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OCTOBER :

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*** INTRODUCTION ***

A lot of changes are happening in the world. Many of them offer challenges to those who believe in the necessity of socialist revolution.

Within Britain, Thatcher has vowed to wipe out "socialism". Of course, her definition of socialism includes all the traditional elements of Labour's social and economic policy, but the anti-"socialist" rhetoric of the Thatcher regime is also directed against genuine socialism.

The reaction of much of the left has been very defensive. The Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) has moved even further away from Marxism under the impact of the offensive of the right: indeed, the CPGB has been part of that offensive, rounding on the militant trade unionists who favour fighting back against capitalist attacks on their rights (such as Scargill and his allies in the N.U.M.), and providing the Kinnockites in the Labour Party with the ideological ammunition for their fight against the left of their own party.

Others join in the ridiculing of "outdated" and "dogmatic" "socialist" ideas. Whatever else might be said about these moves, it is clear that their effect is to make many of those who still believe in a socialist future doubtful about their views, and to make them feel isolated in a world in which the selfish and corrupt values of capitalism hold sway.

Internationally, things seem more complicated. The sharp and obvious differences that there were a few years ago between Soviet and Chinese internal and external policies no longer exist. The changes that have occurred need to be analysed thoroughly and assessed, but there's no doubt that they have left many with a lot of questions about what socialism is and whether it is necessarily superior to capitalism.

We reject the dogmatic approach of those - mainly on the trotskyist left - who attempt to force their analysis of the real world to fit into a mould cast in the last century. But we believe in the basic Marxist view of the world, which analyses the forces in the world and the way they react with each other in terms of their material interests within specific systems of social production, remains absolutely sound.

The Revolutionary Communist League sees the need for accurately analysing changing realities, and adopting the appropriate policies to deal with them. We aim to use Marxism-Leninism to tackle the problems of working for socialism within the context of an advanced imperialist country. There are no models for us to follow, and we cannot expect others to do our thinking for us. We work to find our own independent revolutionary line, and are certain that these around the world who are also doing this have the best prospects of success.

The main article in this issue of OCTOBER concerns an important event in Ireland's revolutionary history, the 1913 Dublin Lockout. This year is the 75th anniversary of the lockout. Irish revolutionaries have achieved a lot since then, forcing Britain into a tactical retreat from parts of their country and, in the recent past, sustaining nearly twenty years of political and armed struggle against the British state. All the same, there are still lessons to be learnt from the fight of Irish workers three-quarters of a century ago, especially about the inter-relationship of the class and national struggle in states where national oppression exists.

In some sense the national element in an unfolding world revolutionary process provides the focus of this issue of OCTOBER. Marxists have the task of grasping the varied forms in which it influences, infuses and impinges upon the social forces of society.

In the contrasting cases of India and Kampuchea, the national element is present despite the different stages of the revolutionary process in these countries. In reprinting their respective documents, the Revolutionary Communist League wishes to advertise their analysis of the situation and tasks they face, rather than provide another interpretation. Already there are too many on the Left who can provide an answer for every struggle except the one where they reside.

Our political criticism of the general orientation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement contained in this issue could be repeated for other tendencies: their inability to recognize that the revolutionary agenda is not set by forces external to the revolutionary struggle; or to recognize an actual revolutionary process at work when it does not conform to their pre-conceived scheme of what revolution is.

Amongst the things that can be said with certainty is that revolution is not simply an event but more an enduring process. The review of Tetsuzo Fuwa's book is a tentative look at one aspect of Soviet experience. A task that cannot be neglected by an revolutionary given the flow of commentaries on the Soviet Union today.

We hope that this and our other articles will be useful and informative for readers. In a small way, we feel that their contents testify to the importance of the development of independent Marxist-Leninist analyses and policies around the world.

This article is in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the 1913 Dublin Lockout, a milestone in the cause of Irish national freedom and social justice. It seeks to draw out some of the relevant lessons and issues that still come to the fore in workers' struggles today.

1913

THE DUBLIN LOCK OUT

INTRODUCTION

The Dublin 'Lock Out' was one of the largest and most important struggles to take place in western Europe. It was to go on for over five months involving over 20,000 workers in Dublin and surrounding districts. It was to be a deeply political strike, one that combined revolutionary nationalism and class war in a bitter anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist fight. On one side stood the Irish capitalist class backed by British imperialism and its lackeys in Ireland and Britain and on the other a revolutionary and nationalist trade union, the working class of Dublin and their allies in Britain.

The strike, like all great social movements was to expose and crystallise the revolutionary forces that were to play a leading role in the 1916 Uprising and the Anglo-Irish war that brought nominal freedom to 26 of Ireland's 32 counties. In Britain its effects were dramatic and deep. The working class divided over the strike with a percentage proving capable of showing class solidarity to their brothers and sisters in Ireland. However, a great number would not, showing that the bite of chauvinism and racism was already deep inside the labour movement. This division in the working class, when it is faced with a struggle that breaks the bounds of 'acceptable' capital labour conflicts which are well within the tolerance of the system in the imperialist heart-lands - indeed are an integrated part of it, particularly a fight that is deeply anti-British imperialist reveals the degree to which bourgeois ideology has become part of the working classes World view. Most sharply exposed was the British 'Labour' movement and its leaders in the imperialist 'Labour' Party and the opportunist misleaders of the TUC. They, in the end, were revealed for what they were for all who had eyes to see.

The strike was an integral part of Ireland's struggle for freedom not as some would wish it a simple capital vs labour struggle. The fact that the lessons of the struggle and indeed the struggle itself is ignored on the part of the British 'left' has much to do with the degree to which bourgeois ideology has corrupted the middle-class would-be revolutionaries of Britain. To put a name on it they are sick with social-chauvinism and what is virtually anti-Irish racism.

The working class of Dublin understood their own struggle quite clearly and stood shoulder to shoulder as long as this was possible. Their struggles, their pain and sacrifices were to be partially rewarded in 1916 and in the 'Tan War', but that is a fight that continues to this day, a fight for Ireland's liberation from British rule. The Dublin strike was an important part of the fight that is the Spirit of Freedom.

THE DESTRUCTION OF IRELAND'S ECONOMY

The relationship between Britain and Ireland is that between oppressors and the oppressed. As Ireland's economy would develop in a particular area so it would be stopped by the British.

In the 17th century there grew up a highly successful trade in fat cattle to be shipped to England. Protests from English graziers had the trade stopped. So the Irish cattle breeders shipped their cattle to be fattened in England, but protests arose from English cattle farmers and so the trade was stopped. So the Irish exported slaughtered animals, but the English butchers objected, so this was halted. Finally, only salt beef and pork in barrels was allowed and this only because it was useful to the English navy. It was to become the poor and shaky mainstay of Irish cattle industry.

By the end of the 17th century, the Irish woollen trade had greatly developed, producing a very high quality woollen cloth. The trade employed 40,000 Protestant families and a large number of Catholics and was of extreme importance to the development of the Irish economy as an independent unit. The English parliament acted to defeat any competition from Irish woollen goods to the English landowners and manufacturers and they effectively smashed the Irish woollen trade. This brought them into particularly sharp conflict with the Irish Protestant landowners as well as other classes of the population.

The cumulative result of this was that Ireland became a useless place to invest in; the huge sums of wealth torn from the Irish peasantry were now used to finance the parasitic existence of an increasingly large number of absentee landlords and used to invest in the high growth, high profit industries now springing up in England. This increased the pace of the degeneration of Ireland's economy.

POST FAMINE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODERN STRUGGLE

The Irish Famine was an infamy on a virtually incomprehensible scale that decimated the Irish population. Whilst Irish peasants starved to death and massive emigration took place, Ireland exported food to England. She exported sufficient food to have easily fed the starving masses of their own nation. The failure of the potato crop resulted in a reduction of the Irish population by $\frac{1}{3}$ in ten years and in rural areas this meant a drop of 50%.

It is worth noting that the potato crop failed throughout Europe, but only in Ireland was there any famine because of the oppression of that nation by Britain. The Irish summed it up:

"God sent the blight; the English landlords sent the famine!"

This destruction of the Irish economy was followed by the mass destruction of the Irish people.

This savage cut in the population led to the following developments in agricultural production:-

<u>CROP</u>	<u>1849 (tons)</u>	<u>1914 (tons)</u>
wheat	697,646	26,916
Oats	2,061,185	1,028,645
Barley	290,690	179,824
Potatoes	718,608	583,609
Turnips	260,069	276,872
Hay	1,141,371	2,487,513

TABLE FROM T.A. JACKSON IRELAND HER OWN

Potato production had fallen by one fifth reflecting the economic squeeze on that section of the population that was dependant upon tillage and the fall in the production of wheat was continuous from 1800. Overall this lessening for the demand of goods from labour intensive farming was to push the poorest sections of the peasantry into subsistence farming or emigration. There was a reciprocal trend of replacing people and tillage farming with livestock.

<u>CROP</u>	<u>1849</u>	<u>1914</u>
Horses	525,924	619,028
Cattle	2,771,139	5,051,645
Sheep	1,777,111	3,600,581
Pigs	795,463	1,305,638
Poultry	6,328,001	26,918,749

TABLE FROM T.A. JACKSON IRELAND HER OWN

IRELAND'S ECONOMY

The decline in Irish manufacturing was absolute, but farm production did increase during this period. It increased because of England's needs. The huge leap in population associated with the Industrial Revolution; a large number of whom were Irish driven from their own land in search of work; had far surpassed the ability of English agriculture to meet the demand. Therefore almost all of Ireland's agriculture was organised around exporting to the English market. However, the vast shipping network and improved preservation techniques meant that the Irish goods sent to England were forced to compete with agricultural produce from around the World - to meet World prices. The increasingly well developed World market had meant a sharp drop in agricultural prices which were difficult for Irish producers to match.

Ireland was unable to develop a manufacturing industry of her own - even to meet the demand within her own borders and could not even protect her own agriculture. As before, investment in Ireland was a poor venture and as before the huge sums of money creamed off the nation went to generation after generation of absentee landlords to be invested in England. This helped in increased capital accumulation, so in this way Ireland financed her own oppression and subsidised her own impoverishment. The absence of investment stretched to agriculture, making it increasingly inefficient in World terms and therefore less able to compete and so further increased the poverty of the peasantry. Ireland was incapable of developing autonomous capitalist development and therefore incapable of producing an independent bourgeoisie. All bourgeois forces, even nationalist revolutionary became tied to foreign domination by this weakness. This crushing burden growing from the rape of the Irish nation, in the name of English "progress" was to lay the foundations for a rebellion begun at the beginning of the Twentieth Century and not yet completed as we approach its close - but success is within sight!

THE GAELIC REVIVAL: RESURGENCE OF IRISH NATIONALISM

British rule systematically destroyed the national culture of Ireland. Replacing it with the culture of the oppressor nation and its language - English - whenever and wherever it possibly could. The Great Famine also played a particularly destructive role in weakening the Irish language. It had hit hardest at the poorest of the poor, decimating the population of the Irish peasantry. The famine hit hardest those areas that the Irish language was strongest and in the face of the large number of deaths and massive emigration the ability of spoken Irish to survive was greatly weakened. By the last decade of the 19th century the Irish language only survived as a living tongue in western Ireland among the peasantry.

The same decade also saw an ever increasing interest in the language, folklore and Celtic stories from Irish intellectuals. This led to a serious and increasingly organised attempt to save the language from extinction and this was reflected in a cultural upsurge of Irish artists. Inevitably, such an upsurge of "Irishness" could only be anti-English - an increasingly sharp opposition to first the culture and then the presence of the oppressor nation to become a revolutionary assertion of nationhood! This cultural struggle became capitalized in the Gaelic League which had, and has had to this day, a profound effect on twentieth century Irish nationalism and gave birth to its most militant and principled child, Republicanism.

The influence of the Gaelic League was by no means limited to middle-class intellectuals although they were its most obvious "public face". Sean O'Casey recalled that while working as a labourer in Dublin he would spend a bit of time everyday trying to learn a phrase of Gaelic. Of course, the Irish peasantry did not need a re-introduction to their own culture where it remained a living force.

In addition the Gaelic League spawned the Gaelic Athletic Association (G.A.A.) dedicated to the preservation and development of Irish sports and games, to which no member of the British Crown Forces or the Royal Irish Constabulary were allowed to participate (this still holds true in the occupied 6 counties), and to Sinn Fein. The cultural, nationalist upsurge became the driving force of the revolutionary national movement incorporating the Gaelic League, the G.A.A., Sinn Fein, the Irish Republican Brotherhood and later the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen's Army. The Gaelic League became the platform whereby many stepped from cultural to political (republican) nationalism. Sean Cronin, in his study of Irish nationalism points out that "Four of the seven signatories of the 1916 Rising's "Proclamation of the Irish Republic" had been to school at the Gaelic League, as P.H. Pearse, their spokesman phrased it. In addition, many of those who took part in 1916 had been members of Constance Gore-Booth's Fianna nirsann - the Irish boy scouts.

The revival was to build an all class alliance in opposition to British Imperialism; although, the consolidation of the various forces was completed through very different routes before their eventual unity. But, whatever their specific routes, as Cronin notes, it culminated in 1915 when "the Catholic mystic Pearse would stand shoulder to shoulder with the Marxist Connolly in defence of the Irish Republic they had proclaimed in arms"

These developments took root among the Irish national minority people living in Britain during the same period. This became particularly strong in areas of large concentrations of Irish people in Liverpool, Edinburgh and Glasgow. William Butler Yates led the influential Irish Literary Society in London and Michael Collins, the future guerilla leader, along with another Irishman, Sam Maguire founded a unit of the IRA, using Post Office rifles which had been stored in the event of a possible German invasion. The Irish national minority people in Britain were to return to Ireland some of the most vital and important leaders of her struggle against

British rule. Both Connolly and Larkin were deeply affected by this movement and their effect on the future of Irish history was dramatic to say the least! The struggles within Ireland were to make demands upon the sympathy of Irish people living in Britain and when asked during the events of 1913 the call was answered. Irish nationalism was to play an extremely important role in the brutal class struggle that was about to explode in Dublin and it played an equally important role in developing sympathy for that struggle inside Britain.

LARKIN AND CONNOLLY

The backgrounds of both men was very similar; both being raised in poverty in Britain, Connolly in Edinburgh and Larkin in Liverpool. The two men were tee-totallers and had married non-catholics. Neither had much in the way of formal education but both men were committed revolutionaries.

However, each developed radically different styles of work. Connolly, 8 years older than Larkin, was cool, calm and sober - always thinking ahead and planning. A veteran of many struggles he was a theoretician and tactician. Cathal O'Shannon, commenting on Connolly's speaking style, gives an impression of the man:

"The effect of Connolly's oratory was invaluable. If it did not arouse the wild and whisky enthusiasm evoked by demagogue, it created an enthusiasm of a different kind. It compelled assent as well as respect; it carried conviction and it aroused enthusiasm of the more lasting kind, a quiet, enduring enthusiasm which forced the hearer to act on Connolly's side rather than cheer his words."

Larkin was a tempest of a man, a fierce orator, brilliant before a crowd raising passions to great heights. He had an uncanny ability to come down on the right side of a question or issue but often with totally confused reasons for being there. Contemptuous of logic and theory he was a fighter par excellence.

But the two men did clash and often quite bitterly and according to one author Connolly in his relations with Larkin, came to "detest his ebullience and unpredictability". In 1911 in a letter to William O'Brien Connolly is quite harsh in reference to Larkin.

"The man is utterly unreliable and dangerous because unreliable"

After another round of difficulty Connolly, in another letter, was sharp in his anger.

"He (Larkin) must rule, or will not work, and in the present stage of the Labour Movement, he has had us at his mercy; And he knows it, and is using his power unscrupulously. I regret to say. We can but bow our head, and try to avoid the storm."

He went on:-

"I am sick of all this playing to one man, but I am prepared to advise it for the sake of the movement."

In the summer of 1913 Connolly nearly resigned over an incident pertaining to money and to his union branch. In a letter to William O'Brien he described how Larkin tried to bully him out of the money owed to his branch and wages due to union employees. Connolly's wages due to union employees. Connolly's rage and bitterness are sharp in the letter and he finishes with:

"I would formerly have trusted to his generosity in financial matters, now I could not trust him at all."

Larkin's personality was a two edged sword before which both friend and foe alike had to look to their defences.

While these clashes were serious and under different circumstances might have been highly destructive this should not receive undue emphasis. Connolly and Larkin were unquestionably on the same side.

They had a high degree of political unity on the type of union they fought to build, the importance of the national question to the Irish revolution, the role of opportunism in the Labour movement to name but a few.

And if Larkin's egoism played a close chase with the devil on many occasions he invariably landed on both feet on the side of the angels when a fight with the bosses or their lackeys had broken out.

THE 1913 DUBLIN LOCKOUT

"Bring your own bread and butter

Bring your own tea and sugar

And join Jim Larkin's union".

Strike song, Dublin 1913.

Home Rule and Counter Revolution

The Liberal Party had maintained "Home Rule" as part of its platform since the mid 1880's. The Irish Parliamentary Party under Redmond had based its existence on an alliance with the Liberal Party in return for Home Rule - some day. When the Home Rule Bill was introduced into Parliament in April 1912, it was to cause a crisis that was not silenced until the beginning of the World War in 1914.

Sections of the Ulster capitalists, united in the Orange Order, began to organise resistance to any form of Home Rule. Catholics were driven out of their homes and jobs, while the police looked the other way, and Belfast seethed with near civil war. Not only the Catholics but any and all Protestants, capitalist and other classes, who were favourable to Home Rule, were also brutally attacked. Orange reaction took the opportunity to attack the trade unions as well. The rise of protestant sectarianism was met by Catholic sectarianism led by the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Each fed on the other. But let there be no confusion who initiated the violence - the Orange Order. However, the result was that the working class in the North was deeply divided and weakened.

September 1912 saw the establishment of the Ulster Volunteers who were prepared to use military means to fight any form of Home Rule. Their leader, Edward Carson, applied to local magistrates for the right to provide his men with arms and it was given. The Ulster Unionist Council went on to plan a Provisional Government. At the same time the Ulster Volunteers were becoming a substantial military force. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir Henry Wilson, helped to provide retired army officers to train the reactionary forces to a fairly high degree of professionalism. The Liberal Government did nothing even as a section of the state machine was brought to near open rebellion and an army was built, openly prepared to attack parliamentary rule. The Home Rule Bill passed a third reading in the Commons in January 1913 but was immediately rejected by the House of Lords. For the Bill to then become Law it had to be reintroduced in two separate sessions of Parliament which meant a substantial delay in its implementation.

The rise of this armed reactionary force and the seeming impotence of the Liberal Government, was to have a powerful effect on the alignment of political forces within Ireland. The Ulster Volunteers, openly armed and drilling, were a source of great danger to both nationalist and working class development. At the same time as the armed reaction was reaching great strength, the bourgeoisie decided to move against the revolutionary trade unionism of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union.

The following description of William Martin Murphy, one of the leading protagonists in the coming Lockout, was made by his hired apologist

Arnold Wright. It gives an effective outline of the position of the Redmonite 'nationalist' bourgeoisie:

"Mr. Murphy is a Nationalist of a type once more common than it is today. With O'Connell and Isaac Butt and other men of a by-gone generation, he sees no incompatibility between a strongly held conviction of Ireland's right to mould her own destinies and a complete loyalty to the King. He is of the great liberator's opinion that 'the golden link of the Crown' is a valuable and necessary adjunct of a Home Rule system."

Such a nationalist would rapidly discover that he had much more in common with a Carson than with serious revolutionary nationalism.

So the smashing of revolutionary trade unionism was of interest to all sections of the bourgeoisie. The threat of violence from Ulster put immense pressure on the Redmonites to compromise their 'nationalism', to meet Carson halfway and partition was becoming openly discussed.

If the 'nationalist' bourgeoisie were to move to a position which would be far below what was satisfactory to large sections of nationalist opinion, who would take up the leading positions they had forsaken? If the red and green marched together, what would happen to the bourgeoisie? This fear was prominent in their minds and explains the deeply reactionary role played by the Ancient Order of Hibernians throughout the Lockout.

DUBLIN CONDITIONS

The rise of Imperialism had destroyed the old 'balance' that the working classes of Europe had experienced. Prices - - once fluctuating with the market - were now under general pressure to rise with the development of monopoly. This was in contrast to the previous period when prices were subject to a general tendency to fall with the increase in productivity. This meant that by 1910 the general standard of living for the working class was worse than it had been in the 1890's. Between 1905 and 1912 the cost of living in Dublin increased by 12%. The Board of Trade figures for November 1913 reveal that Bricklayers, Carpenters and Masons got 8½p/hr. in Dublin to 9 to 10p in Birmingham and Manchester and more in London. Yet the cost of living index was the same in all these cities. The working people of Dublin were subject not only to this increase in prices but unlike most of western Europe in a context where the city and indeed the vast majority of the country had already been debilitated by centuries of British rule. The conditions in Dublin were among the worst, if not the worst, in Europe. In fact Connolly's analysis reveals them to be what today we would describe as 'Third World' conditions:

"According to the latest returns, the death rate in Dublin was 27.6 per 1000. This was the highest of any city in Europe, as given the Registrar General's list, the next highest being that of Moscow - 26.3 per 1000. In Calcutta, in the presence of plague and cholera, the rate was 27 per 1000."

The figures were worst in the Winter months when the poor were unable to withstand the extreme of the climate.

The housing was not only regularly exposed as unfit for human habitation but was as regularly exposed as being beyond repair. Even Arnold Wright - describing the slum dwellers, was forced to comment:

"One point upon which witness after witness insisted was the physical deterioration of men who find their way into these terrible hovels."

Nearly one third of Dublin's 300,000 people lived in these abject conditions - mostly in one room for a whole family. 1913 statistics reveal that of 25,800 families living in tenements, 20,000 families lived in one room. Padraig Pearse, writing in the republican newspaper 'Irish Freedom', commented that "the tenement houses in Dublin are so rotten that now and then they collapse, and if the inhabitants collect in the streets to discuss matters the police baton them." Those who dared to object met the full force of the repressive state - the Dublin police, Royal Irish Constabulary and the British Army. This immense poverty, deepened by the fall in real wages and an increase in unemployment, laid the ground for one of the most important labour struggles of twentieth century Europe - the Dublin Lockout.

FORMATION OF THE IRISH TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS UNION

The birth of the union came in a struggle against British trade union opportunism, more specifically against James Sexton who was head of the National Union of Dock Labourers. James Larkin's revolutionary politics and his remarkable success in organising non-union labour made him a serious threat to bourgeois trade unionism of the British unions.

Larkin's association with Sexton went back some years before the creation of the union and Larkin had acted as Sexton's election agent in the 1906 general election in Toxteth in Liverpool. The size of the national minority community of Irish people in Liverpool made it a hotbed of activity - often dangerous and Sexton, later Larkin's arch enemy, was forced to compliment him in his autobiography:

"Larkin displayed an energy that was almost superhuman

The division was one of the storm centres of religious strife and a stronghold of the Orange Order. My being a Roman Catholic made the situation still more lively. But nothing could frighten Jim. He plunged recklessly into the fray where the fighting was most furious, organised gigantic processions, faced mobs saturated with religious bigotry who were howling for our blood and competed with our opponents in the risky game of impersonation then played at almost every election in Liverpool."

