

JAMES CONNOLLY

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# SOCIALISM AND NATIONALISM



Political and Social freedom are not two separate and unrelated ideas, but are two sides of the one great principle, each being incomplete without the other.

*James Connolly*

DUBLIN

AT THE SIGN OF THE THREE CANDLES

# SOCIALISM AND NATIONALISM

*A selection from the writings  
of*

JAMES CONNOLLY

with introduction and notes by

DESMOND RYAN

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## INTRODUCTION

### JAMES CONNOLLY AND IRISH NATIONALISM

IT was the life-long conviction of James Connolly that the struggle of Ireland for national independence and the struggles of the workers, the small farmers and the mass of the people for social freedom, for life, liberty, happiness and security were in reality, not two distinct struggles, but one. These essays of his grouped under the title of *Socialism and Nationalism* could be expressed in some simple statement of the kind.

A vague legend has been in circulation since his death that Connolly, in his last years came to recant this conviction without which his whole life, with the exception of Easter Week, is meaningless and his work in the Labour movement over three decades a wasted effort. It has even been said : "James Connolly died an Irish Republican and an Irish Catholic. That is the simple truth. He was a Socialist for many years of his life because he was an enemy of injustice to the poor and thought that in Socialism was the remedy for that injustice. Towards the end of his unselfish, courageous life he saw that in traditional Irish Nationhood, with full freedom and separation from England, lay the cure for all our ills." So writes Brian O'Higgins in his booklet, *Easter Week*, 1916, clasping hands for once with Seán O'Casey in the declaration that Easter Week gave Irish Nationalism an advocate and lost Irish Labour a leader. Nicholas Mansergh in *Ireland in the Age of Reform and Revolution* seems to express subdued agreement with similar views : "James Connolly was to the Labour movement what Arthur Griffith was to Sinn Féin. His most notable achievement was that in 1916 he succeeded in effecting a junction between revolutionary Labour and revolutionary National forces as represented



respectively by the Citizen Army and the Irish Volunteers. Before the war the possibility of such fusion appeared extremely remote. Connolly had always emphasised strongly the national side to the Labour programme, more strongly, indeed, than could be sympathised with by many Trade Unionists and yet despite this, the division between him and the various nationalist organisations was very great. 'Only the Irish working class,' said Connolly, 'remain as the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for freedom in Ireland.' The implications of such a statement could never be accepted by the nationalist organisations, largely dependent for support on the agricultural community.<sup>1</sup> And in 1898 in the opening number of the *Workers' Republic* Connolly declared, 'We are Republicans because we are Socialists.' While Connolly was never a rigid doctrinaire, yet the dependence of national on socialist aims was repugnant to the majority of Irishmen whose outlook accorded ill with the conception of a fundamental economic struggle essentially international in character."

In the pages that follow, James Connolly himself replies to similar criticisms, and with no lack of clearness, as he defines and re-defines, in the spirit of a famous passage<sup>2</sup> in almost the last of his declarations of policy, what his beliefs and principles in the matter of Socialism and Nationalism are. What he writes in 1897 may strike some reader as belonging to 1914 or what he wrote in 1914 as belonging to 1897, although that is certainly not to say that Connolly stopped thinking in 1897: he was always examining and re-examining his position in the light of the circumstances and situation that faced him. Dead formulas and stately commonplaces never intimidated him: as he said of Wolfe Tone: "We are told to imitate Wolfe Tone, but the greatness of Wolfe Tone lay in the fact that he imitated nobody."

From the moment in 1896 when he launched the first manifesto of the Irish Socialist Republican Party down to the moment

in April 1916 when, as a leader in an armed uprising, he signed the Republican Proclamation with its declaration that the right of the Irish people to the "ownership of Ireland" and to "the unfettered control of Irish destinies" was "sovereign and indefeasible," that had been Connolly's message.

One of the first manifestoes of the Irish Socialist Republican Party drafted by Connolly in 1896 declares that "the private ownership, by a class, of the land and the instruments of production, distribution and exchange . . . is the fundamental basis of all oppression, national, political and social. The subjection of one nation to another, as of Ireland to the authority of the British Crown, is a barrier to the free political and economic development of the subjected nation, and can only serve the interests of the exploiting classes of both nations."

In the preface to *Labour in Irish History* in 1910 Connolly gives as the two propositions on which this greatest work of his is based, first, that the progress of the fight for national liberty of any subject nation must necessarily keep pace with the progress of the struggle of the most subject class in that nation, and, second, that as the Irish middle class is bound by a thousand economic strings to English capitalism "only the Irish working class remain as the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for freedom in Ireland."

It is for this teaching, and the devoted life-work which upheld it in so many ways, that James Connolly stands out among the men of his time and more than among the men of his time; as the champion of political and social freedom for all Irishmen and Irishwomen, and the one Socialist among the leaders of militant Irish nationalism he stands alone.

Not all Connolly is to be found in his writings. Sometimes he comes more to life in a letter to a friend or in some witty retort to a heckler.<sup>3</sup> Large tracts of his early writings, despite brilliant flashes of eloquence and insight, may seem dry, doctrinaire and remote to a reader who is ignorant of the circum-

stances in which they were written, above all to a reader not familiar with the controversies and currents of opinion in the Labour and Socialist movement in which Connolly formed his mind and policy. Inevitably, too, in a struggling life of toil and tragedy in the day to day arguments of the propagandist hurly-burly, Connolly was driven to repeat himself. It was during his exile in the United States that Connolly reached his maturity as a political thinker, and beyond question his finest writings belong to the last eight years of his life, during his leadership of the 1913 Lockout in Dublin and the 1916 Rising. Yet the early essays given here will prove the unity of all this great man's thought and work and show beyond a doubt that he had nearly as clear a view and as firm a philosophy in 1896 as in 1916. Compare, for instance, his writings on the first World War with the extracts cited in this volume from his first *Workers' Republic*. There is no need for any maudlin apologies for the most vital and consistent thing about him ; his Socialism. Any careful reader will note how deeply Connolly saw from the beginning into the very roots of the social system, into the causes of economic and national evils, into the basis of the capitalist system and modern imperialism.

The written word remains and the spoken word is gone, all the reasoned fire of speech that once made Connolly a force in the Labour and Socialist movement of two continents, the pertinacious intensity known best to his friends, and with the passing of his contemporaries the memory of that will be lost.

His old colleague, Thomas Bell, who knew him intimately in his Scottish Socialist propaganda days records in *Pioneering Days* that his quiet and reticent manner concealed a real store of knowledge and experience, but provoked into discussion or debate, "he would rout opponents with incisive and merciless logic. . . . I learned much from Connolly. I carried the platform and took the chair for him at his meetings. He took great pains to coach us and assist us in becoming public

speakers. He would arrange to put one of us up for ten minutes before he took the meeting. Afterwards he would give us friendly criticism and words of encouragement to do better and better. Connolly's speeches were a model of simplicity, conciseness and burning class invective ; always backed up by quotations and statistics of fact. Being Irish, he excelled in repartee ; his ready wit silencing all opposition, though he went to no end of pains to clear up doubts in the minds of workers honestly seeking the truth." 4

Some such picture of Connolly dominated the friendly reader of his writings in his own lifetime, some such picture as his daughter Mrs. Nora Connolly O'Brien has given in *Portrait of a Rebel Father*. There she quotes him : "It is a mistake when trying to convert people, to look for something to differ upon in order to show how smart you are. You should always seek for some point upon which you can agree ; then when that point is established and agreed upon by both, the path to agreement on vital points will become smooth and easy." This saying preserves the spirit of the argument Connolly carried on with the Nationalists of Ireland and the outcome of that argument from its beginnings to the end.

Sayings of his survive which also summarise many a crisis in his stormy and dramatic life. Of his life in a Dublin tenement : "I cannot go back into the Dublin slums again to live. One experience of that is enough for a lifetime." Or again : "The greatest mistake of my life was to go to America, my second greatest was to leave it." On the outbreak of the first World War : "Twice in my time the opportunity for a fight against England came, but it was not taken. But by God ! I won't let it pass this time." Or on the steps of Liberty Hall as he was leading his men into the 1916 Rising : "We are marching out to be slaughtered." To his wife and daughter in Dublin Castle when he lay a wounded and doomed man : "Be sure if they courtmartial me in bed, they will not hesitate to shoot

me in bed " and again, " Hasn't it been a full life and isn't this a good end ? " To his courtmartial, " You can shoot me if you like ! " And to the firing squad : " I will pray for all brave men who do their duty according to their lights."

This epigrammatic quality at its best revealed the man Connolly was and it often comes suddenly in some casual note in his newspapers or lights up some ephemeral essay. Once in his later Dublin days, some friends urged Connolly to colour his speeches more with rhetoric and the tricks and flourishes which delight the Dublin groundlings and wits alike. The reply was instantaneous and intense : " They'll get no moonshine from me. I'd rather talk honestly to four or five earnest men than win unthinking applause from a thousand who would forget what I'd said five minutes after the meeting." 5

Besides sincerity there was something else behind his terseness and honesty, something which he himself called bigotry, a bigotry against capitalism, imperialism and all oppression, social, economic, class, sex and national. In the *Glasgow Socialist*, July 1904, he put the matter thus :

" The Socialist party that does not believe in itself, which does not cherish as its dearest belief the doctrine that it and it alone is destined to carry the banner of Socialism to a triumphant issue, is bound, sooner or later, to die of dry rot, or become a prey to the machinations of intriguers or the doubts of weaklings.

" What holds good of the individual holds good of the party. The individual only succeeds in the degree in which he believes in himself ; and similarly the party whose members have the moral fibre to act up to that belief will win, and adverse storms but strengthen its determination and stiffen its resolve.

" Hence my admiration for the bigot, the man of no compromise, the good hater, the relentless fighter, whoever and wherever he may be—the man who wars to the knife, and the knife to the hilt."

It was this bigotry in action that helped to build up a conscious

Labour movement in the trying circumstances of Connolly's career as a Socialist propagandist in the dead and disillusioned atmosphere of Ireland in the 'nineties, that made him so successful a mass leader in the industrial battles of Irish Labour from 1911 onwards, that drew from Pearse as the Rising approached the heart-felt praise : " Connolly is more outspoken and determined than Lalor in '48." All through Connolly's first years as a Socialist propagandist in Dublin, this quality breaks out in picturesque demonstrations to embroider his fiery and thoughtful Socialist and Republican manifestoes.

Writing to his friend, Keir Hardie, from an Edinburgh address in July 1894, James Connolly describes himself " as an Irishman who has always taken a keen interest in the advanced movements in Ireland," warns Hardie that the two warring Irish political factions, Parnellites and anti-Parnellites are not friendly to the Labour movement, but declares that " there is the nucleus of a strong Labour movement in Ireland, which only needs judicious handling to flutter the dove-cots in the Home Rule interest." Connolly's further advice is a very accurate picture of his own conduct of meetings : " Now if you were to visit Dublin and address a good meeting there, putting it strong and straight, without reference to either of the two Irish parties, but rebellious, anti-monarchial and outspoken on the fleecings of both landlord and capitalist, and the hypocrisy of both political parties for a finale."

Connolly's old friend, J. Bruce Glasier, gave a vivid snapshot of James Connolly and his " bigotry " in action in an amusing article in *The Clarion* for March 1900 (an article in which Connolly saw nothing humorous, and took occasion to sum up his old friend's political evolution sharply as that of a " revolutionary " for which everything had been once too moderate, and a later a " moderate " for which everything had been too extreme). Glasier, indeed, in his sketch shows Connolly's attitude to him when he came as a Fabian lecturer to Ireland :

"Coming down from the platform of the Trades Hall, Dublin, a few months ago, an old fellow-agitator who used to hold forth with me in Edinburgh in the halcyon days of the Socialist League, gave me his hand chillily and remarked :

"And so, Glasier, you have become a Fabian !"

"Great heavens, no !" I exclaimed. "Why, man alive, I'm only——." But my old friend departed, sorrowfully, without listening to me, and, a few weeks later, on the occasion of Mr. Chamberlain's visit to Dublin, he was descried stampeding with a mob through the streets, brandishing the Boer flag, and shouting for an Irish Republic and the defeat of Britain in the Transvaal !

"How I envied him his self-indulgence and irresponsibility ! How straight and broad, but ah ! how exhilarating seemed the path along which he was careering with the policemen at his heels !"

("How I envied his self-restraint and sense of responsibility !" was Connolly's own retort in a very tart reply which appeared in *Justice*, the Social Democratic Federation organ shortly after).

The thoughtful reader will find in these essays that follow a blend of general and particular. They bear the general title of *Socialism and Nationalism*, and they give us Connolly's views on Ulster, on politics, on the language movement, on the first World War. They begin in the years when the Republican and Labour movements were only slowly groping a way out of the general apathy that had fallen over Ireland after the death of Parnell some seven years before, and they end on a note of inflexible defiance and prophetic insight as Connolly is preparing to join with his Republican allies for insurrection. Two years of struggle lay ahead, and Connolly's final writings belong almost exclusively to the last *Workers' Republic*, few of which are included here.<sup>6</sup> Nor are there to be found here those essays that describe minutely in his own words his fights as a leader of the Dublin Labour upheaval of 1913. There is, however, a very essential part of Connolly here, his

whole philosophy of Nationalism and Socialism, and a very journal of his philosophy in action. It will be found he delights in "analysing and perpetually defining and re-defining" his principles, with his thoughts near the sky and his feet on the earth. The well-known passage mentioned some pages back belongs to January 1916 when once again Connolly defines his programme. Yet in the opening essay in this volume, we find Connolly in January 1897, warning the Irish Separatists that there is a danger by "too strict an adherence to their present methods of propaganda, and consequent neglect of vital living issues, they may only succeed in stereotyping our historical studies into a worship of the past, or crystallising nationalism into a tradition—glorious and heroic indeed, but still only a tradition." Connolly's method and ideal are given in the words :

"If you remove the English army to-morrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organisation of the Socialist Republic your efforts would be in vain. England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through her financiers, through the whole array of commercial and individualist institutions she has planted in this country and watered with the tears of our mothers and the blood of our martyrs . . . *Nationalism without Socialism—without a reorganisation of society on the basis of a broader and more developed form of that common property which underlay the social structure of Ancient Erin—is only national recreancy.*"

Connolly is in full revolt already against "that system of capitalism and landlordism, of which the British Empire is the most aggressive type and resolute defender." Already he asks that question he is to press upon the Nationalists of Ireland—and at an early stage Connolly had defined the Republican and Separatist groups as "the real Nationalists of Ireland . . . men of broad human sympathies and intense democracy"—the dreaded question that cannot be suppressed : "When you



talk of freeing Ireland, do you only mean the chemical elements which compose the soil of Ireland or is it the Irish people you mean, and then, from what do you propose to free them ? ” 7

There is about Connolly the quality of seer and prophet, and it may be admitted that Connolly had something of the mystery and also the defects of the seer and prophet. It was said of Marx and Engels whose famous *Communist Manifesto* influenced Connolly's early thought that “ the further their glance penetrated into the future the nearer it appeared to them.” In consequence, declares Franz Mehring, Marx's biographer, if not a thousand years out in their forecasts of historical development, they were certainly in error to the tune of decades while in certain respects history proceeded differently and less quickly than they had predicted. This criticism might be applied to Connolly with the reservation that as one reads him after the many changes, wars, revolutions, and the course of events in his own country since his death, there is no doubt Connolly has proved a seer and a prophet. And in 1897 and in 1916 alike, James Connolly asks the same question, and gives the same answer, although an answer much amplified and clarified in those nineteen years of militant, thorough-going, and unceasing struggle.

When Connolly launched his Irish Socialist Republican Party in the Dublin of 1896, his crusade seemed a fantastic and forlorn crusade and yet even the most conservative among his future allies in the several camps that then made up the rising Irish-Ireland movement respected his sincerity and fire and strength of purpose while upon the working class movement his teaching and influence made a deep impression. When Connolly advocated Socialism he was not slow to define what he understood by it. “ A Socialist Republic,” he wrote in the *Workers' Republic* of August 27, 1898, “ is the application to agriculture and industry, to the farm, the field, the workshop of the democratic principle, of the republican ideal.” Or again

in the same paper for June 10, 1899: "State ownership and control is not necessarily Socialism—if it were, then the Army, the Navy, the Police, the Judges, the Gaolers, the Informers, and the Hangmen would all be Socialist Functionaries, as they are all State officials—but the ownership by the State of all the land and materials for labour, combined with the co-operative control by the workers of such land and materials would be Socialism . . . to the cry of the middle-class reformers, "Make this or that the property of the government," we reply, "Yes, in proportion as the workers are ready to make the government their property." Already we have the germ of what Connolly expands, seventeen years later, in his *Re-Conquest of Ireland*<sup>8</sup>: "A system of society in which the workshops, factories, docks, railways, shipyards, etc., shall be owned by the nation, but administered by the Industrial Unions of the respective industries . . . seems best calculated to secure the highest form of industrial efficiency combined with the greatest amount of individual freedom from state despotism. Such a system would, we believe, realise for Ireland the most radiant hopes of all her heroes and martyrs."

During those seventeen years much had happened to underline the warning issued by Connolly in a manifesto when he arrived in Dublin in 1896—a warning that summarises not only what he amplifies in *Labour in Irish History*, but the political policy he upheld throughout his life: <sup>9</sup>

"The struggle for Irish freedom has two aspects: it is national and it is social. Its national ideal can never be realised until Ireland stands forth before the world a nation free and independent. It is social and economic, because no matter what the form of government may be, as long as one class owns as their private property the land and instruments of labour, from which all mankind derive their substance, that class will always have it in their power to plunder and enslave the remainder of their fellow-creatures . . . .

“Every Irish movement of the last two hundred years has been either agrarian and social, and in the hunt after some temporary abatement of agricultural distress has been juggled into forgetfulness of the vital principles which lie at the base of the claim for National Independence, or else it has been national and under the guidance of middle-class and aristocratic leaders who either did not understand the economic basis of oppression and so neglected the strongest weapon in their armoury, or understanding it, were selfish enough to see in the national movement little else than a means whereby, if successful, they might intercept and divert into the pockets of the Irish middle class a greater share of that plunder which at present, flows across the Channel. The failure of our so-called ‘leaders’ to grasp the grave significance of this two-fold character of the ‘Irish question’ is the real explanation of that paralysis which at constantly recurring periods falls like a blight upon Irish politics. The party which would aspire to lead the Irish people from bondage to freedom must then recognise both aspects of the long-continued struggle of the Irish nation.”

As the pages of *Labour in Irish History* show, here is the outstanding lesson of Irish history for Connolly. Deeply as he loved Ireland and all things Irish, Connolly would insist upon the economic basis of all Irish struggles. His very internationalism is in the spirit of this teaching. During his controversy with William Walker in the *Glasgow Forward*, (May-June, 1911) Connolly declared: “The internationalism of the future will be based upon the free federation of free peoples and cannot be realised through the subjugation of the smaller by the larger political unit.”

This same controversy was notable for several other declarations of Connolly that throw much light upon his philosophy of nationalism. It was his article, “A Plea for Socialist Unity in Ireland,” in *Forward*, May 27, 1911, that precipitated this most significant and instructive debate. Connolly gave his views

of the then existing political situation. Ireland, it seemed to him, was on the eve of a constitutional change in her history : some form of self-government, he argued, seemed certain, not because of the increased fervour of the national demand, not as Tory bigots asserted because of Mr. Redmond's position, but because the interests of no economic class in Ireland, as a class, were bound up with the Union. The Irish landlords, who had indeed, something to fear in the past from a Home Rule Parliament elected by tenant farmers had made their bargain under the various Land Acts, and being economically secure, were politically indifferent, thus leaving only the force of religious bigotry as an assent to Unionism. Every effort would, no doubt, be made in the North to stir up the embers of the dying fire of sectarian rancour. July parades might be imposing, but the actual rush of good trade would remove the best chances of inciting idle mobs. The Orangeman hated the Pope as much as ever, but, thought Connolly, he would show the good sense that pre-eminently distinguished the city by the Lagan, by hating loss of time rioting while he might be making money by working.

In these circumstances—all too optimistically outlined by Connolly who was to meet his death, in part, owing to the germ of caste and religious rancour working like madness in the brain of an Irish British Field Marshal, Connolly proceeded to ask : " Home Rule, then, is almost a certainty in the future. What are Irish Socialists doing in these circumstances ? Are they exercising any statesman-like grasp of the situation or are they peddling along on sterile street corner theorisings without making any effort to consolidate their forces to seize the greater opportunities that are almost at their doors ? " He pointed out that there were two forms of Socialist organisations in the country : the Independent Labour Party and the Socialist Party of Ireland. The first was strongest in the North and the second in the South, although it had one active branch in

Belfast. Causes of existing differences were then outlined. Connolly stressed his wish for one new All-Ireland organisation and urged that the differences were not so serious that they could not be debated inside one united body. He explained that the I.L.P. desired the Socialist movement in Ireland to remain a due-paying organic part of the British movement or else forfeit its title to be considered a part of International Socialism. But the Socialist Party of Ireland contended that the relations between Socialism in Ireland and Great Britain should be "based upon comradeship and mutual assistance and not upon dues-paying, should be fraternal and not organic and should operate by exchange of literature and speakers rather than by attempts to treat as one two peoples of whom one has for seven hundred years nurtured an unending martyrdom rather than admit the unity or surrender its national identity. The Socialist Party of Ireland considers itself the only International party in Ireland, since its conception of Internationalism is that of a free federation of free peoples, whereas that of the Belfast branches of the I.L.P. seems scarcely distinguishable from Imperialism, the merging of subjugated peoples in the political system of their conquerors. For the propagation, universally, of our ideal of a true internationalism there is only required the spread of reason and enlightenment amongst the peoples of the earth, whereas the conceptions of internationalism tacitly accepted by our comrades of the I.L.P. in Belfast require for its spread the flash of the sword of militarism and the roar of a British 80-ton gun."

It was a reference to William Walker that led to the controversy. Connolly declared that he had a great respect for him, but was glad he had been defeated in a recent election in North Belfast : "His victory would have killed the hopes of Socialism among Irish Nationalists the world over. Not only in Ireland, but all over the continents of America and Australia wherever Irishmen live and work, a vote given by Comrade Walker would have

filled the Irish with such unreasoning hatred of the cause that they would have been lost to it for a generation. But imagine what our situation would have been in the rest of Ireland if the only Socialist M.P. had voted against Home Rule!<sup>10</sup> The cause in Ireland would have been completely discredited and damned. Nor would his opposition to Home Rule have softened the wrath or averted the hatred of the loyalists."

In spite of Walker's long struggles and work for the Labour movement in the North of Ireland, including, also, the distinction of being the pioneer among the many Presidents of the Irish Trade Union Congress in a demand in 1904 for political action by the workers through a party of their own, Walker said nothing that deserves quotation or remembrance in the controversy. Apart from Connolly's definition of internationalism,<sup>11</sup> he made the significant statement: "I hold that every class-conscious worker should work for the freedom of the country in which he lives, if he desires to hasten the political power of his class in that country."

Connolly's literary remains consist of one great book, *Labour in Irish History*, some pamphlets—and nearly thirty years' constant propaganda in the columns of the Socialist and Labour Press (indeed for the most part in that Socialist and Labour Press founded and worked by himself): *The Workers' Republic* (August 1898–May 1903); *The Harp* (1908–1910); *The Irish Worker*, 1911–1914; *Forward*, Glasgow (1910–1915); *The Worker*, December 1914–January 1915; and *The Workers' Republic* (May 29, 1915–April 22, 1916). The message and fortunes of those ventures in journalism undertaken wholly by Connolly himself differ very little in outcome. He writes, for instance, in *The Workers' Republic* when the paper resumes in May 1899, after having run for some eleven issues; that the previous effort "brief and meteoric" had been successful inasmuch as "furious opposition had replaced careless toleration." After some thirty further issues, Connolly after a

suspension of the paper for some months, can write on May 12, 1900 : " Our first effort was a financial failure. . . . We say without the least degree of exaggeration that our little paper effected quite a revolution in the popular conception of politics, in the city of Dublin at least. For the first time the great fetish of Home Rule was attacked from the Irish and democratic standpoint and exposed as a mere ' simulacrum of liberty,' a sham and a fraud, supported and advocated by time servers and tricksters. The indignation of the masses was aroused, and by means of the agitation we then initiated against popular leaders (?) participating in loyalist banquets, etc., the tidal wave of middle-class subserviency was arrested ere it reached the people, and hurled back upon its source. Others have taken up the task since then, but to the *Workers' Republic* belongs the credit of having originated the campaign against such slavish junketing with the common enemy. Financially, we failed, and the failure left our members heavily in debt. . . . The second effort failed like the first and for the same reason. . . . In this third attempt, as in our second, the entire work of composing and printing is performed by the voluntary labour of our own members . . . let the soundness of the doctrine preached compensate for the lack of excellence in the printing, and one and all who can afford it rally up with their cash, and we promise them that, uncorrupted by the promises of politicians as unterrified by the threats of Castle police, we shall continue to hold aloft the banner of the Socialist Republic—a Free People in a Free Land."

Some eight years later, James Connolly, in exile in the United States, launched *The Harp*, a man deepened by experience and disillusioned with the ultra-doctrinaire attitude<sup>12</sup> of the particular Marxist group, the Socialist Labour Party with which he had been long in sympathy, and above all with very changed ideas as to the tactics proper to the Irish Labour movement. As he wrote in the *Harp*, May 1909 : " If I would give a slogan to

the Socialist movement to-day it would be : less philosophising and more fighting. No study of philosophy will ever bring Irish workers into the Socialist movement ; when they come they will come as an incident of the struggle for better conditions and, therefore, the closer the policy of Socialism is bound up with the daily struggles of Irish Labour for bread and butter the more Irish will be in our movement. Unionism, the organisation of Labour in the workshop, the robbery of Labour here and now, and not the question of what influence the social organism of the future will have on the morals of the race of the future are what the Irish worker is interested in, and I am inclined to think in that respect he is not so different from the workmen of other races." He had come to believe that "the more pressing work" was "the proper organisation of the Irish working class as a coherent whole under one direction and in one organisation" (*Harp*, January 1910). Very shortly Connolly back in Ireland was to put these developed views to the test of experience.

It is difficult to find a parallel with Connolly amongst the leaders of militant Irish Nationalism who went before him. Fintan Lalor comes to mind and William Thompson of Cork, that wealthy landowner who, one day in 1827, came to the conclusion that he had been living for twelve years on the labours of others and who, thenceforward by his writings and efforts, left a mark on the Labour and Socialist movements of his time, and even more directly influenced the co-operative experiment of Ralahine, a career of thought and effort that even to-day is mainly preserved for Irish readers in the pages of Connolly's writings. As Fintan Lalor left his mark on the men of '48 and the Fenians, so, in turn, James Connolly left an even deeper mark upon the leaders and the militant Irish nationalism of his time. Before he came in direct contact with Connolly and *Labour in Irish History* even such a man as Patrick Pearse could write a vague and rhetorical warning against the dangers



of Socialism. As he saw Connolly and the workers of Dublin making their heroic fight for a principle throughout the long months of the 1913-14 Lockout, Pearse was moved to language that won a tribute from Connolly for its sympathetic understanding: "a pound a week is sufficient to sustain a Dublin family in honest hunger" and "if I were as hungry as many equally good men of Ireland are at this moment, possibly I should be in the streets wielding a paving stone." And on the eve of 1916 as Pearse was formulating his national gospel in his four final pamphlets there was no book he turned to more frequently than the pages of *Labour in Irish History*. The last of the four pamphlets, *The Sovereign People* comes very near to Connolly's own teaching: "the nation's sovereignty over the nation's material resources is absolute . . . all property is held subject to the national sanction."

Here then are some important writings of James Connolly on Socialism and Nationalism. They end in 1914 on a very prophetic note:

"A resurrection! Aye, out of the grave of the first Irish man or woman murdered for protesting against Ireland's participation in this thrice-accursed war there will arise anew the Spirit of Irish Revolution. . . . If you strike at, imprison or kill us, out of our prisons or graves we will still evoke a spirit that will thwart you, and, mayhap, raise a force that will destroy you. We defy you! Do your worst!"

## NOTES

1. "Industrial slaves or slaves acquiescing in the conditions of their slavery cannot furnish the basis of a really free nation. And the agricultural labourer is among the worst treated of all the slaves of Ireland . . . And by bringing to the country labourer the help of the leadership of the town worker, with his greater opportunities of education, association and enlightenment, the alliance of both under one banner should further generally the belief in the future

of labour in this country. We want to see an Ireland in which all classes of labour will be united under one banner, in which each industry will have its own organisation embracing all within that industry, in which all industries will be linked together in one all embracing union, and in which that all-embracing union of labour will give effective expression to the will of labour in the workshop, the field, the factory, the Council Chamber and the Parliament."

*Forward*, July 26, 1913.

2. "The Labour movement delights in analysing and is perpetually defining and re-defining its principles and objects. The man or woman who has caught the spirit of the Labour movement brings that spirit of analysis and definition into all his or her public acts and expects at all times to answer the call to define his or her position. They cannot live on illusions or thrive by them; even should their heads be in the clouds they will make no forward step until they are assured that their feet rest upon the solid earth."

"WHAT IS OUR POLICY?" *Workers' Republic*, January 22, 1916.

3. Connolly's quickness in retort was proverbial. Once a would-be wit kept disturbing his meeting with smart questions and ended by shouting out: "What will win the Derby?" Connolly silenced the questioner with: "A horse but I am surprised at an ass asking!"

4. A similar picture of Connolly was given by his old friend, Murtagh Lyng, in the New York Socialist, *Weekly People*, September 16, 1902, as he began his first lecture tour in U.S.A.: "Connolly is well educated. His education is of that kind which comes from conflict with circumstances and the constant reasoning on and analysing of those circumstances. His whole character has been coloured by these circumstances which have been bitter. He has a deep hatred of those institutions which have weighed so heavily on the working class. Connolly was in early years a nationalist of the extreme type... James Connolly has a profound knowledge of ancient and modern history, especially in its applicability to the problems of social development. He is particularly well versed in Irish history, especially in the revolutionary phases of it. Connolly excels in the following and applying of abstract principles and historical parallels to the ordinary phases of our social life. An indefatigable propagandist and excellent platform speaker, his speeches are mainly marked by close logical reasoning though there is a plentiful play of the imaginative faculty. Connolly has a sledge-hammer repartee."

5. For a similar statement by Connolly, see *Irishman*, May 10, 1930, Frank Robbins, "CONNOLLY AND THOSE WHO DIED WITH HIM."

6. Connolly's writings on 1913 and 1916 will be published in other volumes.

7. In the *Workers' Republic*, July 7, 1900, Connolly expressed the same thought in the well-known passage, used by him on the title page of his pamphlet, *The New Evangel*: "Ireland without her people is nothing to me, and the man who is bubbling over with love and enthusiasm for 'Ireland,' and can yet pass unmoved through our streets and witness all the wrong and suffering, the shame and degradation wrought upon the people of Ireland, aye, wrought by Irishmen upon Irish men and Irish women, without burning to end it, is, in my opinion, a fraud and a liar in his heart, no matter how he loves that combination of chemical elements which he is pleased to call 'Ireland.'"

8. So early as September 2, 1899, Connolly used the phrase "The Re-Conquest of Ireland" and in an article under that title wrote: "Instinctively the labourer feels that every move which lessens his economic subjection to a master raises him a step nearer to the heights of freedom; he gradually recognises that in exact proportion as the workers take control of the work of the country from the hands of private individuals and vest in charge of public bodies representing the Irish people, in the same proportion does Ireland strike from off her limbs the shackles of slavery. By a steady pursuit of this policy the process of the subjection of Ireland can be, in great part, reversed . . . In the course of this socialisation of society, this gradual re-conquest of Ireland, the public boards in question will eventually find their paths crossed by the capitalist Imperial government. Then Labour, from a dominant local, will rise to the position of a dominant national party, and the fight for complete independence will be taken up by the working class already in possession of the internal government of the country."

9. Quoted in "JAMES CONNOLLY" by William O'Brien, *Irishman*, Dublin, May 12, 1928.

10. Connolly in his controversy with William Walker wrote in *Forward*, July 1, 1911: "Keir Hardie was battling for Irish Home Rule when the Liberal Government was filling Irish jails with unconvicted Irish men and women. Bruce Glasier was a member of the Irish Land League in Glasgow in the same stormy time.

H. M. Hyndman sat upon the National Executive of Great Britain of the Irish Land League; Edward Aveling, brilliant expositor of Socialist science was the first man outside Ireland to join formally the Irish Socialist Republican Party; his wife, Eleanor Marx Aveling, daughter of Karl Marx in her *History of the Working-Class Movement in England*, says sympathetically of our national struggle: 'It is certain that the hope of "Ireland a Nation" lies not in her middle-class O'Connells, but in her generous devoted heroic working men and women!' And within a month of its formation in 1896 she wrote to the Dublin organisation offering us whatever help it was in her power to give . . . The whole Socialist press of the world cheered on the Cubans in their rebellion against Spain, and the Filipinos in their insurrection against the United States; in fact, in all the world there is not to be found such an extraordinarily perverted conception of Socialism as that fathered by Comrade Walker. It is . . . a brand of mere parochialism . . . the banner under which it seeks to rally us is not the sacred banner of true internationalism but is instead the shamefaced flag of a bastard Imperialism."

11. To the average non-Socialist Irishman the idea of belonging to an international political party is unthinkable, is obnoxious, and he feels that if he did all the roots of his Irish nature would be dug up. Of course, he generally belongs to a church—the Roman Catholic Church—which is the most international institution in existence. That does not occur to him as atrocious, in fact he is rather proud than otherwise that the Church is spread throughout the entire world, that it overleaps the barriers of civilisation, penetrates into the depths of savagedom, and ignores all considerations of race, colour or nationality . . . But although he would lay down his life for a Church which he boasts of as "Catholic" or universal, he turns with a shudder from an economic or political movement which has the same characteristic.

*Harp*, November, 1909.

12. Personally, I believe that the fact that we still have long platforms and programmes is one of the signs of the comparatively backward state of the Socialist movement, of our unripeness for Social Revolution. On the day that we have so far conquered the mind of the workers that we can safely abolish our platforms and concentrate and express our whole fighting principle in one simple phrase capable of being remembered by the average schoolboy, we will then, and then only, cease to be a propagandist association and become a revolutionary army.

*The Harp*, December, 1908.

## SOCIALISM AND NATIONALISM

**I**N Ireland at the present time there are at work a variety of agencies seeking to preserve the national sentiment in the hearts of the people.

These agencies, whether Irish Language movements, Literary Societies or Commemoration Committees, are undoubtedly doing a work of lasting benefit to this country in helping to save from extinction the precious racial and national history, language and characteristics of our people.

Nevertheless, there is a danger that by too strict an adherence to their present methods of propaganda, and consequent neglect of vital living issues, they may only succeed in stereotyping our historical studies into a worship of the past, or crystallizing nationalism into a tradition—glorious and heroic indeed, but still only a tradition.

