



THE STARRY PLOUGH

Aibreán
1975

An Camchéachta. 8p.

I.R.S.P.

THE WAY FORWARD

The Irish Republican Socialist Party was formed at a meeting held in Dublin on Sunday, December 8th 1974. The inaugural meeting was attended by approximately 80 delegates from Belfast, Armagh, Co. Derry, Derry City, Donegal, Wicklow, Cork, Clare, Dublin, Limerick and Tipperary.

It was unanimously agreed that the object of the Party would be to "End Imperialist Rule in Ireland and Establish a 32 County Democratic Socialist Republic, with the Working Class in control of the Means of Production, Distribution and Exchange".

To this end, it was agreed that the Party would launch a vigorous campaign of political agitation and education, North and South, on the following issues:

6 COUNTIES

1. Recognising that British Imperialist interference in Ireland constitutes the most immediate obstacle confronting the Irish people in their struggle for Democracy, National Liberation and Socialism; it shall be the policy of the I.R.S.P. to seek the formation of a broad front on the basis of the following demands.
 - (a) That Britain must immediately renounce all claims to Sovereignty over any part of Ireland and its coastal waters and should immediately specify an early date for the total withdrawal of her military and political presence from Ireland.
 - (b) Having specified the date for her total withdrawal from Ireland, Britain must immediately withdraw all troops to barracks; release all internees and sentenced political prisoners; grant a general amnesty for all offences arising from the military campaign against British Forces, or through involvement in the Civil Disobedience Campaign; abolish all repressive legislation; grant a Bill of Rights, which will allow complete freedom of political action and outlaw all discrimination whether it be on the basis of class, creed, political opinion or sex. Britain must also agree to compensate the Irish People for the exploitation which has already occurred.
 - (c) It shall be the policy of the I.R.S.P. to seek an active working alliance of all radical forces, within the context of the Broad Front, in order to ensure the ultimate success of the Irish Working Class in their struggle for Socialism.
 - (d) It will be an immediate objective of the party to launch an intensive campaign of opposition to E.E.C. membership. We therefore, intend to play an active part in the E.E.C. Referendum in the 6 county area and through our support groups in Britain.
 - (e) Recognising that sectarianism and the present campaign of sectarian assassinations arises as a result of British manipulation of the most reactionary elements of Irish society; we shall seek to end this campaign on the basis of united action by the Catholic and Protestant working class against British Imperialism in Ireland.

26 COUNTIES

1. The I.R.S.P. shall seek to have an organised United Campaign of all democratic forces against repressive legislation in the South and against the policy of blatant collaboration with British Imperialism, which is now being pursued by the 26 County administration.
2. The I.R.S.P. is totally opposed to the exploitation of our natural resources by multi national corporations. It is, therefore, the policy of the party to give active and sustained support to the present campaign for the nationalisation of the resources.
3. Recognising that the rapidly increasing cost of living and rising unemployment are to a large extent a direct result of our E.E.C. membership; it shall be the policy of the I.R.S.P. to actively support the formation of peoples organisations to combat rising prices and unemployment.

I.R.S.P. PUBLIC MEETING



Resignations

Since its formation, the I.R.S.P. has made rapid progress in the formation of branches. Many of the members of these branches were at one time members of Sinn Fein (Gardiner Place). In a recent statement these members outlined their reasons for resigning from that organisation:

"We feel it may be necessary to give a brief outline of the reasons for our resignations. They are as follows:"

- The refusal of the Sinn Fein Ard Comhairle to implement the democratically decided policies on the National Question, as laid down at the 1972 and 1973 Ard Fheiseanna.*
- The lack of internal democracy within Sinn Fein. This became particularly noticeable during the course of the past year, when many dedicated members were purged from the organisation because they dared to question the reformist approach of the Ard Comhairle on many vital issues. This purge culminated in attempts by members of the Ard Comhairle to intimidate delegates to the recent Ard Fheis, when many of them were threatened with expulsion if they did not vote in accordance with the wishes of the leadership.*
- The decision of the Ard Comhairle to contest the Six County Assembly Elections, when it was perfectly obvious that the elections were clearly designed to re-establish a British controlled puppet Parliament in the 6 Counties. In our view, this particular decision was indicative of the reformist and counter-revolutionary attitudes which prevail at Ard Comhairle level in Sinn Fein Gardiner Place.*
- The unprincipled betrayal of the internees arising from the decision to take seats on local councils in the North. This decision was made despite the fact that the Ard Comhairle had made repeated statements attacking the treachery of the S.D.L.P. for taking their seats.*
- The general drift towards almost exclusive participation in reformist activity and the total abandonment of agitational political action in pursuit of their objectives. Under its present leadership, Sinn Fein has been reduced to a position of almost total irrelevance in the context of the present political situation."*

The Irish Republican Socialist Party held its first public meeting on Wednesday night, February 12th in Dublin. The meeting, which was organised by the Dublin Regional Executive, I.R.S.P., was attended by over 500 people. The speakers were Seamus Costello, Chairman of the party's National Executive, and Bernadette McAliskey, a member of the National Executive.

Seamus Costello told the meeting that the development of class politics in Ireland — which would bring an end to the sectarian murder campaign in the North — could only be achieved by the ending of British interference in Ireland.

Murder gangs

He said that the Loyalist murder gangs were composed mainly of members of the British Army or the Ulster Defence Regiment, going about at night, out of uniform, murdering innocent people, because they opposed imperialism or at least took a nationalist view point. The divisions in the country and the fostering of sectarianism led to a position, where the control of the wealth and the resources of the country lay in the hands of the few. The I.R.S.P. is determined to end this by a campaign of political agitation and education.

The I.R.S.P. was necessary because no other organisation understood, or had a comprehensive programme based on, a correct analysis of the relationship between the national and the class question. He said that there were some people claiming to be Socialist who divorced themselves from the anti-imperialist struggle and others who were prepared to accept an army of occupation and anti-working class legislation.

The struggle for National Liberation and the struggle for the emancipation of the working class is part of the same struggle. We see the exploitation of the natural resources in the South as part of the same overall plan of imperialism. "We see the presence of an occupation army, not to keep the warring Irish from each others' throats, but to ensure the continued

exploitation of the nation by British imperialism". He said that if Britain wanted to get out, if the situation were no longer of benefit to her, she would leave in the morning and not care tuppence what happened afterwards.

Broad Front

Mr. Costello said, that the party sought the formation of a broad front on the issue of demanding an end to British imperialist control in Ireland. It is necessary that the struggle for National Liberation be led by the working class. If it were not, then British imperialism would be replaced by a government of native gombeen men and speculators. Bernadette McAliskey said that the I.R.S.P. was an attempt to create a revolutionary socialist alternative to 800 years of failure. The Irish struggle against British imperialism had not failed for the past 800 years out of sheer bad luck but had in fact failed because for 800 years we had been doing it the wrong way.