Larkin began work as a trade union official in Ireland in early 1907 working for the National Union of Dock Labourers (N.U.D.L.). It would appear that by 1907 Sexton was already opposed to him and this appointment. Yet in 1907 he scored a series of successes for the union that began to break the sectarian divide, uniting both the 'Falls and the Shankill' in the struggle. The strikers clashed with thousands of troops entering Belfast rioting and several deaths. Sexton and others, terrified that revolution might break out, sold the workers out. They stopped the strike, ignoring Larkin, by refusing further strike funds, thus forcing the men back to work under bad terms. After the sellout, Larkin continued to organise for the union on the east coast of Ireland until November 1908 when the Dublin carters, members of the NUDEL, struck and asked for Larkin's help. The British executive council, under Sexton, refused to support the men and when Larkin went ahead organising and addressing meetings, he was suspended for 'breach of union discipline'. Sexton shortly convinced the union executive to sack him.

The men in Dublin were fed up with the compromising and traitorous policies of the NUDEL and more importantly wanted a union free from British control - an Irish union and one that was prepared to fight!

The union was formed in 1909 on January 4 in a small room in Dublin furnished by "a table, a couple of chairs, two empty bottles." One of the co-founders was William O'Brien, who had been associated with James Connolly since 1896 with the formation of the Irish Socialist Republican Party.

The influence of syndicalism was at a high point in the advanced capitalist economies during this period. In the USA the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), Daniel De Leon and James Connolly had a powerful effect. In England Tom Mann was the leading element and in Ireland, Larkin and Connolly promoted revolutionary syndicalism. Most importantly it was emphasised at the very beginning that the union's revolutionary class politics were directly linked to the struggle for Irish liberation.

As syndicalists the leadership of the union took great pains to make the union the centre of workers' lives both at work and after. Delia Larkin, Larkin's sister, helped to form the Irish Women Workers' Union in the summer of 1911. By the spring of 1912, the IWWU applied to the Irish TUC for affiliation paying fees on 1,000 members. By this time the Transport Union had about 8,000 members growing to 14,000 in 1913. Delia Larkin organised an Irish Workers choir, rehearsals for Juvenile and Adult Dancers, an Irish Language class and a Dramatic Company. At Liberty Hall, Sunday evenings, there were lectures, concerts which became standard affairs. Larkin organised a pipe-band and every Christmas there was a party for the workers' children with Santa Claus giving presents to all and ice-cream provided. Often 5,000 children were entertained and fed at these parties.

The establishment of Croyden Park was perhaps the greatest achievement of Larkin's programme. Three acres and a house were rented to be used as a recreational centre for workers. It was opened on August 3, 1913, by a 'Grand Temperance Fete and Children's Carnival' with dancing, singing - a band that played throughout the day - and games for the children. A cow and a calf were brought in so the slum-dwellers could see some aspects of other things besides urban life and in this vein Larkin encouraged people to grow vegetables and flowers. Even organised sport was established to promote health and well being among the workers.

This gave new hope to workers drowning in the Dublin slums and raised Larkin to a high level in the workers' eyes. For the union provided much more than an organisation devoted to the economic struggle - it had become an important part of their lives.

In Dublin there was no labour aristocracy of the scale there was in Britain and so it was much harder for the bourgeoisie to deflect and weaken class struggles. The rupture from the opportunist British trade unions was complemented by the Irish Socialist Republican Party - free from British influences and demanding an independent Irish state headed by a socialist government. The increasing strength of a revolutionary trade union, linking as it did, the class and national struggles was to have a profound effect in the years to come.

THE BUILD UP TO THE LOCKOUT

The drop in real wages increased the level of economic struggle within Europe. In both Britain and Ireland there was a big increase in the level of working class activity. Throughout 1910, 1911 and 1912 there had been sharp struggles involving large numbers of workers. These expanded beyond the normal trade union battles, and began to develop aspects of social conflict. Many of these fights engendered or sustained previously formed unofficial rank and file movements within the trade unions. These struggles by the working class became inextricably linked to democratic struggles deepening both of them. The most important of these democratic struggles was of course, the struggle for women's suffrage. The defence and expansion of democratic rights was an extremely important aspect in the development of the class struggle both in Britain and in Ireland.

Connolly and Larkin were developing the 'one big union', the Irish Transport Union, with increasing success. The year 1913 started off with sharpening class struggle with no less than 30 strikes taking place between January and the middle of August, and these were increasingly accompanied by violence. Considering the small size of the Irish proletariat in this predominately agricultural nation, this was a high level of action. Serious strikes took place in Galway and Sligo. The workers in Sligo had an open battle with the police and swept the streets clear of them although one striker was killed. The main strength of the union was in Dublin and it was there the bosses had to break it if they were to destroy 'Larkinism'.

Immediately preceding the lockout, the union had two extremely important victories. After a three month struggle against the City of Dublin Steampacket Company, the union broke the resistance of the shipowners and on May 26, 1913, the most important companies signed an agreement with the union making it the 'master' of the port. An intensive campaign began in June to organise the agricultural labourers in the area surrounding Dublin. By August 17 the County of Dublin farm labourers had won a tremendous victory against the farmers. This put the union at the height of its powers with its membership including almost all the unskilled labourers in Dublin. Only two major works were left unorganised - Guinness and the Dublin United Tramway Company. Guinness maintained a union-free shop by very paternalistic methods providing housing and medical aid which made it extremely difficult to organise. On the Trams however, there was plenty of discontent:

"I entered a tram and rode all day
On a regal couch and a right of way
Which reached its arms all over the land
In a system too large to understand.
'A splendid property this!' I cried
And a man with a plate on his hat replied:
'It's Murphy's!'

"I went to heaven. The Jasper walls
towered high and wide, and the golden halls
Shone bright beyond. But a strange new mark
was over the gate, viz 'Private Park'
'What is the meaning of this?' I cried
And a saint with livary on replied:
'It's Murphy's'

"I went to the only place left. 'I'll take
A chance in the boat on the brimstone lake,
Or perhaps I may be allowed to sit
On the griddled floor of the bottomless pit."
But the jeering tout with horns on his face
Cried as he forked me out of the place,
'It's Murphy's!'

Lockout verse.

William Martin Murphy, 'boss of Dublin; and leader of the Employers' Federation owned the tram system. In addition he owned the largest daily newspaper in Dublin, the largest department store, the most prominent hotel, railway interests in Ireland and West Africa and he retained large interests in electric tramway systems in many British cities.

An earlier attempt had been made in 1911, to organise the trams but had failed. In order to keep himself union free, Murphy maintained a barbaric method of employment between casual and "permanent" workers. Beginners or casuals were called "sparemen" and they might have to wait 6 years for a permanent position. "Sparemen" had to turn up for work every day, Sundays and holidays included, for the first year and stay from 7 to 12 to see if they could replace a sick or absentee worker. "Permanent" men lived with the constant fear of being replaced by one of the casuals of the list below him. If a permanent man missed a day or was even late he could be replaced by the worker at the top of the casual list, a list that was constantly replenished and increased with new workers from the countryside.

In the end "sparemen" often only worked 2 or 3 days a week and the pay was usually not much more than 9 shillings. From this heavy deductions were taken:

- 2 shillings per week for 20 weeks as a security for a uniform;
- 6 pence a week for a rule book;
- 6 pence a week for sickness benefit;
- 3 pence a head levy in case of death; and
- 1 shilling annually for renewal.

Before this; In order to start work a new employee had to give a guarantee of £20 with a character reference to cover the previous 5 years. For the first 6 weeks men were paid nothing at all while learning the work.

Conditions were just as bad whilst working. Conductors and drivers only got one day off in 10 and the working day varied from 9 to 17 hours. A man could be reported for leaning or sitting while running a car for all situations the inspector's word was final and if the customer complained about an employee the worker faced instant dismissal. A conductor could loose a whole days' pay for:

- Quitting to collect a penny fare;
- Allowing passengers to exceed the distance paid for;
- Punching a ticket on the wrong space or on the line;
- Talking to passengers; or
- If he was 2 pence short on a day's cash.

A driver could loose a day's pay if he arrived at Nelson's Pillar one minute ahead of his time by the inspector's watch. Not a set of working practices rather a regime of terror.

In the Parcel Department, boys worked from 9 am to 8 pm and up to 11 pm. Wages, at the flat rate, were 2 shillings a week or 3 shillings as basic and $\frac{1}{2}$ penny a parcel or $\frac{1}{4}$ penny if going beyond a 3 mile radius of the depot. Boys were responsible for the parcel.

This terrorism made it extremely difficult to get workers into the union as any worker would be instantly dismissed if he was even suspected of being a member of the union. The man who replaced him would be sharply aware that the very reason he had the job was because he was not a union member.

There is evidence that Murphy had been preparing himself for some months but the actual battle commenced on Friday August 15. Murphy took the initiative and called in the dispatch workers of the newspaper the 'Independent' demanding that they should break their connection with Larkin's union. They refused and were paid off the next week. Then workers from the distributing agents left work because they refused to handle the 'tainted' 'Independent'. The Directors of the Tramways stopped the parcel deliveries and paid the men off as they too refused to handle the papers. Murphy then circulated a document to each worker which said:

"Should a strike of any of the employees of the Company be called for by Mr. James Larkin or the Irish Transport Workers Union, I promise to remain at my post and to be loyal to the Company."

Contained in the same document was the following:

"In case any trouble arises, the cars will not run after dark and the Company are assured of the most ample protection for their men by the forces of the Crown".

workers were to put their pledge to Murphy with the document. Murphy and the forces of the state were well prepared and obviously in collusion well before trouble arose. The police had made plans and the military who were held in reserve.

Larkin had been empowered by a late night meeting of the tramway men to call a strike. On Tuesday morning, August 26, about twenty minutes to ten. 700 men walked off leaving the trams in the middle of the streets. Murphy made a trip to Dublin Castle, centre of the government, on the same day and preparations were made to bring in extra police from County Cork at Dun Laoghaire. On Wednesday the scab-run trams were attacked, stoned and windows were broken. It was announced that the skeleton service on the trams would not continue after dark. That evening, Larkin, speaking to a huge meeting from Liberty Hall, announced a meeting to be held for striking workers in O'Connell Street on August 31. Larkin drew a parallel with Carson arming his men in the north, which was being studiously ignored by the government, and Larkin suggested a workers' defence force.

"If it is right and legal for Carson to arm in the north, why should it not be right and legal for the men of Dublin to arm and protect themselves?"

Larkin stated that the O'Connell Street meeting would be held "come what may". The police provoked trouble and the meeting was drawing to a close and resulted in calls being made to ban the meeting called for the 31st.

The next day Larkin, along with four other speakers, was arrested. He was charged with sedition, libel and conspiracy and released on £200 bail. That night he was joined by Connolly, who had just returned from organising in Belfast, at a huge meeting outside the union office, Liberty Hall. There Larkin met a tumultuous welcome from an estimated 10,000 people and he proceeded to burn the Proclamation banning the O'Connell Street meeting to the cheers of the crowd. He stated he would address the meeting 'dead or alive'. Connolly spoke immediately after suggesting that an English

King had no right to stop Irish people meeting where they pleased. Again the meeting was broken up by the police - Larkin avoided arrest but both Connolly and James Partridge were arrested the next day.

Both appeared in court the same day and the contemporary report of Connolly's statement is not only instructive as to what kind of man he was but also to the type of movement being built.

"A point in the indictment was that he did not recognise the proclamation. He did not because he did not recognise the English Government in this country. As to going to O'Connell Street, the only way progress could be made was by guaranteeing the rights of people to voice their grievances. Whatever militated against that would militate against good order.... They did not want to create mischief in the streets but they wanted the labouring class to be allowed to meet in the streets as Carson did in Belfast and as Redmond did in Dublin.... As to giving bail, he refused to adopt any course that would prevent him from standing up for the rights of the working class."

He was sentenced to three months imprisonment and sent to Mountjoy gaol. Outside anger mounted when it was discovered that the magistrate that sentenced him just happened to be a large shareholder in the Tramway Company. Connolly went on hunger strike which the authorities tried to keep hushed up but protest mounted outside and Connolly was released after one week's imprisonment. Larkin had escaped the immediate attentions of the police by hiding at the house of that great nationalist and revolutionary Countess Markievicz.

With Larkin in hiding and Connolly under arrest, the police made an attempt to smash the strike by intimidation and overt terror and violence. Throughout that Saturday pitched battles raged between police and workers. The workers partially controlled the dock area which was considered union territory. The police, well supplied with drink, countered by attacking Liberty Hall, the union headquarters. They beat a worker, James Nolan, senseless to the ground and he died the next day and another worker, James Byrne, also died as a result of the police beatings. These could only be described as terrorist attacks; an open attempt to weaken the strike by fear. Other workers were dragged from their beds and charged after being badly beaten. The open viciousness of the police and the use of the courts as an anti-strike weapon proved counter productive. The sight of ragged or half-clothed men covered in bandages and bruises receiving long sentences shocked many people and rallied them to the workers' cause. This included not only other workers but people from the middle class as well - professors, lawyers and writers.

Meanwhile in Britain, left newspapers like the 'Daily Herald' demanded that Carson too should be arrested and protests were sent to the authorities.

William O'Brien, temporarily in charge of the union, was worried by the increasing violence and so he transferred the O'Connell Street meeting to the union's recreation grounds, Croyden Park. Larkin sent a speedy retraction of O'Brien's statement saying he would be at O'Connell Street. However, the resulting confusion meant that hundreds of union members did go to Croyden Park.

Countess Markievicz, her husband and Helen Molony, an actress in the Abbey Theatre, made up Larkin to look like an elderly man. Dressed in the Count's best frock coat and accompanied by his 'niece'

Miss Nellie Dufford, Larkin made his way by carriage to the Imperial Hotel. It is poetic justice that the hotel was owned by one William Martin Murphy and that the police cleared a way for Larkin's carriage through the expectant gathered crowds. He bent double, supported by the arm of his 'niece', and tottered through the doorway. Once inside he straightened, lit a cigar and strode to a balcony overlooking O'Connell Street. He "roared defiance at the police mustered below. A great answering, exultant roar rolled the length of O'Connell Street." He had kept his word and had spoken!

Four policemen leapt on him and he was promptly arrested. As he was taken away Countess Markievicz, standing in her carriage, was successfully organising 'three cheers' for Larkin when the humiliated police caused a scuffle to break out. The police ran berserk, wildly batoning anyone within reach - charging into the crowd, who being attacked from all sides found it difficult to break away. At one point over 20 people lay bleeding and unconscious on the ground. One section of the crowd turned and ran up Princess Street only to run into the police reserves who immediately attacked them. The police's thirst for revenge was obvious as they attacked anyone - men, women and children. Over 500 had to be treated in hospital afterwards.

As many of the workers had gone to Croyden Park a large percentage of those assaulted were simply the curious or passers-by. In addition, many were well-to-do people who had just left church. The police had been able to get away with their savage tactics in the working class slum areas but this was too open and too many of those hurt were 'respectable citizens'. Shock spread throughout the city. Immediate calls for a public enquiry were made.

All through Saturday night and that Sunday the fighting continued. The police attacked the tenements with equal brutality but were driven back as workers took to the balconies and counter-attacked hurling stones and any other handy objects onto the invading police. Unable to overcome those on the balconies, the police retreated, and regrouped. They returned at 1 or 2 a.m. bursting into rooms where the sleeping inhabitants were assaulted. Women and children, the sick and the elderly, all were attacked. A baby of a few months old received a black eye. The police continued by smashing up their poor homes, destroying what few bits of furniture they might have possessed. As R.M. Fox put it:

"This was a new form of reprisal and amounted to a police declaration of war against the tenants, whether they were involved in the industrial strife or not."

The workers fought bravely and after effectively attacking scab troops with great ferocity and returned to attack the Murphy-owned police. At one point a battalion of the West Kent Regiment was called out to aid the police. The viciousness of the police attack caused a great cry of rage to go up; not only in Dublin but in Britain as well.

The Dublin bosses had not been idle while their servants attempted to batter and terrorise the workers into defeat. On August 29, Murphy called a meeting of the Employers' Federation, a body that had been formed in 1911 as a response to the revolutionary unionism of the IT&GWU. Arnold Wright, Murphy's mouthpiece, describes how the bosses had sent a delegation to Britain to drum up support and how:

"The British conferes of Dublin employers were not merely willing but eager to help. After an exhaustive tour of the manufacturing districts, the delegates returned to Dublin with such a measure of assistance as to place beyond doubt the financial capacity of the Employers' Federation to conduct the fight to the bitter end, if such it should prove to be."

The meeting of the inner core of the Dublin bourgeoisie decided that it had sufficient strength to attempt to smash the union and therefore called a general meeting of all employers. We must return to Arnold Wright for a statement showing just how united the bourgeoisie were in their fear of Larkinism - the combination of revolutionary national and class stands - even as Carson acted in the north. He describes the Employers' Federation:

"Unionist co-operated with Nationalist and Catholic with Protestant in the heartiest fashion. A Nationalist chairman had the unanimous, and enthusiastic support of the entire body of members, and sturdy Unionists sat amicably on the executive with thoroughgoing Nationalists."

Such was the unity of the bosses when their class was under attack.

On September 3, 400 bosses decided to lock out all of their workers who were members of the IT&GWU. These companies presented an ultimatum to their workers in the form of a statement to be signed:

"I hereby undertake to carry out all instructions given to me for and on behalf of my employers. I further agree to immediately resign my membership of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (if a member) and I further undertake that I will not join or in any other way support this union."

Even with both Larkin and Connolly in prison, the response of the workers was outright refusal. The Transport men and women were joined by the members of 28 other unions. Some of these unions were hostile to the IT&GWU yet they stood solid. By September 4, it was reported that 20,000 workers were affected and by September 22, this number had risen to 25,000 including the farm labourers. Class war was declared:

The rage and class hatred of the Dublin workers was deepened by the events of September 2. In the slum area, on Church Street, two tenements of four storeys each collapsed, killing seven and injuring many more. Had they fallen in while all were a-bed, the death toll would have been much higher. The buildings had been passed as habitable by municipal authorities, only a few weeks previously in August. This event echoed throughout Ireland and in Britain where it brought home to many the cruel oppression of the Irish workers.

The same day that Larkin had been charged, the worker James Byrne, one of those assaulted by the police, died in hospital. At his funeral a huge procession followed and among whom was Keir Hardie. He had just arrived and was reportedly escorted from the railway station by a ragged guard of honour from the newly formed Irish Citizens' Army (ICA). Hardie spoke to the workers that evening promising them aid from "the Socialist side of the Labour movement" and he commented wryly on a threat from Murphy to starve the workers out saying to laughter:

"Most of you have served too long an apprenticeship to starvation to be very much afraid of that."

With Connolly and Larkin in prison, O'Brien and Daly took charge sending a delegation to the British TUC which had opened in Manchester on September 1. So savage had been the police behaviour that Sexton, who hated Larkin, moved a resolution calling for freedom of assembly in Dublin. Larkin had been demanding sympathy action in Britain and had been so successful that the TUC leaders sought to stop him by negotiating peace. After hearing the Irish delegation they voted to send a committee to investigate their report. They meant to attempt a fast compromise but the anger of the rank and file workers in Britain would not allow them the freedom of a peaceful sellout. The committee met the Dublin bosses in the Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin on September 5. It was not until the 8th that the conference was enlarged to include representatives of the Dublin Lockout Committee. The meetings collapsed on September 18th - the employers insisting on imposing their 'yellow dog' contract on the workers. The British TUC committee, after consideration, decided in favour of the Dublin workers.

While the conference had been meeting the struggle had continued to spread with lockouts by the builders and after the harvest, the farmers. Importantly sympathy strikes had broken out in Britain - an occurrence that terrified the British trade union 'leaders'.

FINANCE - BUT NO FIGHT

The pressure on the British union misleaders was tremendous - some action had to be taken to prevent the development of strikes that potentially had far-reaching implications for the very fabric of British society. Having failed in getting a fast peace, hating Larkin and fearing the militancy of their own members, they voted to send money and foodships to Dublin. The British TUC voted £5,000 for funds and agreed to call for more. The Miners' Federation, in early October agreed to send £1,000 per week while some newspapers in London opened subscription lists. The British TUC was to raise £93,637 in all and William O'Brien reported that the total amount raised to support the Dublin fighters came to £150,000 - a very substantial sum in 1913.

On September 27 the first foodship, the Hare, arrived to great enthusiasm and an uplifting of the spirits of the workers. However, the foodships were not to come as an addition to sympathetic strike action but as a substitute for it. This was to seal the fate of Dublin. No matter what the motives of the union leadership, it was as Desmond Greaves points out:

"... the rank and file did not grudge. There was no mistaking the intense class feeling which brought pennies and sixpennies from remote villages in Yorkshire and South Wales into the Dublin relief fund ..."

The food itself was desperately needed and relieved some of the intense suffering.

Dublin suffragettes, led by Delia Larkin and Countess Markievicz, organised a food kitchen in Liberty Hall. In addition, warm clothing was also made there to be given to the most needy families. When it was discovered that so many of the women who called for food to take home were stinting themselves so that their husbands and children could have more, they were asked to take a meal at Liberty Hall before taking their food home.

Bourgeois writers such as Arnold Wright, have condemned the food aid from Britain as it prolonged the strike, which is to say that it prevented the bosses' weapon of starvation from working as quickly as it might - but this is to miss the point. Decisive action could only be taken in Britain and this could only mean serious and possibly sustained sympathy strikes. It was this burning necessity for real action that exposed the degeneracy and opportunism of the leading elements in the British labour movement. The battle for sympathetic action was central, both Connolly and Larkin were well aware of this and had the Dublin workers been able to harness the strength of the British working class, the employers would have been crushed. Without that help the writing was on the wall.

Larkin was released on bail of £100 on September 12 and he rushed to Britain to rally support. Connolly, recovering from his hunger strike, took charge of the union in Dublin. He had been out drumming up support in Belfast with some success although there were attacks by Orangemen against a procession supporting the Dublin workers. Larkin had arrived in Manchester and addressed a huge open air meeting:

"I care for no man or men, I have got a divine mission I believe, to make men and women discontented. I am out to do it and no Murphy or Aberdeen nor other creatures of that type can stop me from carrying on the work I was born for ...".
He finished with a ringing declaration:

"I am out for revolution. What do I care? They can only kill me and there are thousands more to come after me."

Larkin returned to Dublin but was shortly on tour again speaking to audiences of supporters in Glasgow on September 21. He received the support of the National Transport Workers' Federation after a meeting in London on September 22.

FIRST WAVE OF SYMPATHY STRIKES

September saw the opening shots in the battle for sympathetic action inside Britain, between the rank and file and the trade union misleaders. All Dublin traffic saw the beginnings of blocking actions by the railway men. Strikes began to spread when the railway companies began to sack the men who refused to handle tainted goods. In all nearly 10,000 railwaymen were involved in this action. The main areas of activity were Liverpool, Birmingham, Crewe, Derby and Sheffield. Liverpool, with its large section of Irish national minority people, was by far the strongest area of support. But response was more general. The Yorkshire miners had been active in the 1912 coal strike and many rank and file groups had formed, calling for a more progressive industrial policy. A small group of militants on the Yorkshire Miners' Council supported Jim Larkin's call for sympathy strikes. These struggles of 1913 were to give great impetus to unofficial trade union movements such as Vigilance Groups and Minority movements established by the rank and file. Their committees operated separately and independently from the official union bureaucracy. These committees were to play an important role, particularly after World War I, in the formation and development of the communist movement in Britain. While the rank and file pushed for increased action, the traitorous officials did their utmost to stop the action from spreading.