Now traditions may, and frequently do, provide materials for a glorious martyrdom, but can never be strong enough to ride the storm of a successful revolution.

If the national movement of our day is not merely to re-enact the old sad tragedies of our past history, it must show itself capable of rising to the exigencies of the moment.

It must demonstrate to the people of Ireland that our nationalism is not merely a morbid idealising of the past, but is also capable of formulating a distinct and definite answer to the problems of the present and a political and economic creed capable of adjustment to the wants of the future.

This concrete political and social ideal will best be supplied, I believe, by the frank acceptance on the part of all earnest nationalists of the Republic as their goal.<sup>1</sup>

Not a Republic, as in France, where a capitalist monarchy with an elective head parodies the constitutional abortions of

England, and in open alliance with the Muscovite despotism brazenly flaunts its apostasy to the traditions of the Revolution.

Not a Republic as in the United States, where the power of the purse has established a new tyranny under the forms of freedom ; where, one hundred years after the feet of the last British red-coat polluted the streets of Boston, British landlords and financiers impose upon American citizens a servitude compared with which the tax of pre-Revolution days was a mere trifle.

No ! the Republic I would wish our fellow-countrymen to set before them as their ideal should be of such a character that the mere mention of its name would at all times serve as a beacon-light to the oppressed of every land, at all times holding forth promise of freedom and plenteousness as the reward of their efforts on its behalf.

To the tenant farmer, ground between landlordism on the one hand and American competition on the other, as between the upper and the nether millstone ; to the wage-workers in the towns, suffering from the exactions of the slave-driving capitalist to the agricultural labourer, toiling away his life for a wage barely sufficient to keep body and soul together ; in fact to every one of the toiling millions upon whose misery the outwardly-splendid fabric of our modern civilisation is reared, the Irish Republic might be made a word to conjure with—a rallying point for the disaffected, a haven for the oppressed, a point of departure for the Socialist, enthusiastic in the cause of human freedom.

This linking together of our national aspirations with the hopes of the men and women who have raised the standard of revolt against that system of capitalism and landlordism, of which the British Empire is the most aggressive type and resolute defender, should not, in any sense, import an element of discord into the ranks of earnest nationalists, and would serve to place us in touch with fresh reservoirs of moral and physical strength

sufficient to lift the cause of Ireland to a more commanding position than it has occupied since the day of Benburb.

It may be pleaded that the ideal of a Socialist Republic, implying, as it does, a complete political and economic revolution would be sure to alienate all our middle-class and aristocratic supporters, who would dread the loss of their property and privileges.

What does this objection mean ? That we must conciliate the privileged classes in Ireland !

But you can only disarm their hostility by assuring them that in a *free* Ireland their "privileges" will not be interfered with. That is to say, you must guarantee that when Ireland is free of foreign domination, the green-coated Irish soldiers will guard the fraudulent gains of capitalist and landlord from "the thin hands of the poor" just as remorselessly and just as effectually as the scarlet-coated emissaries of England do to-day.

On no other basis will the classes unite with you. Do you expect the masses to fight for this ideal ?

When you talk of freeing Ireland, do you only mean the chemical elements which compose the soil of Ireland ? Or is it the Irish people you mean ? If the latter, from what do you propose to free them ? From the rule of England ?

But all systems of political administration or governmental machinery are but the reflex of the economic forms which underlie them.

English rule in England is but the symbol of the fact that English conquerors in the past forced upon this country a property system founded upon spoliation, fraud and murder : that, as the present-day exercise of the "rights of property" so originated involves the continual practice of legalised spoliation and fraud, English rule is found to be the most suitable form of government by which the spoliation can be protected, and an English army the most pliant tool with which

to execute judicial murder when the fears of the propertied classes demand it.<sup>2</sup>

The Socialist who would destroy, root and branch, the whole brutally materialistic system of civilisation, which like the English language we have adopted as our own, is, I hold, a far more deadly foe to English rule and tutelage, than the superficial thinker who imagines it possible to reconcile Irish freedom with those insidious but disastrous forms of economic subjection—landlord tyranny, capitalist fraud and unclean usury ; baneful fruits of the Norman Conquest, the unholy trinity, of which Strongbow and Diarmuid MacMurchadha—Norman thief and Irish traitor—were the fitting precursors and apostles.

If you remove the English army to-morrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organisation of the Socialist Republic your efforts would be in vain.

England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through her financiers, through the whole array of commercial and individualist institutions she has planted in this country and watered with the tears of our mothers and the blood of our martyrs.

England would still rule you to your ruin, even while your lips offered hypocritical homage at the shrine of that Freedom whose cause you had betrayed.

Nationalism without Socialism—without a reorganisation of society on the basis of a broader and more developed form of that common property which underlay the social structure of Ancient Erin—is only national recreancy.

It would be tantamount to a public declaration that our oppressors had, so far, succeeded in inoculating us with their perverted conceptions of justice and morality that we had finally decided to accept those conceptions as our own, and no longer needed an alien army to force them upon us.

As a Socialist I am prepared to do all one man can do to achieve for our motherland her rightful heritage—independence ;



but if you ask me to abate one jot or tittle of the claims of social justice, in order to conciliate the privileged classes, then I must decline.

Such action would be neither honourable nor feasible. Let us never forget that he never reaches Heaven who marches thither in the company of the Devil. Let us openly proclaim our faith : the logic of events is with us.

*Shan Van Vocht*,<sup>3</sup> January, 1897.

## NOTES

1. "Of course, some of our Socialist friends, especially those who have never got beyond the A.B.C. of the question, will remind me that even in a republic the worker is exploited, as for instance in France and the United States. Therefore, they argue, we cannot be republicans. To this I reply : the countries mentioned have only capitalism to deal with. We have capitalism plus a monarchy with its roots deep in the history and thoughts of the people. Get the people to tear up the foul plant of ages—monarchy; and the mushroom growth of a century—capitalism will not long survive the popular uprising . . . To assert that, because exploitation (robbery) of the workers takes place under a republic, we cannot be republicans is the very acme of absurdity. The exploitation of the workers is relatively greater in countries where the workers have the franchise, as in England, than in countries where the workers are unenfranchised as in Russia. Are we therefore opposed to the worker claiming the vote? Socialists cannot be indifferent to monarchy. Indifference is acquiescence, when confronted with an actively hostile principle. The triumph of Socialism means the destruction of monarchy and all its institutions."

*Workers' Republic*, May 12, 1900.

That day sixteen years later,  
Connolly was executed.

2. Our fathers, as in Black '47, knew how to crawl up to the landlord's office, pay his honour his rent, and then crawl home and die of hunger without making any foolish Socialistic interference

with 'the rights of property.' Why just imagine if our fathers had been Socialistic in '47, not a single Irish man, woman or child would have died of hunger, and the human race would have been deprived of the sublime spectacle of a white race perishing of hunger in the midst of plenty rather than violate the principle of private ownership of God's earth. And their sublime self-denial in favour of private ownership of land is all the more remarkable in our fathers when we remember that their private ownership was never heard of in Ireland until the English forced it upon us at the point of the sword, the gibbet and the halter. *Harp*, November, 1909.

3. A monthly Republican magazine edited by Miss Alice Milligan, and published in Belfast.

## PATRIOTISM AND LABOUR

WHAT is Patriotism ? Love of country, someone answers. But what is meant by "love of country ?" "The rich man," says a French writer, "loves his country because he conceives it owes him a duty, whereas the poor man loves his country as he believes he owes it a duty." The recognition of the duty we owe our country is, I take it, the real mainspring of patriotic action ; and our "country," properly understood, means not merely the particular spot on the earth's surface from which we derive our parentage, but also comprises all the men, women and children of our race whose collective life constitutes our country's political existence. True patriotism seeks the welfare of each in the happiness of all, and is inconsistent with the selfish desire for worldly wealth, which can only be gained by the spoliation of less favoured fellow-mortals.<sup>1</sup>

Vicwed in the light of such a definition, what are the claims to patriotism possessed by the moneyed class of Ireland ? The percentage of weekly wages of £1 per week and under received by the workers of the three kingdoms is stated by the Board of Trade report to be as follows :—England, 40 ; Scotland, 50 ; and Ireland, 78 per cent. In other words, three out of every four wage-earners in Ireland receive less than £1 per week. Who is to blame ? What determines the rate of wages ? The competition among workers for employment. There is always a large surplus of unemployed labour in Ireland, and owing to this fact the Irish employer is able to take advantage of the helplessness of his poorer fellow-countrymen and compel them to work for less than their fellows in England receive for the same class of work.

The employees of our municipal Corporations and other public bodies in Ireland are compelled by our middle-class

town-councillors—their compatriots—to accept wages of from 4s. to 8s. per week less than English Corporations pay in similar branches of public services. Irish railway servants receive from 5s. to 10s. per week less than English railway servants in the same departments, although shareholders in Irish railways draw higher dividends than are paid on the most prosperous English lines. In all private employment in Ireland the same state of matters prevails. Let us be clear upon this point. There is no law upon the statute book, no power possessed by the Privy Council, no civil or military function under the control of Prime Minister, Lord Lieutenant, or Chief Secretary which can, does or strives to compel the employing class in Ireland to take advantage of the crowded state of the labour market and use it to depress the wages of their workers to the present starvation level.

To the greed of our moneyed class operating upon the social conditions created by landlordism and capitalism and maintained upon foreign bayonets, such a result is alone attributable, and no amount of protestations should convince intelligent workers that the class which grinds them down to industrial slavery can, at the same moment, be leading them forward to national liberty. True patriotism seeks the welfare of each in the happiness of all, and is inconsistent with the selfish desire for worldly wealth which can only be gained by the spoliation of less favoured fellow-mortals. It is the mission of the working-class to give to patriotism this higher, nobler, significance. This can only be done by our working class, as the only universal, all-embracing class, organising as a distinct political party, recognising in Labour the cornerstone of our economic edifice and the animating principle of our political action.

Hence the rise of the Irish Socialist Republican Party. We are resolved upon national independence as the indispensable ground-work of industrial emancipation, but we are equally

resolved to have done with the leadership of a class whose social charter is derived from oppression.<sup>2</sup> Our policy is the outcome of long reflection upon the history and peculiar circumstances of our country. In an independent country the election of a majority of Socialist representatives to the Legislature means the conquest of political power by the revolutionary party, and consequently the mastery of the military and police forces of the State, which would then become the ally of revolution instead of its enemy.

In the work of social reconstruction which would then ensue, the State power—created by the propertied classes for their own class purposes—would serve the new social order as a weapon in its fight against such adherents of the privileged orders as strove to resist the gradual extinction of their rule.

Ireland not being an independent country, the election of a majority of Socialist Republicans would not, unfortunately, place the fruits of our toil so readily within our grasp. But it would have another, perhaps no less important, effect. It would mean that for the first time in Irish history a clear majority of the responsible electorate of the Irish nation—men capable of bearing arms—had registered at the ballot-boxes their desire for separation from the British Empire. Such a verdict, arrived at not in the tumultuous and, too often, fickle enthusiasm of monster meetings, but in the sober atmosphere and judicial calmness of the polling-booth, would ring like a trumpet-call in the ears alike of our rulers and of every enemy of the British imperial system. That would not long survive such a consummation. Its enemies would read in the verdict this delivered at the ballot-box a passionate appeal for help against the oppressor, the *moral* insurrection of the Irish people, which a small expeditionary force and war material might convert into such a *military* insurrection as would exhaust the power of the empire at home and render its possessions an easy prey abroad. How long would such an appeal be disregarded ?

Meanwhile, there is no temporary palliative of our misery, no material benefit which Parliament can confer that could not be extorted by the fear of a revolutionary party seeking to create such a situation as I have described, sooner than by any action of even the most determined Home Rule or other constitutional party. Thus, alike for present benefits and for future freedom, the revolutionary policy is the best. A party aiming at a merely political Republic and proceeding upon such lines, would always be menaced by the danger that some astute English Statesman might, by enacting a sham measure of Home Rule, disorganise the Republican forces by an appearance of concessions, until the critical moment had passed. But the Irish Socialist Republican Party, by calling attention to evils inherent in that social system of which the British Empire is but the highest political expression, founds its propaganda upon discontent with social iniquities which will only pass away when the Empire is no more, and thus implants in all its followers an undying, ineradicable hatred of the enemy, which will remain undisturbed and unmollified by any conceivable system of political quackery whatever.

An Irish Socialist Republic ought, therefore, to be the rallying cry of all our countrymen who desire to see the union and triumph of Patriotism and Labour.

*Editorial Note :*

Whilst in full sympathy with Mr. Connolly's views on the labour and social questions, we are absolutely opposed to the scheme he puts forward for the formation of an Irish Republican party in the British Parliament. Any conscientious Republican would stick at the oath of allegiance and no reliance could be placed on what John O'Leary calls "double-oathed" men. John Mitchel allowed himself to be returned as a representative, but absolutely refused to entertain the idea of claiming his seat. He looked upon his election merely as a declaration in favour

of his unalterable rebel principles. We would like to have this question debated.

*Shan Van Vocht*, August, 1897.

## NOTES

1. "I rather like that intense desire to conserve the honour or freedom of a particular country, to which men have given the name 'patriotism.' I am also a believer in the brotherhood of all men in the international solidarity of labour, and in the identity of interests which everywhere link together the oppressed of the earth . . . As a Socialist I hate all governments which reign by force against the wills of their subjects, and therefore, I am in Irish politics a patriot when confronted with the grim fact of an unpopular ruling power, governing in defiance of, and against the interests of, the vast majority of the people—a power which could not last a day save by the force which lies behind its bayonets.

"As a patriot I hate the class which thrives upon the exploitation of its fellow-country men and women, which seizes upon the means of life and withholds them from the poor until their hunger compels them to sell their pittance . . . I hate this class more than the foreigner. Therefore, I am a Socialist—anxious to purge our national household of its social dishonour."

*Workers' Republic*, July 28, 1900.

2. "We mean to be free, and in every enemy of tyranny we recognise a brother, wherever be his birthplace; in every enemy of freedom we also recognise our enemy, though he were as Irish as our hills. The whole of Ireland for the people of Ireland—their public property, to be owned and operated as a national heritage, by the labour of free men in a free country. That is our ideal, and when you ask us what are our methods, we reply: 'Those which lie nearest our hands.' We do not call for a 'United Nation.' No nation can be united whilst capitalism and landlordism exist. The system divides society into two warring nations—the robbers and the robbed, the idlers and the workers, the rich and the poor, the men of property and the men of no property. Like Tone and Mitchel before us, we appeal to 'that large and respectable class of the community, the men of no property.'"

*Workers' Republic*, August 5, 1899.

## SOCIALISM AND IRISH NATIONALISM

THE public life of Ireland has been generally so much identified with the struggle for political emancipation, that, naturally, the economic side of the situation has only received from our historians and public men a very small amount of attention.

Scientific Socialism is based upon the truth incorporated in this proposition of Karl Marx, that, "the economic dependence of the workers on the monopolists of the means of production is the foundation of slavery *in all its forms*, the cause of nearly all social misery, modern crime, mental degradation and political dependence." Thus this false exaggeration of purely political forms which has clothed in Ireland the struggle for liberty, must appear to the Socialist an inexplicable error on the part of a people so strongly crushed down as the Irish.

But the error is more in appearance than in reality.

The reactionary attitude of our political leaders notwithstanding the great mass of the Irish people know full well that if they had once conquered that political liberty which they struggle for with so much ardour, it would have to be used as a means of social redemption before their well-being would be assured.

In spite of occasional exaggeration of its immediate results one must remember that by striving determinedly, as they have done, towards this definite political end, the Irish are working on the lines of conduct laid down by modern Socialism as the indispensable condition of success.

Since the abandonment of the unfortunate insurrectionism of the early Socialists whose hopes were exclusively concentrated on the eventual triumph of an uprising and barricade struggle, modern Socialism, relying on the slower, but surer method of



the ballot-box, has directed the attention of its partisans toward the peaceful conquest of the forces of Government in the interests of the revolutionary ideal.

The advent of Socialism can only take place when the revolutionary proletariat, in possession of the organised forces of the nation (the political power of government) will be able to build up a social organisation in conformity with the natural march of industrial development.

On the other hand, non-political co-operative effort must infallibly succumb in face of the opposition of the privileged classes, entrenched behind the ramparts of law and monopoly. This is why, even when he is from the economic point of view intensely conservative, the Irish Nationalist, even with his false reasoning, is an active agent in social regeneration, in so far as he seeks to invest with full power over its own destinies a people actually governed in the interests of a feudal aristocracy.

The section of the Socialist army to which I belong, the Irish Socialist Republican Party, never seeks to hide its hostility to those purely bourgeois parties which at present direct Irish politics.

But, in inscribing on our banners an ideal to which they also give lip-homage, we have no intention of joining in a movement which could debase the banner of revolutionary Socialism.

The Socialist parties of France oppose the mere Republicans without ceasing to love the Republic. In the same way the Irish Socialist Republican Party seeks the independence of the nation, whilst refusing to conform to the methods or to employ the arguments of the chauvinist Nationalist.

As Socialists we are not imbued with national or racial hatred by the remembrance that the political and social order under which we live was imposed on our fathers at the point of the sword ; that during 700 years Ireland has resisted this unjust foreign domination ; that famine, pestilence and bad

government have made of this western isle almost a desert and scattered our exiled fellow-countrymen over the whole face of the globe.

The enunciation of facts such as I have just stated is not able to-day to inspire or to direct the political energies of the militant working-class of Ireland ; such is not the foundation of our resolve to free Ireland from the yoke of the British Empire. We recognise rather that during all these centuries the great mass of the British people had no political existence whatever ; that England was, politically and socially, terrorised by a numerically small governing class ; that the atrocities which have been perpetrated against Ireland are only imputable to the unscrupulous ambition of this class, greedy to enrich itself at the expense of defenceless men ; that up to the present generation the great majority of the English people were denied a deliberate voice in the government of their own country ; that it is, therefore, manifestly unjust to charge the English people with the past crimes of their Government ; and that at the worst we can but charge them with a criminal apathy in submitting to slavery and allowing themselves to be made an instrument of coercion for the enslavement of others. An accusation as applicable to the present as to the past.<sup>1</sup>

But whilst refusing to base our political action on hereditary national antipathy, and wishing rather comradeship with the English workers than to regard them with hatred, we desire with our precursors the United Irishmen of 1798 that our animosities be buried with the bones of our ancestors—there is not a party in Ireland which accentuates more as a vital principle of its political faith the need of separating Ireland from England and of making it absolutely independent. In the eyes of the ignorant and of the unreflecting this appears an inconsistency, but I am persuaded that our Socialist brothers in France will immediately recognise the justice of the reasoning upon which such a policy is based.

1. We hold "the economic emancipation of the worker requires the conversion of the means of production into the common property of Society." Translated into the current language and practice of actual politics this teaches that the necessary road to be travelled towards the establishment of Socialism requires the transference of the means of production from the hands of private owners to those of public bodies directly responsible to the entire community.

2. Socialism seeks then in the interest of the democracy to strengthen popular action on all public bodies.

3. Representative bodies in Ireland would express more directly the will of the Irish people than when those bodies reside in England.

An Irish Republic would then be the natural depository of popular power ; the weapon of popular emancipation, the only power which would show in the full light of day all these class antagonisms and lines of economic demarcation now obscured by the mists of bourgeois patriotism.

In that there is not a trace of chauvinism. We desire to preserve with the English people the same political relations as with the people of France, of Germany or of any other country ; the greatest possible friendship, but also the strictest independence. Brothers, but not bedfellows. Thus, inspired by another ideal, conducted by reason not by tradition, following a different course, the Socialist Republican Party of Ireland arrive at the same conclusion as the most irreconcilable Nationalist. The governmental power of England over us must be destroyed ; the bonds which bind us to her must be broken. Having learned from history that all bourgeois movements end in compromise, that the bourgeois revolutionists of to-day become the conservatives of to-morrow, the Irish Socialists refuse to deny or to lose their identity with those who only half understand the problem of liberty. They seek only the alliance and the friendship of those hearts who, loving liberty for its own sake,

are not afraid to follow its banner when it is uplifted by the hands of the working-class who have most need of it. Their friends are those who would not hesitate to follow that standard of liberty, to consecrate their lives in its service even should it lead to the terrible arbitration of the sword.

*L'Irlande Libre* <sup>2</sup>, Paris, 1897.

### NOTES

1. "We are told that the English people contributed their help to our enslavement. It is true. It is also true that the Irish people duly contributed soldiers to crush every democratic movement of the English people from the deportation of Irish soldiers to serve the cause of political despotism under Charles I to the days of Featherstone under Asquith. Slaves themselves, the English helped to enslave others; slaves themselves, the Irish people helped to enslave others. There is no room for recrimination. We are only concerned with the fact—daily becoming more obvious—that the English workers who have reached the moral stature of rebels are now willing to assist the working-class rebels of Ireland, and that those Irish rebels will in their turn help the rebels of England to break their chains and attain the dignity of freedom. There is still a majority of slaves in England—there is still a majority of slaves in Ireland. We are under no illusions as to either country. But we do not intend to confound the geographical spot on which the rebels lie with the political Government upheld by the slaves.

"For us and ours the path is clear. The first duty of the working-class of the world is to settle accounts with the master-class of the world—that of their own country at the head of the list. To that point this struggle (the Dublin Lock-Out), as all other struggles, is converging."

*Irish Worker*, November 29, 1913.

[In 1893, two miners were shot by the military at Featherstone, Yorkshire, during a strike. Their deaths profoundly moved the Labour movement of the time.]

"Finally, let us say that we are sick of the canting talk of those who tell us that we must not blame the British people for the crimes

of their rulers against Ireland. We do blame them. In so far as they support the system of society which makes it profitable for one nation to connive at the subjection of another nation they are responsible for every crime committed to maintain that subjection. If there is any section of the British people who believe that Ireland would be justified in ending the British Empire in order to escape from thralldom to it, then that section may hold itself guiltless of any crime against Ireland."

*Workers' Republic*, March 25, 1916.

2. The organ of the Irish colony in Paris, edited by Miss Maud Gonne (later Madame Gonne MacBride).

## THE MEN WE HONOUR

**A**POSTLES of Freedom are ever idolised when dead, but crucified when living. Universally true as this statement is, it applies with more than usual point to the revolutionary hero in whose memory the Irish people will, on Monday, 15th August, lay the foundation stone of a great memorial.

Accustomed, as we are, to accept without question the statements of platform oratory or political journalism as embodying the veriest truths of history, the real meaning and significance of the life and struggles of the high-souled organiser of the United Irish movement of 1798 is too often lost to the people of Ireland to-day. We think with pride and joy of Wolfe Tone and his struggle for Ireland, but when we think of his enemies, of those who thwarted him at every opportunity, who ceased not to revile him while alive and paused not in their calumnies even when he had passed beyond the grave, we are too apt to forget that the most virulent and unforgiving of those enemies were not the emissaries of the British Crown, but the men from whose lips the cant of patriotism was never absent, the leaders in Church and politics of the people whose emancipation Wolfe Tone had laboured to secure—and met death in the effort to forward. Yet it is a lesson we need to remember, fraught as it is with meaning, in the task before the Irish democracy to-day.

There are few passages in the life of Tone more pregnant with interest to the attentive reader than that which chronicles the negotiations between himself and the great Whig Party of which Grattan was such a shining light. The attempt of the Whig aristocracy to cajole and bribe the young and ardent democrat into lending his intellect and powers to the service of their party, and the scornful refusal of the high-minded, but

penniless, Tone to thus prostitute his genius in the cause of compromise and time-serving, points a moral the young men of Ireland might well lay to heart in deciding under which flag they will take their stand in the struggle to which we henceforth challenge friends and enemies.

"I was a democrat from the commencement," proudly declared our hero, and in the light of that announcement we at once perceive why the wealthy classes of Ireland with scarce a dozen exceptions ranged themselves against him ; why Grattan never by word or deed testified the slightest sympathy with the United Irishmen ; why Dan O'Connell took up arms to defend Dublin for the British Government against his own countrymen and rebel co-religionists ; why the Catholic aristocracy fought side by side with the Orange yeomanry ; why the fiercest invectives of Lord Castlereagh or Beresford of the Riding School were but faint echoes of the maledictions heaped upon the revolutionists by the aristocratic Catholic Bishops ; why, in short, Wolfe Tone and his comrades were overwhelmed by the treachery of their own countrymen more than by the force of the foreign enemy. He was crucified in life, now he is idolised in death, and the men who push forward most arrogantly to burn incense at the altar of his fame are drawn from the very class who, were he alive to-day, would hasten to repudiate him as a dangerous malcontent. False as they are to every one of the great principles to which our hero consecrated his life, they cannot hope to deceive the popular instinct, and their presence at the '98 commemorations will only bring into greater relief the depth to which they have sunk.<sup>1</sup> Our Home Rule leaders will find that the glory of Wolfe Tone's memory will serve, not to cover, but to accentuate the darkness of their shame.

Wolfe Tone was abreast of the revolutionary thought of his day, as are the Socialist Republicans of our day. He saw clearly, as we see, that a dominion as long rooted in any country as

British dominion in Ireland can only be dislodged by a revolutionary impulse in line with the development of the entire epoch. Grasping this truth in all its fulness he broke with the so-called "practical" men of the time, and wherever he could get a hearing he, by voice and pen, inculcated the republican principles of the French Revolution and counselled his countrymen to embark the national movement on the crest of that revolutionary wave. His Irish birth did not *create* his hatred of the British Constitution, but only intensified it. Like Mitchel, fifty years later, he held ideas on political and social order such as would have made him a rebel even had he been an Englishman. In this fact lay his strength and the secret of his enthusiasm. We who hold his principles cherish his memory all the more on that account, believing as we do that any movement which would successfully grapple with the problem of national freedom must draw its inspiration, not from the mouldering records of a buried past, but from the glowing hopes of the living present, the vast possibilities of the mighty future.

When the hour of the social revolution at length strikes and the revolutionary lava now pent up in the Socialist movement finally overflows and submerges the kings and classes who now rule and ruin the world, high up in the topmost niches of the temple a liberated human race will erect to the heroes and martyrs who have watered the tree of liberty with the blood of their body and the sweat of their intellect, side by side with the Washingtons, Kosciuskos and Tells of other lands, a grateful Irish people will carve the name of our precursor, Theobald Wolfe Tone,<sup>2</sup> the man whose virtues we can only honour by imitation as the Socialist Republic will yet honour his principles by realisation. *Workers' Republic*, August 13, 1898.

#### NOTES

1. "Since the inception of the '98 Centennial movement, and to a greater degree since the amalgamation of the original Executive



with the bogus organisation engineered by Mr. Tim Harrington, we have witnessed upon all our '98 platforms a most determined attempt to misrepresent the teachings and principles of the United Irishmen. This attitude has mainly taken the form of a play upon the words 'United Irish' in such a manner as to lead the unthinking to believe that the illustrious forerunners of a hundred years ago repudiated all ideas of social reform, and believed that it was possible to create a revolutionary party which would take no account of and refuse to consider remedies for social injustice. We are told the '98 men desired a 'union of class and creed' although the words are nowhere to be found in their official publications; and the same men who admit the organising genius and revolutionary insight of Wolfe Tone tell us that he was fool enough to believe in the feasibility of uniting in one Movement such discordant elements as rack-renting landlords and starving peasants, under-paid labourers and over-paid masters."

*Workers' Republic*, August 13, 1898.

Tim Harrington, 1851-1910, was a leading member of the Irish Parliamentary Party, one-time Secretary of the National League and Lord Mayor of Dublin (1901-1903). Connolly as delegate of the Rank and File '98 Club, formed mainly of I.S.R.P. members, withdrew from the '98 Centenary Committee when its membership was thrown open to the Redmond and Dillon sections of the Irish Parliamentary Party. Connolly protested that only those who had not repudiated the principles of the dead honoured should be eligible.

2. "We are told to imitate Wolfe Tone, but the greatness of Wolfe Tone lay in the fact that he imitated nobody. The needs of his time called for a man able to shake from off his mind the intellectual fetters of the past, and to unite in his own person the hopes of the new revolutionary faith and the ancient aspirations of an oppressed people; as the occasion creates the hero, so the Spirit of the Age found Wolfe Tone. And out of the seemingly unpromising material of a briefless barrister created the organising brain of an almost successful revolution, the astute diplomat, the fearless soldier, and the unconquered martyr . . . .

" . . . Let Ireland seek help where Wolfe Tone found it, viz., in the ranks of the democracy in revolt. Wherever the Socialist banner flies, there gather the true friends of freedom, there let us take our stand, and there let us prepare to raise the only worthy monument to the pioneers of freedom—the realisation of that freedom for which they fought."

*The Workers' Republic*, August 5, 1899.

## SOCIALISM IN IRELAND

### I

WE find that amongst a large section of the Irish in this country (the U.S.A.) and Irish Socialists here are included, it is tacitly assumed that Socialism cannot take root in Ireland, that the Home Rule press, the supposed conservative habits of thought of the people and, above all, the hostility of the clergy, make it impossible for Socialist thought to make headway amongst the Irish working class. This assumption is, of course, not to be reasoned with—you cannot reason with a thing that ignores facts—but is only to be combatted with a quiet presentation of facts to prove that which is assumed as impossible of existence, is already existent, and not only existent, but lusty, aggressive and powerful. The influence of the Home Rule Press is in reality nil amongst the intelligent working-class of Ireland: the conservative habits of thought supposed to be characteristically Irish are in reality the reflex of agricultural conditions in Ireland, as elsewhere, and do not prevail where the Irish worker lives and suffers in the industrial environment of a city and the hostility of the clergy has worn off its own edge by too frequent and indiscriminate use.

The Irish Socialist Republican Party—founded in May 1896, in Dublin, and now represented by the Socialist Party of Ireland—has had to suffer under the boycott of the entire Irish press, with the single honourable exception of the *United Irishman*, in the early days of that journal (now re-christened, *Sinn Féin*.)

Of the weekly newspapers was this more particularly true, and it is from the weekly Irish newspapers that the Irish in America and the agricultural Irish, derived and derive their

impressions of political life in Ireland. Yet, despite this attempt to destroy the influence of this working-class party and to circumscribe the scope of its activities, it has to its record and to its honour, the credit of having initiated and carried to a successful conclusion—unaided—the most striking protest against British tyranny in Ireland in this generation, viz., the Anti-Jubilee Protest of Dublin in 1897, of having been the moving spirit in rendering nugatory the visit of the late Queen Victoria on a recruiting mission to Dublin during the Boer War (a fact recorded by the French newspapers of the time, which spoke of the Socialist Republicans as the only centre from which the British authorities expected trouble) of having originated and popularised an anti-enlisting crusade at a time when even some well-intentioned “physical-force men” favoured the idea of Irish youths entering the British army, “in order to learn the use of the rifle”—one of the most disastrous ideas ever current in Ireland; of having emphasised the fact that there have ever been two currents in modern Irish history, viz., the revolutionary and the compromising or constitutional, and that their ideas can no more mix or their ideals be compounded, than may blend oil and water, and finally, of having conducted the first political campaigns of the Irish working-class on the basis of revolutionary Socialism.

Let those who tell us that the Irish will never respond to the call of Socialism remember that five years ago the candidate of the Irish Socialist Republican Party, in contests against the nominees of the Home Rule and Unionist Parties, polled a vote which represented a third of the total electorate; let them remember this, and then, thinking of the frantic joy of the Socialist Parties of America when they succeed in polling the necessary three or five per cent. to get on the official ballot, let them stop trying to discourage the Irish in America by their foolish declarations that Socialism will never take root amongst the Irish.

Socialism in Ireland is now a force, influencing alike the political, economic and literary thought of the island. . . .

*Harp*, March, 1908.

## II

IT is interesting to observe how Ireland has been and is being made the scene of many radical experiments in legislation which, in any other country, would be only looked for as the result of a great Socialist upheaval.

The Land Acts or rather the Purchase Clauses of the Land Acts upon which so many of our doctrinaires waste so much good ink in reckless denunciations are, despite their many drawbacks, an assertion of the right of the original community not only to establish new property relations to suit new ideas, but also to establish tribunals by means of which the working of these relations may be supervised and controlled.

Of course it is not the Land Nationalisation many of us would like to see, but it is nevertheless the germ out of which a socialisation of the land may ultimately develop. In Ireland the propaganda of Land Nationalisation was doomed to sterility in the past by virtue of the fact that the most earnestly radical and truly revolutionary people in the country, and hence the people most sincerely democratic, looked upon the government as a foreign government and, therefore, upon the proposal to nationalise the land as a proposal to hand over the soil of their country to a foreign government and thus to increase the powers of that government over the economic as well as over the political life of the Irish.

In their phrasology, Land Nationalisation meant making the land the property of the government, and they would inquire :—

“What government ? The English Government ! We have no other government here. Oh, no ! It is too much power that government has already.”

Hence, not even Michael Davitt could popularise Land Nationalisation in Ireland in his day. The political groundwork was wanting, the necessary basis of a government directly under the control of the people concerned. With the Nationalist masses the same difficulty was encountered in the propagation of Socialism, until the uncompromising attitude of the Dublin Socialists on the national question made it clear that Socialism meant on the political side of Ireland an absolute revolutionary change which would make the people of Ireland complete rulers of their own country, as the economic change would thus logically make them owners of the country they would politically rule.

In other words, the Socialists of Ireland had to recognise that the world for the workers can only be realised by the people of each country seizing upon their own country and wresting it by one means or another from the hands of the present rulers or proprietors and restoring it with all its powers and potentialities to the people who inhabit it and labour upon it.

With the advent of self-government in any shape in Ireland, the question of the ownership and administration of the soil can, and will, be approached in a new spirit.

One change I foresee, and hope for, exists already in embryo in the labourers' cottages Acts. Under these Acts, the local authority has the power to acquire land and build cottages for the labourers. These latter become the tenants of the local authority.

Now, I foresee that there may be a change in the spirit of future Land Acts, and that the local County Councils may be authorised to acquire the lands now being purchased by the farmer, and that the purchase price being paid by the present tenants may be changed into a rent payable to the democratically elected County Councils.

If this were done and a reduction in the yearly payment, coupled with a guarantee of fixity of tenancy and right to a

selling interest in the farm (goodwill) given to the farmers in return for their surrender of their future rights of ownership, it is quite conceivable that such a change might be effected without any more opposition than would be offered to any other legislative change.

But the result of this change would be that the local County Councils would become the owners of the soil under the national government, that all questions affecting the administration of the soil would be as keenly under the supervision of the democracy immediately interested as questions affecting the occupancy of labourers' cottages are now, and that thus the gradual democratisation of the agriculture interests would become the vital question in rural politics, as the spread of the same political principle and method of administration would similarly affect industrial interests in urban and national politics.

The squabbles over the occupancy of a labourer's cottage which, at present, make such piquant reading in our Irish newspapers have a sordid side, but this that I have glanced at shows that they have a practical, illuminating side also.

When the principal deliberations of an Urban or County Council perforce turn on the question of the administration of the farms and other lands of the County, as the deliberations of Boards of Guardians now turn upon the occupancy of labourers' cottages, we will begin to have a vivid understanding of the Marxian phrase about "the government of men being replaced by the administration of things."

