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NEW TREATY AFTER TALKS WITH LONDON

Heath, Faulkner and Lynch want to preserve Tory rule in Ireland with a new political set-up

The tri-partite talks on the North are, in reality, a conference of Tory prime ministers trying to preserve the power and interests in Ireland of the class they represent.

The fact that a large section of the population in the Six Counties have become ungovernable in the old way threatens the stability not only of Stormont but of Leinster House and Westminster. Heath, Faulkner and Lynch have to work out a settlement which each can present as a 'victory in his home territory, and appease their respective 'wild men.'

The most likely future development is a new constitutional arrangement between Ireland and Britain which would preserve the economic status-quo with whatever changes are needed in the political set-up. Leading establishment journals in Britain have already played at drawing new boundaries for 'Protestant Ulster', and the *Sunday Times* bluntly stated (19 September) that "the present Northern Ireland state has no future". It is obvious that the more intelligent sections of the British ruling class are anxious for an end to the chaos in Ireland, particularly with their possible membership of the EEC looming up. Lynch can use this factor in his bargaining, and can also contrast the relatively sedate 26 Counties with Faulkner's folly in the Six, and hope to persuade the British to abandon the 1920 settlement in favour of a 32-county neo-colony, safe for EEC and British exploiters but not needing the expensive presence of thousands of heavily-armed British troops to maintain order.

No doubt the British ruling class are already thinking along these lines and endeavouring to provide means of overcoming the major obstacle to this plan: the supporters of 'Protestant Ulster'. The signs are that

'Protestant Ulster' is about to be ditched — with the offer of a face-saving political formula of course, but the big stick will be used if necessary.

Needless to say, the working class will not be represented at the London talks, but nevertheless its organisations can use the existing situation to put pressure on the three governments so as to raise the level of democracy in both parts of Ireland. Lynch, Heath and Faulkner have to take into account the success of the civil disobedience campaign and its possible future use as a political weapon by the organised working class.

Socialists are bound to support the demands being made for an end to internment and the establishment of democratic freedoms in all Ireland without possibility of negation by the Special Powers Act or Offences Against the State Act. This is a primary need for the successful building of a united working-class movement and ending the scourge of sectarianism.

Here, the trade unions can be of great effect. The unions now constitute the only organisations in the North where catholic and protestant workers can find common interest. Efforts should therefore be made to demand more militant trade union activity on behalf of workers' interests in such fields as housing and redundancies. Trade unionists must be active in condemning sectarianism.

At the same time we must relentlessly expose any attempt to preserve or extend the influence of British imperialism in whatever guise it may appear.

Price-control farce to continue in a new form

Although allegedly protected by the 'National Wage Agreement', the standard of living of working people has been subjected to a fierce onslaught in the last few months. We have had withdrawal of the reduced rate of income tax, increases in wholesale and turnover tax, an outrageous rise in bus fares and, more recently, a further increase in the price of bread.

