

labour

VOLUMN 1. Nos. 5 and 6. JULY-AUGUST, 1967. 6d.

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE LABOUR PARTY



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VOTERS' CHOICE

IT is acknowledged everywhere, even in the newspapers generally hostile to Labour, that the only significant—and spectacular—breakthrough in the local elections was made by the Labour Party. The big vote in Dublin was not isolated. Labour also secured 26.2% of the vote in Limerick and in relation to votes beat Fine Gael to become the second party in Limerick.

As in other parts of the country, however, Labour's vote was not reflected in seats gained, and this is the most important factor. All over the country, Labour secured about 17% of the total poll but only secured about 10% of the total number of seats. (This is a field which Labour leaders will have to study for the next national test to see if more candidates are needed.)

The total poll, however, for Labour is of enormous importance to the thousands of Labour men and women who put forth such energetic efforts during the local elections campaign because this was the first national test since Labour adopted its full Socialist policy. All the party leaders, all party statements and programmes spoke of Labour's Socialist solution. This was regarded as daring and audacious but it was substantially proved to be correct. Not alone did our old supporters stay with us but they were joined by thousands of others.

The local elections prove that Labour's fundamental support, the base of Labour, is absolutely secure. Perhaps the supporters believe that at last they have an ideal to aim at and to work for.

The new policy, combined with the greatest effort Labour's members ever yet put forth in Dublin, Limerick, Cork and Waterford, Kilkenny, Galway and Sligo and hundreds of other centres, has registered with the people, at least in the urban areas.

The policy and work, of course, brought results beyond most of our hopes and all credit is due to everyone in Dublin who worked in any way for that success. The securing of 41,000 votes and 13 seats, instead of five held on the eve of the election, is a terrific achievement. The victory against the mighty machines of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, with all the wealth, and the facilities that they bring, was a watershed in the history of the party. It has been said by our enemies

Contd. on Page two.

OUR MEN AT CITY HALL

OUR representation on the Dublin Corporation has increased, as a result of the election, from five to thirteen. Above twelve of the team pose for a historic photograph after attending their first meeting.

They are (left to right) Gerry English (North Central City); Denis Larkin (T.D.), Marino and Donnycarney; Billy Cumiskey (Alderman) North Central City; Sean Dunne (Alderman and T.D.), Ballyfermot and Inchicore; Dermot O'Rourke, Terenure, Ranelagh, Rathfarnham; Mick Mullen (Alderman and T.D.), Navan Rd. and Cabra; Frank Cluskey (T.D.), South Central; George Butler, Drimnagh and Crumlin; Paddy Dunne, Marino, Donnycarney; Mick Hopper, Finglas, Artane; Tommy Duffy, Howth, Raheny, Dermot O'Shea, Ballyfermot, Inchicore.

The missing member is Jimmy Mooney (Alderman), Rialto/James Street areas.

ENTHUSIASM MUST NOT BE DIMMED

By A POLITICAL OBSERVER

LABOUR is the second party on Dublin Corporation—the most powerful local authority in the country. With thirteen seats, just two behind Fianna Fail, Labour is in a strong position to influence and initiate good local government in Dublin.

A big responsibility falls on the 13 newly elected Dublin Corporation members. It is they who by their vigilance and adherence to socialist community policies can spearhead the next advance at the general election. The whole Labour movement throughout the country stands to gain if they do their job well.

Across the water the London County Council gave an unparalleled example of nearly forty years of first class government. It was the Labour government in County Hall which paved the way for the first British Labour Government. Our Dublin members are not in power but they are on the threshold of it and they could perform an immense job for the citizens of Dublin and indirectly for the whole people of Ireland.

The services made available to the working class of Dublin are nothing short of scandalous. Swimming pools, play centres, community centres, clinics, are all lacking. Our housing situation is equally deplorable.

Labour must plan an emergency programme which will catch the enthusiasm of the young people in the city. Conflict there will undoubtedly be—but this is the essence of democratic politics and Labour councillors must not flinch when faced by the tycoons of vested interests.

Labour Dublin must send a message of hope throughout the country. The local elections of 1967 could well provide the springboard from which Labour will eventually attain power. The enthusiasm of the young socialists in the capital must not be dimmed. Their work and its fruits should inspire the rest of the country.



Official Labour policy is expressed in statements issued on behalf of the Party. Signed articles are the responsibility of the authors and unsigned articles are the responsibility of the Editorial Committee.

Vol. 1, Nos. 5 and 6. JULY-AUGUST, 1967.

THE VOTERS' CHOICE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

that Labour spent enormous sums of money on the campaign, but it can be said authoritatively that not more than £300 a constituency was spent during the whole election. The success was achieved by sweat from hard work and by the new support from the trade unions. But the success of Dublin should not blind us to the undoubted success achieved throughout the towns and cities outside Dublin.

It is not realised for instance that in Cork County Council the Labour candidates received more than 21% of the votes cast; that Mrs. Eileen Desmond scored a magnificent victory in her constituency; that Cork City, in spite of the charm of the Cork Taoiseach, and the loss caused to the party by the death of Mr. Sean Casey, Labour polled nearly 20% of the votes cast. In Wicklow, the veteran James Everett and his colleagues rallied Dublin with 25% of the total votes cast. In Co. Meath by the efforts of Deputy Jim Tully and Senator Jack Fitzgerald about 24% of the poll went to Labour. In Wexford, Mr. Corish's home ground the figure was about 25%. In the Dublin County Council, the homes of the wealthy and the non-Labour areas, the Labour Party polled 21% of the total poll. In the West of Ireland Labour made an important breakthrough. In Sligo and Roscommon, where Senator Jack MacQuillan did so well, Labour gains were important.

From the point of view of future politics, however, any assessment must begin with the Dublin results. Dublin is of enormous importance to Ireland both politically, economically and commercially. It is the cultural capital, the political capital and the parliamentary capital. Since 1916 when it made its first real impact on Irish politics, it has, by its example, given the lead to the rest of the country. Pearse, Connolly and Larkin made the mark of social politics and Labour outlook on Ireland, for a study of Pearse will show that he was as Socialist as any other Irishman. It was in Dublin that the 1932 upset, with all its hopes, began. It was in 1943 that Labour received its first breakthrough, a breakthrough that was follied by the most filthy propaganda that a party had ever to endure.

It is not without significance that the *Irish Independent* in its assessment of the local elections put Labour's victories there as the most revealing of the whole poll. In Dublin, it said, the elections were fought on political issues, not on personalities, as is usually the case in the smaller constituencies. Dublin, therefore, could be a pointer towards where the electorate would go if the political issues were made abundantly clear. Another factor is that in the revision of constituencies Dublin is likely to receive two or three extra seats so as to compensate for the growing population and to conform to the Constitution. If, therefore, Labour's successes in the local elections were to be followed in a general election it could mean that Labour could win as many as 15 to 17 seats. If there were such a swing in Dublin in two or three years time, it would be the beginning of the end of one or other of the two main parties—probably Fine Gael with its poor showing in Dublin. If such happened it would change the whole balance of power in the Dail, the country and, in addition, change the character of the Labour Party. Undoubtedly also it would affect the thinking of people outside Dublin.

But Labour's successes must not create any euphoria. One of the most interesting features of the elections was the staying power of both Fianna Fail and Fine Gael. These are still two powerful party organisations and it would serve no purpose to gloss over this fact. These two parties are opponents worthy of our steel. They have been in existence more than 40 years and were born out of the Civil War struggle. Their persistence in Irish politics, when the aims for which they stood have largely disappeared or been eroded, shows that Labour's policy has not yet got over to the voters of Ireland in a big way.

The big thing is that as politics in Ireland matures the Labour Party moves ahead. The country is now beginning to repeat a process that has taken place in almost every European country—a decisive swing to the left with the emergence of major socialist parties. The lessons of July 1967 are obvious—good candidates, an attractive policy and grinding hard work will overcome and conquer the entrenched forces of the two civil war parties. The party organisation must be expanded and strengthened everywhere with the greatest energy and speed. The next test is the next General Election. We know we can gain more seats if we work for them. We have the ideals, the men and the message. Let us begin anew.