The Land Acts dispossessed the landlords and thus ended the economic influence upon which their political power is based. Hence, outside of North-East Ulster, the landed aristocracy have ceased to be a power in politics. An agricultural labourer would have a greater chance to be elected than a landlord in the south-west or east of Ireland would have by his former tenants.

The genius of peasant proprietorship is essentially individua-

listic, and therefore exercises a disintegrating influence upon the political strength and influence of the peasant proprietor. The Land Acts, therefore, have, despite their faults, destroyed the slavery of the Irish tenantry, taken from agricultural questions their exclusive power over Irish affairs, and opened a way for the fundamental reorganisation of the social life of the community.

Then, two years ago, another Royal Commission investigating the question of Irish railways, reported in favour of Nationalisation. With the coming of self-government, the almost unanimous expression of approval with which this was received in Ireland is likely to take concrete form in an legislative enactment.

And now another Commission reports, likewise, in favour of a State Medical Service. And this, also, is received with a chorus of approval.

Said I not that although the Irish have little regard for Socialist theories they have a strong bias in favour of action on lines that are in essence lines of Socialist activity ?

Side by side with all this development of mere Government Socialism, those who know Ireland best know that there is also developing that strong and active spirit of industrial rebellion, that aggressive challenging of the rights and powers of the master class that is absolutely necessary to prevent such governmentalism degenerating into despotic paternalism.

I do not believe it to be possible to prevent a continual extension of the powers of government, even if it were desirable, but I look to the cultivation of the rebel spirit to secure that that extension of the functions of government shall connote a conquest of powers by the working-class instead of an invasion of our rights by the master class.

It is because of that defiant, rebel spirit in Ireland to-day, ever keeping step with, indeed out-marching, the trend of legislative experimenting with social problems that we Irish Socialists feel at last that we are leaving the stage of theorising

and are seeing our principles becoming the faith that moves our class to action.

It is an inspiration to know the working-class of Ireland in their times of conflict. To see that class resolute, erect, defiant, day by day battling with its Nationalist masters, and in starvation and suffering winning its way to victory, which, at the same time as it closes in grappling with the Irish exploiter, it holds itself uncompromisingly aloof from and hostile to its British rulers and their Irish allies. To know that class is to love it.

And I pity those in whom the narrow prejudices of a colony are still, after 300 years of plantation, too strong to permit them to identify themselves with such a nation.

*Forward*, August 16, 1913.



## THE FIGHTING RACE

WE gather from the American newspapers that our countrymen in the United States army and navy have been highly distinguishing themselves in the cause of the war with Spain.

This is as it should be and in consonance with all our Irish traditions. We are a fighting race, we are told, and every Irishman is always proud to hear our politicians and journalists tell of our exploits in the fighting line—in other countries, in other climes and in other times.

Yes, we are a fighting race. Whether it is under the Stars and Stripes or under the Union Jack ; planting the flag of America over the walls of Santiago or helping our own oppressors to extend their hated rule over other unfortunate nations our brave Irish boys are ever to the front.

When the Boer has to be robbed of his freedom, the Egyptian has to be hurled back under the heel of his taskmaster, the Zulu to be dynamited in his caves, the Matabele slaughtered beside the ruins of his smoking village or Afridi to be hunted from his desolated homestead, wheresoever, in short, the bloody standard of the oppressors of Ireland is to be found over some unusually atrocious piece of scoundrelism, look then for the sons of our Emerald Isle, and under the red coats of the hired assassin army you will find them.

Yes, we are a fighting race. In Africa, India or America, wherever blood is to be spilt, there you will find Irishmen, eager and anxious for a fight, under any flag, in anybody's quarrel, in any cause—except their own.

In that cause, for our own freedom and own land, we have for the last century consistently refused to fight. On any other part of the earth's surface we can shed our blood with the

blessing of Mother Church and the prayers of the faithful to strengthen our arms, but in Ireland and for the freedom of the Irish people.

Anathema.

It is an impious thought and we must avoid it. Whatever we do let us keep on the safe side of the road and not quarrel with the Church—which denounced the United Irishmen and excommunicated the Fenians.

Faith and Fatherland. Oh, yes. But don't forget that when the Englishman was a Catholic and worshipped at the same altar as the Irishman, he plundered, robbed and murdered the Irishman as relentlessly as he did when, with sword in one hand and Bible in the other, he came snuffily chanting his psalms in the train of Oliver Cromwell.

The question of religious faith has precious little bearing upon the question of freedom. Witness Catholic Spain devastating Catholic Cuba, the Catholic capitalists of Italy running down with cannon the unarmed Catholic workmen, the Irish Catholic landlord rackrenting and evicting the Catholic tenant, the wealthy Catholic feasting inside the mansion while the Catholic beggar dies of hunger on the doorstep.

And as a companion picture witness the Protestant workmen of Belfast so often out on strike against their Protestant employers and their Protestant ancestors of 100 years ago in active rebellion against the English Protestant Government.

"Our institutions in Church and State" is the catchword with which the wealthy Irish Unionist endeavours to arouse religious bigotry among the Protestant working-class of Ulster and so prevent them coalescing with the working-class Catholic in a united effort for their common emancipation.

And "Faith and Fatherland" by linking the national demands with a specific religious belief serves the same purpose in the mouth of the Home Rule trickster.

For what other purpose than that herein specified are either rallying cries used ?

To keep the people of Ireland, and especially the workers, divided is the great object of all our politicians, Home Ruler or Unionist.

And our great object in this journal will be to *Unite* the workers and to bury, in one common grave, the religious hatreds, the provincial jealousies and mutual distrusts upon which oppression has so long depended for security.

The man whose forefathers manned the walls of Derry is as dear to us as he who traces his descent from the women who stood in the breaches of Limerick. Neither fought for Ireland, but only to decide which *English* king should rule Ireland.

What have we to do with their quarrels ? In the words of the United Irishmen—"Let us bury our animosities with the bones of our ancestors."

In the near future when kings and the classes who are makers of kings no longer encumber the earth with their foul presence, how our Irish youth will smile when they read that 200 years ago Irishmen slaughtered each other to decide which English king should have the right to rob the Irish people.

And that for 200 years after the descendants of the respective parties conclusively proved to their own satisfaction that the leader of the other side had been a scoundrel.

And the impartial world looking on examined the evidence and came to the conclusion that on that point, at least, *both parties* were right Both kings were scoundrels, *ergo* the followers of both were—

Well, never mind.

*Workers' Republic*, August 13, 1898.

## PHYSICAL FORCE IN IRISH POLITICS

IRELAND occupies a position among the nations of the earth unique in a great variety of its aspects, but in no one particular is this singularity more marked than in the possession of what is known as a "physical force party"—a party, that is to say, whose members are united upon no one point, and agree upon no single principle, except upon the use of physical force as the sole means of settling the dispute between the people of this country and the governing power of Great Britain.

Other countries and other peoples have, from time to time, appealed to what the first French Revolutionists picturesquely described as the "sacred right of insurrection," but in so appealing they acted under the inspiration of, and combated for, some great governing principle of political or social life upon which they, to a man, were in absolute agreement. The latter-day high falutin "hillside" man, on the other hand, exalts into a principle that which the revolutionists of other countries have looked upon as a weapon, and in his gatherings prohibits all discussion of those principles which formed the main strength of his prototypes elsewhere and made the successful use of that weapon possible. Our people have glided at different periods of the past century from moral force agitation, so-called, into physical force rebellion, from constitutionalism into insurrectionism, meeting in each the same failure and the same disaster and yet seem as far as ever from learning the great truth that neither method is ever likely to be successful until they first insist that a perfect agreement *upon the end to be attained* should be arrived at as a starting-point of all our efforts.

To the reader unfamiliar with Irish political history such a remark seems to savour almost of foolishness, its truth is so

apparent ; but to the reader acquainted with the inner workings of the political movements of this country the remark is pregnant with the deepest meaning. Every revolutionary effort in Ireland has drawn the bulk of its adherents from the ranks of the disappointed followers of defeated constitutional movements. After having exhausted their constitutional efforts in striving to secure such a modicum of political power as would justify them to their own consciences in taking a place as loyal subjects of the British Empire, they, in despair, turned to thoughts of physical force as a means of attaining their ends. Their conception of what constitutes freedom was, in no sense changed or revolutionised ; they still believed in the political form of freedom which had been their ideal in their constitutional days ; but no longer hoping for it from the acts of the British Parliament, they swung over into the ranks of the "physical force" men as the only means of attaining it.

The so-called physical force movement of to-day in like manner bases its hopes upon the disgust of the people over the failure of the Home Rule movement ; it seeks to enlist the people under its banners, not so much by pointing out the base ideals of the constitutionalists or the total inadequacy of their pet measures to remedy the evils under which the people suffer, as by emphasising the greater efficacy of physical force as a national weapon. Thus, the one test of an advanced Nationalist is, in their opinion, one who believes in physical force. It may be the persons so professing to believe are Republicans ; it may be they are believers in monarchy ; it may be that Home Rule would satisfy them ; it may be that they despise Home Rule. No matter what their political faith may be, if only they are prepared to express belief in the saving grace of physical force, they are acclaimed as advanced Nationalists—worthy descendants of "the men of '98." The '98 Executive, organised in the commencement by professed believers in the physical force doctrine, started by proclaiming its adherence to the principle

of national independence "as understood by Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen," and in less than twelve months from doing so, deliberately rejected a similar resolution and elected on its governing body men notorious for their Royalist proclivities. As the '98 Executive represents the advanced Nationalists of Ireland, this repudiation of the Republican faith of the United Irishmen is an interesting corroboration of the truth of our statement that the advanced Nationalists of our day are utterly regardless of principle and only attach importance to methods—an instance of putting the cart before the horse, absolutely unique in its imbecility and unparalleled in the history of the world.

It may be interesting, then, to place before our readers the Socialist Republican conception of the functions and uses of physical force in a popular movement. We neither exalt it into a principle nor repudiate it as something not to be thought of.<sup>1</sup> Our position towards it is that the use or non-use of force for the realisation of the ideas of progress always has been and always will be determined by the attitude, not of the party of progress, but of the governing class opposed to that party. If the time should arrive when the party of progress finds its way to freedom barred by the stubborn greed of a possessing class entrenched behind the barriers of law and order; if the party of progress has indoctrinated the people at large with the new revolutionary conception of society and is therefore representative of the will of a majority of the nation; if it has exhausted all the peaceful means at its disposal for the purpose of demonstrating to the people and their enemies that the new revolutionary ideas do possess the suffrage of the majority; then, but not till then, the party which represents the revolutionary idea is justified in taking steps to assume the powers of government, and in using the weapons of force to dislodge the usurping class or government in possession, and treating its members and supporters as usurpers and rebels against the constituted

authorities always have been treated. In other words, Socialists believe that the question of force is of very minor importance ; the really important question is of the principles upon which is based the movement that may or may not need the use of force to realise its object.

Here, then, is the immense difference between the Socialist Republicans and our friends the physical force men. The latter, by stifling all discussions of principles, earn the passive and fleeting commendation of the unthinking multitude ; the former, by insisting upon a thorough understanding of their basic principles, do not so readily attract the multitude, but do attract and hold the more thoughtful amongst them. It is the difference betwixt a mob in revolt and an army in preparation. The mob who cheer a speaker referring to the hopes of a physical force movement would, in the very hour of apparent success, be utterly disorganised and divided by the passage through the British Legislature of any trumpety Home Rule Bill. The army of class-conscious workers organising under the banner of the Socialist Republican Party, strong in their knowledge of economic truth and firmly grounded in their revolutionary principles, would remain entirely unaffected by any such manoeuvre and, knowing it would not change their position as a subject class, would still press forward, resolute and undivided, with their faces set towards their only hope of emancipation—the complete control by the working-class democracy of *all the powers of National Government*.

Thus the policy of the Socialist Republicans is seen to be the only wise one. “Educate that you may be free” ; principles first, methods afterwards. If the advocacy of physical force failed to achieve success or even to effect an uprising when the majority were unenfranchised and the secret ballot unknown, how can it be expected to succeed now that the majority are in possession of voting power and the secret ballot safeguards the voter ?

The ballot-box was given us by our masters for their purpose ; let us use it for our own. Let us demonstrate at that ballot-box the strength and intelligence of the revolutionary idea ; let us make the hustings a rostrum from which to promulgate our principles ; let us grasp the public powers in the interest of the disinherited class ; let us emulate our fathers and, like the "true men of '98," place ourselves in line with the most advanced thought of our age and drawing inspiration and hope from the spectacle presented by the world-wide revolt of the workers, prepare for the coming of the day when the Socialist working-class of Ireland will, through its elected representatives, present its demand for freedom from the yoke of a governing master class or nation—the day on which the question of moral or physical force shall be finally decided.

*Workers' Republic*, July 22, 1899.

## NOTES

1. "To my mind an agitation to attain a political or economic end must rest upon an implied willingness and ability to use force. Without that it is mere wind and attitudinising. The only force available to the worker is economic force ; the capture of political power when it does come will come as a result of the previous conquest of economic power, although that conquest can be and should be assisted by the continual exercise of political action by those who have grasped the full meaning and purpose of the working class fight."

*Forward*, March 14, 1914.

"We acknowledge no right in another individual or class to withhold anything which is ours by right of labour. We are out for justice and we have assailed or contested no just liberty. We know our duties as we know our rights and we shall stand by one another through thick and thin prepared, if necessary, to arm and achieve by force our place in the world, and also to maintain it by force. These be the ends of our fight—and should the heavens fall we shall achieve them."

*Irish Worker*, October 25, 1913.



## THE LANGUAGE MOVEMENT

### I

TALKING of Gaelic scholars brings me by an easy and natural transition to speak of the great Celtic renaissance of late years.

I think it has its bad and its good points. Its bad points are, in my opinion, only accidental to the movement and were well got rid of.

They consist in the attempt to exclude all other methods of culture, to deny the value of all other literature and the worth of all other peoples and, in general, to make our Irish youths and maidens too self-centred.<sup>1</sup>

I believe the Gaelic movement has great promise of life in it, but that promise will only be properly fulfilled when it naturally works its way into the life of the nation, side by side with every other agency making for a regenerated people.

The chief enemy of a Celtic revival to-day is the crushing force of capitalism which irresistibly destroys all national or racial characteristics, and by sheer stress of its economic preponderance reduces a Galway or a Dublin, a Lithuania or a Warsaw to the level of a mere second-hand imitation of Manchester or Glasgow.

In the words of Karl Marx, "Capitalism creates a world after its own image," and the image of Capitalism is to be found in the industrial centres of Great Britain.

A very filthy image indeed.

You cannot teach starving men Gaelic ; and the treasury of our national literature will and must remain lost forever to the poor wage-slaves who are contented by our system of society to toil from early morning to late at night for a mere starvation wage.

Therefore, I say to our friends of the Gaelic movement—your proper place is in the ranks of the Socialist Republican Party, fighting for the abolition of this accursed social system which grinds us down in such a manner ; which debases the character and lowers the ideals of our people to such a fearful degree, that to the majority of our workers the most priceless manuscript of ancient Celtic lore would hold but a secondary place in their esteem beside a rasher of bacon.

Help us to secure to all our fellow-countrymen, a free, full, and happy life ; secure in possession of a rational, human existence, neither brutalised by toil nor debilitated by hunger, and then all the noble characteristics of our race will have full opportunity to expand and develop. And when all that is good in literature, art and science is recognised as the property of all—and not the heritage of the few—your ideals will receive the unquestioned adhesion of all true Irishmen.

I do not ask you to cease for a moment your endeavours on your present lines of education, but only to recognise in us your natural allies, as you should recognise that those who, under any pretext, however specious, would ask you to help them to perpetuate that British capitalism—which now thwarts you at every turn—is your enemy and the enemy of your cause.

The success of our cause is certain—sooner or later. But the welcome light of the sun of freedom may, at any moment, flash upon our eyes and with your help we would not fear the storm which may precede the dawn.

*The Workers' Republic*, October 1, 1898.

## II

I do believe in the necessity, and indeed in the inevitability, of an universal language ; but I do not believe it will be brought

about, or even hastened, by smaller races or nations consenting to the extinction of their language. Such a course of action, or rather of slavish inaction, would not hasten the day of a universal language, but would rather lead to the intensification of the struggle for mastery between the languages of the greater powers.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, a large number of small communities, speaking different tongues, are more likely to agree upon a common language as a common means of communication than a small number of great empires, each jealous of its own power and seeking its own supremacy.

I have heard some doctrinaire Socialists arguing that Socialists should not sympathise with oppressed nationalities or with nationalities resisting conquest. They argue that the sooner these nationalities are suppressed the better, as it will be easier to conquer political power in a few big empires than in a number of small states. This is the language argument over again.

It is fallacious in both cases. It is even more fallacious in the case of nationalities than in the case of languages, because the emancipation of the working-class will function more through the economic power than through the political state. The first act of the workers will be through their economic organisations seizing the organised industries ; the last act the conquest of political power.

In this the working class will, as they needs must follow in the lines traversed by the capitalist revolutions of Cromwellian England, of Colonial and Revolutionary America, of Republican France, in each of whom the capitalist class had developed their economic power before they raised the banner of political revolt.

The working class in their turn must perfect their organisations, and when such organisations are in a position to control, seize and operate the industries they will find their political power equal to the task.

But the preparatory work of the revolutionary campaign must lie in the daily and hourly struggles in the workshop, the daily and hourly perfecting of the industrial organisation.

And these two factors for freedom take no heed to political frontiers, nor to the demarcations of political states. They march side by side with the capitalist ; where capitalism brings its machinery it brings the rebels against itself, and all its governments and all its armies can establish no frontier the revolutionary idea cannot pass.

Let the great truth be firmly fixed in your mind that the struggle for the conquest of the political state of the capitalist is not the battle, it is only the echo of the battle. The real battle is being fought out, and will be fought out, on the industrial field.

Because of this and other reasons the doctrinaire Socialists are wrong in this as in the rest of their arguments. It is not necessary that Irish Socialists should hostile those who are working for the Gaelic language, nor whoop it up for territorial aggrandisement of any nation. Therefore, in this, we can wish the Sinn Feiners, good luck.

Besides, it is well to remember that nations which submit to conquest or races which abandon their language in favour of that of an oppressor do so, not because of the altruistic motives, or because of a love of brotherhood of man, but from a slavish and cringing spirit.

From a spirit which cannot exist side by side with the revolutionary idea.

This was amply evidenced in Ireland by the attitude of the Irish people towards their language.

For six hundred years the English strove to suppress that mark of the distinct character of the Gael—their language, and failed. But in one generation the politicians did what England had failed to do.

The great Daniel O'Connell, the so-called liberator, conducted

his meetings entirely in English. When addressing meetings in Connaught where, in his time, everybody spoke Gaelic and over 75 per cent. of the people nothing else but Gaelic, O'Connell spoke exclusively in English. He thus conveyed to the simple people the impression that Gaelic was something to be ashamed of—something fit for only ignorant people. He pursued the same course all over Ireland.

As a result of this and similar actions the simple people turned their backs upon their own language and began to ape "the gentry." It was the beginning of the reign of the toady and the crawler, the scoinin and the slave.

The agitator for revenue came into power in the land.

It is not ancient history, but the history of yesterday that old Irish men and women would speak Irish to each other in the presence of their children, but if they caught son or daughter using the language the unfortunate child would receive a cuff on the ear accompanied with the adjuration:—

"Speak English, you rascal; speak English like a gentleman!"

It is freely stated in Ireland that when the Protestant evangelisers, soupers they call them at home, issued tracts and Bibles in Irish in order to help the work of proselytising, the Catholic priesthood took advantage of the incident to warn their flocks against reading all literature in Gaelic. Thus still further discrediting the language.

I cannot conceive of a Socialist hesitating in his choice between a policy resulting in such self-abasement and a policy of defiant self-reliance and confident trust in a people's own power of self-emancipation by a people.

*The Harp*, April, 1908.

## NOTES

1. "We are not bigoted on the language question; we recognise however, that in this country those who drop Irish in favour of English

are generally actuated by the meanest of motives, are lick-spittles desirous of aping the gentry, whereas the rank and file of the Gaelic movement are for the most part thoroughly democratic in sentiment and spirit. If these latter did not so persistently revert for their inspiration to the past they would lose nothing and gain much in our estimation.

"But as this is neither a political nor an economic question it is outside our province to make any pronouncement upon it. We wish all Socialists to practise the same reserve. In the course of an interpellation in the French Chamber upon the attitude of the French Government towards the Breton language, Mr. Gérault-Richard, editor of *La Petite République*, most aggressively put himself upon record against granting further toleration to that tongue in Brittany. He was uncompromising in his hostility, but on the question of Socialist accepting favours and places (bribes) from capitalist ministries he was pliability itself.

"We prefer to reverse the process; to be uncompromising in our adherence to the principles and policy of our party, and to refrain from all attempts to identify our cause with any other propaganda not necessarily embraced therein."

*Workers' Republic*, March, 1903.

2. Replying in the *Workers' Republic* of December 2, 1899, to a questionnaire sent to him by the Polish paper, *Krytka*, Connolly wrote: "I believe the establishment of a universal language to facilitate communication between the peoples is highly to be desired. But I incline also to the belief that this desirable result would be attained sooner as the result of a free agreement which would accept one language to be taught in all primary schools, in addition to the national language, than by the attempt to crush out the existing national vehicles of expression. The complete success of the attempts at Russification or Germanisation, or kindred efforts to destroy the language of a people would, in my opinion, only create greater barriers to the acceptance of a universal language. Each conquering race, lusting after universal domination, would be bitterly intolerant of the language of every rival, and therefore more disinclined to accept a common medium than would a number of small races, with whom the desire to facilitate commercial and literary intercourse with the world, would take the place of lust of domination." Connolly in his reply also referred to "the close analogy existing in many respects" between Ireland and Poland, and declared that the intellectual life

of Poland would be "scant or abortive according as it was compelled to manifest itself through a foreign medium" and its preservation was "of permanent interest to the friends of European progress." He added: "I consider the free expression of Nationality to be as desirable in the interest of humanity in general, as the free expression of individuality is to the nation." On the question of Polish independence his opinion was: "In view of the enormous strength of modern armaments I fear the conquest of its National Freedom by Poland is not at present practicable, except the effort at attaining it be made in conjunction with a proletarian revolt in the ruling Empires."

## PARNELLISM AND LABOUR

SO long as they seek for Home Rule—for mere changes within the Constitution—our Irish parties at Westminster are, and must ever be, in the position of political hucksters seeking a good price for the votes they offer as wares. Their “independence” is only the fraudulent cloak with which they strive to cover their venality and lack of spirit.

We must not omit to specify one other cause of the decay of the official Parnellite party, viz., their unsatisfactory attitude towards labour. When Charles Stewart Parnell was basely deserted in Committee Room 15 by the crowd of adventurers and hack journalists out of whom he had constructed a formidable political party; when he was attacked in Ireland by the tenant farmers who owed much of whatever security they possessed to his skilful leadership; when the priesthood, whom he had elevated to power in the branches of the National League, turned to rend the man under whose firm guidance their influence might have become a power for freedom; when he was, in fact, deserted by the men who had ever been most loud-mouthed in their adulation of his person, it was the leal and true-hearted workingmen of Ireland who sprang to his side and fought his battles. They had never gained, but ever lost by his agitation, but in the supreme crisis of his destinies they rose superior to all other considerations and fought for the man battling against an insulting form of foreign dictation. They asked no reward—and got none. During the early days of the split Mr. Parnell did, indeed, adopt a programme laid before him by Dublin workingmen—a programme embodying nearly every measure advocated as palliative measures by the Socialist parties, but with his untimely death disappeared every hope of seeing that programme adhered to by any Home Rule



party. Every succeeding year has seen the Parnellite party become more and more conservative and reactionary. To-day, in direct opposition to the policy of their great leader, we find the Parnellite chiefs seeking every opportunity to hob-nob with the representatives of Irish landlordism ; hailing their feeblest utterances upon a financial question as the brightest scintillations of wisdom ; and not scrupling to tell at Cambridge an audience, composed of the young fledglings of English aristocracy, that the realisation of Ireland's independence was neither possible nor desirable.

Followers of Parnell they are indeed, but they follow at such a respectable distance they have lost sight not only of the leader but of his principles.

Meanwhile, the manhood of Ireland, no longer dazzled by the glare of a great personality, have had time to more closely examine their position, social and political. As a result they turn alike from the men who sold their leader at the bidding of an unscrupulous politician ; from the incapable gang whose only hope of existence is to live like political cannibals upon the reputation of the dead ; and from the pitiful compromise of the National Demand which scarce even the genius of Parnell could make appear respectable.

The working class of Ireland trusts no more the charming of the middle-class politician, charm he never so plausibly ; strong in its own power it marches irresistibly forward to its destiny, the Socialist Republic.

*Workers' Republic*, October 8, 1898.

## BRITISH LABOUR AND IRISH POLITICIANS

I HAVE spent a great portion of my life alternating between interpreting Socialism to the Irish and interpreting the Irish to the Socialists. Of the two tasks, I confess, that while I am convinced that the former has been attended with a considerable degree of success, the latter has not. At least as far as the Socialists of Great Britain are concerned, they always seem to me to exhibit towards the Irish working-class democracy of the Labour movement the same inability to understand their position and to share in their aspirations as the organised British nation, as a whole, has shown to the struggling Irish nation it has so long held in subjection.

No one, and least of all the present writer, would deny the sympathy of the leaders of the British Labour movement towards the Labour and Socialist movements of Ireland, but a sympathy not based upon understanding is often more harmful than a direct antagonism. A case in point will serve to illustrate my meaning as well as to provide a guide and a warning for the future.

Upon the passing of the Local Government Act, establishing household suffrage for the municipalities and local governing bodies of Ireland, in 1898, the Trades Councils and other trades bodies all over this country proceeded to form independent Labour Electoral Associations for the purpose of running Labour candidates against the nominees of both the orthodox Irish political parties.

At once, as was natural, the capitalist politicians took fright, and in press and on platform the Irish workers were denounced for daring to abandon their "natural leaders."

But the Irish workers who knew the Irish political cliques and their leaders at first hand and appraised them accordingly

at their just value, went on with the nomination of their candidates, practically every trades council in this country being actively engaged in the work of fighting for independent Labour representation.

The small British Socialist press which then existed had given, up till this, a cordial approval of this hopeful development of the political side of the Irish Labour movement.

But so ominous did this movement appear to the interests which control the Home Rule party that eventually the present leader of that party took the field against it, and in a carefully reported speech, declared that "Labour and Nationality must march together," meaning as all his hearers knew, as everybody in Ireland knew, that Labour must abandon its political adventure as a separate cause, and must be content to seek its fortunes as a subordinate issue in the Home Rule camp.

Labour, in Ireland, did not pay much attention to this pronouncement against it, but the responsible leaders of the Labour movement in Great Britain immediately seized upon this phrase and in press and on platform it was heralded in that country as a "magnificent pronouncement of the Irish party *in favour of Labour.*"<sup>1</sup>

A more ridiculous perversion of facts it would be hard to conceive. But all during these fiercely contested Local Government elections in Ireland where Irish M.P.'s were brought down in shoals into the municipal wards to fight against the nominees of the Irish Trade Unions, these same M.P.'s had no better weapons in their armouries than the eulogies which, in England, were being lavished by responsible Labour men upon the Home Rule leaders—eulogies based upon and only made possible by a wresting of the language of a politician from all relation to the circumstances which inspired it.

If some one had said, in England, that "Labour and Liberalism must march together," no one would have or could have construed it into a declaration of Liberalism in favour of the

Labour movement, but all would have recognised it as a declaration against that political independence of Labour which is the very essence of the movement. So it was with the former declaration in Ireland ; but the British Socialists, accustomed to think of the Home Rule party as a minority party, utterly misunderstood its attitude and language when speaking in Ireland as a majority party deprecating all political activities not under the control of its officials.

This is but one sample out of many that could be quoted of the difficulty of making the comrades in Great Britain understand the totally different conditions in Ireland and also understand that these conditions naturally produce catch-words, phrases and rallying cries which bear no relation to the conditions which prevail in Great Britain.

The Labour party in Parliament tries to surmount this difficulty by, so to speak, establishing Home Rule in its relations with Ireland. Thus, if a trade union in Ireland writes to the Labour party asking that a certain question be raised in Parliament, if that question pertains to a district represented by a member of the Home Rule party, the answer sent to the trade union generally is that the question has been turned over to the Irish party, and that should that Party raise it in the House, the Labour Party will support it.

As the Irish Parliamentary Party desires to pose in Ireland as opposed to all class division, and as a cold matter of fact is generally bossed locally by small sweating employers, slum landlords and publicans, the M.P. from the district never brings the question up and the incident never is made public, but only serves to accentuate "the pleasant relations which exist in the House between the Irish Party and Labour." Ahem !

As a result of these "pleasant relations," there was no one in the House to fight for the inclusion of Ireland in the Meals for Necessitous School Children Act and thus while reformers in England are now fiercely fighting for the right to feed

children during holidays, the school children of Ireland are yet denied the primary right of being fed during school hours.

A threat from the Labour Party to wreck the Insurance Bill unless Ireland was included in the Medical Benefits would have secured that, the best part of the Act, for Ireland. But that would have disturbed the pleasant relations also, and Ireland was left out, and a totally inadequate, unworkable Act without that provision foisted upon this country.

Ireland is, to-day, the battle-ground almost daily of fierce industrial disputes. In these disputes there are continual outrages by a police and constabulary over whom no popularly elected body in city or country exercises the smallest control ; but in no case are these outrages upon Labour made the subject of Parliamentary questions by the Irish parties. Strikers arrested in industrial disputes are tried and sentenced by resident magistrates drawn entirely from the possessing classes ; but although their findings and sentences are usually a travesty upon law and an outrage upon justice, the smug serenity of our lawmakers is never troubled by any question pertaining thereto.

Labour and Nationality, now as in 1898, are marching together (in Parliament) and the fierce battles of the labourer in the towns of Ireland for bread must not disturb their pleasant relations.

Oh yes, the Home Rulers are great democrats—in England ; great friends of Labour—in England ; heroic defenders of the common people—in England. But in Ireland. Ah ! that is another matter.

During a lock-out in Dundalk at the beginning of last year, a girl picket was arrested for striving to induce another girl not to blackleg. She was summarily tried and sentenced to prison on a charge of "indecent conduct in the streets." No unclean language or action had been attributed to her and the police evidence simply stated that she had persisted in picketing, yet the cold-blooded scoundrelism of the authorities framed a

charge against her calculated to blast her character and ruin her whole life. If she had been a daughter of an Irish farmer fighting an Irish landlord in Land League days the then Irish Party would have made the world ring with their denunciations of such character assassinations ; but she was only an Irish working girl fighting an Irish employer, and none of the Irish heroes who, on the platforms of the Liberal Party in England, are fighting for the "Glory of God and the Honour of Erin," had time to waste on such as her.

Small wonder that we in Ireland are working to establish a Labour Party of our own. We have no fault to find with the Labour Party in Great Britain. We recognise that it has its own problems to face and that it cannot well be expected to turn aside to grapple with ours. And, Heaven knows, these problems are serious enough to require the most earnest study and undivided attention of men on the spot. They require more study and attention that can be given by men absorbed in the urgent problems of the greater population across the water.

From time to time I propose to give some attention to the elucidation of the problems peculiar to Ireland and particularly to this part of it. For the present, it is sufficient to emphasise the fact that the religious affiliations of the population of Ulster determine their political leanings to a greater extent than is the case in any part of Europe outside the Balkans. But the manner in which this has developed is also unique. I believe that it is true to say that, politically speaking, the Protestantism of the North of Ireland has no parallel outside this country, and that the Catholicism of the Irish Catholics is, likewise, peculiar in its political trend.

To explain—I mean that, whereas, Protestantism has in general made for political freedom and political Radicalism, it has been opposed to slavish worship of kings and aristocrats. Here, in Ireland, the word Protestant is almost a convertible

term with Toryism, lickspittle loyalty, servile worship of aristocracy and hatred of all that savours of genuine political independence on the part of the "lower classes."

And in the same manner, Catholicism which in most parts of Europe is synonymous with Toryism, lickspittle loyalty, servile worship of aristocracy and hatred of all that savours of genuine political independence on the part of the lower classes, in Ireland is almost synonymous with rebellious tendencies, zeal for democracy, and intense feeling of solidarity with all strivings upward of those who toil.

Such a curious phenomenon is easily understood by those who know the history of Ireland. Unfortunately for their spiritual welfare—and I am using the word "spiritual," not in its theological but in its better significance as controlling mental and moral development upward—the Protestant elements of Ireland were, in the main, a plantation of strangers upon the soil from which the owners had been dispossessed by force. The economic dispossession was, perforce, accompanied by a political and social outlawry. Hence every attempt of the dispossessed to attain citizenship, to emerge from their state of outlawry, was easily represented as a tentative step towards reversing the plantation and towards replanting the Catholic and dispossessing the Protestant.

Imagine this state of matters persisting for over 200 years and one realises at once that the planted population—the Protestants—were bound to acquire insensibly a hatred of political reform, and to look upon every effort of the Catholic to achieve political recognition as an insidious move towards the expulsion of Protestants. Then the Protestant always saw that the kings and aristocrats of England and Ireland were opposed by the people whom he most feared and from recognising that it was but an easy step to regard his cause as indetical with theirs. They had a common enemy, and he began to teach his children that they had a common cause, and common ideals.

This is the reason—their unfortunate isolation as strangers holding a conquered country in fee for rulers alien to its people—that the so-called Scotch of Ulster have fallen away from and developed antagonism to political reform and mental freedom as rapidly as the Scots of Scotland have advanced in adhesion to these ideals.

The Catholics, for their part, and be it understood I am talking only of the Catholic workers, have been as fortunately placed for their political education as they were unfortunately placed for their political and social condition. Just as the Socialist knows that the working class, being the lowest in the social system, cannot emancipate itself without as a result emancipating all other classes, so the Irish Catholic has realised instinctively that he, being the most oppressed and disfranchised, could not win any modicum of political freedom or social recognition for himself without winning it for all others in Ireland. Every upward step of the Catholic has emancipated some one of the smaller Protestant sects; every successful revolt of the Catholic peasant has given some added security even to those Protestant farmers who were most zealously defending the landlord. And out of this struggle the Catholic has, perforce, learned toleration. He has learned that his struggle is, and has been, the struggle of all the lowly and dispossessed, and he has grown broadminded with the broad-mindedness of the slave in revolt against slavery.