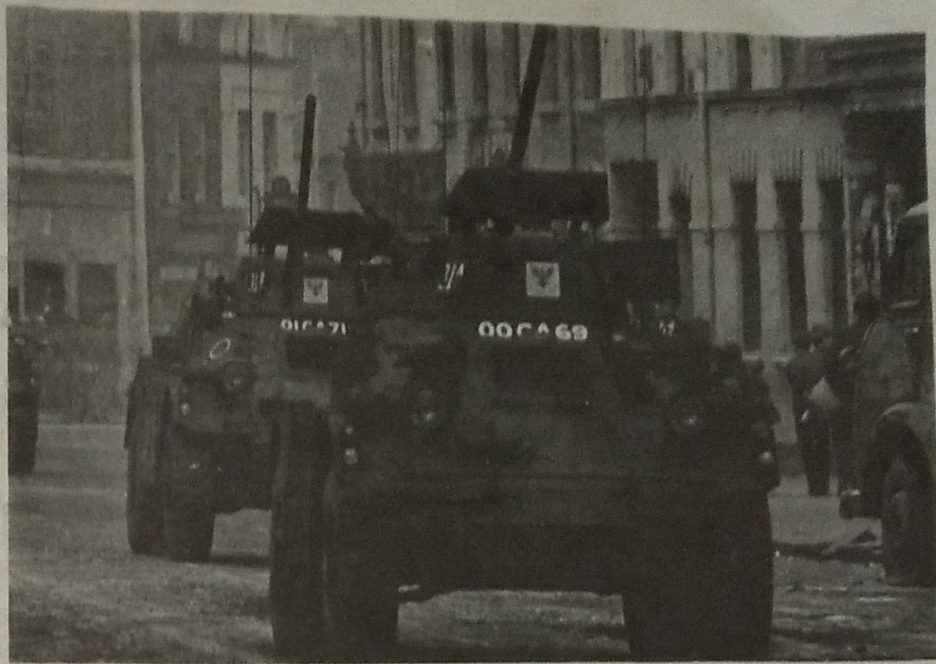
In an effort to ward off protest, the 'government' (as we politely call the robber gang who rule us) have announced the establishment of a 'National Prices Commission' to take over the price-control functions of the Department of Industry and Commerce. Demonstrating their love for the workers, the government have allowed the trade union movement two seats on the new commission, and one for the employers' group, the Confederation of Irish Industry. Two seats also go to the Irish Housewives' Association. The CII have expressed 'anger' and denounced the commission.

We hope that the trade union representatives will not allow themselves to be used as front-men for a new government confidence-trick. The operation of 'prices control' until now by the Department of Industry and Commerce does not inspire confidence, to say the least. The usual process was for announced price increases to produce a reaction of mock surprise from the Minister, to be followed by an 'enquiry' lasting long enough for the public to forget the original announcement. Then the price increase was allowed and went

quietly into effect, without much protest or publicity. In this way, public wrath was dissipated, and the government appeared to be taking some action to control prices. The only thing they really controlled was the date on which the increases became effective.

The trick has been repeated so often that even the most gullible people can now see through it. A new Punch and Judy show has to be devised in which the government appears to be hammering the nasty employers' price rises in defence of the workers' standard of living. If this is the purpose of the National Prices Commission, the trade union movement must refuse to have anything to do with it. The farcical National Wage Agreement has already done enough damage to trade union unity — let us beware another cause of disunity.

Statutory control of prices has never been an effective help to the workers' struggle. Sooner or later, the bosses will pressure it out of existence. Our main battle in the present system is for more wages, and shorter hours.



FORCIBLE ENTRY BILL NOW LAW

The Forcible Entry Bill is now law. After a debate lasting approximately 100 hours in the Dáil and 40 hours in the Senate, the Bill was steamrolled through, adding to the mockery already made during the last two years of our so-called democratic institutions.

It is now painfully obvious to the Fine Gael and Labour opposition that the Fianna Fáil government is no longer interested in even keeping up the pretence to the working class that Dáil Éireann is a democratic parliament in which the workers through elected representatives can influence the decisions or policy emanating from that house.

It is equally obvious to the opposition that the longer Fianna Fáil, in their blind arrogance, continue to make a farce of parliamentary democracy, the sooner the working class is going to realise that this is how things have always been except that, until now, all parties in the Dáil had pulled together in an effort to demonstrate that the working class really had a say in what went on in the country.

If one looks at the many and varied amendments which were offered to the Bill it can be seen that no effort was made to change the actual nature of the Bill — an attack on the working class by the powerful men of property. All the amendments were simply attempts to diplomatically hide the blatant pro-private-property, anti-working-class nature of the Bill.

It was almost possible to imagine Garret Fitzgerald during the debate saying to the Minister for Justice (under his breath): "For Christ's sake, Des, we don't believe a homeless man, woman or child has the right to move into vacant private property either, but you don't have to make it so damn obvious — some of these people can read, you know."

However, even allowing for the lack of sincerity of the opposition, and the government's lack of regard for them, the Forcible Entry Bill should not have gone through as easily as it did. It should have been carried to its death on the streets. This did not happen, and the left-wing organisations must take the brunt of the blame for it.