ELECTION RESULTS AT A GLANCE

COUNTY COUNCILS

	FIANNA FAIL		FINE GAE		OTHERS		LABOUR		Labour Change
	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	
Carlow	4,908	7	5,378	9	973	2	3,069	3	—
Cavan	10,976	11	9,339	10	6,849	9	0	0	—
Clare	18,346	18	7,857	7	7,105	5	2,162	1	—
Cork	38,292	19	36,252	18	6,622	—	19,771	8	+1
Donegal	24,258	15	17,311	11	8,066	2	931	0	—
Dublin	23,966	9	25,170	10	5,299	2	14,912	4	-1
Galway	28,879	16	22,091	13	7,978	2	1,182	0	—
Kerry	23,105	12	12,724	10	5,769	2	6,384	2	—
Kildare	9,987	8	9,163	8	2,024	2	4,129	3	-1
Kilkenny	11,243	12	8,947	10	1,867	1	5,074	3	—
Laois	8,031	10	9,341	13	200	—	2,371	2	-2
Leitrim	5,587	8	6,304	11	2,209	3	333	0	—
Longford	4,848	9	5,648	7	3,521	5	0	0	—
Limerick	17,395	12	14,522	10	2,318	2	3,635	3	—
Louth	11,540	10	12,882	13	2,260	2	3,337	1	—
Mayo	22,728	16	20,545	13	5,164	2	434	0	—
Meath	13,140	14	7,954	10	1,642	1	6,691	4	—
Monaghan	8,001	7	7,769	7	6,205	6	408	0	—
Offaly	8,522	9	6,318	6	4,592	5	1,760	1	-1
Roscommon	11,679	11	10,267	11	2,085	2	2,812	2	—
Sligo	9,324	10	10,294	11	2,842	2	1,401	1	+1
Tipperary N.	8,524	8	10,089	8	1,793	1	4,305	4	—
Tipperary S.	13,401	11	11,065	9	1,221	1	6,335	5	+2
Waterford	8,972	12	6,342	10	1,400	0	2,560	1	—
Westmeath	8,641	9	8,236	9	3,026	2	2,574	3	—
Wexford	13,245	8	9,767	7	3,113	1	8,193	5	—
Wicklow	8,647	9	6,572	5	2,988	2	6,154	5	-2

CORPORATIONS

Dublin	52,676	15	37,339	11	28,369	6	41,761	13	+8
Cork	16,961	14	11,193	9	7,374	2	7,278	6	+1
Limerick	8,760	8	5,465	4	1,735	1	5,496	4	-2
Waterford	3,743	4	2,419	3	4,339	6	2,267	2	—
	463,233		377,065		141,091		174,064		
	40.0%		32.6%		12.3%		15.2%		

AMALGAMATED TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS'

UNION

*

Irish Secretary:

SENATOR

NORMAN KENNEDY

*

112 Marlborough St.,

Dublin, 2.

Telephone 47995.

Labour Party Conference

The Labour Party Annual Conference will be held in Liberty Hall, Dublin, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the 13th, 14th and 15th October, 1967, commencing at 7.30 p.m. on the Friday evening.

Federation of Rural Workers

The only trade union that caters specially for farm, local and health authority, forestry and turf workers. The FRW officials have made a special study of the working conditions of such workers. An example is the bonus scheme for forestry workers.

JOIN the FRW now!

FARM WORKERS! Farm workers who are members of the Federation have higher wages, more holidays with pay and better conditions than unorganised workers. Non-union workers help employers to keep wages low. Join now.

All enquiries to: James Tully, T.D., General Secretary, FRW, Pollack House, 6, Gardiner Place, Dublin 1. Telephone 78987

WORKERS' UNION OF IRELAND

"EACH FOR ALL AND ALL FOR EACH"

A GENERAL TRADE UNION
for all Categories of Employees
MANUAL, CLERICAL, SUPERVISORY
in
PUBLIC and PRIVATE
Employment

AFFILIATED TO THE IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS, TO LOCAL TRADES COUNCILS AND THE LABOUR PARTY.

Enquires to: THE GENERAL SECRETARY,
29 PARNELL SQUARE, DUBLIN, 1.
Telephone 48711 (6 lines).

A GUIDE FOR OUR MEMBERS

THE ultimate success of any paper depends on the readers and this applies more to a Labour paper than to any other kind. This letter from the Editor to you and all our readers is intended to be a two-way traffic. The Editor also wants to hear from you. Write what you think of the paper; what your branch is doing; what the trade unions in your area are active about; what the grievances are; the tasks that have to be done locally.

Tell the Editor what you are discussing at your local branch. Do you, for instance, discuss the national and the policy of the Labour Party printed in it? Do you in the Branch or the constituency council discuss the other political parties, those against Labour and those—like some Republican groups—whom many Labour people would support? Do you in Branch or Council ever read of Partition and then read Brendan Corish's speech about union and party unity and the aim of getting the Northern workers to support Labour's Social Policy? (Labour in fact, is the only Party that can unite Ireland.) Do you discuss James Connolly?

OUR AIM

The aim of this paper is to build the Labour Party. We aim to tell you of Labour's policy, to tell you in the paper of the activity of the national administrative committees, of the decisions of the Parliamentary

BY THE EDITOR

Party on all national questions. We will try to seek the issues in what is happening and what we hope, you and the national committees will hammer out policies to meet them.

Tell us what kind of resolutions you are preparing for the next very important annual conference of the Party in October. You should send us these resolutions now. Between us we can make "Labour" into a mass national newspaper and ultimately a weekly paper and perhaps even a daily paper.

Thus the paper will reflect the growth of the Labour Party and show it to be a national party of all men and women, who together can win a Democratic-Socialist Ireland. But this can be done only if the whole Labour Movement is active. Don't leave it to the T.D.s and Councillors. They are also depending on you to sustain them with ammunition to fire on behalf of Socialism. By resolution and deputation locally you can keep your own and other T.D.s and councillors active. Get them to visit your branch and to start policy discussion.

OUR OBJECTIVES

In this first letter perhaps it is necessary to state that Labour seeks all the time to clarify ever better its main objectives and the means to achieve them. You can help here. Discuss the Party Constitution. These aims are to secure the best means of mobilising all the resources of the nation—human and material—to create the maximum national wealth. To give every citizen—all men and women and the young—the opportunity to study or to work for the greatest community wealth and then to see

that it is equitably and most productively distributed.

Under the private-profit system of capitalism many thousands in Ireland are not given the chance to earn their living and to get a decent income to live on; the best housing, clothing, amenities, education and health services for their children. Many more thousands are employed in blind-alley jobs which they detest.

Labour aims to change all this. It will insist that new social institutions are created to ensure that finance, credit, land for housing, and basic needs are produced by public enterprise concerned really controlled by the people. The aim really will be to promote the working people into the ruling people and ultimately to reduce working hours so much that life can become full, exciting, fulfilling and joyous.

BUT ABOVE ALL . . .

Above all, housing, incomes, health and education, security in old-age and all social services will be the basis of living. New and enduring friendships, based on real affection and companionship and good companionship, would make life really worth living.

Such is a rough outline of what Socialism would mean to Ireland but it is a long road. In the meantime we have to fight for more and more public control for public ownership of building, land, basic industries and banks so that at least progress can be made. Our social gains will bring North and South together with a friendlier hand to British Labour of the future. Here is real unity. We will create a better Dail a better and more efficient Government and Civil Service and local authorities.

THE CHALLENGE

The biggest possible effort in the next few years by Labour will be to ensure that the Common Market and the Trade Agreement with Britain will not put tens of thousands of our people out of work. We must try, too, to ensure decent housing, social services, education and health services and old-age pensions.