But with the advent of Home Rule, nay even with the promise of Home Rule and the entrance of Ireland upon the normal level of civilised, self-governing nations, the old relation of Protestant and Catholic begins to melt and dissolve, and with their dissolution will come a new change in the relation of either faith to politics. The loss of its privileged position will mean for Protestantism the possibilities of an immense spiritual uplifting; an emergence into a knowledge of its kinship with its brothers and sisters of different creeds. Whether the entrance



of Catholicity into a position of mere numerical voting power will lead, in its turn, to a withering up of those kindly feelings born of its past sufferings is another matter. I do not believe that it will, at least amongst the toilers. Our apprenticeship to misery has been too long, our journeyings in the desert of slavery have surely implanted in our breasts a sense of the criminality of any attempt to impose fetters upon others such as we have ourselves worn. And out of that belief the writer looks forward with confidence to the future believing that the tale these Notes from Ireland will have to tell will be a hopeful one, even if the hope is nurtured amid storm and stress.

*Forward, May 3, 1913.*

## NOTES

1. In the *Workers' Republic*, March, 1901, and October, 1901, Connolly made similar criticisms of the British Labour attitude; in his final article he wrote: "Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., and his colleagues on the *Labour Leader* have been assiduously instilling into the minds of the British Socialists the belief that Mr. John Redmond's Home Rule Party are burning with enthusiasm for Labour and are favourably inclined towards Socialism. We beg our readers in Ireland not to laugh at this . . . We do not agree with Hardie's general policy, would decidedly not adopt it as our own, but we believe in his honesty of purpose. We ask nothing from the English democracy but we do not wish to cross one another's path. We believe the Irish working class are strong enough to fight their own battles and we would be the last to advise them to seek outside help in the struggle that lies before them. We do not propose to criticise Hardie's voting alliance with the Home Rulers, but a voting alliance need not be accompanied by indiscriminate praise of your temporary allies." In his first article Connolly wrote: "The Irish Home Rule party is essentially a capitalist party . . . Its chiefs do indeed 'recognise that there is a Labour question,' but they recognise it only in order to sidetrack and postpone indefinitely its discussion."

## MR. JOHN E. REDMOND, M.P. : HIS STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS

IN endeavouring to give readers in Great Britain some real conception of the realities of Irish political life, one finds the task of explanation made increasingly difficult by the spectacular nature of the campaign waged by the Redmondites on the one hand, and the reactionary, lying stupidities of the Irish Tories on the other. The fact that national political freedom is both desirable and necessary blinds many people to the truth that the advocates of such freedom on the political field may be most intensely conservative on the social or economic field and, indeed, may be purblind bigots in their opposition to all other movements making for human progress or enlightenment.

On the other hand there are not wanting, even among Socialists, many who seeing the socially reactionary character of much of the agitation for national freedom, became opposed to the principle because of the anti-Socialist character of some of its advocates.

The Socialist Party of Ireland avoids the dangers of either course. It recognises that national political freedom is an inevitable step towards the attainment of universal economic freedom, but it insists that the non-Socialist leaders of merely national movements should be regarded in their true light as champions of the old social order and not exalted into the position of popular heroes by any aid of Socialist praise or glorification. A fact many of our British comrades are apt to forget.

We need not besleave the United Irish League because we detest the Tories. We can detest them both. In fact they represent the same principle in different stages of social development. The Tories are the conservatives of Irish feudalism,

the United Irish Leaguers are the conservatives of a belated Irish capitalism. It is our business to help the latter against the former only when we can do so without prejudice to our own integrity as a movement.

How difficult this becomes, at times, is best illustrated by the position of Mr. John E. Redmond, M.P. "Leader of the Irish race," as his followers enthusiastically assure us. Mr. Redmond has a record as a reactionist difficult to excel. Long before the Parnell split, he denounced the Irish agricultural labourers in a speech at Rathfarnham, near Dublin, for forming a trade union to protect their own interests. On the granting of Local Government in 1898, a measure that first enfranchised the Irish working class on local bodies, Mr. Redmond made a speech counselling the labourers to elect landlords to represent them—a speech truly characterised by Mr. Michael Davitt in the House of Commons as the "speech of a half-emancipated slave." The labourers in town and country treated Mr. Redmond's advice with contempt and elected men of their own class all over Ireland. Compelled by the imperative necessity of maintaining in power a Home Rule government, Mr. Redmond votes for every measure of social reform the defeat of which would lead to the resignation of said government, but quietly acquiesces in every exemption of Ireland from progressive measures. Mr. Redmond believes that the Irish people are capable of governing their country, but opposed the proposal of Mr. T. W. Russell to allow the Irish people to control their own schools under the Local Government Act of 1898. Mr. Redmond bewails the fact that lack of employment compels the Irish workers to emigrate at the rate of 30,000 per year, but opposed the attempt of the Labour party to compel the government to recognise its duty to provide work for them at home; Mr. Redmond believes that all public servants and representatives should be paid for their services to the State from the funds of the state, but is opposed to payment of

members being extended to Ireland ; Mr. Redmond's heart bleeds for the poor of Ireland, but he would not vote for the Feeding of School Children's Act to be applied to Ireland, and Mr. Redmond is a friend of the Labour party in England (!), but his party fights to the death against every independent candidature of Labour throughout the purely Nationalist districts of Ireland.

If we are, as we are, capable of running our own country, how comes it we are not fit to be trusted with our own schools ? And if the public control of schools by the Catholic Irish people would lead to atheism and to the persecution of the clergy, how has it not produced the same effect in Canada which Mr. Redmond is continually praising as an example for Ireland ? Here is what a clergyman, the Rev. J. E. Burke, in a recent speech in the Assembly Hall, Belfast, said of the educational system of Canada—that country so beloved of Mr. T. P. O'Connor and Mr. Redmond :

“ They had no church schools—nothing but state schools. While the priest and the parson were at liberty to visit the schools, and give advice and encouragement, they had nothing to do in the management. The children of all nationalities and all creeds and classes attended these schools and grew up together in them, and he believed that the result of this was a better understanding amongst them in after life.”

Mr. Redmond exalts Canada as a model for Irish Government, but opposes in Ireland all these domestic institutions which make free government a success in Canada.

If it was right, as it undoubtedly was, to demand aid for Irish farmers, why is it not equally right to demand state aid or local aid for starving Irish school children ?

If, as Mr. Redmond claims, Ireland is overtaxed to the extent of over two millions per year, how will payment of

Irish members of Parliament be a gift from the "British" Treasury? Does one feel like the recipient of a "gift" when you get back some of your own?

How then does Mr. Redmond and his party maintain their hold despite their essentially reactionary position? Simply because the Irish Unionists are still more reactionary. It is almost a choice between the devil and the deep sea.

Observe: In the debate in the House of Commons on the M'Cann case, Mr. Joseph Devlin, M.P., taunted the Orange bigots with the fact that none of their clergymen had been on the Anti-Sweating platform in the Ulster Hall, Belfast. As a matter of fact, the same was true of the Catholic clergymen. None of them were on that platform either, but the stupid Orange reactionaries could not think of a better answer to Joe than to deny the fact of the sweating. The obvious retort was apparently beyond their capacities.

Another illustration: In the debate upon the issue of the writ for North Louth, an Orange member, Mr. William Moore, moved to suspend the issue of the writ for four months on the ground that "Protestants" had been assaulted. This motion was made despite the fact that the whole trend of the evidence had been to prove that every species of intimidation and bribery had been brought to bear upon Catholics who refused to bow to the dictates of the official Home Rule gang. That, in short, it was Catholics who needed to be protected and not Protestants.

A motion to suspend the issue of the writ pending a Parliamentary investigation into the workings of the organisations responsible for the wholesale terrorism exercised upon the electors of North Louth—irrespective of religion—would have opened the way for a capable man to give such an exposure of the workings of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (Board of Erin) and its relation to the United Irish League, as might have led to the extirpation of that pest in Ireland, but no one could expect such statemanship from the Orange quarter.

But just imagine what a real Irish democrat could have made of such a situation ! Then he could have dealt with the pilgrimage of the M.P.'s to America and Canada to beg from Irish exiles money towards the Irish cause, how our exiled brothers and sisters stinted themselves of, perhaps, even the necessities of life in order to help to "free Ireland and uplift poor Mother Erin," and how the money thus procured was used to debauch Irish men and women, to destroy political purity, to purchase bludgeons to smash in the heads of Irish men, and to terrorise the peaceful countryside ?

A real representative of the Irish democracy might go on to show how Mr. Joseph Devlin's organisation, the A.O.H., supposed to be the Ancient Order of Hibernians, but by some believed to be the Ancient Order of Hooligans, has spread like an ulcer throughout Ireland, carrying social and religious terrorism with it into quarters hitherto noted for their broad-mindedness and discernment.

How it has organised the ignorant, the drunken and the rowdy, and thrown the shield of religion around their excesses ; how it has made it impossible to conduct a political contest in the South of Ireland except on the lines of civil war ; and how every man who dares to oppose the Redmondite party, or every man within that party who opposes the A.O.H., must be at all times prepared to take his life in his hands. . . .

Every shade of political feeling in Ireland, outside of the official gang at the head of the United Irish League, agree that this organisation of Mr. Devlin's creation, and of whose work Mr. Redmond accepts the fruits, is the greatest curse yet introduced into the political and social life of Ireland. It is the organised ignorance of the community placing itself unreservedly at the disposal of the most insidious and inveterate enemies of enlightenment. In West Belfast it calls upon the Labour vote, upon the Socialists, to vote for "Wee Joe Devlin," and in Queenstown <sup>1</sup> it fomented a riot in order to prevent a Socialist

speaker delivering his message ; it is a true reincarnation of mediaeval intolerance masquerading in the guise of Christian charity. . . .

Such is the problem, or rather some factors in the problem, in Ireland. Say, ye British Socialists, have your leaders any conception of this problem, or do they imagine that an Irish branch of a British Socialist organisation can grapple with this problem, or do anything with it save make a mess of it ?

Or that it can be grappled with in any manner save from within the Irish nation by the workers of Ireland uniting in a party of their own to throw off the incubus of social slavery and religious intolerance ? Such is the work the Socialist Party of Ireland sets out to accomplish. In that work the Socialists of Ireland know well that they can expect no help or countenance from the bigots of either Green or Orange persuasion, and while ever insisting upon the right of Ireland to control its own destinies, it allows precedence in its thoughts and plans to no interest but one, that of the working class. To the Redmonds and the Devlins, the Carsons and the Moores—it leaves the apostleship of religious bigotry ; in our ranks there is no room for that type of politician of whom the poet writes that :—

“ With all his conscience and with one eye askew,  
So false he partly took himself for true ;  
Whose pious talk, when most his heart was dry.  
Made wet the crafty crow’s-foot round his eye ;  
Who never naming God except for gain,  
So never took that useful name in vain ;  
Made Him his cat’s paw, and the Cross his tool,  
And Christ his bait to trap his dupe and fool ;  
Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace, he forged,  
And, snakelike, slimed his victim ere he gorged.”

*Forward, March 18, 1911.*

### NOTES

1. Since renamed Cobh. A reference to the organised attack on one of Connolly's Socialist meetings there. The omitted portions of this article consist of very long quotations from the *Cork Free Press*, organ of William O'Brien, M.P. and Mr. Lindsay Crawford, leader of the Independent Orangemen, both exposing the sectarian activities of the A.O.H.



## WEE JOE DEVLIN

**T**HAT great, that heroic figure, Wee Joe Devlin, at the recent Convention of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (Board of Erin), told how his society had rallied to the Empire in its day of difficulty—that difficulty for which all good Irish Nationalists were wont to pray :

“ All the funds of the society were invested in Irish securities, so that the money was retained in Ireland for the benefit of the Irish people, with the exception of £12,000 which had been invested in the new War Loan at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., a fact which, taken with the numbers of those who had joined the colours, ought to demonstrate beyond question or doubt that in regard to the war the society, as a whole, recognised, in sympathy with the overwhelmong majority of the Irish people, the obligation of supporting the cause of justice and freedom as represented by the Allies, as against the brute force, materialism and tyranny for which Germany stands in the present world conflict (applause).”

When you read a speech like that you at once realise that if Germany has discovered poisonous gas, we in Ireland have suffered from it for years. As I think of the hundreds of good men I have known, fathers of families, husbands, sons with aged parents, etc., who have been enticed to leave their homes and dear ones and march out to battle for an Empire that never kept faith with the Irish race, and think that it was Wee Joe's influence that led them to their folly, I think things that the Defence of the Realm Acts will not permit me to print.

Belfast opponents of Joe Devlin usually refer to him sarcastically as the “ Wee Bottlewasher,” alluding to his position before he climbed into power. The sarcasm is pointless. A bottlewasher was an honest occupation, but a recruiting sergeant luring to their death the men who trusted him and

voted him into power is—ah well, let us remember the Defence of the Realm Act.

The present writer cannot ride up the Falls Road in his own motor car, the penny tram has to do him. But thank God, there are no fresh made graves in Flanders or the Dardanelles filled by the mangled corpses of men whom he coaxed or bullied into leaving their homes and families.

And that consolation counts more to the peace of his soul than would the possession of a motor car, or the companionship of grossly overfed boon companions of the bottlewasher—or of the bottle.

There are widows in Belfast to-day whose husbands would still be with them if they had taken my advice ; there are orphans in Belfast to-day whose fathers would still be able to work for them and love them if they had taken my advice ; there are stricken mothers and fathers in Belfast to-day whose sons would still be smiling and happy at the family hearth to-day if my advice had been listened to. And I am confident that it will not be long before these widows, orphans and bereaved parents with every sob and sigh will breathe a curse upon the conscienceless politician to whose advice they did listen.

You can fool all the people some of the time, you can fool some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.

What is true of my attitude in Belfast is true of our attitude in Dublin and all over Ireland wherever our voice and influence could reach.

We saved the lives of thousands, held together thousands of homes, and amid all the welter and turmoil of a gigantic and unparalleled national betrayal we presented to the world the spectacle of the organised Irish working class standing steadfastly by the highest ideals of freedom, so that the flag of Labour became one with the standard of national liberty.

*Workers' Republic*, August 28, 1915.

## THE IRISH MASSES IN HISTORY

IN its issue of August 8, the Boston *Pilot* had a very interesting article upon the life of a typical Irish girl of ancient Ireland. The article dealt with the life of the ancient Irish as it has been reconstructed by antiquarians from a study of the gold and silver ornaments found in various bogs in Ireland, and from the allusions to the use of those ornaments made in old Irish manuscripts.

All this is interesting, especially to those who desire to have their Irish patriotism or pride of race buttressed up by historical data. And, of course, there are many such.

I, also, was much interested in the article, but for another reason. To me it was especially interesting as illustrative of the curious effect modern property relations have upon the mind of even the most gifted amongst us. The gifted authoress of the article in question took as the imaginary subject of her sketch an ancient Irish princess and reconstructed her life in the most ingenious manner, describing her lying down and uprising, her hunting and riding and chess-playing and sweet-hearting and, in fact, all the incidents in which an Irish princess is revealed or touched upon by the old Irish manuscripts in song or story.

In all of those pursuits she was waited upon by a slave woman, a different slave woman for each separate amusement ; in all, there must have been at least a dozen different slave women waiting upon the one princess, and what appeared to my cold Socialistic mind as curious was that the writer wrote and treated of the princess as a typical "colleen" of ancient Ireland, and utterly neglected to recognise in the slave women any right to be regarded as Irish types at all.

Yet when we remember that for every princess living the life of luxury and ease sketched by the *Pilot* writer there must

have been at least a dozen other women attending her and a hundred other Irish women working in the fields attending cattle and weaving and spinning to feed and clothe and house and ornament her, it must be conceded that any one of these hundred useful Irish women had more right to be considered "typical Irish colleens" than the useless drone whose life our authoress has reconstructed with such loving fidelity and care.

By all means tell us about the typical colleens of ancient Erin, shake up for us the dry bones of history and tell us about the wives and mothers and daughters of the producing classes of our native country, but do not ask us to believe that a princess was anything more than a type of the class to which she belonged—a predatory useless class—a class whose predatory proclivities hindered the free development of the nation and prepared the way for its subjection.

What a history that would be which would tell us the history of the real women of Ireland—the women of the people ! What a record of ceaseless suffering, of heroism, of martyrdom ! What a recital of patient toil, of uncomplaining self-sacrifice, of unending abnegation ! Aye, and what a brilliant tale of things accomplished, of deeds done, of miracles achieved !

Think of all the insurrections against British tyranny in Ireland, and as you honour the men who went out to front the armed force of the oppressors think also of the brave women who kissed them and cried over them ere they went, but bade them go for freedom's sake.

Think of all the slimy roll of informers in Erin, and wonder when you remember how seldom even tradition places a woman's name upon the list.

Think of the long and bloody history of the fight against private property in Irish land—against Irish landlordism, and when you remember how the Irish mother, the woman of the house, consented to suffer eviction and ruin rather than let her husband betray the cause of his friends and neighbours, then if

you believe in a God thank Him for the spirit and courage and honour of our Irish womanhood.

But then you will not be accepting princesses as the types of Irish life, you will be looking for types of the real womanhood of Ireland where only they can be found, among the producing classes.

Those Irish girls who in the recent dock strike in Belfast joined their fathers and brothers and sweethearts in the streets to battle against the English troops imported in the interests of Irish capitalism are to my mind a thousand times more admirable "types of Irish colleens" than the noblest *bean uasal* of Gaelic Erin much as I admire the latter.

What would we think of the historian who would picture the life of the daughter of an Irish aristocrat of to-day, and then tell us that this was a picture of the life of a typical Irish girl of the twentieth century? We would laugh him to scorn. Yet that is the manner in which history is written.

*The Harp*, September, 1908.

## SINN FEIN, SOCIALISM AND THE NATION

IN a recent issue of *The Peasant*, a correspondent, "Cairbre," in the midst of a very fair and reasonable article on "Sinn Fein and Socialism," says :—"A rapprochement between Sinn Feinism and Socialism is highly desirable." To this I desire to say a fervent "Amen," and to follow up in my prayer with a suggestion which may help in realising such a desirable consummation. Always presupposing that the rapprochement is desired between Sinn Feiners who sympathise with Socialism and not merely with those who see no further than "the Constitution of '82," on the one hand, and Socialists who realise that a Socialist movement must rest upon and draw its inspiration from the historical and actual conditions of the country in which it functions and not merely lose themselves in an abstract "internationalism" (which has no relation to the real internationalism of the Socialist movement), on the other.

But, first, it would be as well to state some of the difficulties in the way in order that we may shape our course in order to avoid them.

Sinn Fein has two sides—its economic teaching and its philosophy of self-reliance. With its economic teaching, as expounded by my friend Mr. Arthur Griffith in his adoption of the doctrines of Frederick List, Socialists have no sympathy, as it appeals only to those who measure a nation's prosperity by the volume of wealth produced in a country, instead of by the distribution of that wealth amongst the inhabitants. According to that definition, Ireland in 1847 was a prosperous country because it exported food, whereas Denmark was comparatively unprosperous because it exported little. But with that part of Sinn Fein which teaches that Ireland must rely upon itself, respect her own traditions, know her own history,

preserve her own language and literature without prejudice to, or denial of, the worth in the language or literature of other people, stand erect in her own worth and claim to be appraised for her own intrinsic value, and not as part of the wheels and cogs of the imperial system of another people—with that side of Sinn Fein Socialists may sympathise ; and, indeed, as a cold matter of fact, those doctrines were preached in Dublin by the Irish Socialist Republican Party from 1896 onward, before the Sinn Fein movement was founded.

The first side of Sinn Fein necessarily excludes the Socialists ; the second does not. The first rests upon a capitalist conception of progress ; the second is a gateway by which Ireland may enter into the intellectual domain which Socialism has made its own—by its spiritual affinity with all the world-wide forces making for social freedom.

Socialists are also somewhat divided in their ideas as to what is a proper course in a country like Ireland. One set, observing that those who talk loudest about “ Ireland a Nation ” are often the most merciless grinders of the faces of the poor, fly off to the extremest limit of hostility to Nationalism and, whilst opposed to oppression at all times, are also opposed to national revolt for national independence.

Another, principally recruited amongst the workers in the towns of North-East Ulster have been weaned by Socialist ideas and industrial disputes from the leadership of Tory and Orange landlords and capitalists ; but as they are offered practical measures of relief from capitalist oppression by the English Independent Labour Party, and offered nothing but a green flag by Irish Nationalism, they naturally go where they imagine relief will come from. Thus their social discontent is lost to the Irish cause. These men see that the workers shot down last winter in Belfast were not shot down in the interests of the Legislative Union ; they were shot down in the interests of Irish capitalists. Hence, when a Sinn Feiner waxes eloquent

about restoring the Constitution of '82, but remains silent about the increasing industrial despotism of the capitalist ; when the Sinn Feiner speaks to men who are fighting against low wages and tells them that the Sinn Fein body has promised lots of Irish labour at low wages to any foreign capitalist who wishes to establish in Ireland, what wonder if they come to believe that a change from Toryism to Sinn Feinism would simply be a change from the devil they do know to the devil they do not know !

The other section of Socialists in Ireland are those who inscribe their banners with the watchword "Irish Socialist Republic," who teach that Socialism will mean in Ireland the common ownership by Irish people of the land and everything else necessary to feed, clothe, house and maintain life in Ireland, and that therefore Socialism in its application to Ireland means and requires the fullest trust of the Irish people as the arbiters of their own destinies in conformity with the laws of progress and humanity.

This section of Socialists were so Irish that they organised and led the great anti-Jubilee procession of 1897 in Dublin, which completely destroyed all the carefully-prepared British preparations to represent Irish as loyal ; and yet their position was so correct from their standpoint that at the International Congress of 1900 at Paris they were granted, in the name of Ireland, separate representation from England and treated and acted as a separate nation.<sup>1</sup>

Now the problem is to find a basis of union on which all these sections who owe allegiance to one or other conception of Socialism may unite. My position is that this union, or rapprochement, cannot be arrived at by discussing our differences. Let us rather find out and unite upon the things upon which we agree. Once we get together, we will find that our differences are not so insuperable as they appear whilst we are separated. What is necessary first is a simple platform around which to



gather, with the understanding that as much as possible shall be left to future conditions to dictate and as little as possible settled now by rules or theories. As each section has complete confidence in their own doctrines, let them show their confidence by entering an organisation with those who differ from them in methods, and depend upon the development of events to prove the correctness of their position. Each person to have complete freedom of speech in conformity with the common object ; the lecture platform to be common to all, and every lecture to be followed by questions and discussion. With mutual toleration on both sides, the Protestant worker may learn that the co-operation of the Catholic who works, suffers, votes and fights alongside him is more immediately vital to his cause and victory day by day than the co-operation of workers on the other side of the Channel ; and that Socialists outside of Ireland are all in favour of that national independence which he rejects for the sake of a few worthless votes.

And the Catholic Sinn Feiners may learn that love of freedom beats strongly in the breasts of Protestant peasants and workmen who, because they have approached it from a different historical standpoint, regard the Nationalist conception with suspicion or even hostility.

*Irish Nation*,<sup>2</sup> January 23, 1909.

## NOTES

1. Connolly was not one of the delegates. They were E. W. Stewart, Mark Deering and Daniel O'Brien.

2. *The Irish Nation*, Dublin, edited by W. P. Ryan (1909-1910) was the successor to *The Irish Peasant*, published in Navan (1905-1906), and *The Peasant*, Dublin (1907-1909).

## ARMS AND THE MAN

SOMEWHERE or other we have read that every act brings its own payment ; every crime its own punishment. Recent events in Ireland would seem to bear out the truth of that bit of philosophy. We have had on the part of the fervent supporters of the established institutions of the British Empire a continual and increasing fervency of appeal to the arbitrament of force as against the verdict of constitutional government, a rising crescendo of hysterical eloquence invoking the use of arms as against the verdict of votes. Landlords, ex-Crown lawyers, ex-Ministers of the Crown, aspirants to be Ministers of the Crown, Ministers of the Gospel, smug, sweating capitalists and dear ladies living upon the sweated toll of poor women—all have joined in declaring with one voice that the only course open to lovers of justice and liberty when outvoted is to appeal to the arbitrament of arms, and to bathe with blood the hills and dales of their native land, what time the crack of rifles and zip-zip of machine guns rattled around the banks of our “lazy shining rivers.”

The world has looked on amazed, the responsible Ministers of the Crown amused, and the forces of revolution rather pleased than otherwise. But whilst the Government twirled its thumbs rather bored at the spectacle, something was happening in other circles on which the Government had not counted, and which the same Government could not afford, or did not think it could afford, to view with equanimity. That something took shape and form on the day on which we announced that the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union proposed to organise and drill a Citizen Army of its own. At first looked upon as a mere piece of Liberty Hall heroics, it assumed a different aspect when it was discovered that regiments had actually been

organised, and drilling under the command of an experienced officer and competent non-commissioned officers was in progress nightly. A parade through the city impressing the onlookers by its discipline and self-control effectually dispelled all illusions as to the deadly earnestness of purpose of the men and their chiefs. Following this came the uprise of Volunteer forces throughout Nationalist Ireland, and the young stalwart men who have ever cherished high dreams for Erin commenced to learn the rudiments of drill.

And then the Government took action. To allow Orangemen to drill was all right. Their leaders could be trusted to see that no action would be taken which would interfere with the sacred rights of property, or to end the right of the few to rule and rob the many. But to allow Labour to drill and perhaps arm, to allow Nationalists to drill and arm !!!—that would never do ! Hence the Government which allowed the Orange aristocracy to arm and drill the Orange mobs, to supply them with all the implements of war, and to inflame them with the passions of war, promptly and ruthlessly prevented the issue of arms to, or the learning of drill by the people against whom the poor Orange dupes were being armed and excited.

That was instance number one of the manner in which the crime brings its own punishment, the counsel to arm on behalf of the Orange aristocracy bringing inevitably with it the counsel to arm the masses of the Nationalist democracy.

The second instance is of a more tragic as well as of a more striking nature. During the progress of the present dispute we have seen imported into Dublin some of the lowest elements from the very dregs of the criminal population of Great Britain and Ireland. This scum of the underworld have come here excited by appeals to the vilest instincts of their natures ; these appeals being framed and made by the gentlemen employers of Dublin. They have been incited to betray their fellows fighting against the imposition of an agreement denounced by

the highest Court of Inquiry, as well as by public opinion in general, as an interference with individual liberty. And in order to induce them to act as Judases their rascally passions were pandered to by the offer of wages higher than were ever paid to union men, and by the permission and encouragement to carry murderous weapons. Too much stress cannot be laid upon this latter encouragement. There are natures so low that permission to carry about the means whereby life may be destroyed has to them an irresistible appeal ; the feeling that they carry in their pockets the possibility of destroying others, has to these base natures an intoxication all its own. To that feeling the employers of Dublin deliberately appealed. Deliberately, and with malice aforethought, they armed a gang of the lowest scoundrels in these islands, and after daily inflaming them with drink, sent them to and fro in the streets of the capital, inciting and maddening all those upon whose liberties they were helping to make war. In one of the streets on Thursday afternoon, this cold-blooded policy of incitement to outrage had its effect. A few men jeered at the passing scabs and made a show of hostility. Immediately a scab drew a revolver, fired—and shot one of the employers principally responsible for bringing him here and principally responsible for arming him and setting him loose primed with drink upon the streets of Dublin. That action of the employer in importing and arming such a scoundrel was a crime—an anti-social crime of the foulest nature—and surely never more dramatically did a crime bring its own punishment. It came like a judgment from on high, and what wonder if such was the first thought of the workers when the news was told !

So it will ever be ; no act can escape its consequences. And now let us ask if this fearful example will be lost, or will it not help to arouse all to a sense of the fearful dangers incident to the present warfare upon the liberties of the working class of Dublin ? Is it not time that saner counsels prevailed and

that now, having fought our battle, tried each other's mettle and felt each other's strength, we should sit down to devise means to terminate the present conflict and provide for the possibility of peaceful co-operation replacing the reign of chaos and disorder ?

*Irish Worker*, December 13, 1913.

## THE LIBERALS AND ULSTER

**T**HIS is the fateful week when, according to all the authorities, the drums of war are really to beat in Ulster. Everybody is on the tip-toe of expectation, and many worthy souls are not able to sleep at nights listening anxiously for the first rattle of musketry.

It is all very weird and puzzling. Had some writer gifted with the powers of prophecy attempted four years ago, or fourteen years ago, to sketch in a novel the outlines of the political developments of the past two years in Ulster, he would have been branded as a foul libeller of the British governing classes or else as an idiot who failed to understand the passion for order and constitutional methods of procedure that inspires those set in authority in these islands. Not in all Europe would he have found one who would have accepted his prophecy as an indication of the probable trend of events.

Permit me briefly to recapitulate the chief marvels that have astounded the world in this political struggle.

A Cabinet Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, announces that he has accepted an invitation from Ulster Liberals to address a Home Rule meeting in the Ulster Hall in Belfast. A meeting of the Ulster Unionist Council, with a noble lord in the chair, publicly announces that it will take steps to prevent Mr. Churchill's meeting. Up to that point nobody in Ulster who knows the Ulstermen had taken in the least degree seriously the threats of fighting on their part. All recognised that the rank and file were probably ready enough to fight, but all also recognised that the economic position of the leaders of the Orange forces, their standing as holders of capitalist stock, land, coal mines, shipping, etc., made the suggestion that they should rebel against the Government that guaranteed

their investments—a very ridiculous suggestion indeed. It was generally felt that a firm application of the power of the police force would suffice to quell in a few days all the Orange resistance, and nobody dreamt that the Government would hesitate in firmly applying that force upon the first opportunity. Any open defiance of the law, any open declaration of an intention to break the laws, supplied just that opportunity for the Government to act with all the traditions of law and order at its back.

This projected meeting of Mr. Winston Churchill and the Unionist threat to prevent it came almost as a providential gift to a Government desirous, before it should act, to have its opponents entirely in the wrong. All the traditions of British constitutional procedure were outraged; even the most hardened Tories in Great Britain looked askance at this Orange proposal to deny to a Cabinet Minister that right of public meeting theoretically allowed to even the most irresponsible agitator. The occasion called, and called loudly, for a firm application of force to establish, once and for all, the right of public meeting in Ulster; to convince the Orange hosts that henceforth unpopular opinion must be met by arguments and not by bolts, rivets, nuts or weapons of war.

But, lo and behold! the Government ran away. Mr. Winston Churchill abandoned his right to hold his meeting in the place advertised, and slunk away to the outskirts of the city to hold a meeting surrounded by more soldiers and police than would have sufficed to capture the city if held by the whole Orange forces in battle array. We in Ulster gasped with astonishment at this pitiful surrender of public liberties, and we realised that a direct encouragement had been given to all the forces of reaction to pursue the path of violence.

Mr. Winston Churchill's meeting was for the Ulster Orange leaders a glorious opportunity; it gave them the excuse for a daring experiment in lawlessness. That experiment was a

success ; it stood and stands to the succeeding events in the same relation as a trial trip of a newly-launched vessel stands to all its following voyages. Such a trial trip demonstrates the amount of pressure that can be safely put upon the boilers ; Mr. Churchill's meeting demonstrated how, in what manner, and to what extent, pressure can be successfully applied to the Liberal Government by a reactionary class.

Suppose that the declaration of an intention to take steps to prevent the meeting had been made by a committee representing the Labour movement, do you think that Mr. Churchill would have abandoned his meeting, even although that Committee represented an overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the city ? You know that he would have held that meeting at all costs, under such circumstances.

Next in importance to the abandonment of the right of public meeting came the tacit permission given to the Ulster Volunteers to arm themselves with the avowed object of resisting the law.

For two years this arming went on, accompanied by drilling and organising upon a military basis, and no effort was made to stop the drilling or to prevent the free importation of arms until the example of the Ulster Volunteers began to be followed through the rest of Ireland. The writer of these notes established a Citizen Army at Dublin in connection with the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union, and this was followed by the establishment of Irish Volunteer Corps all through Nationalist Ireland. Hardly had the first of these corps been organised, and the desirability of having them armed been mooted, than the Liberal Government rushed out a proclamation forbidding the importation of arms into Ireland. What had been freely allowed whilst Orangemen alone were arming was immediately made illegal when Labour men and Nationalists thought of obtaining the same weapons. Then having allowed the Unionists to drill and arm, the Government made the fact of their military



preparations an excuse for proposing the dismemberment of Ireland as a sop to those whom it had allowed to arm against it. Ulster, where democracy had suffered most because of religious ascendancy, was to be handed over to those whose religious ascendancy principles and practices had made democracy suffer.

Then we had the revolt, or mutiny, at the Curragh. Some regiments were ordered North, and the Liberal Minister humbly inquired of the officers if these gentlemen would kindly consent to go. The Orange leaders, their ladies and the royal family itself, had, it is believed, been usually engaged for two years in seducing these officers from all sense of duty—in teaching them to believe that they should refuse to act against the poor dupes who were being humbugged by the brothers, uncles, fathers, cousins and other relatives of those officers. And hence, as the ties of class are stronger than the ties of governments, the officers very quickly told your backboneless Liberal War Minister that they would not proceed against their fellow landlords and capitalists in the North, nor against the poor wretches who had surrendered their political initiative to them. And the Liberal War Minister, instead of promptly cashiering those officers, or ordering them to be tried by court-martial, humbly crawled to them, asked their pardon, so to speak, for daring to suggest such a thing, and gave them a guarantee that their services would not be called for against the Orange leaders. The guarantee was afterwards repudiated, but the rebellious officers are still in high favour with royalty, and still in command of their regiments. And the Liberal Government itself allowed the men who had corrupted the army to put it upon the defensive, and stand it in the dock, pitifully denying that it did the very thing that it is not fit to hold office if it fears to do, viz., to use its armed forces to make an ascendancy clique beaten at the polls recognise the machinery of the law from which it derived its powers in the past.

A final consummation to all this pitiful compromise and

treachery to a people's hopes is the gun-running of the past few weeks. A ship sails into Larne Harbour one fine Friday evening, and immediately the Ulster Volunteers take possession of that town and seaport, the Royal Irish Constabulary are imprisoned in their barracks, the roads are held up by armed guards, the railway stations of Park Road, Belfast, of Larne, Bangor and Donaghadee are seized by the Ulster Volunteers and thousands of stands of rifles are landed together with a million rounds of ammunition. Along with the landing at Larne vessels are used to tranship arms and ammunition from the original gun-running steamer and land the cargo so transhipped at Bangor and Donaghadee. Some hundreds of motor cars were used to convey the arms and ammunition to safe places, that night, and the same motor cars worked all day on Saturday conveying them from temporary resting places to more secure and handy depots throughout Ulster.

In a few days afterwards the affair came up for discussion in the House of Commons. The Liberals stormed and raved, and the Tories laughed. Why should they not? All the laugh was on their side. Then up rose again the hero of the Ulster Hall—Winston Churchill. He screeched and shouted and perorated and declaimed about law and order until one might have thought that, at last, a wrathful government was about to put forth its mighty powers to crush its unscrupulous enemy. And then, having attained to almost Olympic heights, Mr. Churchill ended by cooing more gently than sucking dove and blandly assured the Orange law breakers that he had not yet reached the limits of concession—he was willing to betray the Irish some more. If they would only let him know how much degradation of the mere Irish would satisfy them, he would try and work it for them. And Parliament adjourned, wondering what it all meant.