Failure of left

The Left in Ireland had failed and lost relevance because they did not raise the demands relating anti-imperialism with the class struggle. She criticised the purely economist approach: people who were against repression and internment, but were too busy waging the revolution to do anything about them, too busy to pose the question of oppression, harassment, political prisoners, because they had succeeded in uniting workers on a factory floor over wages.

She pointed out that the fight against the Brits, against internment and oppression is part of the same fight to survive in the place of work.

The I.R.S.P. would work consistently in the trade union movement and outside it, not only against the national wage agreement for democracy and socialism in the trade unions, but would be the vanguard of the struggle for workers to achieve ownership of the entire means of Production, Distribution and Exchange.



West German Group Backs I.R.S.P.

The West German/Ireland Solidarity Committee have withdrawn their support from the Sinn Fein (Gardiner Place) organisation and are now in complete agreement with the policies and objectives of the I.R.S.P.

The West German/Ireland Solidarity Committee was formed about 4 years ago and is one of the major support groups in Europe for the struggle for Civil Rights and National Liberation in Ireland. During the course of the past few years, they have arranged numerous speaking tours in Western Europe for members of the Sinn Fein Ard Comhairle and have given significant financial support to that organisation.

In a recent letter, they have invited representatives of the National Executive of the I.R.S.P. to undertake a month long speaking tour of West Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands in order to explain the policies of the I.R.S.P. to other support groups in those countries.

During the past month, the I.R.S.P. has received messages of support from various groups in France, Switzerland, West Germany, Canada and the United States.

**BUY THE
STARRY
PLOUGH
EVERY
MONTH**

EAGARFhOCAL

The Irish Republican Socialist Party, despite what has been described as its bloody baptism, is not an organisation intent on fragmenting further the anti-imperialist or socialist forces in Ireland. We seek no quarrel, no antagonism, with any group or individual fighting for the end of imperialism and capitalism in our country. On the contrary, it is our objective to work towards uniting those forces in an effective campaign against imperialism and for the creation of an Irish Socialist Republic.

Why then a new organisation? In creating the I.R.S.P. we are not creating division or difference of opinion, we are merely recognising that this division already exists. The difference of opinion is not in itself unhealthy, it is natural that people who are actively engaged in political work, in putting their political theories to the test of practice, on the factory floor, in the streets and in the community organisations, in getting continual feedback for the progress of their politics in action will continually debate among themselves, the political effectiveness and correctness of their ideas.

The I.R.S.P. is an organisation of people who have the same outlook, the same aims and objectives and accept the discipline of working together under the national leadership. Given the speed of change in Ireland over the past 10 years, it is even more natural that the political argument here is more intense and crucial than it appears to be elsewhere. Political discussion and debate and political criticism of ourselves and others are essential to ensure that the tactics and strategy in the fight against imperialism are correct and fulfil the objective of creating a Socialist Republic. It was because this idea of freedom of discussion was hard to find in the organisations we left that many found the I.R.S.P. the best way forward. As an organisation we must always be ready and willing to discuss and defend our point of view and be prepared if discussion of the issues shows us to be in error, to change that point of view. This is the hallmark of a truly revolutionary organisation.

The principle on which our organisation stands and which we believe differentiates us from the other Socialist and Republican groups is our interpretation of the relationship between the National struggle and the struggle for Socialism. There are two current schools of thought in this vital relationship. The first and that which is most clearly identified with the Provisional Republican Movement, is the idea which argues that we must "free Ireland" first and fight for Socialism afterwards. Even if this were possible the opportunity afforded to Socialists, after this so-called freeing of Ireland would be minimal. The

second and most popular argument on the political left, is that the National Question is itself divisive — it creates fear and anger amongst the Loyalist working class, it allows for a fragile unity of "Nationalists", which is not in the class interest of the Catholic workers and therefore the class struggle must come first. That is, we make Socialists of the Catholic and Protestant workers first, then seeing their common class interests they will become Republicans overnight.

This school of thought, of necessity, plays down the National Question in an effort to play down the division and contradiction within the working class, which the National Question raises. It deals, therefore, with only the safe issues of social and economic reform. The I.R.S.P. position is that both these approaches may achieve some limited success from the point of view of creating, in the working class, a revolutionary consciousness essential to the creation of a Socialist Republic. They are both doomed to failure. The National Question, however complex, confusing or divisive does exist — there is no point in avoiding it, it will not go away.

The fact that the struggle for

National independence is not led by Socialists or is not working class in its outlook or philosophy does not invalidate the right of the Irish people to struggle for independence. It is a criticism of Socialists that they are not in a position to create a working class leadership for the National struggle. The struggle should be led and controlled by the working class, organised and conscious of what freedom, democracy and independence mean in class terms. To bring this about, instead of avoiding the issues, Socialists should be in the vanguard of the struggle. We must be involved in building a working class party which enables workers to organise a fight in their own class interest against inflation, redundancies, unemployment and oppression and for the fight of ownership of the wealth and means of production of wealth in this country.

The attempt to do this bring us into immediate conflict with those who at present lay claim to this country, not only in social and economic terms but in political terms as well.

We cannot and must not run away from this political conflict. In the North, the traditional manipulation of

the Protestant working class loyalty in the interest of British Imperialism makes the task infinitely more difficult than it might otherwise be; but again it does not invalidate the correctness of this approach. Nor is it sectarian to state that the Loyalist workers in the North must reject their adherence to imperialism in their own class interest. This is a fact of life. To attempt to dislodge their loyalty by terrorising them into denouncing their position out of fear, or by denying them freedom of political expression by force of arms or legislation would be sectarian and oppressive.

The I.R.S.P. totally rejects any such approach and rejects any allegation that such is our intent. It is only by consistently involving ourselves in the struggle of workers in the place of work, by posing and arguing against the contradiction which exists in the working class; by building the revolutionary party of the working class that is capable and prepared to oppose effectively the social, economic and political effects of the system — the capitalist system, that we can expose the contradiction within the Loyalist ranks and begin to win Protestant workers, on the basis of political principle to our point of view. This may take a long time. There is no short cut to Socialism. There is nothing to be gained by fooling ourselves as an organisation and attempting to fool everybody else, that progress can be made overnight in "bridging the sectarian gap" or that it has already been done to any significant degree. The only way you can bridge the gap is by creating a revolutionary consciousness in the working class, Catholic and Protestant. Calling Ken Gibson a Socialist will never make him one, as long as he continues to support and misunderstand the nature of imperialism.

The I.R.S.P. does not claim to have all the answers. We do not claim to be "the revolution". The only claim we do make, is that we represent a serious attempt to build a revolutionary party of the working class — capable and prepared to wrest control of our wealth, our property and our lives from the clutches of capitalism and imperialism. To do that, we must be prepared to investigate our own historical task and the class role in the past of the Republican tradition. Whatever has been said and much that is derogatory, defiling and disgraceful has been said, unfortunately, by others who call themselves Socialists — we, as an organisation, will continue to argue our policies, to work for our programme — in action and through the columns of our newspaper.