This column will encourage all Labour Party branches to hold activities; to bring these basic and short-term aims before the people by meetings, by distribution of this paper, by articles, letters and queries from you and your friends to this paper; by meetings introducing the paper to all the people in your area, town or village. Tell us of our activities and we will print them here so that the Party branches throughout the country will know what the others are doing. Tell us the local trade union activities and try to draw trade unionists into your meetings and to work with them. We can all work together for the good of our country.

● THE DIVIDE AND CONQUER CLIQUE

This Fianna Fail Challenge must be met

By Tom Corr

"DIVIDE and rule" has been the motto of tyrants and conquerors for millennia. Its success has been proved time and again—not least in Ireland, where our English rulers, in medieval times, separated one feudal lord from another, and in modern times, separated class from class, peasant from worker, the easier to keep them all under the jackboot.

Our present rulers have learned well the lessons of history. They know perfectly well that the demands and grievances of the farmers, as expressed in the N.F.A. campaign, are just and genuine. They are also determined to do nothing worthwhile about them. Each of their Budgets contains a few extra millions in doles and handouts for farmers; and most of this money is simply poured down the drain, because no one knows better than the farmers themselves that the maintenance of the smallholders of the West at subsistence level

only begs the question: that imagination, and drive, and a totally new radical approach to the urgent problems of Irish agriculture, are needed.

Cattle remain unsold, fields untilled, and thousands of people leave the land each year. Since there is no possibility of industrial jobs for them, they are forced to emigrate. The problem is exposed, and Fianna Fail need not bother about it any longer.

But if all this money is put to no practical beneficial use, it is put to political use for the ruling clique. It serves them well in the countryside, where they tell the small farmers whom they are driving off the land: "See how much we are doing for you." It serves them even better, and in a more sinister way, in the cities, above all in the suburbs. There they whisper in the ears of their supporters and of anyone else who can be duped that the farmers are featherbedded; that they already have too big a slice of the national cake; and that from now on Fianna Fail are going to be tough with them and keep them in their place—look how tough the Minister for Agriculture, not to mention the Minister for Justice, has already been.

The business of the rates seizures was very cleverly done, if we forget for the moment the fascist manoeuvres that accompanied it: the deployment of enormous numbers of police and troops, the cutting of telephone wires and the blocking of roads, so that one might have thought that the civil war had re-started.

The operation was concentrated on big farmers, and when people in the cities read of the things that were being taken away, the television sets and washing machines, they naturally wondered how farmers could have such things if they were as poverty-stricken as they claimed to be. And that was exactly what they were meant to think.

Now in the first place, why in the name of all that's holy shouldn't Michael Gibbons possess a television set and a washing machine? Very likely Neil Blaney had a washing machine, and it's rather notorious that Charlie Haughey has a television set. Why would he be a splendid thing if every household in the country had them. Workers in particular should know better than to be fooled by this kind of thing. They ought to remember the kind of talk that used to be very com-

mon a few years ago, and that goes on in some quarters even to-day: "What's the use of giving them houses with bathrooms when they put the coal in the bathtub? The workers are better off than anyone. They all have TV sets in their houses with bathtubs. And look at all the cars in the streets in these housing schemes."

Well, the workers have pretty well established their right to have bathtubs and motor-cars; and why shouldn't the farmers have them too, and good luck to them? Or do you have to be a member of TACA to be allowed to have anything?

But there are also more important points involved. The big farmers whose property was seized are not typical; they are a very small minority of Irish farmers. The great majority are small farmers, and it is worth remembering that their complaints of having incomes of less than £5 a week are perfectly true. Many of our small farmers live in disgraceful and degrading poverty, and so far from having television sets and washing machines, find it hard to get the bare necessities of life. Workers who have fought for and won, these things agree that farmers, like themselves, are entitled to a decent standard of living.

Workers know, too, of the attempts by Fianna Fail to take over the trade union movement, and, when that failed, to destroy the power of the trade unions. The same thing is happening at the moment with the farming organisations.

The Government is taking over those farming bodies which have tried to co-operate; it is trying to destroy the N.F.A. It would be wrong for the Labour Movement not to care about this.

For the moment we have won the battle for free trade unionism, but let nobody imagine that the Fianna Fail attacks on the unions are not going to be renewed. They are—and if Fianna Fail can destroy the farmers, that will encourage them in their moves against the workers.

But the most important point, and the most important danger, is the attempt to divide town from country, to stir up hatred between two sections of the community, and to get support from the urban population for their undemocratic and totalitarian methods in dealing with the farmers—just as, in any future clash with the workers, they will try to stir up the same feelings in the countryside.

The time is rapidly coming when it will be not merely desirable, but necessary, for urban and rural workers to join in the interests of rural workers and small farmers to realise that their interests are the same, and that they will have to stand together to preserve their freedom against a tyrannical Government.

Bright prospects for Council of Labour

The three Labour Parties in Ireland have been meeting since April with a view to establishing a Council of Labour. Representatives of the Labour Party, the Northern Ireland Labour Party and the Republican Labour Party held meetings in Leinster House and Stormont to exchange views on the methods of working closer together.

A working party consisting of two members from each party has been meeting all Summer hammering out the details of the Council's proposed constitution. It is now believed that significant progress has been made in achieving agreement on the main points of difference.

If all goes well and the three party executives approve of the working party's proposals it is possible that the Council could get off the ground by the end of Autumn.

The purpose of the Council of Labour will be to provide an official form of liaison between the three parties who have been ploughing one furrows to-date. The basic objective of the Council is to put socialist parties in power in Ireland.

Membership of the Council will not involve any loss of party independence or any compromise on principals such as Partition. Every party will agree to respect the other's opinion. However, the party's will expect to gain considerably from joint action on matters such as the effects of E.C. membership on the whole of Ireland.

● BATTLE IN WARD TWELVE

THE ONE THAT GAVE AWAY!

By BILL McCORMACK

THE party's local election campaign in Area No. 12 was one of the most comprehensive exercises in grass roots politics in the district by any party for many years. Ten days before polling day the team of canvassers had covered virtually every home in the area TWICE, firstly with an introductory leaflet coverage, and then a detailed canvass with fresh literature. This represented a far more thorough campaign than that of the catastrophic Noel Browne defeat at the General Election.

This time the canvassers were not prepared to leave anything to chance and so a third covering of the area began, concentrated on the working-class areas such as Ringsend, Fishbowen and all the Corporation flats in the district. This contact was maintained right up to the last minute before polling began.

This area (in General Election terms—Dublin South-East) is a vital one for the Labour Party. Ringsend is one of the satellite housing centres for the Dublin workers and it marks the bound-

For the record, ward 12 was the only Dublin area where Labour failed to gain representation. This shows how stern the battle for supremacy must be.

dary of Dockland. Failure to get the voters of this particular section of the area into the booths results invariably in a Labour defeat; and this is why the Party concentrated its forces here for the last days of the campaign.

A unique feature of the struggle in No. 12 was the issue of Sandymount Strand. Supported naturally by property owners who feared depression of land-prices, The Sandymount Residents' Association put up Jack Torpax for election. The business of Sandymount Strand obviously meant a lot to a lot of people, though I suspect it meant more to the slum dwellers outside the area than to the residents of Gifford Park, Woodbine or Elgin Roads. Nevertheless, a Labour pamphlet was prepared setting out a plan for the preservation of all amenities in the area and the development of better ones, and proposing a balanced target of housing and light-industrialisation in the district. This was circulated throughout the area, particularly along the Strand Road fringe.

Poster warfare in election campaigns has become a more sophisticated business than it was at the last Local Elections seven long years ago. No. 12 area collaborated with most of the other Dublin branches and used a basic red-and-white design for its

posters; towards the end of the campaign the blue and white Dublin region poster was introduced to attract attention once again to the familiar array of untidy lamp-posts. In fact the essential feature of the effort in No. 12 was an attempt to get out into the canvass before any other party and yet to keep up the pressure right to 10 o'clock 28th June; being able to pull a fresh leaflet out of the bag six days before polling allowed the Labour party to approach the electorate in some cases for the third time without having doors slammed in its face.