It is true that the Committee to Oppose Repressive Legislation held a number of marches and demonstrations, but the attendance at these, while acceptable by left-wing standards, was far too small when one thinks of the far-ranging effects of the Forcible Entry Bill. A properly-organised committee should have attracted much larger crowds if it hoped to have any effect on public opinion, and in consequence the passing of the Bill. Indeed, one got the impression from CORL speakers that they accepted that the Bill would be passed in toto, and were merely thinking in terms of breaking it en masse after it became law. An unfortunate fact of

life, of which the members of the CORL should be aware, is that while there is a good chance of a properly-organised committee getting a few thousand people to protest against the possibility of an anti-working-class Bill of this nature becoming law, the numbers you can call on to break it once it has become law can be counted on the fingers of ten hands. When this happens, you are then back to square one, where the people arrested, because of their exposure in the press, are considered by the public at large to be political 'agitators' who have nothing better to do.

What should have been done? It is now too late to stop the Bill. If the CORL still intend to have a go at rendering it ineffective, or having it declared unconstitutional, they will have to get a hold of themselves, and re-organise on the basis of their executive being made up of delegates from interested organisations, not, as is now the case, of individuals who, regardless of the fact that they may be members of a particular organisation, are not directly responsible to their organisations. This means that they cannot speak for or pledge the active support of the members of the organisations to which they belong.

The Left in Dublin is notorious for the bad read-back it gets from committees on which it has accredited delegates, never mind the ones on which its members are working in an 'individual capacity.' It was because of the failure of the delegates of the various organisations at the inaugural meeting of the CORL to grasp this fact that the Socialist Party of Ireland, while still supporting the agitation, withdrew from participation in the committee.

Séamas Ó Reachtagáin, on behalf of the Socialist Party, proposed that "the executive of the committee be composed of accredited delegates from interested political, tenants and cultural organisations." This proposal was put to a vote and defeated, with the Communist Party, Connolly Youth Movement, Sinn Féin (Gardiner Place) and representatives of the various Labour Party branches, voting against it. Seven people were then nominated for positions on the executive.

It was then stated that the executive would report back every two weeks to a public meeting at which they would be given a mandate for the next two weeks. So much for left-wing discipline.

It is to be hoped that the CORL have learned from their mistakes. If not, they are doomed to a predictable end: that is, the committee being represented by a small group of well-known people who are forced to resort to worn-out publicity stunts with which they are already associated. In fact, they should be representative of all the left-wing and liberal organisations, as well as trade unions, tenants and cultural bodies.

Threat to jobs

Trade unionists should beware of the Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael attempt to sell us a pig in a poke: the Common Market. Pro-EEC spokesmen have been making wild promises of prosperity for all if we join the Common Market. But the facts of life in the EEC countries today prove otherwise.

The Brussels Commission (*not* an elected body) operates what is called an 'approximation policy', which means that trade union policy is brought to the lowest common denominator existing in the EEC and then implemented in all the member states. This means that if we joined, our trade unions would be brought down to the level of those of West Germany, for instance, which are little better than house associations under the thumb of the employers.

Joining the EEC would mean opening up the Irish market to a flood of imported goods from all the big countries of western Europe. Irish industry, with its small-scale production, could not hope to compete with the EEC monopolies. We already have the bitter lesson of 'free trade' with Britain, and the continuing factory closures which have resulted from this. EEC 'free trade' would be ten times more destructive. Massive unemployment and emigration would certainly be the result.

The EEC monopolies use migrant workers from southern Italy and outside the EEC — Spain, Yugoslavia, Morocco, Algeria, Greece — to force down wages in the industrialised areas. Migrant workers are badly

treated and kept in ghetto areas. The West German government allows agents of the Greek fascist régime to operate offices in the country and terrorise Greek workers to prevent them from joining trade unions or complaining about bad conditions.

► Demand that our unions take a militant stand against redundancies, unemployment and the Common Market sell-out.

► Demand that the government present the full facts on the implication of EEC membership to the people.

► Demand a statement of attitude on the EEC, 'free trade' and redundancies from TDs and councillors.

Left unity

The slogan 'Unity of the Left' is often on the lips of members of working-class political organisations, but will it ever be translated into reality?

From the viewpoint of the Socialist Party this is a long-term possibility, but there are long and difficult intermediate stages in this development.