J.H. Thomas of the NUR played a particularly disgusting role in stopping the development of serious action. Not only did he not support the actions of his members, he actually aided some of the employers in getting some of his members the sack. He was typical

of the trade union leaders that despised Larkin and his revolutionary stand and feared the militancy of his own union members. He, like the other leading representatives of the labour aristocracy wallowed in their petit-bourgeois respectability; more offended by Larkin's "to hell with contracts" than they were with the misery of the Dublin workers, more concerned with the legalisms of the oppressor than the suffering of the oppressed. The absence of official support - rather in the face of open hostility from the bureaucrats - and the failure to spread the action over a wider area pushed the men back to work. However, the demand for action simmered just below the surface, particularly in Liverpool.

GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION

On September 26 the Board of Trade declared that it would hold an official inquiry into the dispute set in three days time, the 29th. H. Gosling of the National Transport Workers' Federation represented both British and Irish trade unionists. His comments were very conciliatory and it was obvious he wanted a settlement. The bosses were represented by T. Healy KC, later Governor General of the Irish Free State, even then a well-known figure in Irish politics and a personal friend of Murphy. Healy's principal argument, echoing the position taken by the British opportunists, was that the sympathy strike made relations between capital and labour impossible. Larkin took over as representative of the men using a statement drawn up by Connolly. He was both fierce and brilliant as he clashed with both Healy and Murphy as he put the workers' case. In a newspaper he was reported as blaming the employers for the conditions of the Dublin workers; he said of the bosses: "They take to themselves that they have all the rights that are given to men and to societies of men, but they deny the right of the men to claim that they also have a substantial claim on the share of the produce they produce, and they further say they want no third party interference. They want to deal with working men individually ... It means that the men who hold the means of life control our lives, and, because we working men have tried to get some measure of justice, some measure of betterment, they deny the right of the human being to associate with his fellow. Why, the very law of nature was mutual co-operation. Man must be associated with his fellows. The employers were not able to make their own case. Let him help them ... What was the position of affairs in connection with life in industrial Ireland?... There are 21,000 families - four and a half persons to a family - living in single rooms. Who are responsible? The gentlemen opposite to him would have to accept the responsibility. Of course they must. They said they control the means of life; then the responsibility rests upon them. Twenty-one thousand people multiplied by five, over a hundred thousand people huddled together in the putrid slums of Dublin."

He went on: Let those people who desired the truth go to the factories and see the maimed girls, the weak and the sickly, whose eyes are being put out and their bodies scarred and their souls seared. When they were no longer able to be useful enough to gain ... whatever wage they earned, they were thrown into the human scrap heap."

He took two hours to finish and forced all those who followed him to take a stand. All the Irish and British trade unionists backed him, even Gosling who stated that the Dublin employers would not destroy the Transport Union while the British trade union movement existed.

The results of the court of inquiry were highly favourable to the workers. While making statements against sympathy actions, its conclusions were that the 'yellow dog' contract that the men were asked to sign imposed "upon the signatories conditions which are contrary to individual liberty, and which no workmen or body of workers could reasonably be expected to accept".

The employers immediately declared that the findings of the inquiry were a basis for negotiation and left the proceedings. Now, and in the future, the main sticking point was victimisation. The union position being that all workers locked out must be re-employed but the employers would not grant this; protecting the scabs they had hired. Shortly afterwards the bosses made any settlement impossible by demanding Larkin's removal from his trade union post.

These events gave increased support for the Dublin workers - even the 'Times', then the chief voice of the British bourgeoisie, said on October 8, that it was time the Dublin employers settled. But, even with public opinion heavily ranged against them, the bosses remained safe as long as they could count on scab labour, and their products were not involved in any actions in Britain against tainted goods.

Shortly after Larkin lashed out at the trade union opportunists. He spoke in London on October 10 at the Memorial Hall, describing the sell-out:

"They were - the men, he said who were standing in their road, and they would have to be pulled out of the road. They were about as useful as mummies in a museum. The weapon that was wanted was the sympathetic strike used in a scientific manner. These were hypocrites who told them they must not have sympathetic strikes because they caused inconvenience to the public. The officials of the Railwaymen's Union pleaded that there were agreements and contracts. To hell with contracts. The men were in advance of their leaders, and they would tell their leaders to get in front or get out He had been told by a trade union leader to be careful what he was doing, because although the rank and file were with him, the union leaders controlled the money. That was the sort of threat that was held over the men who belonged to the 'rebel wing.'"

The effect of this speech was electrifying and it was greeted with great enthusiasm. There was a huge crush of people outside and Larkin was carried on the shoulders of a huge Irishman, Con Lehane to Clerkenwell Green where he addressed an overflow meeting and sang rebel songs till well after midnight.

SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN

Suffragettes from both Britain and Ireland played an important role throughout the struggle setting up support committees wherever they could. Some, connected to the 'Daily Herald' the left wing paper, proposed that some of the children be brought to Britain and housed with workers there for the duration of the trouble. Mrs. Dora Montifiori took the lead in getting it organised. Larkin agreed to the plan although it appears that Connolly was quite doubtful but he was going on a speaking tour in Scotland and let matters lie. Desmond Greaves records that Mrs. Montifiori had tried a similar scheme in the USA during the New England textile strikes and that it had failed because of sectarian difficulties. However, applications came in

rapidly and the plan was initiated. Potentially it could be of great assistance. Men and Women would be greatly weakened in their resolve watching their children suffer even more in the slums of Dublin and knowing the children were well cared for would have increased their ability to fight on.

The British TUC would have nothing to do with the plan saying that all of their funds must be used to help the children in their own homes. Perhaps the august members of that body, already having great trouble in controlling their members, were terrified of the effect of the arrival of hundreds of poor and suffering children from Dublin would have on public opinion and on the actions of their members. Homes were found in London, Edinburgh, Plymouth, but above all in Liverpool. The Irish community remained in the forefront of those prepared to sacrifice for Dublin.

During this time Larkin prepared his defence for his trial and Connolly continued his speaking tour. Both had been very effective in building support in Britain; Larkin getting the Liverpool dockers to stand prepared to strike again increasing the fear of the bosses and their lackeys, the trade union leaders.

Although a number of children had already left Dublin over a period of several days, the Archbishop of Dublin suddenly declared that the "deportation" of the children endangered their religious faith. In a letter published in the Dublin dailies he asked the mothers of the children if "they had abandoned their faith". He went on to suggest "that they can no longer be held worthy of the name of Catholic mothers if they so forget that duty as to send away their children to be cared for in a strange land without security of any kind that those to whom the poor children are to be handed over are Catholics, or indeed persons of any faith at all." It would seem that this 'good shepherd' the Archbishop, had not noticed how his friends the employing class of Dublin had been treating the 'poor children'. No doubt he felt the degenerating misery of the slums was due to some other cause - act of God, perhaps? The Hibernians joined in the attack in newspapers controlled by them. They published a membership card of the Orange Order belonging to a James Larkin. Now James Larkin is not an uncommon name and it was patently absurd to suggest this James Larkin could have any connection with the union leader. Nonetheless, the Hibernian-controlled newspapers raised, wherever they could, sectarian feelings to the heights, accusing Larkin of attempting to pervert the faith of the children.

The day after the Archbishop's letter, October 22, saw a large number of fanatical young priests breaking into the Corporation Baths where a number of children were being cleaned up for the journey. The priests managed to stop the children's departure.

That night Larkin spoke from the window of Liberty Hall backing Mrs. Montifiori:

"I have tried to kill sectarianism, whether in Catholics or Protestants. I am against bigotry or intolerance on either side. Those who want to divide the workers have resorted to the foulest methods ... I have not read the evening papers, but I am informed vile things are stated in them. They have lit a fire they will never put out."

A few days later he returned to the topic:

"I am not frightened by the Archbishop or the priests. No one has ever heard me say one word against them, but I say the priest who says I would allow a child to be proselytised is a liar in his heart."

Let anyone think that the actions of the 'good Shepherd' burst forth from his pure Christian concern for the children and this therefore puts him outside and above class struggle and class motives - the police rapidly arrested Mrs. Montifiore and a Mrs. Rand on the trumped-up and grotesque charge of kidnapping the children:

When Delia Larkin tried to take more children out, the priests with a mob in tow, staged a near riot in which both children and parents were hurt. She was forced to return to Liberty Hall and afterwards no further attempt was made to send children abroad. The two women were released after agreeing that they would make no further attempts to continue their project. The affair had so far gone badly against the union.

Connolly then turned the tables with a brilliant counter-stroke. He told the papers that the 'Fight to Save the Kiddies' was to be abandoned and in turn he demanded that the children be cared for in Dublin. He told the workers:

"Go to the Archbishop and the priests. They are loud in their professions. Put them to the test."

He then stopped all free meals at Liberty Hall. Larkin, the night before his trial, made what he thought would be his farewell speech as he was prepared for a sentence of anything from two months to two years. He noted again the role of the church:

"For years and years I have done the work I was born for. I have proved there were 21,000 families living five in a room in Dublin. Call that Catholicism, Christianity! It is something different. I have raised the morals and sobriety of the people. Even Murphy says Larkin has done good but 'hands off the tram.'"

As was expected, the Catholic relief organisations were first jammed and then overwhelmed by the demand. They were completely unable to cope. The Archbishop, it would seem, was much better at organising howling reactionary mobs than providing 'loaves and fishes'. The dinners were resumed at Liberty Hall after a week and the Archbishop was forced to issue an appeal for an end to the lockout. Such an appeal could only be seen as being directed towards the employers and thus served the unions's purpose.

LARKIN - IMPRISONED AND FREE

On October 28, Larkin went to court and was sentenced to seven months for sedition as 15,000 people cheered and protested outside the court rooms. The city was alive with anger and it met an answering cry in London. The next Sunday, Delia Larkin, Connolly, George Russell (AE), Mrs. Montifiore, George Lansbury, Ben Tillet and George Bernard Shaw all spoke at a huge protest meeting held in the Albert Hall. Shaw was particularly outspoken in a fashion uncharacteristic for an pro-imperialist Fabian. He attacked the Dublin employers and compared the Dublin police to a pack of 'mad dogs'. He suggested that the Dublin workers be armed to protect themselves from the police.

Connolly proposed a campaign to free Larkin. There were three by-elections pending and he proposed that any opponent of the Liberal Government should be supported. The bourgeois nationalists shrieked their protests, this could destroy the Home Rule promised - endlessly promised by the Liberal Party. Nonetheless, an appeal was sent out and a speaking tour arranged. The appeal read:

"Locked out Nationalist workers of Dublin appeal to British workers to vote against the Liberal jailers Larkin and murderers of Byrne and Nolan."

The deep importance of the struggle both national and class, the links being forged between them by the struggle of Dublin workers was never far from Connolly's mind. When James Byrne, the secretary of the Dun Laoghaire Trades Council, died after being on hunger strike, Connolly said:

"My heart swelled with pride that the workers are at last learning to honour their fighters and martyrs. Byrne as truly died a martyr as any man who ever did for Ireland."

It is probably Connolly's greatest contribution that he put the Irish proletariat at the head of the Irish national struggle and in doing so changed the course of Irish history.

The call for an anti-Liberal vote helped direct and tap the anger in Britain. The contradictions were too obvious when Larkin was sentenced for sedition and yet Carson was arming and drilling men in Ulster, making openly seditious statements and encouraging mutiny in the armed forces and yet nothing was done. In one by-election the Liberal majority was greatly reduced and on November 9, their candidate was defeated in Reading. These defeats brought outbursts of joy in Dublin and sky rockets from the roof of Liberty Hall. Lloyd George, speaking to the National Liberal Club in London, analysed the by-election reverses:

"There are explanations, the most prominent of which is, probably, Jim Larkin."

The defeat of the Government sent the bourgeois nationalists into fits of fear and rage. Connolly's successful appeal to British workers to defeat the Liberals no matter what the cost to the Home Rule Bill ripped their strategy right out from under their feet. Moreover, it greatly endangered their claims to be the leaders of the nationalist struggle. The Redmonite newspaper 'The Freeman's Journal' dropped its 'neutral' stance and began openly attacking syndicalism in its editorials. However, such was the intense feeling generated in Ireland that the editorial itself caused splits in the Irish Party. James Glynn, the MP for Galway City, disassociated himself from the 'Freeman's Journal'.

Connolly answered his Redmonite critics:

"We are doubtless to be told we are attacking Home Rule. Dublin working men are as firm as ever for national self-government. But they are not going to allow the government to bludgeon them and jail their leaders and comrades and place all the machinery of the law, police and military at the disposal of the employers without hitting back."

Two days after the Reading defeat, Larkin was released having served 17 days of his 7 month sentence. Larkin was himself - he came out fighting! The afternoon of his release Connolly and Larkin spoke from Liberty Hall. It was from here that Larkin launched his 'Fiery Cross' campaign:

"... that his enemies wanted him out of Ireland. It would be a bad day for them when he did leave Ireland. He was going in a few hours to light a fiery cross in England, Scotland and Wales ... and he promised the employers of Dublin that they were going to sup sorrow with a long spoon."

Connolly was equally uncompromising:

"We will carry on the fight until we have demonstrated that the Transport is going to rule the roost here in Dublin and throughout Ireland ... We have got our leaders back, and you must now demonstrate and picket as you have never picketed before, and see if the police will clear us off the street as they threatened. If they attempt to do so then the present strike in the port of Dublin will be nothing to what is to come."

That Thursday night saw the largest meeting yet called. Celebrating Larkin's release, the women and girls sang songs born in the struggle, "Cheer up Larkin", "I am One of Those Horrible Larkinites" and "We Are Going to Join Jim Larkin's Union". Larkin did not speak as he was suffering from nervous reaction so Connolly gave the lead:

"They had proved by the release of Larkin that they were stronger than any government. Every right had its duty, but when they were deprived of their rights, they owed no duty to anyone. That is what is meant by a state of war. 'Listen to me,' he cried.

'I am going to talk sedition, the next time we are out for a march, I want to be accompanied by four battalions of trained men. I want them to come with their corporals, sergeants and people to form fours. Why should we not drill and train our men in Dublin as they are doing in Ulster? But I don't think you require any training!"

SHARPER AND DEEPER - SCABS ARRIVE

While Larkin had been in prison the struggle had spread. As early as September 25, Connolly had warned what could happen if the Shipping Federation brought in scabs:

"Moderate as I am, I know what it means. If this ship is brought to Dublin by the Shipping Federation and they begin to discharge their cargo - I mention no names, as I want to give them a chance of withdrawing - I know, you know, and God knows, that the streets of Dublin will run red with the blood of the working classes."

But the scabs arrived. On October 29, 50 came from Manchester and on November 5, another 100 from Liverpool. In England there were calls from the 'Daily Herald' for a general strike.

Connolly issued a manifesto calling for mass picketing of the docks and when this failed he closed the port. This violated the agreement of May 1913 with the companies and they pleaded their contracts. Connolly pointed out that this was no 'normal' dispute. The bosses then began to wail about 'To Hell with contracts' and 'broken agreements'. The closing of the port united the capitalists in the struggle. In turn the close of Connolly's manifesto was sharp and to the point:

"Fellow workers, the employers are determined to starve you into submission, and if you resist, to club you, jail you and kill you. We defy them. If they think they can carry on their industries without you, we will, in the words of the Ulster Orangemen, take steps to prevent it. Be men now, or be for ever slaves."

The bosses armed the scabs who were kept above the law. Even when workers were shot by scabs, some killed, the scabs went unarrested. The struggle against the scabs and police was to be the dynamic in the formation of the Irish Citizen Army.

THE IRISH CITIZENS ARMY

"Who fears to wear the Blood Red Badge upon his manly breast?
What scab obeys the vile command of Murphy and the rest.
He's all a knave, and half a slave who slighte his union thus
But true men, like you men, will show the badge with us.

They dared to fling a manly brick
They wrecked a blackleg tram
They dared give Harvey Duff a kick,
They didn't care a damn.
They lie in gaol, They can't get bail.
Who fought their corner thus
But you men, with sticks man, must make the Peelers cuss."

The dramatic, indeed history changing, uprising of 1916 in Dublin is incomprehensible without a class understanding of the effect of the Dublin Lockout. The need for the working class to defend itself from the repressive state forces gave rise to the Irish Citizen Army (ICA). It grew in the heat of class struggle and was both socialist and nationalist in its view like the union from which it sprung. Moreover, it was born in a tide of anti-imperialism that was rising throughout Ireland. The increasing blend of the two revolutionary streams - nationalist and socialist - is shown by the fact that the ICA was formed within weeks of the nationalist Irish Volunteers. Both were in part a response to the formation of Carson's Ulster Volunteers but it would be incorrect to see their birth as a simple reflex action. The rise of the proletarian class struggle directly linked to the fight for national liberation is a key to understanding the future developments. The formation of a proletarian army in Ireland pre-figured the later events in Russia. If the British working class had become fully engaged in the fight the course of European history would have been deeply affected.

The concrete proposal for the formation of a workers defence force was suggested at a meeting of the Civic League. This Committee had earlier been known as the Peace Committee, a body formed to try and mediate in the dispute. Its members were generally drawn from the middle class intelligentsia including writers and professors. Starting off as a 'neutral' body the sharpness of the fight and the justice of the workers' cause won its members to an active bias in favour of the working class. Among its members was Captain Jack White, the son of a famous Boer War General, who had resigned his commission as captain in the British Army because of his developing anti-imperialist views. Despite the liberal views about justice to the poor, civil liberties etc., that predominated in the Civic League, there was immediate interest when Captain White proposed that drilling be introduced as a method of bringing discipline "into the distracted ranks of labour."

The events that followed are an amusing example of the contradictions in consciousness in the Civic League. They were allowed to meet in the Mansion House only so long as they did not engage in partisan action. When they found themselves agreeing with the proposal for the formation of a proletarian army to combat the forces of the state they agreed to change the venue of their meeting, so as not to break the 'understanding' they had about the Mansion House. 'It might be civil war, but rules are rules'. They adjourned to the reading rooms of Reverend R.M. Gwynn in Trinity College. Agreement was rapid and a fund was established in order to buy staves for the new army.

Connolly returned from organising support in Belfast to attend the first public meeting of the Civic League. It had been called to urge the formation of a workers' defence force. Students at Trinity College had been playing a progressive role and Captain White had earlier advised them to boycott their classes as a means of protesting the police protection of the scabs. The college authorities response to the League's coming meeting was to forbid Trinity students, under pain of expulsion, from attending what the authorities described as "Captain White's Home Rule meeting". Approximately 100 students arrived in procession that night and they were greeted with loud cheers and given seats on the platform. White, Connolly and Countess Markievicz were among the speakers. Importantly a telegram was received from Sir Roger Casement, then helping to initiate the formation of the Irish Volunteers. It read:

"I understand you begin movement to drill and discipline Dublin workers. That is a good and healthy movement. I wish to support it and I hope it may begin a widespread national movement to organise drilled and disciplined Irish Volunteers to assert Irish manhood and uphold the national cause in all that is right."

Sean O'Casey, later to be famous as the great Irish dramatist, was appointed Secretary to the Citizen Army. He describes a meeting in Beresford Place with Larkin speaking from the window of Liberty Hall:

"We are going to give the members of our union a military training. Captain White will speak to you now and tell you the plans he has to create from among the members of the labour unions a great Citizen Army. Captain White will take charge of the movement, and I trust that the various trade unions will see to it that all of their members join this new army of the people, so that Labour may no longer be defenceless but may be able to utilise that great physical power which it possesses to prevent its elementary rights being taken away and to evolve such a system of unified action, self control and ordered discipline that Labour in Ireland may march at the fore-front of all movements for the betterment of the whole people of Ireland."

White followed and asked all those who were interested to attend the union ground at Croyden Park for enrolment and drilling. When those wishing to join were asked to raise their hands, a forest of arms went up and a great cheer rose from the crowd.

Captain White did not have the class background to provide him with an immediate grasp of the labour struggle but his anti-imperialist views made him deeply sympathetic. He bought hurley sticks, broom handles and staves for drilling. While there were both objective and subjective difficulties in organising regular drilling which greatly frustrated White, he persisted. The men had tasted the lash of the police far too often and a deep desire to meet them and beat them on their own terms - in the streets - drove them on. White was harsh and often difficult but he helped mould a force that was capable of successfully fighting for the workers' right to use the streets and protect their own meetings come who may.

The formation of the ICA provided a flame of pride and self-respect that combined with the deep class hatred felt by the workers. Many of the ICA men marched with the metal badge of their union, a red hand, pinned to their chests. When they marched they carried a huge banner with a life-size picture of Larkin and above the picture this inscription:

"The Chief who raised the Red Hand up until it Paled the Sun,
and Shed such Glory on our Cause as Chief had never Done."

Such was the esteem that Larkin was held in by his members.

When the Amgier Street branch of the union decided to start a band, Larkin was delighted and provided union funds for a loan for the purchase of the instruments. These instruments became a target for the police so the band brought hurley sticks to protect their instruments.

Often the hurley sticks were shod on one end to increase their effect and as they were longer than the police batons they commanded respect. Soon all the union meetings and processions were accompanied by ICA men swinging their hurley sticks. This brought about an immediate improvement in the behaviour of the 'courageous' police force. It was union practice to hold marches along the tramlines and previously the workers would be punched, shoved and hustled aside by the police in order to clear the way. Now, protected by ICA men, the police inspector would ask if the men would be so kind as to allow the traffic to pass. This change injected pride and self respect into the workers which was to be needed in the hard times ahead.

During the autumn and winter of 1913 the ICA stood guard over the homes of workers threatened with eviction. Connolly, editing the 'Irish Worker' recorded how these gaunt and hungry men, dressed in rags, protected the workers' homes and in cases returned the few sticks of furniture to the houses of those who had been evicted. Their unbreakable spirit was steadfast throughout that period and the creation of the ICA was the most important development of that struggle. It is too often ignored that the future role of the Irish Citizen Army was born and given shape in the forge of class struggle.

THE FIBRY CROSS

The day after Larkin's release from prison both he and Connolly issued a statement to the British Workers. The Manifesto to the British Working Class announced Dublin port was to be closed and asked for their help in keeping scabs out. It appealed directly to the rank and file in Britain and re-opened the struggle for sympathetic action.

"We are denied every right guaranteed by law, we are subjected to cold-blooded systematic arrests and ferocious prison sentences. Girls and women are jailed every day. 'Free' labourers are imported by the hundreds.

"We propose to carry the war into every section of the enemy's camp. Will you second us? We are about to take action the news of which will have reached you before this is in your hands."

The Manifesto finished with the words:

"We appeal to our brethren in Great Britain to second our efforts. We thank them for that cordial support which has made our blow so successful, and we counsel them to go ahead and strike while the iron of revolt is hot in our souls."

Larkin announced he would make a general policy statement in Manchester and he was joined there by Connolly. At the Free Trade Hall 4,000 packed inside while a further 20,000 waited outside. Larkin's speech appealed to his audience in both class and national terms. He addressed them both as workers and a section as national minority people resident in Britain:

"In Dublin men know what I say is the truth. Do you think I dare to come to a country like England, and to Lancashire where at least one half of every four of you, or a little more are Irish, and tell you a lie about my own country, a country I love as I love no other land and no other people? A man who won't love his own fireside can have no love for those outside. What I want to do is to lift up the class I belong to; I want to improve them physically and mentally, broaden their outlook as human beings"

He went on to attack the British trade union opportunists with a caustic remark about "the wise men from the East of England trade unionism."