Why all the fuss about the details of one campaign you may ask. Every other area tries to do its ultimate also without broadcasting the fact in print; but for, the Dublin South East Labour Party this election was not merely an end in itself.

The effort of the last six weeks is merely a preliminary in the fight to get Noel Browne firmly back into public life. In the elections Labour had been fighting its corner in a multi-cornered contest. When the General Election is declared (and it need not be too far away) every political interest in the constituency apart from Labour will have two objectives: (i) to get its candidates in; (ii) to keep Browne out.

The second is probably the more vital for the conservative political forces in the country. It has been obvious that since the last General Election much of the fire has gone out of the Party parliamentary belly, despite all conference acclamations. The radical Socialists in South-East started the battle in the recent election. The groundwork for future success has I feel, been well laid, but much more support from the rank-and-file branch member is needed. A continuous fund-raising campaign must begin immediately the dust settles on last week's results. A recruiting drive, extension of the branch network—every branch effort, however small, must be directed towards that one objective: GET BROWNE BACK.

Without him the Labour Party would not be worthy of the name. Let the vulgar pedagogues and sycophants who at present hold South-East beware; war has been declared.

Order
LABOUR NOW

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

9/- Post Free.

Editorial offices:

20 EARLSFORT TERRACE,
DUBLIN 2.

● THE WEST'S ASLEEP—OR IS IT?

Labour's Duty to Connacht is Clear and Urgent

By C. A. GIBBONS

WRITING as a Labour man in the sober, post-election atmosphere of Connacht, there are a few observations I would make immediately for the benefit of our friends east of the Shannon. In Dublin you have every right to be proud, but don't labour the victory too much. Success in the metropolis is important but we don't want it thrown at us here—not in rural regions generally—that ours is a party for the cities and big couragement. Too much crowing about our urban successes will only throw more rural voters into the two conservative camps.

In Connacht it takes a certain courage to-day to profess one's Labour leanings. In the East or the South, where to be socialist-inclined is a stamp of modernity, it is too easy to dismiss the western voter as conservative, a diminishing species of cockroach capitalist that may be dismissed. Indeed one Labour T.D. from the smug midlands, has whispered in my ear that the West is for the tourist.

The conservative flag wavers of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, while perhaps thinking likewise, whistle a different tune. And Fine Gael, with its businessmen's mentality, has done damn well out of it. Some 60% of its recent successes were notched up in Connacht. Some of these were at the expense of Fianna Fail whose conservative 'polities' for the region have earned for Connacht nothing but disenchantment and a loss of 600,000 of its youth in 40 years. These promises of full employment around happy industrial estates—the promises which gave the West to Dev, in another day—no longer hold the votes. These are now being switched back to the very conservatives who the West rejected in the '30s.

But, mind you, it is being done without either enthusiasm or faith. It is being done because there seems to be no other course. It is being done mainly by old and tired people—men and women who have done their best, only to see their lambs melt into the work forces of Britain and the U.S.A. And this is the region that rose in '98; that fought equal to the best in the long national struggle; that threw up so many of the leaders of 1916; that gave us Davitt and Joyce; that gave us Connally; that wrote for the world the meaning of Boycott. It is the only region which holds still the old traditions in language and culture which made our nation great at another time.

It should be a great region for Labour, for socialism. It would be if we had enough people to preach it. Those of us in the West who think of socialism as a just format to cherish people usually have in the past been so engaged with the inequalities in Connacht that some perhaps have gone too far—that is, if you accept smug, conservative judgments—and learned the popular catchnames which warned

honest-to-goodness ears away from us. There are reasons why the conservative voice is being heard still; the age grouping in Connacht lends to this—the work force (and Labour's strength) is mainly overseas and, as well, conservatives in business and in every facet of western life, have a tight grip that will not be easily loosened.

To date Labour's challenge has not been nearly enough. In fact it has not been a challenge at all, though all credit to the men who took the banner up and stomped across constituencies which have not given Dáil Eireann one Labour seat. The challenge is for the Party rather than for the West.

Labour has yet to analyse the measure of Western strength, now lying dormant and being wakened daily through emigration and disillusionment. Twenty years ago the rural West proved it had still the embers of that socialism which swept Davitt to a frightening victory. But Labour did not sense it then. Instead the West gave us Clann na Talmain, a party bred from socialist thinking in Britain; reared on the discontent of Connacht, but cap-

tured—and ultimately destroyed—by conservatives. Need I press the point?

Labour has succeeded in Dublin by its policy aimed at righting the wrongs of the underprivileged. Now let its 13 members on Dublin Corporation make their presence felt. In so doing they will not alone blow fresh air through the crowded back streets from which people rallied to them, but will give a new hope and determination to those of us in Connacht who in isolated pockets wait for the winds of change to get us moving steadily on a Labour course.

We want the Party to think positively on our problems; we want young workers to speak and organise. We want in Labour the voice that will reach through Connacht's hills the immortal words of Connolly: "Ireland without its people means nothing to me."

With that on its masthead Labour can save Connacht and justify Connolly and all the others who fought and fell for a classless Republic. The name of Labour will then take on new meaning in the West—and in the nation.

IRISH WOMEN WORKERS UNION

48 Fleet Street, Dublin 2

The only Union run entirely for Women
by Women.

THE IRISH UNION OF DISTRIBUTIVE WORKERS
AND CLERKS
(Established 1901—"Unity and Self-Reliance")
THIS IS THE UNION FOR ALL SHOPWORKERS
AND CLERKS

16,000 members; 70 Branches; £18,000 Assets. Affiliated to Irish Congress of Trade Unions and International Federation of Commercial, Clerical and Technical employees.

Sections for Sales Staffs in Drapery, Footwear, Furniture, Hardware, Grocery and Provision and Clerks in Insurance, Commerce and Private Banking, Pharmacy, Commercial Travellers, Agents, Supervisors.

HEAD OFFICE:
CAVENDISH HOUSE, DUBLIN, 1
Telephones: 46321/3.

A PROFILE

By Michael Macken

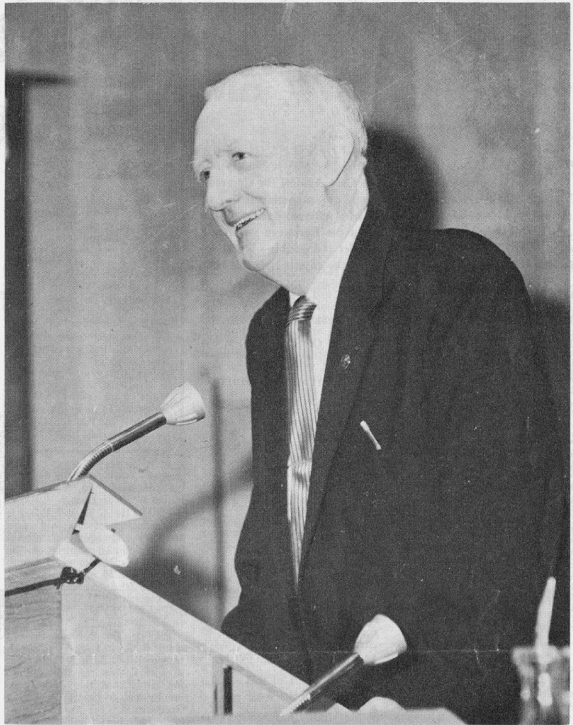
MR. JOHN CONROY scored a partnership and many violent double in the Labour month of May. He became President of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions at the annual conference in Portrush and two weeks earlier he had, as President of the ITGWU, led his union into opening negotiations for affiliation with the Irish Labour Party—thus achieving his life's dream of welding the industrial and political wing of Labour into one United Movement so as to achieve full political and social freedom for a 32-County Ireland.