Now let me put the situation re the gun-running to any unprejudiced reader. Can anyone believe that the gun-ship,

the "Fanny," which had been reported at Hamburg a month before its appearance at Larne and the nature of its cargo known, could keep hovering around these coasts for a month without the Government having it under close supervision ?

Can anyone believe that if this gun-running feat had been attempted at Tralee, Waterford, Skibbereen or Bantry and Nationalists had attempted to imprison armed Royal Irish Constabularymen in their barracks that no shots would have been fired and no lives lost ?

Can anyone believe that if railway stations were seized, roads held up, coastguards imprisoned and telegraph systems interfered with by Nationalists or Labour men, that at least 1,000 arrests would not have been made the next morning ? Evidence is difficult to get, they say. Evidence be hanged ! If Nationalists or Labour men were the culprits, the Liberal Government would have made the arrests first and looked for evidence afterwards. And been in no hurry about it either.

My firm conviction is that the Liberal Government wish to betray the Home Rulers, that they connive at these illegalities that they might have an excuse for their betrayal, and that the Home Rule party through its timidity and partly through its hatred of Labour in Ireland is incapable of putting the least pressure upon its Liberal allies and must now dance to the piping of its treacherous allies.

Who can forecast what will come out of such a welter of absurdities, betrayals and crimes ?

*Forward, May 30, 1914.*

## NORTH-EAST ULSTER

### I

A DUBLIN Comrade once remarked to the writer of these notes that as two things cannot occupy the same space at the same time, so the mind of the working class cannot take up two items at the same time. Meaning thereby that when that working class is obsessed with visions of glory, patriotism, war, loyalty or political or religious bigotry, it can find no room in its mind for considerations of its own interests as a class.

Somewhere upon these lines must be found the explanation of the fact that whereas Dublin and Nationalist Ireland generally is seething with rebellion against industrial conditions and manifesting that rebellion by a crop of strikes, in Belfast and the quarter dominated by the loyalist element, class feeling or industrial discontent is at present scarcely manifested at all.

For Dublin and its Nationalist allies, the Home Rule question has long gone beyond the stage of controversy ; it is regarded as out of the region of dispute and consequently the mind of the working class is no more excited over that question that it can be considered to be excited over the general proposition that the whole is greater than its parts.

In North-East Ulster, on the other hand, the question of Home Rule is not a settled question in men's minds, much less settled politically, and hence its unsettled character makes it still possible for that question to so possess the minds of the multitude that all other questions such as wages, hours and conditions of labour, must take a subordinate place and lose their power to attract attention, much less to compel action.

According to all Socialist theories North-East Ulster, being the most developed industrially, ought to be the quarter in which class lines of cleavage, politically and industrially, should

be the most pronounced and class rebellion the most common.

As a cold matter of fact, it is the happy hunting ground of the slave-driver and the home of the least rebellious slaves in the industrial world.

Dublin, on the other hand, has more strongly developed working-class feeling, more strongly accentuated instincts of loyalty to the working class than any city of its size in the globe.

I have explained before how the perfectly devilish ingenuity of the master class had sought its ends in North-East Ulster. How the land were stolen from Catholics, given to Episcopalians, but planted by Presbyterians ; how the latter were persecuted by the Government, but could not avoid the necessity of defending it against the Catholics, and how out of this complicated situation there inevitably grew up a feeling of common interests between the slaves and the slave-drivers.

As the march of the Irish towards emancipation developed, as step by step they secured more and more political rights and greater and greater recognition, so in like ratio the disabilities of the Presbyterians and other dissenters were abolished.

For a brief period during the closing years of the eighteenth century, it did indeed seem probable that the common disabilities of Presbyterians and Catholics would unite them all under the common name of Irishmen. Hence the rebel society of that time took the significant name of "United Irishmen."

But the removal of the religious disabilities from the dissenting community had, as its effect, the obliteration of all political difference between the sects and their practical political unity under the common designation of Protestants, as against the Catholics, upon whom the fetters of religious disability still clung.

Humanly speaking, one would have confidently predicted that as the Presbyterians and Dissenters were emancipated as a result of a clamorous agitation against religious inequality, and as that agitation derived its chief force and menace from the

power of Catholic numbers in Ireland, then the members of these sects would unite with the agitators to win for all an enjoyment of these rights the agitators and rebels had won for them.

But the prediction would have missed the mark by several million miles. Instead, the Protestants who had been persecuted joined with the Protestants who had persecuted them against the menace of an intrusion by the Catholics into the fold of political and religious freedom—"Civil and religious liberty."

There is no use blaming them. It is common experience in history that as each order fought its way upward into the circle of governing classes, it joined with its former tyrants in an endeavour to curb the aspirations of these orders still unfree.

That in Ireland religious sects played the same game as elsewhere was played by economic or social classes does not prove the wickedness of the Irish players, but does serve to illustrate the universality of the passions that operate upon the stage of the world's history.

It also serves to illustrate the wisdom of the Socialist contention that as the working class has no subject class beneath it, therefore, to the working class of necessity belongs the honour of being the class destined to put an end to class rule, since, in emancipating itself, it cannot help emancipating all other classes.

Individuals out of other classes must and will help as individual Protestants have helped in the fight for Catholic emancipation in Ireland ; but on the whole, the burden must rest upon the shoulders of the most subject class.

If the North-East corner of Ireland is, therefore, the home of a people whose minds are saturated with conceptions of political activity fit only for the atmosphere of the seventeenth century, if the sublime ideas of an all-embracing democracy equally as insistent upon its duties as upon its rights have as yet found poor lodgment here, the fault lies not with this generation of toilers, but with those pastors and masters who

deceived it and enslaved it in the past—and deceived it in order that they might enslave it.

But as no good can come of blaming it, so also no good, but infinite evil, can come of truckling to it. Let the truth be told, however ugly. Here, the Orange working class are slaves in spirit because they have been reared up among a people whose conditions of servitude were more slavish than their own. In Catholic Ireland the working class are rebels in spirit and democratic in feeling because for hundreds of years they have found no class as lowly paid or as hardly treated as themselves.

At one time in the industrial world of Great Britain and Ireland the skilled labourer looked down with contempt upon the unskilled and bitterly resented his attempt to get his children taught any of the skilled trades ; the feeling of the Orangemen of Ireland towards the Catholics is but a glorified representation on a big stage of the same passions inspired by the same unworthy motives.

An atavistic survival of a dark and ignorant past !

Viewing Irish politics in the light of this analysis, one can see how futile and vain are the criticisms of the Labour Party in Parliament which are based upon a comparison of what was done by the Nationalist group in the past and what is being left undone by the Labour Group to-day. I am neither criticising nor defending the Labour Group in Parliament ; I am simply pointing out that any criticism based upon an analogy with the actions, past or present, of the Irish party, is necessarily faulty and misleading.

The Irish party had all the political traditions and prejudices of centuries to reinforce its attitude of hostility to the Government, nay, more, its only serious rival among its own constituents was a party more uncompromisingly hostile to the Government than itself—the republican or physical force party.

The Labour party, on the other hand, has had to meet and overcome all the political traditions and prejudices of its

supporters in order to win their votes, and knows that at any time it may lose these suffrages so tardily given.

The Irish party never needed to let the question of retaining the suffrages of the Irish electors enter into their calculations. They were almost always returned unopposed. The Labour party knows that a forward move on the part of either Liberal or Tory will always endanger a certain portion of Labour votes.

In other words, the Irish group was a party to whose aid the mental habits formed by centuries of struggle came as a reinforcement among its constituents at every stage of the struggle. But the Labour party is a party which, in order to progress, must be continually breaking with and outraging institutions which the mental habits of its supporters had for centuries accustomed them to venerate.

I have written in vain if I have not helped the reader to realise that the historical backgrounds of the movement in England and Ireland are so essentially different that the Irish Socialist movement can only be truly served by a party indigenous to the soil, and explained by a literature having the same source : that the phrases and watchwords which might serve to express the soul of the movement in one country may possibly stifle its soul and suffocate its expression in the other.

One great need of the movement in Ireland is a literature of its very own. When that is written people will begin to understand why it is that the Irish Catholic worker is a good democrat and a revolutionist, though he knows nothing of the fine spun theories of democracy or revolution ; and how and why it is that the doctrine that because the workers of Belfast live under the same industrial conditions as do those of Great Britain, they are therefore subject to the same passions and to be influenced by the same methods of propaganda, is a doctrine almost screamingly funny in its absurdity.

*Forward*, August 2, 1913.



## II

It is often said that the Irish flag is a green flag to suit a green people, but the Dublin workers are not so green as to believe that a party which voted against the Right to Work Bill, the Minimum Wage for Miners, and the Minimum Wage for Railwaymen, which intrigued against the application to Ireland of the Feeding of Necessitous School Children and the Medical Benefits of the National Health Insurance Act, can be described as anything else than a treacherous "friend" of Labour.

Some day a similar spirit will come up North and the workers of the North-East corner will get tired of being led by the nose by a party captained by landlords and place-hunting lawyers. Here, in North-East Ulster, the ascendancy party does not even need to pretend to be favourable to the aspirations of Labour ; it is openly hostile and the inculcation of slavish sentiments is a business it never neglects. In that is the main difference between the parties—the growth of a rebellious spirit amongst the Nationalist democracy has compelled the Home Rule politicians to pay court to Labour, to assume a virtue even when they have it not, but the lack of such a spirit in this section has enabled the Orange leaders to openly flout and antagonise the Labour movement.

But times change and we change with them. North-East Ulster democracy is awakening also, and we long for and will see in Belfast movements of Labour as great as, if not greater than any of which Dublin can boast.

In that glorious day Ulster will fight, and Ulster will be right, but all those leaders who now trumpet forth that battle cry will then be found arrayed against the Ulster democracy.

*Forward, June 7, 1913.*

## III

A correspondent of *Forward* in a recent edition asked how it was that if the Orangemen were so bad they allowed Mr. Connolly to hold meetings in the principal streets of Belfast ? Our answer to that is that neither Mr. Connolly nor any other Socialist can now hold outdoor meetings in an exclusively Orange district, even those Belfast Socialists who "will not have Home Rule" in their programme, cannot hold open-air meetings in any exclusively Orange district. Socialist meetings in Belfast can only be held in the business centre of the town where the passing crowd is of a mixed or uncertain nature.

All this demonstrates how immensely difficult is the task at present in Belfast. No part of these countries has a part more difficult. It means the propagation of twentieth century revolutionism amidst the mental atmosphere of the early seventeenth century.

When striving to induce my Belfast comrades to adopt this policy we are now propagating in our meetings, I was asked did I think it would make our propaganda easier. I answered that I did not, that on the contrary it would arouse passions immensely more bitter than had even been met here by the Socialist movement in the past, but that it would make our propaganda more fruitful and our organisation more enduring.

To this I still adhere. A real Socialist movement cannot be built by temporising in front of a dying cause such as that of the Orange ascendancy, even although in the paroxysms of its death struggle it assumes the appearance of an energy like unto that of health. A real Socialist movement can only be born of struggle, of uncompromising affirmation of the faith that is in us. Such a movement infallibly gathers to it every element of rebellion and of progress, and in the midst of the storm and stress of the struggle solidifies into a real revolutionary force.

Therefore, we declare to the Orange workers of Belfast that

we stand for the right of the people in Ireland to rule as well as to own Ireland, and cannot conceive of a separation of the two ideas, and to all and sundry we announce that as Socialists we are Home Rulers, but that on the day the Home Rule Government goes into power the Socialist movement in Ireland will go into opposition.

*Forward, August 23, 1913.*

## THE FIRST HINT OF PARTITION

**H**ERE in Ireland the proposal of the Government to consent to the partition of Ireland—the exclusion of certain counties in Ulster—is causing a new line of cleavage. No one of the supporters of Home Rule accepts this proposal with anything like equanimity, but rather we are already hearing in North-East Ulster rumours of a determination to resist it by all means. It is felt that the proposal to leave the Home Rule minority at the mercy of an ignorant majority with the evil record of the Orange party is a proposal that should never have been made, and that the establishment of such a scheme should be resisted with armed force if necessary.

Personally I entirely agree with those who think so ; Belfast is bad enough as it is ; what it would be under such rule the wildest imagination cannot conceive. Filled with the belief that they were after defeating the Imperial Government and the Nationalists combined, the Orangemen would have scant regards for the rights of the minority left at their mercy.

Such a scheme would destroy the Labour movement by disrupting it. It would perpetuate in a form aggravated in evil the discords now prevalent, and help the Home Rule and Orange capitalists and clerics to keep their rallying cries before the public as the political watchwords of the day. In short, it would make division more intense and confusion of ideas and parties more confounded.

*Forward*, March 21, 1914.

## LABOUR AND THE PROPOSED PARTITION OF IRELAND

THE recent proposals of Messrs. Asquith, Devlin, Redmond and Co. for the settlement of the Home Rule question deserve the earnest attention of the working class democracy of this country. They reveal in a most striking and unmistakable manner the depths of betrayal to which the so-called Nationalist politicians are willing to sink. For generations the conscience of the civilised world has been shocked by the historical record of the partition of Poland ; publicists, poets, humanitarians, patriots, all lovers of their kind and of progress have wept over the unhappy lot of a country torn asunder by the brute force of their alien oppressors, its unity ruthlessly destroyed and its traditions trampled into the dust.

But Poland was disrupted by outside forces, its enemies were the mercenaries of the tyrant kingdoms and empires of Europe ; its sons and daughters died in the trenches and on the battle-fields by the thousands rather than submit to their beloved country being annihilated as a nation. But Ireland, what of Ireland ? It is the trusted leaders of Ireland that in secret conclave with the enemies of Ireland have agreed to see Ireland as a nation disrupted politically and her children divided under separate political governments with warring interests.

Now, what is the position of Labour towards it all ? Let us remember that the Orange aristocracy now fighting for its supremacy in Ireland has at all times been based upon a denial of the common human rights of the Irish people ; that the Orange Order was not founded to safeguard religious freedom, but to deny religious freedom, and that it raised this religious question, not for the sake of any religion, but in order to use religious zeal in the interests of the oppressive property rights

of rackrenting landlords and sweating capitalists. That the Irish people might be kept asunder and robbed whilst so sundered and divided, the Orange aristocracy went down to the lowest depths and out of the lowest pits of hell brought up the abominations of sectarian feuds to stir the passions of the ignorant mob. No crime was too brutal or cowardly ; no lie too base ; no slander too ghastly, as long as they served to keep the democracy asunder.

And now that the progress of democracy elsewhere has somewhat muzzled the dogs of aristocratic power, now that in England as well as in Ireland the forces of labour are stirring and making for freedom and light, this same gang of well-fed plunderers of the people, secure in Union held upon their own dupes, seek by threats of force to arrest the march of ideas and stifle the light of civilisation and liberty. And, lo and behold, the trusted guardians of the people, the vaunted saviours of the Irish race, agree in front of the enemy and in face of the world to sacrifice to the bigoted enemy the unity of the nation and along with it the lives, liberties and hopes of that portion of the nation which in the midst of the most hostile surroundings have fought to keep the faith in things national and progressive.

Such a scheme as that agreed to by Redmond and Devlin, the betrayal of the national democracy of industrial Ulster would mean a carnival of reaction both North and South, would set back the wheels of progress, would destroy the oncoming unity of the Irish Labour movement and paralyse all advanced movements whilst it endured.

To it Labour should give the bitterest opposition, against it Labour in Ulster should fight even to the death, if necessary, as our fathers fought before us.

*Irish Worker*, March 14, 1914.

## THE EXCLUSION OF ULSTER

SOCIALISTS and Labour people generally in Great Britain have had good reason to deplore the existence of the Irish question and to realise how disastrous upon the chances of their candidates has been the fact of the existence in the constituencies of a large mass of organised voters whose political activities were not influenced solely or even largely by the domestic issues before the electors. Our British comrades have had long and sore experience of contests in which all the arguments and all the local feeling were on the side of the Socialist or Labour candidate, and yet that local candidate was ignominiously defeated because there existed in the constituency a large Irish vote—a large mass of voters who supported the Liberal, not because they were opposed to Labour, but because they wanted Ireland to have Home Rule.

Our British comrades have learned that the existence of that Irish vote and the knowledge that it would be cast for the Home Rule official candidate, irrespective of his record on or his stand upon Labour matters, caused hundreds of thousands who otherwise would have voted Labour to vote Liberal in dread that the Irish defection would “let the Tory in.” For a generation now the Labour movement in Great Britain has been paralysed politically by this fear; and all hands have looked forward eagerly to the time when the granting of Home Rule would remove their fear and allow free expression to all the forces that make for a political Labour movement in that country. Even many of the actions and votes of the Labour party in the House of Commons which have been strenuously complained of have been justified by that Party on the plea that it was necessary to keep in power the government that would get Home Rule out of the way. Now, in view of this

experience of the Socialist movement in Great Britain, we can surely not view with any complacency a proposal that will keep that question to the front as a live issue at British elections for six years longer or rather for a totally indefinite period. We know that this "six years period" so glibly spoken of by politicians has no background of reality to justify the belief that that term can be considered as more than a mere figure of speech.

In the *Daily News and Leader* of 6th April, Mr. H. W. Massingham, writing of the "Ulster Limit," says, and the saying is valuable as indicative of the trend of Liberal thought :

"Should we, therefore, make an absolutely dead halt at the six years' milestone? Both parties implicitly admit that that is impossible, for one Parliament cannot bind another."

And in the previous week the Liberal Solicitor General declared in Parliament that if within the six years' period

"the other side brought in a Bill to exclude Ulster, it would have a royal and triumphant procession to the foot of the throne."

Thus we have it clearly foreshadowed that there is no such thing as a six years' limit which can be binding upon future Parliaments and that therefore the question of Home Rule for the Ulster Counties will be a test question at future elections in Great Britain, and will then play there the same disastrous role for the Labour movement as the question of Home Rule does now. The political organisation of the Home Rule party will be kept alive in every industrial constituency on the pretext of working for a "United Ireland," and in the same manner the Unionist Party will also keep up its special organisations, Orange Lodges, etc., in order to keep alive the sectarian appeal to the voters from Ireland who will be asked to "vote against



driving Ulster under the heels of the Papish Dublin Parliament."

Labour men in and out of Ireland have often declared that if Home Rule was wanted for no other purpose, it was necessary in order to allow of the solidifying of the Labour vote in Great Britain, and the rescue of the Irish voters in that country from their thralldom to the Liberal caucus. It might not be far from the truth to surmise that the Liberal Party managers have seen the same point as clearly as we did ourselves, and have quietly resolved that such a good weapon as the Nationalist Party sentiment should not be entirely withdrawn from their armoury. The reader will also see that with a perfectly Mephistophelian subtlety the question of exclusion is not suggested to be voted upon by any large area where the chances for or against might be fairly equal, where exclusion might be defeated as it might be if all Ulster were the venue of the poll, and all Ulster had to stay out or come in as a result of the verdict of the ballot box. No, the counties to be voted on the question are the counties where the Unionists are in an overwhelming majority, and where therefore the vote is a mere farce—a subterfuge to hide the grossness of the betrayal of the Home Rule electors. Then again each county or borough enters or remains outside according to its own vote, and quite independent of the vote of its neighbours in Ulster. Thus the Home Rule question as far as Ulster is concerned, may be indefinitely prolonged and kept alive as an issue to divide and disrupt the Labour vote in Great Britain.

The effect of such exclusion upon Labour in Ireland will be at least equally, and probably more, disastrous. All hopes of uniting the workers, irrespective of religion or old political battle cries will be shattered, and through North and South the issue of Home Rule will be still used to cover the iniquities of the capitalist and landlord class. I am not speaking without due knowledge of the sentiments of the organised Labour movement in Ireland when I say that we would much rather

see the Home Rule Bill defeated than see it carried with Ulster or any part of Ulster left out. . . .

Meanwhile, as a study in political disparity, watch the manoeuvres of the Home Rule Party on this question. The deal is already, I believe, framed up, but when the actual vote is to be taken in the Counties of Down, Antrim, Derry and Armagh and the Boroughs of Belfast and Derry, Messrs. Redmond, Devlin and Co. will tour these counties and boroughs letting loose floods of oratory asking for votes against exclusion and thus will delude the workers into forgetting the real crime, viz., consenting to make the unity of the Irish Nation a subject to be decided by the votes of the most bigoted and passion-blinded reactionaries in these four counties where such reactionaries are in the majority. The betrayal is agreed upon, I repeat, the vote is only a subterfuge to hide the grossness of the betrayal.

It still remains to be seen whether the working class agitation cannot succeed in frightening these vampires from the feast they are promising themselves upon the corpse of a dismembered Ireland. . . .

*Forward, April 11, 1914.*

## IRELAND AND ULSTER : AN APPEAL TO THE WORKING CLASS

**I**N this great crisis of the history of Ireland, I desire to appeal to the working class—the only class whose true interests are always on the side of progress—to take action to prevent the betrayal of their interests contemplated by those who have planned the exclusion of part of Ulster from the Home Rule Bill. Every effort is now being made to prevent the voice of the democracy being heard in those counties and boroughs which it is callously proposed to cut off from the rest of Ireland. Meetings are being rushed through in other parts of Ireland, and at those meetings wirepullers of the United Irish League and the Ancient Order of Hibernians (Board of Erin) are passing resolutions approving of the exclusion, whilst you who will suffer by this dastardly proposal are never even consulted, but, on the contrary, these same organisations are working hard to prevent your voice being heard, and have done what they could to prevent the calling of meetings, of holding of demonstrations at which you could register your hatred of their attempt to betray you into the hand of the sworn enemies of democracy, of labour, and of nationality.

An instance of this attempt to misrepresent you may be quoted from the Irish press of March 26. In a letter from the Irish Press Agency it says :—

“The proposal, representing the limit of concession and made ‘as the price of peace’ would only mean, if accepted, that the Counties of Down, Derry, Antrim and Armagh would remain as they are for six years at the end of which time they would come in automatically under Home Rule. They know, too, that the Nationalists in these four counties are perfectly willing to assent to this arrangement and that they are the Nationalists most concerned.”

Remember that this is a quotation from a letter sent out by the Irish Press Agency and that copies of it are supplied by the agents of the Irish Parliamentary Party to every newspaper in Ireland and to Liberal papers in England, and you will see how true is my statement that you are being betrayed, that the men whom you trusted are busily engaged in rigging up a fake sentiment in favour of this betrayal of your interests. For the statements contained in the letter just quoted are, in the first part, deliberately misleading and, and in the second part, an outrageous falsehood.

The statement that the counties excluded would come in automatically at the end of six years is deliberately misleading because, as was explained in the House of Commons, two General Elections would take place before the end of that time. If at either of these General Elections the Tories got a majority—and it is impossible to believe that the Liberals can win the other two elections successively—it would only require the passage of a small Act of not more than three or four lines to make the exclusion perpetual. And the Tories would pass it. What could prevent them ? You can prevent them getting the chance by insisting upon the whole Home Rule Bill and no exclusion, being passed *now*. If you do not act *now*, your chance is gone.

The second part of the statement I have quoted is an outrageous falsehood, as every one knows. The Nationalists of the four counties have not been asked their opinion, and if any politician would dare to take a plebiscite upon this question of exclusion or no exclusion, the democracy of Ulster would undoubtedly register a most emphatic refusal to accept this proposal. And yet so-called Home Rule journals are telling the world that you are quite willing to be cut off from Ireland and placed under the heel of the intolerant gang of bigots and enemies of progress who for so long have terrorised Ulster.

Men and women, consider ! If your lot is a difficult one

now, subject as you are to the rule of a gang who keep up the fires of religious bigotry in order to divide the workers, and make united progress impossible; if your lot is a difficult one, even when supported by the progressive and tolerant forces of all Ireland, how difficult and intolerable it will be when you are cut off from Ireland, and yet are regarded as alien to Great Britain, and left at the tender mercies of a class who knows no mercy, of a mob poisoned by ignorant hatred of everything national and democratic.

Do not be misled by the promises of politicians. Remember that Mr. Birrell, Chief Secretary, solemnly promised that a representative of Dublin Labour would sit upon the Police Inquiry Commission in Dublin, and that he broke his solemn promise. Remember that Mr. Redmond pledged his word at Waterford that the Home Rule Bill would go through without the loss of a word or a comma, and almost immediately afterwards he agreed to the loss of four counties and two boroughs. Remember that the whole history of Ireland is a record of betrayals by politicians and statesmen, and remembering this, spurn their lying promises and stand up for a United Ireland—an Ireland broad based upon the union of Labour and Nationality.

You are not frightened by the mock heroics of a pantomime army. Nobody in Ulster is. If the politicians in Parliament pretend to be frightened, it is only in order to find an excuse to sell you. Do not be sold. Remember that when soldiers were ordered out to shoot you down in the Belfast Dock Strike of 1907 no officer resigned then rather than shed blood in Ulster, and when some innocent members of our class were shot down in the Falls Road, Belfast, no Cabinet Ministers apologised to the relatives of the poor workers they had murdered. Remember that more than a thousand Dublin men, women and children were brutally beaten and wounded by the police a few months ago, and three men and one girl killed, but no officer

resigned, and neither Tory nor Home Rule press protested against the coercion of Dublin. Why, then, the hypocritical howl against compelling the pious sweaters of Ulster and their dupes to obey the will of the majority ? Remember the A.O.H., the U.I.L. and the Irish Parliamentary Party cheered on the Government when it sent its police to bludgeon the Nationalist workers of Dublin. Now the same organisation and the same party cheers on the same treacherous Government when it proposes to surrender you into the hands of the Carsonite gang. As the officers of the Curragh have stood by their class, so let the working-class democracy of Ulster stand by its class, and all Irish workers from Malin Head to Cape Clear and from Dublin to Galway will stand by you.

Let your motto be that of James Fintan Lalor, the motto which the working class Irish Citizen Army has adopted as its aim and object, viz. :

That the entire ownership of Ireland [all Ireland]—moral and material—is vested of right in the entire people of Ireland.

And, adopting this as your motto, let it be heard and understood that Labour in Ireland stands for the unity of Ireland—an Ireland united in the name of progress, and who shall separate us ?

*Irish Worker*, April 4, 1914.

## THE SOLIDARITY OF LABOUR

THIS being Easter week, the news from Ireland for the readers of *Forward* will necessarily be of a short and scrappy character. We are all busy enjoying ourselves, and as this is the last Easter before the red flames of war will light up our hilltops and the red rivers of blood flow along our valleys (ahem !), our amusements must perforce be absorbing and exciting. For it is an awful and serious thing to think that in a month or two the wooden guns of Ulster may go off, and the trained ambulance corps may be wrestling with the problems of how to tie up broken heads or staunch the flow of blood from bleeding noses.

We may not see "red ruin and the breaking up of laws," but we may see the breaking of window panes and hear the rattle of cobble stones upon our doors.

The wooden guns of Ulster ! Aye, but let us be frank with ourselves and confess that the wooden guns of Ulster have, at least, succeeded in frightening the Liberals, or if they have not frightened them, then the Liberals are engaged in the greatest game of sham these countries have ever seen. They are pretending to be frightened in order to cover their action in going back on all the promises with which they have held the Home Rulers of Great Britain and Ireland in leash for a generation. Charles Stewart Parnell could have got Home Rule with Ulster excluded thirty years ago. We have been told *ad nauseam* about the statesmanlike qualities of John E. Redmond as the leader of the Irish race, and yet it appears that his statemanship has brought his followers to the point of accepting with joyful eagerness and gratitude that which Parnell rejected with scorn thirty years ago. A more miserable fiasco than this ignominious collapse of a great national movement is not recorded in history.

To this poor end have come all the glorious promises, and this poor reward is all the Irish Party can show for its persistent fight against Labour in every three-cornered election in Great Britain, in every municipal election without exception in Ireland.

It is to us a grim comment upon the boasted solidarity of Labour when we see a Labour M.P., in Great Britain, calmly announcing that he prefers to follow the official representatives of Irish capitalism rather than the spokesman of 86,000 organised Irish workers, and that he does so because the latter are yet too weak to protect themselves politically—have no votes to deliver in Parliament, whereas their enemies have.

Personally I make no complaint about the position taken up by Mr. George N. Barnes, M.P. and his colleagues. I do not complain because I expected it. I have always preached in Ireland that politically we were far behind the English and Scots workers, that many of the measures we required as an imperative necessity were already in working order in Great Britain, and that it was absurd to expect the British working men to turn aside to fight our political battles when his own required so much effort and sacrifice.

On these lines of argument I have fought for the establishment of a Labour Party in Ireland, for the separate political organisation of the Irish workers and for the separate economic and industrial organisation of the Irish workers on a more revolutionary basis than was usual in England and Scotland. This I felt to be wise, because, as much of Ireland is practically unorganised, I do not see the necessity of us committing all the mistakes in organisation already made in Britain, when we have so much practically virgin soil to till in industrial organisation here.

In doing this, in carrying on such a propaganda, I have been continually subject to misrepresentation and even abuse. I have been told that I was no Internationalist, that I was preaching hatred of England, that I was a disruptor. In vain for me to insist that the usual mistake of the Englishman, viz., that he



understood Irish problems better than the Irish did themselves, applied quite as strongly to British Socialists as to the British ruling class, and that therefore the Irish Socialists should work out their own policy and create their own literature, and that we must expect to be misunderstood until we could compel recognition by our own strength. For preaching this doctrine I have generally suffered the boycott from the official Socialists in Great Britain, and dislike from those in Ireland who followed their lead. But now comes along Comrade George N. Barnes, M.P., and he blandly acknowledges that Socialism in England in the votes of its Parliamentary representatives will take its cue from the representatives of an Irish party that openly avows in Ireland its hatred of Socialism and its opposition to Independent Labour representation in this country. This, I take it, is a confirmation of my position that the Irish workers must work out their own salvation, and that in the process of working it out they need not be astonished if the working-class leaders in Great Britain utterly fail to understand them.

This question of presenting Socialism so that it will appeal to the peculiar hereditary instincts and character of the people amongst whom you are operating is one of the first importance to the Socialist and Labour movement. A position, theoretically sound, may fail if expressed in terms unsuited to the apprehension of those to whom you are appealing. For years I fretted at what I considered the utterly foolish attitude of certain Socialist propagandists in Great Britain. Their arguments did not appeal to me, and I did not believe that they could appeal to anyone else. Since then I have come to believe that these people, perhaps, understood the psychology of their own countrymen better than I did, and that this question of psychology or mental make-up was of fundamental importance. Since that dawned upon me, I have painstakingly stuck to the endeavour to translate Socialist doctrines into terms understood by the Irish, in or out of Ireland. I fancy that I have at least

in that respect set a headline for abler persons than myself to copy in future. But we cannot deal with Ireland without getting entangled in the question of religion. Hence I have got frequently involved in disputes centring around that point. Now observe this confession ! I have, I believe, fairly well presented my case on that subject, but my case was the case for workers to whom the traditions and aspirations of Irish Nationality had been of prime importance. That achievement was reserved for, and I think has been most excellently performed by our Comrade John Wheatley and his colleagues of the Catholic Socialist Society. Nowhere have I come across literature so well suited for the purpose of making Socialists of Catholics ; my own poor attempts have been, as I have said, directed to the enrolment in my ranks of Irish workers.

All this is a digression in a sense, but an understanding of it may explain to the reader "that tired feeling" that comes across us in Ireland when we witness the love embraces which take place between the Parliamentary Labour Party and our deadliest enemies—the Home Rule Party. I say our deadliest enemies, because the Unionist Party is only a negligible quantity except in a small corner of Ireland, and in that corner it is not destined to be permanent. We do not get angry when we see these things or read such letters ; we simply say—"What the devil is up with those fellows ?"

There will be no bad feeling over such letters as Mr. Barnes', or the implied refusal of the Labour Party to pay any attention to the request of organised Labour in Ireland, but it will not help on a better understanding between the militant proletariat of the two islands.

*Forward, April 18, 1914.*

## HOME RULE, ETC.

BY GEORGE N. BARNES, M.P.

### EXTRACT

. . . But I have taken my line, along with my colleagues, from the Irish Nationalists. I note that an Irish correspondent in your columns takes me to task for following the lead of Irish Members of Parliament instead of Irish Trades Councils and Labour bodies generally. In regard to which I have only to say that the Nationalists of Ireland have sent men to Parliament and the Labour men have not. I assume that the Irishmen know their mind and business best, and I take it as expressed in that fact. Your correspondent has also a good deal to say about the merits—or rather the demerits—of the suggested compromise, and points out to me that the cutting out of Ulster from the rest of Ireland will divide A.S.E. membership in Ireland into two different political camps. It is sheer waste of fact arguing about it. Nobody defends it on its merits. It is put forward as the price of peace. If peace is not brought by it, then it goes by the board. And so I leave it.

*Forward, April 11, 1914.*

## THE LATEST MASSACRE IN DUBLIN

AS I am writing all the people of Ireland are agog with excitement over events in Dublin. The first shots of the threatened civil war have at length been fired, and the streets of an Irish city have run red with the blood of Irishmen. But contrary to all the threats, omens and portents, it was not an Ulster city that witnessed calamity ; it was not the blood of Ulstermen that was shed in defence of their rights and liberties. It was only the blood of common ordinary Irishmen who dared to fancy that what was sauce for the Orange goose was also sauce for the Nationalist gander.

On Sunday, 26th July, the Irish Volunteers brought off successfully a gunrunning coup of their own at Howth, near Dublin. A few thousand Volunteers marched out from Dublin and took possession of the village. Sentries were posted on all the roads leading into Dublin, telegraph and telephone wires were earthed, and every military precaution was taken to secure freedom from interruption by the authorities.

When the regiments had successfully taken possession of the harbour, signals were sent to a yacht that was standing off the coast, and the yacht, steered by an unknown lady, entered in and commenced to discharge a cargo of rifles. The local customs chief and the head of the police force in the district attempted to interfere at this juncture, but were quietly warned off at the point of loaded revolvers. A quantity of rifles, variously estimated at from 2,000 to 4,000,<sup>1</sup> with corresponding ammunition, was landed and dispatched and then the Volunteers present proceeded to march back in military order to the city, each man carrying his newly acquired rifle, but no ammunition.

The police, who were helpless, marched along with the battalions without making any effort to disturb or intercept the

march. But some cyclist had managed to slip past the volunteer sentries and bring the news to Dublin Castle. The authorities there hastily despatched a regiment of soldiers, the King's Own Scottish Borderers, apparently with orders to seize the rifles and break up the march.

These soldiers met the returning Volunteers near Fairview, and drawing across the roadway demanded the surrender of the rifles and the disbandment of the parade. Although surrounded by police and confronted by soldiery, the Volunteers refused to give up their arms, and after a brief altercation the military fired and then charged with fixed bayonets. Having foolishly neglected to retain their ammunition, the Volunteers could only defend themselves with the butt-ends of their rifles against the bayonets of the soldiery. Hence the conflict was but one-sided. The soldiers captured about 20 rifles, all the rest being got safely away. It is also stated that a quantity of rifles was wrenched from the hands of the soldiers by the people.