It is ultimately on this programme and on our actions that we will be judged by the working class. Theirs is ultimately the only judgement of any consequence.

The Irish Republican Socialist Party wishes to extend its sympathies to the relatives and friends of Hugh Ferguson Chairman of the Whiterock Branch I.R.S.P. who was murdered by the Official I.R.A.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

1975 has been declared International Womens Year. The 26 county government has declared its intention to promote the role of women in Irish society. To date all we have had from the Government is a large amount of window dressing.

What women really need is the acceptance of the Government of the following demands:

1. The right of women to a job
2. Equal pay for equal work
3. A wider choice of jobs for women

Despite Michael O'Leary's protestations to the contrary, equal pay is still a long way off. In order to file a claim for equal pay, a woman must fulfill one of the following conditions:

- a. she must be doing the same work

as a man;

- b. she must be doing work of a similar nature;
- c. she must be doing work which is of equal value as work being done by a man.

To prove a pay claim, you must be able to compare your job with that of a man. To evaluate a job and its value, job evaluation is used. This job evaluation is not of a scientific nature but usually rests on an opinion.

The statistics for certain jobs in Ireland give us a true insight into the role of women in Ireland.

Office Cleaners are mainly women . . . 75-90%

Typists are mainly women . . . 90%

Hosiery workers — Dry Cleaners are mainly women . . . 50-75%

INTERVIEW WITH SEAMUS COSTELLO

Question: What caused the present feud between the I.R.S.P. and the Officials?

Costello: As far as we can see, it is the fact that the I.R.S.P. is undermining the Officials organisationally, particularly in Belfast where the feud is most intense. During the past 3 or 4 months, since the party was launched on the 12th of December, the I.R.S.P. has taken some 200 members from the Officials in the Belfast area. This has led to a situation where, at the moment, the Officials in Belfast have only half the numerical strength of the I.R.S.P. As a result of this, a request was made by the Sinn Féin Ard Comhairle to the Official I.R.A. to prevent the organisation of further I.R.S.P. branches in the Belfast area. Immediately after this request, starting on Dec. 12th, a number of our members were kidnapped in the Belfast area. From then until the murder of Hugh Ferguson, we have had dozens of people kidnapped, people beaten up, people wounded through shooting, houses petrol bombed, cars burned and so on. Undoubtedly the immediate cause of the feud is the fact that the Officials are losing members.

Question: What are the main ideological differences between the I.R.S.P. and the Officials?

Costello: The principal ideological differences would be their attitude towards the National Question as against our attitude. Basically, the position of the leadership of the Officials is that there is no hope of achieving National Liberation until such time as the Protestant and Catholic working class in the North are united and therefore there is nothing which can be done in political terms or in any other terms about this particular issue. Our attitude, on the other hand, is that the British presence in Ireland is the basic cause of the divisions between the Protestant and Catholic working class in the North. It follows from that, in our view, that the primary emphasis should be on the mobilisation of the mass of the Irish people in the struggle for National Liberation. We believe, also, that the left in Irish

politics should play a leading role in this struggle. Up until recent years, many of us felt that the Official Movement was capable of and willing to do this. Indeed the rank and file of the Official Movement had expressed their views on this at the 1972 and 1973 Ard Fheiseanna, where they rejected the position of the national leadership on the national question and put forward a policy which would have led to a more militant approach on this question.

However, the leadership disagreed with this policy and deliberately frustrated its implementation. The result of this was that the Official Republicans, who, at that time, were the largest single body of organised left-wing opinion in Ireland, deliberately divorced the working class struggle from the national struggle and gradually degenerated taking a reformist position on a number of very important issues.

Question: What issues in particular?

Costello: The principal issues that come to mind immediately are the Civil Rights struggle, the Assembly Elections, the question of taking seats and the question of the rent and rates strike. In all these issues, the leadership of the Officials hesitated to take a stand. They have, for instance, regarded the Civil Rights struggle since 1969, as the only struggle worth taking part in. They ignored the presence of 15,000 troops on the streets. They ignored the torture and terror perpetrated by the British Army on the Nationalist population and they acted as though there was no change in the situation since 1969. . . . In other words, they failed to realise the change in the nature of the struggle in Ireland, particularly in the North. They failed to realise that struggle within the context of the 6 Co. state to an outright struggle against Imperialism, as manifested by the British political and military presence in Ireland.

Question: The I.R.S.P. has been described as a "Stickie" organisation with a "Provo" streak. How would you differ from the Provos?

Costello: The principal difference we would have with them as I see it, is that the Provisionals are not as an organisation, dedicated to the establishment of a Socialist Republic. We feel that, from an organisational point of view, many of them would accept a theoretically independent state, with no significant change being made in the social and political structures of the state. However, there are individuals within the Provisionals ranks who are quite radical and support the idea of establishing a Socialist Republic. We are not in business to criticise the Provisionals. We have our own policy to pursue and we have our own objectives. To the extent that the Provisional policy runs parallel to ours, we are prepared to co-operate with them. The principal meeting point of our two policies at the moment is the question of British withdrawal from Ireland. I don't think anybody can question the sincerity of the Provos on that particular point. To that extent, we are willing to co-operate with them ON THAT ISSUE. We are also, of course willing to co-operate with the Officials, or any other radical organisation in Ireland that we have common ground with on specific issues.

Question: Would you be willing to co-operate with Loyalist groups on short-term economic and social issues?

Costello: We would certainly co-operate with anybody on any aspect of our policy. But we think that any approach to the Loyalist and Protestant working class in the North, must be on the basis of a principled political approach. In other words, there is no use in us, as an organisation, going to some Loyalist group and asking them for co-operation with regard to housing on the Shankill and Falls Road and at the same time pretending that we are not Socialists and we are not Republicans. We feel that the approach to the Loyalists must be an honest one and that we must explain to them what all aspects of our policy are. We must explain, for instance, that we are opposed to the British presence in Ireland and that

we are not merely opposed to that presence because we want to establish a Catholic Republic in the whole country. We are opposed to it because we regard it as the principle means of dividing the Protestant and Catholic working class and because we regard the British presence in Ireland as the principle obstacle

preventing the emergence of class politics in Ireland. We feel that, if we approach the Protestant working class on this basis, we may manage to convince some of them, at least, that our approach is correct. We see no point whatsoever

tribute to a comrade

The funeral of Hugh Ferguson, who was Chairman of the White Rock Branch of the I.R.S.P., took place on Monday 24th February. The funeral was attended by many hundreds. Seamus Costello, Chairman of the I.R.S.P., gave a short address at the graveside.



