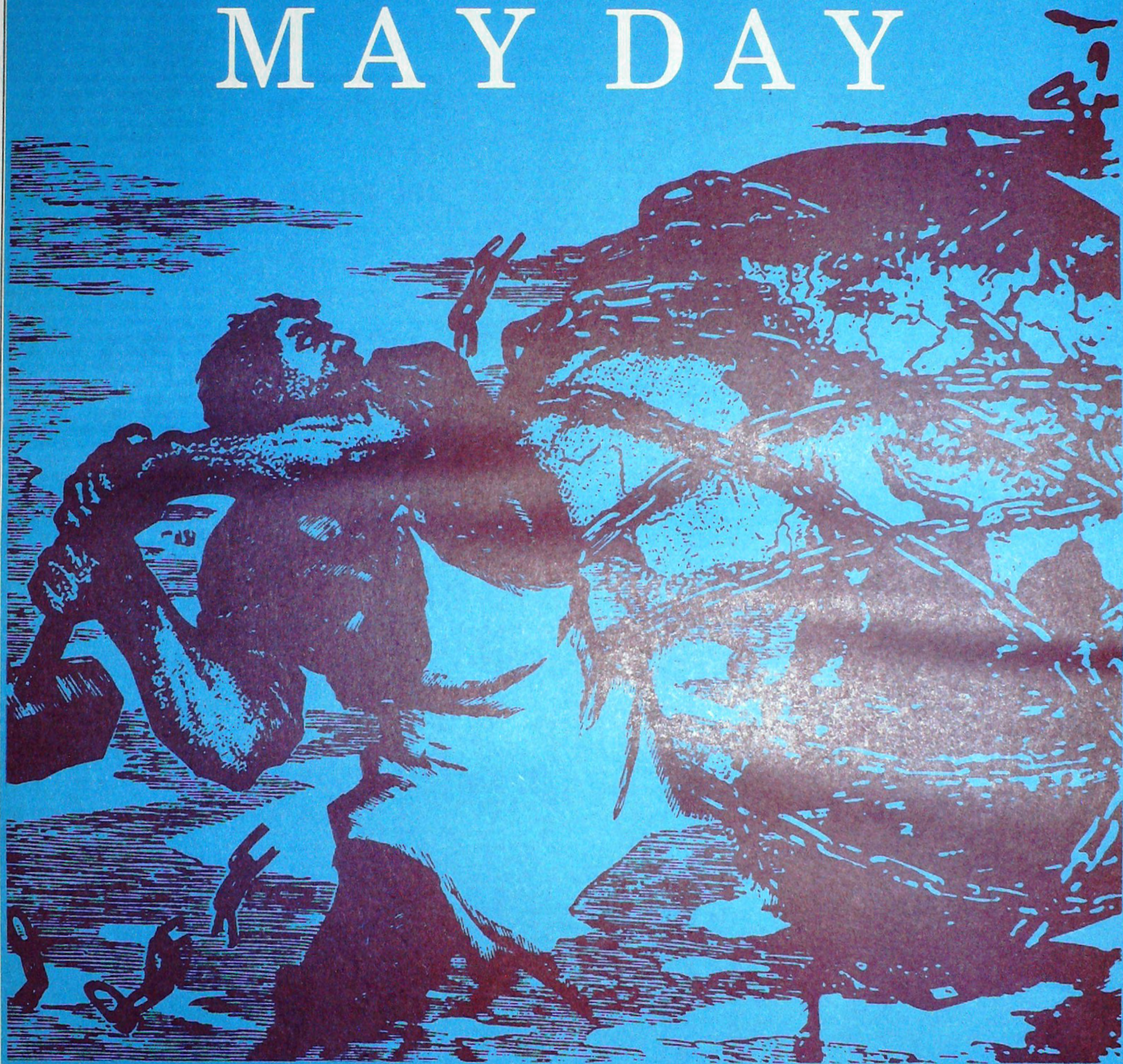


THE LENINIST

LONG LIVE MAY DAY

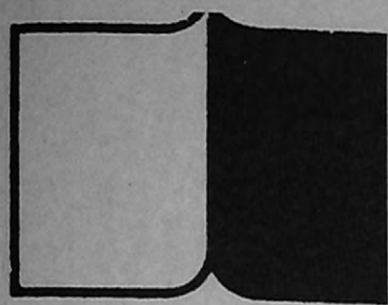


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Rally from 6pm May 1 1987 Embankment tube



Nationalism and Revolution

David Howell, *A Lost Left: three studies in socialism and nationalism*, Manchester University Press, pp351, £8.95

THE THREE studies are those of James Connolly, John Maclean and John Wheatley. For the purposes of this review, we shall leave aside any mention of Wheatley, a Scottish "Catholic Socialist", and concentrate on the two revolutionaries, Connolly and Maclean.

A few comrades have repeatedly taken us to task in our letters page for our "English chauvinism" with respect to Scotland, taking as their standard-bearer Maclean, who later in his life came towards the position of a Scottish Communist Party independent from its English (sic) counterpart, and an independent Scottish Workers' Republic. Howell's work provides a useful medium to contrast the theoretical views, practice and influence of Connolly and Maclean.

Briefly, Connolly learnt his Marxism in the abstract propagandist school of the Social Democratic Federation in the 1890s. This was later heavily influenced by the syndicalist tendencies of the De Leonite Socialist Labour Party and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the United States. Combined with the Irish republican socialism that first influenced him through the works of John Leslie, Connolly's ideas developed through his political work in Edinburgh, Dublin, the US and finally Dublin once more.

On returning to Ireland from the US in 1910, Connolly found his ideas of an Irish "One Big Union" like the IWW unworkable, mainly because of the divisions driven into the Irish working class because of the national oppression of the country. He was now forced to extend and develop in the concrete his existing socialist republican theory which had been previously codified in the Irish Socialist Republican Party.

This was done through his staunch opposition to World War I, especially his idea of using the war in Europe for Ireland's liberation, distancing him from all but the far-left minority of the old Second International.

The Irish Citizens' Army, formed during the Dublin lock-out of 1913, came under his leadership in October 1914, and he worked to transform this small organisation from a workers' defence guard into a proletarian insurrectionary army. Connolly's view was towards winning an alliance between socialists and radical nationalists, under the leadership of proletarian forces, for national, and through this social, emancipation.

The alliance was achieved when Connolly was drawn onto the Military Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood early in 1916 and, after argument, agreed to desist from independent action and bring the ICA into the Easter Ris-

ing. Many valid criticisms can be made of Connolly: his acquiescence to Catholicism, his patriarchal attitudes, the premature nature of the Rising, its isolation and Connolly's lack of independence from its petty bourgeois leaders like Pádraig Pearse. However, in Ireland today what Marxist can doubt the importance of Connolly's writings? Who can doubt the retrogressive consequences of partition, as he warned?

With decades of vacillation of the leadership of the republican movement, from Griffith onward, who can doubt the necessity for proletarian leadership of the national struggle? Connolly made an as yet unsurpassed assessment of the link between national and social emancipation in Ireland. And though he failed to realise such a revolution, the bulk of his work provides a firm base for an assessment of Irish work today.

John Maclean is a different kettle of fish. He had a "conventional" Marxist background in the Social Democratic Federation and British Socialist Party, and until the latter stages of World War I never favoured Scottish separatism. Indeed, quite the opposite: "The establishment of a Scottish Babel ... would be a retrograde step and should meet with our opposition and ridicule. What is good or bad for England is good or bad for Scotland." (Maclean writing in *Justice*, July 27 1912)

Howell sums up Maclean's change in positions succinctly: "Although Maclean's pre-war writings had expressed the orthodox Second International Social Democracy, his comments on the Highland question had given an occasional Scottish twist to his argument. Throughout the war, his concern to present an untarnished internationalism had dominated his politics, but in 1919, before he parted from the BSP, his interest in Scottish issues became much more visible." (p207)

It is interesting that his breach with the BSP in that year is reported to have been not over Scottish independence, but over the party's desire to transfer him to work solely with the Hands Off Russia! campaign. Neither were his objections to the formation of a Communist Party in Britain national, but because the forces included were "a heterogeneous mixture of anarchists, sentimentalists, syndicalists, with a sprinkling of Marxists. Unity in such a camp is likely to be impossible." (Maclean's *Open Letter to Lenin in The Socialist*, February 3 1921).

Such an analysis, combined with his developing nationalism, gives us a picture of confusion and sectarianism, rather than clarity, as the adherents of his later works claim today. To justify such actions he began to take an anti-internationalist line in respect to the Communist International: "The less the Russians interfere in the internal affairs of other countries at this juncture, the better for the cause of revolution in those countries." (*Vanguard*, December 1920)

The logic of Maclean's position went as follows: "Since the British Empire is the greatest obstacle to communism, it is the business of every communist to break it up at the earliest possible moment. That is our justification for urging a Communist Republic of Scotland." (*Vanguard*, September 1920)

On this basis you could argue for Welsh, Cornish, Northumbrian, *ad infinitum* independence. The crucial question is whether the struggle for an independent Scotland reflects a historical necessity. Scotland being poorer, and the expro-

priation of crofters' land by English and Scottish capitalists around a century ago do not provide such a basis. Therefore, in the face of a highly centralised bourgeois nation-state, such moves can only be divisive. Comrade Yurukoglu has made the point that the Party should not act as five independent fingers, but a fist. Centralism against centralism. Defend the right of the Scottish and Welsh nationalities to self-determination but fight for the monolithic unity of the proletariat and its Party.

Maclean maintained his position and, in doing so, lost his finest allies of the war years - Gallacher, Bell, McShane and others - to the Communist Party of Great Britain. What he was left with in his abortive Scottish Workers' Republican Party was, as Gallacher described them in *Revolt on the Clyde*, "a bunch of toadies", who quickly dispersed after his death.

The ability of the English, Welsh and Scottish workers to fight as one, unimpeded by phantom differences, was shown brilliantly in the General Strike of 1926, and again recently in the 1984-85 Great Strike. The inability of class solidarity to take this form in Ireland is indicative of national oppression there, and its absence in Scotland.

We can make comparisons also in the organisations of these countries. 'English' political parties are more or less reproduced in Scotland. The "heroic struggle of the Scottish people" referred to by one of our correspondents hardly reveals itself in the SNP, or for that matter in the handful of radical nationalists in the John Maclean Society. You can reel them off historically in the case of Ireland: United Irishman, Whiteboy, Young Irelander, Fenian, IRB, IRA to the Provisional Sinn Féin and the IRA today. When one organisation is crushed or capitulates, national circumstances force another to take its place.

Where are the signs of Scottish oppression today? Where are the Scottish equivalents of H-Block, UDR, RUC, shoot-to-kill? Where is the occupying army? Scotland's 'non-status' as an oppressed nation makes national struggle there today and in Maclean's day a non-starter.

Maclean's inability to understand this, and his false transposition of the Irish situation to Scotland, was the downfall of an outstanding revolutionary. Connolly's penetrating insight into the nature of Ireland's oppression was his genius.

Alan Merrick.

Mystifying Chartism

Dorothy Thompson, *The Chartists: Popular Politics in the Industrial Revolution*, Wildwood House, 1986, pp399, £6.95

CHARTISM is important because it was, as Lenin said, "the first broad, truly mass and politically organised proletarian revolutionary movement". (CW Vol 29 p309) It contained in embryonic form many features of later reformist and revolutionary movements, as well as backward looking elements, such as the land plan.

In her introduction Dorothy Thompson comments that: "Very few people today are without some fairly clear idea of what the Chartist movement was about." (p2) Regrettably, this is far from true. Although present day British workers are better educated than

their counterparts 150 years ago, the bourgeois state deliberately keeps them almost completely ignorant of their own history.

Lenin describes the two methods used by the bourgeoisie in its struggle against the working class. The 'feudal' method of "violence, persecution, bans and suppression" and the 'modern' method of "dividing the workers, disrupting their ranks, bribing individual representatives or certain groups of the proletariat with the object of winning them over to its side". (CW Vol 20 p455)

In its struggle against Chartism, the bourgeoisie initially had available only the first method. As capitalism developed in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, it evolved the second method, with which it overcame the revolutionary impulse of Chartism. The British bourgeoisie has now perfected the second method and uses it so skilfully the modern proletariat is hardly conscious of itself as a class for itself.

In Chartism, unlike earlier outbursts of working class rebellion, local actions were coordinated into a truly national movement through the Chartist newspapers, such as the *Northern Star*. This was possible because for the first time the poverty and desperation of workers was combined with a relatively high level of literacy and education. Chartists "valued education highly...and sought it for their children and for themselves". (p146) Chartist schools were organised "in deliberate opposition to those on offer by church and charitable bodies". (p147)

As the quotations which Dorothy Thompson gives from Chartist speeches and publications show even more clearly than her own narrative, Chartist leaders understood the importance of combining protest actions with political education.

Today this is more crucial than ever. The working class must be liberated from the grip of bourgeois ideology and equipped with the political understanding it needs to carry out socialist revolution and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Communist Party must take the lead in this. One of its functions is to safeguard the collective memory of the working class. Marxist historians have a special role in this task of engendering revolutionary consciousness. They provide workers with vital insights into the real material causes and significance of what is happening to them by comparing their experiences with those of previous generations.

In studying both present day society and that of the Chartist period, the actions, beliefs and hopes of the great diversity of groups and

individuals involved, and the complex pattern of interacting sociological, ideological and economic factors which influence them, can only be understood by looking beneath the surface at the class struggle. Dorothy Thompson's book does not do this.

She tells us she distrusts general theories of history. What she is really saying is that she does not understand the Marxist method and so cannot see the crucial difference between oversimplifying the causes of a complex process and uncovering the primary contradiction at the heart of it. In her conclusion for example she looks at several factors which contributed to the rapid decline of Chartism after 1848, and lamely concludes that: "Each of these explanations has some force, but none really explains the matter satisfactorily". (p330)

Similarly, in her introduction she compares two ideological perspectives on Chartism, that of Whig historians "watching the inevitable unfolding of British democratic institutions" and "the view of history which sees it as developing towards a classless socialist society." (p3) She characterises them both as teleological, and considers that their analysis of events is therefore distorted and oversimplified.

It is of course a serious error to refer to a Marxist teleology. She is confusing the scientific understanding of the way society develops in conformity with objective laws due to internal contradictions - which is the method of historical materialism - with the teleological conception that things happen because of some future goal they help to bring about. In revealing the laws of social development underlying the surface complexity of historical changes, Marxism has nothing to do with this idealist error.

