

AN PHOBLACHT

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"SPECIAL GROUPS TO BE FORMED"

.."TO BE CHOSEN FROM THE BEST
AND MOST CONSCIOUS MEMBERS
OF THE ORGANIZATION".



SPECIAL CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN
TO MEN WITH STRONG BACKS, AND WHO
ARE DEAF, DUMB AND BLIND.

EDITORIAL

IT IS GENERALLY AGREED UPON nowadays that the great weakness of the Republican effort during the Liberation Struggle of 1917-1921 lay in a complete absence of unity on political and economic goals. The movement of the day represented a conglomeration of diverse elements bound together by what was essentially an anti-British emotionalism. The common bond which held the movement together, indeed on which the movement was founded, was forged from a common hatred for British imperialism; and not on a common identity of aspirations for the creation of an independent Irish nation. In other words, the unity of that great national effort was for the most part based on NEGATIVE, rather than on POSITIVE motives; and as a consequence, it was rent asunder once it experienced the political pressures exerted on it by the negotiations with British imperialism. It is relatively easy now to see how this happened, and why it happened. United only in their opposition to the colonial system as it then prevailed, the solidarity of the Republican Movement collapsed when British imperialism proffered a modified alternative. This alternative satisfied the aspirations of some; and from there on the story of what happened is too well known to be repeated.

THIS HISTORICAL FACT IS referred to here, not to detract in any way from the magnificent efforts of the Republican soldiers during the "Tan War"; but rather, to demonstrate the need for a thorough understanding and study of that particular era -- as well as of others which preceded and followed it -- so that errors which contributed to failures are not again repeated in the future. It is a cliché to say that "history repeats itself;" but it would, perhaps, be more correct to say that MEN REPEAT HISTORY by their stupidity and their refusal to take cognizance of past events.

THE PRIMARY WEAKNESS OF THE Liberation War during the fore-mentioned period, was that it represented a Revolutionary Struggle without the required Revolutionary political leadership to direct and retain it on its natural course. Instead of a revolutionary political party, unified in its aspirations and strictly disciplined

in its functioning, to back the IRA and convert its military victories into revolutionary political gains; you had instead what can best be styled a "Parliamentary Coalition" which functioned as Dail Eireann. To be sure, it was great to brag about the "Democratic" content of the political body which controlled our fight for freedom; but that proved rather a cold comfort when the same "democratic" body sold the revolution down the drain in 1922. One would think that Republicanism had learned its lesson from that experience. But no! Only this year we again hear about the great need for "a vast and diversified movement under the Republican umbrella." One such "umbrella" escapade should be enough for any organization; especially when on that occasion "our allies" the Griffithites smartly folded said "umbrella" and rapped us on the head with it.

ALL TOO OFTEN MILITANT Republicans have either ignored or failed to grasp the full significance of political leadership, and what to look for in such leadership, so as to be able to judge with a reasonable accuracy whether or not the political leaders can be expected to remain true to the objects for which the soldiers are prepared to risk their lives. As a corollary to this lack of perspective on political leadership, there is the inevitable absence of appreciation on the structural requirements for the political portion of the revolutionary movement, and on the fundamental prerequisites of its programme and policies. As a rule Republican soldiers couldn't care less on these matters, and this apolitical outlook has, without fail, cost them dearly in the end. No doubt, there are many historical reasons why militant Republicans show such an apathy towards the political aspects of their revolutionary undertakings. However, while these can be understood, they cannot be condoned in the light of objective revolutionary evaluations. And while it remains our firm conviction that Irish Unity and the establishment of a sovereign Republican state can never be realized without an armed struggle wherein Republican soldiers will play the decisive role; we also hold with

equal conviction the belief that Republican soldiers will never taste the fruits of victory until that day when their revolutionary military organization is harmoniously wedded to an equally revolutionary political organization which will do in the political field what the soldiers will do on the military one.

OVER THE YEARS SUCCESSIVE generations of Republican soldiers have shown that they can fight as ably as others. Yet, in each decade we see others smash their colonial chains while we continue to wear ours. Why is this so? We can hardly blame the Almighty; nor the weather. Neither can it be attributed to our military inadequacies, because as has been said, we think it self-evident that Irish Republican Soldiers can hold their own with anyone when it comes to the art of guerilla or insurrectionary warfare. Why then have we failed where others have succeeded? This was the question we of AN PHOBLACHT asked ourselves some years back. We eventually found the answer, and it was a simple one; or at least, like all such phenomenon it appeared elementary once it had been grasped. On studying the SUCCESSFUL revolutionary struggles of the past half century, it was found that they all possessed one element in common; a disciplined revolutionary political organization, whose solidarity was firmly founded on an unqualified acceptance of a specific revolutionary socio-politico-economic programme. We found that the soldiers of a successful revolutionary struggle were invincible, not because they were better soldiers than those who fought in the ranks of movements which failed, but because they fought as the spearhead of an effort that had been cemented together by an unyielding and uncompromising revolutionary political leadership.