First of all we can ask: why is the Left disunited? Various reasons come to mind; sectional divisions in the working population, for example, skilled and unskilled labour, union and non-union labour; lack of class-consciousness among workers; the influence of bourgeois ideas and propaganda on the people, part-

icularly in the Labour and Social-Democratic parties; the complex problem of the national question and workers' attitudes to it. All these are factors which have helped to produce the present political divisions on the Left.

Despite these obstacles, however, working-class organisations with different policies and tactics can engage in short-term co-operation on specific issues such as housing and opposition to the Common Market and repressive legislation. Some measure of success has been achieved in these fields, the most spectacular being Dublin Housing Action Committee in 1968 and 1969.

These activities are themselves a help towards eventual unity as they raise the level of political consciousness of those taking part. More formal attempts at unity are, at this stage, premature, mainly because of the low level of organisation of the groups expected to participate. Until these groups are functioning properly as organisations they can hardly function properly in a united front.

This failing, which is widespread, sticks out like a sore thumb in all the joint activities and ad-hoc committees of the Left. In some cases the problem is just ignorance of the basic principles of organisation; in others, just plain laziness — but it must be eliminated before we can make progress. Those who refuse to tackle this problem are not serious revolutionaries.

Policy and tactical differences will be more difficult to overcome, but unity in action should at least create a better climate of understanding among those genuinely working for socialist revolution.

New tax will favour bosses, and hit workers

The announcement by the 26-County government on the 30th of March last that it is to introduce the system of taxation known as *value-added tax*, to replace the turnover and wholesale taxes at present in operation, is another major step in the complete sell-out to big-business interests which is necessary in order that this country may join the Common Market.

Value-added tax is a tax imposed on the value added at each stage of production, which means the total of cash received by the owner less the total value of the stock of material used in the product. The figure thus arrived at is equal to profits + depreciation + total labour cost. Thus, the tax has a broader base than the present taxes based on profits alone (income tax and corporation profits tax). What this amounts to is shifting the burden of the tax from profits to labour cost in each business. This will encourage the substitution of capital for labour because it will ease the tax on capital and impose a tax on labour. So-called 'labour-saving investments' would be encouraged because of the increased cost of labour by that part of the tax which falls on the workers' wages.

This tax is at present in operation in five of the six Common Market countries, with the sixth — Italy — agreeing to adopt it on the 1st of January 1972. The adoption of value-added tax by these labour-exploiting countries is a direct result of the ever-increasing demands of capitalist governments to get more profits, at whatever cost to the working population, in order to keep their countries running in the interest of monopoly capital. These governments have reached saturation point with direct taxation (i.e., taxes on income and, to a minor degree, on wealth) and have increasingly resorted to indirect taxation as a means of getting money to pay back loans borrowed from the same business interests.

Value-added tax falls exclusively on the domestic consumer and is a regressive tax which hits hardest those who are least able to pay: the workers.

There are two main elements in the demand for this indirect tax: firstly, tax must be got from somewhere, and the most obvious way to get it is from those who can afford to pay; big business enterprises and those who have unearned wealth. But since capitalist governments are run by those same business interests, there has been in recent years continuous pressure to reduce the tax already charged on this source and to introduce value-added tax. This of course is what has been one in the Common Market countries, and corporation profits tax has either been kept at the same level, or actually cut (the Conservative government in England has just done this and of course our own native capitalists, not to be outdone, are braying ever louder for the same thing here).

The second element of the demand for value-added tax is the obsession that all capitalist countries have with exports. No matter how the people suffer, exports must be increased at all costs, otherwise the imperialist countries collapse for want of markets. Value-added tax is not charged on exports: all the tax charged up to the exporting stage can be recovered. The desired result is that all countries will charge the same value-added tax, so that the capitalists won't be hampered by differing rates of tax in different countries.