They talk about it here, they talk about it there
They talk of revolution everywhere,
So working class unite,
And come and join our fight,
Let's fight for a Socialist Republic now

(2)

You've heard of Fianna Fail from Cork to Donegal
They still claim to be Republicans
But there is no doubt
That they have sold us out
Let's fight for a Socialist Republic now

(3)

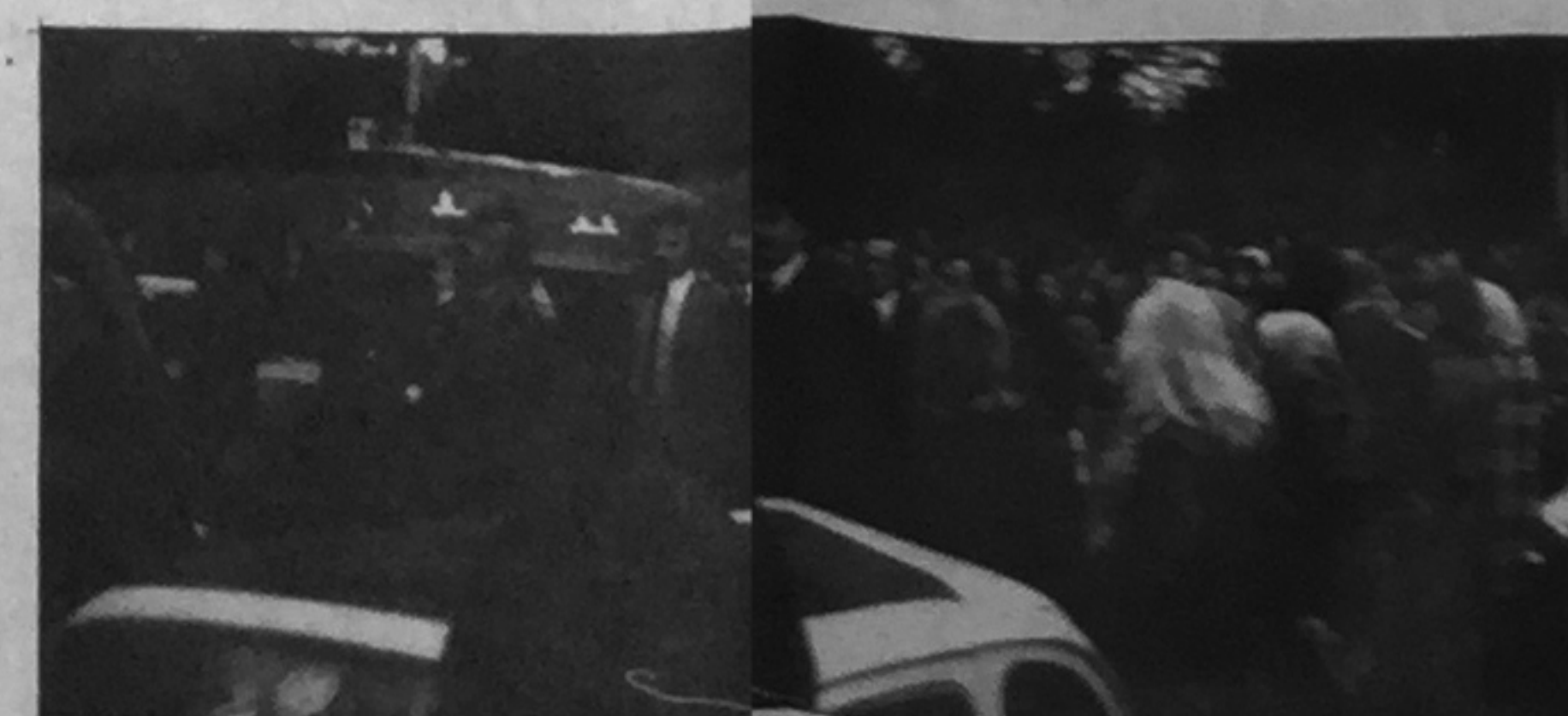
You workers must unite, the Capitalist we must fight
Exploitation we must end
Stand by your demands
The powers in your hands
Let's fight for a Socialist Republic now

(4)

Listen to what I say, come help us on our way
Stand by the ideals of Connolly,
Let us agitate,
Organise and smash the state
Let's fight for a Socialist Republic now

(5)

We talk of Liberty, Ireland one and Ireland free
That day we will have equality
So stand together now
Let's raise our Starry Flag
It's the flag of our Socialist Republic now



in co-operating with them on short-term issues while at the same time trying to fool them about our policies. If we were to do that, we would be in the same position as the people in Belfast in 1913 whom Connolly described as "gas and water" Socialists. The Official Movement, during the last few years, have tried this particular approach and have now moved into a position of what we would call "Ring-road Socialists". In other words they are prepared to adopt a common stand with Loyalist organisations on the question of the Ring-road in Belfast and to hope, or believe that the Protestants will not suspect that they are really Republicans or Socialists. We feel this is a very dishonest approach and that ultimately it is a counter-productive one. We have a situation arising from that, where the ranks of the Official Movement now find themselves moving in parallel directions to Loyalist murder gangs. This is the logical extension of an unprincipled political approach.

Question: You have criticised the Officials for contesting the Assembly Elections. Yet the I.R.S.P. has decided, in principle, to contest the Convention Elections. Is there not a contradiction?

Costello: First of all, let me say, that the decision which the I.R.S.P. made regarding the Convention Elections was, as you point out, a decision in principle. This decision was made at the meeting at which the party was formed and we have explained quite clearly since then that this decision will be subject to review at our

Annual Conference, which is taking place on April 5th and 6th.

What the final outcome of that discussion, at the conference, will be, I don't know. But the essential difference which we see between the Assembly Elections and the Convention Elections is that the Assembly was, in fact, a Parliament, with statutory powers of administration and powers of government. The Assembly Elections were an attempt, by the British government, to re-establish the Stormont Parliament under another name and to continue with separate political institutions in the North directly under British control. A large section of the population of the North had rejected the existence of the Stormont Assembly. In the context of that situation, we felt that it was a totally unrevolutionary and a very reactionary decision by the Official Republicans to agree to contest these elections. We felt that they were lending validity and credence to Britain's claim to govern any part of this country, despite their repudiation of this claim. The Convention, on the other hand, has no powers. It is not an Assembly. It is not a Parliament. The only task of the Convention will be to discuss constitutional arrangements for the future government of Northern Ireland. We understand from the British government's statements that, in fact, the Convention will be abolished after a stated period of time and it is for this reason that some of us, at the original meeting, felt we should contest the Convention Elections.