Then the soldiers after this "brilliant victory" marched back to the city, accompanied all the way by a crowd of angry demonstrators, furious at the wanton slaughter of Dubliners for daring to exercise a right which the Carsonites had freely exercised less than 24 hours previously in Belfast.

Passing through the centre of the city the crowd increased in numbers and in indignation. Stones were thrown, a few soldiers were jostled, and suddenly, without a moment's warning, an officer wheeled his company across the roadway and ordered them to fire with ball cartridges upon the people. *No Riot Act was read, no Magistrate was present, no warning was given*, but before the people could realise their danger, the volley was sent flying into the midst of the multitude in that crowded, narrow thoroughfare. The hired assassins had obeyed orders. It is a soldier's duty to obey orders—except when the soldier is an officer ordered to act against his class instincts.

Stated baldly these are the facts of Sunday's work in Dublin.

For the past two years the aristocrats of the Tory Party have been preaching rebellion against constituted authority. For two years they have been training and arming a rebel army—an army to rebel against the mandate of the democracy of these islands. Their conduct has continually been connived at by the Government, and each fresh connivance has led them on to fresh acts of aggression and organised intimidation. They held up three seaport towns, made prisoners of the King of England's constabulary and coastguardmen, interfered with the railway system, the telegraphs, and telephones, and took unlawful possession of passengers upon the King's highway.

Finally, upon Saturday, 25th July, they paraded through the streets of Belfast in military array, armed with rifles, and escorting Maxim and other machine guns. All this they were allowed to do with perfect impunity ; indeed, their chiefs in the midst of their illegalities were granted special indications of Royal favour.

Upon the top of this the Irish Volunteers make an effort to equip themselves with arms, so that they, the most popular body in Ireland, should not also be the most unprotected. Who can question their wisdom in resolving to protect themselves, as the Government would grant them no protection ? But immediately this attempt was made, police and military are ordered out, a bayonet charge is made upon the Volunteers, and volley firing with ball cartridges is practised upon unarmed crowds in the streets of the capital city. At the time of writing, four persons have been killed, and about 80 wounded as a result of the few minutes blood lust of those in command of the soldiery on Sunday.

What a grim comment upon the so-called impartiality of the Liberal Government ! What a telling indictment of the whole system of class rule upon which the Government of these islands is conducted. What a striking refutation of the theory that what is sauce for the Ulster goose would be sauce for the

Irish gander. Here we have a demonstration—a demonstration written in blood—that the ruling classes of those countries are one in heart and sentiment, whether they call themselves Tory or Liberal ; that in the last analysis the rule of the classes is founded upon the sword, and that no petty quarrel amongst themselves over methods of ruling is going to make them tolerate the idea of guns getting into the hands of slaves who cannot be trusted to use them in the interests of their masters. Liberal and Tory may quarrel over methods by which class rule should be maintained, but Liberal and Tory are at one in the determination that maintained it must be, and that no effective organisations of force should be allowed amongst those who might question it or destroy it. The Dublin workers have shewn in the near past that they are not willing slaves, political or social, and that not even the necessity of the struggle for political freedom can make them abandon their individual liberties, or weaken their fearless democracy. Hence it became imperative in the interests of the ruling tyrants that these guns should be prevented from remaining in the hands of such men. It was felt that even John Redmond might not be able to resist the appeal for a forward move made by men with guns in their hands, and it was realised that this concept of an armed democracy, inspired by democratic ideas and stirred by social unrest, was a menace to the class rule for which governments exist. Hence the attempt to disarm the Volunteers of Dublin and hence the fresh massacre of the Dublin workers.

Brave, heroic, Dublin ! Ever battling for the right, ever suffering, ever consecrating by the blood of your children the weary milestones of the path of progress. A year ago the Capitalist class let loose its wolves and slanderers upon you, jailed, batoned and murdered your sons and daughters, but were unable to destroy your holy aspirations for freedom. To-day the Government of that class once more spring at your throat ; once more the blood of your children is shed in the

streets, and even some of your misguided children who cheered on that Government in its outrage of a year ago are now ruthlessly slaughtered by that same Government.

Magnificent Dublin ! As you emerged with spirit unbroken and heart undaunted from your industrial tribulation, so you will arise mightier and more united from the midst of the military holocaust with which this Government of all the treacheries meets your plans for political freedom.

Labour will not be swept off its feet in this crush. But Labour sees that all its antagonisms to this Government were more than justified, hears now that even the critics of Labour unite in declaring that no more unscrupulous Government ever held sway in this country, and that the only real hope of the people is in the strength of the people. For

Behind all kings and governments, all presidents and law,  
Stand army corps and commoners to keep the world in awe ;  
For sword-strong races rule the earth and ride the  
conqueror's car,  
And liberty has ne'er been won except by deeds of war.

*Forward*, August 1, 1914.

## NOTES

1. Actually 900 rifles and 29,000 rounds of ammunition were landed at Howth ; 600 rifles and 20,000 rounds at Kilcool a week later. The yacht was the *Asgard*, navigated by Erskine Childers, his wife, and a small crew. The Batchelor's Walk casualties were : 3 killed and 32 wounded.



## OUR DUTY IN THIS CRISIS

**W**HAT should be the attitude to the working-class democracy of Ireland in face of the present crisis ? I wish to emphasise the fact that the question is addressed to the "working-class democracy" because I believe that it would be worse than foolish—it would be a crime against all our hopes and aspirations—to take counsel in this matter from any other source.

Mr. John E. Redmond has just earned the plaudits of all the bitterest enemies of Ireland and slanderers of the Irish race by declaring, in the name of Ireland, that the British Government can now safely withdraw all its garrisons from Ireland, and that the Irish slaves will guarantee to protect the Irish estate of England until their masters come back to take possession—a statement that announces to all the world that Ireland has at last accepted as permanent this status of a British province. Surely no inspiration can be sought from that source.

The advanced Nationalists have neither a policy nor a leader. During the Russian Revolution such of their Press as existed in and out of Ireland, as well as their spokesmen, orators and writers vied with each other in laudation of Russia and vilification of all the Russian enemies of Czardom. It was freely asserted that Russia was the natural enemy of England ; that the heroic revolutionaries were in the pay of the English Government and that every true Irish patriot ought to pray for the success of the armies of the Czar. Now, as I, amongst other Irish Socialists, predicted all along, when the exigencies of diplomacy makes it suitable, the Russian bear and the English lion are hunting together and every victory for the Czar's Cossacks is a victory for the paymasters of those King's Own Scottish Borderers who, but the other day, murdered the people of

Dublin in cold blood. Surely the childish intellects that conceived of the pro-Russian campaign of nine years ago cannot give us light and leading in any campaign for freedom from the British allies of Russia to-day ? It is well to remember also that in this connection since 1909 the enthusiasm for the Russians was replaced in the same quarter by as blatant a propaganda in favour of the German War Lord. But since the guns did begin to speak in reality this propaganda had died out in whispers, whilst without a protest, the manhood of Ireland was pledged to armed warfare against the very power our advanced Nationalist friends have wasted so much good ink in acclaiming.

Of late, sections of the advanced Nationalist press have lent themselves to a desperate effort to misrepresent the position of the Carsonites, and to claim for them the admiration of Irish Nationalists on the grounds that these Carsonites were fearless Irishmen who had refused to take dictation from England. A more devilishly mischievous and lying doctrine was never preached in Ireland. The Carsonite position is indeed plain—so plain that nothing but sheer perversity of purpose can misunderstand it, or cloak it with a resemblance to Irish patriotism. The Carsonites say that their fathers were planted in this country to assist in keeping the natives down in subjection that this country might be held for England. That this was God's will because the Catholic Irish were not fit for the responsibilities and powers of free men and that they are not fit for the exercise of these responsibilities and powers till this day. Therefore, say the Carsonites, we have kept our side of the bargain ; we have refused to admit the Catholics to power and responsibility ; we have manned the government of this country for England, we propose to continue to do so, and rather than admit that these Catholics—these "mickies and teagues"—are our equals, we will fight, in the hope that our fighting will cause the English people to revolt against their government and re-establish us in our historic position as an

English colony in Ireland, superior to, and unhampered by, the political institutions of the Irish natives.

How this can be represented as the case of Irishmen refusing to take dictation from England passeth all comprehension. It is rather the case of a community in Poland, after 250 years colonisation, still refusing to adopt the title of natives, and obstinately clinging to the position and privileges of a dominant colony. Their programme is summed up in the expression which forms the dominant note of all their speeches, sermons and literature :

“We are loyal British subjects. We hold this country for England. England cannot desert us.”

What light or leading then can Ireland get from the hysterical patriots who so egregiously misrepresent this fierce contempt for Ireland as something that ought to win the esteem of Irishmen :

What ought to be the attitude of the working-class democracy of Ireland in face of the present crisis :

In the first place, then, we ought to clear our minds of all the political cant which would tell us that we have either “natural enemies” or “natural allies” in any of the powers now warring. When it is said that we ought to unite to protect our shores against the “foreign enemy” I confess to be unable to follow that line of reasoning, as I know of no foreign enemy of this country except the British Government and know that it is not the British Government that is meant.<sup>1</sup>

In the second place we ought to seriously consider that the evil effects of this war upon Ireland will be simply incalculable, that it will cause untold suffering and misery amongst the people, and that as this misery and suffering have been brought upon us because of our enforced partisanship with a nation whose government never consulted us in the matter, we are therefore perfectly at liberty morally to make any bargain we

may see fit, or that may present itself in the course of events.

Should a German army land in Ireland to-morrow we should be perfectly justified in joining it if by doing so we could rid this country once and for all from its connection with the Brigand Empire that drags us unwillingly into this war.

Should the working class of Europe, rather than slaughter each other for the benefit of kings and financiers, proceed to-morrow to erect barricades all over Europe, to break up bridges and destroy the transport service that war might be abolished, we should be perfectly justified in following such a glorious example and contributing our aid to the final dethronement of the vulture classes that rule and rob the world.

But pending either of these consummations it is our manifest duty to take all possible action to save the poor from the horrors this war has in store.

Let it be remembered that there is no natural scarcity of food in Ireland. Ireland is an agricultural country, and can normally feed all her people under any sane system of things. But prices are going up in England and hence there will be an immense demand for Irish produce. To meet that demand all nerves will be strained on this side, the food that ought to feed the people of Ireland will be sent out of Ireland in greater quantities than ever and *famine prices will come in Ireland to be immediately followed by famine itself*. Ireland will starve, or rather the townspeople of Ireland will starve, that the British army and navy and jingoes may be fed. Remember, the Irish farmer like all other farmers will benefit by the high prices of the war, but these high prices will mean starvation to the labourers in the towns. But without these labourers the farmers' produce cannot leave Ireland without the help of a garrison that England cannot now spare. We must consider at once whether it will not be our duty to refuse to allow agricultural produce to leave Ireland until provision is made for the Irish working class.

Let us not shrink from the consequences. This may mean

more than a transport strike, it may mean armed battling in the streets to keep in this country the food for our people. But whatever it may mean it must not be shrunk from. It is the immediately feasible policy of the working-class democracy, the answer to all the weaklings who in this crisis of our country's history stand helpless and bewildered crying for guidance, when they are not hastening to betray her.

Starting thus, Ireland may yet set the torch to a European conflagration that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist bond and debenture will be shrivelled on the funeral pyre of the last war lord.

*Irish Worker*, August 8, 1914,

## NOTES

1. "Though race considerations do in small part enter into them, wars to-day are not mainly dictated by racial animosities—they are mostly dictated by commercial and money interests. Mr. Chamberlain, a typical modern statesman ought to know. And Mr. Chamberlain, in a speech delivered on November 13, 1896, said, "The Foreign Office and the Colonial Office, are chiefly engaged in finding new markets and in defending old ones..." And except as throwing a blaze of light on the system by which the workers of all countries are oppressed, what interest have these intrigues for us? Why should we, as Irishmen, feel a thrill of joy because a German capitalist ousts an English capitalist from the chance of swindling some African savages, and swindles them himself? Why should we swell with patriotic pride because a Russian money-monger gets the better of an English money-monger in some piece of 'boodle' in China?"

*Workers' Republic*, October 15, 1889.

## ON GERMAN MILITARISM

**F**INALLY, as a word of warning. Do not let anyone play upon your sympathies by denunciation of the German military bullies. German military bullies, like all tyrannies among civilised people need fear nothing so much as native (German) democracy. Attacks from outside only strengthen tyrants within a nation. If we had to choose between strengthening the German bully or the Russian autocrat the wise choice would be on the side of the German. For the German people are a highly civilised people, responsive to every progressive influence, and rapidly forging weapons for their own emancipation from native tyranny, whereas the Russian Empire stretches away into the depths of Asia, and relies on an army largely recruited from amongst many millions of barbarians who have not yet felt the first softening influence of civilisation. German thought is abreast of the best in the world ; German influences have shaped for good the hopes of the world, but the thought and the hopes of the best in Russia was but the other day drowned in blood by Russia's worst.

To help Britain is to help Russia to the dominance of Europe, to help the barbarian to crush the scientist. That is the reflection of the wise revolutionist of to-day.

Meanwhile the Orange enemy of Irish freedom wisely stays at home and conserves his forces, and the Irish Nationalist is encouraged by his leaders to rush abroad and shed his blood in a quarrel not his own, the simplest elements of which he does not understand.

*Irish Worker*, August 22, 1914.

## THE WAR UPON THE GERMAN NATION

NOW that the first drunkenness of the war fever is over, and the contending forces are locked in deadly combat upon the battlefield, we may expect that the sobering effect of the reports from the front will help to restore greater sanity to the minds of the people. There are thousands of Irish homes to-day from which, deluded by the foolish declaration of Mr. Redmond that Ireland was as one with the Empire in this struggle, and the still more foolish and criminal war whoops of the official Home Rule press, there went forth sons and fathers to recruit the armies of England. If to those thousands of Irish homes from which the call of Mr. Redmond drew forth young Irishmen we add the tens of thousands of homes from which reservists were drawn, we have a vast number of Irish homes in which from this day forward gibbering fear and heartbreaking anxiety will be constantly present—forever present at the fireside, unbidden guests at the table, loathsome spectres in the darkness grinning from the pillows and the coverlet.

Each day some one of these homes, some days thousands of these homes will be stricken from the field of battle, and news will come home that this young son or that loving father has met his doom, and out there under a foreign sky the mangled remains, twisted, blown and gashed by inconceivable wounds will lie, each of them in all their ghastly horror crying out to Heaven for vengeance upon the political tricksters who lured them to their fate.

Poor and hunger-harassed as are the members of the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union, is there one of them who to-day has not a happier position and a clearer conscience than the so-called leaders of the Irish race, who are responsible

for deluding into enlisting to fight England's battles the thousands of Irish youths whose corpses will ere many months be manuring the soil of a foreign country, or whose mangled bodies will be contemptuously tossed home to starve—a burden and a horror to all their kith and kin :

Read this report from the *Daily News and Leader* of the 25th inst. of the statement of an Alsatian peasant who saw some of the fighting in Alsace. He says :

“ The effects of artillery fire are terrific. The shells burst, and where you formerly saw a heap of soldiers you then see a heap of corpses or a number of figures writhing on the ground, torn and mutilated by the exploded fragments.”

And when you have read that then think of the many thousands of our boys—for God help us and them, they are still our brave Irish boys though deluded into fighting for the oppressor—around whom such shells will be falling by day and by night for many a long month to come. Think of them, and think also of the multitude of brave German boys who never did any harm to them or to us, but who rather loved us and our land, and our tongue and our ancient literature, and consider that those boys of ours will be busy sending shot and shell and rifle ball into their midst, murdering and mangling German lives and limbs, widowing humble German women, orphaning helpless German children.

Such reflections will perhaps open the way for the more sane frame of mind I spoke of at the beginning of this article. To help in clarifying the thought of our people that such sanity may be fruitful in greater national as well as individual wisdom, permit me, then, to present a few facts to those whose attitude upon the war has been so far determined by the criminal jingoism of the daily press. I wish to try and trace *the real origin of this war upon the German nation*, for despite all the truculent shouts of a venal press and conscienceless politicians,



this war is not a war upon German militarism, but upon the industrial activity of the German nation.

If the reader was even slightly acquainted with the history of industry in Europe he would know that as a result of the discovery of steam as a motive power, and the consequent development of machine industry depending upon coal, Great Britain towards the close of the eighteenth century began to dominate the commercial life of the world. Her large coal supply helped her to this at a time when the coal supply of other countries had not yet been discovered or exploited. Added to this was the fact that the ruling class of England by a judicious mixing in European struggles, by a dexterous system of alliances and a thoroughly unscrupulous use of her sea power was able to keep the Continent continually embroiled in war whilst her own shores were safe. Whilst the cities and towns of other countries were constantly the prey of rival armies, their social life crushed under the cannon wheels of contending forces, and their brightest young men compelled to give to warfare the intellect that might have enriched their countries by industrial achievements, England was able peacefully to build up her industries, to spread her wings of commerce, and to become the purveyor-general of manufactured goods to the civilised and uncivilised nations of the world. In her own pet phrase she was "the workshop of the world," and other nations were but as so many agricultural consumers of the products of England's factories and workshops.

Obviously such a state of matters was grossly artificial and unnatural. It could not be supposed by reasonable men that the civilised nations would be content to remain for ever in such a condition of tutelage or dependence. Rather was it certain that self-respecting nations would begin to realise that the industrial over-lordship by England of Europe meant the continued dependence of Europe upon England—a most humiliating condition of affairs.

So other nations began quietly to challenge the unquestioned supremacy of England in the markets. They began first to produce for themselves what they had hitherto relied upon England to produce for them, and passed on from that to enter into competition with English goods in the markets of the world. Foremost and most successful European nation in this endeavour to escape from thralldom of dependence upon England's manufactures stands the German nation. To this contest in the industrial world it brought all the resources of science and systematised effort. Early learning that an uneducated people is necessarily an inferior people, the German nation attacked the work of educating its children with such success that it is now universally admitted that the Germans are the best educated people in Europe. Basing its industrial effort upon an educated working class, it accomplished in the workshop results that this half-educated working-class of England could only wonder at. That English working class trained to a slavish subservience to rule-of-thumb methods, and under managers wedded to traditional processes saw themselves gradually outclassed by a new rival in whose service were enrolled the most learned scientists co-operating with the most educated workers in mastering each new problem as it arose, and unhampered by old traditions, old processes or old equipment. In this fruitful marriage of science and industry the Germans were pioneers, and if it seemed that in starting both they became unduly handicapped it was soon realised that if they had much to learn they had at least nothing to unlearn, whereas the British remained hampered at every step by the accumulated and obsolete survivals of past industrial traditions.

Despite the long hold that England has upon industry, despite her pre-emption of the market, despite the influence of her far-flung empire, German competition became more and more a menace to England's industrial supremacy ; more and

more German goods took the place of English. Some few years ago the cry of "Protection" was raised in England in the hopes that English trade would be thus saved by a heavy customs duty against imported commodities. But it was soon realised that as England was chiefly an exporting country a tax upon imported goods would not save her industrial supremacy. From the moment that realisation entered into the minds of the British capitalist we may date the inception of this war.

It was determined that since Germany could not be beaten in fair competition industrially, it must be beaten unfairly by organising a military and naval conspiracy against her. British methods and British capitalism might be inferior to German methods and German capitalism ; German scientists aided by German workers might be superior to British workers and tardy British science, but the British fleet was still superior to the German in point of numbers and weight of artillery. Hence it was felt that if the German nation could be ringed round with armed foes upon its every frontier until the British fleet could strike at its ocean-going commerce, then German competition would be crushed and the supremacy of England in commerce ensured for another generation. The conception meant calling up the forces of barbaric powers to crush and hinder the development of the peaceful powers of industry. It was a conception worthy of fiends, but what do you expect ? You surely do not expect the roses of honour and civilisation to grow on the thorn tree of capitalist competition—and that tree planted in the soil of a British ruling class.

But what about the independence of Belgium ? Aye, what about it ?

Remember that the war found England thoroughly prepared, Germany totally unprepared. That the British fleet was already mobilised on a scale never attempted in times of peace, and the German fleet was scattered in isolated units all over the seven seas. That all the leading British commanders were at home

ready for the emergency, and many German and Austrian officers, such as Slatin Pasha, have not been able to get home yet. Remember all this and realise how it reveals that the whole plan was ready prepared ; and hence that the cry of "Belgium" was a mere subterfuge to hide the determination to crush in blood the peaceful industrial development of the German nation. Already the British press is chuckling with joy over the capture of German trade. All capitalist journals in England boast that the Hamburg-American Line will lose all its steamers, valued at twenty-millions sterling. You know what that means ! It means that a peaceful trade built up by peaceful methods is to be struck out of the hands of its owners by the sword of an armed pirate. You remember the words of John Mitchel descriptive of the British Empire, as "a pirate empire, robbing and plundering upon the high seas."

Understand the game that is afoot, the game that Christian England is playing, and when next you hear apologists for capitalism tell of the wickedness of Socialists in proposing to "confiscate" property remember the plans of British and Irish capitalists to steal German trade—the fruits of German industry and German science.

Yes, friends, governments in capitalist society are but committees of the rich to manage the affairs of the capitalist class. The British capitalist class have planned this colossal crime in order to ensure its uninterrupted domination of the commerce of the world. To achieve that end it is prepared to bathe a continent in blood, to kill off the flower of the manhood of the three most civilised great nations of Europe, to place the iron heel of the Russian tyrant upon the throat of all liberty-loving races and peoples from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and to invite the blessing of God upon the spectacle of the savage Cossack ravishing the daughters of a race at the head of Christian civilisation.

Yes, this war is the war of a pirate upon the German nation.

And up from the blood-soaked graves of the Belgian frontiers the spirits of murdered Irish soldiers of England call to Heaven for vengeance upon the Parliamentary tricksters who seduced them into the armies of the oppressor of their country.

*Irish Worker*, August 29, 1914.

## THE GERMAN OR THE BRITISH EMPIRE :

[The following reply to a correspondent is a terse summary of Connolly's views in the two preceding articles.]

NOTHING warms the cockles of my old heart so much as when some British Socialist kind-heartedly approves of my attitude—approves of it “except,” “but,” and “only for.” Especially am I pleased when I learn from his letter that he has only read one copy of the *Workers' Republic*, is only just arrived in Ireland, but nevertheless understands our position thoroughly, and is only filled with pity for the “sweet innocence” that inspires our little mistakes in such matters as a desire to vindicate the character of the enemies of the British capitalist Government.

Perhaps after he has been here as many years as he has been days he will begin to understand that the instinct of the slave to take sides with whoever is the enemy of his own particular slave-driver is a healthy instinct, and makes for freedom. That every Socialist who knows what he is talking about must be in favour of freedom of the seas, must desire that private property shall be immune from capture at sea during war, must realise that as long as any one nation dominates the water highways of the world neither peace nor free industrial development is possible for the world. If the capitalists of other nations desire the freedom of the seas for selfish reasons of their own that does not affect the matter. Every Socialist anxiously awaits and prays for that full development of the capitalist system which can alone make Socialism possible, but can only come into being by virtue of the efforts of the capitalists inspired by selfish reasons.

The German Empire is a homogeneous Empire of self-

governing peoples ; the British Empire is a heterogeneous collection in which a very small number of self-governing communities connive at the subjugation, by force, of a vast number of despotically ruled subject populations.

We do not wish to be ruled by either empire, but we certainly believe that the first named contains in germ more of the possibilities of freedom and civilisation than the latter.

*Workers' Republic*, March 18, 1916.

## THE REAL SITUATION IN IRELAND

IN these days of conflict Ireland occupies a unique position. For the first time in history an Irish leader has publicly pledged the support of the Irish nation to Great Britain in an armed struggle. But it would be a mistake to imagine that his act has indeed received the universal assent the newspapers claim. On the contrary, there is a very strong and influential body of opinion in the country which holds that the act of Mr. Redmond in proffering to the Government the armed co-operation of the Volunteers was an act sadly lacking in the first principles of statesmanship. It is felt and freely asserted by that section that Mr. Redmond gave too much and got too little in return ; indeed, it is stated that he got nothing in return. His offer of co-operation with the Ulster Volunteers has been laughed at by that body, and the Government on its part had not promised to withdraw the Amending Bill, nor yet to modify it in any way favourable to the Nationalists.

Great Britain was about to engage in the greatest war in her history, in a war that must inevitably strain her every resource—military and commercial—and she found herself in this position at the very moment when Ireland possessed a large force of men drilled and organised on a military basis and partially armed. When, at the close of Sir Edward Grey's speech, and pronouncements of Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Asquith the assembled Tories and Liberals in the House of Commons began to clamour for "Redmond, Redmond," it was a recognition of the fact that Ireland was in a strong tactical position. Had Mr. Redmond at that moment sat still and let them clamour away, had he refused to be drawn into speech at that juncture, it is felt that before the night was over he would have been able to dictate his terms to the Government. Or had he



been desirous to avoid seeming haste, and called in Ireland a Convention of his followers, or preferably of the Volunteers, to consider what action should be taken in view of the war, it is certain that such concessions would have been made by the Government as would have been infinitely preferable even to the Home Rule Bill in its present form.

But the malign spirit that prompted Mr. Redmond to capture the Volunteers and make himself solely responsible for its activity now impelled him to rush into speech and commit the whole people of Ireland to aggressive warfare upon Germany, solely upon Mr. Redmond's own responsibility or the responsibility of his Party, and without being able even to indicate any gain as a *quid pro quo* for their action.

At first the country seemed quite swept off its feet by this action. All the kept newspapers of the United Irish League immediately constituted themselves recruiting agents for the British Army, and every effort was made to stampede the Volunteers into unconditional acceptance of Mr. Redmond's blatant offer. Many thousands of recruits were obtained for the British Army during the first week or fortnight of the jingo fever promoted by the Home Rule press and wirepullers, companies of Irish Volunteers marched in parade order to see reservists off by the train and ship, their bands, to the astonishment of everyone and the horror of most, played "God Save the King," and all sorts of erstwhile rack-renting landlords and anti-Irish aristocrats rushed in to officer these Irish Volunteers whom they had formerly despised. But gradually the nation is swinging back to sanity. The independent elements are everywhere asserting themselves, and there has already developed a fierce fight to prevent the Irish Volunteers being—as Mr. Redmond intended—handed over to the War Office.

Up to the time of writing, the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers has stood firm. They have refused the offer of the War Office to supply officers to the Irish Volunteers, and

insisted upon being officered by men of their own choosing under their own control, and they have stated that they prefer to buy and own their own arms rather than get them from Lord Kitchener and know that they are subject to his recall.

Along with this a strong propaganda is being carried on showing that Ireland has no quarrel with the German nation ; that on the contrary, Irish culture and Irish literature owe very much indeed to German friendship and to German research.

Upon the economic field a common ground has been found which is going far towards uniting all the unofficial parties and providing a common basis of action for all whose love of country is more than a political shibboleth, and for all whose conception of freedom is wider than is indicated by a mere change in administrative methods. This common ground is furnished by the question of the foodstuffs. It is realised that Ireland is able to sustain herself with her own food, but that the demand for food to feed the army and to provision Great Britain will lead to an enormous increase of prices and, perhaps to famine in the Irish towns.

The Irish farmer will sell gladly, but the prices he will obtain from the Government will send up the cost upon the poorly paid Irish workers in urban areas, and it is feared that should provisions not be available in Great Britain, should any of the trade routes be closed and grain and agricultural produce generally not be available in sufficient quantities, the British Government would commandeer the foodstuffs of Ireland as ruthlessly as it commandeered the railways during the dispatch of the Expeditionary Force of the past two weeks. It is determined on all hands that should this be done resistance will be offered, and the export of this food fought against even to the extent of armed resistance.

*Forward, September 5, 1914.*

## THE FRIENDS OF SMALL NATIONALITIES

THE "war on behalf of small nationalities" is still going merrily on in the newspapers. That great champion of oppressed races, Russia, is pouring her armies into East Prussia and offering freedom and deliverance to all and sundry if they will only take up arms on her behalf—without undue delay. She is to be the judge after the war as to whether they did or did not delay unduly. . . .

. . . The Russian Socialists have issued a strong manifesto denouncing the war, and pouring contempt upon the professions of the Czar in favour of oppressed races, pointing out his suppression of the liberties of Finland, his continued martyrdom of Poland, his atrocious tortures and massacres in the Baltic provinces, and his withdrawal of the recently granted parliamentary liberties of Russia. And to that again add the fact that the Polish Nationalists have warned the Poles against putting any faith in a man who has proven himself incapable of keeping his solemnly pledged faith with his own people, and you will begin to get a saner view of the great game that is being played than you can ever acquire from the lying press of Ireland and England.

Of course, that should not blind you to the splendid stand which the British Government, we are assured, is making against German outrages and brutality and in favour of small nationalities. The Russian Government is admitted by every publicist in England to be a foul blot upon civilisation. It was but the other day that when the Russian Duma was suppressed by force and many of its elected representatives imprisoned and exiled, an English Cabinet Minister defiantly declared in public, in spite of international courtesies :

"The Duma is dead ! Long live the Duma !"

But all that is forgotten now, and the Russian Government and the British Government stand solidly together in favour of small nationalities everywhere except in countries now under Russian and British rule.

Yes, I seem to remember a small country called Egypt, a country that through ages of servitude has painfully evolved to a conception of national freedom, and under leaders of its own choosing essayed to make that conception a reality. And I think I remember how this British friend of small nationalities bombarded its chief seaport, invaded and laid waste its territory, slaughtered its armies, imprisoned its citizens, led its chosen leaders away in chains, and reduced the new-born Egyptian nation into a conquered, servile British province.

And I think I remember how, having murdered this new-born soul of nationality amongst the Egyptian people, it signalled its victory by the ruthless hanging at Denshawai of a few helpless peasants who dared to think their pigeons were not made for the sport of British officers.<sup>1</sup>

Also, if my memory is not playing me strange tricks, I remember reading of a large number of small nationalities in India, whose evolution towards a more perfect civilisation in harmony with the genius of their race, was ruthlessly crushed in blood, whose lands were stolen, whose education was blighted, whose women were left to the brutal lusts of the degenerate soldiery of the British Raj.

Over my vision comes also grim remembrances of two infant republics in South Africa, and I look on the map in vain for them to-day. I remember that the friend of small nationalities waged war upon them—a war of insolent aggression at the instance of financial bloodsuckers. Britain sent her troops to subjugate them, to wipe them off the map ; and although they resisted until the veldt ran red with British and Boer blood, the end of the war saw two small nationalities less in the world.

When I read the attempts of the prize Irish press to work up

feeling against the Germans by talk of German outrages at the front, I wonder if those who swallow such yarns ever remember the facts about the exploits of the British generals in South Africa. When we are told of the horrors of Louvain, when the only damage that was done was the result of civilians firing upon German troops from buildings which those troops had in consequence to attack, I remember that in South Africa Lord Roberts issued an order that whenever there was an attack upon the railways in his line of communication every Boer house and farmstead within a radius of ten square miles had to be destroyed.

When I hear of the unavoidable killing of civilians in a line of battle 100 miles long in a densely populated country, being of, as it were, part of the German plan of campaign, I remember how the British swept up the whole non-combatant Boer population into concentration camps, and kept it there until the little children died in thousands of fever and cholera ; so that the final argument in causing the Boers to make peace was the fear that at the rate of infant mortality in those concentration camps there would be no new generation left to inherit the republic for which their elders were fighting.

This vicious and rebellious memory of mine will also recur to the recent attempt of Persia to form a constitutional government, and it recalls how, when that ancient nation shook off the fetters of its ancient despotism, and set to work to elaborate the laws and forms in the spirit of a modern civilised representative state, Russia, which in solemn treaty with England had guaranteed its independence, at once invaded it, and slaughtering all its patriots, pillaging its towns and villages, annexed part of its territories, and made the rest a mere Russian dependency. I remember how Sir Edward Grey, who now gushes over the sanctity of treaties, when appealed to to stand by and make Russia stand by the treaty guaranteeing the independence of Persia, coolly refused to interfere.

Oh, yes, they are great fighters for small nationalities, great upholders of the sanctity of treaties !

And the Irish Home Rule press knows this, knows all these things that a poor workman like myself remembers, knows them all, and is cowardly and guiltily silent, and viciously and fiendishly evil.

Let us hope that all Ireland will not some day have to pay an awful price for the lying attacks of the Home Rule press upon the noble German nation.

Let our readers encourage and actively spread every paper, circular, leaflet or manifesto which in these dark days dares to tell the truth.

Thus our honour may be saved ; thus the world may learn that the Home Rule press is but a sewer-pipe for the pouring of English filth upon the shores of Ireland.

*Irish Worker*, September 12, 1914.

#### NOTES

1. The Denshawai executions in 1906 here referred to are fully dealt with in the preface to Shaw's *John Bull's Other Island*, and in W. S. Blunt's *Diaries*.

## SOME PERVERTED BATTLE LINES

NOTHING is more remarkable in this war than the manner in which the ruling class in the countries of the Triple Alliance have appropriated and used for their own purposes every phrase and rallying cry that their political opponents had coined against them. For years the Socialists have preached against war, and preached with such vehemence and argumentative persuasiveness that their anti-militarist campaign had profoundly influenced public opinion in Europe and raised hopes that the era of international blood-letting was past. Vain delusion ! As soon as the capitalist class of England concluded that the time was ripe for the destruction of their German competitors, so far from finding the Peace campaign of the Socialists a hindrance it proceeded to use it as a useful asset in the militarist business. With perfectly fiendish and sardonic humour it took up the rallying cries of the Peace Party and used them as its very own. It called upon the Labour Parties, the Socialists, the humanitarians among the Liberals and Radicals to rally to the aid of the British army to "make war upon war," to "put an end to militarism," to "bring peace on earth and goodwill among men" at the point of British bayonets and to sweep German commerce of the seas as a preliminary to establishing brotherhood with the German peoples. With the honourable exceptions of the Independent Labour Party and the Socialist Labour Party, the organised and unorganised Labour advocates of Peace in Great Britain swallowed the bait and are now beating the war drums and hounding their brothers on to the butchery of their German comrades—and hounding them on with the cant of fraternity on their lips.

For a generation the French Government has made war upon the secular power of the Catholic Church in France. It abolished the Concordat between Church and State, made public property of the churches, did away with religious teaching in its schools, removed all religious emblems from its courts of law and public buildings, seized and auctioned off property the Church claimed as its own, and exercised its power with such relentlessness that many religious orders abandoned the country and removed themselves and all their belongings to Ireland, America, Belgium and other more friendly countries. Whether it was in its right or not is immaterial—the material point is that in its defence the Church through all its organs represented France as a Godless Atheistical country which God in His own good time would doubtless punish in order to avenge His persecuted faithful.

But when it became necessary to go to war with Germany, France joined England in raising a newspaper wail over the sufferings of "poor Catholic Belgium," planted machine guns in the churches at Louvain and field artillery before the Cathedral at Rheims, and when the Germans in self-defence trained their own artillery upon these sacred buildings in order to destroy the French fire the resultant damage was made the basis of an allegation that the Germans were making war upon religion which the pious French Government were nobly defending. To aid this business of representing this French Government as noble crusaders in defence of the Catholic faith hundreds of little Belgium children have been deported to Great Britain and Ireland, and are now being scattered up and down the land so that Catholics may be moved by sympathy with their suffering to go out and fight for the French Government, which a few months ago they were being taught to curse in the name of Catholicity.