But in his heart he has a deeper ambition ever than those and that is to see the 40-year-old split between the unions—ITGWU and WUI—of which Big Jim Larkin was General Secretary at one time or another, merged into a mighty industrial and general organisation of more than 180,000 members. Such an event would have profound effect not only on the industrial field but also on the economic and political fields. This merger plan is moving forward—slowly.

Genial John Conroy has come a long way to become the acknowledged leader of the two largest organisations in the country, and the acknowledged voice of the lower-paid workers for whom over the years, he has demanded a national legal minimum wage and full employment. He began his career in the Garden of Ireland—Wicklow—in what was virtually a partnership between himself and that other grand veteran of Labour, Mr. James Everett, T.D., 12 years his senior. Forty years ago, or more, as a result of that

labour and industrial struggles (in which both Everett and Conroy carried the Plough and the Stars and the Red Flag through Wicklow Town) John Conroy became branch secretary of the Wicklow branch of his union and thus started on his long climb to fame. He began work as a boy in the local fertiliser factory at an age when his better-off neighbours were attending to their higher education but through his union branch work he was soon recognised by Head Office. From Branch Secretary he was transferred to organisation work in Dublin! He later became branch secretary in Limerick City where his success as organiser was acknowledged.

Here his first sympathies with political Labour showed when he became secretary of the Limerick Branch of the Labour Party at a time when Mick Keyes (R.I.P.) was the guiding light in political, transport and sporting circles—for Mick was a famous athlete. With unsurpassed energy, the young John Conroy combined his principles and aims of uniting political and industrial work and he was again promoted to the "Movements Department" where his genius at wage negotiations was shown. Then came the near-top position when he became Vice-President in 1946 to William Macmillen's Presidency. With such a militant leader Conroy could not be held back and when Billy Macmillen retired he was unanimously elected President—a position he has held since.



John Conroy in many ways is one of the great characters of the Movement. In private conversation he is easy-going and affable and interested in what is being said. He subordinates always his own ego to the person he is talking to and emerges in conversation as a modest, almost retiring man

who—and this is true—does not seem to have any sense of the important man he is. He is really modest and retiring but this characteristic has endeared him to thousands. Always relaxed and ready to listen, he never seems to be in a hurry. He is always ready to listen to the humble and in this he gives a lesson to many lesser men. But when he makes a speech the laughing, kindly eyes can flash, and light many a new social fire.

His guiding light is James Connolly although he is no philologist or dogmatist. But he has a great instinctive sense of Labour outlook. He has tried so many times—and it was a necessary exercise—to make union members remember that they were family men with wives and children as well as workers on the job. He has sought—and still seeks—to make them conscious that family needs (such as full employment; adequate incomes; generous health, education and social services; decent opportunities for employment; usefulness in leisure; comfortable and well-made homes) are all things that can be won only if there is unity between the industrial and the political wings. In pursuance of such beliefs he has sought pensions and sick leave for workers; strove for security in employment and, perhaps above all, fought for the acknowledgment that all workers are human beings with their rights to dignity and fulfilment. Conroy has pres-

ted often that too much power rests in the hands of a few men to decide whether or not a man could remain in employment and with the aim in mind of eliminating this has worked to build the union to defend workers against the iniquitous sack. He was the first—later followed by Dr. Hilderly—to declare that a man who had spent years in one employment had a share in it and definite rights against dismissal. He supported the recent Congress claim that workers should be represented on boards of management. He agrees with public enterprises as the first instalment of Socialism but demands that the ESB, Aer Lingus, CIE and other public enterprises should not be bodies with public money and private control, but be really social institutions which could be extended far more than at present and run by the people.

We wish John Conroy another year of success in the trade union movement and as President of the ICTU. We trust that as his year of office ends he will really have fulfilled his dream of ensuring that all unions realise that North and South can be united and all aims achieved by a Social Programme that will—as Connolly said—unite workers of all religions with the common aim of social progress and unite political and industrial labour. No trade unionist should act the scab at the ballot—for Labour is his party. That is John Conroy's policy.

JOHN CONROY

—THE MAN WITHIN

'He was the first to declare that a man who has spent years in one employment has a share in it and a definite right against dismissal'.

THE COMMON MARKET: THE CASE FOR OR AGAINST?

THE CASE FOR

By **TONY BROWN, M.Econ.Sc.**

The Economic Sub-Committee of the Wolfe Tone Society has issued a statement entitled "The Case Against the Common Market." This statement is intended to present a coherent opposition viewpoint in the context of a national debate on the merits and demerits of Irish entry to the European Economic Community. The aim of the pamphlet is laudable—indeed, it is long overdue—but the statement of the case is lamentable.

It is a primary misconception of many Irish "critics" of the European Community to centre their thinking on the popular sub-title "Common Market." This leads to a concentration on the means rather than the end—on the trading and economic matters rather than on the other implications and long-term objectives enshrined in the "European Ideal."

In the Wolfe Tone pamphlet we are treated to an absurdly emotional outburst on the "rich man's club" theme. A committee of the Common Market was established in the interests and to serve the needs of the large monopolies and giant enterprises that dominate the economies of the main capitalist countries of Western Europe." This type of statement—a throw-back to the thinking of the British Left ten years ago—is based on a failure to grasp the realities of European history and thought in the forties and fifties.

FROM COMMISSION

The European Community sprang from the conviction that long-divided Europe should seek to build progress and peace through unity. Experience proved that the greatest barriers to the unity of peoples were the entirely artificial economic frontiers which shackled enterprise and denied opportunities for growth. The unification of the coal and steel industries of the Six in 1951 showed the way—the Rome Treaties of 1957 were the next, and logical steps. Now there exists a growing Community with much more than an economic goal—with political and social objectives—and with very real achievements.

Another general misconception is that of the rigidity of the European Community structures and institutions. Everything—down to the price of left-handed screwdrivers—is believed to be immovable. It cannot be over-emphasised that the Community "is a process, not a product." Institutions, systems and regulations are constantly evolving, through a process of bargaining and acceptance of the fact that perfection is not attainable overnight.

In this connection, the picture created in the pamphlet of the Commission bureaucrats misleading the Council of Ministers which in turn bullies the small members is a caricature. The job of the Commission is to take initiatives—drafting and proposing policies—not to take decisions or to carry them out. Decisions are taken by the Council which has developed traditions of bargaining and compromise. These traditions have led to the remarkable achievements of the Community. There

are difficulties, of course, even tensions and dissensions, in such a large and revolutionary undertaking—but there has been real progress and a build-up of impetus. Of the Council it has been said that it is "condemned to succeed."

AN ATTEMPT TO BUILD

In short, the European Community is a genuine attempt to build a progressive and prosperous Europe, free of the age-old divisions and enmities. Through economic development the standard of living, education and social well-being of nearly two hundred million people is being raised steadily. Obviously, the Common Market of to-day is not perfect. It is a humanly developed organism—it can be what its people want it to be—it can truly be the foundation of a better way of life for all Europeans. The rush to imitate this initiative—in E.E.T.A., in Central and North America, even in Eastern Europe—indicates the attractiveness of the concept. The real question for us in Ireland is whether or not we want to be part of this attempt to build together for the future.

The Economic Committee of the Wolfe Tone Society state that the debate on the Common Market in Ireland "has to date been on the level of wish-fulfillment rather than of reality." They certainly give good evidence of this in their approach. One would expect some economic and some statistics—from an Economic Sub-Committee. There is not a word about the reality of Community achievement since 1958.

Industrial production in the E.E.C. rose by 64% between 1958 and 1966—compared with 32% in the U.K. and 70% in the E.S.A. In the period 1958-1966, Gross National Product rose by 45%, compared with 37% in the U.S.A., 29% in the U.K., and 32% in Ireland. We are asked to believe—on faith rather than facts—that the E.E.C. is an obstacle to international trade, and that it is no better than the capitalist exploiter of the underdeveloped nations. Let us look at the facts.

FIRST—Average E.E.C. tariffs on non-agricultural goods are 6% lower than U.S. rates and 7% lower than those in the U.K.