Question: You state that the I.R.S.P. is not an abstentionist party. If you get candidates elected to the Dail, what kind of role will they play? The role of a social-democratic party? (e.g. the Irish Labour Party)

Costello: When we say that we are not an abstentionist party, what we mean by this is that we are not a party, in principle, committed to abstention. But there are circumstances and conditions under which it might be desirable to abstain and if we felt that it was tactically desirable at any particular point in time, in either the North or the South to abstain from Parliament, then we would do so. That would depend, however, on the circumstances existing at the particular point of time. If a situation existed, for instance, where there was a possibility of large scale dissatisfaction, on the part of the people, with either, the 26 county parliament or the 6 county Parliament then abstention, on our part would be a legitimate tactic. We are not, however, abstentionist in principle. As for the role I.R.S.P. representatives would play in Leinster House, we would see their primary task there as one of highlighting the policies of the I.R.S.P. using the parliament as a platform for the pursuit of these policies, and for achieving publicity for them. But we feel that, in addition to that, members elected to Parliament would have, by necessity, to be active in politics outside of Parliament i.e. in extra-parliamentary and agitational politics on the streets.

We see a direct relationship between the successful struggle on the streets in pursuit of any particular political objective and the presence of people in Parliament. We don't see Parliament as an institution that is likely to produce the results which we want from a long term point of view. We don't see it in a reformist way. We see both Parliamentary institutions in Ireland as institutions that have to be abolished if we are to make progress from the point of view of establishing a Socialist Republic.

This was the first Easter that the I.R.S.P. held Commemorations. There were Commemorations in Limerick, Killaloe, Bray and Dublin. The speaker in Limerick was Seamus Costello, while Osgur Breatnach gave the oration in Killaloe. Jim Mc Corry, of the Belfast Regional Executive (Coiste Ceanntair Beal Feirste), gave the orations in Bray and Dublin.

The Commemoration in Dublin was to the Republican Plot in Glasnevin Cemetery. The following is the speech of Jim McCorry:

culminating in the coming together of Pearse and Connolly, one realising that we could not have National freedom without Social and Economic Freedom and the other realising that we could not have Social and Economic freedom without National freedom. So it has developed since then.

In every generation, men have gone out to fight and to work to build that Ireland, which we want. So we also will try to.

For many of us our Socialism is simple. It starts with concern,

sort of work we wish to do. For reasons known only to themselves, an organisation which many of us feel should be a brother organisation, has decided that we have no right to exist. For the past six weeks, we have done everything possible to ease the situation in Belfast. We went to peace meetings, met intermediaries, tried to talk direct. Everything we have done has been seen as coming from a position of weakness.

During the last two weeks particularly, there have been a number of attacks on our members in

us. But this weekend, we decided — no more. If we have to fight those who should be with us, before we can get at our real enemy, then that will be the case. We would hope and we would appeal, sincerely and passionately, that that should not be so. We ask them if they would sit down and talk, that we could speak and that in some way we can help each other to develop our thoughts and our actions in the service of our people. That is what we want and they say that is what they want. Then let them sit down and talk.

Easter Commemorations

"Coming down from Belfast, I didn't know what to say about 1916 or about the things we all feel deeply about. But reading the newspapers on the way down, Glenn Barr had a statement which said — build your dream and then show it to us. That is what we are going to do. We are going to build our dream.

It's a dream that has been held by the Irish Nation for 800 years: a dream of freedom that has developed throughout those 800 years — till

compassion and love. It is a Socialism that will come to fruition through our work on the ground, in homes and in factories. It will come to fruition because we are the embryo of the new society. We do think, that we alone have the only path to the truth, but we, along with those other organisations and individuals can build a new society.

In Belfast unfortunately, during the past three months there has not been much opportunity to do the

Belfast, shooting incidents, raids on homes. Standing down here it seems pretty easy to talk about the tension in Belfast. I have visited homes where lads have not been home for six or eight weeks. They cannot visit their wives or their mothers, and this week they are embarrassed because they have not got a couple of pounds to give to the woman of the house who could feed them.

Well for the past few weeks we have taken whatever was thrown at

From Tuesday night our people will again be going back into their areas. They will be going to their homes. This is their right and it is a right that the British can not take off us, that the R.U.C. nor the B-Specials can't take off us. Certainly no other organisation will. We would hope that there will be peace and that we can work together. The decision will be in the hands of the Official Republican Movement.

Unemployment

At the present time, there are over 140,000 people unemployed in Ireland (32 Counties). Many of these redundancies are inevitable — give the current recession in the capitalist countries. However, some of these redundancies are unnecessary.

The Car Assembly industry in this country is in a state of chaos. The Reg Armstrong factory has been closed on a temporary basis and Britains intend closing (n.b. by the time this article appears, Britains will have, in all probability closed) for three months. The Britain closure will mean 900 more workers on the dole.

Yet at the same time, fully assembled cars are being imported into the country. It has been proposed that these cars (e.g. British Leyland and Opel) be subjected to a boycott by the Trade Unions. This boycott would have the effect of keeping the home market protected from imports and of saving some jobs.

The last time the car union leaders met, they considered a proposal for imposing a blanket ban on all built up car imports while the home assembly industry was having a bad time and while short-time working, closedown and redundancy was endemic in the industry.

That time they failed to agree on a blanket ban. Now, with the Reg Armstrong closure and 900 more

jobs (Britains) in jeopardy, it seems likely that the Union leaders will make up their minds at last. A strong stand now can save jobs.

The Irish people can help keep jobs in the country by buying Irish products wherever possible. In certain sectors jobs have been threatened by cheap imports. The shoe industry is a good example of this. The market was flooded by cheap shoes, manufactured in Italy. Boycotting foreign products when there are native products just as good is not being chauvinistic. It is a simple matter of survival. Many people say, that foreign products are cheaper — "We can't afford to buy Irish".

There is a simple answer to this. It is "In a situation where 140,000 Irish people are unemployed and buying Irish can save some jobs — we can't afford not to".

Small Farmers

One of the main considerations in causing Ireland to join the E.E.C. was to secure guaranteed high prices for fat cattle. In order to maximise benefits from this, it was necessary that fat cattle producers should have ample supplies of young cattle at low prices.

Small farmers were encouraged greatly to expand their output of young cattle and to borrow heavily to

do so. This meant that large numbers of young cattle were available to large farmers. The combination of low prices for young cattle and guaranteed prices for fat cattle maximum profits for large farmers.

The small farmers, on the other hand, were left in a position where they had incurred debts of hundreds of pounds to banks and the A.C.C. When the cattle crisis arose, these small farmers suffered huge losses. The small farmers by relying on organisations and institutions dominated by large farmers abdicated collective responsibility for their interests.

These organisations pursued policies and adopted measures designed exclusively for the betterment of large farmers. If there is a lesson to be learned by the small farmers from the crisis, then surely it is the necessity of building their own separate organisation to protect their interests and not those of the large farmers.

Fishermen

The fishermen of Scotland, Wales and England, by their blockade on their ports, have shown a very effective way to express their discontent with the present state of things. Fed up of passing votes of no confidence, they decided to take strong action to have their voices

heard.