The campaign for real action waged by Connolly and Larkin had exposed the Labour Party men and the trade union leadership in their true colours and they wanted an end to Larkin and Larkinism. As early as September, Phillip Snowden, second only to MacDonald in the British Labour Party, had openly attacked Larkin in the 'Morning Post', one of the most right-wing of the London dailies, under the title 'Do Strikes Pay?' In it he denounced the "wild revolutionary appeals of men like Mr. James Larkin and Mr. Ben Tillet". James Sexton attacked syndicalism in the same series of articles where J.H. Wilson, head of the Seamen's Union also joined in:

"The men often lose their heads, largely due to the fact that new teachers arrive on the scene, and they proceed to preach to their fellows that their old leaders are what sometimes is called back numbers The men who presume to be leaders have not felt the responsibility for office, consequently, they can afford to give very cheap advice and in this way members of a union are often led to get out of hand and make demands which it is impossible for the employers at that particular time to concede."

"Demands which it is impossible for the employers at that particular time to concede": Here is a classic formulation of opportunist trade unionism fully prepared to compromise with a vicious and degenerate imperialist ruling class. These articles were no doubt meant to reassure the bourgeoisie of the loyalty of their lackeys. What craven action to mount such an attack when women and children were being starved and assaulted in Dublin and men being beaten to death by the police.

The attacks continued throughout September and October. Snowden carried on, writing in the Labour leader:-

"The old trade unionism looked facts in the face and acted with regard to commonsense. The new trade unionism, call it what you will - Syndicalism, Carsonism, Larkinism, does neither."

Snowden and Keir Hardie had a series of exchanges with Hardie writing to defend the use of the strike weapon against the bosses. Larkin counter-attacked suggesting Snowden had written in the 'Morning Post' for cheap financial gain.

Throughout the Fiery Cross campaign Larkin directed his fire at MacDonald and Snowden of the Labour Party and Wilson and J.H. Thomas of the trade unions.

The day after Larkin's Manchester speech, J.H. Thomas told some railwaymen that:

"No trade union official, no matter how competent or able, or influential, ought to have the sole power of telling men when they must cease work."

This was obviously aimed at Larkin and ignored the fact that his members were consulted. More importantly it ignored Thomas's own traitorous activities towards Dublin and his own members. The steady stream of escabs arriving from England was allowing many companies to keep ontrading and greatly weakening the workers.

Two days after the Manchester meeting, Connolly, Larkin and delegates from the Dublin Trades Council met the Parliamentary Committee of the British TUC to get the TUC:

"To take steps to prevent the further importation of non-union labour into Dublin, and should also isolate the Dublin employers by holding up the transit of goods to that city."

The Committee stated "that it was frankly opposed to any extension of the action beyond the support now being given to the Dublin strikers." Only the immense pressure being exerted by the rank and file of the unions kept the committee from completely selling out by voting against the proposal altogether. Instead it was decided that a special conference of the TUC would be held on December 9, meaning at least another three weeks suffering for the Dublin workers. Even the final decision for the conference was left hanging for a couple of days.

Both the Irish leaders went to London where they addressed a huge meeting in a packed Albert Hall on November 20. The meeting had been organised by the 'Daily Herald' who had remained solid supporters of Dublin. Among the speakers was George Lansbury, editor of the 'Herald', Will Dyson its cartoonist, Robert Williams, George Russell (AE), George Bernard Shaw and Sylvia Pankhurst. In many of the speeches there were pointed and barbed attacks on the Labour Party and the trade union misleaders. Students, in strong contrast to those in Dublin, attempted to disrupt and destroy the meeting but were prevented by Con Lehane among others, from doing so. Both Connolly and Larkin laid particular emphasis on sympathetic action and the special TUC. Larkin was electrifying and he is described by a writer for the 'New Statesman':

"... He was in deadly earnest and, walking up and down like an infuriated tiger, he roared out his message of defiance to the capitalist system and of death to Murphy. There striding about the platform one beheld the whole of the sweated, starved, exploited working class suddenly incarnate in the shape of a gigantic Tarzan of all the slum jungles of the West."

Whilst generating great enthusiasm for the Dublin workers he found it difficult explaining the revolutionary unity of the class and national questions in Ireland, to his predominantly English audience. Dead silence greeted his statement that the struggle being conducted against the lockout was not as important as Ireland's struggle for national freedom and he expressed his understanding that not until Ireland had attained self government could Labour win control.

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On Saturday November 21, the 'Daily Herald' published another manifesto from Larkin:

"Tell your leaders now and every day until December 9, and raise your voices upon that day to tell them for the future they must stand for Trade Unionism, that they are not there as apologists for the shortcomings of the Capitalist system, that they are not there to assist the employers in helping to defeat any section of the workers striving to be free, nor to act as a brake on the wheel of progress."

On the same day, J.H. Wilson, as his personal contribution to the buildup for the special TUC, issued a manifesto denouncing Larkin and the methods of the Transport Union in Dublin.

In Ireland and particularly in Dublin the fight between Capital and Labour was fairly clear in its lines of demarcation with no labour aristocracy to defeat the class struggle in a major way. This really left the repressive state machine as the first line of defence for the Irish capitalists. In Britain the first line of defence for the ruling class was the bourgeois trade union leaders and they were doing their best to fulfil their role. As December 9 approached these craven opportunists and misleaders attacked Larkin again and again.

In the manifesto, Larkin replied to these attacks:

"Your leaders have come far short of the gospel of brotherhood. They seem to think, speak and act as though trade unionism was meant to be used as a salve for the sore of poverty ... They seem to think that round-table conferences, nice language, beautiful phrases that fall trippingly from the tongue, conciliation boards and agreements are the be-all and end-all of life ... We say trade unionism is a root remedy and by industrial action we can accomplish great things. We are not willing to say that trade unionism shall be used either by industrial commissioners, conciliation boards or by cabinets to chloroform the workers, to persuade them to remain as dumb dogs."

At a meeting in Sheffield, Larkin took up the challenge once again:

"A great many of the trade union leaders seemed to think they existed, to apologise for capitalism, to try and stop strikes and smooth difficulties over, to put a healing salve on the wounds and bandages, and to heal it for a while. But you cannot heal this disease with a salve. It is a root remedy that you must apply. The poison is the employers' power over labour. The power to exploit your flesh and bone and brain."

In the same speech he called Thomas a "double-dyed traitor to his class" and referred to both Thomas and Wilson as being "too big for their boots."

His 'fiery cross' speech had been attacked in the official organ of the Labour Party, the 'Daily Citizen'. It described Larkin at Sheffield as a "howling dervish" and said that his statements about the two union leaders were "wild, illogical and untrue". On November 21, the editor adopted a disgusting attitude suggesting that he understood Larkin's "natural impatience" because of the "prolongation of the ordeal now being endured by the workers of Dublin ..." but that "the reproaches which he directs against responsible trade union leaders are not deserved." Not a word about the fact that the "prolongation" of the dispute was principally due to the failure to develop sympathetic action that these very trade union leaders had so effectively sabotaged. On the 24th, the editor continued:

"We do not suppose any argument will have much weight with Mr. Larkin in his present mood. For our part we have no end to serve except that of helping towards victory for the locked out men and women of Dublin."

The method of 'help' was a sure guarantee of failure. A week later Larkin correctly pilloried the 'Daily Citizen' as "that alleged Labour paper". In London he contemptuously referred to both Philip Snowden and Wilson saying: "I am not going to allow these serpents to raise their foul heads and spit out their poison any longer" and he slashed at "those union leaders (who) had neither 'a soul to be saved or a body to be kicked.'" Larkin's forceful personality and brilliant invective often turned a hostile audience into cheering supporters as he laapooned the traitorous practice of the misleaders.

Larkin is often criticised or approached with bewilderment by petit-bourgeois writers who find his behaviour both incomprehensible and sectarian. How could he 'bite the hand that fed him?' In fact he took the only course open to him, and was extremely effective. Both Connolly and Larkin were well aware of the true nature of the Labour Party and the trade union leadership. If Larkin and Connolly had pandered to and sucked up to these 'leaders' would the results have been any different? Most likely it would have been worse as it was only massive pressure exerted by the rank and file that got the leaders to take any action at all and prevented a rapid and complete sellout! Their only hope lay in rallying the rank and file against the union opportunists.

SYMPATHETIC ACTION -- THE SECOND WAVE

Strikes supporting Dublin broke out two weeks before the Conference. Larkin's efforts had not been wasted and his agitation took root in the rank and file. Two locomotive men in South Wales, named Jones and Reynolds, had refused to handle tainted goods. They were sacked immediately and a strike flashed across South Wales. The drivers were joined by goods porters. In Liverpool carters and watermen went on strike. The intense feeling was shown by steelworkers at Briton Ferry Dock. The steelworkers, then on their way home from work, found an engine of the Great Western Railway still working. They forced the fireman and the driver to get off the engine and stop work. J.H. Thomas rushed to halt the strike on the very eve of the Special Conference. The railway union officials did not get Jones and Reynold reinstated. The men were told to return to work or get no strike pay. So their action was settled on terms that can only be described as open betrayal.

The deep upsurge in class feelings can be traced even when it did not burst forth into direct action. In turn, the struggle by the union officials against any overt action and their desperate manoeuvrings reveals their deep corruption.

On the London Docks, Harry Orbell, a union official, describes the feelings of the men and efforts made to contain them:

"In all my experience I have never known a time when there has been manifested a desire to help any union in dispute as there is among dockers both in London and the provincial ports towards their Dublin comrades."

Further:

"We have had to rearrange the whole of our paid officials in London placing them in certain centres with the express purpose of preventing any disorganised work ... It has been with the greatest trouble - and some of us have received rather strong words - that we have so far been able to hold the men in check Should it come to a stoppage I think it will be of such magnitude as has never been equalled in any previous dispute."

Again in Liverpool "union leaders experienced great difficulties keeping the men at work."

Such strength of support, particularly among English workers, is all the more remarkable considering the years of anti-Irish racist propaganda that had been dished out by the bourgeoisie. The following quotation shows the virulence of this campaign of filth. It is by Charles Kingsley, a Cambridge University historian of the nineteenth century and author of 'The Water Babies' describing a visit to Ireland:

"But I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw along that hundred miles of horrible country. I don't believe they are at fault. I believe there are not only many more of them than old, but they are happier, better, more comfortably fed and lodged under our rule than they ever were. But to see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they were black, one would not feel it so much, but their skins, excepted where tanned by exposure are as white as ours."

This grotesque racism used to justify the national oppression of the Irish people had been thrown at the British working class for centuries. However, we must take care to appreciate that it was this same chauvinism and racism within the working class that allowed the labour aristocracy to defeat the militant rank and file. They were aided by the massive onslaught of the 'King and Country' propaganda being developed in preparation for the coming slaughter in Europe.

However, these struggles did strengthen the unofficial movements and made good progress in uniting the best of the British left, that section least affected by social-democracy and social-chauvinism, around the fight in Dublin. The strongest resistance occurred around the class/nation nexus. The Irish national minority workers were in the vanguard and deep wells of support existed among the oppressed nations of Wales and Scotland. International support was developing as the fight was now known throughout the world. Lenin commented:

"The Irish proletariat that is awakening to class consciousness has found a talented leader in the person of Comrade Larkin, the Secretary of the Irish Transport Workers' Union. Possessing remarkable oratorical talent, a man of seething Irish energy, Larkin has performed miracles among the unskilled."

However it was clear that the results of the Special Conference were already decided. The stopping of the sympathetic strike occurred even as funds were beginning to arrive from Australia, and French workers were prepared to refuse to handle all goods from Dublin. The British TUC was now sitting on a potential volcano of class warfare - something they feared even more than the consequences of an open sellout of the Dublin workers.

DECEMBER 9 - THE SPECIAL TUC

The TUC met in Farringdon Hall in London with 600 attending representing 350 unions. Supposedly called in order to do something about Dublin, it rapidly became an attack on the leadership of the Dublin workers, particularly Larkin.

Archbishop Walsh had arranged a peace conference in Dublin on December 4, attended by the Dublin bosses and the British and Irish trade unionists. The unions had agreed to give up the sympathetic strike but only in return for complete reinstatement of all those locked out. As before, after several days of negotiation, the conference collapsed over the question of reinstatement.

A. Henderson gave the conference a lengthy report on the negotiations with veiled insults directed at Larkin; Gosling, the Chairman, avoided any hostile remarks and gave an account damning Murphy. Connolly argued for the Irish delegation as he had conducted the negotiations in Dublin as Larkin had been on tour. He took the main points of Henderson's report to be correct and added "that there had been too much recrimination on both sides." He exposed the Dublin employers as being responsible for the breakdown of negotiations and he read out the bosses' proposal:

"The employers, whilst they cannot agree to dismiss men taken on who have been found suitable, will agree that as far as their business permits, they will take on as many of their former employees as they can make room for, and in the operation of their business will make a bona fide effort to find employment for as many as possible as soon as they can."

The issue of reinstatement came with no guarantees so the bosses could refuse to rehire the best and most militant of the union.

Connolly analysed the situation:

"Our attitude is that the conditions spoken of there are the conditions which exist where there is no trade union at all, that is what the employers do. They take on as many as they like to suit their own business and we are told that the joint efforts of the trade unionists of Great Britain and Ireland can only succeed in getting terms that could be got by every individual if there was no trade union in the field at all!"

There was a cheer for the above point but hostility broke through:

"Remember", said Connolly. "This conference was called to help Dublin, where the workers have been locked out for months. They are hungry and desperate."

"You should have thought of that before!" came the hostile reply.

"If you think we withdraw one word of our criticisms of your inaction, you are wrong. We will raise it at the proper time but we want to concentrate on helping Dublin now."

Connolly had made a serious effort to keep the Conference discussing the topic it had been called for - helping Dublin, but the opportunists had their target in their sights.

When the attack came, it was from a surprising source. Ben Tillet, who had close connections with the "Daily Herald" group and who was considered to be one of the most militant of the trade union leaders, moved the following resolution:

"That this Conference deplures and condemns the unfair attacks made by men inside the trade union movement upon British trade union officials, who have been so unjustly assailed, and its belief in their ability to negotiate an honourable settlement if assured of the effective support of all who are concerned in the Dublin dispute."

This opened the floodgates. Class traitor after traitor got up to attack Larkin. For many assembled there their actions were a foreshadowing of their role in the 1926 General Strike when the miners were sold out by the T.U.

J.H. Thomas, of the railwaymen, asked the delegates: "Were they to stand by and allow themselves to be libelled and slandered?" And when answered by a chorus of 'No's, he said: "He was not going to for 50 Larkins." He accused Larkin of creating dissension among the rank and file of British railwaymen. Wilson, head of the Seamen, mounted the rostrum and said he did not think it necessary to answer Larkin's charges and that he had entered the trade union movement 30 years earlier and "was not kicked into it". He attacked Larkin saying that "he had made great blunders from the very inception of the strike in Dublin. The state of affairs in Dublin would not have existed for 24 hours had he shown a little common sense." Wilson avoided discussion of the snapping of scabs to Dublin and how long he thought the lockout might have lasted had sympathetic action been allowed to develop. Instead he suggested that Larkinism was a manifestation of "Murphyism" in the trade union movement.

Larkin was outraged by these unprincipled and lying attacks and given 20 minutes to respond, gave a brilliant response which nearly caused riots in the hall. He opened:

"Mr. Chairman and human beings."

"You said we were human beings", came the wounded reply.

"Yes", said Larkin. "But you are not giving much evidence of it now."

Larkin with his back to the wall was Larkin at his best and he thundered defiance at the assembly. He said he "did not care whether they would let him go on or not" and "if they were not going to give him an opportunity of replying to the foul, lying statements which had been made, it would only be what he expected from a good many of them." Each statement was met with cries of rage and the Chairman had great difficulty in maintaining and restoring order. Larkin roared that "not a man in this hall has been elected." He denounced the traitors by name - Wilson, Thomas, Sexton, and Henderson and told the delegates that "they were afraid to hear the truth." "Accept the guilt if you are guilty, and don't make lying statements about me!" Constantly told to shut up by hecklers, he centred on the real questions:

"Neither you nor these gentlemen on the platform can settle this Dublin dispute. I challenge you to try it. I know, however, that the rank and file of the British trade unionists will support the Dublin men in their battle, and if we do not get that support we will do what we have done before - fight it out. This is a game of war; it is not a game of beggar-my-neighbour. I know the men we have to deal with. All they want to do is to delay negotiations in order that we may weed the men out. The ban against the union has not been withdrawn. The employers of Dublin are neither truthful or honest, and the only way to deal with them is to deal with them with a strong hand. We have always been able to do that. Take away your scabs, out of Dublin; take away the men who organised scabs, who are acting worse than the imported scabs. The men of Dublin will never handle tainted goods as long as I am an official."

He ended as he had begun - fighting:

"Larkin will go down fighting. They are not going to be beaten by the force of capitalists in that country or the men who were not out to fight capitalism in this country."

After a lunch-break, Tillet's resolution was passed almost unanimously.

What followed was a disgusting display notable in its revelation of the treachery of the Labour Party, the majority of the delegates and what class they served. An MP, John Ward, proposed a resolution thanking the British leaders for their support during the lockout and pledging their continued help until the Dublin dispute was successfully concluded. The full extent of the duplicity of the TUC was shown in the debates that took place over the resolution on what was to be done about Dublin. A.J.W. Kelly proposed that another attempt should be made by the Joint Board of British and Irish delegates to settle by negotiation. Only one interpretation could be put on such a proposal coming as it did so soon after the failure of the last meeting. The unions would be willing to climb down and settle for terms, the bosses' terms; dropping their insistence on all workers being rehired. It was pointed out by another MP, George Roberts, that they would not be prepared to carry out support for ever. The threat was clear either the Irish trade unions would knuckle under, giving the British TUC virtual control over an Irish union - or the TUC would join the Dublin bosses in starving the workers into submission.

An amendment was put by Jack Jones, leader of the Gasworkers, who was a supporter of Larkin, to the effect that all unions in the transport trade would, on a specified date, refuse to handle Dublin traffic and he called for a monthly levy to be voted by the British unions to support the Dublin workers. The lines were now clearly drawn, the class struggle inside the unions formulated in two opposing stances - one for the workers and the other pro-boss. One struggling to develop the class struggle and the other attempting to extend Britain's imperialist control over Ireland by gaining control of the Transport workers even as they sold them out. Those who rose to speak in support of Dublin were constantly heckled and jeered.

The amendment was put to a card vote and the class stand of the Labour Party and the TUC was shown to the World. 203,000 for the amendment; 2,280,000 against. The original proposal was put and passed easily.

Larkin was speechless with rage and disgust. Connolly faced them with great dignity:

"I and my colleagues from Dublin are here under a deep sense of humiliation. It would have been better for the conference to have first endeavoured to try and settle the Dublin dispute and afterwards wash their dirty linen. The reverse has however been the case."

Connolly warned:

"We in Dublin will not necessarily accept all the resolutions passed at this conference."

The Special Conference was delayed as long as possible and never had any real chance of developing support for Dublin. There can be no serious argument against the obvious - the goal of the Dublin bosses and that of the British TUC were one and the same - to smash Larkin, Larkinism and all forms of revolutionary trade unionism. The conference was called to finalise the betrayal of the Dublin workers, to end the struggle before it further increased the militancy of the rank and file in Britain and before more damage was done to the bourgeois 'respectability' of the British labour movement. The Conference sealed the fate of the Dublin workers.

AFTERMATH

Larkin and Connolly maintained hope that rank and file action could still be won. The day after the conference, Larkin carried the struggle back to Scotland. In Glasgow where 4,000 turned out to hear him, he again asked for sympathetic action - that workers "should use our economic power for our own salvation." Once again it was the Irish national minority in Glasgow that had led the movement there. As Harry McShane has pointed out, politics in Glasgow before the First World War, were Irish politics. He recalls the Dublin lockout as the "highpoint of struggle before 1914-1918 War." The whole movement came together in those years and seemed to undergo a transformation. By the outbreak of the war, the majority of the old British Socialist Party were industrial workers and the old shopkeeper element seemed to disappear." He also notes that during the lockout was the only time when street collections were made for strikers in Glasgow. These preparations were the basis for the Red Clyde as was the lockout for the 1916 Uprising. In each case the link between the national and class question was vital in the development.

The next day Larkin went to Edinburgh, also with a large Irish population, where he spoke to an estimated 7,000. At the end of the meeting "the platform was stormed by sympathisers, eager to shake Mr. Larkin by the hand."

In Dublin the struggle went through December with outbreaks of violence. Scabs shot workers without fear of arrest and the ICA continued to drill. Many of the ICA were lost to the Irish Volunteers because they could provide guns. The Ancient Order of Hibernians continued their reactionary activities, smashing up the printing equipment of the 'Irish Worker', the police refusing to arrest them, and also attacking a meeting of the Irish Volunteers in Cork City.

The week after, the Congress negotiations were attempted and broke down on December 20, the issue of reinstatement again the sticking point. This was the last attempt at a negotiated settlement. The British union leaders ordered their men to work scab ships and defeated further attempt at sympathetic action. The foodships ceased to arrive.

Men began to drift back to work as the financial aid from Britain began to dwindle. The violence continued and a young girl was shot and killed by a scab. He was acquitted on a judge's order. The union leaders had a closed meeting on January 18, 1914, telling the men to return to work if they were not asked to sign the 'document'. After this large numbers returned.

Women and girls returning to work were subjected to cruel treatment in many cases. Some were paraded before scabs, managers and foremen while insults were hurled at them, comments about their poor clothes, the state of their health and their physical appearance. Some, in an attempt to humiliate and degrade them, were made to undergo medical examinations even when there was no intention of giving them jobs.

On January 30, Larkin stated what had become obvious:
"we are beaten, we will make no bones about it; but
we are not too badly beaten still to fight Will our
men sign this document? No!"

The Building Labourers Union however, numbering about 3,000 members agreed to return to work and were forced to accept the bosses' terms: no membership of the Transport Union and no sympathetic strikes. The Dublin Relief Fund was closed on February 11, 1914, as to all intents and purposes this particular stage of the class struggle was over.

Connolly was deeply bitter:

"And so we Irish workers must again go down into Hell, bow our heads to the lash of the slave driver, let our hearts be seared by the iron of his hatred, and instead of the sacramental wafer of brotherhood and common sacrifice, eat the dust of defeat and betrayal. Dublin is isolated."

conclusion

Connolly was indeed bitterly disappointed at the sellout he received from the British 'Labour' Movement. He learnt, what is common knowledge among the present day Irish revolutionaries, that the vast majority of the British 'left' can do and will do nothing for Ireland.

The lesson has modern parallels in the struggle for national liberation in Africa. The revolutionary forces of Zimbabwe looking at the price to be paid for outside 'aid', effectively swapping one form of foreign domination and exploitation for another with a 'left' face, responded unequivocally "WE ARE OUR OWN LIBERATORS!". So too, the struggle for Irish national liberation can only be built by the Irish themselves.

The action taken by the working men and women of Dublin was not a failure. Various Trotskyist writers, wearing their usual 'black and white' spectacles that its all class struggle, and only class struggle - its only victory or defeat - have made efforts to present it as such.

Murphy and the other bosses failed to gain the destruction of the union -- the goal they had so desperately sought. Large sections of the workers refused to sign the 'yellow document' and still got their jobs back. The end result was a stalemate, but one that shed glory on the Dublin working class.

The formation of the Irish Citizens Army was to be of deepest importance for the future development of Irish history. In just three short years it was to provide one of the main components in the climatic and history changing events of the 1916 Uprising.

The era of imperialism has introduced a universal world market subjecting all economic forces before it. In turn this has created a universal or world history in its fullest sense, one that has its own specific lessons. These lessons can be used to illuminate a specific historical moment such as Dublin, but we cannot apply the lessons of Dublin universally. This would be a collapse into idealism. However, some of the 'themes' that can be revealed in an historical study can be seen to continue today albeit in a changed and often distorted manner.