In the rest of the book she surveys various aspects of Chartism such as the involvement of women and the Chartist press, and gives a picture of what trades Chartists worked in and the sort of lives they led. A lot of careful research into original sources has gone into ensuring that the information she gives is as complete and accurate as possible. Like most bourgeois historians of recent generations she considers her job to be the compilation of a comprehensive and accurate corpus of historical facts, but not to synthesise from them a coherent theory to explain the cause of changes. This is in contrast to the Marxist view that it is as important to evaluate as to record, since if you do not evaluate you cannot know what is worth recording.

Mary Goodwin

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KEEPING IMPERIALISM'S PEACE

The CCG's promised "most important ever" campaign based on its peace pamphlet started with a whimper on October 7 1986 when its own *Morning Star* failed to even report the launch rally in London. The pamphlet, *A Communist Perspective for Keeping the Peace*, was eventually published three months later in January, unnoticed by the mass of CCG supporters, by then deep in their winter hibernation.

Our attempts to discuss the content of the pamphlet with rank and file CCGers have proved extremely frustrating. Many have heard of it. A few 'activists' have actually bought it, but it seems most have not got round to reading it and are unable to offer an assessment.

This illustrates the fact, which most CCGers will admit if they are honest with themselves, that they owe their allegiance to this or that personality with whom they have some traditional connection, rather than to the CCG's official positions as published in its documents. Certainly there are many honest CCGers who genuinely want to fight for a Leninist Communist Party, but all the CCG's publications to date demonstrate the reformist swamp into which these potential revolutionaries are being led. *Keeping the Peace* is no exception.

As is characteristic of centrism, the pamphlet offers an incompatible mixture of throwaway decorative Marxist-Leninist tenets with thoroughly opportunist conclusions.

The heading on page 10 correctly proclaims: "Imperialism — the root cause of war in our epoch," but then we are told, instead, that it is the military industrial complex, rather than imperialism as a whole, which causes the cold war and the war drive. "The absence of such a military industrial complex under socialism is why the Soviet Union...has no interest in war or preparation for war." This leads logically to the spurious aim of peaceful imperialism — instead of revolution to smash imperialism — if only the military industrial complex can be "confronted".

The Labour Party is accused of creating "the illusion that it is possible to wind down the cold war without confronting the US and British military industrial complexes responsible for it". (p16)

The CCG, however, is upholding its own illusion of a post-imperialist phase of better capitalism, in line with its beloved Alternative Economic Strategy for curing capitalism of its crisis without going to the trouble of destroying it. This is further codified into a "new system of international relations" (p18) which will be brought about by "mobilising billions of people...to impose their will on the imperialists". So there you have it! Peaceful, crisis-free, thriving imperialism. No need for revolution, is there?

For Lenin, of course, the expansionist war drive is essential to the



Ken Gill, like the pro-imperialist Labour Party, wants to defend Britain using conventional high tech weaponry. Lenin said "not a penny, not a man, to the bourgeois army".

nature of imperialism, which is the highest and last phase of capitalism.

This rejection of Marxist-Leninist principles is excused because of the immense destructive power of nuclear weapons, which could destroy society and simultaneously destroy politics. "Clauswitz' old dictum" (upheld by Marx and Lenin) "that war is a continuation of politics by other means does not apply to a nuclear war, for this is incapable of being pursued in a way that enables any political objective to be achieved. It simply destroys everything..."

The flaw in this argument is perfectly obvious. If the human race is destroyed completely, then, of course, politics is also destroyed, and who then would there be to defend our principles. But the struggle to destroy imperialism before it destroys human society must be carried on in this world, on this side of the (possible) nuclear holocaust, while human society still exists and the scientific ideas of Marxism-Leninism have not yet been bombed off the face of the earth.

There is a strange credibility gap in the logic of the pamphlet's arguments. The history of the arms race and the Soviet Union's diplomatic struggle for peace is expounded to prove, quite convincingly, that socialism wants peace and imperialism wants war, that the US has scuppered each Soviet peace initiative and "each new impulse to the arms race comes from the US and NATO. The motive is always the same: to gain military superiority over the Soviet Union".

The Soviet diplomatic struggle for peaceful coexistence has certainly served to expose imperialism as the warmonger. Then we have the strange illogical leap, contrary to all the evidence, to run after the fairy tale of peaceful crisis-free imperialism.

What is the explanation for this mental gap, this breakdown in logic? Cowardice! Opportunist fear of revolutionary class struggle, of confrontation with the bourgeoisie! Afraid to call on workers to do the necessary, the opportunists talk big about "mass mobilisation of pressure" (p15), "a growing trend in world opinion" (p16), "all decent men and women" (p17), "mobilising billions of people" (p18), "forcing the imperialists to abandon recourse to war" (p17), etc etc — but all without destroying imperialism.

The naive belief in peaceful imperialism is underpinned by a grossly overoptimistic assessment of the world balance of forces.

"Nowadays, however, imperialism is not able to dictate the course of events as in the past. For the socialist countries, the national liberation movement in the third world, and the working class and democratic movement in the capitalist countries are now powerful enough, if mobilised and united, to impose their will for peace upon the imperialists."

Unfortunately, the advanced capitalist countries still have about 65% of the world's industrial production, and as the world economy sinks towards the biggest ever world capitalist crisis, the pressure to solve the crisis by expansion and war will be stepped up enormously. When imperialist politicians start talking war instead of feigning peace, as Hitler did in the 1930s, Gorbachev's communicating skills and public relations victories will fall flat, and the CCG's utopian dream of peaceful imperialism will fade from memory.

Our urgent task is to reforge the CPGB to provide the British working class with the weapon it needs to lay bloodstained British imperialism in its grave — the only way in which imperialism can really be made peaceful!

Ian Farrell

What is the 'National Council of Young Communists'? What has happened to our Young Communist League and its General Council? Party publications still carry adverts to join the YCL and yet we have not seen a copy of *Challenge* for years and there are no reports of any YCL campaigns or activity. Has St John Street decided that rather than closing the YCL it should, like old soldiers, fade away? If this is so, and everything indicates it is, then this is liquidationism through the back door. No YCL congress has decided to change its name or constitution, certainly no Party EC meeting has taken such a decision.

The CPGB Executive Committee is wrong to only approve the standing of 11 candidates in the next general election. As the Labour Party's drift to the right shows, there is a crying need to build an alternative. Despite this the EC blocked moves to stand a CP candidate in Greenwich. The area has a record of communist work and there was a candidate in the 1983 general election. The local branch had voted by 11 to 10 to contest (the pro-CCG members being against) and the London District Committee supported Greenwich branch by 18 votes to six. And yet a special meeting of the EC saw only six votes in favour of standing while 18 considered it more important to work for 'a decisive Labour victory'.



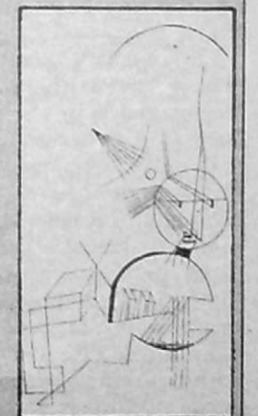
Should we work for a 'decisive' victory for this self-confessed reactionary?

Our collection for the Communist Party's £100,000 appeal netted £150 onto which must be added donations given to Party branches directly by our supporters. Without giving away any secrets we raised more than the average donation to the appeal. But perhaps of greater significance is the fact that we managed to persuade even non-Party communists who are deeply hostile to Eurocommunism into giving money. They did so not because of any lessening of their ideological opposition to the political project of *Marxism Today*. No, their donations were the result of a growing conviction in our strategy of reforging the CPGB and resisting liquidationism wherever it comes from. We have now written to Fund Organiser, comrade Eric Atkinson, enclosing our £150 cheque and telling him of the determination of our supporters to see the Party back to financial health and unity around the Marxist-Leninist principles proclaimed in our rules.

The demonstration on May Day in London this year will begin at 7.00pm. This, according to the Labour Party and CCG organisers, will allow employed workers to participate. What an unimaginative and blinkered outlook! Those sympathetic to the Union of Turkish Progressives have long argued for the May Day demonstration to begin in the early afternoon precisely in order to get employed Turkish workers *en masse* onto it by bringing them out directly from the sweat shops of the East End. It is precisely such a fighting perspective which results in May Day demonstrations in London consisting mainly of Turks year after year. With Wapping fresh in our minds, new anti-trade union laws in the pipe line, teachers engaging in industrial action, students up in arms against loans replacing grants, blacks enraged by the savage sentences against Broadwater Farm youth and unemployed workers facing the prospect of JTS slave labour, May Day could, and should, act as a focal point with which to unite all struggles into a single mighty demonstration of working class unity. We urge all our readers to support the London demonstration. Rally from 6.00pm onwards at the Embankment.

ON TARGET

Our return, after a seven week absence, has caused disappointment in certain quarters. Certain political opponents waxed lyrical claiming that their oft repeated prediction that *The Leninist* would fold had at last come true. We were delighted to disappoint them. We are also delighted to have received so many letters from supporters not only enquiring about our technical problems, worrying about stupid rumours of a split, but sending us money to ensure our reappearance. There have been no political problems comrades. Our tendency would not hide them if this were the case but, as we have done in the past, give them full publicity, to enable you our readers and supporters to take sides. Because of this we have won the trust of our readers. So, despite financial difficulties, one comrade declared *The Leninist* "is my paper" and has been sending us £5 weekly throughout our non-publication. Another comrade, this time on a meagre pension, decided to make provision for us in his will. Not to be outdone, a former supporter of the *Morning Star* has doubled her monthly standing order. What all this, and a rush of other donations, adds up to, is that our £600 fighting fund for March was exceeded by £78.



THE *Morning Star's* Farringdon Road press is now printing Maxwell's *London Daily News*. To supporters of the *Morning Star* this might appear manna from heaven. It may be thought that Maxwell has made himself vulnerable to labour movement pressure by getting his paper printed by the *Morning Star* press.

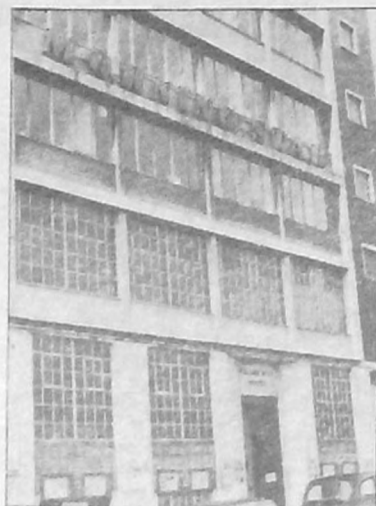
This is not the case. Maxwell has carefully planned his whole operation. In a move to cut costs to the bone and to avoid strikes affecting his circulation he has farmed out the *London Daily News* to a whole number of different printers – one of them being the *Morning Star*.

This means Maxwell can call the tune. He can command rock bottom prices. He has a less direct relationship with the printing unions. Moreover he can move the printing of one of the editions of the *London Daily News* as he chooses. And if he does he is not liable to pay any redundancy payments that may result.

Because of this we say the deal struck between the *Morning Star's* management committee and Maxwell opens up a whole can of worms. It carries with it great dangers which it must be said were inherent in the management com-



Maxwell (left) back in 1983 takes on Sogat printers in Park Royal, London. Should he be trusted, with the fate of the *Morning Star*?



line in circulation was blamed on the Communist Party for not trying hard enough to sell it.

Nothing could have been further from the truth. The crisis of the *Morning Star* reflects the crisis in the communist movement specifically and the crisis of opportunism in general.

As a politician and personality Tony Chater personifies this crisis. This right opportunist hack came to regard the *Morning Star* as his paper. When the Communist Party wanted to make changes in the paper he resisted to the point of breaking its historic links with the Party and attempting to ensure its future by securing the help of the trade union bureaucracy and by commercial printing.

The results have not been impressive. The 'survival plan' has led to job losses, money handed over to the SWP and the *Star's* future in the hands of Maxwell and the vagueries of the capitalist market place. As to the political results, they have been even less impressive.

On the one hand the *Morning Star* is the cheerleader for the TUC and the Labour Party, and on the other it acts as the mouthpiece for the Communist Campaign Group. In practice this means pretending to be the paper of the 'broad labour movement' while pursuing the most narrow politics.

No wonder domestic circulation is said to be around 8,000 and continues to fall. No wonder tension has built up among those who back it. Some, like Ken Gill, only want articles which reflect the thinking in the mainstream of the trade union bureaucracy. Others, like Photis Lysandrou, want to keep CCGers on the straight and narrow with articles like his March 17 double page polemic with the NCP. This, as we have said time and time again, is an oil and water mixture doomed to fail.

The *Star's* survival cannot be secured by dependence on Maxwell, the SWP, the labour bureaucracy or the capitalist market place. It can survive only as the paper of the Communist Party. And only when the Communist Party is reformed on Leninist principles will it be capable of sustaining a communist daily newspaper.

Jack Conrad

PRINTING FOR THE MOVEMENT?

mittee's survival plan from the very beginning.

The fact is the *Morning Star* needs Maxwell. Maxwell does not need the *Morning Star*.

To avoid commercial printers attempting to censor the political content of the *Daily Worker* the Communist Party always fought tooth and nail for the working class to establish its own printing service – this eventually resulted in the launching of the People's Press Printing Society on September 12 1945.

The management committee may still boast that the *Morning Star* is owned by its readers. But because of its decisions the truth is that today the fate of the paper rests with press baron and monopoly capitalist Robert Maxwell. This cannot be denied.

Only if Captain Bob continues to use the PPPS press can printing the *Morning Star* be brought back to Farringdon Road after its highly embarrassing period at the Socialist Workers Party's East End Offset. If he decides for one reason or another to move printers what would happen to the *Morning Star*? Would it have to go back to the SWP cap in hand?

William Rust must be turning in his grave. With Maxwell's silver hammer hanging over the head of the *Morning Star* it is perfectly legitimate to suggest that the paper's political integrity has been mortgaged to the hilt. Is it for this that generations of communists and militant workers sacrificed?

What would happen if he discreetly but firmly demanded from the *Morning Star* that it toned

down criticisms of say Neil Kinnock? Would the management committee tell him where to get off, or would it quietly capitulate in order to save the paper? Who knows?