SECOND—The E.E.C. is the largest trading bloc in the world, it exports. Since 1958 imports from the rest of the world have increased by 93%, exports by 85%. In 1966 the Community imported \$33 billion and exports totalled \$29.5 billion. Trade between the member states totalled \$2 billion.

THIRD—In 1966, the Community imported \$11 billion

On this page "Labour" gives two sides of a very vexed question: the nation's approach to the European Economic Community. Our application is already in, but the whole matter has been marked by the minimum of debate—AT ANY LEVEL. "Labour" feels that this is a lamentable position and indeed congratulates the Wolfe Tone Society on being the only organisation so far to publish the result of a study. In order to stimulate discussion we have asked Mr. Tony Coughlan to give an idea of the reasoning behind the document and Mr. Tony Brown, who happens to be an ardent Common Marketeer, to give us a review of this Wolfe Tone effort which leaves one in no doubt as to the side of the fence on which he stands.

worth of goods from the developing countries, and exported \$8 billion worth to them.

FOURTH—The E.E.C. is engaged in massive aid programmes and capital investment in developing countries. The European Development Fund, assisting the 65 million people of the 18 African associated states, has committed \$130 million in initiatives—of which \$90 million has already been spent.

FIFTH—The European Investment Bank had, at 31/12/1965, provided loans and guarantees to a total value of \$614 million for projects within the Community and Associates (including Greece and Turkey). 115 projects have been undertaken, no less than 74 in the less developed parts of Italy (value \$390 million).

The list of matters to be corrected or put in correct perspective is enormous. For instance, there is a long section on the impossibility of economic planning within the E.E.C. May I quote from a leading British trade union leader to refute this suggestion—"Under the Rome Treaty, the Government of the Six, except Germany have been actively involved in national economic planning. Even in Germany there is but a mere direction of national resources than Christian Democrat politicians care to admit."

OUR PROBLEMS

Now to Ireland's difficulties and problems. No one doubts that Irish industry will face severe competition and that agriculture will have to accept rapid and substantial adaptation. If we wish to minimise these problems—they must be faced up to with much greater determination than has been in evidence to date, there is no reason to believe that Ireland can progress only by standing aside from history. It is irrational to see European "advocates" of what appears to be a policy of hiding behind Britain. We must accept the fact of our history. In Europe, however, we have the opportunity of widening our economic and social horizons. Culture is too often equated

Continued on opposite page.

THE CASE AGAINST

By **TONY COUGHLAN**

The pamphlet has been issued at this time to stimulate public debate in Ireland on the important question of the Common Market and to provide an assessment of the political and economic implications of Irish Common Market membership which would be of use in the forthcoming Dail debate on this subject. To date the Irish Government has issued no material attempting to inform the Irish public on what those implications are, in contrast to the British Government which has issued two White Papers on the subject. Denmark and Norway also have had voluminous reports prepared by their Governments for the information of their members of parliament before deciding whether or not to apply for E.E.C. membership.

The pamphlet will be sent to all members of the Oireachtas, the Hierarchy and to business, trade union and farming leaders. It will be of particular interest to Labour leaders in formulating their attitude to the Common Market and to the related questions of membership and association. The pamphlet warns of the dangers of Common Market entry to the detriment of Irish workers and forecasts greatly increased unemployment and emigration rates if we join the E.E.C.; it draws attention to the fact that entry to the E.E.C. would require Ireland to abandon those public economic planning powers which are necessary for the successful pursuit of full employment policy in this country and whose use the Labour Movement has always been to the fore in advocating.

The pamphlet examines the political conflicts that at present exist within the E.E.C. and considers the policy making effectively the preserve of the big powers and that there is no guarantee possible that Ireland's national interests will be safeguarded if we join. It describes the structure of the E.E.C. institutions, the Council, Commission, and Parliament, and discusses the likely numerical apportionment of Irish representation on these bodies in the event of our joining. It criticises the undemocratic character of these bodies in that they are subject to no popular control by citizens of the E.E.C. countries and states that "Irishmen" say would be that of one Government Minister who would have one or, at most, two votes on a Common Market Council of 26 together with a dozen or so nominated representatives in the European Parliament which, it points out, is a parliament with no power to make laws.

The sovereignty of the Dail and Supreme Court under the Irish Constitution would be considerably affected by Irish Common Market membership. Under Article 187 and 192 of the Rome Treaty decisions of the E.E.C. Council and Commission may be directly enforced in the member states by the judicial machinery of those states, even though their Parliaments and Governments do not approve. The proposed requirements set out in amendments to the Irish Constitution so as to give the Treaty of Rome this overriding power.

The pamphlet examines the implications of Common Market membership for Ireland's military neutrality, for regional development policy, for the

development of state industry and for Irish agriculture. It points out that the six E.C. countries are almost self-sufficient as it is in the goods which constitute Ireland's main agricultural exports, being surpassed by the highly efficient and low-cost farmers of Holland and France, and that in fact they have exportable surpluses of dairy products, cereals, and other goods. Common Market sugar beet and cereal prices are lower than in Ireland. The main advantage of Common Market membership for Ireland thus boils down to the safeguarding of the existing trade in agricultural goods, and especially cattle, with Britain, something which Ireland's supporters have been assured by the terms of the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement.

The pamphlet suggests that the short-term alternative to the Common Market for Ireland is to pursue the same policy as Switzerland, Austria, Finland and New Zealand, all of them countries very much dependent as we are on trade with the Common Market and with Britain, but who are not applying for membership. Switzerland for example, is surrounded by the Common Market and is the oldest and most stable democracy in Europe, but it is opting to stay out because of the lack of democracy in the Common Market and for fear of having to abandon her traditional neutrality. Ireland should demand of the British Government, as these countries are doing, that she stand by her agreement with us to ensure continued access for our traditional exports to her market even if we do not join the E.E.C. with Britain. In 1966 Britain bought £137 million worth of Irish goods, but Ireland bought £17 million worth of British goods. Britain's £42 million more dependence works both ways, and in demanding continued access to the British market for our exports we clearly have some important trade cards in our hands which an Irish Government with courage and vision should play to our advantage. In the event of Britain joining the E.E.C. Ireland should negotiate a commercial agreement with the E.E.C. to engage in trade on mutually advantageous terms similar to the agreements that the E.E.C. has negotiated with other countries. Staying out of the E.E.C. would be a difficult course for Ireland but it need not mean the economic collapse threatened by the Government if we do not join with Britain.

Continued on opposite page.

LABOUR AND THE UNIONS

After the Marriage A Fruitful Future

By A POLITICAL OBSERVER

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions is next to the Labour Party annual conference—the most important event for all who work for their living whether by hand or brain. This year's was even more important than usual for in addition to trade union organisation, wages demands and new proposals for the Labour Court, there were new calls for more political action by the trade unions, and logically enough, new calls for improvement in housing, education, health services, leisure facilities, old-age and other pensions, full employment and a higher standard of living for all. Such resolutions had their significance for their implementation could be secured only by political action.

It was clear that the conference realised this fact for when Mr. J. Harte, of the Workers' Union of Ireland, moved that Congress should establish what in effect would be a National Council of Labour, combining all Labour Parties in the country—North and South—and all trade unions, there was almost unanimous support for his proposal, and the conference rose to the speech of Mr. Brendan Corish, Labour Party Leader who seconded the proposition on behalf of the ITGWU. Speeches by rank and file delegates also proved that the point had been well made.

TIGHTENING OUR GRIP

Mr. J. Harte, in his speech said that the trade unions had been dissipating their energies by not combining wage demands and industrial action with political action. Gains made on the industrial side were lost later by political decisions which raised prices or taxes and which caused less employment.

The new Council would lay down a Social Programme which would point the way forward for a united movement and would show the kind of Society the people wanted. This would include adequate income from full employment, the free use of all skills and talent, adequate education for all, better health services, and it would restore the equality of man and woman and their true dignity.