IN ESSENCE, THE UNDENIABLE key to success in all instances, lay in the existence of a capable revolutionary political leadership. We know, of course, that there are some who will dismiss this as hogwash; as we are aware that there are many Republican soldiers who will view all this talk of politics with a very jaundiced eye indeed. Be that as it may, we will still ask such men a few simple questions; and on answering, let them at least be honest with themselves. Who, we ask, capitulated in 1922? Was it the IRA; or, was it the careerist pol-

iticians who somersaulted out of "the straightjacket of a Republic" the first chance they got? And again, we ask: who cut the ground from under the recent IRA campaign in the North-east? Was it the IRA men who strove to maintain the fight under abominable conditions; or, was it the politicians who could not restrain their desire to immerse the whole Republican Movement in extremely questionable political undertakings on the Free State market? 'Tis about time such questions were asked; and answered too.

WE CLAIM THAT THE BASIC CAUSE of our failures in the past can be attributed primarily to an absence of uniformity and firmness in political ranks, and to a general ambiguity on the question of political commitments as a whole. This does not mean that the politicians who hitched their cart to militant Republicanism in the past were insincere in their personal feelings towards Ireland. No doubt the greater number were sincere after their own fashion; but most assuredly, they were not committed to the determined and unremitting pursuance of such revolutionary goals as are explicit in our Republican traditions. And it is on this latter score they must be judged, and on no other. Naturally, the same criterion holds good today and for the future; and we say bluntly to all militant Republicans: be less impressed by the personal sincerity evinced by those who aspire to political leadership, and instead, take a greater and closer interest in what they really stand for. Take notice of and evaluate their statements. Weigh their statements and propositions against past experiences. In other words, use history as it should be used; that is, as a basis to judge the value of their utterances, and to assess the possible and probable outcome of their proposals. Militant Republicans must engage in this sort of homework if they wish to avoid being made the playthings of political hypocrites.

FOR OUR PART, WE HAVE NO DOUBT but that militant Republicans will always be on hand to take a crack at British imperialism. Yes! and at Her Majesty's Loyal puppetry in Leinster House too, when the time is right. We believe this because the people, from whence such men spring, have always been fundamentally sound in their allegiance -- despite occasional evidence to the contrary. But as revol-

utionaries consciously committed to the preparation of that FINAL CLASH, it is our determined purpose to leave no stone unturned to ensure that when militant Republicans march again, political ranks and political activities will be as one with them. To graft revolutionary political labour to the traditional revolutionary militarism of our people, as the woodwork is combined with the mechanism and barrel to make the effective rifle, that is our aim. The imperative need for such a combination should, indeed must, be obvious to all Republicans blessed with ordinary common sense. And it follows logically that to do this we must begin by concentrating on the confusion and deception which presently prevails within Republican ranks. To expose it and to show it for what it truly is, so that Republican formations are first placed on a solid revolutionary footing before they again turn their sights on the common enemy.

THERE ARE POLITICIANS OF questionable Republican standing presently in the Republican Movement, who would have rank-and-file IRA men believe that we of AN PHOBLACHT are spreading "false and confusing theories" when we advocate a thorough straightening-out of, and a general clean-up in, political ranks. These self-appointed guardians of our revolutionary traditions claim, if you please, that our object is "to gull the politically innocent." (TUAIRISC, August, 1966) So there you have it Republican Soldiers: to the Dublin Wolfe Tone Society, which publishes TUAIRISC, and which is but a front for the clique who presently aspire to take over the IRA lock, stock and barrel, the ordinary IRA man is but a political fool, who is in constant need of suitable political protection and guidance from the DRUGSTORE INDIANS who sit in council in the Dublin Wolfe Tone Society. We, of course, care little for the rantings of such political pygmies. In the long run they too will disappear like all the other political hucksters who have dogged the path of Irish Republicanism in the past; they possess neither the ability nor the will to lead the Irish Revolution, and they know this as well as ourselves. No doubt, they will continue for a little longer in their efforts to retain their reputation as coffee-shop rebels at the expense of honest militant Republicans. But the day of reckoning must eventually arrive, and when it does, Republican soldiers

will realize the correctness of our present position, and act on it. In itself, that will be sufficient reward to all of us associated with An Phoblacht.

LONG LIVE THE IRISH REVOLUTION!

A GOOD SPEECH!

ALL TOLD, CATHAL GOULDING'S speech at the Sean Treacy Commemoration was a good one. (See Nov. issue of U.I.) To contest any part of it at this stage, would be to quibble over secondary issues -- to split hairs for the sake of argument alone. There is no disputing the fact that the Irish Struggle represents a conflict between internal class forces, as well as one between national and external interests; and this, Cathal Goulding capably demonstrated in his speech.

BUT:--

IT IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO POSSESS the ability to deliver a good speech. And while we are in agreement with the sentiments expressed by Cathal Goulding, we are, none the less, compelled to place his address in context with other sentiments expressed by his associates, so as to determine its long-term worth. You see, a good speech is all right; but unless it is associated with an appropriate course of action, its significance cannot be other than negligible.

UNFORTUNATELY:--

IN OUR OPINION, CATHAL'S SPEECH loses much of its weight when read in conjunction with some of the views expressed by Tony Meade in the November U.I. Cathal is unquestionably correct when he asserts that the rural and urban working classes "must unite and fight their oppressors." But how are we to interpret this, when in the same paper Tony Meade says: "There is however a new element in the willingness to use force; namely that this force will be defensive."