Maxwell might be a member of the Labour Party but he is hardly a friend of the working class. He is a publicity seeking millionaire on the extreme right of the party with a record of sackings with which only Rupert Murdoch can compete. There is every reason to believe that he could at some point in the future demand his pound of flesh from the *Morning Star*.

Naturally none of this has been frankly dealt with in the *Morning Star*. This is true to form. Its management committee has a record of dishonesty second to none.

The return of the red banner was proclaimed as a major step forward. Yet this was only possible because printing had to be shifted to East End Offset. Despite putting the dust covers over the Farringdon Road press the *Morning Star* parroted on about how it was good to have the red masthead back and carried on as if nothing untoward had happened, even still carrying appeals to: "Take a share in our new press".

The 'survival plan' was based on the idea of getting the *Morning Star* a much needed new press and using clever accounting and the capitalist market to 'print the *Morning Star* out of crisis' thus providing the labour movement with a top quality service and saving jobs to boot.

It was all too easy to be true. Far from printing the *Morning Star* out

of crisis, the 'survival plan' has compounded the problems.

At the heart of the 'survival plan' is the £1.5 million Goss Urbanite Mark II printing press. It was obtained in a lease/buy deal with the US corporation Rockwell International, signed on Friday 13 January 1984. With thousands of donations from individual and trade union supporters a £300,000 deposit was placed on the Urbanite, which was duly installed at Farringdon Road at the cost of £100,000.

Yet now not only is the *Morning Star* being printed by the SWP but on December 3 1986 the paper tersely announced that 36 of its printers were to be made redundant. Like any employer, chief executive Mary Rosser expressed "the deepest regret", claimed it had been done "reluctantly" but insisted that unless uneconomic workers were sacked "we have been legally advised that we shall have to close down".

What had gone wrong? Rosser's statement did not touch on the full extent of the crisis facing the *Morning Star*. The fact is the paper is confronted with a crisis more profound than anything it has experienced in the past.

Rosser admitted the *Star's* 1986 deficit was £340,000 and the expectation that this year would be of the same order. What she did not mention was the little matter of failure to get commercial work.

Until Maxwell's decision to use Farringdon Road as one of the presses for his *London Daily News* hardly any commercial printing orders had been obtained. Despite

George Guy doing his best to get his old pals in the trade union bureaucracy to print their journals at the *Morning Star* little to nothing was obtained. As to genuine commercial work, there was even less. It was this failure of management which was the immediate cause of moving to East End Offset, and not lazy printers as Rosser half implied.

The leaseback money plus interest on the Urbanite amount to around £12,000 a month until 1992. This means the new press has not liberated the paper, it has made it a hostage to fortune. Under the lash of the necessity of meeting the interest payments the management committee has been forced to turn the 'survival plan' on its head.

Printing the *Morning Star* by itself was quite simply not enough work. The wages of the printers were more expensive than the cost of printing it outside. Hence the sackings and paying the SWP to do the job. As if this were not bad enough the management committee has now been compelled to give one of Britain's most powerful and ruthless bosses the power to decide the future of the *Morning Star*.

None of this has ever been alluded to in PPPS management committee statements. Why? Because it exposes the reactionary consequences of Tony Chater's liquidationism to the full.

Chater always saw the *Morning Star's* problems as being technical not political. No criticism was accepted of its dull 'let us cover everything' shallow form, or the social democratic content. The de-

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LESSONS OF BRENT

We say that in office Labour and Tory are much alike. But what of the 'loony left', as Kinnock calls his comrades in Brent?



The Daily Express portrays Labour's left as a bunch of loonies. In reality these 'revolutionaries' are reactionary municipal 'socialists' and just as anti-working class as the Tories.

THE AFTERMATH of the Greenwich by-election produced a wave of reaction inside the Labour Party against what is called the 'loony left'. Brian Nicholson, Transport and General Workers Union chairman, announced the launch of the witch hunting Londoners for Labour; a private meeting of the Solidarity organisation of 70 right wing Labour MPs expressed its 'disappointment' that the party was not taking a tougher line against the 'hard left'; and almost at the same time a letter attacking the 'loony Labour left' from Kinnock's press secretary, Patricia Hewitt, was very conveniently leaked.

What all this adds up to is that those who entered the Labour Party in the belief that it could be a vehicle for socialist change are up the creek without a paddle. Kinnock is cynically bashing them in an effort to excuse the fact that the Labour Party has been reduced from the party of alternative government to a party of crisis.

How has the Labour left responded to this? Instead of drawing the obvious lesson that the Labour Party is, and always has been, thoroughly reactionary, we see its various components have moved further and further to the right in an attempt to prove their loyalty to the Kinnock leadership.

With this in mind, should advanced workers side with the Labour left? We say no. Just like Militant these 'loony leftists' have proved themselves loyal to Labourism time and time again. In other words they are loyal to the Labour Party and disloyal to the working class. Far from this symptom of class collaborationism being confined to the leftists in the Labour Party, the overwhelming majority of the left in Britain suffers from the same disease. For us this was perhaps best illustrated in the events in Brent around the McGoldrick issue. So let us turn again to the recent events in Brent.

The Labourite left and their apologists are essentially economic in outlook. Give them a nice uncomplicated wage dispute, a straight confrontation between worker and boss, labour and capital, and they will - after a fashion - plump for the cause of labour. Would that life were so simple.

Brent, McGoldrick and the National Union of Teachers proved a knotty problem indeed. The confrontation between boss and worker was still there, but not quite as straightforward as many leftists would like. For instance, the boss in this case do not wear top-hats, monocles and smoke Havana cigars, at least so far as I know. They are Brent Labour councillors. To top this, it is not over money, but as to whether NUT headmistress Maureen McGoldrick dropped a racist comment and whether the council should have a right to discipline her for it. A tangled web indeed.

To start with, some steely-eyed Bolsheviks cannot even tell if the workers in the NUT are workers at all. Workers Revolutionary Party (*Workers Press*) guru Cyril Smith, for example, writes: "the middle class are not unwilling to fight. The long drawn out teachers' struggle proves that". (*Workers Press*, November 22 1986) Nice one Cyril! Not only do teachers sell their labour power, owning no means of production other than this, but their labour power is - albeit indirectly - productive, as it increases the value of other labour power through training. Let us first decide which classes we are talking about before we proceed.

Still on the WRP, Gerry 'hormones' Healy's lot seem to have trouble working out what class is on the other side of the dispute. Banner proudly unfurled, *News Line* editorial of December 18 1986 declared itself for "independent working class action". Marvelous. But for this oddball bunch of stereotypical Trots, "independent working class action" means backing Brent council - against Ms McGoldrick and Brent NUT. Aha, this must be some new definition of 'worker' we have not encountered before.

Let us linger a little with the WRP (*Workers Press*), since they seem to fancy getting their teeth into *The Leninist* over Brent. Leading WRP member Gerry Downing, while taking us to task for positions we do not hold in the letters page of *The Leninist* No 46, gives us a good insight into the confused nature of his own stand. "Socialists must defend Brent, oppose the NUT assault even if it means crossing their picket lines" he writes, and then goes on to attack the rightism of Brent NUT Eurocommunists for defending McGoldrick. Verily, do proverbs of motes and specks in various eyes spring to mind. We should scab on teachers striking in defence of one of their own union members? If Downing really believes this and is prepared to put it into practice then he should drop the words 'workers' and 'revolutionary' preceding the misnomer 'party' and shuffle off to the 'Labour' Party.

Another WRPer, Charlie Pottins, has a crack at us in *Workers Press* January 17 1987. Polemicis-

ing against our article on the Brent dispute in *The Leninist* No 44, he attacks our statement that "we therefore reject all state interference in our class". Pottins comments: "A bit incongruous when the union has invited both capitalist law courts and a Tory minister to interfere against a Labour council!" Pottins' reading of our article is most selective. We distinctly said *all* state interference. That includes fighting for rank and file opposition to any attempts by the union bureaucracy to get the state to do the fighting for them. But then after Bob Archer's supposed 'reply' to our *Open Letter to the WRP*, perhaps we are expecting a little too much in hoping that the WRP (*Workers Press*) would reply to our *real* positions.

Still more from Pottins: "If there was an ounce of real Leninism in *The Leninist*", he rants "they would recognise that in the face of a reactionary, racist offensive from the Tories it was our duty to defend Brent council against the Tory government, while simultaneously conducting a fight for real socialist policies against the reformists". His idea of fighting reformism in this context is going all the way with those who staff a local wing of the bourgeois state against a workers' organisation.

We have already said that we would oppose Tories interference in this matter. Pottins is side-stepping the central issue, which is the dispute between Brent NUT and Brent council. In such a situation *real* Leninists, Charlie, must lend critical support to the teachers.

Both WRPs have a great deal of company in their reactionary Labourism as regards Brent, including the Labour loyalists of the Socialist League. They too draw false battle lines between Tory central and Labour local government, shoving Brent NUT sideways. For them: "The task of Brent Council and the Brent parties is to explain and mobilise support for their [Brent council's] anti-racist policies. And the task of the whole labour movement is to support them". (*Socialist Action*, November 7 1986) Here, the working class has no independent role to play, except to act a walk on/walk off part in defence of Labour councillors, irrespective of whether those

councillors are attacking workers at the time or not.

The Socialist League has a definite interest in holding this position. Their submergence of the IMG into the swamp of the Labour Party has born fruit for them, of a sort. They now have a foot-hold in the Labour bureaucracy, and this includes councillors. The IMG went into the Labour Party in a desperate search for relevance. This foot-hold has given them this relevance, and they are going to kick out at anyone who threatens this - including workers who resist their council employers. A sad end indeed for the organisation that, in the late sixties and early seventies, was campaigning to 'kill the beast' of the Labour Party.

Real anti-racist activity cannot be tied to the interests of a council - which is anyway part of the bourgeois state - but must rest on independent working class action. The material result of Brent council's 'anti-racist' policies are proof of this. Brent has, broadly speaking, gone along with restrictions by central government on council spending. Brent has cut budgets, including education budgets. The number of vacancies for teaching posts has risen, poorly covered by part-time teachers. To talk of equality in a borough with over 50% black population under such deprivation is a joke. And it is a joke that the Labour council has not challenged. Are these the 'anti-racist' policies the left wants to defend?

What they are defending is the 'jobs for the boys' quangoism of the council. For instance, Russell Proffitt started in 1981 as the first full-time worker in the council's Race Relations Unit. He has risen up the Labour Party Black Sections hierarchy and is now prospective Labour MP for Lewisham.

The anti-racist policies of the council have done exactly what they were intended to do; create a stratum of petty bourgeois blacks in an attempt to divert black people from organising independently for their rights. Both *Socialist Action* and *Workers Press* are only too pleased to go along with tying black militants to the bourgeois state and bourgeois Labour Party.

When Proffitt and his ilk get out

on the streets and physically defend black people from racist attacks from the state and racist gangs, when we see a real material improvement in the living standards of the black community in the borough through the actions of the council, then we might have something to defend. Until then we must stick with defending workers and their organisations from state attacks and agitating for independent anti-racist activity from the working class. The fact that the above organisations do not take this view is positive proof that they have long given up leading workers, just quangos.

Other organisations, like the *Morning Star* and the SWP, hover about on the fence. Yes, they want to support a trade union in struggle, but feel uncertain in attacking a Labour council to do so, especially when that council is under attack from the Tory government. If the defeats of Lambeth and Liverpool councils, and also the GLC, prove anything, they prove that local democracy cannot be preserved by fighting around Labourite politics. Brent is no different. We are not opposed to local democracy, but Brent council was trying to crush local union democracy, the right of a union to handle its own affairs. Now this has given central government the excuse to get its greasy fingers into the pie, they can only turn round and blame the NUT.

If you want a historical analogy on a much more dramatic level, look at Russia in between the February and October revolutions, at the time probably the most democratic capitalist state in the world, under the leadership of the petty bourgeois Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries. The answer of Lenin and the Bolsheviks to the reactionary threat posed to the regime by the Tsarist forces was to plan, and then carry out a proletarian insurrection. Now, I am not yet advocating passing out the Kalashnikovs in Brent, but from this example the *Workers Press* choice of the lesser of two evils is no choice at all. It is not for so-called revolutionaries to adopt cate one or the other strand of bourgeois politics, but to organise around proletarian politics.

Here, I hope, we have exposed the fake 'anti-racism' of Brent council. For comrades Downing and Pottins, if they need more proof, a careful reading of the article in No.44 would be helpful. There are more statistics there of the fruits of Brent's anti-racism.

If the left truly wants to fight racism, it should stop harping on about what in essence amounts to the jobs of a few black petty bourgeois quangoites and take a look at the real issues of black oppression - for instance, the chauvinist logic of reformism and the racist practice of Labour governments - instead of clouding the issue as they do at the moment.

If we ever want to see effective anti-racist action we must defeat the worn-out Trotskyists of the WRP and Socialist League who do little more in the last analysis than act as apologists for the chauvinist Labour Party. They are the dreary 'municipal socialists' whom Marx mocked. We should be no less disparaging with them today.

What black people in Britain need is not the dumb illusion that the bourgeois state and Labour Party will defend them, but revolutionary theory and organisation through which to defend themselves, fighting alongside white workers. This is something that the present left organisations cannot offer. In the long term it is to their cost because it will sweep them aside.

Sean Quinn

While Beatrix Campbell's Iron Ladies says there's a feminist inside every Tory woman and calls for the 'sisters' to unite, we say working class women must unite with working class men against the Tories and the ruling class.



Union of Turkish Women lead a demonstration which included many men in celebration of International Women's Day.

WOMEN ON THE MARCH

INTERNATIONAL Women's Day back in March provided us with an ideal opportunity to study the various movements, trends and ideologies claiming to be fighting for women's liberation. Indeed for us March 8 1987 provided a text book confirmation of why our communist approach to women's liberation is correct.

The political points we made in our *Hail the women* leaflet issued on March 8, above all our insistence on the need to learn from the socialist and proletarian women's movement of the past and the need for a communist-led working class women's movement today, was given substance, immediacy and concreteness by life itself.

We pointed out that the revolutionary wing of the workers movement has in its championing of women's liberation always fought feminism. For us feminism has never done anything to significantly improve the material conditions of working class women. Whatever working class women have achieved has been as a result of the efforts of the working class in general and themselves in particular. For us the history of the struggle of working class women for a decent life is the history of the struggle of the proletariat for its liberation.