Just as the peace campaign in England became a weapon in the hands of the war party, so the Catholic propaganda in



Ireland and England has been made a valuable tool in the services of the freethinking rulers of France.

The small conquered nations of Europe have in a thousand ways fought to propagate the idea of nationality, to emphasise the value of small nations and their special contributions to civilisation. Part and parcel of their propaganda has of necessity been directed against those two Empires which in Europe stand alone in the unenviable position of suppressing national existences and insisting upon small nations conforming to the mould in which these empires would cast them. But as soon as these two empires, England and Russia—the only two empires in Europe, we repeat, which do not respect the formation of small empires<sup>1</sup> within their borders—as soon as England and Russia go to war they, with the effrontery of a Satan, raise the slogans of small nationalities as their battle cries, and call upon the world to admire them as the deliverers of the oppressed nations.

And to crown all we see Ireland, which for centuries has whined to Europe for relief against England, now being led by its elected leader to fight for England, that the British Empire might continue to keep its navy as a sword at the throat of Europe

The irony of it all.

*Irish Worker*, September 26, 1914.

## NOTES

1. So in original. The expression is clumsy although the sense is clear. It may be noted that Connolly in the *Workers' Republic*, March 18, 1916 later draws a distinction between the German and British Empires even while declaring he wishes to be ruled by neither:

"The German Empire is a homogeneous Empire of self-governing peoples; the British Empire is a heterogeneous collection in which a very small number of self-governing communities connive at the subjugation by force of a vast number of despotically ruled subject populations."

## RULING BY FOOLING : "HOME RULE ON THE STATUTE BOOK "

THE greatest strategic move by the British Forces this week took place, not on the fields of Belgium or France, but on the floor of the House of Commons. In that fortress the forces of the enemy are too firmly entrenched to fear defeat, and therefore their strategic move was crowned with brilliant success. The problem was not how to defeat a nation in arms battling for all that makes life worth living, but how to fool a nation without arms into becoming the accomplice of its oppressor. And the strategic move in question is already being hailed as a great landmark of national progress.

As the reader guesses I am alluding to the great debate on Home Rule, to the great fight between Home Rulers and Unionists and the dramatic march-out of Mr. Bonar Law and his followers. And as the reader must also guess I believe the whole thing to have been a carefully-staged pantomime to fool Nationalist Ireland. All the evidence points in that direction. Listen. To any reader of the *Irish Worker* who can point out any real difference between the proposal of Messrs. Asquith and Redmond on the one hand and that of Bonar Law and Carson on the other I will give the first brass farthing with their name upon it I find floating down the Liffey on a grindstone.

. . . . .

Now, Mr. Printer, will you please put the proposals of the two parties side by side that the readers might get an opportunity of judging them apart from the lying rant of the Party Press :—

## CARSON'S PROPOSAL

That the Home Rule Bill should not be put on the statute book until the end of the war, and should then be considered along with an Amending Bill.

## ASQUITH-REDMOND PROPOSAL

That the Home Rule Bill should be put on the statute book, but "no steps taken to put it into practical operation" till the end of the war, when an Amending Bill will be passed to "alter, modify and qualify" its provision.

Again I ask, will some person tell me please what is the difference? There is none! What, then, was the reason for the great "scene" in the House of Commons?

The reason, simpleton, why the reason is plain. When Carson consented to encourage his Volunteers to enlist in return for a promise on the part of the Government that the Home Rule Bill would be hung up high and dry he had to agree not to betray the fact of the compact to the public lest it destroy the chances of recruiting in the Nationalist district. And for the same reason it was necessary that the Tories who are delighted at Asquith's surrender should pretend to be indignant. The scene in the House and the alleged disappointment of the Tories will be a great help to recruiting. Lord Crewe declared

"He was quite confident that when the Government of Ireland Bill had been placed on the Statute Book there would be a rush to enlist in the army on the part of the whole of Ireland. (Ministerial cheers)."

And the matchless leader of the Irish race, John E. Redmond, alluding to the recruiting mission of Mr. Asquith, hastened to hold out the same hopes of an inexhaustible supply of Irish food for powder. He said

“The Premier had announced that he was going to address a meeting in Dublin. Let him beg him to go soon. He hoped to have the honour to stand on the platform beside him, and he could promise him that he would have an enthusiastic response to his appeal.”

The great American humorist, Artemus Ward, declared during the American Civil War that he was prepared to sacrifice all his wife's relations in the sacred cause of the American Union. Our leaders are better than that. They are prepared to sacrifice all the sons of the poor, and all the soul and honour of their nation for the deferred promise of a shadow of liberty.

And so the great scene in the House of Commons was but a fresh staging of the old game of treachery and intrigue making its own price with compromise and weakness. That is understandable, but that compromise and weakness should masquerade as patriotism and statesmanship is for Irishmen a humiliating confession.

Home Rule is postponed until after the war. After the war the game will be entirely in the hands of Sir Edward Carson, according to the following words of Mr. Asquith

“It might be said that those whom Sir Edward Carson represented had been put at a disadvantage by the patriotic action they had taken. The employment of force for what was called the “coercion of Ulster” was an absolutely unthinkable thing. As far as he and his colleagues were concerned it was a thing which they would never countenance or consider.”

These words were a plain intimation to the Orange forces and their leader that if they stand firm they will win. A hint they are surely wise enough to take.

Meanwhile the official Home Rule press and all the local J.P.'s., publicans, land-grabbers, pawnbrokers and slum landlords

who control the United Irish League will strain every nerve in an endeavour to recruit for England's army, to send forth more thousands of Irishmen and boys to manure with their corpses the soil of a foreign country, to lose their lives and their souls in the work of murdering men who never harboured an evil thought of Irish men or women, to expend in the degradation of a friendly nation that magnificent Irish courage which a wiser patriotism might better employ in the liberation of their own.

Yes, ruling by fooling, is a great British art—with great Irish fools to practise on.

*Irish Worker*, September 19, 1914.

## REDMOND CANNOT DELIVER THE GOODS

THE action of the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers in repudiating the nominees of Mr. John Redmond, and proceeding to re-take that control which they ought never to have abandoned sent a thrill of joy through the heart of every true man and woman in the country. It was felt that the ground was at last being cleared for action, and that the insidious attempt to betray the Volunteers into the clutch of the Empire had received a staggering blow at the very outset of the campaign.

Never was the peril of Irish Nationality greater, never were the forces of national and social freedom more in danger of death from moral asphyxiation than at the outset of this Redmond-Asquith conspiracy. Every force capable of influencing and confusing the people had been corrupted successfully beforehand ; the recruiters came with a carefully doctored scheme of political liberty in the one hand and an enlistment form in the other, and to all and sundry it was suggested that the realisation of Ireland's hopes of political freedom depended upon her response to the call to enlist in England's army. All through the country the innumerable agencies, subject to manipulation at the hands of the Home Rule wirepullers, were busy preparing the ground by whispers and artfully-framed suggestions. It was freely alleged in the North that Sir Edward Carson was in league with the Kaiser and that, therefore, it was the duty of every Nationalist capable of bearing arms to enlist for service against the Germans. To a people who have lived for generations under the domination of Orangism as the Nationalists of North-East Ulster have done, that was an almost irresistible appeal. And when it was coupled with a declaration that " Home Rule was now upon the Statute Book " the poor workers of Belfast and district were momentarily swept off their feet. No mention was made of the fact that Mr.

Asquith had definitely promised that the Amending Bill would go into operation as soon as the Home Rule Bill, nor yet that he had pledged his word that the coercion of the Carsonites was to him and his colleagues absolutely unthinkable ; or, as it was excellently put by the Provisional Committee, that they would not dream of coercing the Unionists of Ulster, but that they were quite ready to coerce the Nationalists of Ulster.

Not perhaps till the Great Day of Reckoning will we discover how many thousands of brave young Irishmen have been betrayed to their deaths on Continental battlefields by those treacherous tactics of Redmond and Devlin and their local wirepullers. But long ere that many thousands of Irish mothers, wives and children will fervently curse the dastard leaders and newspapers whose lying words induced their breadwinners to desert home and family to fight the battles of the enemies of their class and country.

In the remainder of Ireland the point depended upon most was the traditional alliance with France, and the careful exploitation of the supposed German atrocities upon Catholic churches in Belgium and France. The word having been given as to the lines upon which the campaign of slander was to be conducted, the Home Rule and Unionist Press vied with each other in artful appeals to the sympathies of the Irish people. Never in the history of warfare did any nation sink to such a dishonourable campaign against the character of an enemy as Great Britain has sunk in this war. I believe that the poster headed "Remember Belgium," and embellished by a supposed representation of a German soldier standing upon the body of a prostrate woman, is the most infamous public appeal to which any government lent its name.

All this campaign was designed to find its crown and apex in the recruiting meeting in the Mansion House. Observe the steps in the campaign. First the Volunteers were threatened with a rival force, then their Provisional Committee was packed

by Mr. Redmond with men who were prepared to sell Ireland to the Empire, then all the forces at their command were employed in order to corrupt the public mind and to stampede into the pro-British ranks as many as possible. Then, from pledging the help of the Volunteers to defend Ireland for the Empire, Mr. Redmond proceeded to offer the Volunteers for service abroad, and finally it was hoped by the Mansion House meeting to stampede the Provisional Committee and bully, seduce or confuse the Volunteers into an *en masse* enrolment as soldiers of the British army. It was all well planned—the most gigantic, deep-laid and loathsome attempt in history to betray the soul of a people.

The unconquerable spirit of the Dublin Nationalists, the acute political insight of the Dublin workers and the Napoleon-like stroke of the old Provisional Committee in resuming control at the psychological moment saved the situation for the country at large, as the magnificently defiant demonstration at the head of Grafton and Dawson streets by the Citizen Army, saved the situation for Dublin itself.

We may now confidently expect the Redmondites to make the fight of their lives to resume control of the Volunteer movement. For that end they will flood the country with agents, for that end they will spend money like water—and as it is in the cause of England they will have money enough to spend—and for that end they will leave no stone unturned, no slander unused, no man or woman's character unassailed. It is a fight to a finish.

For some of us the finish may be on the scaffold, for some in the prison cell, for others more fortunate upon the battlefields of an Ireland in arms for a real republican liberty. We bespeak for the Provisional Committee the support of all ready to face whatever that fight may entail, in the determination that we shall show the world that, though Redmond may sell Ireland he cannot deliver the goods ! *Irish Worker*, October 3, 1914.



## A FORWARD POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS

I WISH to-day to write something about the necessity of a "Forward" policy for the Irish Volunteers and all those who agree with the revolt of that body against the unscrupulous intrigues of the official Home Rule Party. That some Forward policy must be evolved, and when evolved, acted upon with swiftness and determination, must surely be clear to anyone who understands the present situation in Ireland. The Redmondite forces are at work all over the country in an endeavour to recapture their lost prestige, and to demonstrate their ability to deliver the goods to the British Empire in the shape of lusty young Irishmen to swell the ranks of its sorely depleted army. No stone will be left unturned. North, South, East and West the emissaries are already at work spreading insidious lies, retailing unprintable slanders, inventing every hour fresh excuses for, and explanations of, the transformation of Irish M.P.'s into English recruiting sergeants.

The scriptural injunction to be all things to all men is being interpreted and practised by these agents of Messrs. Redmond and Devlin in a thousand ways unthought of by the holy writer. To those who really believe that Ireland is irrevocably bound by nature and destiny to the car of the British Empire these agents whisper that every effort must be made to secure an Irish Brigade to serve at the front, that Ireland's credit as a loyal part of that Empire may be firmly established in the British mind. To those whose loyalty to all the high ideals that Irish Nationalism has hitherto stood for makes service in England's army seem an act of treason to Ireland, the agents of Messrs. Redmond and Devlin whisper that this appeal for recruits is all a stage play, that the "Party" does not want the Volunteers to enlist, that they only make that call in order not

to be outdone by Carson, and that if the Volunteers will only affirm their loyalty to Redmond they are welcome to stay at home as much as they like. No mention is made to these Volunteers of the hundreds of young Irishmen who have taken Messrs. Redmond and Devlin's appeal for recruits at their face value and offered themselves up for England as these gentlemen advised, nor yet is any attempt made to explain in what manner people can know whether the party politicians are lying in their open professions of loyalty to the Empire, or lying in their secret professions of loyalty to the cause of Irish Nationalism. Lying in either case they must be, and yet this is the chief stock-in-trade of the wirepullers in their endeavour to recapture the Volunteers—and with these double-edged lies upon their lips they stand up and sing with Davis that

“Righteous men must make our land  
A Nation Once Again.”

Face to face with such unscrupulous opponents the Volunteers must recognise that their fight is a struggle to the death, that the prize at stake is the soul of a Nation, and that therefore every ounce of energy, every bright coinage of the brain, must be flung at once into the struggle. The Volunteers must realise that against the shamelessly vile methods of the politician there is but one effective weapon—the daring appeal of the Revolutionist.

You cannot fight the devil with brimstone; you cannot beat the politicians at their own game. The secret methods of character assassination, elaborated by hordes of ward politicians and perfected by the foul manipulators of Hibernian lodges, cannot be countered by any mere policy of marking time, nor defeated by any organisation that hesitates to attack in the open the organisations that are everywhere in secret striking at our very life.

Let us be plain-spoken! The United Irish League, the

Parliamentary Party, the Board of Erin Hibernians have at the present moment a thousand foul agencies at work to destroy the Volunteers who dared to spoil their attempt to betray Ireland into the grasp of British Imperialism. The hatred of these organisations for the men and women who dared to prefer Ireland to the Empire, who dared to prefer the memories of a glorious past and the hopes of a glorious future to the sordid service of England—that hatred is as deep and as implacable as is ever the hatred of the traitor spoiled of the fruits of his treachery. Here and there in the Volunteer ranks are some who, whilst true to Ireland, are not yet sufficiently convinced of the treachery of their leaders to forsake their old allegiance to them. The presence of such persons will be, and is being used as an argument against the Volunteers taking aggressive action. It is argued that these good men must be converted more fully before the Volunteers can do more than remain on the defensive, else they will be lost. To this it must be answered that in politics as in military affairs the attack is ever the best defence. The Provisional Committee must attack aggressively, resolutely, openly, or they and their followers will be wiped out of existence. Aggressive action will convert the waverers better than a thousand speeches, or a hundred printed proclamations.

Again let me repeat it, let us never forget it : This fight against Redmondism and Devlinism is a fight to save the soul of the Irish Nation.

Volunteers, your policy must be that of the old German Marshal, Blucher—"Forward !" "Forward !" "Forward !"

In what way can that policy best be formulated ?

I have neither the ability nor the authority to formulate the fighting policy of the Irish Volunteers, but I would respectfully suggest that there are certain things which the Volunteers might at once initiate a campaign for, with the certainty of winning the adhesion of everyone worth their salt in Ireland.

They might

Pledge the Irish Volunteers to remain in armed service in Ireland for Ireland, and to resist all attempts of any other nation to deprive Ireland of their services,

Pledge the services of their armed forces to Ireland to enforce the repeal of all clauses in the Home Rule Act denying to Ireland powers of self-government now enjoyed by South Africa, Australia or Canada.

These two articles would appeal to all true Irishmen and women as the very minimum of a National programme for a Volunteer force. If the Provisional Committee would adopt some such pledges, and begin to educate and organise public opinion on its side, it would be provided with a basis of attack upon its opponents that would effectually place upon these gentry the onus of defending things morally and politically indefensible.

It would compel them either to defend the recruiting consistently, or to abandon it.

It would compel them to defend all the worst iniquities in the Home Rule Act, or else to join in the attacks upon them.

Such a policy would attract the best elements in the country. But it would need to be carried out vigorously by public agitation, as the Volunteers of 1782 agitated for Free Trade and for the Reform of the Franchise. Merely to indicate the adhesion of the Volunteers to such a pledge will not be enough. It will be necessary everywhere to support and push forward the agitation.

The Volunteers, I will be told, are only a military body, not an agitation. But even the army of an established government requires the support of a public agitation in its campaign, as the English Government well exemplifies at this present moment.

Agitation for a definite object is the best recruiting campaign that the Volunteers can carry on ; their pledge to fight for that object will be the guarantee of their success in their fight for the soul of Ireland.

Volunteers, *FORWARD! FORWARD!! FORWARD!!*

*Irish Worker*, October 10, 1914.

## THE BALLOT OR THE BARRICADES

TOWARDS the close of last week the British Government flew a kite in Ireland. Flying a kite when practised by a Government means getting some person or paper to issue a statement that the Government contemplates taking certain action. If the announcement arouses no hostility of a serious nature the action is forthwith taken. If, on the contrary, the announcement is met with a storm of hostility the Government declares it did not authorise and does not contemplate any such action as was announced, and that it regrets that any such statement should have been made by unauthorised persons. Having flown its kite to learn how the wind blows, the Government then proceeds to do a little more spade work to prepare the ground better for taking the action it has just declared it does not intend to take.

The kite flown last week was the announcement that the Militia Ballot Act was to be enforced in Ireland. As it evoked hostility the Government proceeded to officially repudiate it. The ground was not well prepared, the game was too shy. But nevertheless the iniquitous proposal is only temporarily abandoned. In some form or another conscription is inevitable.

The only thing that can avert conscription is the speedy collapse of the German army—a thing as remote as the conversion of England's rulers to Christian principles. Already a responsible authority, Sir Thomas Barclay, has declared that England will, before the close of the war, have two million men with the colours, an army impossible without conscription. In addition to this we have the fact that the slaughter at the front is almost inconceivable. A great surgeon, Dr. Haden Guest, says, that at present the military sick and wounded in France number half a million. Thus the gaps in the firing line

require the presence of a continually increasing army of support to fill them. Where and how are all those soldiers to be got, if not by and through some form of conscription ?

The truth about the Germany army is that its position becomes more secure every day. At the beginning of the war the Allies joyfully declared that time was on their side, that every day gained was equal to the winning of a battle, that the Allies could afford to wait and the Germans could not. It is now beginning to penetrate the heads of the military experts of Fleet Street that the boot is on the other leg. The Russians were the great hope of England. Unless the Russians can achieve victory before the closing in of the terrible Russian winter that hope is gone. It will be impossible to maintain in the field the enormous masses of Russian troops, to provision them, to keep them supplied with munitions of war, to handle all the elaborate, cumbrous but necessary machinery of transport and commissariat, whilst the snow king has his grip upon Russian railroads and rivers. Add to this the terrible cost of the maintenance of such an army as Russia requires to face the Germans—the most uneducated nation in Europe to face the most educated, and we see at once that England cannot hope to see Russia win the war for her. She must produce the men herself. Russia is bankrupt. The Czar was only able to crush the Russian Revolution because of the loans from France and England. Now these countries need all their moneys for their own salvation.

Thus on the side of Germany there are fighting the influences of time and of money, of superior equipment, and of wise provision for the future.

Therefore the Militia Ballot Act or some form of conscription will come. Are we, like our rulers, to await the evil day, and then “muddle through” with ineffective protests ? Or are we to make provision beforehand for the fight that will be necessary ?

We of the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union, we of the Citizen Army, have our answer ready. We will resist the Militia Ballot Act, or any form of conscription, and we begin now to prepare our resistance. Upon the Volunteers we urge similar resolves, similar preparations.

Understand what this means. It means a complete overhauling and remodelling of all the training and instruction hitherto given to those corps. It means that the corps shall be taught how to act and fight when acting against an enemy equipped with superior weapons, instead of all teaching being based upon the ideas of British military text books which always presume an equality of weapons, or even a superiority upon the British side. It means that much that has been taught will be worse than useless if acted upon, as such teaching presupposed that the corps receiving instructions were to form part of a regular army in the field, an army properly supported and reinforced by complete arms of the service. The resistance to the Militia Ballot Act must of necessity take the form of insurrectionary warfare, if the resisters are determined to fight in Ireland for Ireland, instead of on the Continent for England. Such insurrectionary warfare would be conducted upon lines and under conditions for which text books made no provision.

In short, it means barricades in the streets, guerrilla warfare in the country.

To all who are prepared to face that ordeal rather than shed their blood for the tyrant and exploiter we appeal to join our Citizen Army. We propose to make that force the best equipped mentally in Ireland. We want no parade ground soldiers. We want young men prepared to die for Freedom in Ireland. If the Government proposes to force us to fight against our consciences and our desire we propose to challenge it upon its own ground ; and if it wants us it must take us by force.

From this date greater decision and promptitude in action will be enforced in our army though even now it is an example



to follow. All those who fell away because we had not rifles enough are requested to enrol at once and take a course in the preliminary training in the new course of instruction on the lines we have indicated.

The rifles will come all right. And there are other modern weapons of warfare.

The Citizen Army Offices at Liberty Hall, Aungier Street, Inchicore, Thomas Street, and elsewhere are open every night for enrolment. We want a new muster of men prepared to face the worst and to take the best if taken it can be. . . .

*Irish Worker*, October 24, 1914.

## THE HOPE OF IRELAND

THE present crisis in Ireland is shattering many reputations and falsifying many predictions, but to the careful observer it is becoming daily apparent that it will leave intact at least one reputation, that of those who pinned their faith to the working class as the anchor and foundation of any real nationalism that this country can show. Here and there the working class may waver, here and there local influences may exert sufficient pressure to weaken or corrupt the manhood of the workers, but speaking broadly it remains true that in that class lay the only hope of those who held fast to the faith that this Ireland of ours is a nation distinct and apart from all others, and capable of working out its own destiny and living its own life.

The working class has ever refused to be drawn into any mere anti-English feeling ; it refuses to be drawn into it now. It has always refused to consider that hatred of England was equivalent to love of Ireland, or that true patriotism required an Irishman or woman to bear enmity to the toiling masses of the English population. It still holds that position.

The working class of Ireland, when grown conscious of its true dignity, does not consider that it owes to the British Empire any debt except that of hatred. But it also realises that the best services it can render to the British people is due to them, and that service will be and will take the form of as speedy as possible a destruction of the foul governmental system that has made the British people an instrument of the enslavement of millions of the human race, of the extirpation of whole tribes and nations, of the devastation of vast territories. Enslaved socially at home the British people have been taught that what little political liberty they do enjoy can only be bought at the price of the national destruction of every people

rising into social or economic rivalry with the British master class. If it requires war to free the minds of the British working class from that debasing superstition then war we shall have, for the world cannot progress industrially whilst so important a nation in Europe is perverted mentally by a belief so hostile to fraternal progress ; if it requires insurrection in Ireland and through all the British dominions to teach the English working class they cannot hope to prosper permanently by arresting the industrial development of others then insurrection must come, and barricades will spring up as readily in our streets as public meetings do to-day.

Those who hold that the British people must learn this lesson are not necessarily enemies of the British people, of the British democracy. Rather do they hold with John Mitchel they are the truest friends of the British people who are the greatest enemies of the British Government. The Irish working class see no abandonment of the principles of the Labour Movement in this fight against this war and all it implies ; see no weakening of international solidarity in their fierce resolve to do no fighting except it be in their own country to secure the right to hold that country for its own sons and daughters. Rather do they joy in giving this proof that the principles of the Labour Movement represent the highest form of patriotism, and that true patriotism will embody the broadest principles of Labour and Socialism.

The Labour Movement in Ireland stands for the ownership of all Ireland by all the Irish ; it therefore fights against all things calculated to weaken the hold of the Irish upon Ireland, as it fights for all things calculated to strengthen the grasp of the Irish people upon Ireland and all things Irish. It has no war with Germany, it welcomes the German as a brother struggling towards the light. It believes that the blood guiltiness of this war lies chiefly at the door of that British Empire whose " far-flung battle line " is a far-flung shadow upon the face of civilized

progress. And so believing, it counsels the Irish race to stand aloof from the battle, since it cannot intervene as a nation on the only side that honour and interest dictates.

Alone in Ireland the working class has no ties that bind it to the service of the Empire. Hunger and the fear of hunger have driven thousands of our class into the British army ; but for whatever pay or pension such have drawn therefrom they have given service, and owe neither gratitude nor allegiance. For those still held to that accursed bargain as reservists, etc., we have no feelings except compassion ; the British Shylock will hold them to the bond. Other classes serve England for the sake of dividends, profits, official positions and sinecures—a thousand strings drawing them to England for the one patriotic tie that binds them to Ireland. The Irish working class as a class can only hope to rise with Ireland.

Equally true is it that Ireland cannot rise to Freedom except upon the shoulders of a working class knowing its rights and daring to take them.

That class of that character we are creating in Ireland. Wherever then in Ireland flies the banner of the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union there flies also to the heavens the flag of the Irish working class, alert, disciplined, intelligent, determined to be free.

*Irish Worker*, October 31, 1914.

## RALLY FOR LABOUR

SIGNS are not wanting in Ireland to-day that there are strenuous and exciting times before the forces of organised Labour. The fever and excitement of the war is practically over, the talk of certain victory and a short war has disappeared from the conversation of even the most optimistic of the employing class, and everywhere we see that the class that rules and robs us is making preparations to take whatever advantage the war may offer to increase its profits, and increase its power over our lives. Capitalist society is so built that the clash of interests is inevitable ; here and there at all times, and all over for a short time, these clashing interests may be forgotten in a wave of patriotism or a frenzy of religious enthusiasm ; but such unity never survives for long the constant attrition of the divergent interests of the various classes and individuals. Sooner or later the old war of self-interest resumes its domination, and the conflict inherent in capitalist society with all its ugliness and horror, assumes control and direction of the minds, passions and lives of men and women.

When this war broke out there was in England, and amongst those whose outlook on life is that of England, a fine simulation of the self-abnegation of patriotism. Employers in England told their employees that the firm would make up the wages of each man volunteering to the front, and workers left wives and families to trust to the tender mercies of their masters and their government. They were all out against the "common enemy," and all distinctions, rivalries and clashing interests were laid aside. It was fine !

But it was too fine to last. Already the Government has shown its bias against trade unionism, and against the working class. The demand of the Parliamentary Labour Party for £1

per week for soldiers is treated with the contempt earned by its sponsors when they delivered the goods before they stipulated for a price—went recruiting for the army first, and only thought of demanding proper payment for recruits after thousands upon thousands had surrendered their liberty and became food for cannon. All through England and Ireland committees under various names are engaged in procuring the manufacture of goods for the army by voluntary labour, whilst the persons—mainly women and girls—normally employed at the manufacture of those goods are turned out on the streets to starve, or else compelled to seek a livelihood by begging these committees to supply them with work under conditions they would scorn if offered at other times by private employers.

A moratorium suspending payment of large sums has been granted to and is freely availed of by the rich, whilst eviction notices are descending as thick as snowflakes upon the helpless poor, and wives and widows of England's soldiery every day throng the police courts begging for permission to keep together a little longer the household gathered by the loving labours of the "heroes at the front." Relief of Distress Committees in their work seem to unite in regarding every applicant as a degraded criminal upon whom every insult can be heaped that class hatred can devise, until poor women resolve to die in their slums rather than have their wretchedness marked by the insulting questions and insinuations of the investigators. In Ireland the demand of organised labour for representation upon such committees is made subordinate to the whims and prejudices of every little mind from Lord Mayor Sherlock down to the toadies whose delight it is to eat dirt that has been trodden on by the feet of Lady Aberdeen.

A consignment of flour is sent here from Canada, and the Government ostentatiously gives the work of discharging it to the lowest collection of blacklegs that has ever disgraced Dublin. A law is on the Statute Book empowering the Cor-

poration of Dublin to feed the children starving at school, and the Corporation mocks the law and the children by appointing on that committee the bitterest enemies of the measure, and a chairman who has made up his mind that it shall never be enforced, whilst the claim of the Dublin Trades Council to be represented is met with a flat refusal, as is also the claim of the Ladies' Committee which for years has fed the children of two of our Dublin schools.

War is ever the enemy of progress. It is only possible when humanity is stifled, when the common interests of the human race are denied. The first blast of the bugles of war is also the requiem note of human brotherhood. It is but a step, and a short step, from exulting in the sufferings of a foreign enemy to contemptuous indifference to the sights and sounds of suffering amongst our own poor in our own streets. The poor of the world would be well advised, upon the declaration of war in any country, as their first steps to peace, to hang the Foreign Minister and Cabinet whose secret diplomacy produced such a result. If each country hanged its own Foreign Minister and Cabinet before setting out to the front, wars would not last long ; and if a jingo editor were hanged each week it lasted, the most jingo being the first to hang, not many angry passions would be stirred up to make the work of peaceful understanding difficult.

Wanting such a desirable result the workers must realise now that all the machinery of the State, and all the extra machinery now being set up to aid the State, are being deliberately utilised to accentuate the weakness of the individual worker, to intensify the dependence of his dear ones upon charitable and anti-labour organisations, to concentrate in the hands of the enemies of his class all the new agencies of government as well as the old, and in short, to weaken, discredit and destroy every power that the workers have hitherto built up as weapons for their peaceful social regeneration.

Our trade unions are attacked by every insidious weapon, our standard of life is menaced in a thousand evil ways, a corrupt press calls aloud for the suppression of every Irish journal that refuses to prostitute itself. The time is ripe for a forward move against all those gathering forces of evil ; every man and woman who has reaped the advantages which organised Labour has won in the past must now rally to the flag. All jealousies must be forgotten, all rivalries laid aside.

Labour is the only force that can save Labour. Rally then to save Labour from its encircling enemies, and know that in saving Labour you save the most effective force for the redemption of Ireland.

*Irish Worker*, November 14, 1914.



## COURTMARTIAL AND REVOLUTION

*"Irish Worker,"*<sup>1</sup> 19th December, 1914.

THE Earl of Halsbury said that in deference to the wishes of the Government he would not press his objections, but he thought the proposal of this Bill was the most unconstitutional thing that had ever happened."

The foregoing sentence is from a report of a debate in the House of Lords on the "Defence of the Realm Consolidation Act," on Friday, November 27th. This precious Act gives the military authorities power to arrest civilians and try them by Courtmartial, sets aside all the ordinary safeguards of civil liberty, and empowers these Courtmartial to inflict the death penalty or any lesser sentence. In other words, and plainer language, it establishes Martial Law as the law of the land, and places the lives and liberties of all in the power of a military unaccustomed to the restraints of civilised courts of justice, and ignorant of the laws of evidence.

A German, a French, an Italian or an Austrian Government would have openly and honourably sought to attain those ends by a declaration of Martial Law; the hypocritical and cowardly gang of assassins who control the Government of the British Empire seek to achieve the same objects by clandestinely and treacherously destroying civil liberties whilst professing a desire to safeguard and protect them. This is but a fitting culmination to all the anti-democratic and liberty-hating diplomacy which brought about this war, and now seeks to destroy every agency which would help to unmask its injurious conspiracy against mankind, or tell the truth about the terrors that accompany it. As a result of this Act there is no longer liberty in Ireland—liberty of speech, liberty of association,

liberty of the press, liberty of the subject are all gone. No longer may a man or woman demand to be tried by his or her peers in an open court-room, before the eyes and hearing of his or her fellows. At any time any man or woman may be arrested, day or night, and dragged off in secret, to be tried in secret, and condemned and assassinated in secret by the hired assassins of the British Empire.

Aye, there is no break in the continuity of the methods of British Imperial Rule in Ireland. Dublin Castle is always Dublin Castle, the same at all times, loathsome, lying, hypocritical, *murderous*.

Of course we have the word of this Government that no death sentences will be carried out until Parliament meets, and of course we all know what the word of the Government is worth. Belgium knows it now, knows that this Government pledged its honour to maintain Belgian neutrality, and then manœuvred to leave Belgium irrevocably committed to sink or swim with one side in this struggle in which she was supposed to remain neutral. Ireland knows it, knows that the Liberal Government pledged its word to give Home Rule to all Ireland, then pledged its word to Carson not to force Home Rule upon all Ireland, pledged its word to place a representative of Labour upon the Commission of Inquiry into the Dublin police outrages, then deliberately breaks its solemn word, and appointed no such representatives ; pledged its word to appoint an independent Commission of Inquiry into the Bachelor's Walk massacre, and yet declared in Parliament beforehand that the said Commission would exonerate the uniformed murderers of peaceful citizens. Aye, Ireland knows the value of a Government promise, as our fathers knew it in the past !

But let "messieurs, the assassins," beware. There are in Ireland to-day many scores of thousands of earnest men neither committed to the British Empire nor to the cause of revolution. For the most part these are men who, wearied of the chaos of

Irish politics, gave a grudging adhesion to the parliamentary attempt to secure some form of Home Rule as an organised legal expression of Irish nationhood. Loyalty to the party entrusted with that task has kept these men silent and inactive even whilst that party was betraying their trust, and besmirching their ideals. Always the hope persisted that eventually Home Rule would come, and then these traitors would be punished by an outraged people. But if the British Government once more throws off the mask of constitutionalism and launches its weapons of repression against those who dare to differ from it, if once more it sets in motion its jails, its courtmartial, its scaffolds, then the last tie that binds those men to the official Home Rule gang will snap. On that day we will see once again all the best and brightest in Ireland definitely arraying itself on the side of revolution, fully realising that freedom and the British Empire cannot co-exist in this country.

The constitutional mask, the simulacrum of civil liberty still paralyses the activities and holds the hand of many a true Irish patriot, as the boasted freedom of contract of the wage-system still hides from many a worker the reality of his slavery. But once let the Government drop that mask, or abandon that pretence of civil liberty, and then the result will see such a resurrection of Irish revolutionary spirit such as has not been seen for generations.

A resurrection ! Aye, out of the grave of the first Irish man or woman murdered for protesting against Ireland's participation in this thrice-cursed war there will arise anew the spirit of Irish revolution.

“ The graves of those murdered for freedom bear  
seed for freedom  
Which the winds carry afar and re-sow.”

Yes, my lords and gentlemen, our cards are all on the table !  
If you leave us at liberty we will kill your recruiting, save our

poor boys from your slaughter-house, and blast your hopes of Empire. If you strike at, imprison, or kill us, out of our prisons or graves we will still evoke a spirit that will thwart you, and, mayhap, raise a force that will destroy you.

We defy you ! Do your worst !

Whether this death sentence upon Irish prisoners of these new Courtmartial will or will not be carried out will depend, not upon the plighted honour or solemn assurances of Cabinet Ministers already foresworn and discredited even in their own country, nor yet upon any action of the degenerate Irish Members of Parliament who sat still and helped to destroy the constitutional rights of which they prate so loudly ; nor yet upon the British Labour Members who, like all apostates, are readiest to stab and destroy all those who remain true to that ideal of democratic freedom they have deserted and dishonoured. No, the question of life and death will depend solely upon the temper of the people of Ireland. If they remain dumb, nerveless, lacking in intrepidity, quivering too mutely in the leash laid upon them by the apostles of "caution and restraint," then the blow will fall in increasing severity and ferocity, arrest will follow arrest, blow will follow blow, and sentences will increase in savagery in exact proportion to the tameness of the Irish people, until at last the death penalty will once more strike down those who embody the rebellious people of the Irish race. Oh, it is all well planned. Their fathers in Hell could not have planned it better !