In the era of imperialism there are no pure class struggles, not that there ever has been. But most of the left in Britain says "imperialism" but views the world through the glasses of a pre-imperialist economic analysis.

This is part, and the least serious part, of the ideological blinkers worn by the left in the imperialist heartlands. The failure to grasp the essential changes that the advent of imperialism has had on the world, and particularly class politics, means that, both externally and internally, they view the revolutionary forces of the world with incomprehension.

Imperialism can be defined as, but not limited to, national oppression. It is this nationalist component of the present principal revolutionary anti-imperialist and anti-hegemonist struggles that is ignored or even attacked by the so-called left in the imperialist heartlands.

In the era of imperialism national struggle is in the last analysis class struggle. The success or failure of that struggle is determined by the internal class relationships of the oppressed nation, but this does not change the fundamental nature of the struggle.

The 'left' in the imperialist nations either does not 'recognize' these struggles for what they are, or simply uses, or attempts to use them for their own purposes. In either case, this is the expression of a West-Centered or more properly, a Euro-centric distortion of revolutionary marxism. Such a distortion must be theoretically, ideologically and finally politically smashed before serious advance can be made towards re-developing the revolutionary movements in the imperialistic and hegemonistic heartlands. Regardless the peoples of the world will continue to assert their struggles in practice with or without the racist and chauvinist "help" of the Eurocentric 'left'.

The role of the national minority peoples has become subjected to the blinkered view of the pro-imperialist 'left'. National oppression cannot be reduced to class struggle between workers and the bourgeoisie. The existence of national oppression requires a national response; implicit in that response is the possibility, even the probability, of an all-class alliance against national oppression. Which class of the national minority peoples leads that struggle will be determined by the internal dialectic operant inside the specific nationality.

It is of course necessary to point out that the success of that struggle is also dependant on which class leads it but this is not open, or should be open to the manipulations of organisations that are of the national majority. That would be a clear act of social-chauvinism and racism.

In the case of the Dublin struggle, it was the Irish national minority people who became both the leadership and the principal base of the resistance that was built in Britain. It was principally their activities that brought sections of the working class in Britain into struggle on behalf of the Dublin workers. This directly involved them in an anti-imperialist struggle against the Irish comprador bourgeoisie and the British imperialist bourgeoisie.

Additionally, it must be noted that the other areas of deepest support, where proletarian internationalism was a living force among the working class and not just political organisations, was in the oppressed nations of Scotland and Wales.

National minority organisations, such as the Gaelic League, were of extreme importance to the struggle as it developed. When the national and class struggles of the Dublin workers were adopted by the Irish national minority workers in Britain they became an extremely potent force. They took up the call in the docks, the railways and factories, and not only united as communities in the face of the brutal oppression going on in their homeland, but also pulled forward important sections of the working class in Britain.

The Labour Party and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) were revealed for what they are, both are the products of imperialism and its active agents; the bourgeoisie's allies inside the working class and imperialism's first line of defence inside the working class. Externally, they are the enemies of the peoples of the world!

At the same time, the working class in Britain is not the same now as in 1913. The post-war advent of the welfare state has greatly eased the internal contradictions facing the bourgeoisie. It is the national minority peoples who are presently conducting the most resolute and principled struggle inside Britain, in that their struggle is essentially an anti-imperialist struggle, albeit of necessity a defensive one. In turn, they are isolated from the majority working class by the high level of racism and chauvinism that has bitten deeply into the class, and which social-democracy feeds on.

Years of trade union and economist leadership from a British 'left', which is also steeped in a 'left' version of racism and social chauvinism, means that there is no mass base for anti-imperialism inside the working class at the present time. It must be clearly understood that most forms of economist class struggles are well within the imperialist system and rather than being a challenge to it (despite the dreams of the 57 variety of Trotskyists) are in fact an accepted part of it.

Finally, the deep importance of the Irish revolution to the development of the struggle in Britain. The struggle against opportunism must be first directed against the deep social chauvinism that rots the vast majority of the British 'left'.

Ireland and the Irish struggle is a watershed: people must choose- either support British imperialism, in any of its multi-fold guises, or support unconditionally the war of national liberation now being conducted by the Republican Movement. There is no middle path. A clear militant stand must be taken in support of the Irish people's right to self-determination, their right to fight as they see fit and their right to choose their own leadership.

No other position is possible for anyone wishing to call themselves revolutionary.

" In the streets the children sang
It's a wrong thing to crush the workers
It's a wrong thing to do. "

-- Dublin Strike song.



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D O C U M E N T S

Throughout Vietnam's ten year occupation of Kampuchea, the Democratic Kampuchea Party, through its President, Khieu Samphan, has put forward a number of proposals for a political settlement.

In their search for national reconciliation significant concessions have been made as in the March 1986 "Eight - Point Peace Plan" issued by the three party coalition government.

In spite of the goodwill shown by the Democratic Kampuchea Party, it is clear that we are now witnessing the manoeuvring of parties involved in the Kampuchean conflict against the D.K.P.

As 'Class Struggle' reported in September 1988, there is a concerted attempt "to prevent the resurgence of the strongest resistance force in a post-settlement Kampuchea."

The document reproduced here was issued in August 1988 after the inconclusive informal meetings held in Indonesia between the forces of the Coalition Government and Vietnam and its client, Hun Sen.

It focuses on the real nature of the conflict in Kampuchea, and puts forward measures to guarantee a settlement agreement. It is a comprehensive testimony of the D.K.P.'s future intentions.

* * * *

PROPOSAL OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA FOR A COMPREHENSIVE
POLITICAL SETTLEMENT OF THE PROBLEM OF KAMPUCHEA

* Foreward *

Democratic Kampuchea has constantly demonstrated its goodwill to promote a political settlement of the problem of Kampuchea. As one partner of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK), Democratic Kampuchea has wholeheartedly supported the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions on Kampuchea over the past 9 years.

Moreover, Democratic Kampuchea has actively cooperated with all the forces of the CGDK in working out and putting forward successive proposals for a political settlement of the Kampuchean problem, such as :

- The CGDK's 8-point peace plan of 17 March 1986, which is a generous, comprehensive and reasonable proposal for Kampuchea as well as for the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRVN) and for peace, security and stability of South-East Asia and the world at large. The overwhelming majority of the international community has welcomed and expressed its strong support to that proposal, but the SRVN has flatly rejected it.
- The CGDK's proposal dated 25 June 1988. It represents a new significant concession from Democratic Kampuchea which accepts the simultaneous dismantling of the state of Democratic Kampuchea and the so-called "People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK)", a smoke-screen used by the SRVN in Phnom Penh in its attempt to cover its aggression in Kampuchea. The SRVN has again rejected that proposal.

Promoted by its constant goodwill to arrive at an earliest political settlement of the Kampuchean problem so that the people of Kampuchea and those of Vietnam can enjoy again peace and security, the threat to the regions of South-East Asia and Asia-Pacific is removed, and Kampuchea can become an independent and neutral country, Democratic Kampuchea would like to present a new proposal for a comprehensive political settlement of the problem of Kampuchea.

We believe that, in order to allow our friends the world over to see better the goodwill of Democratic Kampuchea, it would be necessary to recall a number of basic elements on the real nature of the Kampuchean problem.

A NUMBER OF BASIC ELEMENTS ON THE REAL NATURE OF THE PROBLEM OF KAMPUCHEA

Democratic Kampuchea is of the view that in the search of a comprehensive political settlement, one should keep constantly in mind the real nature of the problem and should be guided by a number of fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Indeed, to do otherwise would not lead to a comprehensive political settlement.

1. The real nature of the Kampuchean problem has been the SRVN's aggression and occupation in Kampuchea which go on unabated since late December 1987. The United Nations has directly and seriously dealt with this problem since its 1979 34th General Assembly. It has ever since maintained the seat of Democratic Kampuchea and has adopted, over the past nine consecutive years, resolutions calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces (precisely the SRVN's aggression forces) from Kampuchea. In 1979, the UNGA resolution on Kampuchea received 91 favourable votes. This number has increased each year and reached 117 in 1987.

This is a clear-cut pronouncement of the overwhelming majority of the international community on the real nature of the Kampuchean problem. The SRVN has no pretext whatsoever to invade and occupy Kampuchea.

2. Therefore, based on such a real nature of the problem, a comprehensive political solution can only be found through direct negotiations between the SRVN and the CGDK, who is leading the Kampuchean people's struggle, for almost ten years now, to liberate Kampuchea from the SRVN's grip. It must be solved in such a way because the warring parties are :

- i) the aggressor, who is the SRVN;
- ii) the CGDK, who is leading the Kampuchean people's struggle against the SRVN war of aggression.

If the two warring parties do not negotiate with each other, and instead leave others to solve the Kampuchean problem; and if the SRVN continues to try to evade its own responsibility, a solution can never be found. Other countries, which are not the warring parties, can only help.

3. In the framework of a comprehensive political settlement, it is necessary to distinguish the pressing key issue of the problem from the issues that come after the withdrawal of all the SRVN's aggression forces from Kampuchea :

FIRST : THE PRESSING KEY ISSUE

The pressing key issue of the Kampuchean problem is the withdrawal, under international supervision, of all the SRVN's aggression forces.

If the SRVN continues to refuse to negotiate with the CGDK and to withdraw all its aggression forces from Kampuchea, a solution to the Kampuchean problem can not be found, and Kampuchea can not become an independent and neutral country. The war in Kampuchea will go on. Peace and security will not be restored both in Kampuchea and in Vietnam, and the threat to peace, security and stability of South-East Asia will not be removed.

Moreover, if the SRVN continues to refuse to deal with the withdrawal of its aggression forces from Kampuchea, and instead tries to raise other issues to be tackled first, it will be impossible to arrive at a settlement. If the SRVN continues to do so, this will be tantamount to "putting the cart before the horse". What the SRVN tries to do is to evade its own responsibility and to divert the issue so that it can forever occupy Kampuchea.

SECOND : ISSUES COMING AFTER THE COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF THE SRVN'S AGGRESSION FORCES FROM KAMPUCHEA

After the withdrawal of all the SRVN's aggression forces from Kampuchea all other issues of Kampuchea are internal matters of the Kampuchean people. They must be left to the Kampuchean people to decide by themselves in accordance with the principle of the right of each people to self-determination free from any outside interference. This is one of the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, which is generally accepted in the world and must be observed.

However, taking into account the views of various Kampuchean parties and concerned countries on the Kampuchean problem, Democratic Kampuchea is also of the view that a number of issues could be raised among the four Kampuchean parties and concerned countries within the framework of an international conference on Kampuchea. Those issues are inter alia:

- National reconciliation among all Kampucheans and among all political parties or factions regardless of their past and their political tendencies;
- The setting up of a provisional quadripartite government to organize direct, free and general elections of a Constituent Assembly which will endow the country with a new Constitution;
- Among the issues coming after the Vietnamese withdrawal:

On the one hand, some people are worried about "the return of the Khmer Rouge to power alone or to dominate the others" because those people have clearly seen that the force of Democratic Kampuchea has been playing a very important role in the current national liberation struggle against the Vietnamese aggressors on the battle field over the past ten years.

But on the other hand, the whole people of Kampuchea, at home and abroad, fear the Vietnamese aggression and annexation of their country. For many generations, this fear has never died down because at stake is the very survival of Kampuchea as a people and a nation. They have been worrying whether Kampuchea could become a second Kampuchea Krom (Cochin-China) or a second Champa.

Besides, the majority of the countries of South-East Asia, Asia-Pacific and the world at large have been also worried about the Vietnamese expansionism, at present and in the future, because Vietnam has its own regional expansionist policy and is an ally, a military base and, at the same time, an outpost of the Soviet Union with its global strategy and its expansionist policy in South-East Asia and Asia-Pacific.

Therefore, the whole people of Kampuchea, at home and abroad, and the countries and peoples of South-East Asia, Asia-Pacific and the world at large, see the need to have appropriate measures to prevent Vietnam from implementing its expansionist strategy so as to enable the Kampuchea people to live in peace and security within an independent, neutral and non-aligned Kampuchea, and to secure peace, security and stability in South-East Asia and Asia-Pacific.

In the light of the afore-cited situation, the world can clearly see that the so-called "Khmer Rouge problem" and the problem of Vietnamese expansion are two problems whose nature is far apart.

The concern of some people about the "Khmer Rouge problem", whether reasonable or not, is on a matter that falls within the boundaries of a country, not a threat to peace, security and stability of South-East Asia, whereas the threat of Vietnamese expansionism does constitute a very grave danger not only for the survival of the people and nation of Kampuchea but also for South-East Asia as a whole.

Even in such a condition, Democratic Kampuchea which has been prompted by its sincere spirit to uphold the interests of the great national union in the liberation and defence of the country higher than anything else, agrees that all effective measures should be worked out:

1. To ensure that Democratic Kampuchea cannot return to power alone, and any one Kampuchean party cannot dominate the others. This is for the sake of maintaining peace, security and stability within the Kampuchean national society.
2. To ensure at the same time that after the withdrawal, Vietnam will not be able to implement its "Indochina Federation" strategy and its regional expansionist policy in accordance with its claims to be an outpost of the Socialist bloc and as it has done so. This is for the sake of ensuring peace and security in Kampuchea as well as peace, security and stability in South-East Asia.

To sum up, we believe that the real nature of the Kampuchean problem and a number of fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, as mentioned earlier, are touch-stones to be tested on any proposal for a political settlement of the Kampuchean problem whether it is correct, reasonable and sincere or simply a trick.

* PROPOSAL OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA *

The Pressing Key Issue

1. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRVN) must withdraw all its aggression forces from Kampuchea within a definite time-table, under genuine international supervision, in the frame-work of an overall agreement.
2. Once an overall agreement on the withdrawal of all the SRVN aggression forces from Kampuchea is signed, there will be a cease fire among all the parties throughout Kampuchea.

Issues Coming After The Withdrawal
Of All The SRVN's Aggression Forces
From Kampuchea

1. At the last phase of the withdrawal of the SRVN forces from Kampuchea, the following measures will be taken:
 - a. Simultaneous dismantling of the "People's Republic of Kampuchea" and the state of Democratic Kampuchea;
 - b. Setting up of a provisional quadripartite government under the Presidency of H.R.H. Samdech Norodom Sihanouk;
 - c. Confining to barracks all the armed forces of the four Kampuchean parties, under the supervision of a quadripartite Kampuchean Commission and international supervision.
2. The provisional quadripartite government will organize, under international supervision, direct, free and general elections of a Constituent Assembly which will endow the country with a new Constitution. The new Constitution will determine the name of the country, the national flag and anthem, the political regime as well as the judiciary, administrative, economic, financial, social, religious, cultural, educational and press system of the country.
3. On the future national army:
 - During the transitional period, setting up of a quadripartite army, with an equal strength of each of the 4 Kampuchean armed forces, under a quadripartite General Staff;
 - Organizing one National Army according to the new Constitution of Kampuchea, adopted by the Constituent Assembly.

4. Measures to guarantee the agreement on the Kampuchean problem:

After an agreement on a comprehensive political settlement of the Kampuchean problem is reached, an International Conference will be convened with the participation of all concerned countries and those of the 5 Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council as well as the U.N. General Secretary in order to find out effective measures to guarantee the agreement and the independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of Kampuchea.

To reach these objectives, the International Conference could be discussed a number of issues as follows:

- a. the guarantee of the agreement by the 5 Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council;
- b. the setting up of an international mechanism, be it a United Nations International Commission or another International Commission, or any other measure, which the four Kampuchean parties and all the countries attending the International Conference agree upon in order to prevent Democratic Kampuchea or any one Kampuchean party from dominating the others, and to prevent the SRVN from committing again acts of aggression against Kampuchea.

5. To ensure peace and security in Kampuchea, in the SRVN and in South-East Asia, there will be a peace and non-aggression treaty between Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam or better still a peace and non-aggression treaty among Kampuchea, Vietnam and other countries of South-East Asia.

6. An independent, neutral and non-aligned Kampuchea will establish good relations in all fields with all the countries in the world, from the West, from the East and from the neutral and non-aligned countries, and welcome the assistance of all countries to rebuild Kampuchea after the liberation, and investments from any countries.

15 August 1988

(signed) KHIEU SAMPHAN
President of Democratic Kampuchea
Party

* ANNEX *

THE DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA PARTY'S STAND ON
THE NATIONAL DEFENCE POLICY

The fundamental policy of the Democratic Kampuchea party stems from its clear perception of the regional -- South-East Asia and Asia-Pacific -- geopolitical context in which Kampuchea is evolving and which will not likely to change for many decades to come.

Against this geopolitical foreground, and for the sake of the very survival of Kampuchea, it is imperative to have suitable internal and external policies so as to ensure the great national union and the support of the international community.

Therefore it is not our intention to seek the monopoly of power.

At present, Democratic Kampuchea together with the coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) firmly abides by the relevant United Nations resolutions on Kampuchea and the CGDK's 8-Point peace proposal for a political settlement of the Kampuchean problem, for the withdrawal of all the Vietnamese aggression forces from Kampuchea and for the national reconciliation among all Kampuchean.

In the future, the Democratic Kampuchea policy on national defence will be as follows:

1. We will firmly pursue the great national union policy.
2. We will firmly abide by the 8-Point political programme considered from now on as the basis of the national Charter of Kampuchea.
3. We will honour our commitment to work within the framework of the free enterprise system and the liberal democratic regime.
4. We will firmly remain committed to the policy of an independent, neutral and non-aligned Kampuchea, which dictates the necessity to establish relations with all countries, near and far, on the basis of the five principles of peaceful co-existence, and not to authorize the stationing of any foreign military base on Kampuchea's territory.
5. There will be one and only national army that has to be hammered out in accordance with the above-mentioned great national union policy and the 8-Point political programme.

In practical terms, the question of that one and only national army will be discussed on the basis of the above-listed 4-point policy on national defence and the consensus decision-making rule, either within:

- i. the present tripartite Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, or
- ii. the quadripartite coalition government to be organised according to Point 4 of the CGDK's 8-Point peace plan of 17 March 1986, or
- iii. the coalition government to be formed after the elections.

The objective is to have all national forces discuss among themselves the problem of that national army, which shall be under the control of the Ministry of National Defence, with only one High Command and one General Staff, and shall have its own rules and regulations. The national army shall be sanctioned by the National Assembly or shall be recognised by the whole Kampuchean people through referendum.

8 March 1987

(signed) KHIEU SAMPHAN
President of the
Democratic Kampuchea party

EUROCENTRISM AND THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

Eurocentrism and the Communist Movement

This 104-page pamphlet, produced by New Era Publications, explores how the development of a Europe-centred political and economic system has had a deep impact on the theory and practice of the European left.

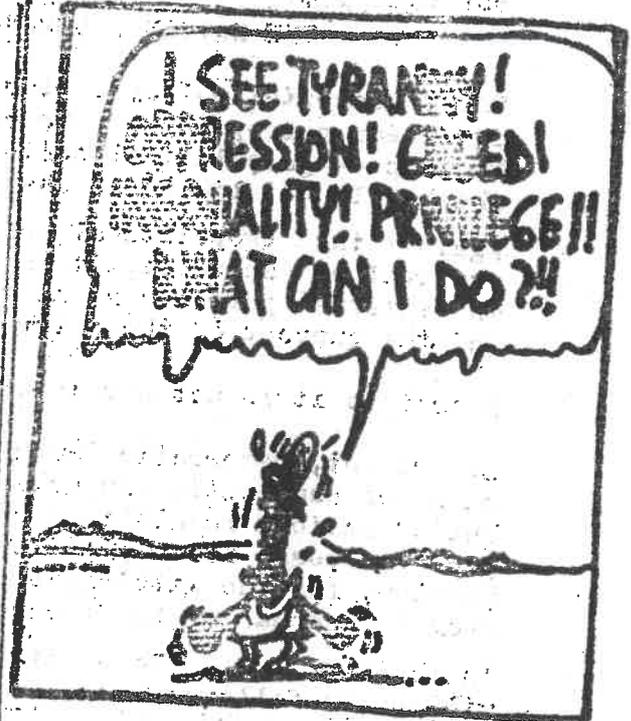


Because Eurocentrism is the predominant ideology of capitalist society, it crops up also within the 'left' movement. It is not inevitable that the left will be sucked into this trap, but it will tend to be drawn into the dominant ideological system unless it consistently adopts historical materialism, adopts the standpoint of humanity as a whole and above all incorporates centrally into its ideology and politics not just the lessons of the practical revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nations, but also their theoretical achievements. The 'left' variant of Eurocentrism is essentially the same as the openly bourgeois forms, but it has certain specific features in terms of form. It is the main purpose of this paper to investigate 'left' Eurocentrism, and it may be useful here to give a brief definition. It does the following things:

1. It builds upon the bourgeois unilinear theory of 'social progress' (with Europe as the highest point, leading factor and universal point of reference of world history), extending this beyond the point of capitalism (where the bourgeoisie stops short), so that Europe also becomes the factor leading the world forward to socialism.
2. It uses a semblance of historical materialism to invent a historically progressive role for capitalism worldwide, during a period when capitalism was in reality only progressive in relation to the feudal system within the major European states.
3. It underplays the history of colonialism, the slave trade, etc. as a basis for the capitalist mode of production.
4. It schematises world history on the basis of the European experience and forces everything into this mould, as for example, the expectation that all societies must have a succession of the same modes of production (slave, feudal) as in Europe or are 'backward' if they have not.
5. It holds that advanced productive forces necessarily produce advanced struggles, looks down on the peasantry, conceives of revolution primarily as a sharing-out of the national cake between proletariat and bourgeoisie of particular industrialised countries and subordinates everything to this.
6. It elevates inter-imperialist contradictions above the fundamental contradiction between oppressor and oppressed nations and considers relations among the great powers to be the main events in world politics.
7. It fails to see the continuing character of super-exploitation and the unequal international division of labour as the fundamental basis for imperialism and seeks to explain the dynamics of crisis and restructuring in the contemporary world economy without giving pride of place to relations between the imperialist countries and the third world.
8. It fails to see how the main contradictions of the capitalist mode of production have been embodied in contradictions between oppressor and oppressed nations, and regards nationalism in the colonial countries as a backward, tiresome, 'drag-inducing' factor; a prejudice to be treated at best with condescension.
9. It generally regards the national liberation movement as subordinate to the supposed interests of the proletarian movement in the industrialised countries, and tells them what to do.

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Centralised State Power & the threat to Minorities in India.

The Indian People's Association in North America (IPANA) organised a Conference in Vancouver in October 1987, at the same time as the Commonwealth Conference held in the same city. It was on the theme "Centralised State Power and the Threat to Minorities in India". IPANA has a proud record of fighting fascism and supporting democratic rights and the struggle against imperialism and the domination of India by both superpowers. The main theme of the Conference is outlined in the following extracts from IPANA's Journal, Mangar, October 1987 issue:

IS INDIA DRIFTING TOWARDS FASCISM?

"Is India drifting towards fascism?" is the key question every patriotic and democratic person has to ask.

Today the country is facing the most severe crisis of its always weak, fragile and formal democracy. All minority communities - ethnic, linguistic or religious - are under attack. And of these

minorities, those that are facing the most intense, systematic and escalating attacks all over India are the religious minorities: the Muslims, the Sikhs and the Christians.

The mob violence perpetrated on the Sikhs in the form of a brutal massacre organised by the Congress Party in November 1984 has been qualitatively surpassed by the genocidal massacre of the Muslims in Meerut in the month of May 1987. It was after all, the state's own troops (the Provincial Armed Constabulary) who carried out the killing.

While Meerut is an exception in this sense, it is hardly an isolated case. The entire country is caught in the vortex of communal violence targeted at minority communities.