The feminists who insist on women only events on International Women's Day forget its origins as International Working Women's Day. And no wonder. The first International Working Women's Day on March 8 1911 was initiated by the International Women's Socialist Organisation at the suggestion of Clara Zetkin, its secretary. Her name is synonymous with revolutionary Marxism, and as we all know, she played a prominent role in the formation of the Third (Communist) International. Zetkin got the idea from a demonstration on March 8 1908 by women machinists demanding improved working conditions and the right to vote.

Monstrous though it may seem to support-

ers of *Spare Rib*, *Socialist Action* and *Marxism Today* this demonstration was also directed against the bourgeois women's suffrage movement because it did not favour working class votes.

Again, monstrous though it may seem to modern 'socialist' feminists, in resolving to make March 8 International Working Women's Day the IWSO resolved that "socialist women must not ally themselves with bourgeois feminists, but lead the battle side by side with the socialist men". Of course there were opportunist elements, not least from Britain, who considered the IWSO majority 'sectarian' in their attitude towards feminism. Fortunately they were rebutted.

Inevitably though, there are today 'socialist' feminists, like Helen Bennett of the *Morning Star*, who claim there is no contradiction in praising Zetkin and feminism because, they say, the feminist movement has changed. This is untrue, this is anti-socialist poison.

Feminism still claims that men are the enemy of women. And in the last analysis all forms of feminism want to see working class women cooperate with middle class women against working class men.

Zetkin fought tenaciously against the Helen Bennetts of her day. Against them she declared that there is "no such thing as a women's movement". Bourgeois women will struggle for improved conditions from men of their own class but Zetkin argued working class women can only achieve their liberation "through the political rule of the working class."

In this stand she was joined by the Bolsheviks. They produced the first issue of *Rabotnitsa*, a paper for women, in time for the first celebration of International Working Women's Day in Russia in 1913. The debate around plans for this celebration are revealing (and, as we will see later, very relevant to March 8 1987).

The Mensheviks wanted women only demonstrations and cooperation with the feminists. This was vigorously combated by *Rabotnitsa*. The lead article was written by Krupskaya specifically on this issue. She attacked the Mensheviks for wanting to cooperate with "bourgeois women" who "always oppose themselves to men and demand their rights from men." For working class women the question is "quite different." They are united with working class men because of "their common struggle and their common goals."

For these reasons the Bolsheviks insisted March 8 be celebrated by the entire working class. They wanted nothing to do with women only events advocated by the Mensheviks and now so beloved by the Labour and Euro feminists.

The Bolshevik line shook the world. On March 8 1917 (February 23 in the old Russian calendar) strikes by women celebrating International Working Women's Day acted as the spark for the February Revolution which toppled the Tsar and paved the way for the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Labourite feminism

The feminist movement and its friends in Britain today do not want to remember any of this. It has exchanged its petty bourgeois ideal of the intimate groups and structureless, leaderless autonomy of the 1970s for the pampered life of the petty bourgeois municipal socialist in the 1980s. As we put it in our leaflet: "The feminist movement in Britain today is now based on a convergence of middle class women and Labourism." But, as celebrations of International Women's Day in 1987 showed, there was a price to pay.

International Women's Day 1987 gave us the most graphic and telling evidence to date of the bankruptcy of the feminist movement. Feminist women only events were either tiny or dull bureaucratic affairs, or both. Despite the thousands of pounds spent by the town hall Labourite feminists in Birmingham, Manchester, Southampton, Lambeth and Camden the masses were noticeable by their absence.

The 'official' feminist march to Jubilee Gardens on March 7 (!) was also a sorry affair. It was "demoralisingly small" according to one fed up participant we spoke to. More than that it was dispirited, tired and politically regressive. The hundred or so assorted feminists who bothered to turn up were the representatives of undynamic quangos, not mass movements.

Clearly feminism has declined dramatically since its heyday in the early 1970s. Is this because women have been liberated? Hardly.

Under Thatcher's government working class women have suffered from swingeing

attacks on health care, nursery facilities and the real value of maternity benefits. This has gone hand in glove with the use of the AIDS scare to attempt to curb women's sexuality, and the Sun's setting up women for rape by portraying them as mere sex objects - there only for the pleasure of men.

And as unemployment has spiralled upwards and the number of people forced to survive on social security has soared, women have borne the brunt of the brutalising and dehumanising strains this has put on family life. It is they who have been forced into prostitution in order to make ends meet, it is they who are on the receiving end of the drunken violence bred of despair, it is they who have to perform the role of being domestic slaves (doing 90% of household work, according to the International Labour Organisation) and at the same time seek employment.

In other words, as well as suffering the degradation of the perverted morality of decadent bourgeois society, as capitalism in Britain drifts towards a new general crisis, the position of women as a reserve army of labour has been reemphasised and reinforced.

Women's employment has increased, it is true. But they have often been brought in as cheap replacements for men and in an effort to weaken or break trade union organisation.

Despite the fact that women now make up 40% of the workforce, they are less likely to be in a union than men. Latest figures show that only 35% of women workers are in unions. The traditional branch structures of trade unions have, of course, mitigated against the involvement of women, as even the most militant of them are often unable to attend meetings out of working hours due to domestic responsibilities.

But the narrow prejudice of the trade union bureaucracy against part timers and temporary workers also plays directly into the bosses hands. Unions, especially those representing skilled and well paid workers, simply do not want to organise part time or temporary workers who are seen as either a threat or marginal, or both. This particularly concerns women, after all women make up a vastly disproportionate percentage of the part time or temporary workers. Of the 9.7 million women in work, 3.8 million are part time.

As if this lack of organisation did not leave women workers vulnerable enough to enable employers to suck the life blood from them, the return to Victorian values brigade have launched a moral onslaught on the need for women to return to the home. This ideological position is not designed to protect women from exploitation but reinforce their marginal position in the labour market. This is also the aim of the government's proposal to reduce maternity rights, along with its attack on the limited legal safeguards for part timers work-



always ready to organise conferences about problems faced by women workers but it always has to be forced to organise action. Questions such as housework, abortion and nursery facilities hardly ever get a look in, such is the blinkered attitude of the bureaucracy. This is why feminists are able to claim that trade unions only defend the interests of male workers, indeed that they are male institutions and that only women will fight for women.

The feminists declare themselves to be on the side of the downtrodden working class women of the world, and some of them even say they are in favour of socialism – in the far distant future of course – but, despite this, none of them have shown the slightest intention of joining the struggle for revolution to achieve it. The best of them believe, with a naive sincerity, that once that seat in parliament is within their reach they will be able to cure all the social ills which have plagued humanity because male MPs have been so silly and egotistical.

Despite the good intentions of individual feminists towards the working class, whenever the class struggle has posed itself in a sharp, point blank way they have always left the battlefield with extreme haste, such is their fright. They simply find the class struggle alien, distasteful, crude, and so they say, of all things, male.

At the end of the day the women's world is, as Alexandra Kollontai, Soviet Russia's first Minister of Social Welfare, rightly insisted, "divided, just like the world of men, into two camps" The interests and aspirations of one group of women "bring it close to the bourgeois class, while the other group has close connections with the proletariat, and its claims for liberation encompass a full solution to the women's question."

Thus although both camps follow the slogan of the 'liberation of women' their "aims and interests", again according to Kollontai, "are different". The class position of the feminists stops them fighting for revolution, which is the only way to break the back of bourgeois society and open up the road to true liberation with communism. Quite simply feminists seek equality within the framework of reformism and therefore within the framework of existing class society. They look to the state to advance their interests. We look to smashing the state to advance ours.

The feminists supported British imperialism in World War I, they attacked the Russian Revolution and denounced the liberation struggle in Ireland. It is therefore dishonest to talk of feminists pioneering the road of rights for women as a whole. They only fight a sectional, middle class, struggle. Only because women workers had been brought into the labour market by the bosses were bourgeois and middle class women able to win for themselves the well paid jobs which were previously the preserve of middle class men.

It is difficult to point to even one instance in the history of the struggle of working class women to improve their lot where the feminist movement has made a significant contribution. From the match girls' strike to Trico, from the Cleaners' Action Group of May Hobbs to the Ford's sewing machinists dispute, as we have said, whatever working class women have achieved has been by the efforts of the working class in general and themselves in particular.

Feminism moves right

Having no wish to get their hands dirty with the real life class struggle the feminists now prefer to glorify the myths that capitalism fosters about women. They are the 'gentle sex', the 'carers' who are naturally pacifistic. This idealism is shared by all feminists, including so-called 'Marxist' feminists. Because of this we find 'Marxist' feminists attacking the concept of a disciplined democratic centralist party and totally divorcing male chauvinism from any material basis in class society.

But while some middle class feminists opt out of the 'rat race' and sit round the camp fires at Greenham Common the majority are determined to climb the career ladder. They therefore concentrate on obtaining rights for themselves at the expense of middle class men. Rather than fight for genuine women's liberation by fighting the bourgeois state, most feminists have moved to the right and now look towards widening the state's powers.

Arguing that rape is caused by pornography, radical feminists like Andrea Dworkin have campaigned in the US alongside the most bigoted, anti-abortion, anti-black and anti-women forces, in an attempt to get the Reaganite state to act as the arbiter of what

people can and cannot publish. Using a similar logic, feminists in Britain have clamoured for the strengthening of the police force and not only longer prison terms for rapists, but death sentences and even castration.

Other feminists have travelled a different path but arrived at the same conclusion. Despite making autonomy an article of faith, an army of middle class feminists have flocked into the Labour Party. But this merger of 'socialist' feminism and Labourism has turned out to be just as reactionary as radical feminism which claims that pornography, the bias towards maleness in language, and the nature of boy's socialisation, are the roots of women's oppression.

Labourism and feminism have proved neither capable of defending women's rights nor advancing them. Indeed today's collapse of feminism into the 'politics of individualism' on the one hand and Labourism on the other has not only seen feminism lose its ability to mobilise support (other than from those on local government women's committees), it has also lost all its early anti-state radicalism.

Confronted by the economic stagnation of the 1980s and the need to present the most reasonable and realistic proposals (within capitalism), feminism has gone on the defensive. Out have gone the demands for free abortion on demand, equal pay and education, and free 24 hour nurseries. Now the radical feminists celebrate the isolation of women in capitalist society, while the feminists in the Labour Party have adopted a pro-state reformism of the most petty, sectional, mealy mouthed, self righteous and middle class sort.

Labour Party feminists have become totally embroiled in the spiders web of quangos. There they seek to advance their narrow middle class interests by using the state and playing on the guilt of middle class males. They blame men, not class society and capitalism, for war. Nuclear weapons become expressions of "the twisted values" of a "male-dominated society". Piecemeal reforms, influencing the powers that be, and consciousness raising, are presented as the answer to almost everything. Comrade Beatrix Campbell, the doyen of Euro-feminism, has taken this reformist, idealist, pro-state and anti-male theory to its logical anti-working class, reactionary conclusion.

She openly wants to pit working class women against working class men. In her book, *Sweet Freedom*, (which she wrote along with Anna Coote) she declares that: "The biggest obstacle, in our view, is not finding the resources, but persuading men to relinquish their privileges." This at a time of huge cuts in public spending, rising mass unemployment and a sustained capitalist offensive against the rights of all workers!

Not surprisingly, this posing of men against women, seeing men as the source of women's oppression, leads to total alienation from the class struggle and from working class women. For example, during the miners' Great Strike Euro-feminists as well as Labour-feminists denounced violence on the picket lines and equated police terror with the miners' self defence.

Despite the feminists recommendation to copy the non-violent, pacifistic clowning of the Greenham Common women, the miners wives and girl friends joined their men on the picket lines and gave the police as good as they got. Exactly the same thing happened at Wapping, despite the protestations of comrade Campbell and her middle class feminist sisters.

Hackney lessons

In light of this and the decline of the popular base of feminism, it is more than just interesting to note that the march in Hackney on International Women's Day on March 8 itself was at least six times bigger than the 'official' march the day before.

Of course, as in many other Labour controlled London boroughs, feminism is council policy in Hackney. Yet although the council's women's committee sponsored the march it was neither the local feminist women's movement nor the local *Socialist Action* Labourites who made it such a success. No, the feminists and the Labourite disciples of Leon Trotsky could be counted on the fingers of two hands.

The Hackney march drew its support overwhelmingly from the Turkish community in the area. But this was not an example of what the Labourites patronisingly call 'ethnic politics' – it was a manifestation of working class politics. More than that, the differing approaches of the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks over the first International Working Women's Day celebrations in Russia in 1913 were, in a

sense, played out again.

The main contingent of the march was dominated by organisations sympathetic to the ideas of *Iscinini Sesi* (in English *Worker's Voice*). This was the contingent joined by supporters of *The Leninist*. While it mainly consisted of women, there was no bar on men. In point of fact a struggle had been carried out to encourage men to take part, in order to emphasise the point that only the unity of working men and women can secure social liberation.

As with the Bolsheviks, the Communist Party of Turkey - *Worker's Voice* and supporters of *The Leninist* understand full well that male and female workers do not have antagonistic interests. The dictatorship of the proletariat and the building of socialism is the key to the liberation of women and all humanity.

Because of this no concessions can be given to feminism, which in the last analysis claims men are the enemy of women. With this in mind, and conscious of the need to involve the mass of women if revolution is to be successful, it is essential on International Women's Day to create living manifestations of the unity of male and female workers in the fight against reaction.

This means it is essential to fight for a united celebration of the fight against the rotten capitalist system which rests on the double oppression of working class women, and equally essential to promulgate the common goals of working class men and women in the form of militant slogans.

This perspective lay at the heart of the main contingent. Men and women marched side by side and the streets of Hackney echoed to slogans proclaiming workers' unity.

With discreet topping up by Cypriot women, courtesy of AKEL, the front organisation of the 'official' Communist Party of Turkey – the Halkevi Community Centre – constituted about one third of the Hackney march. Just like their Menshevik ideological ancestors in pre-revolutionary Russia, the 'officials' of Turkey played a thoroughly reactionary role by organising a women only contingent. Naturally this did not mean the women were actually in charge: No, the male leaders of Halkevi walked alongside the march to give the orders and keep an eye on their women folk.

In an effort to avoid ideological contamination the Halkevi leaders attempted to maintain as large a distance as possible behind the main body of the march. But in vain. Much to their obvious chagrin, slogans initiated by pro-*Iscinini Sesi* militants – particularly those demanding the withdrawal of Turkish troops from Kurdistan – were enthusiastically taken up by many in their own contingent.