Subsidies

The possibility of Irish fisherman taking similar action, is not as remote as it seemed. But the most immediate issues affecting Irish fisherman are different from those affecting the Scottish and Welsh. Here the most immediate issue is the possibility of Irish fishermen obtaining oil and diesel subsidies. The Secretary of the Irish Fishermen's Organisation Mr. Frank Doyle, has warned that discontent with these issues could lead to some sort of protest.

Cheap Imports

A Killybegs skippers stated recently that fishermen were in a very militant mood about this issue. He said that the enormous increases in the cost of oil and diesel had angered many fishermen. He pointed out that fishermen here had many genuine demands: The chief demands were:

1. Oil and diesel subsidies
2. The flooding of the Irish fish market with cheap imports from Norway, Iceland, Russia and Poland must stop.
3. The establishment of a 200 mile fishery limit and the provision of adequate fishery protection.

He said that some fishermen were prepared to leave the question of cheap imports to the E.E.C. bureaucrats but that this demand coupled with the demand for a 200 mile fishery limit could cause a "cod war" of the Irish coasts.

Imperialism is the extension of the native capitalism of one country into another. The latter being dominated by the former. It manifests itself in many ways, depending on circumstances prevailing in both the "mother" country and the "victim". Today in Ireland we see two basic manifestations of this evil system.

In the north we have economic exploitation backed by the armed presence of the British Army, with their various weaponry of repression, murder, torture, internment, etc. In the south, however it is much more subtle. Here we have the same economic exploitation, only this time it is guarded over and protected by our very own "Irish" Government.

To understand how to fight it, we must first of all understand the need to fight it. First of all, let us look at what its effects are in our country at present:

1. Over 140,000 unemployed
2. A chronic housing shortage even though a large number of building workers form part of the dole queue.
3. Small farmers barely able to live on the land — certainly not without the dole.
4. The North! Need I say more on that subject?

Now I think any reasonable person who thinks about the above shambles would be justified in wanting to put his hands firmly around the neck of whoever is causing it.

The current scape-goats for this mess range between Provo "terrorists"; unreasonable workers who dare ask for an extra few bob to feed their families; greedy farmers; the Coalition Govt. and the Arabs.

Undoubtedly the Provo campaign has stopped a few foreign tourists from arriving here but it seems unlikely that their presence here for a few weeks would have gone any way towards solving the fundamental problem.

Now what about the workers? Well that us. Now you just think about it. Are you being unreasonable in your demands? I mean, are you driving a Mark 10 Jaguar, living in a £40,000 house and earning over £6,000 a year? ... You're not? Well I would say that anyone in that position, looking for more is being unreasonable — i.e. the bosses.

What we, the workers, are looking for is no more than we produce and what we need to give our families a decent life. That is not an unreasonable demand and if the system makes it one then it is the system that is being unreasonable.

As for the farmers. It is true that larger farmers are getting more than their fair share ... with grants, the green pound and various concessions. On top of this, we hear them complaining about having to pay tax. These people have undoubtedly gained from the E.E.C. Their holdings and farming enterprises are large enough to ensure a substantial income supplemented by equally substantial grants. However the other section of the farmers; the small farmers, have lost out completely in the competitive system.

The amount of grants small farmers receive is nowhere near enough to bring their meagre earnings up to an acceptable level. Hence we have the spectacle of large farmers making

handsome profits, which are increasing all the time thanks to the EEC agricultural policy, the policies of the IFA and the government. Meanwhile the smaller farmers are existing with the help of the dole or being forced off the land altogether. The result being large farms expanding as large farmers take over small farmers' holdings. The small farmers who have left the land, meanwhile, join the long queues in search of a job in industry. In the circumstances, it is not greed by the small farmers which makes them seek the dole. It is simply a matter of survival.

To simply blame the present government of mishandling the present economic policies is not the answer either. All over the capitalist

present government would help the working class in any way AS LONG AS THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT EXISTS.

Arabs

And so we come to the Arabs. What exactly have they done? It is true that there are a great many changes to be made in their own countries, mainly relating to who should get all the wealth from the oil. However that is a different story. For years the Arabs have been giving their natural resources away to major oil companies in return for the creation of a few jobs in their countries and a small royalty. Now, for various reasons, including the

So what can we do in a situation, where we would appear to have no say. First of all, we must face reality. The basic fact is that capitalism is an evil system which in order to survive must underproduce, to ensure profit competition and hence profit ... profit being the whole motivation behind free enterprise. It produces for profit and not for need. Therefore the only real cure is to change to a system which will produce on the basis of need — SOCIALISM.

This is not to say that we ignore so-called reformist demands. We must fight for the rights of all exploited people and ensure that in the process of that fight that we help politicise the people involved in their various struggles.

From what we have seen here, there are various sections of the community who, out of necessity, have to struggle against the system in their own particular circumstances. We have people in the North who because of their aspirations towards a better system find themselves in direct conflict with the armed presence of British Imperialism.

We have the small farming community who, if they are to survive, must realise the large farmers on whose behalf the I.F.A. fights, are not their allies but they in fact threaten their existence. They will need to band together in their own organisation to fight for solutions to their own problems, which are different to those of the "ranchers".

Trade Unions

We have the workers and the unemployed who have to struggle daily against redundancies, for wage increases to enable them to survive, and for the right to work itself. In these struggles, the workers are hampered and misled by a bureaucratic and Trade Union Movement and so we must combine their struggle against the bosses with the struggle for democracy within the Trade Unions.