Traditionally oppressed groups like the Dalits (the Untouchables and other low caste people) and the Adivasis (the tribal people) are also encountering growing waves of attacks under the religious frenzy whipped up by Hindu chauvinistic organisations. In the tribal areas of Jharkhand and other regions, Christian churches and missions are burnt down or usurped. Mosques elsewhere are being openly claimed in favour of Hindu temples. Reconversion to Hinduism is being aggressively imposed.

a slide towards fascism

Belonging to a minority religion is often enough to characterise a person as an actual or potential traitor, and a threat to India's national unity and integrity. When members of minority communities assert their fundamental constitutional right to practice their religion, culture and way of life, they are branded as anti-Indian.

PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY AND SECULARISM

This attack on the minorities is mounted through the ideology of Hindu chauvinism which is used, promoted and directly assisted by the Indian state. What is of gravest concern to all democratic people is that this state-promoted violence against religious and other minorities is the product of a growing unity between a centralised and militarised state on the one hand, and the ideology of Hindu chauvinistic nationalism perpetrated by organisations like the RSS, Shiv Sena, Hindu Mahasabha, etc. on the other.

All constitutional pretensions of the Indian state being secular are gradually falling off. What is under the gun in India today are not only minority rights but the very principles of democracy and secularism. It is a slide towards fascism.

CHARTER of DEMANDS

IPANA VANCOUVER CONFERENCE

Preamble:

India is a land of great diversity. For hundreds of years people of different and mingled races with a variety of languages, religions and cultures have lived side by side in India. Despite occasional tension between regions and groups, on the whole the Indian people with their many different identities have lived together in peace and neighbourliness. The cultural heritage of India is a rich and complex web, woven by the history of this togetherness: Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jains, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs and Zoroastrians are all partners in this collective heritage. All minorities have a place in the history that is India; they are as much a part of India as anyone else. And all of them have the democratic right to maintain their identity, their right to be who they are within the Indian complex. A threat to this is not only a threat to a minority but a threat both to the principle of democracy and the historical diversity of India.

whereas, the recent years have seen an escalating attack on the basic civil and democratic rights of people belonging to religious minorities and to the traditionally oppressed groups like the Dalits (the Untouchables and other low caste people) and the Tribals in India.

whereas, this attack has ranged from large-scale massacres, through various degrees of violence against life, religious shrines, and other property, to assaults on religious sentiments, rights and heritage of minorities.

whereas, these recent developments have made belonging to minority religions equivalent to being "foreigners", and defending one's rights as a member of a minority equivalent to "anti-national" activity.

whereas, the attack on the minorities is mounted by a growing Hindu-chauvinistic ideology and its proliferating organization with the active cooperation of the Indian state.

whereas, the Indian state has increasingly become identified with the interests of Hindu-chauvinism and the notion of Hindu nation.

whereas, these developments constitute a rapid and grave erosion of the ideas of secularism and democracy in India, and forbode a fascist society, in which religious and nationalist chauvinism are united with the power of the state.

BE IT RESOLVED that the above concerns and the following demands be placed before Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, as well as before the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, at the time of the Commonwealth Conference to be held in Vancouver in October.

THE DEMANDS :

1. That the Indian state maintain the ideal of secularism inscribed in the Indian Constitution by respecting the rights of all religious groups, but neither identifying with nor intervening in the internal affairs of any religion;
2. That it guarantee the democratic right of people to practice any religion without discrimination and prejudice and stop all harassment of people on the basis of their religious identification;
3. That it actively defend the minorities against violence, insults and encroachments on their religious and cultural heritage;
4. That it stop all atrocities against the Dalits and the tribals; and
5. That it bring to justice all who have been implicated in acts of violence against minorities, both those who have participated in or encouraged these acts and those who have permitted them by their calculated inaction.

* * * * *

PRIOR to the conference, the IPANA issued a statement to clarify the political orientation of the gathering, and express its concern about the rapid erosion of democratic and secular values in India. It characterised the defence of minority rights as "an urgent democratic struggle of the Indian people".

We re-publish a selection from this statement :

DEFENCE OF MINORITY RIGHTS

An Urgent Democratic Struggle of the Indian People

Several friends of IPANA, in Vancouver and outside, have raised questions and doubts about the Conference we are organizing in October on the question of the minorities in India. These are friends of long standing whose comradely fraternity, support and solidarity we have valued through the years, and with whom we have engaged in collective practice in the service of our people and our homeland. Furthermore, the questions and doubts they are raising, we believe, come from both a sincere desire to serve our people and the homeland, as well as from a spirit of fraternal and constructive criticism. We take this opportunity to respond to many points raised, and to clarify our stand.

The questions raised fall in two broad categories :

I. THE POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF THE CONFERENCE:

Doubts have been expressed about our very basic formulation that there is an organized, calculated attack on the religious and other minorities in India. Those who accept this formulation as correct have expressed doubts, nonetheless, if the notion of the growing Hindu chauvinistic ideology has any merit, or if this ideology is backed by the Indian state and by the Congress Party. Some say that even if Hindu chauvinism is growing, it is not so much of a threat to the people and the country as the chauvinism of the minorities - particularly that of the "Khalistani fanatics". It is these fanatics in Punjab, they say, who are killing the progressives and the communists. Our principal task, these friends maintain, is to therefore oppose these fanatics.

A question has also been raised as to what is our stand on Khalistan. Since our original call (dated June 26, 1967) was silent on Khalistan and only talked about the state-sponsored threats to religious and other minorities, we are told that the proposed Conference would only end-up supporting the Khalistanis. This would be all the more so, in view of the fact that we plan to invite representatives from various gurudwaras to participate in the Conference.

It has also been said that the main thrust of the Conference appears to be anti-Hindu.

And, finally, it has been stated that the orientation of IPANA's proposed Conference is reactionary because it ignores the class question, does not rely on class solidarity and class struggle as the motive force of change, and instead pampers the backward notions of religion and religious identities of the people.

II. OUR PROPOSED INVITEE FROM INDIA : SYED SHAHABUDDIN

The second category of doubts have expressed concern about our choice of Mr. Syed Shahabuddin as the main guest from India for the Conference. It is alleged that Shahabuddin belongs to Janata Party, the party which oppressed the Indian people, just like the Congress Party, during its brief rule in the late 70's. It has been said that Shahabuddin is after all a bourgeois politician and could not thus be expected to be a genuine friend of the Indian people. Still others have questioned Mr. Shahabuddin's stands on the Shah Bano case and on Babri Masjid, and have characterized him as anti-women and as essentially a religious fundamentalist.

... The growth of Hindu chauvinistic organizations and ideology by itself could not be very disturbing. What makes it specially dangerous is the growing identity of the Hindu-chauvinistic ideology with Indian nationalism. It is not simply a chauvinism asserting the superiority of Hindu religion over others; it blatantly asserts that being an Indian is being a Hindu. In other words, the very definition of Indian nationhood is being couched in religious terms. Already in many parts of the country aggressive campaigns are on way to impose "shudhikaran" - to reconvert Dalits and tribals back to Hinduism. A certain psyche is already in the making which treats non-Hindus with suspicion, as aliens. It should also be noted that many of these organizations have been training and arming its members, thus acquiring a militaristic character. In addition, there is a parallel development in the ideological sphere. A sizable number of intellectuals and journalists have emerged as the ideologues of this new trend... But what makes the growing Hindu-chauvinistic ideology, the spread of militaristic Hindu chauvinistic organizations, and the growing assertion of the identity between Hinduism and Indian nationhood, extremely alarming and a matter of grave concern for all democratic people is the fact that behind all these developments lies the full might of Indian state in general and the Congress party rule in particular. It is this emerging unity between a highly centralized and highly militarized state on the one hand and the rapidly spreading ideology of Hindu chauvinism that needs to be grasped as a key centrality of contemporary Indian reality.

Even the most unabashed apologists of the Congress would concede that the roots of the present-day Punjab problems go back to the policies of the central government. The government of Mrs. Indira Gandhi intervened in the affairs of Punjab in a manner which had the consequence of creating a division among the Akalis, among the Sikhs, between the Sikhs and the Hindus, and between Punjab and the rest of India. More importantly, the events of Punjab became the rallying point for the crystallization of the Hindu chauvinistic ideology, for the militant assertion that India was a Hindu Rashtra, and for the notion that the state and the Congress Party were the saviors of this great Rashtra. A state machinery which already had a highly disproportionate concentration of upper caste Hindus in its bureaucracy, with the shift in Congress strategy, began to take more and more an appearance of a Hindu state. Beginning with the early eighties, most of the old Hindu chauvinistic organizations (like the RSS) openly shifted their allegiance to the Congress Party. The new ones emerged, by and large, under Congress patronage...

The issue is not one of Hindu vs. Muslim, or Hindu vs. Sikh. It is one of the forces of democracy and secularism vs the forces of chauvinism and fascism.

Chauvinism, of course, is not limited to only the Hindus. Strong streaks of it could be found among all religious, and also linguistic, groups. No one denies that. But it is the ideology of the Hindu chauvinistic organizations which is imposing its will and uniformity on the country as a whole.

The process and the campaign is already on. "The Hindu is an alien in Hindustan; he must be activated." "We must channelise the dynamism of the Hindu society, which has been lying dormant. Once we are able to awaken this sleeping giant all our ills will evaporate." "Hindus must be mobilized to create the Hindu nation". "Hindu politics must be emphasized to make India a complete Hindu nation." "We Hindus have been at the receiving end for too long." "The country of our ancestors is being split. We must foster nationalism of the German or Japanese variety". These are the voices of the leaders of the various old and new organizations. To assume that these are mere empty threats would be naive and irresponsible. RSS today has over 3500 shakas (branches) all over India with a million dedicated workers. The numerical strength of the members of the various armed Senas is estimated to be over 50,000. Then there is the State - at various levels - , losing all its facade of secularism, and openly becoming partisan. Countless number of district level officers (Collectors, Magistrates, Police Superintendents) are active members of chauvinistic organizations; some in fact leading them.

"Fostering nationalism of the German and Japanese variety" may very well appear to be a far cry. But all the necessary ingredients are building up.

(i) A crisis in the polity : the ability of the rulers to continue to rule eroding day by day; the crisis of legitimacy and credibility of the rulers. It is all there in today's India, much more so than it was in the days of 1974-75. (ii) A continuous build-up of repressive machinery, draconian laws, and suppression of all dissent. It has been going on for a long time; is getting intensified lately. The Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act passed in 1985, already an extremely repressive legislation, was amended in August of this year : "confessions" made (or extorted) in a police lock-up will be considered grounds for charges. Does one need to elaborate on the implications of this? And it is done with a super-patriotic vein : "British rulers presumed that the Indian policemen were untrustworthy. Are we going to live with that kind of a slur on our police force?", the Minister of state for Home told parliament on August 24. Attacks on dissent : on September 1, all the eleven offices of the Indian Express, throughout India, were simultaneously raided by police, tax and customs officials. (iii) A nationalistic hysteria : orchestrated voices that the unity and integrity of the country is in peril. Not just a hollow or abstract fear. Not just the known or unknown outside enemies. But clearly identifiable enemies of the nation within. The Sikhs. The Muslims. The Gorkhas. The Jharkhandis. Whoever asks for their constitutional rights, or regional, linguistic rights, become threat to India's unity. The low-caste, the untouchables, who in order to free themselves from their age-old repression adopt Islam, Christianity, or even Buddhism, become alien. And, (iv) The social ideology of the Hindu Rashtra. The glorification of the past, the Aryavrata. And a large-scale militaristic preparation to impose this ideology...

Minorities are deeply threatened everywhere in today's India. Their legitimate and growing aspiration for equality and justice in the so-called independent and secular India has been meeting with oppressive denial from forces of Hindu chauvinism and the state. All oppressions are not similar. A Dalit is oppressed because Hindu religion defines his identity as an "untouchable". His struggle is then fundamentally against this identity that is imposed on him, and against the religion that imposes it. In the case of religious, cultural and linguistic minorities, their oppression is in fact an attack on their very identity; it questions their right to be who they are and practice what they do. When a Sikh or a Muslim is attacked or called "anti-national", it is his right to be a Sikh or a Muslim that is attacked. In this situation, and in view of all the developments identified above, the defense of a minority identity is a fundamental human rights issue, and the most urgent and democratic political task : i.e., the defense of a Sikh's right to be a Sikh without facing any discrimination, stigma, or inequality. In such situations, if someone says that religion is a reactionary force, and one should not think of people as Sikhs or Muslims, but only as workers, Panjabis, or Indians, etc., it can only amount to joining hands with those who are oppressing a Sikh for being a Sikh, or a Muslim for being a Muslim. It may seem to be a very progressive, a communist position; in effect it is idealistic, isolationist, and reactionary.

It is quite likely that when a religious or cultural identity is under attack, the most reactionary section of the minority community will be in the forefront of the defense. That is because the defensive struggle is first of all conservative. The Dalit's struggle is to blow up an identity imposed on him. The struggle of the oppressed religious minority, on the other hand, is to conserve the identity threatened with assimilation, liquidation, or even genocide. The people whose institutional task it is to do this are the priests and the most backward among the religious writers and elders; i.e. precisely those who have always resisted change. These come to the fore in defense of the people and their identity, and religious fanaticism and fundamentalism grow : they grow because they tap/feed on the power of people's anger against oppression. In such situations just condemning fanatics or asking people to not listen to reactionary fundamentalists is useless. If people were not angry, these forces would have little grip on them. If people had a better way of fighting this particular fight (and not some other fight progressives or communists want) they would take that way.

Does it mean, then, that we support or condone fundamentalism, chauvinism, or fanaticism in the minority communities? The answer is very clearly no. We support or condone fundamentalism and fanaticism in neither minority nor majority communities. But the two things cannot be judged against each other, by placing them on the two sides of the same scale. The two phenomena are vastly different. For one thing, if there is growing fundamentalism in the minority communities, it is only defensive, a response to the escalating attacks on them. Even more important is the question: on whose side does the Indian state stand, with all its militaristic, political and ideological might? Minority fundamentalism has grown under attack, while Hindu chauvinism has emerged under the benevolence and encouragement from the state. One is a negative reaction; the other an affirmation of the state's endeavors. One is labelled as menacing, dangerous, an enemy of the nation, while the other is trumpeted as a savior of the nation. To oppose, even to condemn, fundamentalism in the minority community is one thing. But to put it at par with state-sponsored Hindu chauvinistic ideology and organizations is quite another. Those who condemn both in the same measure not only fail to see the difference between cause and effect, between assault and defense, but also relinquish their responsibility to stand by the besieged minorities. And those who seek the state's help, or arms from the state in the name of fighting terrorism of the minority, only serve to assist the state in its devious design.

Opposition to fundamentalism and chauvinism in the minority communities could only come from democratic forces. If such forces are not there, or if they are weak, they could be developed or strengthened not by condemning fundamentalism or chauvinism in those communities but by openly and unequivocally standing on the side of the minorities in their struggle to defend their culture, their way of life, their beliefs, and also their very survival. Defending each and every minority in its struggle against the state-endorsed fascistic onslaught, linking the struggles of different minorities together, and with the democratic forces in the country as a whole, is the most important task in today's India. Does it mean pampering the backward ideas of the people, abandoning the class perspective? No it does not. A perspective which does not take into account the designs of the state and of the ruling classes, does not analyse the motivating factors behind those designs, and does not develop adequate responses to those designs, cannot be called a class perspective. It is idealistic. A perspective which does not motivate people to act at the time of genocidal attacks because those being killed are not workers, peasants, or communists, but happen to be Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, or Dalits, is a reactionary perspective.

It is true that in recent years a section of the Sikh people have been raising the demand for Khalistan. What is our stand on it? We maintain that Khalistan has become an issue among the Sikh people because the repressive, militaristic policies of the Indian state and the forces of Hindu chauvinism used and promoted by it, have assaulted the sentiments, dignity and human rights of the Sikhs, and have made their lives insecure in India. We also maintain that it is the right of all people to live in security and dignity, even to the extent of seeking a separate homeland: in principle the right of self-determination by a people must be recognized. We however maintain that the quest for Khalistan is an incorrect solution at the present time: the solution lies in the united struggle of all minorities, the oppressed people, and all democratic forces for a country in which all can live in dignity and security. We also condemn all violence which victimizes innocent people, including the violence of the separatist extremists, because it is essentially anti-people and anti-democratic, and because it vitiates the growth of unity among the oppressed minorities and the democratic forces. Those who are critical of the Conference on the grounds that it might give support to the idea of Khalistan must realize that it has been made into an issue by the policies or lack of policies of the state.



Criticism of the 'Revolutionary Internationalist Movement'

Introduction

After the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 and the ending of the Cultural Revolution, a strong right opportunist trend developed in the Marxist-Leninist movement in the imperialist and capitalist countries. Many organisations had been sectarian and ultra-leftist in their policies and practice during the period of the Cultural Revolution, and they had failed to develop strategies and tactics for political advance appropriate to the conditions of their countries, instead tailing real or imagined policies of the Communist Party of China. Now, the majority began to re-evaluate their previous practice. Some did so on the basis of continuing to hold to Marxism-Leninist; others began to reject it.

Organisations such as the Communist Party of Portugal (Marxist-Leninist) used the Three Worlds Theory to justify a rightist line of subordinating every other issue to that of uniting all possible forces against Soviet social-imperialism, which meant aiming for a united front with their own ruling classes and US imperialism. Marxism-Leninist, such as the necessity for a revolutionary party to lead the struggle for socialism, and the vanguard role of the working class in that fight, and ended up liquidating themselves.

In these circumstances, it was inevitable that an ultra-left trend should develop, leaning very heavily on the re-assertion of the old and safe certainties of the Cultural Revolution. Today, this trend is organised in the main within the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM). This contains organisations which may make serious political errors, but which have a significant base in their countries, such as the Communist Party of Peru organisation which is more widely known as 'Sendero Luminoso' (Shining Path), as well as insignificant groups which draw much of the strength they do have, from associating themselves with more credible RIM groups.

The following article was written by a person who broke with RIM followers in Britain for a while, before going back to them. It is an individual view, with important omissions and inadequacies: for example, it does not tackle the RIM's general tendency to belittle the importance of making the most of contradictions among the enemy within countries, and of rallying to the side of the revolutionary forces the 'middle forces' within societies, which include much of the petty bourgeoisie and intelligentsia. Nevertheless, the article does make sound criticisms of RIM, and can be taken as a contribution towards a more all-round critique of this trend.

ON ULTRA-LEFT REVISIONISM

Comments on the 'Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement'

Introduction

In the late '70s and '80s, the Marxist-Leninist Movement underwent a severe crisis, especially in the imperialist countries. Under the impact of this crisis (the reasons for which it is outside the scope of this article to analyse) two opportunist trends arose. One was liquidationism - questioning Marxism-Leninism itself, throwing up one's hands and despairing of revolution and, logically, dissolving parties and organisations. Another was to retreat into the womb-like comfort of dogmatism and sectarianism. This tendency - which has aptly been called ultra-left revisionism - is best exemplified by the Party of Labour of Albania (PLA) and their adherents abroad.

Most Marxist-Leninists have seen through the crude and infantile line of these people, in particular their rejection of Mao's theoretical enrichment of Marxism. But now a fresh challenge to Marxism-Leninism from the ultra-left has been mounted by the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), an international organisation of Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations. In many ways they are more dangerous than the PLA, as they claim to uphold Mao Zedong Thought (in fact, they have rejected many of Mao's most important contributions, including the mass line and the theory of new democratic revolution) and are not so transparently dogmatic and idealist as the PLA and their supporters.

One of the distinguishing features of the RIM is that they claim to have broken with certain allegedly incorrect ideas which developed in the international communist movement from the 1930s onwards. The RIM rightly criticise the PLA for wishing to return to a 'mythical doctrinal purity' of the '30s; but the RIM are attempting to return to a scarcely less mythical purity of the '20s. It is true, as the RIM say, that Marxism became to some extent ossified in the 1930s. But, on one cardinal question, its understanding was weak even in the '20s. The movement did not properly grasp that the centre of the world proletarian revolution had shifted to the east. It is precisely this which the RIM also have failed to understand. Whilst there was considerable excuse for this in the '20s, and some in the '30s, there is none now. And in fact, the RIM have rejected even the limited understanding of the '20s. The ideas of the international communist movement which the RIM have 'broken' with are in the main CORRECT ideas.

Another point of note concerning the RIM is that they are supporters of the Gang of Four. The petty-bourgeois ideology and composition of most of the Marxist-Leninist movement in the imperialist countries provided a strong basis for ultra-leftism. After Mao's death, the ultra-left felt free to indulge to the full their subjective fantasies and, moreover, to claim that Mao too was in their camp, witness their claim that Mao opposed the Three Worlds theory ('Declaration' p.25 - all refs. to the English edition). The arrest of the 'Gang' provided a 'king over the water' for the ultra-left to look to for ideological and political inspiration, much as similar elements looked to Trotsky after Lenin's death and Trotsky's defeat by the leaders of the CPSU grouped around Stalin.

Before going on to make specific criticisms of the RIM's 'Declaration', it is only fair to note, as is customary, what is correct in it. In the writer's opinion, there are valuable points in it on the history of the international communist movement; there are many abstractly correct statements of Marxist theory; and it upholds, although in a one-sided way, the theory and practice of the Cultural Revolution in China. But overall, it is characterised by an arrogant, sectarian and idealist ideological outlook and a thoroughly Eurocentric line on the world situation and the tasks of the proletariat and oppressed peoples and nations.

'Saviours From On High'

In the style of Nietzschean supermen, the RIM is going to save the world. The tone of their 'Declaration' is set early on, when, in typically unassuming style, the RIM announce that they will be 'forging an invincible barrier against revisionist and all bourgeois ideology' and that they will be found 'providing scientific leadership to and standing in the forefront of the surging revolutionary waves...' (p.6.)

The task of communist is to struggle to provide scientific leadership to the objectively existing struggle, not, as the 'Communist Manifesto' put it, to invent 'sectarian principles by which to shape and mould the movement'. Such leadership is difficult to give and can only arise out of the most painstaking and sustained investigation and analysis of concrete conditions and deep involvement in the struggles of the masses, backed up by a profound grasp of Marxist-Leninist theory. It is difficult enough for the best parties to provide this leadership - it took the CPC, for instance, decades to develop the line and policies which eventually led to victory in 1949. How much more difficult is it in today's conditions, especially in the imperialist countries, for the infant Marxist-Leninist movement to develop a correct line. This can only happen if a modest, simple and unassuming style and method of work is adhered to.

The RIM though have no doubts about their abilities and knowledge. They have all the answers, or where they have not, they will pull one out of a hat. Thus we learn, that 'in countries where no Marxist-Leninist party exists the IMMEDIATE (our emphasis) task ... there is to form such a party.' (p.28) Just like that! No hesitation here, no pause to reflect that if there is no party in a particular country, then this might well indicate that the concrete conditions are no favourable. In Britain, for instance, the number of Marxist-Leninists is tiny, their theoretical knowledge and understanding of concrete conditions is weak and their mass influence, even among advanced elements, is small by any standards. It would be an elitist, putschist act to 'immediately' form the party here. Such a 'party' would represent nobody but itself. And yet the British adherents of the RIM, the miniscule Nottingham and Stockport Communist Groups, seriously considered such a step.

A phrase which is bandied about in the RIM to justify their arrogance is 'taking on the responsibility for the movement' or, in other, less pretentious words, I'm in charge. Self-appointed leaders and parties have been ten-a-penny in the history of the revolutionary movement, from Bakunin, through Trotsky, to Jiang Qing. One thing all such leaders and parties have in common is a smug and overweening confidence in their ability and knowledge, coupled with disdain and contempt for the masses.