Leaving aside the philistine suggestion that the Hackney march was a purely Turkish event, we proletarian internationalists believe it contains many lessons which the communist movement in Britain would do well to learn.

Neither opportunism nor feminism can take the fight for women's liberation to the heart of the working class struggle. Both in their different ways perpetuate sexism and the subordinate, marginalised position of women in capitalist society. What working class women need is a Communist Party which is able to link their specific needs and aspirations to the struggle of the working class to smash capitalism itself.

The programme of the Communist Party of Turkey - *Worker's Voice* says: "The women's question is not a question for women alone; it is also a question for men. Men will not be free and equal until women achieve freedom and equality." We wholeheartedly agree. That is why we utterly reject all ideologies that set women against men and men against women.

Modern technology provides the material prerequisites for tremendously advancing the social position of women. Yet under capitalism women's double burden is becoming heavier. Therefore when we demand what working class women deserve and need in the modern world, we are implicitly attacking capitalism.

If the bosses and their decaying, moribund system cannot afford free contraception and abortion on demand, around the clock nursery provision, the right to work at wages equivalent to men's and the opening of cheap but good quality restaurants and laundries and other facilities which help to socialise housework, then it's time they and their system are replaced by a system which can.

Hence it follows that working class women have just as much an interest as men in the overthrow of capitalism, indeed they have a greater interest because women are doubly oppressed under capitalism.

Jack Conrad

ing less than 20 hours a week.

Women workers in industry, retailing, commerce and transport are therefore less organised, lower paid (not just net but also per hour), more exploited and have scant protection from trade unions against speed ups, pay cuts and lay-offs.

Homeworkers, again overwhelmingly women, are even more exploited. They count themselves lucky if they net £20 a week. As to unemployed women workers who are married, they often do not even bother to sign on because they receive no benefit. As a result women constitute perhaps a majority of the million or so hidden army of unemployed workers.

Double burden

So over the last decade or so women's double burden of oppression has grown heavier not lighter. The much vaunted promises of Labourite equal pay legislation have come to naught. The fact that middle class feminists have muscled in on jobs in the media, academia and in quangodom has not helped their working class 'sisters', nor has the TUC's patronising conversion to feminism ...

The average gross hourly earnings of working women was 72.1% of men in 1975; now it is 73.5%. But for those in full time work there has been a relative decline in women's wages from 75.7% in 1977 to 73.9% in 1982. Not exactly a major step forward, considering the increasing number of female workers as a percentage of the workforce.

The Labour Party's legislation against sexual discrimination and for equal pay have not, and could not, free women because the source of women's oppression is class society itself. Women cannot be fully liberated without the disappearance of the division of labour. Real freedom for women will only come under communism because it will see the end of what Marxists call 'bourgeois right'. Only communism can introduce the principle "to each according to his/her needs". In other words each person, irrespective of the quality and quantity of labour they can give to society, receives gratis everything they need.

Labour's Equal Pay Act and Sex Discrimination Act have been made into dead letters by the harsh realities of the capitalist market place. The root of women's oppression lies in class society. Only when one strikes at capitalist society and its state does one strike a blow for women's freedom. Because of this no hope should be placed in Labour's feminist inspired vote catching proposal for a ministry of women.

Likewise, for all the concern expressed about women's conditions and rights by the TUC, women workers remain second class union members. Trade union officialdom is

ANDERSONSTOWN, December 21 1986. Republican Thomas McCartan is shot dead outside his home. But this is no attack by the UDA or UVF. It is the first killing in the ongoing fratricidal feud which has exploded the Irish National Liberation Army.

The killing was carried out by a breakaway organisation from the Inla, the Irish Peoples Liberation Organisation (IPLO), which also goes under the name of the Army Council of Inla. In a statement released to the *Irish News* after the shooting, the IPLO claimed that McCartan, an Inla member, "was killed because he abused the republican struggle for his own selfish ends". The accusation of gangsterism made by the IPLO against the Inla leadership (now the General Headquarters of Inla) has been used to justify their assassinations, and their declared intention to liquidate the Inla. To this end a 'death list' has been drawn up by the IPLO. "There are only about five or six men at the top of this and they will be dealt with. It would be as well if their followers listened to what we have to say now: they're running out of time." (IPLO spokesman, quoted in the *Sunday News*, February 2 1987)

Only after four members and supporters had been assassinated did Inla carry out the retaliatory killing of Tony McClusky.

McClusky was killed in response to the shooting of two leading members of the Inla and its associate political organisation, the Irish Republican Socialist Party. He was accused of setting up John O'Reilly, alleged Chief of Staff of Inla, and Thomas 'Ta' Power at a fake peace meeting between the two groups in late January at Drogheda.

The meeting had been arranged by Father Des Wilson. O'Reilly and Power had been driven there by McClusky with the intention of negotiating a peaceful parting of the ways between the two groups. However, instead of being met by IPLO peace negotiators they were instead met, and shot dead, by IPLO gunmen. It would seem that the prime target here was O'Reilly, not Power.

Since then the struggle has continued with more IPLO assassinations and Inla retaliations, including the killing of IPLO leader Gerard 'Dr Death' Steenson by an Inla active service unit, which took two loaded pistols from the car in which he and his companion were travelling. After Steenson's death both sides agreed to "permanently terminate hostilities". But whether or not the IPLO will honour this agreement remains to be seen.

Among the British left all this has passed largely without comment. *Socialist Worker* and *Workers Press* have both rightly condemned the killing of Mary McGlinchey, leading IRSP member and wife of imprisoned ex-Chief of Staff, Dominic. However, this does not constitute a political analysis of the present split, especially when both the IPLO and Inla have disclaimed responsibility for the murder. The rest of the left, for whom the situation presents itself as all too confusing to assess, are preparing to be wise after the event, as they were in the Provisional/Official split in 1970, or are hesitant lest they be branded 'chauvinist' for raising criticisms of a national liberation movement. This is not our view. Where differences arise within a movement of this kind we have a communist duty to assist in clarification, not least because since 1984 the IRSP has declared itself to be Marxist-Leninist.

But neither do we fall into the trap of chauvinism, as does the Labourite *Socialist Organiser* of February 5, which dismisses the split as proving that "it is not possible to combine socialist aspirations with the sort of gun-centered militarist 'politics' which came to dominate the Inla. Militarism wins out". What *SO* is in effect saying is that armed resistance to British imperialism inevitably leads to the sort of situation that at present exists in Inla. This is only a pretence at analysis, and is designed to get *SO* off the hook in their miserable failure to support the democratic right of the Irish people to take up arms against their British oppressors.

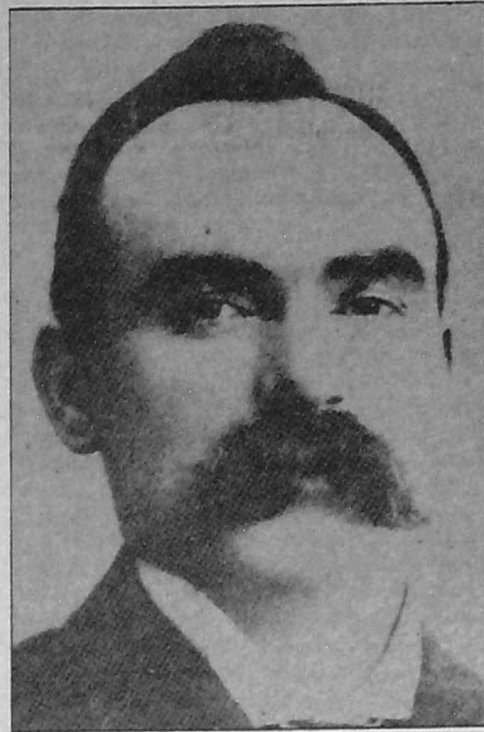
We do not take such an attitude. Our aim here is to analyse the development of the republican socialist movement and the nature of the politics which underpin it. Unlike *SO* we do not intend to use it as an excuse to slag off certain tactics of the movement which may prove unpopular in Britain and in doing so wash our hands of the whole affair.

We hope that comrades in Ireland, both within the republican socialist movement and outside it, will find our perspective constructive and will respond to points we raise.

In essence, all trends stemming from the republican movement of the 1960s can find their roots in the process set in motion by the failure of the IRA's border campaign of 1956-62.



Gerry Adams and Sinn Fein now claim Connolly's tradition as their own.



The republican movement sat down to reassess its strategy – or rather construct one, since it had been conspicuous by its absence in the previous period.

Two rather amorphous trends became discernible. One, dominating the movements' leadership, wanted a realignment away from 'traditional' republicanism towards what they claimed was a more socialistic outlook. Its chief ideologue Dr Roy Johnston, associated with the communist movement in Ireland, wanted to drop the armed struggle in favour of 'working class politics'. The other, superficially more rightwing and traditionalist, refused to go along with this 'communism' and went on to form the Provisional republican movement after 1970. But the division of these two trends was not completed in 1970. From out of the Official section, the IRSP/Inla arose.

It is important to understand the split in the republican movement in its complex entirety. For the majority of the leadership the reassessment and 'leftward' realignment provided an excuse for a retreat towards reformism. But for a substantial minority personified by Seamus Costello it was sincerely seen as the first step towards reorientating the republican movement towards the Irish working class, as the main revolutionary class.

Republican crisis

A simplistic view of the 1970 split creates all sorts of problems when it comes to understanding the later developments of Irish republicanism. David Reed, Revolutionary Communist Group guru, provides an example of such a misconception in his book, *Ireland: key to the British revolution*: "The split...involved choosing between the revisionist and the revolutionary national position on the fundamental issues of the Irish revolution." (p136) Now, before moving on, let us first say that the term 'revisionism' applied within a petty bourgeois revolutionary national movement is a misapplication. More importantly, for Reed one of the "fundamental issues of the Irish revolution" is "the question of participation in the imperialist imposed partitionist parliaments". Since Sinn Fein also dropped abstentionism in the Twenty-six Counties this must now be a cause of some embarrassment to Reed, who we presume still regards Sinn Fein as a revolutionary nationalist movement. Significantly, in the 1970 Ard Fheis at which the split took place it was Seamus Costello, future founder leader of the IRSP and Inla, who moved the anti-abstentionist motion.

Obviously after the split Official Sinn Fein was not one homogeneous mass of 'revisionists', helplessly guided towards counterrevolution by the iron hand of historical necessity, as Reed suggests. Costello and his supporters did not rediscover their revolutionary credentials in 1974 with the formation of the IRSP, they retained them and fought for them throughout this period. Official Sinn Fein was therefore a contradictory phenomenon. A contradiction between revolution and reform, between a retreating leadership pro-reformist majority and a substantial revolutionary minority remained until the IRSP's formation in December 1974.

Ta Power, in a document written while in prison in 1985 (made available to us by the IRSP) describes this development: "Basically the rank and file wanted to expand the strug-

The bloody internal struggle within the Inla is said to be over; we hope so. But even if it is, the republican socialist movement still faces an ideological crisis.

gle while coming increasingly up against a leadership resolved on stopping it altogether. The introduction of internment was a blessing in disguise for this leadership, as it allowed them to gradually wind their involvement in the struggle down, as many militants were interned, arms supplies began to dry up etc. But even this didn't go by without some opposition; early moves which may have led, perhaps, to a split in early 1972 concerned Joe McCann and others who were aware of the Official leadership's intention to call a ceasefire to which they were totally opposed. However this ended as McCann was shot dead by the Brits in April 1972. The Officials declared a ceasefire in May 1972. Costello in later years declared that he should have split there and then instead of continuing to work inside the Officials to try and change it...

"Throughout 1972-73 more militant policies were promoted in the Officials in relation to the national question, but the leadership frustrated and refused to implement these. Instead, they launched a concerted campaign to isolate the main protagonist of this more revolutionary line – which resulted in Costello being suspended in 1973. From here onwards the divergence between Costello and the now openly reformist leadership was out in the open. Much discussion took place all over the country and inside the jails as well, on their respective positions, with the leadership of the Officials trying to stifle debate, taint people, issuing threats and finally expulsions, especially of Costello at the 1974 Ard Fheis.

"The dismissal of Costello only formalised what was already fact – the parting of the ways of a revolutionary and reformist strategy on the national question. Costello was already in the process of forming a new party when he was formally dismissed and events now proceeded at a quickened pace over the remaining months of 1974 with revolutionary republicans, socialists and trade unionists coming together to form the IRSP. The same process took place in the Official's cage in Long Kesh as well. When it was announced in December 1974 that this new political party had been formed, the slogan under which it was launched was 'For National Liberation and a Socialist Republic.'"

Derry Officials went over virtually to a man. Many in Belfast also went with the IRSP. The Officials responded with pistol whipping, kneecapping and assassinations. The Inla was formed first in Belfast in response to Official attacks.

By late 1975 the party had a membership of around 800 over Ireland, claiming such notables as civil rights campaigner Bernadette Devlin. It produced a quarterly internal discussion bulletin and a monthly newspaper, *The Starry Plough*. Formally basing itself on the teachings of James Connolly it had con-



The Divis flats in Belfast: once a stronghold

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siderable influence; not being an abstentionist organisation it stood for and won council seats in Derry and the Divis Flats, Belfast. Inla too, quickly gained notoriety among the British forces. A promising start indeed. So what happened?

