikely movement is also unclear. Is it the ending of partition, or the creation of a "New Democratic Northern Ireland?" In the first case we must come back to the often-stated and violent opposition of the majority population in the North to the idea of unification. We have argued that there is an objective basis for this opposition - the history of the past 50 years would tend to confirm this. On every occasion when working class unity has raised its head in Northern Ireland, it has been split apart on the national question. At the very least, supporters of "Irish unity" must attempt to explain how a National Liberation struggle is to be carried out in the face of the violent opposition of two thirds of the population of Northern Ireland. It must further be argued that unification would be in the interests of the working class, considering the nature of the Southern Irish State. It is avoiding the issue to argue that there must be parallel democratic developments in the South. There is no evidence to suggest that the events in the North are having any significant effect in the South, except to tie it even more closely to the policies of the British ruling class. In fact, the general trend in the South is towards re-integration with the UK, and the most likely form that 'Irish unity' would take at the present time is unity under British control. This is pointed out by T.S. and it is not a development that Communists would support.

The alternative sometimes posed is the idea of U.D.I. in the North. The developments of contradictions between sections of the Protestant community and the British ruling class is cited as evidence to support this view. There are two objections here. Firstly, such contradictions do not reflect any objective national contradictions between Britain and Northern Ireland. The disagreement between the ultra-loyalists and the British government is a disagreement over how much to oppress the Catholics, and a reaction against what are seen as conciliating policies. Secondly, even supposing such a reaction could form the basis for a National movement, why should Communists support it? The opposition is centred round the most reactionary elements in Northern Ireland. U.D.I. under men like Craig could only lead to increased oppression and would almost certainly set back the revolutionary movement for many years.

The purpose of plotting these brief "scenarios" is not to substitute prophecy for analysis, not to "tell the Irish what to do". It is, however, important, if we are to advance, that we consider carefully the practical implications of the lines that we are proposing.

#### ECONOMIC DETERMINISM AND VOLUNTARISM

The criticism has been made that we approach the whole question of Ulster in an over "practical", in a pragmatic way, although the great majority of D.B.'s article in MLQ 4 was concerned with the theoretical questions behind our line. We feel that it is the proponents of the opposing view who do not put their analysis in a sufficiently comprehensive theoretical framework.

Take for example the whole approach to the national question: Lenin calls for a very clear distinction between the "psychological" approach and the "historico-economic" approach (e.g. "Right to Nations to Self-Determination" section 1). We have tried to relate our analysis to the era of rising capitalism in Ireland, to the needs of the rising bourgeoisie, to the size of the units of production and the size of the market needed to absorb products from such enterprises. Yet we are criticised for having an "economic determinist line". What then is to be understood by Lenin's call for a distinctly "historico-economist" approach to the national question? It would obviously be valuable for the debate if this could be answered.

By criticising what he calls an "economic determinist" line H.M. draws attention to the weakness that we would suggest he himself does not guard sufficiently against - that of voluntarism. The role of militancy, heroism and leadership is absolutely crucial, but crucial within a context and a battle that does objectively exist - not *in spite of* the limitations of the objective world.

When he and T.S. (in MLQ 5) argue that the starting point of analysis should be "the programme of the forces involved" they leave themselves open to accepting their *subjective* outlook at its face value without seeing that there

can be an enormous gap between the role that a group objectively plays in the line-up of class forces and the role it *thinks* it plays. Thus, we suggest that however much the Provisionals may think they are a revolutionary force they are in fact objectively *at best* only a Catholic defence force. The Officials while they would like to believe that they are going to unite the entire working class in an anti-imperialist struggle, are *objectively* uniting a section only of the Catholic working class alone, on issues of working class oppression and Catholic civil rights. The problem of false consciousness is neglected.

For example, in discussing the ideology of the two wings of the Republicans, H.M. and T.S. are very lenient in failing to measure their outlook against the standards of specifically *Communist* ideology. They imply instead that the logic of events is taking the Republican movement towards progressive political positions. Talking of the Catholic minority H.M. says:

"This minority have found that (victory in the civil rights campaign) can only take place by smashing the ruling Orange clique and separating the Northern Ireland state from Britain."

#### THE PROTESTANT COMMUNITY

When he comes to look at the loyalist forces, H.M. seems to fail to pinpoint this contradiction between the ultra-loyalists and the British government. He writes "what they say is very clear" but he is vague himself about what they do say. He implies that the contradiction with the British government is part of a national contradiction because the Protestants are part of an oppressed nation forcibly retained in the United Kingdom, but the truth is that whatever limp kites Craig may have tried to fly about U.D.I. in the past (he doesn't try this on so much now) the contradiction with the British government is about *how vigorously to suppress the Catholics!*

This needs to be given more careful consideration than has been the case to date. Some developments can, however, be considered. Clearly one of the most important developments in this respect has been the split in the Unionist movement. The monolithic nature of that institution is no longer a major factor in Northern Irish politics. This has both its negative and its positive aspects. The negative aspect is the emergence of the ultra-loyalist reactionary forces, centred round political figures like Craig, but probably led by elements in the Protestant para-military groups. The potential dangers of such a development should be taken very seriously - it can be no accident that links have been made between these groups and more familiar reactionaries, such as Powell and the National Front.

At the same time there appears to be a growing movement among the Protestant community which rejects their traditional bourgeois leaders. This may manifest itself in support for petty-bourgeois reactionaries like Craig. There are other more positive signs. Even within the predominantly reactionary U.D.A., there are more progressive elements who are increasingly taking a class stand, rather than a sectarian one. In January this year the U.D.A. called a halt to sectarian assassinations, and at the same time tentative contact was made between the U.D.A. and the Official I.R.A. According to Dave Fogel, ex-U.D.A. commander in Woodvale, there is a community of interest between the Catholic and Protestant working classes, and the main obstacle to unity is the fact that the Catholics will not "come out categorically for the continuation of the border. It's this which keeps the Catholics and Prod working class apart."

In the event nothing came of the truce and the sectarian attacks continued. These kind of developments do, however, indicate the positive aspects of the present situation. There can be no doubt that after the experience of the last six years any combination of the Catholic and Protestant working class would be a powerful and highly class conscious force.

How to bring about this combination is surely the nub of the whole problem of Northern Ireland. How do we win the Protestant working class from its present bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaders? Anyone claiming to put forward a line must answer this question in a vigorous and all-round way. Assuredly no real progress, let alone revolution, can take place in Northern Ireland if the one million Protestants are in the camp of the bourgeoisie.

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