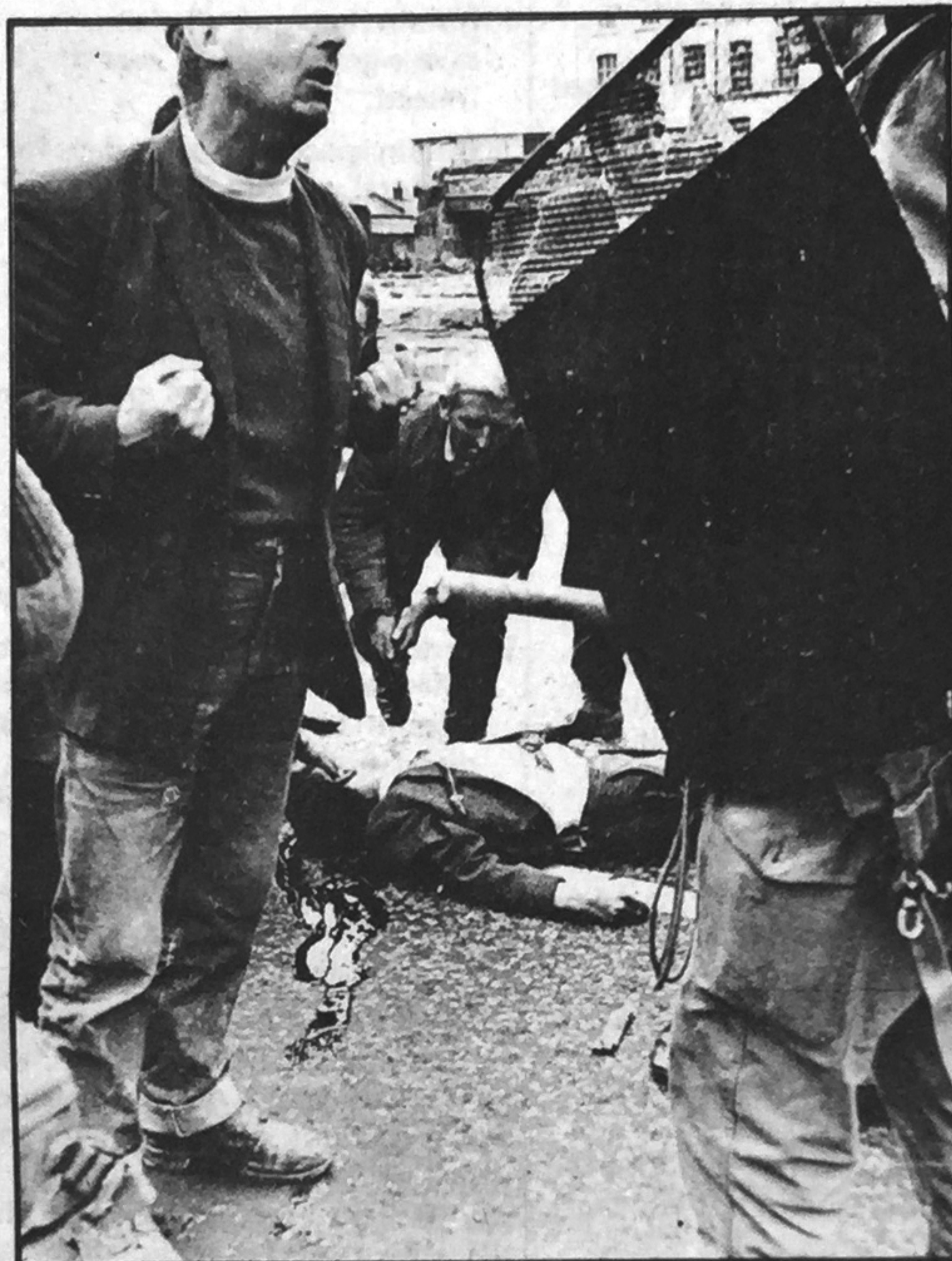
There are, of course, other sections of the community who find themselves in conflict with the system; the students, the homeless, tenant associations, fishermen ... the list is endless.

The purpose of this article is not, however, to discuss in any detail what tactics should be adapted by each of these bodies but rather to point out the necessity for fighting imperialism and capitalism and to point to the base on which it should be fought.

Quite obviously, this system must be fought and destroyed if we are to achieve any sort of equality and a decent standard of living for our people. It is also obvious that since the interests of so many sections of the community are in conflict with the system, then any socialist must attempt to link those separate struggles into one basic struggle against imperialism.

As I have said the precise manner in which this may be done, is for discussion in further articles. The I.R.S.P. will attempt through actively participating in every aspect of the struggle against imperialism and capitalism to link each separate aspect into one united struggle.

To conclude, it can be seen clearly that no one aspect of the general struggle can be divorced from any other. The National Struggle and the various social struggles are completely integrated and any attempts to separate them must be resisted.



Imperialism In Ireland

world, the present crisis is hitting the working class and the free enterprise system. So we must ask if every single government in Europe, America, etc. is mishandling their economies. This is not the case.

The fact is that due to the nature of the capitalist system, it cannot produce enough of anything for everybody. After all if enough goods were produced for everyone there would be no competition and hence less profits for the bosses. Naturally, they would describe this as unfair. So we compete and pay more if they are to make more profits. The "Bring back Jack" Brigade should consider if his presence or anyone else's in the

Middle East War, the Arabs have taken a much stronger line and are demanding much more realistic payments for their oil.

The effect of this is that the Oil Companies, who have been making vast profits for years, simply passed on the increased costs to the consumers in order to maintain and in fact increase, their profits. The end result of this is that price increases in practically everything has been conveniently blamed on the increased cost of oil. The fact is that prices were increasing anyway in line with demand and the oil increases simply helped speed up a process of inflation, which was inevitable in the first place.

Easter Statement From The National Executive Of **THE I.R.S.P**

Ba mhaith le Coiste Náisiunta Phairtí Poblachtach Sóisialach na h-Eireann a ndea-nheim a chur in iúl, an Chaitse seo, dos na dreamanna ar fad ata ag cur in aghaidh an Impiriulachais in Éirinn agus i dtíortha eile thar lear.

Ta muid anseo len ar ndilseacht d'aidhmeanna 1916, don poblachtachas agus don sóisialachas a ath-dhearbhu. Is trua linne an deighilt mhor idir na forsai frith-impiriulacha sa tír seo, deighilt a leirítear chomh soiléir ar ocaidí cosúil leis an geomoradh seo inniu. Cuireann deighilteanna den chineal seo mearbhall ar an bpobal agus laghdaítear an tacaíocht d'fhorasí frith-impiriulacha da bharr.

Ta an cineal seo deighilte ag cur isteach orainne i bPairtí Poblachtach Sóisialach na h-Eireann o bunaidh an pairtí i Mi na Nollag seo chaite. Ta ionsaithe fíochmhara a ndéanamh ar ar mbaill i mBeal Feirste, ach go h-áirithe. Ní fad o dunnharaíoch comradai linn, Hugh Ferguson, sa chathair sin. Ionsaíodh, gortaíodh agus lámhachadh go leor baill eile. Ta iarrachtaí ar bun le ceithre mhí anuas an pairtí se'againne a scrios. Níl muid ag iarraidh coibhlint leis na h-Oifigúlaigh. Ní dheanfadh se sin maitheas do dhuine ar bith seachas dos na forsai Impiriulacha sa tír seo, na forsai go bhfuil muid ag iarraidh troid ina n-aghaidh.

Is e is aidhm do Phairtí Poblachtach Sóisialach na h-Eireann na deireadh a chur le riail impiriulach in Éirinn agus poblacht daonlathach sóisialach 32 contae a bhunú, ina mbeadh ceannas ag an lucht oibre ar na meoin táirgíochta, daileachain agus malairte. Leis an aidhm seo a bhaint amach caithfear Arm na Breataine a dhíbirt as se contaetha thuaisceart Éireann. Caithfear freisin smacht pholaitiúil, eachnamuil agus chultúrtha na Breataine sa tír ar fad, thuaidh agus theas a scrios. Aithníonn muid nach feidir ceist na n-aicmí agus ceist an Náisiunachais a scarúint o cheile. Dearmad e sin a rinne dreamanna eile. Is cuid den aon troid amháin iad, an cur in aghaidh na n-aicmí agus an troid ar son an Náisiunachais.