The fall of the IRSP

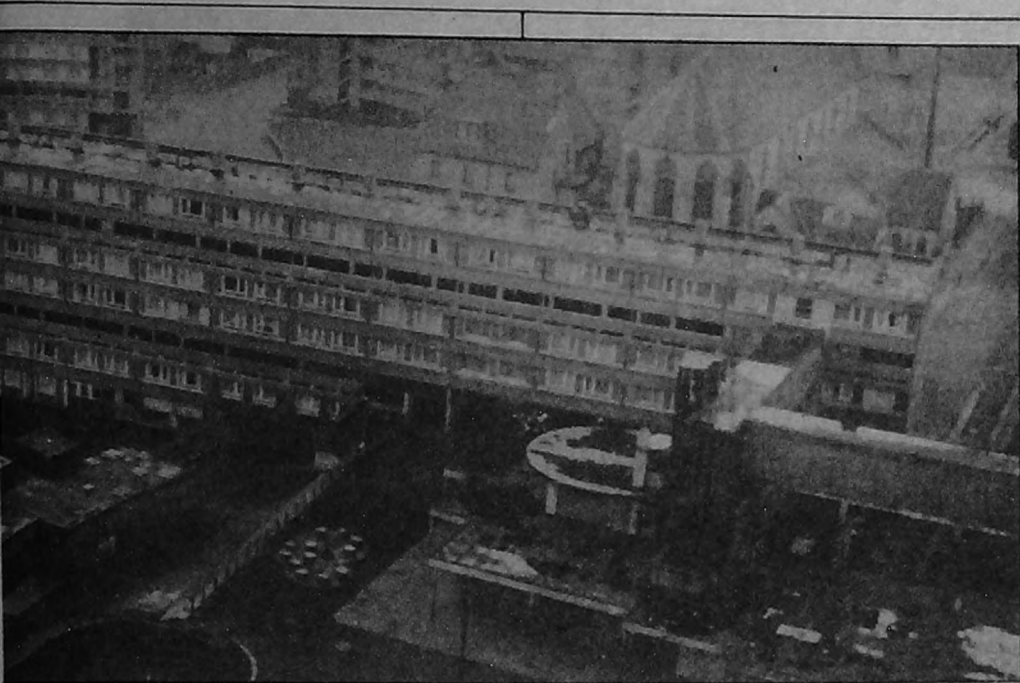
The blame for the crisis of the republican socialist movement cannot be laid at the feet of one individual or one causal factor. However, an analysis of its origins and emergence provides us with the central factor responsible for the situation today.

The IRSP was born, not out of the workers movement in Ireland, but from an essentially petty bourgeois national movement which, despite its radicalism and socialist rhetoric, had in practice moved little from the idealistic self-sufficiency economics of the bourgeois founder of Sinn Fein, Arthur Griffiths. Its organisational structures and relationship with the masses, again, could not but be a product of the petty bourgeois politics of the movement.

In effect, the IRSP and Inla emulated the structures of the movement which produced them. The relationship between the military and political sectors was confused, in practice allowing the military aspect to predetermine the overall line of the organisation. The IRSP was not, nor did it then claim to be, a 'party of a new type', to use Lenin's phrase, wherein the party would have had absolute control of any associated military section, should it choose to form one.

Above all, the IRSP was not constructed on the basis of a protracted theoretical polemic, an open ideological struggle in front of the masses. Nor could it have been, given the manner of its emergence and the nature of the Officials. It was created from a realignment of diverse forces after the 1974 split. As the IRSP has in the past observed, this brought into the ranks of the party and Inla both civil rights radicals and those who had no perspective other than the continuation of the war against Britain. What was lacking was not heroism and militancy but scientific theory, a coherent strategy, a clear sighted Leninist leadership and a trained cadre.

This is not in any way a condemnation or 'write-off' of the IRSP, but merely an observation of the objective difficulties resulting from the origins of the republican socialist



of the IRSP.

THEORY PRACTICE

movement that stood in the way of those within the movement, such as Ta Power, who realised the necessity of transforming it into a genuine communist party.

From its genesis the IRSP exhibited the problems to be expected of an organisation of the petty bourgeoisie, caught as it is between two determinable classes but indeterminable in itself. Very quickly it shed a number of civil rights radicals, eg Bernadette Devlin, who came into conflict with the military strategy of the movement. From early on there was antagonism between the party and the proscribed military wing, for the reasons outlined above.

This was exacerbated by the murder of Costello by the Officials in Dublin in 1977, depriving the movement of its leader and foremost ideologist. The movement had no alternative leader or group leadership to step into Costello's shoes, and this manifested itself in lack of theoretical development. Socialism and national liberation were much talked of in the party press, but their nature and dialectical interrelationship seemed little understood, and certainly not linked concretely to the socio-economic contradictions of Ireland.

This showed itself on the political plain through political incoherence, shallowness and instability, with the IRSP even entering into some kind of protracted relationship with the thoroughly economistic Socialist Workers Party in Britain. This love affair could only be of the most ephemeral, short lived kind, the two organisations having in practice totally different approaches to political and military work in Ireland – the SWP being hostile to any kind of armed campaign. On the military level, divisions and splits within Inla were often in evidence (see, for instance, the announcement of the expulsion of a group from Inla for refusing to accept army discipline; Inla statement in *The Starry Plough*, February 1981). These problems which have caused instability have now reached crisis point.

Sinn Fein

For the republican socialist movement one of the key questions it has had to face has been its relationship, political and organisational, with Sinn Fein and the IRA. One of the central planks for the IRSP since its inception has been the policy of an anti-imperialist alliance, what they term the 'Broad Front', encompassing all forces opposed to British rule.

There have been a number of problems in

the application of this. One has been the unwillingness of Sinn Fein to enter into such an agreement. In many respects this is hardly surprising. Both organisations come from, and still stand within, the same tradition. They have virtually identical organisational structures on both the political and military levels. Sinn Fein can be forgiven for looking at the republican socialists and seeing a smaller but less influential, and now crisis ridden, version of itself. As the experience of the communist movement has shown, alliances will only be accepted when those proffering such an alliance are strong, and the recipient therefore has little choice in the matter. On this basis the IRSP cannot claim to be the most sought after ally.

In relation to this the first task of the movement must be to forge unity within its own ranks before it can realistically look towards forging general anti-imperialist unity. The IRSP is, needless to say, still some way from achieving this. On the surface of the crisis of republican socialism is the identity crisis it faces in relation to Sinn Fein. At its root, though, is the failure to subordinate itself totally to the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism.

When the IRSP and Inla were formed they based themselves on a rather uncritical approach to the works of Connolly and a formal commitment to socialism. At the time, this set them aside from the Provisionals, who were of the more 'traditional' trend of republicanism, and whose leadership was not averse to making anti-socialist and anti-communist speeches. This is no longer the case. Sinn Fein has moved discernibly leftward, declaring itself ever more openly for a socialist republic in Ireland.

Sinn Fein's leftward development has eroded the base of support for the IRSP, helping to reduce its membership to much less than the 800 it once boasted of. For the republican socialist movement the questions posed by this are at once political and organisational. Given that political formulations and organisational structures are now so similar, what is the way forward for the IRSP? Should it, accepting the founding principles of the movement as sacrosanct, follow the logic of its own politics and Sinn Fein's development, and wrap up the movement and go and join Sinn Fein and the IRA? This would seem to be the essential position of the IPLO group- ing.

Alternatively, does this illustrate the need to reassess the history of the party, and of republicanism, and develop accordingly? This is the stand taken by the IRSP, who at their 1984 Ard Fheis set themselves the task of moving beyond Connolly and Costello and "adopted the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin as providing the basis for its socialist principles". (see IRSP press release in *The Leninist*, November 1984) This move met with resistance, especially from sections of Inla, which now manifests itself as the campaign of assassinations against the IRSP.

Fundamentally, the question posed is whether or not the republican movement is capable of uniting and realising Irish national and working class social emancipation, and if it isn't, what is? Accusations of gangsterism and corruption from both quarters aside, it is this that has determined the lay of the battle lines for the fratricidal confrontation.

Battle lines

The present situation is said to have been triggered by the imprisonment of Inla chief of staff Dominic McGlinchey, who had been able to hold it relatively united. Arrests certainly exacerbated the internal crisis, through the supergrass trials in the Six Counties and liberal use of the 'heavy gang' in the south.

However, the split in the ranks of the republican socialist movement has been confined to Inla, the IRSP remaining united with Inla GHQ against the IPLO. Intimidation by elements now within the IPLO were apparently responsible for the resignation of the entire IRSP Ard Chomhairle (national executive) in October 1985, to date leaving the party officially leaderless, in other words underground.

Party work has understandably turned to the question of defence, with safe houses established for those members on the IPLO 'death list'. They show little sign of giving in to the demands of the IPLO to liquidate their organisation: "The one thing you can be sure of is that the Inla and IRSP will come out the other side of this better organised and streamlined" ex-IRSP vice-chair, Kevin McQuillan, told the *Sunday Tribune*, (February 8 1987).

For its part, the IPLO has no other objective than the liquidation of the republican socialist movement. It is comprised of three loosely united factions, grouped around two individuals in Belfast and one in Dublin. They have established no political front organisation, all statements relate entirely to the campaign to liquidate the Inla.

There is no way that we as communists can defend such a perspective. It is not a component part of the struggle against British imperialism, it has no national democratic content. We unreservedly condemn the actions of the IPLO, however they might justify themselves. We will therefore support actions taken in defence by the IRSP/Inla against the IPLO.

It must be said that the IPLO's method of resolving differences has been symptomatic of the nature of the movement in the past, from the Free State anti-IRA pogrom initiated by de Valera after his defection in the 1920s, through conflict between the Officials and first the Provisionals and then the IRSP, to the situation today. Recourse to violent means to resolve what begins as a political disagreement is indicative of the petty bourgeois politics which have characterised republicanism. Consequently, the movement can be intrinsically anti-imperialist with a mass following, yes, but incapable of developing a consistent line of march for the revolution. Moreover there is the constant pull on the republican movement to do a de Valera or a Goulding, and go over to compromising with imperialism despite subjective anti-imperialist intentions.

It is sad indeed that the political crisis in the republican socialist movement could not have been resolved within the boundaries of political debate, or a peaceful parting of the ways. However, no split of this kind is negative in its entirety. The 1970 and 1974 splits allowed the development of the Provisional republican and the republican socialist movements respectively. It is to be hoped that a qualitatively new progression will result from this latest split. It is certainly needed.

Communism

"A revolutionary socialist party must have a revolutionary ideology, an ideology that enables us to analyse the world, the motive forces at work in the world and plan a campaign based on this analysis, a campaign that is consistently principled and bold in its implementation. Marxism, as a guide to ac-

tion, is such an ideology. It represents the historical interests of the working class, which through the medium of a revolutionary party, aims to overthrow the capitalist order and begin the construction of communism." (Ta Power)

Power's document and the 1984 Ard Fheis resolution declaring the IRSP to be Marxist-Leninist are declarations of intent. If these worthy aims are to be realised it is not just a matter of passing motions, they must be given flesh through in-depth analysis of Ireland and Ireland's relation to the world. They must be applied on the streets, among the people, concretely.

The IRSP now holds many positions that we would agree with; their recognition of the necessity of Marxist-Leninist theory, the need for working class leadership in the Irish revolution, and the historical mission of that class to take the revolution uninterrupted through to socialism. Not least, the need for a revolutionary communist party.

Unless applied concretely, these positions will remain formal and abstract. The IRSP must reassess, and effectively break from, the tradition from which it has come, heroic though its traditions are.

This reassessment must begin now. We understand that the IRSP is engaged in a fight for survival and, for individual comrades within the organisation, their lives. But even under such circumstances theory is not and cannot be an optional extra. The IRSP found itself in today's sorry state essentially because of its lack of theory. The development of revolutionary theory will lay the basis for the positive solution of the crisis. Lenin's dictum from *What is to be done?* - "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." - is often quoted, misquoted and misused. The Official's leadership used to frequently throw it around to give themselves a semblance of revolutionary legitimacy. Yet for them this 'theory' was but a cheap, gaudy veneer to mask their rotten reformist core, and to provide ideological 'covering fire' for their retreat.

The dictum nonetheless still retains all its legitimacy despite its illegitimate would-be adherents. Indeed, it has been proven and reproven a thousandfold. As we indicated above, Marxist theory is not a toy for minds that cannot be better occupied, mere icing on the cake. It is not in any way an ivory tower diversion. It is powerful because it is true. It is powerful because it transcends bourgeois ideology, it is theory which cannot but be applied to action. The IRSP has lacked this theory, and so has seen this reflected in its practice.

More than anything else, Ireland cries out for a communist party guided by a revolutionary programme. Such a programme cannot be pulled out of a hat, written overnight or produced by retreating from the real world to sit Buddha fashion in one's room and contemplate the evils of the world, as do many on the British left. Neither can it be developed, as the republican socialist movement has proven in the past, through a 'business as usual' attitude to the Irish war and, Mickawber fashion, hoping something will turn up.

The IRSP must develop such a programme by intense and open ideological struggle. It must develop concretely an understanding of Ireland's relationship to the world, and of the nature and role of the social and economic forces in Ireland. From this it should draw its strategy and tactics, and not vice versa as has happened in the past. It must constantly test this theory in practice, for only through practice can theory be concretised and developed. Most importantly, given the IRSP's origins and past, it must clearly define its stand in relation to the republican movement. Communism in Ireland is an ally of revolutionary republicanism. It cannot be equated or reduced to it.

The problems of the past have resulted in the absence of revolutionary strategy, instead leaving a succession of tactics underpinned by the armed struggle. In effect a tactic had been substituted for a cardinal principle, in the same way that abstentionism had been with Sinn Fein. To break with this tradition does not mean to break with anti-imperialism, or necessarily armed struggle, and embrace social-democracy, as did the Workers Party.

It means, through reappraisal and objective analysis, through a class approach which is proletarian not only in theory but in practice, to unite Irish liberation with world socialist revolution.

The IRSP is struggling for survival. If it is ever to do anything more than this, the road to revolutionary communism is the only one open.

Alan Merrick

ORANGE OR RED?

READING only the *Morning Star*, you would be hard pressed to discover that there has been a war in the Six Counties of the north of Ireland for over 17 years. In fact, you could be forgiven for assuming, from the information supplied by the self-proclaimed 'Marxist-Leninists' who write for this turgid rag that, sailing westward from Liverpool, the first land you would strike would be America, if it were not for the odd report from the bourgeois news agencies, Reuters and Press Association. And what is penned by the *Star* journalists themselves could easily pass for such reports, were it not for its appalling quality.

So we must regard the double page devoted to Ireland on February 7 1987 as something of a rare treat. With the enthusiasm of an intrepid Columbus, *Star* deputy-editor David Whitfield has rediscovered Ireland and eagerly puts pen to paper to tell his public about it.

To give a real taste of his journey Whitfield found himself an interview with one of the natives. Readers with naive faith in the anti-imperialist standpoint of what professes to be a working class paper might expect the *Star* to give a platform to one of the leaders of the republican movement. Those who are more familiar with this paper's rare ventures into Irish politics might have settled back in preparation for yet another interview with the soporific general secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland, Jimmy Stewart. But no. I must confess that for once Whitfield, normally as dynamic as a sick tree-sloth, had my rapt and undivided attention.

He had interviewed Gusty Spence!