*Irish Work*, December 19, 1914.

## NOTES

1. The *Irish Worker* was suppressed on December 4, 1914. In place of an editorial, blanks appeared with this short notice : "The editorial for this week has been declined by the printer on the very reasonable grounds that it was against the Government, and that he

had been notified by the military authorities that if he printed any criticism of the Government, or against recruiting, he would be held responsible, and that his place would be closed and himself arrested. "We will now rejoice, Home Rule is on the Statute Book, martial law is now in force, and free expression of opinion is forbidden." This missing editorial, which W. H. West, the printer, had warned Connolly would lead to suppression, was printed as a two page leaflet with a cartoon, and the title, *Irish Work*. *Irish Work* was distributed widely through the city after suppression of the *Irish Worker*.

## *APPENDICES:*

### PROGRAMMES AND MANIFESTOES

The Irish Socialist Republican Party, 1896.

Declaration of Principles, Irish Socialist Federation, 1908.

The Socialist Party of Ireland, 1910-1911.

Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1897.

Coronation of King Edward VII, 1902.

Visit of King George V, 1911.

I.L.P. of Ireland, "Ireland Upon the Dissecting Table," 1914.

War. What it Means to You. (Irish Citizen Army, Belfast, 1914.)

Appeal to the Irish Working Class, 1914.

## IRISH SOCIALIST REPUBLICAN PARTY

“The great appear great to us only because we are on our knees ; LET US RISE.”

### OBJECT

Establishment of AN IRISH SOCIALIST REPUBLIC based upon the public ownership by the Irish people of the land, and instruments of production, distribution and exchange. Agriculture to be administered as a public function, under boards of management elected by the agricultural population and responsible to them and to the nation at large. All other forms of labour necessary to the well-being of the community to be conducted on the same principles.

### PROGRAMME

As a means of organising the forces of the Democracy in preparation for any struggle which may precede the realisation of our ideal, of paving the way for its realisation, of restricting the tide of emigration by providing employment at home, and finally of palliating the evils of our present social system, we work by political means to secure the following measures :—

1. Nationalisation of railways and canals.
2. Abolition of private banks and money-lending institutions and establishments of state banks, under popularly elected boards of directors, issuing loans at cost.
3. Establishment at public expense of rural depots for the most improved agricultural machinery, to be lent out to the agricultural population at a rent covering cost and management alone.

4. Graduated income tax on all incomes over £400 per annum in order to provide funds for pensions to the aged, infirm and widows and orphans.
5. Legislative restriction of hours of labour to 48 per week and establishment of a minimum wage.
6. Free maintenance for all children.
7. Gradual extension of the principle of public ownership and supply to all the necessities of life.
8. Public control and management of National schools by boards elected by popular ballot for that purpose alone.
9. Free education up to the highest university grades.
10. Universal suffrage.

## THE IRISH SOCIALIST REPUBLICAN PARTY

### HOLDS :

That the agricultural and industrial system of a free people, like their political system, ought to be an accurate reflex of the democratic principle by the people for the people, solely in the interests of the people.

That the private ownership, by a class, of the land and instruments of production, distribution and exchange, is opposed to this vital principle of justice, and is the fundamental basis of all oppression, national, political and social.

That the subjection of one nation to another, as of Ireland to the authority of the British Crown, is a barrier to the free political and economic development of the subjected nation, and can only serve the interests of the exploiting classes of both nations.



That, therefore, the national and economic freedom of the Irish people must be sought in the same direction, viz., the establishment of an Irish Socialist Republic, and the consequent conversion of the means of production, distribution and exchange into the common property of society, to be held and controlled by a democratic state in the interests of the entire community.

That the conquest by the Social Democracy of political power in Parliament, and on all public bodies in Ireland, is the readiest and most effective means whereby the revolutionary forces may be organised and disciplined to attain that end.

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## DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES OF THE IRISH SOCIALIST FEDERATION

The Irish Socialist Federation is composed of members of the Irish race in America, and is organised to assist the revolutionary working-class movement in Ireland by a dissemination of its literature ; to educate the working-class Irish of this country into a knowledge of Socialist principles and to prepare them to co-operate with the workers of all other races, colours and nationalities in the emancipation of labour.

It affirms its belief that political and social freedom are not two separate and unrelated ideas, but are two sides of the one great principle, each being incomplete without the other.

The course of society politically has been from warring but democratic tribes within each nation to a united government under an absolutely undemocratic monarchy. Within this monarchy again developed revolts against its power, revolts at first seeking to limit its prerogatives only, then demanding the inclusion of certain classes in the governing power, then demanding the right of the subject to criticise and control the power of the monarch, and finally, in the most advanced countries, this movement culminated in the total abolition of the monarchical institution and the transformation of the subject into the citizen.

In industry a corresponding development has taken place. The independent producer, owning his own tools and knowing no master, has given way before the more effective productive powers of huge capital, concentrated in the hands of the great capitalist. The latter, recognising no rights in his workers, ruled as an absolute monarch in his factory. But within the realm of capital developed a revolt against the power of the

capitalist. This revolt, taking the form of trade unionism, has pursued in the industrial field the same line of development as the movement for political freedom has pursued in the sphere of national government. It first contented itself with protests against excessive exactions, against all undue stretchings of the power of the capitalist, then its efforts broadened out to demands for restrictions upon the absolute character of such power, i.e., by claiming for trade unions the right to make rules for the workers in the workshop ; then it sought still further to curb the capitalist's power by shortening the working day and so limiting the period during which the toiler may be exploited. Finally, it seeks by Boards of Arbitration to establish an equivalent in the industrial world for that compromise in the political world by which, in constitutional countries, the monarch retains his position by granting a parliament to divide with him the duties of governing, and so hides while securing his power. And as in the political history of the race, the logical development of progress was found in the abolition of the institution of monarchy and not in its mere restriction, so in industrial history the culminating point to which all efforts must at last converge lies in the abolition of the capitalist class and not in the mere restriction of its power.

It recognises in all past history a preparation for this achievement, and in the industrial tendencies of to-day it hails the workings out of those laws of human progress which bring that object within our reach.

The concentration of capital in the form of trusts simplifies the task we propose that society shall undertake and the industrial organisation of labour resultant therefrom drills and prepares the force necessary to its accomplishment.

As to-day the organised power of the State theoretically guarantees to every individual his political rights, so in the Socialist Republic the power and productive forces of organised society will stand between every individual and want, guaran-

teeing that right to life without which all other rights are but mockery.

The Irish Socialist Federation, recognising these two phases of human development, pledges its members to fealty to the principles resultant therefrom, politically rejecting the domination of nation over nation as of man over man ; it on the field of Irish politics is organised against every party recognising British rule in Ireland in any form or manner, in all its moods and modifications ; and as the final solution of the Irish, as of every other struggle for freedom, it seeks the Workers' Republic—the administration of all the land and instruments of labour, all social property in which all shall be co-heirs and owners.

*New York, January, 1908.*

## SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND ★

(Headquarters : 42e Great Brunswick Street, Dublin).

### ITS AIMS AND METHODS

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND seeks to organise the workers of this country, irrespective of creed or race, into one great PARTY OF LABOUR. It believes that the dependence of the working class upon the owners of capitalist property, and the desire of these capitalists and landowners to keep the vast mass of the people so subject and dependent, is the great and abiding cause of all our modern social and political evils—of nearly all modern crime, mental degradation, religious strife, and political tyranny. Recognising this, it counsels the Irish working class to follow the example of the workers in every civilised country in the world, whether subject or free, and organise itself industrially and politically with the end in view of gaining control and mastery of the entire resources of the country.

Such is our aim : such is Socialism. Our method is : Political organisation at the Ballot Box to secure the election of representatives of Socialist principles to all the elective governing Public Bodies of this country, and thus to gradually transfer the political power of the State into the hands of those who will use it to further and extend the principle of common or public ownership. *We mean to make the people of Ireland the sole and sovereign owners of Ireland*, but leave ourselves free to adapt our methods to suit the development of the times. The Socialist Party of Ireland may, as the occasion seems to warrant, either enter the political battlefield with candidates of our own or else assist in furthering every honest attempt on the part of Organised Labour to obtain representation through independent working-

class candidates pledged to a progressive policy of social reform. *We know that every victory won for progress to-day is a victory for Socialism*, even when the victors most anxiously repudiate our cause.

We live in times of political change, and even of political revolution. More and more civic and national responsibility is destined to be thrust upon, or won by, the people of Ireland. Old political organisations will die out and new ones must arise to take their place ; old party rallying cries and watchwords are destined to become obsolete and meaningless, and the fires of old feuds and hatreds will pale and expire before the newer conceptions born of a consciousness of our common destiny. In this great awakening of Erin, Labour, if guided by the lamp of Socialist teaching, may set its feet firmly and triumphantly upon the path that leads to its full emancipation. But if Labour does not rise to the occasion, and allows itself to be swallowed up in and identified with new political alignments, scattering and dissipating its forces instead of concentrating them upon Socialist lines, then indeed will our last state be worse than our first.

We therefore appeal to all workers, and to all honest friends of progress in any rank of life, to throw in their lot with the Socialist Party of Ireland, and assist it in giving force, clearness and effectiveness to the gathering Working Class Movement of this country. And on its part that Party, conscious of its high mission, pledges itself to pursue, unfalteringly and undeviatingly, its great object—common ownership of the means of producing and distributing all wealth. In other words, common ownership of our common country, the material basis of the higher intellectual and moral development of the future.

★ 1910 or early 1911

## QUEEN VICTORIA'S DIAMOND JUBILEE, 1897

“The great appear great to us, only because we are on our knees : LET US RISE.”

Fellow Workers,

The loyal subjects of Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, etc., celebrate this year the longest reign on record. Already the air is laden with rumours of preparations for a wholesale manufacture of sham “popular rejoicings” at this glorious (?) commemoration.

Home Rule orators and Nationalist Lord Mayors, Whig politicians and Parnellite pressmen, have ere now lent their prestige and influence to the attempt to arouse public interest in the sickening details of this Feast of Flunkeyism. It is time then that some organised party in Ireland—other than those in whose mouths Patriotism means Compromise, and Freedom, High Dividends—should speak out bravely and honestly the sentiments awakened in the breast of every lover of freedom by this ghastly farce now being played out before our eyes. Hence the Irish Socialist Republican Party—which, from its inception, has never hesitated to proclaim its unswerving hostility to the British Crown, and to the political and social order of which in these islands that Crown is but the symbol—takes this opportunity of hurling at the heads of all the courtly mummers who grovel at the shrine of royalty the contempt and hatred of the Irish Revolutionary Democracy. We, at least, are not loyal men ; we confess to having more respect and honour for the raggedest child of the poorest labourer in Ireland to-day than for any, even the most virtuous, descendant of the long array of murderers, adulterers and madmen who have sat upon the throne of England.

During this glorious reign Ireland has seen 1,225,000 of her children die of famine, starved to death whilst the produce of her soil and their labour was eaten up by a vulture aristocracy, enforcing their rents by the bayonets of a hired assassin army in the pay of the "best of the English Queens"; the eviction of 3,668,000, a multitude greater than the entire population of Switzerland; and the reluctant emigration of 4,186,000 of our kindred, a greater host than the entire people of Greece. At the present moment 78 per cent. of our wage-earners receive less than £1 per week, our streets are thronged by starving crowds of the unemployed, cattle graze on our tenantless farms and around the ruins of our battered homesteads, our ports are crowded with departing emigrants, and our poorhouses are full of paupers. Such are the constituent elements out of which we are bade to construct a National Festival of rejoicing!

Working-class of Ireland: We appeal to you not to allow your opinions to be misrepresented on this occasion. Join your voice with ours in protesting against the base assumption that we owe to this Empire any other debt than that of hatred of all its plundering institutions. Let this year be indeed a memorable one as marking the date when the Irish workers at last flung off that slavish dependence on the lead of "the gentry," which has paralysed the arm of every soldier of freedom in the past.

The Irish landlords, now as ever the enemy's garrison, instinctively support every institution which, like monarchy, degrades the manhood of the people and weakens the moral fibre of the oppressed; the middle-class, absorbed in the pursuit of gold, have pawned their souls for the prostitute glories of commercialism and remain openly or secretly hostile to every movement which would imperil the sanctity of their dividends. The working class alone have nothing to hope for save in a revolutionary reconstruction of society; they, and they alone, are capable of that revolutionary initiative which, with all the political and economic development of the time



to aid it, can carry us forward into the promised land of perfect Freedom, the reward of the agelong travail of the people.

To you, workers of Ireland, we address ourselves. AGITATE in the workshop, in the field, in the factory, until you arouse your brothers to hatred of the slavery of which we are all the victims. EDUCATE, that the people may no longer be deluded by illusory hopes of prosperity under any system of society of which monarchs or noblemen, capitalists or landlords form an integral part. ORGANISE, that a solid, compact and intelligent force, conscious of your historic mission as a class, you may seize the reins of political power whenever possible and, by intelligent application of the working-class ballot, clear the field of action for the revolutionary forces of the future. Let the "canting, fed classes" bow the knee as they may, be you true to your own manhood, and to the cause of freedom, whose hope is in you, and, pressing unweariedly onward in pursuit of the high destiny to which the Socialist Republic invites you, let the words which the poet puts into the mouth of Mazeppa console you amid the orgies of the tyrants of to-day :—

" But time at last makes all things even,  
And if we do but watch the hour,  
There never yet was human power  
That could evade, if unforgiven,  
The patient *hate* and vigil long,  
Of those who treasure up a wrong."

## CORONATION OF KING EDWARD VII, 1902

Fellow-Workers,

Unless unforeseen accidents intervene to prevent this consummation, His Majesty, Edward VII, King and Emperor, will be crowned on June 26th. Were we able to follow our own inclinations in the matter we would be inclined to treat it with contempt as being of but little importance to the cause for which we stand, or to the workers with whose interests we are concerned. To us, as Socialists, it is but of little moment who may for the time being wear the trappings of royalty ; that we are compelled to acquiesce in his rule by the bayonets of his hireling soldiery and police is for us sufficient ; and to us, as workers, the personality of the head of the Capitalist system in these islands is of small concern when we realise that our exploitation by the master class would proceed apace even if King Edward VII were a Christian gentleman instead of a—

But although we would rather treat the matter thus philosophically, we find that the machinations of those in power do not leave us that possibility ; with them, and because of them, the festivities attending the Coronation have taken on the aspect not merely of a huge parade of pomp and magnificence—cloaking the festering sores of that slave society on which it is built—but have also become an elaborately contrived and astutely worked piece of Royalist and Capitalist propaganda, designed to captivate the imagination of the unthinking multitude, and thus lead them to look askance upon every movement which would set up as an ideal to work for something less gorgeously spectacular, even if more solidly real. The evil effects of private ownership of industries is thus illustrated once more in a manner that ought to appeal to those patriots in our

midst who still dread the innovating effects of Socialism on the National spirit of the Irish people.

Because of this private ownership and control of our newspapers, of our shops, of our manufactures, we find our Home Rule press devoting columns to descriptions of all the preparations for the Coronation, nauseating the thinking portion of its readers, but insidiously sapping the manhood of the weak and vulgar, and preparing their minds for the worship of the foul gods of Imperialism. We find our shops stocked with every kind of article, from the toy of the babe in arms to the dress patterns of our womankind dedicated by name to the Coronation ; and we find our manufacturers able by their economic power over the bread and butter of their employees, to enforce observance of this saturnalia of tyranny, even upon those workers whose whole beings are hot with revolt against it. Hence we are compelled to speak, lest by those who have trusted us by their adherence, or by those who have honoured us by their hatred for our unflinching championship of the workers' cause, our silence should be construed either into an approval or even into weakness in front of this demonstration of the power of the enemy, or the imbecility of its slaves.

We are Socialist Republicans ; we work for the realisation of that time when kings and emperors will be no more, when they will be remembered by mankind as the strong man awakened remembers the hideous nightmare which oppressed him as he slept. As Socialist Republicans we desire the application to society in all its relations, industrial and political, of the freest republican principles. We unceasingly devote our energies to awakening in the minds of the workers consciousness of the sufficiency of their own manhood and of the dignity of their class ; and we hope and believe in the rapid approach of that time when those ideas and that consciousness will have so far leavened the minds of the workers as to justify us in calling upon them to rally up for that final struggle, the issue of which

will assuredly usher in the era of free and enfranchised labour, instead of the barbaric splendour of military and financial castes. Meanwhile, animated by such hopes, inspired by such principles, looking forward impatiently to that time of glorious struggle, when the eyes of the world are turned upon that City of London, when Capital and its cringing slaves are united in adoration of the monarch who has been successful in uniting in his person, all the baser attributes of the mediæval monarch and the modern stockjobbing capitalist ; we also in imagination hasten thither in order to offer to King Edward, in the name of ourselves and our class, the only homage we owe him—OUR HATRED.

We are neither awed by the magnificence of the robbers, daunted by the bayonets of their hired assassins, nor dismayed by the plaudits of the multitude. The magnificence of the robbers but serves to fire our hearts with a greater hatred when we think of the squalid surroundings and miserable homes of our class. The glitter of the sunlight on the bayonets of its hired assassins reveals to the vision of the humanist the moral hideousness of a society propped by such means, and the plaudits of the multitude are but useful to him who desires to sound the depths to which such a system can degrade a people.

Let those who are pleased, and those who are dismayed, by the pressure of gaping, cheering crowds of witless ones, remember the pregnant words of Cromwell in the same city on a similar occasion, "My Lord Protector," said one of his attendants, as Cromwell rode through London, "how the people crowd to see you." "Yes," replied Cromwell, "but how many thousands more would crowd to see me hanged !"

## VISIT OF KING GEORGE V, 1911

Fellow-Workers,

As you are aware from reading the daily and weekly newspapers, we are about to be blessed with a visit from King George V.

Knowing from previous experience of Royal Visits, as well as from the Coronation orgies of the past few weeks, that the occasion will be utilised to make propaganda on behalf of royalty and aristocracy against the oncoming forces of democracy and National freedom, we desire to place before you some few reasons why you should unanimously refuse to countenance this visit, or to recognise it by your presence at its attendant processions or demonstrations. We appeal to you as workers, speaking to workers, whether your work be that of the brain or of the hand—manual or mental toil—it is of you and your children we are thinking ; it is your cause we wish to safeguard and foster.

The future of the working class requires that all political and social positions should be open to all men and women ; that all privileges of birth or wealth be abolished, and that every man or woman born into this land should have an equal opportunity to attain to the proudest position in the land. The Socialist demands that the only birthright necessary to qualify for public office should be the birthright of our common humanity.

Believing as we do that there is nothing on earth more sacred than humanity, we deny all allegiance to this institution of royalty, and hence we can only regard the visit of the King as adding fresh fuel to the fire of hatred with which we regard the plundering institutions of which he is the representative. Let the capitalist and landlord class flock to exalt him ; he is

theirs ; in him they see embodied the idea of caste and class ; they glorify him and exalt his importance that they might familiarise the public mind with the conception of political inequality, knowing well that a people mentally poisoned by the adulation of royalty can never attain to that spirit of self-reliant democracy necessary for the attainment of social freedom. The mind accustomed to political kings can easily be reconciled to social kings—capitalist kings of the workshop, the mill, the railway, the ships and the docks. Thus coronation and king's visits are by our astute never-sleeping masters made into huge Imperialist propagandist campaigns in favour of political and social schemes against democracy. But if our masters and rulers are sleepless in their schemes against us, so we, rebels against their rule, must never sleep in our appeal to our fellows to maintain as publicly our belief in the dignity of our class—in the ultimate sovereignty of those who labour.

What is monarchy ? From whence does it derive its sanction ? What has been its gift to humanity ? Monarchy is a survival of the tyranny imposed by the hand of greed and treachery upon the human race in the darkest and most ignorant days of our history. It derives its only sanction from the sword of the marauder, and the helplessness of the producer, and its gifts to humanity are unknown, save as they can be measured in the pernicious examples of triumphant and shameless iniquities.

Every class in society save royalty, and especially British royalty, has through some of its members contributed something to the elevation of the race. But neither in science, nor in art, nor in literature, nor in exploration, nor in mechanical invention, nor in humanising of laws, nor in any sphere of human activity has a representative of British royalty helped forward the moral, intellectual or material improvement of mankind. But that royal family has opposed every forward move, fought every reform, persecuted every patriot, and intrigued against every good cause. Slandering every friend of

the people, it has befriended every oppressor. Eulogised to-day by misguided clerics, it has been notorious in history for the revolting nature of its crimes. Murder, treachery, adultery, incest, theft, perjury—every crime known to man has been committed by some one or other of the race of monarchs from whom King George is proud to trace his descent.

“ His blood  
Has crept through scoundrels since the flood.”

We will not blame him for the crimes of his ancestors if he relinquishes the royal rights of his ancestors ; but as long as he claims their rights, by virtue of descent, then, by virtue of descent, he must shoulder the responsibility for their crimes.

Fellow-workers, stand by the dignity of your class. All these parading royalties, all this insolent aristocracy, all these grovelling, dirt-eating capitalist traitors, all these are but signs of disease in any social state—diseases which a royal visit brings to a head and spews in all its nastiness before our horrified eyes. But as the recognition of the disease is the first stage towards its cure, so that we may rid our social state of its political and social diseases, we must recognise the elements of corruption. Hence, in bringing them all together and exposing their unity, even a royal visit may help us to understand and understanding, help us to know how to destroy the royal, aristocratic and capitalistic classes who live upon our labour. Their workshops, their lands, their mills, their factories, their ships, their railways must be voted into our hands who alone use them, public ownership must take the place of capitalist ownership, social democracy replace political and social inequality, the sovereignty of labour must supersede and destroy the sovereignty of birth and the monarchy of capitalism.

Ours be the task to enlighten the ignorant among our class, to dissipate and destroy the political and social superstitions of

the enslaved masses and to hasten the coming day when, in the words of Joseph Brenan, the fearless patriot of '48, all the world will maintain—

“The Right Divine of Labour  
To be first of earthly things ;  
That the Thinker and the Worker  
Are Manhood's only Kings.”



## INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY OF IRELAND

### IRELAND UPON THE DISSECTING TABLE

Fellow-Workers,

As the only political organisation in the North of Ireland which, seeking first the well-being and freedom of the working class, has yet at all times resolutely stood for the attainment of Irish Nationhood, we desire to appeal to you and the public generally to protest with all possible power and without loss of time against the proposal to allow the unity of Ireland to be placed at the mercy of the voters in a small part of Ireland. The Exclusion Proposals put forward by the Liberal Government and accepted by the Home Rule Party, mean that a vote is to be taken of the electors in the Ulster counties and in the two boroughs of Belfast and Derry on the question of whether these places will continue to be reckoned as part of Ireland, and therefore as subject to the Home Rule Bill. If the majority in any one of these places vote against Home Rule then that county or borough will be cut off politically from Ireland and the Home Rule Bill will not apply to it. This, in simple language, means that a local majority, in Belfast or Derry, for instance, are to be given the power to wreak their hatred upon Ireland by dismembering her, by cutting Ireland to pieces as a corpse would be cut upon the dissecting table.

Cromwell, in his worst days, the Orange Order in its most atrocious moments, never planned a more dastardly outrage upon the Irish nation than this. And remember that this is planned by the political parties who for a generation have taught you to believe that they hoped for and worked for

IRELAND A NATION.

Yet in the moment when it was possible and easy to realise that ideal they consented to betray you, and to place your hopes and the unity of your nation at the mercy of the voters in the Ulster counties and boroughs, where the seeds of intolerance, bigotry and opposition to social progress have borne the most evil fruit and darkened the vision of the largest multitudes.

But we will be told that this Exclusion is to be only temporary, and Home Rule and Liberal politicians are whispering into your ears that they are resolutely opposed to any extension of the six years' limit. Do not be misled. Remember that no man can foretell the course of politics. Could any Home Ruler have foretold one year ago that the Home Rule Party would have consented even to discuss this dismemberment of the Irish Nation? He would have been driven in disgrace out of the A.O.H. or the U.I.L., if he had suggested a year ago that such a thing was possible. But to-day these organisations are loud in their approval of the proposal to put Ireland upon the dissecting table and to give into the hands of Sir Edward Carson and his dupes the knife with which to cut her up. But truth will out, and even the politicians themselves let slip the fact about the real probabilities of the future. Read the speech of Mr. John Dillon, M.P., in the House of Commons on the night of Wednesday, April 1st, as reported in the *Liberal Daily News and Leader* of the following day. He laid stress upon the fact that two General Elections will take place within the six years. He said—

“Ulster had been offered the safeguard of two elections, and it would be an event unparalleled in British history for the Unionist Party not to win one of them.”

What would happen then, if the Unionist Party won one of these elections, as Mr. Dillon says they almost certainly would? On the same night the Solicitor-General supplied the answer. He said—

“ If the other side came into power and brought forward a Bill to exclude Ulster it would have a royal and triumphal procession to the foot of the throne.”

So that here you have two leading spokesmen of the Liberal and Home Rule Parties admitting that the six years' limit is only a form of speech—that in practical politics it will have no real existence. What this proposal is really doing is establishing the right of, and giving the power to, a small minority to destroy the nation as a nation to—we again repeat it—place Ireland upon the dissecting table, and give into the hands of Sir Edward Carson and his followers the knife with which to cut her up. No amount of speeches against Exclusion which the Home Rule politicians may hereafter make should be allowed to cover or hide their complicity in this damnable crime, or to obscure the fact that it was and is their acceptance of Mr. Asquith's proposal that alone makes Exclusion possible.

Think of all the measures needed by the workers in this part of the country which will be impossible if this Exclusion is allowed. The Nationalisation of Irish Railways, so badly needed, will be an impossibility ; the Extension to Ireland of the Medical Benefits of the Insurance Act, the Provision of Meals to Children at School, the Abolition of Sweating, and the general safeguarding of the interests of Mill Workers and other forms of Labour needing Legal Protection, will all be delayed, if not absolutely lost, if any part of Ulster is cut off from Ireland as a nation. And in addition, all the old sectarian jealousies will be kept up, workers will be kept fighting with workers and progress will be impossible.

We appeal to you then to arouse yourselves to the gravity of the occasion. Make your protest in every possible way. Do not allow it to be said of you by the children of the future that your generation was the only generation in all the history of Ireland that consented to betray her, that granted to an

intolerant minority the power to destroy the unity of the country to disrupt and dismember it, and that you granted this at the very moment when Labour elsewhere in Ireland was most assertive of its rights and most desirous of a Free Irish Nation as the natural guardian of those rights.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,  
Independent Labour Party of Ireland,  
Belfast Branch.

*April, 1914.*

## WAR

### WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

You are asked to stop and consider what this war will mean to the working class of this city and country.

It already means that increased prices will be demanded for all food and household necessities. In every bite of food you eat you will be compelled to pay for the war ; and as you are already poor and have at the best of times a struggle to live, the war will mean hunger and misery to thousands—less food on their tables, less clothes on their backs or beds, less coal for their fires, less boots and shoes on their children's feet and their own.

War will mean more unemployment and less wages. Already the mills of Belfast are put on short time, which means starvation wages, ware-rooms are closing down, and all foundries and engineering works which make machinery for the Continent, if they have not closed down already, are getting ready to do so.

Thus before a shot has been fired by the British army on land, before a battle has been fought at sea, ruin and misery are entering the homes of the working people. What will be your case? Many thousands of you will die of slow starvation, or perish of cold and long-drawn-out misery before the end of the war if you suffer so much before it is begun.

Some people tell you it will be over in a fortnight. They said the same about the Boer War, but it lasted three years. And the Boer War was a mere picnic compared to what this war will be.

Remember that Lord Kitchener tells all joining now that they must be prepared to serve three years. And he knows.

You women ! Remember that it is the children you suckled at your breast, reared at your knees, whose little steps you watched and prayed over and were proud of, it is they who will be sent to fight the battles of the Empire—an Empire that despises you and them—an Empire under whose rule three million Irish people were thrown on the roadside to starve, four million driven like wild beasts out of their own country, an Empire under which in less than fifty years a million and a half of Irish men, women and children died of hunger in the midst of smiling harvests, and under which YOU have lived a lifetime of sweated misery and badly paid toil.

Women of Belfast. Will you send your husbands, fathers, sons or sweethearts to be slaughtered in defence of an Empire that stood quietly by and allowed the Orangemen to arm against you and against freedom for Ireland, but sent its soldiers to shoot down the unarmed people of Dublin when they attempted to arm in defence of Irish Nationality ?

Remember, all you workers, that this war is utterly unjustifiable and unnecessary. Belgium would never have been in the slightest danger if France had not encouraged Russia to prepare to attack Germany. And France would never have given that encouragement to Russia had she not been urged to do so by the secret diplomacy of England. There would never have been war within two hundred and fifty miles of the Belgian frontier had not the French and English governments secretly resolved to attack Germany in order to help Russia—the greatest and most brutal foe of human liberty in the world. The gallant Belgians are being sacrificed that they may pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the unscrupulous capitalist government of England and the half-savage government of Russia. Should we allow ourselves to be sacrificed also ? No ! No !! No !!!

We have no foreign enemy except the treacherous government of England—a government that even whilst it is calling

upon us to die for it, refuses to give a straight answer to our demand for Home Rule.

**VOLUNTEERS !** Has the iron of slavery so far entered your souls that you will sing the songs, carry the flags and fight the battles of the Power that even in its extremity refuses to allow your Nation to take its place amongst the Nations of the earth ?

Britain guaranteed the independence of Belgium. Yes, as she guaranteed the independence of Egypt, and then swallowed it up and slaughtered and imprisoned its patriot sons and daughters. Britain guaranteed the independence of Belgium. Yes, as she guaranteed the independence of Persia, and then encouraged her Russian ally to invade it and drown its freedom in a sea of blood.

Britain guaranteed the independence of Belgium. But who will win and guarantee the independence of Ireland ? Will the Volunteers ? Will the anti-Irish aristocrats who are rushing in to become your officers allow you to take a stand for Irish Nationality ? Remember the words of Wolfe Tone—

“ When the aristocracy come forward the people fall backward ; when the people come forward the aristocracy, fearful of being left behind, insinuate themselves into our ranks, and rise to be timid leaders, or treacherous auxiliaries.”

**WE WANT IRELAND, NOT FOR PEERS OR THE  
NOMINEES OF PEERS, BUT IRELAND FOR THE  
IRISH.**

Irish Citizen Army (Belfast Division) 1914.

## INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY OF IRELAND

### APPEAL TO THE IRISH WORKING CLASS

Fellow-workers.—In the midst of the many appeals and manifestoes now being thrust upon your notice, we hope that you will find time to read this, the appeal of the only organised body of Socialists in Ireland who have at all times held to the principle that the true path to national redemption for this country led along the road of social progress ; and that therefore they who worked for either cause could not but be of service to the other. As Socialists, we have ever taught that National Freedom could not be won by a population resigned to industrial slavery ; and as believers in National Freedom we have ever taught that the real re-conquest of Ireland necessarily implied the redemption of the Irish worker from the slavery of the capitalist system.

This being our position, we desire now that Industrial Emancipation and National Freedom are alike in danger, to set before you our views of the present war, and your and our proper attitude towards it. We speak as workers to workers, and as lovers of our common country to all those who ought to love and cherish it.

Ask yourselves this question : What foreign enemies have the workers of Ireland ; what country has ever done us any harm ? With all the people of the world we have much in common ; with none of them have we any just grounds for quarrel. All the workers of the world are like ourselves, beasts of burden to a propertied class, their lives ordered and ruled for them by the interests of that class, their countries stolen from them by the armed might of the hirelings of that class in the past, and kept from them by the superstitions of law



and tradition fostered by that class in the present. Their sufferings are as our sufferings, their hopes are our hopes—we are all brethren one of another. To take up arms in anger to kill any of the poor driven workers of another nation at the order of our rulers is as clearly an act of murder, an act worthy of Cain, as any crime of violence ever committed.

Now if we forget for a moment the vital distinction between a people and their rulers, and imagine that each of the countries outside Ireland is solid and with but one interest to conserve, that when we speak of England, we mean all England ; of Germany, all Germany ; of France, all France ; of Russia, all Russia ; if we imagine this current capitalist cant to be true, not even then can we conceive of any reason why Irish workers should fly to arms for the Empire. Has Germany ever harmed Ireland ? No ! Has England ever harmed Ireland ? Yes ! The whole history of our connection has been a history of English war upon Ireland. Are we then to take up arms and proceed to murder a nation that never harmed us, and do it at the call of a nation that destroyed our national life, murdered our civilisation, devastated our country, slew with famine untold millions of our people, hanged or imprisoned the best and bravest of our race, and even now refuses to put in operation the poor caricature of Home Rule so long promised ?

We refuse to believe it. No, fellow-workers ! The Empire is founded upon the misery of the toiling masses ; security is based upon the submission of the dispossessed working-class. Its triumph will establish its industrial and political supremacy more firmly than ever. Its humiliation, on the contrary, will allow other peoples to take their rightful place among the nations of the world, and enable the working class to pursue their path to prosperity and freedom.

Out of such humiliation would come the peaceful growth of industry in Europe, and out of the travail of such humiliation for Empire there might arise an Ireland nationally free ; an

Ireland able to develop a real civilisation based upon that broad democracy of common ownership which the Celtic civilisation of our forefathers foreshadowed.

We ask you then to let the Empire go its own way ; let those who own it fight its battles. It is not yours, you are but its slaves, and surely there is nothing in creation meaner than slaves fighting for the source and basis of their enslavement.

Conserve your energies, guard the welfare of your own homes, study and work for the redemption of your class and nation. Watch and wait—in Ireland. For

“Time at last makes all things even  
And if we do but watch the hour,  
There never yet was human power  
That could evade, if unforgiven,  
The patient hate and vigil long  
Of those who treasure up a wrong.”

1914.

*Read also:* \_\_\_\_\_

## LABOUR IN IRELAND

I. LABOUR IN IRISH HISTORY

II. THE RECONQUEST OF IRELAND

Introduction by Cathal O'Shannon

"Ireland, as distinct from her people, is nothing to me; and the man who is bubbling over with love and enthusiasm for 'Ireland,' and can yet pass unmoved through our streets and witness all the wrong and the suffering, the shame and the degradation wrought upon the people of Ireland—aye, wrought by Irishmen upon Irish men and women, without burning to end it, is, in my opinion a fraud and a liar in his heart, no matter how he loves that combination of chemical elements he is pleased to call 'Ireland.'"—*James Connolly.*

## THE WORKERS' REPUBLIC

Edited by Desmond Ryan

Introduction by William McMullen

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'Labour, Nationality and Religion.'

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Introduction by William O'Brien

"We went out to break the connection between this country and the British Empire and to establish an Irish Republic. We believed that the call we then issued to the people of Ireland, was a nobler call in a holier cause than any call issued to them. . ."

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