Brendan Corish caught the mood of Congress entirely when he said that the Labour Party was proud to represent the unions and their members and families. Here he was stressing the point that trade unionists are concerned not alone with wages and working conditions but also with family conditions, good housing, low rents, free education, good health services, better leisure amenities.

CONNOLLY'S DREAM

Mr. Corish said that with the affiliation of the unions—and others were joining with the ITGWU and the WUI—Ireland was at last securing the Labour Party envisaged by Connolly; a Party which would secure a

socialist Ireland; an Ireland really governed by the sovereign people and not by private profit-makers and landlords along with some spivs who make profits on the homes, the lives, and even the deaths of working people.

Mr. Frank Cluskey declared that "no bird ever flew on one wing" and that the Labour Movement needed a strong political wing with its industrial wing to secure industrial and social progress.

Mr. Norman Kennedy envisaged the National Council as being ultimately a Council representing all Irish and British Labour Parties—even British Labour Governments—to discuss social and economic problems of common interest.

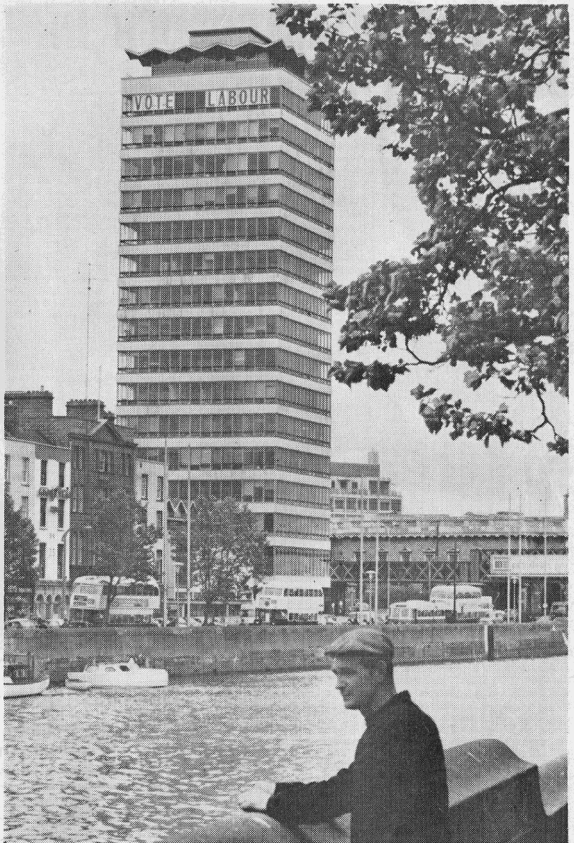
A WOMAN'S VOICE

Miss Betty Sinclair, Belfast, described the National Council resolution as the most important ever to come before Congress. "At last the North and the South will come together in Labour."

Congress also decided to reject Dr. Hillery's plan for group licences which would have a consequence of limiting their right to strike pickets. Mr. Larkin WUI, for an executive made it clear that trade unions could go ahead and seek wage increases although Congress itself would not initiate a new round but unions should ensure that their claims did not damage the movement, their own members in other sections or the general interest of Trade Unionism.

Congress took most important decisions. From the opening address by the President, Mr. Thompson, urging North-South talks, every item was deeply concerned with the lives of the people. Above all it could be called "Congress for the Social Republic: it was a new drive for the Social Republic. This was the turn to politics.

If this were implemented by some trade union vote it could change the whole pattern of power in the Dail. It was Congress in a new role and many Labour veterans must have rejoiced that at last their aim of the unions and the Party together would secure the fulfilment of their dreams.



AND THEY DID!

THE COMMON MARKET DEBATE

Continued from previous page.

FOR

in this country to "the language." Culture is the sum total of a people's response to life, to society, to work, to experience. Distinctiveness in culture reflects much that is rooted in history and environment. What is good in our culture will survive, not because of its becoming a "badge," but because it is good and humanly meaningful. If we have allowed our identity to become blurred, and if we have a retarded cultural situation, the answer is not in isolation but in the purposive building of a better life for all our people.

Space permits no more comment. The Wolfe Tone statement raises the right question, but, because it seeks to find the answer in presenting a distorted picture, it does nothing more,

AGAINST

Above all, we would preserve our independence of action to adopt a longer term alternative.

LONG-TERM APPROACH

Such a longer-term alternative would include the following measures: The establishment of national control of credit to serve the needs of Irish economic development, the repatriation for productive purposes of some of the £400 million or so of Irish capital invested abroad by Twenty Six County investors and the control of the export of Irish savings; a national investment programme involving the planned choice of investment priorities, the extension of public industry and a policy of hire the foreign expert rather than bring in the foreign businessman; the opening

up of trade links with all countries irrespective of political systems; the use of physical controls on imports and exports where necessary to balance our national payments without having to resort to credit squeeze; a more equitable taxation and social security system to reduce the burden of increased investment rates on the mass of the people; the use of a variation in the exchange rate between the Irish and British pounds as a device to assist Irish exports. Such measures are not only necessary to take the fullest advantage of such independence as the State at present possesses (as the pamphlet states), they are also necessary for the successful implementation of a national full employment policy.

LABOUR BREAKTHROUGH IN SLOGO FIRMS EVERY SEAT

THE Labour Party here is proud that SliGo started with Dublin as a region which improved its position in the recent election. Our advance was not nearly as spectacular as the swing in the capital but, for the first time ever, a Labour member sits on SliGo County Council.

Six weeks before polling day our morale was low. Dan Shaw, who fought two general elections for us, was gone to Bray. Our branch chairman had moved to Cork. Labour held the Mayor's Chair but little else was in our favour. A number of us got together to shake off this apathy. We re-organised our branch, called a County Convention to select candidates and got in touch with Brendan Halligan. Brendan arrived in time for the Convention and got us off to a splendid start. Six candidates were selected to fight SliGo Corporation—two in each of the three wards. Two of these were nominated to contest the SliGo Division of the County Council as well.

The new committee really got things moving. In the town each household was immediately notified of our choice for that area. Next we delivered to every house a map of SliGo showing the new ward system with the names and photographs of our six contestants each in his own ward. On the back was a message spelling out that Labour was seriously in the lead this time. Labour had a policy for SliGo—it was adopted as our slogan and this fronted a nine-point policy document which also carried pictures and short biographies of our candidates. Once more we saw to it that no house was without one. Car stickers in orange were sent out on personal canvases. The wards were made by the candidates—here we suffered our first setback. The Mayor of SliGo, Sidney Gallagher, contesting the North Ward in the Corporation and also the Co. Council fell ill and was unable to campaign. Otherwise a most thorough canvass was made—down even to leaving a special note to anyone who was not at home when his house was visited. A special letter was sent to the Heads of all Institutions and days arranged for canvassers to visit their charges. On the eve of the election a letter was delivered through every letterbox in the Borough containing a final exhortation to vote Labour on the following day. That night, Labour posters appeared all over town.

In the County, we had formed a new branch in Ballisodare under the care of Jim Finn and Tommy Casey. A special policy document was printed and circulated outside the Borough boundary. After-Mass meetings were held in the chapel areas with three teams heading out from town each Sunday. We started on the perimeter of the town and worked our way in to the churches on the edge of the town on the final Sunday when we had the use of a public address system. Our posters also appeared near each polling station the night before D-day—Labour posters can never hope to

SliGo County Council registered Labour's only gain in Connacht. At the last General Election Labour narrowly missed a Dail seat in the SliGo-Leitrim constituency. Clearly this is a vital area in any Labour plan for a future breakthrough. Top flight organisation, good candidates and grass roots enthusiasm can crack these conservative strongholds. As an example of what can be done SliGo Branch Chairman Lionel Gallagher reports.

last intact for more than one day!

Meanwhile a highlight of our campaign took place when Brendan Corish addressed the meeting in SliGo Town Hall on Tuesday, June 13th. We feared for the success of the meeting when the sun blazed on that day and sent hundreds scurrying for the beaches but we were encouraged when the Corish name filled the hall about ten minutes after the advertised time. Brendan Halligan was back with us that night and each of our candidates addressed the meeting.