Such scanty references to the masses and the mass line as there are in the RIM's 'Declaration', are very revealing. Thus, the term 'mass line' is qualified by the adjective 'revolutionary'. This term is a nonsense, as becomes clear when we consider what its opposite would be - a reactionary mass line! The qualification is there because the RIM do not really believe in the mass line: they have no understanding whatsoever that, as Mao put it: "the masses are the real heroes, while we ourselves are often childish and ignorant." What the RIM mean by a 'revolutionary mass line' is revealed in several places in the text in question. We learn on p.27 that the tasks of communist is to 'hasten' the revolutionary struggle. Not at all! Even the best, most experienced parties cannot 'hasten' the revolutionary struggle. They can only lead the objectively existing struggle. Neither the Bolsheviks nor the CPC 'hastened' the revolution: they merely provided the leadership which ensured that the masses could seize power when the objective conditions permitted it.

This word 'hasten' is no slip of the pen: it captures the spirit of the RIM, a spirit which thinks that heroes, not the masses, make history. Here, it is relevant to look at the composition of the RIM. Whilst, as was remarked earlier, a majority of its adhering organisations are from the Third World, the dominant influence in the RIM is the RCP, USA. It is, in the main, THEIR ideological and political line which is dominant. It is justified therefore to look at some aspects of the practice of the RCP,USA as an illustration of what the RIM stands for.

One means that the RCP,USA used to 'hasten' the revolution was to throw red paint over the US and Soviet ambassadors to the UN. This, no doubt make them feel good, but what impact such adventurist activities have on the masses is another matter. No-one cares what happens to such reactionaries, but unless attacking them expresses the righteous indignation of the masses and is carried out by people with close contact with them and with their confidence, then it is indeed adventurist and elitist. Similar putschist attitudes are expressed in the RCP,USA's slogan 'Revolution in the 1980s, Go For It!'. This slogan expresses better than a million words their view that revolution is a matter of the will, not the result of a particular set of concrete conditions. The RCP,USA have decided that there must be a revolution in the USA in the 1980s, therefore there will be a revolution.

It is not unfair, at least on this question, to tar the whole of the RIM with the same brush as the RCP,USA. For May Day 1984, the RIM organisations adopted unified slogans. In sum, they betrayed an RCP-like contempt for the masses and a belief that revolution is brought about by the loud shouting of slogans, the louder and 'leftier' the better. One of them 'Harness the Fury of Women as a Mighty Force for Revolution' - had been previously coined by the RCP, as its empty rhetoric suggests. Women (whether 'furious' or not) ARE a mighty force for revolution and it advances the cause of revolution not an inch to wander the streets of New York wearing the T-shirts emblazoned with this slogan which the RCP had printed. Slogans should address themselves CONCRETE needs and arise out of the struggles of the masses. The RIM's slogan could appeal only to petty-bourgeois revolutionaries, divorced from the masses and who wish to 'harness' that struggle to their own ends.

On Eurocentric Social-Chauvinism

The RIM's 'Declaration' is saturated in Eurocentric, or West-centred social-chauvinism. In its ideology the RIM is a variant of one of the 'left' forms of this disorder, Trotskyism. This is expressed most sharply in the fetishistic way the international proletariat is referred to.

The Second Congress of the Communist International (Comintern) adopted the slogan 'Workers and Oppressed Peoples and Nations, Unite' in addition to the old slogan 'Workers of All Countries, Unite'. This was in recognition of the fact that the struggle of the oppressed peoples and nations had become a component part of the world proletarian revolution. This same Congress adopted Lenin's 'Theses on the National and Colonial Question', which were a first, though major, step in grappling with the problems posed for Marxism and the revolutionary struggle by the 'awakening' of the peoples of the East and the shift in the centre of the revolutionary struggle from the imperialist heartlands to the oppressed countries of the periphery. Unfortunately the international communist movement as a whole made little further progress in this pressing task, the Comintern concentrating most of its attention on Europe. The Chinese party though, in the course of the national liberation struggle in China and in their polemics with the Soviet revisionists made significant further advances.

The RIM chooses to end the 'Declaration' with the concluding words of the 'Communist Manifesto' - "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains, they have a world to win". These words, another way of expressing the sentiment 'workers of all countries, unite' still retain an important and essential truth in that we are in the epoch of the world proletarian revolution. But not to use the slogan 'Workers and oppressed peoples and nations, unite' shows that the ultra-left revisionists of the RIM have broken with the concepts embodied in that slogan. The 'Communist Manifesto' was written in 1848, before the emergence of modern imperialism, before the eruption of the national liberation movement in the East and before the shift in the centre of gravity of the world revolutionary movement to the oppressed countries. On these matters, the cardinal questions of the epoch, the RIM, despite their professed purity of doctrine, are in the same camp as the modern revisionists, the social-democrats and the Trotskyists. This is highlighted by the fact that in its appraisal of the CPC's polemic against modern revisionism, the RIM fails specifically to uphold a thesis of the CPC which all varieties of opportunism take particular exception to, namely: "The various types of contradiction in the contemporary world are concentrated in the vast areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America; these are the most vulnerable areas under imperialist rule and the storm centres of world revolution dealing direct blows at imperialism." ('Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement', p.201).

It is not surprising then to find that in its political line the RIM seriously underestimate the importance of the struggle of the oppressed peoples and nations against imperialism and exaggerate the importance of the other fundamental contradictions in the world. It exaggerates those contradictions which highlight the role of the proletariat of the imperialist countries - those between the imperialist powers and that between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of the advanced capitalist countries - and ignores the contradiction between imperialism and the socialist countries.

The RIM say that proletarian internationalism is a 'reflection of the fact that the proletariat is a single class world-wide with a single class interest, faces a world system of imperialism, and has the task of liberating all humanity.' (p.30) Yes, the proletariat is a single class world-wide. But more must be said. In the first place, the proletariat of the imperialist heartlands is in an alliance, however temporary, with the imperialists against that part of the proletariat located in the periphery and against the people of the oppressed countries in general (this point will be elaborated later.). It is not therefore, even carrying out the elementary proletarian internationalist duty of supporting national liberation movements. Only the proletariat of the oppressed countries is carrying out a revolutionary struggle, and in those countries it is a small minority of those who have an objective interest in revolution. In the second place, the proletariat is a mere 12% of the world's population, and that of the imperialist countries a mere 3%. The implications of these facts for the strategy of the international communist movement are not considered for one moment by the dogmatists of the RIM. This will become clear when we consider their political line in detail.

The Three Worlds Theory

One of the most important development of the imperialist epoch is the rise of the Third World, especially in the years since World War Two. The RIM acknowledges this, after a fashion, by saying that the countries of the Third World 'have constituted the main arena of the world-wide struggle of the proletariat' (p.30). But note that this struggle is described as a struggle 'of the proletariat' not of the oppressed peoples and nations as A WHOLE. This is Trotskyism, pure and simple, and, in striking confirmation of this charge. The RCP, India, one of the adhering organisations of the RIM, have recently announced that India is a monopoly capitalist country, that the Indian bourgeoisie is mainly independent of imperialism, and that the stage of revolution in India is socialist, not new democratic.

The tremendous achievements of the Third World since 1945 are completely ignored by the RIM. In reality, the RIM recognise only the proletariat as a revolutionary force and only RIM approved organisations as true communists. They refuse to support advances made by other revolutionary forces or under the leadership of communists outside the aegis of the RIM, or through such progressive steps as the formation of the OPEC cartel. Thus, the only reference to the wave of struggles for national independence which took place in the '50s and '60s is to 'heroic struggles ... which have not led to the establishment of political power by the proletariat and its allies but where the fruits of the victories of the people have been picked by new exploiters usually in league with one or another imperialist power(s)' (p.30). It is true that the proletariat is the only thoroughly revolutionary force, that only communist leadership can ensure final victory in the revolution and that most formally independent countries are subject to neo-colonial rule in varying degrees. None of these elementary facts must be underestimated: but the RIM have carved these ideas on tablets of stone, referring to them as priests consult the bible, rather than studying the real world.

The RIM's assessment of the situation in the Third World is extremely one-sided and grossly underestimates what has been achieved. In few countries have national struggles led to the seizure of power by the proletariat and its allies but they have on many occasions led to the establishment of national bourgeois regimes which have struggled with varying measures of success against imperialism. But for the chauvinists of the RIM, it matters little, for instance, that the people of Algeria threw out the French imperialists, or more recently, that the Nicaraguans defeated Somoza. All this would

appear to be 'bitter experience' (p.30). The RIM are indifferent to whether or not Algeria is still a French colony, and whether it is the Sandinistas who, according to the RCP, USA, have 'sold out', or the Somoza regime who rule in Nicaragua. The RIM's viewpoint is that so scathingly described by Lenin:

".... to imagine that social revolution is conceivable without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe without the revolutionary outbursts of a section of the petty-bourgeoisie with all its prejudices, without a movement of politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against landlord, church, monarchial, national and other oppression - to imagine that means repudiating social revolution. Very likely, one army will line up in one place and say 'We are for socialism' while another will do so in another place and say 'We are for imperialism' and that will be social revolution

Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will never live to see it. Such a person pays lip service to revolution without understanding what revolution really is."

The RIM profess to uphold Mao's theory of 'revolutionary strategy and tactics in the colonial, semi- (or neo) colonial countries' (p.31) but in fact their line is 'left' revisionist. The type of revolution in the oppressed countries is not a socialist one, but a democratic one of a new type with the aim of, as Mao put it, of "establishing a new-democratic society and a state under the joint dictatorship of all the revolutionary classes" (Selected Works, Vol.2, p.344). Further, it is important to grasp, again according to Mao, that 'no matter what classes, parties or individuals in an oppressed nation join the revolution, and no matter whether they themselves are conscious of the point or understand it, so long as they oppose imperialism, their revolution becomes part of the proletarian-socialist world revolution and they become its allies' (ibid., p.346).

For complex historical reasons, communist forces are not in the leadership of the revolutionary struggle in most countries (although there are important exceptions such as the Philippines); whilst this will undoubtedly lead to greater difficulties and setbacks, and, in some cases, to outright betrayal as in Iran, such struggles are no less objectively revolutionary in character. Stalin expressed it well:

"The struggle that the Emir of Afghanistan is waging for the independence of Afghanistan is objectively a REVOLUTIONARY struggle, despite the monarchist views of the Emir and his associates, for it weakens, disintegrates and undermines imperialism...." (Foundations of Leninism, Peking ed., p.75 (emphasis in original)).

But for the RIM, 'history demonstrates the bankruptcy of an 'anti-imperialist' (or similar 'revolutionary front') which is not led by a Marxist-Leninist party...' (p.32). Really? Then we might as well all give up, for what is actually happening in most countries is precisely a struggle led by such a front. The task of communists is not to whistle for the moon, but to work where the masses are and to struggle to give communist leadership to the OBJECTIVELY EXISTING (not subjectively desired) struggle.

What the ultra-left (but, in practice, extremely rightist) line of the RIM means in practice can be shown by the attitude of the RCP USA to some actual struggles. The 'Revolutionary Worker' (the weekly paper of the RCP) has published one adulatory article after another on the armed struggle in Peru led by the forces known as 'Sendeno Luminoso' (actually the Communist Party of Peru). This is undoubtedly because this party is an adherent of the RIM. The author has no quarrel with the RCP publishing the achievements of the Communist Party of Peru. Yet, in several articles in the 'Revolutionary Worker' which dealt in byzantine fashion with contradictions among the reactionary forces in the Philippines, virtually no mention was made of the fact that the Communist Party of the Philippines control large liberated areas and, according to the CIA, is likely to seize power in the next few years. No doubt when this happens, they will quickly be denounced as 'in league with imperialism' (p.32). This is apparently inevitable if you disagree with the RIM, and the RCP, USA have scandalously described ZANU(PF) in Zimbabwe as being so.

The scurrilous accusations of the RCP, USA are entirely consistent with the line of the 'Declaration'. The RIM do not understand (or rather have revised) the basic Marxist-Leninist position that the objective of the revolutionary struggle in the oppressed countries is not socialism and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat (although this is certainly the eventual goal), but, again to quote Mao: "The establishment of a new-democratic society under the joint dictatorship of all the revolutionary classes ... headed by ... the proletariat." (Ibid, p.347). In countries like Nicaragua, although it could not be claimed that it is 'headed by the proletariat', at least a 'joint dictatorship' has been established and this is a great step forward which clears the way for further advance.

The constant harping in the RIM's 'Declaration' about 'proletarian leadership', 'hegemony', etc., even when accompanied by ritual references to 'united fronts' and 'other sections of the masses' is a reflection of their Eurocentric social-chauvinism. Like the people criticised by Lenin, they look for pure, proletarian-led movements, proceed from abstract 'principles', not concrete analysis of concrete conditions and tick off and admonish all who fail to conform to their high standards. The RCP, USA for instance, are on record as lecturing the PLO for failing to carry out a last-ditch battle, rather than evacuate Beirut at the time of the Israeli invasion. Coming from people who benefit from the plunder of the US imperialists and who live what to a Palestinian would be an incredibly easy life, this is patronising and hypocritical.

It is striking that the discussion of the world situation in the RIM's 'Declaration', whilst recognising that countries exist (even the RIM could scarcely fail to notice this), discusses the class struggle purely in terms of classes, not recognising that many important class struggles take on the form of battles between COUNTRIES. This 'left' form of exaggerating the 'pure' class struggle (which of course never has and never will exist) has the rightist essence of failing to support the just struggles of Third World countries. Thus the struggle of these countries for a new international economic order is totally ignored and implicitly denounced. The case of OPEC has already been mentioned (it is worth recording that in an internal struggle among the British adherents of the RIM, the people who left were condemned for supporting OPEC). Every time bank interest rates in the imperialist countries rise, thousands more peasants are driven from their lands to make room for cash crops to be sold to pay debts to the imperialists.

Only a revolution can end such callous plunder, but if in the meantime, a Third World country refuses to pay its debts, isn't that in the interests of the masses? And doesn't it "weaken, disintegrate and undermine" imperialism? Such struggles, and those for fairer commodity prices, for a re-scheduling of debts etc., are matters of complete indifference to the RIM, who, in their Olympian detachment will support only full-blown revolution. Objectively, this means support for the imperialists and their ruthless robbery of the peoples of the Third World.

The 'Declaration' recognises only two types of country in the world: imperialist and oppressed countries. This is certainly the most important division, but more must be said. It is absurd to treat the imperialist countries as an homogeneous whole, from the two superpowers at one pole to such countries as Greece and Bulgaria on the other. Many of the smaller Second World countries have features in common with the Third World. Some of them are subject to varying degrees of control by the great powers, especially the superpowers. Often, there are still substantial democratic and national tasks to be accomplished in the revolutionary struggle, as in the cases of land reform in Spain and Portugal and the national struggle in Ireland.

For such reasons some of these countries frequently take a progressive stance in world affairs. Spain, for instance, refused to support US aggression against Nicaragua. Yet, the RIM, because they have rejected the Three Worlds theory, are unable to explain and certainly do not support such phenomena. On the question of war, the RIM say: "The revolutionary defeatist position must be adopted by the Marxist-Leninists in all the imperialist countries." (p.44) If a new world war erupts, in the period leading up to it many things would occur which could not be dealt with in such a lofty manner. What if Greece were to attempt to force the US to withdraw from its bases there and the US carried out a military intervention? Should the Greek proletariat adopt a line of 'revolutionary defeatism'? We think not! All of this, of course, is speculation. But it highlights the crude dogmatism and idealism of the RIM, their method of DEDUCING responses to relationships and events in the real world with the aid of a set of 'principles' conceived a priori.

Even the bigger second world imperialist powers, (Britain, France, Germany, Japan, etc.), despite being bound by a thousand and one threads to the US superpower and to each other, and playing a generally reactionary role, have contradictions with the superpowers which can be made use of. Many progressive people in Europe, for instance, resent the role of the US superpower and are fighting against US bases, for withdrawal from NATO, against Cruise missiles and so on. Under mass pressure, and for their own reactionary reasons, the governments of these countries have opposed certain plans of the US superpower; the EEC countries, to take but one case, have refused to endorse the US's 'Strategic Defence Initiative' (the so-called 'Star Wars' plan). In another case Belgium resisted for a long time the installation of Cruise missiles there.

The people who fight for these things are dismissed by the RIM as having 'national chauvinist views that seek to avoid the devastation of war for one imperialist nation or another at the expense of the rest of the world' (p.44). This is crude ultra-leftism, but in the case of the RCP,USA it is out-and-out social-chauvinism. Which imperialist power has a particular interest in opposing such movements? The USA, of course! And which organisation of the RIM fights this so-called 'national chauvinism' with particular zeal? Why the RCP,USA! Despite their loud protestations of revolutionary

purity, the RCP, USA are not infrequently found to be objectively on the same side as their "own" bourgeoisie, as in the case of their unsolicited advice to the PLO and during their contemptible attacks on Deng Xiaoping during his visit to the USA.

Such criticism cannot be levelled at all the organisations of the RIM, especially those from the Third World. But it IS essential to make use of inter-imperialist contradictions in order to weaken the imperialist camp and broaden and deepen the anti-imperialist camp. All of the RIM organisations would do well to ponder Mao's insistence that tactics must be guided by principles which "make use of contradictions, win over the many, oppose the few and crush our enemies one by one" (Ibid, p.444)

The Class Struggle in the Imperialist Countries

The most important thing to be said about the class struggle in the imperialist countries is, as has already been remarked, that the working class is in a temporary alliance with the bourgeoisie. This alliance is against the long-term objective interest of the vast majority of the working class, but it exists nevertheless and it has deep foundations. It should be added that here and in the discussion which follows, it is the ten or so great powers which are fully imperialist which are being referred to. Such countries as Greece, Bulgaria have quite different characteristics and the prospects there for the revolutionary struggle are quite different. The RIM, though, are unable to make such distinctions, as we have seen on the question of national defence.

The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 marked, not the beginning of the socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries of the west, coming as it did in one of the most backward countries of Europe, moreover a country which straddled Europe and Asia, but the decisive shift in the centre of the world proletarian revolution to the East. As Mao said: "The salvoes of the Russian revolution brought Marxism to China."

Marx and Engels thought that the proletarian revolution would occur first in the 'advanced' countries of the West, which were ripest for revolution in the sense of the level of development of the productive forces. But the development of imperialism and the consequent plunder of the oppressed countries meant firstly, that the bourgeoisie were able to buy off whole strata of better paid workers, and, secondly that the productive forces of the imperialist countries were constantly developed, not held back, with resultant rising living standards for the mass of the working class. The vast majority of the working class of the imperialist countries have not faced the necessity for revolution for around a hundred years. Indeed, they have supported, to a greater or lesser degree, imperialist domination of the oppressed countries and of oppressed nations and national minorities in their "own" countries. The attitude of the English workers to Ireland and of white to black Americans are cases in point. The other side of this coin has been the increasing immiseration of and brutal dictatorship over the peoples of the Third World by imperialism, which has led to a constant revolutionary ferment there.

In general, the form that the struggle in the imperialist countries has taken since around the turn of the century has been an argument over the division of the national cake, including plunder from the Third World. The working class has not risen to the level of even questioning, let alone challenging the capitalist order. It is striking that even the profound crisis around World War One did not seriously shake bourgeois rule in the imperialist countries, save for the special case of Russia: even the uprising in Germany was quelled relatively easily.

For many years in the Marxist-Leninist movement, there was an implicit belief that the working class was subjectively revolutionary but was being 'betrayed' by its leaders. An early article in 'Marxist-Leninist Quarterly' (the journal of the RCL's predecessor the CFB M-L) claimed that the German revolution of 1919 failed because the German workers had not a leader of the stature of Lenin. But this begs the question. Why did Russia bring forth a Lenin at that time? And why did China later bring forth a Mao? Objective conditions CREATE leaders and give them the confidence of the masses. As Engels once remarked 'treachery' is a stupid explanation for failure. By and large, the working class gets the leaders it deserves. The English workers get such leaders as Bill Sirs because these leaders represent the aspirations and desires of the average worker. 'Treachery' was NOT the reason why most of the organised working class failed to support the miners' strike of 1984-85, as some of the 'left' have claimed. Quite simply, the majority of the class did not WANT to give more than token support: if they had wished to do so, they would have found the means and swept aside leaders like Bill Sirs in the process.

The consequence of the forgoing analysis is not, as some have suggested, that nothing can be done in the imperialist countries except to wait for the Third World to overthrow imperialism: it simply means that our strategy and tactics must reflect the realities described. The 'Declaration' of the RIM appears to recognise these realities, particularly the plunder from the oppressed countries and the degree to which the working class benefit from this plunder. And yet, the RIM claim that "mass revolutionary struggles ... developed in most of the Western imperialist countries especially in the 1960's..." (p.10). It is clear from the text that the RIM consider that the working class was involved in "mass revolutionary struggles". But in fact, only three imperialist countries were seriously affected by the revolutionary upsurge of the 60s, and in none of them did the proletariat as a "class for itself" come to the fore.

In France, in the events of 1968, only at the end and in relatively small numbers, did the working class take part. France '68 was essentially a student uprising and doomed to failure. The other cases were different. In the USA mass NATIONAL rebellions of black people erupted. And in the UK, in the internal colony of northern Ireland, the NATIONAL revolution took to arms once again. This, of course, is not accidental. Minority nations and nationalities suffer considerable oppression at the hands of the majority population in the imperialist countries. It has already been remarked that most of the majority proletariat, to a greater or lesser degree, connive in it and they are deeply infected with the racism and chauvinism which the bourgeoisie propagate to justify and bolster such oppression. Contrary to the dreams of the RIM, who attach equal importance to the socialist revolution in the West and the national democratic revolution in the East, there is no prospect for revolutionary advance in the West until significant sections of the white working class, under the impact of the crisis, break away from the ideology and politics of what Samir Amin has called the "social-democratic alliance", i.e. the alliance of the working class with the imperialists. There are signs of this happening. But it will be a long process, the necessity for which the RIM do not recognise. For the present, and foreseeable future, it is in the Third World that revolutionary opportunities will present themselves.

But for the RIM, the revolutionary prospect in the imperialist countries are "more favourable than in any time in recent memory" (p.10). This is true from a long-term perspective. But it is clear that the RIM are thinking in the short-term. In particular, they are banking on a Third World war erupting fairly soon and precipitating a revolutionary situation. It is hard though to see how a proletariat which has shared in imperialist plunder for decades and has shown little sign of a firm class, let alone revolutionary consciousness, is suddenly going to become revolutionary, even under the impact of war. Certainly they did not in World Wars One and Two and since then the proletariat has become even less subjectively revolutionary.

Given the general ideological outlook of the RIM, their recognition of the effect of imperialism on the working class of the imperialist countries, coupled with their insistence that the prospects for revolution in these countries are good, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that what they have in mind is not a revolution, but a putsch. If the adventurist, elitist style of the RCP, USA is anything to go by, this is indeed the case.

The RIM treat the struggle of the oppressed nations and nationalities in the imperialist countries in a chauvinist way which fails to recognise that these struggles are autonomous struggles against imperialism, not simply an aspect of the proletariat's struggle. Thus such events as the uprisings in Britain in 1981 are described as being carried out "by the lower strata of the proletariat" (p.10) and the national minorities are said to be "an important part of a single multi-national proletariat" (p.43).