For those who are unfamiliar with the name, Whitfield introduces him so: "In Belfast, Gusty Spence is to the Loyalist Shankill what Bobby Sands is to the Republican Falls." Whitfield starts on an antagonistic tack, for anti-imperialists, straight away. To compare Spence on any level with Bobby Sands, democrat, socialist, revolutionary and martyr in the cause of Irish freedom, is monstrous. For Spence is the man central to the reformation in the mid-1960s of the Ulster Volunteer Force. The UVF existed and exists solely to terrorise, maim and murder innocent Catholics. No similar claim could justifiably be made of Sands' organisation, the IRA.

Now, however, we are to believe that Spence, who served 18 years in Long Kesh concentration camp "wants to sit down round a table and talk to Republican Sinn Fein". Now, aside from the fact that *Republican Sinn Fein* is ex-Sinn Fein President Ruari O'Bradaigh's splinter group and Whitfield seems



Gusty Spence: the Orange bigot the *Morning Star* loves.

to mean *Provisional Sinn Fein*, we must take Spence's born again non-sectarian oh-so-earnest wishes with a pinch of salt.

When asked if he still has links with his old playmates in the overtly sectarian UVF, Spence replies: "There are very few people in Northern Ireland who are not a kick in the backside away from some paramilitary organisation". If I may take the liberty of translating, this is diplomatic for 'yes'. Whitfield makes no comment on this. Presumably, then, he has no great objection to the sort of people with whom Spence associates.

To give himself a platform for his cosy tea and biscuits fire-side chats with Sinn Fein, Spence has invented his own tin-pot party, the 'Progressive Unionist Party', which he describes as "the only socialist unionist party in Northern Ireland". Oh unbridled joy! What now can stand in the way of that long-awaited 'workers unity' in the North? Bugger it, its those damned Provos again. David. It seems that Joe Austin, Sinn Fein vice-chair in the Six Counties, is not over impressed with 'comrade' Spence's overtures: "I don't believe there's such a thing as a progressive Unionist. To me it's like talking about progressive fascism. Unionism by its very nature has a fascist element. And you can't have progressive fascism".

But surely Spence only wants people to be nice to each other? Forget it: Spence's pre-conditions for discussion are a joke. "If the IRA put down its guns, if Sinn Fein allowed a dialogue to take place — there could be some sort of a solution", he declares. Quite straightforward isn't it? The republican movement only has to cease

the armed struggle, leaving the nationalist community undefended from the British army, UDR, RUC, UDA and his friends in the UVF, for the privilege of talking to the non-entity Gusty Spence. Whitfield really seems unable to understand why Sinn Fein doesn't take up the offer.

He takes Spence's claims of socialist credentials at face value, regarding his commitment to "keeping the link with Britain" as merely idiosyncratic. But this is the essential truth of Austin's statement. There is no such thing as a pro-imperialist socialist, and the link with Britain is there to ensure Britain's continued domination of Ireland. It serves no other purpose than this. Again, Whitfield skates over this 'pedantic point' without comment.

In effect, if you want to compare Spence's politics with anything or anyone it is not the pro-imperialist Kinnoek, with whom Spence allies himself (though this surely, is bad enough). With his background and present associations with the UVF, the label that springs to mind is 'Strasserite', the trend within the pre-war Nazi party that advocated a greater use of socialist sentiment, and even tactical alliances with the Communist Party of Germany, to enhance its working class appeal. But then, Whitfield would probably have interviewed Strasser as well.

Sadly, Whitfield is not alone in his craven pro-imperialism. What passes for communism in Britain is riddled with this cancer. When delegates from the London District of the CPGB went over to the Six Counties in 1983 they set up a meeting with Andy Tyrrie and his murdering henchmen in the UDA. This was at a time when the Lon-

don District was dominated by forces that later formed the *Morning Star* Communist Campaign Group. The report from this delegation, after sitting cheek by jowl with these sectarian murderers, declared that the UDA "seeks to represent a working class dimension". This was at a time when, as the report even goes so far as to admit, the UDA was making contact with fascist groups in Britain.

Would the CCGers then sit down under similar conditions and talk to the AWB in South Africa, or the National Front in the East End of London? If they follow through the logic of their position this is indeed where they would wind up. Maybe this is something to look forward to in the future.

London District's report and, still clinging to these politics of four years ago, the *Morning Star*, justifies itself thus: "there is also opportunity for development along more progressive lines, if the real causes of their deprivation are to be spelled out, as communists once did among fascist supporters in London's East End". (*Ireland: a question for us all*, p12). The key word is *supporters*. The Party in the thirties organised campaigns for working class interests which would mobilise fascist supporters and consequently break them from their leaders. The *Morning Star* chats with their leaders. Where is the comparison?

The friendly treatment of Spence contrasts sharply with Roger Trask's interview with Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams in the *Morning Star* of March 3 1986. 'Interview' is something of a misnomer, as Adams hardly gets a word in edgeways. Instead we get a half page of Trask sneering at Sinn Fein's 'claim' to be a liberation movement. Sinn Fein's position is not represented. Instead we get Trask setting up, through sparse and highly selective quotations, a straw republican dummy to then knock down. Hardly surprising since he has neither the politics nor the intellect to make a real challenge to the republican movement's politics.

No subsequent platform has been given to the republican movement in the pages of the *Star*. Perhaps it's just as well. We should leave such sectarian slugging to the bourgeois gutter press. The scandalous thing is that the *Star* should give a sympathetic platform to a noted sectarian, pro-imperialist and murderer, and furthermore one who has not renounced the essence of his views, and still denounces the Irish liberation movement vociferously at any and every opportunity.

In doing so the *Morning Star* exposes itself for what it is — no communist daily, no paper of the working class, but the gutter press of the pro-imperialist labour bureaucracy. There is no other way we can interpret the politics voiced by the *Star* on Ireland.

Surprising for the dead headed bureaucrats who run the *Star* some debate has actually been permitted to take place in its hallowed pages, not normally besmirched by such trivia. One 'volley' was fired by Dermot Miller on March 2. It is a somewhat confused letter, although anti-Spence, whose organisation is described as "no new trend", and as "the trend of a sometimes cowardly, sometimes opportunist, sometimes outright reactionary 'left'". We would put it a deal more strongly than that, but let it pass. Miller praises the rightist Communist Party of Ireland for its "principled analysis of the national question". Now, this we cannot let pass. For years the CPI has shamefully condemned the

heroic armed resistance of the IRA, and urged them to emulate the Officials fifteen years ago and dump arms. In fact Spence has "off the record contacts with Ireland's Communists" (*Morning Star*, February 7), and CPI General Secretary Jimmy Stewart hasn't an ill word to say of him. We would suggest that if Miller were to submit the same letter with 'cowardly' replacing 'principled', then he would have a far more consistent position.

In the *Star* of March 6 yet another letter was printed, this time by one David Lawson, who rushed to the *Star's* defence, applauding "the decision to carry the article on Gusty Spence". Lawson delivered his polemical broadside in response to Miller's letter, who, for his most temperate criticisms of the *Star* is denounced as having an "out-dated 'nationalism' approach". Lawson's approach? "What might help would be a critique of the stances of groups such as the Workers Party and the Socialist Unionists on the national question". Let British imperialism tremble!

By far the best letter on the Spence article was the first, written by R Johns and printed on February 23. Johns rightly condemns Spence as a "sectarian murderer", and attacks the *Star* for its de facto censorship of Gerry Adams, comparing his interview with Spence's. As to Spence's 'socialism': "Progressive? No. Just plain Loyalism dressed up in a different way".

What is more, we find Johns' solutions somewhat more principled and useful than Lawson's: "The task of British socialists and communists is to begin to build a movement with one aim: not a 'socialist Ireland', certainly not a Bill of Rights, but to force a British government, any British government, to withdraw militarily economically and politically, from the Six Counties.

"That is our duty. A success in this would remove the obstacle to working class unity — the border."

Excellent, comrade Johns. A change indeed from the usual turgid, rightist crap found in the *Star's* pages.

What is surprising is that there are those in the CCG who will honestly tell you that they support the republican movement, and that they support the armed struggle. Yet they remain in a faction which is dominated by overt pro-imperialists.

Why? All they are doing is acting as left apologists for the *Star's* betrayal of Ireland. This is not a pedantic tactical point, it is a question of principle, and furthermore one that Lenin said would prove the acid test for British communists. Ireland still remains that acid test, and one which the *Star* has decidedly failed. Those who lump themselves in with this rotten opportunist block should not then complain if they are branded for pro-imperialism along with Whitfield and Trask.

Alan Merrick

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Nationalism and Revolution

David Howell, *A Lost Left: three studies in socialism and nationalism*, Manchester University Press, pp351, £8.95

THE THREE studies are those of James Connolly, John Maclean and John Wheatley. For the purposes of this review, we shall leave aside any mention of Wheatley, a Scottish "Catholic Socialist", and concentrate on the two revolutionaries, Connolly and Maclean.

A few comrades have repeatedly taken us to task in our letters page for our "English chauvinism" with respect to Scotland, taking as their standard-bearer Maclean, who later in his life came towards the position of a Scottish Communist Party independent from its English (sic) counterpart, and an independent Scottish Workers' Republic. Howell's work provides a useful medium to contrast the theoretical views, practice and influence of Connolly and Maclean.

Briefly, Connolly learnt his Marxism in the abstract propagandist school of the Social Democratic Federation in the 1890s. This was later heavily influenced by the syndicalist tendencies of the De Leonite Socialist Labour Party and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the United States. Combined with the Irish republican socialism that first influenced him through the works of John Leslie, Connolly's ideas developed through his political work in Edinburgh, Dublin, the US and finally Dublin once more.

On returning to Ireland from the US in 1910, Connolly found his ideas of an Irish "One Big Union" like the IWW unworkable, mainly because of the divisions driven into the Irish working class because of the national oppression of the country. He was now forced to extend and develop in the concrete his existing socialist republican theory which had been previously codified in the Irish Socialist Republican Party.

This was done through his staunch opposition to World War I, especially his idea of using the war in Europe for Ireland's liberation, distancing him from all but the far-left minority of the old Second International.

The Irish Citizens' Army, formed during the Dublin lock-out of 1913, came under his leadership in October 1914, and he worked to transform this small organisation from a workers' defence guard into a proletarian insurrectionary army. Connolly's view was towards winning an alliance between socialists and radical nationalists, under the leadership of proletarian forces, for national, and through this social emancipation.

The alliance was achieved when Connolly was drawn onto the Military Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood early in 1916 and, after argument, agreed to desist from independent action and bring the ICA into the Easter Ris-

ing. Many valid criticisms can be made of Connolly: his acquiescence to Catholicism, his patriarchal attitudes, the premature nature of the Rising, its isolation and Connolly's lack of independence from its petty bourgeois leaders like Padraig Pearse. However, in Ireland today what Marxist can doubt the importance of Connolly's writings? Who can doubt the retrogressive consequences of partition, as he warned?

With decades of vacillation of the leadership of the republican movement, from Griffith onward, who can doubt the necessity for proletarian leadership of the national struggle? Connolly made an as yet unsurpassed assessment of the link between national and social emancipation in Ireland. And though he failed to realise such a revolution, the bulk of his work provides a firm base for an assessment of Irish work today.

John Maclean is a different kettle of fish. He had a "conventional" Marxist background in the Social Democratic Federation and British Socialist Party, and until the latter stages of World War I never favoured Scottish separatism. Indeed, quite the opposite: "The establishment of a Scottish Babel ... would be a retrograde step and should meet with our opposition and ridicule. What is good or bad for England is good or bad for Scotland." (Maclean writing in *Justice*, July 27 1912)

Howell sums up Maclean's change in positions succinctly: "Although Maclean's pre-war writings had expressed the orthodox Second International Social Democracy, his comments on the Highland question had given an occasional Scottish twist to his argument. Throughout the war, his concern to present an untarnished internationalism had dominated his politics, but in 1919, before he parted from the BSP, his interest in Scottish issues became much more visible." (p207)

It is interesting that his breach with the BSP in that year is reported to have been not over Scottish independence, but over the party's desire to transfer him to work solely with the Hands Off Russia! campaign. Neither were his objections to the formation of a Communist Party in Britain national, but because the forces included were "a heterogeneous mixture of anarchists, sentimentalists, syndicalists, with a sprinkling of Marxists. Unity in such a camp is likely to be impossible." (Maclean's *Open Letter to Lenin* in *The Socialist*, February 3 1921).

Such an analysis, combined with his developing nationalism, gives us a picture of confusion and sectarianism, rather than clarity, as the adherents of his later works claim today. To justify such actions he began to take an anti-internationalist line in respect to the Communist International: "The less the Russians interfere in the internal affairs of other countries at this juncture, the better for the cause of revolution in those countries." (*Vanguard*, December 1920)

The logic of Maclean's position went as follows: "Since the British Empire is the greatest obstacle to communism, it is the business of every communist to break it up at the earliest possible moment. That is our justification for urging a Communist Republic of Scotland." (*Vanguard*, September 1920)

On this basis you could argue for Welsh, Cornish, Northumbrian, *ad infinitum* independence. The crucial question is whether the struggle for an independent Scotland reflects a historical necessity. Scotland being poorer, and the expro-

priation of crofters' land by English and Scottish capitalists around a century ago do not provide such a basis. Therefore, in the face of a highly centralised bourgeois nation-state, such moves can only be divisive. Comrade Yurukoglu has made the point that the Party should not act as five independent fingers, but a fist. Centralism against centralism. Defend the right of the Scottish and Welsh nationalities to self-determination but fight for the monolithic unity of the proletariat and its Party.

Maclean maintained his position and, in doing so, lost his finest allies of the war years - Gallacher, Bell, McShane and others - to the Communist Party of Great Britain. What he was left with in his abortive Scottish Workers' Republican Party was, as Gallacher described them in *Revolt on the Clyde*, "a bunch of toadies", who quickly dispersed after his death.

The ability of the English, Welsh and Scottish workers to fight as one, unimpeded by phantom differences, was shown brilliantly in the General Strike of 1926, and again recently in the 1984-85 Great Strike. The inability of class solidarity to take this form in Ireland is indicative of national oppression there, and its absence in Scotland.

We can make comparisons also in the organisations of these countries. 'English' political parties are more or less reproduced in Scotland. The "heroic struggle of the Scottish people" referred to by one of our correspondents hardly reveals itself in the SNP, or for that matter in the handful of radical nationalists in the John Maclean Society. You can reel them off historically in the case of Ireland: United Irishman, Whiteboy, Young Irelander, Fenian, IRB, IRA to the Provisional Sinn Fein and the IRA today. When one organisation is crushed or capitulates, national circumstances force another to take its place.