Our election day our workers were printed "Vote Labour" discs while our candidates wore tastefully designed, hand printed identification rosettes. We made as good an effort as we were able but the number of cars and workers that Fianna Fail were able to throw into the campaign was a great help to our organisation. Still, by making one volunteer do the work of ten conscripts we fought a good fight and lasted in the thick of things until ten. A Labour car touring the town with a public address system helped to keep us going as much as it got the message across to the voters.

We were still in a state of stupor from the exhaustion of the previous day as the votes were counted. The North Ward was first and here the loss of Josie McMorrow, a sitting member and a father figure in the Branch to us younger ones was a tragedy. Compensation was gained, however, when Sidney Gallagher was returned as Alderman.

In the East Ward we had two young candidates, Padraig Fowley and Ronnie Pilkington, and a terrific male great-grandfather of it before losing the last seat by seven votes on the eighth count.

In the large West Ward Tommy Higgins almost captured the second Aldermanship. However, our second Labour man here, P. J. Gurré, made such a fight of it that he stayed in too long and let a Fine Gael candidate in before Tommy! When P. J. went out Tommy was swept in well in excess of the quota. We had held our two Corporation seats and our vote had much more than doubled since 1960. The Ward system did not suit us as well as the following figures show. Fianna Fail polled 1,493 first preference votes and won five seats, i.e. an

average of 298.6 votes per seat. Fine Gael 3 seats with 1,181 votes, or 393.6 per seat. Labour polled 1,031 for two seats or 515.5 votes per seat.

In the County Council Election Tommy Higgins walked home in third place and Sidney Gallagher was unfortunate to lose a seat on SliGo County Council.

Where do we go from here? Our party has won a new prestige in SliGo, particularly amongst the younger people. Since the election we have enrolled many new members—six to-day alone! Our task now is to get more branches organised throughout the county and into the Leitrim end of the constituency. We have a long hard fight ahead of us but with the dedication and industry we displayed in the campaign we feel that we can make a much greater impact on the North-Western political scene in the future.

Lionel Gallagher,
Chairman, SliGo Branch,
July, 1967.

THE NORTHERN SCENE

(By our Northern Correspondent, Michael Farrell)

THE LOCAL ELECTIONS in May and June provided a useful test of political feeling in the North. The major conflict was in Belfast and resulted in considerable gains for Republican Labour, leaving them the main opposition in the City Hall. On the surface Republican Labour's advance from three to eight seats seemed spectacular enough but in fact these were confined to the three wards in Belfast with Catholic majorities: Smithfield, Falls and Dock.

All but one member of the Opposition on the Corporation are now Catholics: a potentially unhealthy position. None the less, Republican Labour is now in a strong position, for, advocating Socialist policies, and adopting an entirely non-sectarian attitude, they can earn a new respect and pave the way for expansion outside purely Catholic areas.

N.I. Labour was heavily defeated everywhere in the City and its outskirts, losing four seats out of five in Belfast. Despite the losses the Labour vote remained static and the poll was universally low, where N.I. Labour faced Unionist, showing that Labour didn't lose many votes; only failed to win more or to fire the electorate with the enthusiasm to come out and vote for a change. The biggest single factors in the N.I. Labour defeat were the unpopular policies of the Wilson Government and the failure of the Labour Party to mount an aggressive socialist

campaign exposing the Unionist clique of estate agents and contractors in the City Hall.

Outside Belfast, Irish Labour won control in Warrenpoint, the first Labour Council in the North for many years, and won three seats from the breakaway Markey group in Newry. Though Markey—expelled from Irish Labour some years ago—retained control with the help of his Unionist allies, he was later heavily defeated by Irish Labour in the election for the Newry representative on Down County Council. This heralds the end of Markey's party and the ultimate return of Newry Council to Irish Labour control.

In Derry N.I. Labour contested all the seats in each ward, thereby exposing the hypocrisy of the Nationalists who, for all their complaints about getting unseated, have not contested all the seats since 1926. In the event, though Labour won no seats, they polled well in both Unionist and Nationalist wards and showed that a union of all the Labour elements in Derry, N.I. Labour, Rep. Labour and Stephen Duggan and the remnants of the old Irish Labour Party, might at last wrest that city from the domination of the Orange—and the Grand

The lesson of Derry was the lesson throughout the North.

In Belfast the people of Falls and Smithfield, who have elected N.I. Labour and ex-NIP candidates together with Republican Labour to defeat even "progressive" Nationalists.

Thus they showed that even if the official talks on a Council of Labour were going slowly, the electorate preferred either kind of Labour to Nationalism.

As the results came in the proliferation of Labour titles was bewildering and depressing yet the electorate has clarified the picture. They clearly rejected the spurious parties, Frank Hanna's Independent Labour in Belfast, Markey's Newry Labour, leaving the Nationalist and working class groups, N.I. Labour, Rep. Labour and Irish Labour in Newry and Warrenpoint.

The next step is clear: to unite these groups in a major assault on both Tory parties, Unionists and Nationalists, driving them out of Labour to Nationalism, essential unity of interest in maintaining the status quo in the North. There must be no more spectacles like the South Down bye-election in 1965 when all the Labour Parties allowed a straight fight between two Tory candidates in this strong Labour area. Labour in the North, like Labour in the Republic, must aim at becoming the main opposition as a prelude to Labour Government, North and South. If the All-Ireland Council of Labour can develop these objectives it will lead to a revolution in Irish politics, on both sides of the Border.

IRISH TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION

Founded 1909

IRELAND'S LARGEST TRADE UNION—150,000 MEMBERS

RESERVE FUND £1,750,000

SIX INDUSTRIAL GROUPS

EACH IN CHARGE OF NATIONAL GROUP SECRETARY

Group No. 1	Group No. 2	Group No. 3	Group No. 4	Group No. 5	Group No. 6
Textiles (all types)	Food	Building & Public Works	Hotels	Transport & Freight	Printing
Clothing	Drink	Public Bodies & Local Authorities	Catering	Air	Paper-making
Jute	Tobacco	Public Bodies & Local Authorities	Personal Service	Rail	Box-making
Ropes	Milling	Drugs & Chemicals	Nursing	Road	Wood-work
Blanking & Dyeing	Drugs & Chemicals	Fertilisers	Clerical & Commerce	Docks	Furniture
Rubber	Mining & Quarrying	Turf	Distribution	Communications	Metal Work
Plastics	Bricks	Cement	Professional Entertainment	Coal & Petroleum	Machinery
Tanning	Leather	Shoes & Boots	Glass & Pottery		Engineering

The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union is the largest and most powerful of Irish Unions. It is in fact, the greatest organisation in the country, a trade union without parallel in its national record, unparalleled in its service of the workers of Ireland. It has ever been, and will always be—first in the battle for the uplift of the wage-earner.

Branches in all the principal towns in the Country. Representation in the Dail and on most Corporations, Urban Councils, County Councils, Harbour Boards and State and inter-state concerns. Representations on Joint Labour Committees, Joint Industrial Councils and other negotiating bodies.

General Secretary: FINTAN KENNEDY.
Head Office: LIBERTY HALL, DUBLIN, 1.



Phone Number:

488031

Telegrams:

OBU DUBLIN

Title: Labour, Vol. 1, Nos. 5-6

Organisation: Labour

Date: 1967

Downloaded from the Irish Left Archive.

Visit www.leftarchive.ie

The Irish Left Archive is provided as a non-commercial historical resource, open to all, and has reproduced this document as an accessible digital reference. Copyright remains with its original authors. If used on other sites, we would appreciate a link back and reference to the Irish Left Archive, in addition to the original creators. For re-publication, commercial, or other uses, please contact the original owners. If documents provided to the Irish Left Archive have been created for or added to other online archives, please inform us so sources can be credited.