The government has gone to great pains since June of last year to point out that the rate of value-added tax will not cause a rise in prices and will be charged at the same rate as the present turnover and wholesale taxes. We are indeed grateful, and can rest assured that this will be so (has anyone ever known a Minister to break his bond?) The government can afford to say this in the short term, having already, in anticipation of the opposition which would ensue from the introduction of value-added tax at a higher level, doubled turnover and wholesale tax in the last budget. The 'political commentators' and the 'opposition' could not understand why an inflationary budget was introduced at a time when the 'economy' was in crisis — now we know. Nor has any guarantee been given that turnover and wholesale tax will not be raised again before next January. Even if this is not done, since there is a broader base more tax will be passed on to the consumer and so there will most certainly be a rise in prices.

The Minister for Finance has asked that recommendations and suggestions be submitted to the Revenue Commissioners. This is a major issue for trade unions since it is the workers who will bear the burden of this tax, in three principal ways:

1 — *The value-added tax is a tax on labour* and a shift from corporation profits tax. Thus there will be a continuous effort to use capital-intensive as distinct from labour-intensive means of production.

2 — *The tax affects most heavily the industries which are least able to pay.* Only businesses which make a profit are subject to corporation profits tax; now, as is already the case with turnover and wholesale tax, taxes will be charged but on a much broader level on the wages of the workers. The burden is eased on companies making a huge profit. 'Investors' will be encouraged to pull out of declining areas and move to high-profit areas, adding to the closures already taking place as a result of the Anglo-Irish 'free trade' agreement.

3 — *The tax burden will be borne entirely by the consumer*, and this means the worker, and if not now certainly later the inevitable rise in prices will follow.



McQuaid's interference in state affairs

There are many Roman Catholic clerics in Ireland who act as if they were superior to the Roman pontiff himself, but none behave as arrogantly or as brazenly as John Charles McQuaid, archbishop of Dublin.

Dr McQuaid's pastoral letter on the controversial subject of contraception was a scarcely-veiled ultimatum to Dáil deputies and senators warning them off any change in the legal position regarding the availability of contraceptives.

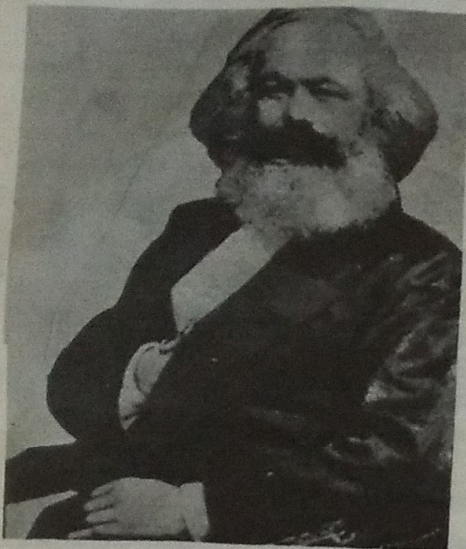
Dr McQuaid may be within his authority in issuing an edict to members of his own church who will ultimately judge the correctness, or otherwise, of his action as it affects them. But when the archbishop attempts to extend to citizens not members of the Roman Catholic church an authority which they do not recognise and publicly reject, it is time for all supporters of democratic methods of government to call a halt to such actions.

Dr McQuaid's concept of an 'objective moral law' existing outside and above human society is not acceptable to many people in Ireland and hundreds of millions of people outside this country. Declarations by one Irish archbishop do not change this world reality. The archbishop's letter involves not

only the arguments for and against the availability of contraceptives, but also the question of who rules the 26-County state, church or Dáil? Government Ministers and many TDs have been at pains in recent years to deny allegations from Six-County politicians that the Roman Catholic church exercised an inordinate amount of influence on government policy in the 26 Counties. If they have to bow to the archbishop's crosier in public and repeat the sorry spectacle of the 1951 sell-out of Noel Browne's mother-and-child scheme, how can they justify their claims that freedom of conscience exists in the 26 Counties?

The Pope, more conscious of the world as it exists than Dr McQuaid, recently received President Tito of Yugoslavia in the Vatican. In his address of welcome he said: "For itself, the church only asks the legitimate freedom of carrying out its spiritual ministry and of offering its loyal services to man, without any personal interest foreign to its religious and moral mission. Awareness of the nature, and at the same time of the limits, of this mission . . . is a guarantee against every fear of undue interference of the church in the field of the sovereign and legitimate competence of the state."