Where are the signs of Scottish oppression today? Where are the Scottish equivalents of H-Block, UDR, RUC, shoot-to-kill? Where is the occupying army? Scotland's 'non-status' as an oppressed nation makes national struggle there today and in Maclean's day a non-starter.

Maclean's inability to understand this, and his false transposition of the Irish situation to Scotland, was the downfall of an outstanding revolutionary. Connolly's penetrating insight into the nature of Ireland's oppression was his genius.

Alan Merrick.

Mystifying Chartism

Dorothy Thompson, *The Chartists: Popular Politics in the Industrial Revolution*, Wildwood House, 1986, pp399, £6.95

CHARTISM is important because it was, as Lenin said, "the first broad, truly mass and politically organised proletarian revolutionary movement". (CW Vol 29 p309) It contained in embryonic form many features of later reformist and revolutionary movements, as well as backward looking elements, such as the land plan.

In her introduction Dorothy Thompson comments that: "Very few people today are without some fairly clear idea of what the Chartist movement was about." (p2) Regrettably, this is far from true. Although present day British workers are better educated than

their counterparts 150 years ago, the bourgeois state deliberately keeps them almost completely ignorant of their own history.

Lenin describes the two methods used by the bourgeoisie in its struggle against the working class. The 'feudal' method of "violence, persecution, bans and suppression" and the 'modern' method of "dividing the workers, disrupting their ranks, bribing individual representatives or certain groups of the proletariat with the object of winning them over to its side". (CW Vol 20 p455)

In its struggle against Chartism, the bourgeoisie initially had available only the first method. As capitalism developed in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, it evolved the second method, with which it overcame the revolutionary impulse of Chartism. The British bourgeoisie has now perfected the second method and uses it so skilfully the modern proletariat is hardly conscious of itself as a class for itself.

In Chartism, unlike earlier outbursts of working class rebellion, local actions were coordinated into a truly national movement through the Chartist newspapers, such as the *Northern Star*. This was possible because for the first time the poverty and desperation of workers was combined with a relatively high level of literacy and education. Chartists "valued education highly...and sought it for their children and for themselves". (p146) Chartist schools were organised "in deliberate opposition to those on offer by church and charitable bodies". (p147)

As the quotations which Dorothy Thompson gives from Chartist speeches and publications show even more clearly than her own narrative, Chartist leaders understood the importance of combining protest actions with political education.

Today this is more crucial than ever. The working class must be liberated from the grip of bourgeois ideology and equipped with the political understanding it needs to carry out socialist revolution and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Communist Party must take the lead in this. One of its functions is to safeguard the collective memory of the working class. Marxist historians have a special role in this task of engendering revolutionary consciousness. They provide workers with vital insights into the real material causes and significance of what is happening to them by comparing their experiences with those of previous generations.

In studying both present day society and that of the Chartist period, the actions, beliefs and hopes of the great diversity of groups and

individuals involved, and the complex pattern of interacting sociological, ideological and economic factors which influence them, can only be understood by looking beneath the surface at the class struggle. Dorothy Thompson's book does not do this.

She tells us she distrusts general theories of history. What she is really saying is that she does not understand the Marxist method and so cannot see the crucial difference between oversimplifying the causes of a complex process and uncovering the primary contradiction at the heart of it. In her conclusion for example she looks at several factors which contributed to the rapid decline of Chartism after 1848, and lamely concludes that: "Each of these explanations has some force, but none really explains the matter satisfactorily". (p330)

Similarly, in her introduction she compares two ideological perspectives on Chartism, that of Whig historians "watching the inevitable unfolding of British democratic institutions" and "the view of history which sees it as developing towards a classless socialist society." (p3) She characterises them both as teleological, and considers that their analysis of events is therefore distorted and oversimplified.

It is of course a serious error to refer to a Marxist teleology. She is confusing the scientific understanding of the way society develops in conformity with objective laws due to internal contradictions - which is the method of historical materialism - with the teleological conception that things happen because of some future goal they help to bring about. In revealing the laws of social development underlying the surface complexity of historical changes, Marxism has nothing to do with this idealist error.

In the rest of the book she surveys various aspects of Chartism such as the involvement of women and the Chartist press, and gives a picture of what trades Chartists worked in and the sort of lives they led. A lot of careful research into original sources has gone into ensuring that the information she gives is as complete and accurate as possible. Like most bourgeois historians of recent generations she considers her job to be the compilation of a comprehensive and accurate corpus of historical facts, but not to synthesise from them a coherent theory to explain the cause of changes. This is in contrast to the Marxist view that it is as important to evaluate as to record, since if you do not evaluate you cannot know what is worth recording.

Mary Goodwin

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Marching for Kinnock or peace?

PEACE promises to be one of the most important issues in the forthcoming general election. By going non-nuclear, Britain would be able to avoid destruction in a super-power conflict, claims the Labour Party. Thatcher (and for that matter Callaghan) says this is unrealistic and unpatriotic and would play into the hands of the Soviet Union.

To counter this charge *Labour Party News* makes it quite clear that the "party of peace" will have an "absolute commitment to a sound national defence policy and to membership of Nato." Integral to this "sound national defence," Labour will "keep troops in Ulster, Falklands, Cyprus etc." In fact Kinnock's Labour Party claims it will defend British imperialism better than the Tories. In other words Labour is not the party of 'peace', no, Labour is a party of imperialism and imperialist war.

Because of this we see no reason to vote Labour *because* of this policy on peace. In fact because we understand that "peace" under imperialism, whether it is administered by conservatives, liberals or reformists, is nothing more than preparation for war, we must have no illusions in Labourism.

This was one of the fundamental tenets of Lenin. Far from this being wrong, one sided or simply outdated, Lenin has been proved correct by Labour's support for Britain's role in countless colonial conflicts, two world wars and imperialism's anti-Soviet war drive.

We therefore, unlike the CND, oppose capitalist militarism in all its forms. We do not say: cut 'defence' spending; we say: not a penny, not a person, to the bourgeois army. We do not counterpose nuclear to conventional weapons, we oppose the system which gives rise to war. And while we support the tactic of peaceful co-existence we unconditionally defend the Soviet Union and the socialist countries against reactionary attacks and we oppose pacifism.

We support all liberation movements against imperialism, especially those in Ireland and South Africa, because of the role of British imperialism in these countries. In fact we see the struggle for peace as bound up with the struggle for world revolution.

This is the ABC of Marxism-Leninism on peace. Yet although our rules state our Party is guided by Marxism-Leninism, January's meeting of the Party's EC heard diametrically opposed views.

In his report on peace comrade Jon Bloomfield stated it would be "sectarian" to reject the Labour Party's 'defence' policy. And in order to accommodate Kinnock's

watering down of conference decisions he considered that Labour's policy on peace has to be "tempered with flexibility and a willingness to listen to popular anxieties".

We all know what is meant by this. For "popular anxieties", read establishment anxieties. This is a squalid attempt to secure CPGB support for Labour no matter what. We say this rightism is deadly. It sows the seeds of the organisational liquidation of our Party. After all, why have a CPGB if it simply excuses and trails behind every move Kinnock makes?

There are of course those opponents of Eurocommunism with politics on peace that are not so different from Eurocommunism. The Straight Leftists, NCPers and CCGers in the last analysis call for a vote for Kinnock because of peace. Labour, they believe, is the best chance for peaceful co-existence. They also, just like the Eurocommunists, split the struggle for peace from the struggle for revolution.

Leading CCGer and *Morning Star* supporter Tom Durkin actually mocked the very idea of securing peace through world revolution in a letter to *The Leninist* (see No.45). For him world revolution is so abstract it is meaningless. Putting a cross next to the name of the Labour candidate is a far more realistic way of fighting for peace.

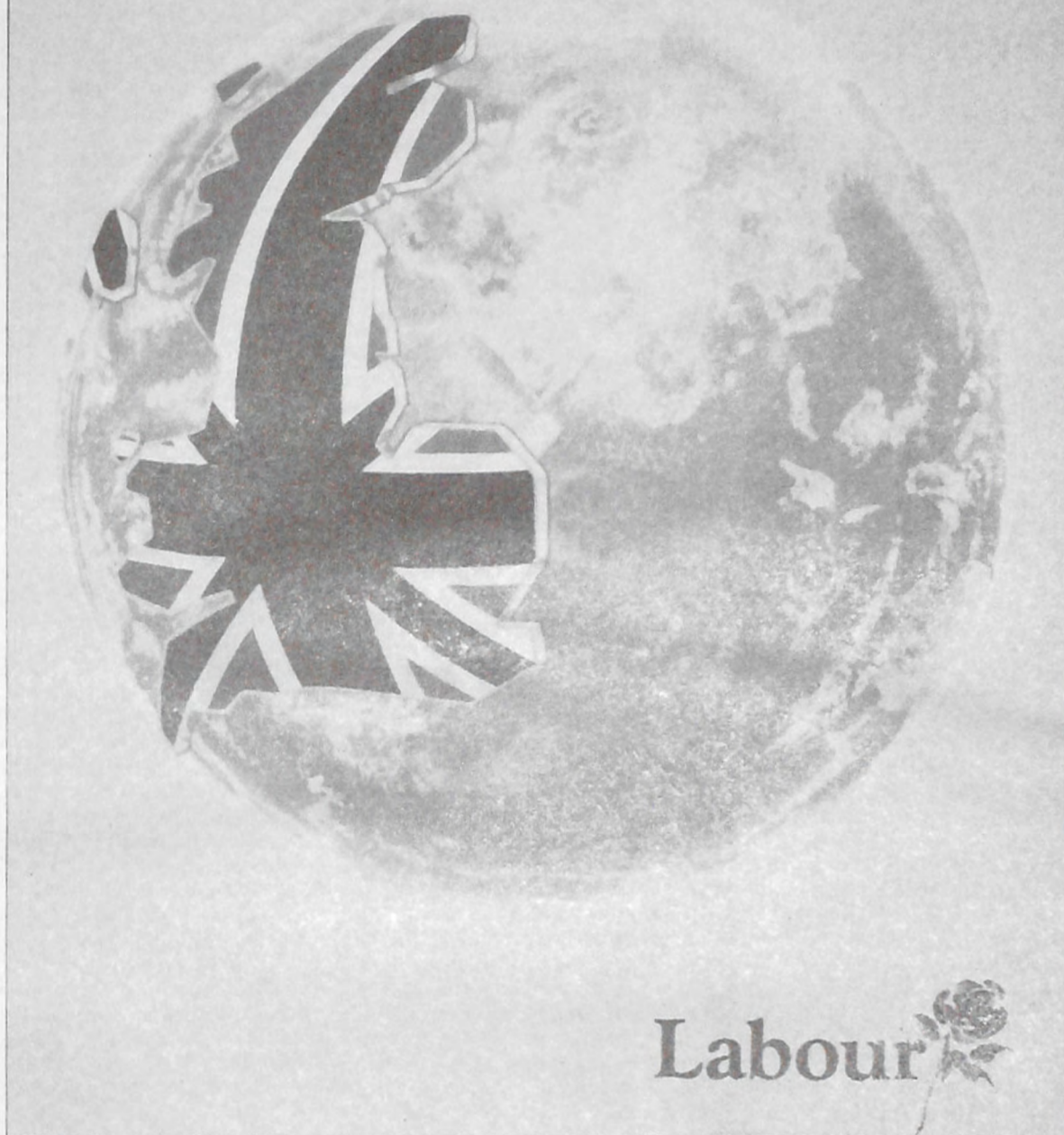
Because of this obvious lack of revolutionary vision he felt the need to rubbish us for our supposed belief that it has to be revolution or nothing and for *not* supporting peaceful co-existence. Durkin obviously cannot bring himself to admit we actually advocate peaceful co-existence — if not the version so dear to the *Morning Star*.

Ironically, and it must be said laughably, while Trotskyites consider our advocacy of the tactic of peaceful co-existence to be the result of our 'Stalinism', the actual fans of Stalin in our communist movement, like Tom Durkin, label us 'Trotskyite' over the same question of peaceful co-existence.

What a convenient division of labour. Neither form of opportunism dares admit that our political positions, not least our stand on peace, flows from our commitment to, and understanding of, Leninism.

We say the Soviet government is in principle perfectly correct to negotiate with Reagan and advance the idea of peaceful co-existence between capitalism and socialism. Certainly the rejection of peaceful co-existence by imperialism exposes its war-like nature to the world.

Modern Britain in a Modern World The Power to Defend our Country



It should read 'The Power to Defend our (imperialist) Country'.

LABOUR CAN'T BRING PEACE

But, for us, peaceful co-existence must serve, must be subordinated to, the aim of world revolution. Peaceful co-existence should not be used as a substitute for communists explaining to workers that the imperialist powers cannot be made peaceful and must be put down like a pack of rabid dogs if peace is to be guaranteed.

The leaders of the CPSU no longer argue along these lines. In their Party programme the tactic of peaceful co-existence is not balanced with the aim of world revolution. Indeed, far from the aim of world revolution being the central, uniting strand that runs through the programme, it is not even mentioned.

If a tactic — whether it be armed insurrection, standing for election to the bourgeois parliament or peaceful co-existence — is pursued

without being subordinated to the overall aim of world revolution, it becomes a form of opportunism.

Lenin rightly insisted peace had to be fought for not in a reactionary utopia of a non-imperialist capitalism, nor in a naive pacifist-type plea for 'sanity' between the big powers, but in the future socialist revolution.

As we all know, Durkin, the Straight Leftists, the NCP and the CCG take their cue from the present leadership of the CPSU. Because of this they clearly fall into the category of those who mislead the working class by promising peace without linking it to the socialist revolution. Instead of the struggle for revolution these opportunists do their best to create illusions in the Labour Party.

The CCG's new peace pamphlet hopes a Labour government would

"help the negotiations for international nuclear disarmament". The NCP is so concerned for Labour's chances that, in an effort not to alienate potential 'moderate' voters, it has actually condemned attempts to get the CND campaigning on the question of Nato. In the same spirit, the January edition of the Straight Leftists' *Communist* wants to limit the struggle for peace to creating a favourable climate for Labour's "peace and disarmament policy."

Lenin vehemently denounced the peddling of such opportunist pacifist nostrums. He declared till the end of his life that the danger of war could only be eliminated by eliminating the capitalist system itself. Or put another way: peace cannot come through voting Labour.

Jack Conrad