Ta muid sasta comh-oibriú le dreamanna frith-impiriulacha eile, a ghlacann lenar n-aidhmeanna, chun an cuspoir seo a chur i gcrích. Caithfear an coras mar ata se a scrios, Sóisialachas agus Poblachtachas a chur in ait an Impiriulachais agus an Chapitealachais ata againn faoi lathair. Is fearr agus is tapula a eireoidh linn e sin a chur i gcrích ma bhíonn comh-oibriú idir na dreamanna eagsula frith-impiriulacha sa tír.

The National Executive of the IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST PARTY extends fraternal greetings this Easter to our members and supporters, and to all other anti-Imperialist groups in Ireland and abroad in their struggle against the common enemy — Imperialism.

This Easter, like many Easters past, sees other Republican organisations parading to Republican plots throughout Ireland, each with their own following, whether it be big or small, and each castigating Britain for her Imperialist role in Ireland. We recognise that each of these separate Republican organisations are anti-Imperialist and have been the main opponents of Imperialism in Ireland in the latest phase of the struggle against Britain, but by the very fact that these organisations viciously vilify each other over the graves of our Republican dead demonstrates the division and

confusion which exists in Ireland to-day.

This division and political confusion in the context of our Party, has manifested itself in a most ugly and antagonistic fashion, and has resulted in a situation where, for the past four months, determined efforts have been made to smash and destroy the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

Since the formation of our Party last December our Belfast members have been the victims of a terror campaign which would have impressed Brigadier Kitson himself, and could only have been equalled in ferocity by the British occupation army. We have witnessed the assassination of one of our members in Belfast, Hugh Ferguson, along with countless shootings, kidnappings and beatings. All this from an organisation which many of us belonged to at one time, and many of our comrades of former times sit in confused silence and watch their leaders order and execute these vile deeds. We have consistently and on every possible occasion, striven to end this conflict. We are confident that the aggressors will eventually realise that terror will not stop the growth of our party, which has a legitimate political programme, and that tactics of this nature only strengthen us further in our determination to present and work for our policies, which we believe will lead to the creation of a Socialist Republic. The destruction of our Party and the Officials would only be in the interests of British Imperialism. We wish to state quite clearly that the formation of our Party as an alternative to the sterile policies being presented to the working class of Ireland is a significant contribution to the building of independent working class politics. We as a party understand the necessity of uniting the National struggle with the Class struggle. We will not fall into the Imperialist trap by waging the National struggle to the exclusion of the class struggle, and likewise we will not exclude the National struggle from the Class struggle. The needs of our class are the needs of Ireland, they cannot be presented in isolated parts, but must be welded together to secure the end of British Imperialist rule in Ireland,

North and South. To this end one of our many tasks in the short term is to work for the unity of the Irish people behind the demand that Britain end her presence and interference here, and to do this we seek the formation of a broad front to actively work for this demand. We as a party are prepared to work with any organisation or individuals who support our demands that:

1. Britain renounce all claims to sovereignty over any part of Ireland.
2. Britain specify an early date for the total withdrawal of her military and political presence from Ireland.
3. Britain release all Internees and Political Prisoners and grant an amnesty for offences arising from the military campaign against British forces, or through involvement in the Civil Disobedience campaign.
4. Britain abolish repressive legislation.
5. Britain grant a bill of rights that will ensure the complete freedom of political action, and outlaw all discrimination whether it be on the basis of class, creed, political opinion or sex.
6. Britain agree to compensate the Irish people for the exploitation that has already occurred.

Under such a short term programme, we as a party must ensure that, for the sake of gaining some concessions, we do not drop our other demands, which would mean a return to a pre-1969 position in the North where the basic problems would still exist, and also we must ensure that the struggle does not de-generate into a mere campaign for a bill of rights.

In Ireland today, because of the crises in the capitalist economies throughout the world, society as we know it is divided on class lines and the native Irish capitalist class are uniting with their imperialist masters in an effort to solve their problems at the expense of the working class.

We see so-called labour party leaders unable or unwilling to mobilise the workers in defence of the class interests, and because of this the large pool of unemployed in the country has been left leaderless and at the mercy of the capitalist

system. Even today the workers, North and South, are being fooled into believing that acceptance of Wage Agreements and Social Contracts are in their interests, when in fact they are instruments used to blunt the effectiveness of the workers in their opposition to redundancies and short time working weeks. We must ensure that they see the socialist alternative. They must be made aware that the fight for the right to work is the same as the fight against the British Army, is the same as the fight against Internment and the Offences Against the State Act and is the same as the fight for more houses.

All the problems confronting the Irish working class are caused by the one enemy . . . Foreign Imperialism and Native Capitalism. The left in Ireland today must realise that in order to resist the attacks on the Irish workers and small farmers, there must be unity of action in this resistance and if they refuse, because of political sectarianism, to come to the defence of the workers, they will suffer the fate of the reformist and be pushed into a position of total irrelevance in the context of working class politics.

In the struggle ahead the left in Ireland must regain the ground lost in 1969 and the main thrust against British Imperialism must not be left to people who do not understand the real nature of British Imperialism. Therefore the I.R.S.P. will not lose sight of its ultimate objective — the establishment of a 32 County Democratic Socialist Republic, with the working class in control of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

Only when this is achieved can sectarianism and the working class division be banished for eternity. Only when this is achieved can the rightful inheritors of the wealth of Ireland build a Socialist economic system on the needs of the working class, an economic system which would build houses according to the needs of the plain people and not for the needs of profit. An economic system that would secure the right to work, and vest control of the factories in the hands of the working class. Only under such a system can the working class be in complete control of their own destiny.

We have a Party which knows the way forward, we have a membership who, in the main have contributed their entire adult lives to the cause of Republicanism and Socialism and who understand the mistakes of the past. The conditions exist for large scale social upheaval. The only thing needed is the existence of a genuine Republican Socialist Party working in conjunction with and in the interests of the Irish working class.

The I.R.S.P. is such a party and we ask you to play your part in the struggle for National Liberation and Socialism by joining our ranks.

Issued by the National Executive
IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST
PARTY
EASTER 1975.

JOIN THE IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST PARTY

The aim of the I.R.S.P. is "to end Imperialist Rule in Ireland and establish a 32 County Democratic Socialist Republic with the working class in control of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

- ☐ I want to join
☐ I want associate membership
☐ I want more information

Write or contact:

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Name _____

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Title: The Starry Plough, Vol. 1, No. 1

Organisation: Irish Republican Socialist Party

Date: 1975

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