SOCIALISM — workers' control of the economy and state



Marx

Socialism is a political and economic system under which the means of production, distribution and exchange are collectively owned by the workers.

In the 19th century, with the start of industrialisation and the growth of factories, workers began to band together to fight against their exploitation and poor conditions. These first workers' organisations were the trade unions. They quickly learned the strike weapon and how to force employers to concede to their demands for better pay and conditions.

Some of the early trade unionists dreamed of a social order in which there would be no oppression of man by man, and equality, justice and abundance would flourish everywhere. Some believed that these ideals could be realised without a fight against the people's oppressors, and these were called *utopian socialists*. Others believed that the trade unions alone could take control and establish a socialist system, and these were called *syndicalists*. The first socialist ideas grew from the early organisations of the industrial workers in their fight against the new class of factory-owners or *capitalists*.

The next development on the road to socialism came from the studies of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. They proved scientifically that capitalism was a historical stage in the development of man, just as tribalism and feudalism were in their day. They showed that capitalism divided society into two *classes*: the working class, who sell their labour in exchange for wages, and the capitalist class, who own the factories and workplaces and take a share of the profits produced by the workers. Marx and Engels showed that as capitalism developed, the workers would become aware of their position in society and demand a larger share of the wealth they were producing and a greater say in the running of their own affairs. This *class consciousness*, which was being expressed by organised labour in the economic demands of the trade unions, would later develop to political demands. The inevitable result of the conflict between capital and labour would be the removal of a small exploiting class and its replacement by the mass working class. Marx

died in 1883 and Engels in 1895. Neither of them lived to see the establishment of the first socialist state and the proof that their theory of *scientific socialism* was correct.

In all countries, the scientific socialists or *Marxists* became the leaders of the working class struggle. In Ireland, James Connolly was organising and educating in the trade unions and through his papers and pamphlets. Connolly analysed Irish history using, as he said, "the key to history as set forth by Karl Marx, the greatest of modern thinkers and first of scientific socialists." Connolly's book *Labour in Irish History* is the only history of Ireland ever written from the socialist viewpoint, and, needless to say, it has never been used as a text-book in Irish schools. After the rising of 1916 Connolly was shot by special request of the Dublin businessmen. They realised, only too well, the strength of the organised Dublin workers.

While Connolly was organising in Ireland, another scientific socialist, V I Lenin, was organising in Russia. Lenin's adaptation of scientific Marxist principles to the working-class struggle led to the establishment of the first socialist state in the history of mankind. The victory of the socialist revolution in 1917 initiated radical changes. The Russian workers nationalised the banks and industrial enterprises and took control of production. The land and the mineral wealth became the socialist property of the workers' state. All education and health services were made free of charge, and the economic basis of exploitation was done away with.

Today, there are many socialist states in the world in various stages of development. In Africa and South America, many of the former colonies have turned against the exploitation of their former rulers. These countries form a bulwark against capitalism and have made the world a very small place for the exploiters of labour. The economic and military strength of the socialist states is a firm guarantee to the workers of the capitalist countries of Europe and North America of the inevitable destruction of capitalism and the establishment of socialism.

Lenin



The wrong tactics

On Saturday 21 August a protest meeting was held in Dublin by a group called the Committee of Trade Unionists Opposed to Internment. Notices appeared in the papers in the preceding week inviting the support of trade unionists for the demonstration. The address of the committee is 30 Gardiner Place, headquarters of Sinn Féin (Gardiner Place). A crowd of approximately 2,000 attended the meeting at the GPO.

After the speeches, the meeting formed up into a parade and marched first to the Dáil and then to the British embassy where protest notes were handed in. The stewards were members of the 'official' republicans of Gardiner Place. Of these fourteen stewards, eleven are not members of trade unions. The parade was led by a car affixed with loudspeakers and bedecked in Sinn Féin (Gardiner Place) posters declaring *Boycott British*. The loudspeakers played such records as *God save Ireland* and *A nation once again*. In case any workers were worried about the effect of such a boycott on British goods, a Sinn Féin (Gardiner Place) statement would console them. "We realise", it said, "that such a boycott may affect Irish workers employed by British-owned firms here, but the hardship they will endure is a small price to pay".