That the vast majority of national minority people in the imperialist countries - Turks in Germany; Moroccans and Algerians in France; Asians, Irish and West Indians in Britain - are proletarians, and in the lowest strata at that, is not in doubt. Indeed it was and is overwhelmingly proletarians who have taken part in the national uprisings in the USA, northern Ireland and Britain. This fact is of tremendous importance for the development of a revolutionary strategy. But at present it is their NATIONALITY not their class, which mainly accounts for exploitation and oppression which they suffer. Their very presence in these countries is a direct result of imperialist domination of their homelands. Driven from their homes by imperialism, they arrive in the 'mother country' only to find themselves in the lowest and worst-paid jobs, subject to innumerable forms of racial discrimination and harassment and the victims of vicious attacks by the police and fascist thugs. As a direct consequence, national minority people in general have a far more developed political consciousness than the majority population and are in the forefront of the struggle against imperialism. Simply to describe national minority proletarians as "an important part" grossly underestimates the objective importance of national minority struggles. And it is another form of the RIM chauvinism which refuses to give full support to national struggles against imperialism of ALL classes.

The view which blithely ASSERTS that there is a "single multi-national working class" ignores these considerations and is objectively a 'left' form of the bourgeois view that national minorities should be 'assimilated', i.e. their culture destroyed, their national rights trampled on, their very existence threatened. It is this viewpoint which gives rise to such facile slogans as 'Black and White, Unite and Fight' ignoring the temporary alliance of the working class with the bourgeoisie, and to the chauvinist assertion that racism is devised by the bourgeoisie to 'split the working class'.

Racism IS used for this purpose. But it arose as an ideological justification for colonialism and imperialism and is principally used by the bourgeoisie to gain working class support for national oppression, with no small measure of success. Nowhere in the RIM's 'Declaration', nor in the practice of its adhering organisations that are known to the author, is there any recognition of these facts.

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This criticism of the 'Declaration' of the RIM is by no means exhaustive. But it has shown that its adhering parties and organisations represent an old tradition of the international communist movement which must be decisively broken with, if the movement is to progress. To rise to the level of theoretically comprehending and, eventually, leading the world proletarian revolutionary struggle, a radical rupture is required with old Eurocentric ideas which have, as Lenin put it, "gaze(d) with awe upon the posteriors of the proletariat" of the imperialist countries and their backward even reactionary, struggles, and refused to recognise that it is the oppressed peoples and nations who are in the forefront of the struggle against imperialism. The RIM though have regressed even from the limited understanding that the movement gained in the 1960's in the course of the polemics against modern revisionism. They are indeed ultra-left revisionists.

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Postscript : The Philippines Revolution

This article was written in 1986. Shortly afterwards, the Committee of R.I.M. sent an open letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

The letter (published in A World To Win No.8) is dated March 1987, and takes the CPP to task, stating in its first paragraphs:

" Indeed, the inability of the CPP to find its bearings amidst the political crisis and ultimate fall of the Marcos regime in order to carry forward the revolutionary war has now given rise to political crisis in the CPP itself, and even to mounting tendencies towards outright capitulation."

The open letter condemns the CPP's self-criticism, in which the party declares that it made an error in calling for a boycott of the elections in which Marcos was overthrown.

Towards its conclusion, RIM's letter sums up its criticisms thus:

" In sum, the depths of the ideological and political deterioration of the Party, which results in no small way from the refusal to take a clear stand between Mao Tsetung Thought and revisionism, have become truly alarming:- The class nature of the regime you were fighting was lost sight of, the necessity to smash the entire repressive apparatus increasingly downplayed, bourgeois-democratic notions of 'modern-day republics' were promoted, as wrong conceptions of the path and goal of the revolution have come to the fore;- The proletariat has been progressively subordinated to other class forces, imperialist puppets are promoted as 'progressives' and 'reformists' and one of the original strengths of the CPP, that of rallying the peasants in a genuine people's war as the main force for revolution, is increasingly put on a par (or even subordinated to) united action with bourgeois strata in the cities;- Imperialist countries are treated as socialist ones, dependent countries as independent revolutionary regimes, and eventually the necessity or possibility of completely rupting with imperialism begins to give way to 'practical' plans to come to terms with imperialism, possibly under the banner of the 'necessity' of Soviet aid. "

A little over a year has passed since the RIM letter was produced, and it should be quite clear by now that, far from heading for "outright capitulation", the CPP remains in the vanguard of what the US identifies as the fastest growing insurgent movement in the world. Its commitment is unwavering.

RIM's analysis was plainly wrong. Marxist-Leninists have always recognized that the workers and peasants cannot take political power by peaceful means: the oppressing classes invariably use violence to deny that desirable option to them. Therefore, a marxist-leninist party has to develop a strategy which involves, at some point, a mass armed revolutionary seizure of power. But a party of the working class is duty bound to seek the line of advance which is least costly to the masses in terms of lost lives, injuries and material destruction.

Hence the importance of forging alliances - even conditional, temporary ones - with all who can be united against the main enemy. This brings added strength to the revolutionary forces and weakens the power of the reactionary forces. It is stupid to do anything else.

When a revolutionary party seeks to build alliances, it must expect to make concessions to the non-proletarian classes and strata, which have interests which diverge from or even conflict with those of the working class.

They cannot be expected to enter into any alliance without having solid in return. The revolutionary party must be ready to offer concessions and guarantees, but must be careful not to surrender its independence, and not to betray the fundamental interests of the masses.

The art of making such alliances lies in determining what has to be given to establish the alliance, while not losing grasp of the necessity of retaining both the leading role of the revolutionary party and the essential elements of power (primarily the revolutionary armed forces) in the hands of the working people.

The CPP has proved to be a party with a very sophisticated strategy and tactics for revolution. From the early '70s, it saw the target of revolution as being "the US-Marcos dictatorship". This never meant that it was forgetting elements of the oppressing classes who were not grouped around Marcos, or that it was failing to take a class stand.

US imperialism dominates the Philippines economy; the USA equips the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and plays a major role in training its officer corps; it has two massive bases in the Philippines and other military installations.

The machinery of the Marcos dictatorship included the AFP and the state bureaucracy. In focussing the target of the revolution on the US-Marcos dictatorship, the CPP maximised the scope for building alliances; at the same time, taking into consideration exactly what was being targetted (not just Marcos as an individual, but the whole state order which made up the dictatorship) it is clear that it was striking at the lynchpin and core of the entire system of class and national oppression in the Philippines.

Aquino has now stepped into Marcos' shoes, and one day, when her usefulness is at an end, she will no doubt be replaced in her turn. When the revolution does win out, employing a similar approach to that used against Marcos, it should be quite clear that, even though elements of the present ruling classes, which took an anti-dictatorship position, still retain some power and influence, the dominant position in the Philippines will then be held by the workers and peasants. They can then transform Filipino society as they wish.

When the Marcos regime was overthrown, and Aquino took office, the revolutionary forces were faced with a very difficult position. As the anti-Marcos movement had gained momentum, the US had swung its backing behind Aquino. It was clear what role it wished her to play.

Aquino promised democracy, land reform, liberalisation of legislation affecting the unions, and the removal of the US bases when the agreement concerning them runs out in 1992. Her first cabinet included a minority of liberal figures (including the Labour minister) whose commitment to democracy and pro-people reform was never in doubt.

Most of the workers and peasants had little or no confidence that Aquino offered them anything better than Marcos. But large sections of the middle strata who had been drawn towards the National Democratic Front during the anti-Marcos struggle believed that Aquino could offer a real improvement.

If the CPP and National Democratic Front (NDF - the united front in which the CPP works, and which RIM disregards) had taken the course which RIM evidently thought was right - i.e. to say that nothing had changed and the armed struggle would go on regardless - then they would have risked losing an important section of their allies, which would have meant a grave setback for the revolution.

The CPP and NDF had to get what they could out of the new situation in the people's interests without providing openings for the new regime and the AFP to split and undermine the revolutionary alliance or the legal popular movements (of which RIM does not take any account, despising legal work in a country like the Philippines, even when undertaken by radical bodies like the First of May Movement (KMU), the independent labour federation, or GABRIELA, the federation of Women's organizations, both of which mobilise hundreds of thousands of people).

The NDF accordingly decided that the New People's Army should restrict its operations to defensive ones while the possibilities of achieving anything with the new regime were explored. Eventually, a ceasefire was also agreed.

The NDF proclaimed its willingness to conduct serious negotiations with Aquino, but at the same time, set out the minimum it required if the ceasefire was to become permanent. It also insisted that the NPA would not give up its guns as part of the ceasefire. In the event, the Aquino government showed that it was incapable of agreeing to the minimal reforms which the NDF called for: it basically sought the surrender of the revolutionary forces. The ceasefire ended without any agreement being reached, and the revolutionary war continued with renewed force.

By its stand between Aquino's election victory and the end of the ceasefire, the NDF allowed the Aquino government every chance to show its true character and ensured that the alliances built during the Marcos era were preserved.

During the ceasefire period, NDF leaders took full advantage of the opportunities they had to give interviews to the legal press and to have a dialogue with legal opposition forces. The ceasefire also enhanced the international standing of the NDF: the fact that the Aquino regime felt the need to negotiate with it only underlined its strength - a point not lost on the Marcos loyalists.

A genuine revolutionary party must be strict in adhering to its principles, but be extremely flexible in the strategy and tactics by which it works for revolution. The CPP is such a party. RIM's criticisms merely reveal its dogmatism, its inability to analyse a concrete situation, the shallowness of its grasp of Marxism-Leninism, which leaves it incapable of either developing a multi-layered strategy for fighting for the destruction of imperialism or understanding such a strategy when others have one.

In 1936, Lu Xun, the great Chinese revolutionary writer, received a letter concerning the policy of the Chinese Communist Party. The letter said of the communists:

" They have made a volte-face, abandoned their class stand issued new declarations and sent representatives to negotiate with the bureaucrats, politicians and warlords, including those who slaughtered the masses, in order to form a 'united front' with them. They have put away their own banner and confused the people's minds, making the masses believe that all those bureaucrats, politicians and executioners are national revolutionaries who will resist Japan too. The result can only be to deliver the revolutionary masses into the hands of those executioners for further slaughter."

This letter was written by a representative of the Chinese Trotskyists. It is not accidental that RIM's criticisms of the CPP should seem like an echo of it. Lu Xun responded sharply to this letter, commenting:

" Your 'theory' is certainly much loftier than that of Mao Zedong; yours is high in the sky, while his is simply on the ground. But admirable as is such loftiness, it will unfortunately be just the thing welcomed by the Japanese aggressors. Hence I fear that it will drop from the sky, and when it does it may land on the filthiest place on earth." *

Who was right? China achieved its liberation thirteen years after this exchange took place. The practice of the Communist Party of the Philippines has already shown how unjustified the criticisms of RIM were. The revolution is now at a stage when the first steps to establish a Provisional Revolutionary Government are already being taken.

Faced with the threat of rapidly escalating US intervention in order to hold back the NDF's advance, the Philippines' revolution needs solidarity, not the denunciation of organisations which cannot recognise a revolution if it does not fit in with their own rigid formulae.

* Exchange of letters from:
Lu Xun, Selected Works Volume 4, pages 279-282 (PLP, Beijing).



For reliable information on the struggle in the Philippines
NEW ERA BOOKS stocks:

Liberation : published by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

Kasama : bi-monthly newsletter of the British-based Philippines Support Group.

Class Struggle, the political paper of the RCL, frequently carries report on the revolutionary struggle in the Philippines.

Review : Tetsuzo Fuwa STALIN & GREAT POWER CHAUVINISM

Stalin and Great Power Chauvinism makes for uncomfortable reading for any internationalist. Such an ambitious survey of the origins and development of great power chauvinism in the Soviet Union requires serious study, and this brief review can only touch upon some of the questions raised in Tetsuzo Fuwa's explanation.

Undoubtedly, the question of national chauvinism under Stalin and that of modern day Soviet Union are inter-related. A clear understanding of the drive for hegemony, particularly its origins, demands a theoretical understanding of the "Stalin Question". But Fuwa's endeavours implies that, apart from a brief period under Lenin, the Soviet state has been the inheritors of the hegemonist tradition of the Tsars. In effect, stating that little has changed in Soviet foreign policy, that substantially tsarist plans provide the guidance for Soviet behaviour. Furthermore, his over-riding concern is to demonstrate that :

"..the policies and actions of the present Soviet leadership are, in many respects, an extension of the great-power chauvinism and hegemonism of Stalin."

In stressing the grave mistakes under Stalin, Fuwa overstresses the subjective factor. In an inquiry that centres on the diplomatic, the cultural, economic and political factors are largely absent. He under-estimates the material and ideological basis of great russian chauvinism that became epidemic in Stalin's later years.

It is obvious that Khrushchevian revisionism drew on currents within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and Soviet society and did not spring into life upon Stalin's death in 1953. But the continuity in Fuwa's indictment is questionable.

Fuwa does not give recognition to the reality of two epochs in question: that when the Soviet Union under Stalin pioneered, without precedent to guide or build upon, the construction of a socialist society; and that of the betrayal of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism by a new exploitative rule first represented by N.Khrushchev. That is what Fuwa neglects, that which differentiates the gross acts of chauvinist interference under Stalin from that of the post-Stalin leadership : the pernicious pursuit of hegemony.

The feature that binds both epochs is that under Stalin there was an accumulation of errors that were incompatible with communist principle and which had a marked negative impact on Soviet policy. Instead of correcting such distortions in inter-state and party relations, the revisionists have refined them into a criminal doctrine to justify armed interference in others internal affairs, such as in the disastrous occupation of Afghanistan.

The changing impetus for Soviet policy is absent from Fuwa's account of great power chauvinism. Soviet military strategy, before the destruction of socialism in the Soviet Union, was to construct a defensive force capable of protecting the USSR. By the 1960's rapid militarization projected military strategy far beyond its border areas.

Soviet Admiral Sergi Gorshkov described the process of acquiring strategic naval facilities as the Soviet navy's "conversion into a real force capable of ensuring the state interest of the Soviet Union in the World Ocean."

The pursuit of an expansionist foreign policy under Brezhnev was made all the necessary by the inability of the Soviet elite to escape the mire of economic stagnation and inefficiency at home. A hegemonic policy served the needs, both political and economic, to secure control of economic resources of other countries. This aspect Fuwa fails to cover: the Superpower contention to dominate the Third World; with the Soviet Union courting national bourgeoisie into dependency upon the Soviet Union for loans, military supplies etc.

In a theoretical attempt to explain Soviet actions in terms other than Superpower competition, Soviet schools promoting the non-capitalist road of development and the revolutionary role of the armed forces in social transformation sprang into action.

The author's conceptual framework imposes an interpretation of Soviet hegemony at odds with a marxist understanding. It has an internal basis that Fuwa covers up for in his assertion that the root cause is to be found in Stalin.

Within the International Communist Movement, the CPSU(B) under Stalin undertook direct interference in the internal affairs of other communist parties. These attempts to liquidate or replace the initiative of other parties were not without domestic supporters. As the Bulgarian communist Dimitrov put it: "the touchstone of proletarian internationalism was the unconditional support of the USSR. Communists had to fight the enemies of the USSR, a factor evident in the CPGB's rapid switch in positions at the outbreak of the 1939-45 war."

Component parts of the Third International became, often willingly, embroiled in the diplomatic tactics of the Soviet state to the detriment of developing a national marxist programme.

Why such interference became entrenched, and accepted by other communist parties, as late as the 'excommunication' of the Yugoslav party, is not examined. Why was it that not only the CPSU(B) but others lacked a spirit of equality? Did not the programme of the Third International contain a clause about "the Soviet state using all the forces at its command to safeguard and support the national cultures of nations that have liberated themselves from capitalism." ? Such paternalist themes are not touched upon in Fuwa's brief review of the violation of proletarian internationalism.

Many of the mistakes, both in domestic and foreign policy, were products of historical conditions more powerful than any one man. Any other conclusion is a rejection of historical materialism. But the selectivity in Fuwa's account ignores many episodes that need further investigation.

For instance, he adopts the technique of contrasting Stalin's actions with Lenin's words. Yet Lenin shares the collective political responsibility for the elimination of centrifugal forces such as in the Central Asian republics which had enjoyed de facto independence.

The early Soviet state saw off the challenge associated with Sultan-Galiev. He was a local bolshevik leader who questioned whether the proletariat of the advanced countries came automatically to the colonial areas in the role of liberators. Having contributed from the 1916 Central Asian revolt onwards to breaking the "prison house of nations", Sultan-Galiev, and his followers were ill-disposed to see a possible resurrection under the guise of Soviet anti-Islamic campaigns. Their revolt was crushed.

Divergence from both the letter and spirit of the nationalities policy formulated by the young Soviet state was not Stalin's sole responsibility even when clearly implicated in such action. Fuwa's focus on the personality rather than the social forces at work side steps the whole analysis of the consequences of expediency both at the centre and periphery.

The gap that developed between theory and practice in the nationalities question lay, according to contemporary critics, in the 'inertia of centralism' and great power psychology of many 'party apparatchiks' that obstructed inter-republic relations.

Stalin, the son of an oppressed class within an oppressed nation, oversaw the development of building a socialist society within the boundaries of a multi-national state.

Under Stalin, the Soviet state did take concrete steps on the road from the formal equality of peoples proclaimed by the revolution to actual equality, promoting the cultures and languages of formerly oppressed peoples.

Fuwa ignores that Stalin's 1913 work "Marxism and the National Question" was superseded by the 1929 polemic "The National Question and Leninism". In this article, Stalin advanced the discussion on nations which had arisen on the foundations of the Soviet system. In this, Stalin stated that the victory of 'socialism in one country' does not create the necessary conditions for the amalgamation of nations and national languages. On the contrary: "this period creates favourable conditions for the renaissance and efflorescence of the nations that were formerly oppressed by Tsarist imperialism".

The CPSU(B) affirmed its duty to support the national development of each people in each national republic. While the imperatives of development did play a part in down-grading the importance of the nationalities question, as important was the growth of "red patriotism" that cherished the growing successes of Soviet power. This degenerated into an oppressive russophilism.

The revision of attitudes towards essentially Russian history was part of a process of building up a sense of national pride and determination amidst an encirclement of hostile capitalist powers.

The revival of Russian nationalist sentiment and agitation was accompanied by a crackdown on "nationalist deviations". Increasingly there was a one-sided analysis of the tsarist inheritance. Stalin has personal responsibility in endorsing such tendencies: his 1934 article criticised Engels for "overestimating" the reactionary role of the Tsar's policies.

There is Stalin's display of chauvinism in his famous toast in honour of Red Army Commanders on May 24, 1945:

"I drink in the first place to the health of the Russian people because it is the most outstanding nation of all the nations forming the Soviet Union.

I propose a toast to the health of the Russian people because it has won in this war universal recognition as the leading force of the Soviet Union among all the peoples of our country.

I propose a toast to the health of the Russian people not only because it is the leading people, but also because it possesses a clear mind, a staunch character and patience."

This was not simply a case of extrubance in the wake of victory. Stalin, who seldomed left Moscow, declared in his "Greetings Message to Moscow" in September 1947:

"The service Moscow rendered is primarily that it became the basis for uniting disunited Russia into a single state, with a single government and a single leadership...
... The historic service which Moscow rendered is that it has been and remains the basis and the initiator in the creation of a centralized state in Russia."

Under Stalin's later years there was an unashamed promotion of Great Russian patriotism as identical with Soviet patriotism. The sin of "nationalist deviation" had been often cited during the PURGES of the 1930s that decimated the governments of many Soviet republics. A legacy still to be resolved was the deportation of eight nationalities from their homelands during World War Two.* The justification for such action came easily to Stalin. He had pointed out in "The Foundations of Leninism" that:

"In the forties of the last century Marx supported the national movement of the Poles and Hungarians and was opposed to the national movement of the Czechs and South Slavs. Why? Because the Czechs and the South Slavs were then 'reactionary nations'."

The designation of 'reactionary nations' could be equally applied twenty years later to some of the nations of the North Caucasus, the Crimea and Asian borderlands. The deportation policy that was applied to these nationalities occurred when people, such as the Volga Germans, were charged en masses of concealing "enemies of the Soviet people" and subject to mass population transfer. Such policy decision didnot lay with Stalin alone but had wide official support to stigmatise a whole nationality. There was no hint of collaboration of the people from Meskhetia when they were deported in November 1944. The Germans had been beaten back, and had not been within hundred miles of the area. The Chechens, the largest single people to suffer deportation, had won 44 decorations in the Red Army and contributed twelve million roubles to the war effort by October 1942. Yet they were deported en mass in early 1944 charged that "the main masses of the population" had not resisted the invaders.

These nations were not physically annihilated, but the measures taken against them reflected a lack of faith in official nationalities policy. Such measures continued after the threat receded: in the last major operations, Soviet Greeks were deported in 1949 to Kazakhstan.

* Volga Germans, Kalnyks, Crimean Tartars, Chechens, Meskhetians, Ingushi, Karachai and Balkars nationalities.

What colours Tetsuzo Fuwa's analysis of such events is his assertion that Russian Great Power chauvinism "is to be found in the national chauvinism of Stalin".

While Lenin's "miraculous Georgian" enforced a Russian centralism, he drew upon a deep well of national chauvinism paradoxically reinforced by the success of the USSR becoming the first bastion of socialism. Stalin reflected rather than, as Fuwa asserts, "systematically nurtured" such ideas.

Despite this, at least in Stalin's time, there was a recognition, and in part promotion of the nationalities and their cultures whereas since then we have seen an official policy of the peoples and cultures amalgamated under the theoretical guise of the 'Soviet nation'.

The ethos of Khrushchev's triumph on national rights was seen in the 1956 decision abandoning the use of local language in the transaction of correspondence and business in the national republics.

The Soviet Union embarked upon an intense "Russification" policy under the guise of the amalgamation of the component cultures of the USSR.

Whilst Stalin maintained that "the policy of assimilation is absolutely excluded from the arsenal of marxism-leninism, as being anti-popular and counter-revolutionary policy, a fatal policy", Brezhnev boasted at the 26th Congress of the CPSU in 1981: "We are witnessing the moulding of the cultures of the whole Soviet people -- a new social and international community."

The Kremlin's policies for an allegiance "one and indivisible" is a policy of forced assimilation. Such "socialist amalgamation" is anathema to communist teachings on the rights of self-determination.

As the revisionists consolidated its power over the state and economy, the concept of 'Soviet nation' served as justification for a tightening of central bureaucratic control, denying the national republic integrity and sovereignty of economic life.

A new division of labour, rather than the goal of national equality, returns to the lopsided economic development as tributaries in service of the Russian elite. But in aspects of Khrushchev onwards Fuwa is silent about their domestic policy. Instead, he focus on foreign policy and inter-party relations. As leader of the revisionist Japanese party he is well placed to discuss Soviet factional intrigues within that party.

The catalogue of wide ranging abuse that Fuwa draws upon to bolster his theses criticises all aspects of policies associated with Stalin. Such empiricism shies away from abstraction to examine aspects of Soviet experience, as opposed to the epochal questions on the whole gambit of communist history that is involved in assessing Stalin's contribution. He undialectically holds Stalin personally responsible: no Stalin, no problems !

Whilst not questioning the facts of Stalin's national chauvinism and its detrimental effects upon world communism, it is Fuwa's methods which are suspect. In trying to cover such a broad canvas in 60-odd pages, too many important aspects are excluded in the construction of such a naive equation. This treatment of the subject is fraught with the dangers of scapegoating.

In sketching out his argument, the author fails to impart an understanding of the historical processes of the period. Yet for all its limitations Stalin and Great Power Chauvinism has attempted to address questions for others to go beyond, to add flesh and explanation to the skeleton Fawa has rattled.

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