On arrival at the British embassy, the voice on the loudspeaker became more and more excited as the crowd poured around the corner of Merrion Square and piled up outside the embassy. "Keep in formation... we are a peaceful protest" said the loudspeaker voice. The protest note was handed in and there was the now-traditional burning of a Union Jack. The crowd was still arriving when the Sinn Féin car announced that they were moving off. As the loudspeaker voice threatened "We are moving off" there were shouts of "So what... Who cares?... Piss off". A section of the crowd then followed the car up Merrion Square to shouts of "Sell-out!"

It was then that the first bottle was thrown. There was a rush of police towards a section of the crowd and more breaking glass. There was scuffling as the police dragged someone to a police van. The Sinn Féin car and the section of the crowd that had followed rushed back when the scuffling started. The familiar call of the loudspeaker went unheeded: "We ask you to follow this car... This is a peaceful protest". The crowd surged around the police vans shouting "Let them out". Some sat on the road blocking the vans.

At this point the chief steward, a well-known member of Sinn Féin (Gardiner Place), approached a Dublin trade unionist member of any political organisation and threatened him with physical

violence if he did not move from the roadway, and exclaimed "You keep away from our public meetings, you only want to cause trouble!"

The Sinn Féin car appealed to the now hostile crowd: "There is nothing you can do... The men have been arrested: march to Store Street and we'll try and get them released". Some marchers attempted to overturn a police van and then Superintendent Kennedy, the police officer in charge, offered to release the man if the crowd moved off. There were agreeable noises from the crowd, and the man was released. He was chaired up the street, and the march resumed around Merrion Square.

At the far side of the square the Sinn Féin car stopped again. Matt Merrigan and Des Geraghty repeated the worn-out cliché once again: "This was a peaceful protest... There was more booing and cat-calling. The crowd pushed past the car and dispersed toward the city, discarding their placards on the roadway as they went.

The whole disgusting affair can best be summarised by the old jingle:

The Grand old Duke of York,
He had ten thousand men,
He marched them up to the top of the hill
And he marched them down again.

It is to be hoped that the trade unionists who participated in this protest learned the lesson, not to surrender their leadership to political opportunists and publicity-seekers. For their part, Sinn Féin (Gardiner Place) have not learned any lesson, as it was exactly the same form of stunt that led to their offices being stoned by hostile crowds during the troubles of August 1969.

Do we need tourism?

All summer long, on the Sunday night television news, we are treated to the same embarrassing spectacle. Not the bit of film of the bishop and the pilgrims at the holy well, nor the other bit about the Old IRA laying a wreath. No, the news item that makes you want to throw up is the piece where we see the Queen of the Mushrooms, the Goosegob Princess or Queen of the Ballyshekels Porridge Festival, accompanied by her maidens, sailing down the canal to be crowned by the chairman of the county council, in red breeches and a tricorn hat.

We are then treated to a close-up of the blushing maidens, wearing green shawls and silver paper tiaras and carrying cardboard harps. Next, there is the interview with the organiser of the festival, who turns out to be (surprise, surprise) chairman of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, a graduate in economics of UCD and a son of the local Fianna Fáil gombeen-man. He tells us that the

festival was designed to attract tourists to the town — or, to be more exact, to his father's hotel and his uncle's pub.

The camera then pans around to show one or two of the local bachelors in their Sunday collars, eating mushrooms or strawberries or what you like and looking as comfortable as if they had come without their trousers. The nauseating affair is rounded off with a jolly quip and a phoney grin from Charles Mitchell. If all this sounds far-fetched, just look in next Sunday and see.

Now let us take an unemotional look at what is behind all this tomfoolery. Firstly, nobody would object to people enjoying themselves. But the Irish are not as extrovert as some other people. Your average Spaniard, for example, can do a flamenco at a railway station with a bottle of vino in one hand and a sefforita draped over the other, and not a bother to him. But an Irishman at a fiesta would be in a corner drinking his bottle of Guinness and hoping people weren't looking at him. The second argument in favour of these festivals is that they attract tourists (=money) to the town. Well, even the most gullible American tourists are not going to believe that these ghastly charades are what the high kings of Ireland did on their days off. And even if they did, how does the money come 'to the town'? In fact, any money coming 'to the town' is going to the hoteliers, publicans and shopkeepers.

The whole prostitution of Irish culture and the ridiculing of hard-working country people as gnomes and leprechauns is carried out in order to grease the palms of the gombeen class. Bad enough, but it is the representatives of the same gombeen class, the rural TDs of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, who sold out Irish industry to the British monopolies under the Anglo-Irish 'free trade' agreement and now propose to sell what's left to the EEC monopolies.

As the industry goes, and the self-respecting workers drift to England following the jobs, the country is being turned into one big holiday camp. The tired European or American businessman (tired from exploiting his emigrant Irish workers) will come to Ireland and be welcomed by a gombeen hotelier. And there'll be no shortage of Paddys to carry his bags or Biddys (hostesses to you) to serve him mediaeval banquet. The rest of us can dress up in green tweed and shamrocks and treat them to 'festivals' of Oirish culture.

Time is running out for the Irish nation. The depleted number of rural workers and small farmers can do little to combat their deliberate extinction. It is the demands of industrial workers, organised in trade unions and working-class parties, that can break the back of capitalism and with it the hold of the parasitic gombeen class. In this coming struggle, the rural workers and small farmers must realise that their future lies not with the local 'party man' but with the organised working class and the socialist movement.

Socialist Party explained

The Socialist Party of Ireland was formed in January of this year by a group of Dublin working people frustrated by the inability — and in many cases, unwillingness — of existing so-called socialist organisations to seriously undertake the long and difficult task of organising and leading the working class — the 'incorruptible inheritors' of the struggle for the re-conquest of Ireland.

The main issue facing the Irish people today is British imperial domination of the whole country, indirectly in the South and directly in the North. As a result of this domination, there are over 100,000 people unemployed in the 32 counties (approximately 7% of the whole working population) and this figure is being added to almost daily by closures and redundancies.

The disastrous attempt to drag the country into the EEC exploiters' club, despite the rising tide of opposition, would, if it were successful, drastically worsen the situation, leading to even more unemployment and emigration, and more anti-union and anti-worker laws.

The time has come to declare the alternative to the destruction of the Irish nation, and, despite what the reformers and 'improvers' of capitalism have said, there is only one alternative: socialism.

Much has been said and written about socialism, by all kinds of people, over the last few years; and yet, very little

has been done to put any of the thinking or talking into effect in the only way that counts: building the organisation that will organise, educate and lead the working people in the struggle for socialism.

At the same time, no-one seems able to agree on what exactly socialism is; many have forgotten (or never known) the meaning of the term, which is: the public ownership of the means of producing and distributing wealth, in a state in which democracy applies in economic as well as political life, under the leadership of the working class.

In this struggle, the Socialist Party of Ireland regards as its main tasks:

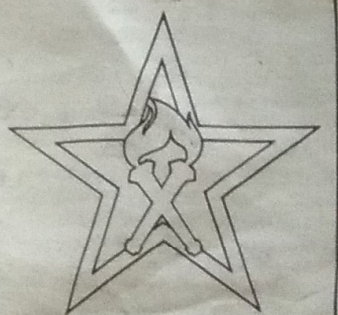
- participating in the day-to-day economic and political struggles of the working people;
- leading the working people to an awareness of their real political position and of the need for them to take state power in order to abolish capitalism and establish workers' control of the economy;
- the strengthening of the alliance between the working class and the mass of the small farmers and other sections of the people oppressed by capitalism;
- co-operating with other groups for the achievement of national independence;
- encouraging solidarity between the Irish working class and the working class of other countries.

On policy, our stand is clear and unequivocal: the complete abolition of what James Connolly described as 'the most foreign thing in Ireland' — capitalism — and the building of socialism in a free Ireland.

The Socialist Party of Ireland

To apply for membership of the Socialist Party, or for any further information, fill out this coupon and post it to:

The Socialist Party of Ireland
105 Silloge Road
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