OBVIOUSLY:--

WHEN TONY MEADE TALKS ABOUT using force in the DEFENSIVE sense, he is not talking in revolutionary terms; because revolution, whether in its political or military aspects, must of necessity proceed on the basis of an OFFENSIVE strategy; and Meade, whether he knows it or not, is talking of force in its strategic sense in his article.

THE QUESTION IS:--

HOW THEN ARE WE TO TAKE CATHAL Goulding's speech? By itself it

Continued page 12.

IRISH REPUBLICANISM NEEDS ITS ARMED MEN

BY

PADDY MAC

EVER SINCE THE FOUNDING OF the IRB in 1858, Republican objects have always had a continuous organization of armed men to sustain them. It is true enough that the ranks of the Republican Armed Force were at times thin; but few or many, the armed men were always there to serve as a solid foundation for every new attempt against the British imperialist exploiter. When hopes of victory were high, it was the efforts of armed Republicans who made them so; when hopes reached a low ebb, it was the same armed men who kept the flame of separatism alive, to blaze anew on yet another day. While there are organized men with arms at their disposal, who are dedicated to the revolutionary cause of Irish Republicanism, our history shows us that our cause can rise from the lower depths with tremendous rapidity. When such an armed organization is broken, our history shows us also that it could well take over half-a-century to overcome the loss. Men with arms have been the great salvation of Irish Republicanism; no matter what their numerical strength they have always made Republicanism a force to be feared and dreaded by British imperialist and his Irish hireling alike. Without such armed men Republicanism could well become a thing to be despised by those same parties. It is well that all contemporary Irish Republicans ponder these points.

ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS ATTEMPTS have been made in the pages of AN PHOBLAUGHT to awaken Republicans, and especially IRA men, on the dangers to their organization from the designs of the so-called "Progressive" group who operate in Leadership circles. Amongst other things warning was given of a plan to disarm the IRA, and eventually disband it altogether. The Directorate who decides the policy of AN PHOBLAUGHT have refused permission to document my specific charges from files in our possession; at least for the present; and perhaps they are wise in doing so. This places myself in the awkward position of being unable to say what I know, and what I think other

militant Republicans should know. However, I can at least say this much to all IRA men: If you now have arms, KEEP THEM, and don't be fools enough to be talked into giving them up under any pretext whatever. Local Army units always possessed the RIGHT to look after and protect their own arms; this right has been jealously guarded over the years; if it is relinquished now, YOU CAN SAY GOODBYE TO THE IRA.

THE GENERAL ATTITUDE OF THE self-styled "Progressives" towards the Army, is clearly shown in the "Captured Plan" which was released in part last May by the Free State. The I.R.P.B. denied of course that this "plan" constituted policy. True perhaps; but knowing its origin we can positively report that it represents a policy which the "Progressives" will implement when they are in complete control. The contents and style betray its social-democratic origins; and if there are some who may not know what a social-democrat is, he is an erstwhile socialist who has been reclaimed by capitalism--a rubber-kneed species of mankind (class-bastard if you will) who has betrayed a revolutionary cause for the condescension of the ruling class. Under the heading "REVOLUTIONARY" this "plan" proposes amongst other things that Army training and indoctrination in future be designed "to back up and consolidate revolutionary (sic) action initiated LEGALLY, rather than to initiate actions ILLEGALLY relying on the political organization to 'explain away' as has been the case hitherto." It is surely an indication of the contempt in which the author of this "plan" holds the men of the IRA, and also of the security he must feel he possesses with the present IRA leaders, when he can openly vilify the actions of the IRA in the area of its leadership, calling them irresponsible, and requiring a long-suffering Sinn Fein to explain them away. Other than this, however, the key to the paragraph is LEGALITY. In the author's view, political action as defined by the laws of the Free State represents LEGAL action, and

must regulate the future actions of the Republican Movement; while all action prohibited by the laws of the Free State is ILLEGAL, and must be avoided by the movement. This is surely the neatest piece of native revisionism that has appeared for a long time; indeed it outshines Dev's somersault on the "Oath" by a long shot.

IT IS BAD ENOUGH WHEN PEOPLE of questionable political background are co-opted into the realm of Republican leadership, but it goes beyond my powers of comprehension when proposals by such people, in which the soldiers of the IRA are labelled irresponsible characters due to the ILLEGALITY of their actions, are not alone tolerated but given a brazen display in a paper styling itself the guardian of the Republican cause. And in case there be any confusion as to what paper I refer to, it is the UNITED IRISHMAN. According to this attitude, the '56 campaign was an ILLEGAL undertaking, which Sinn Fein had to "explain away." So also was the attack on a British gun-boat by Richard Behal, and his subsequent escape from a Free State jail. No doubt this ILLEGAL and irresponsible action on the part of Behal accounts for his recent dismissal from the Army. But then, as many of us have found from experience, the present leaders don't want men in the IRA who believe in fighting; by far safer are the sort who prefer talk to action.

TO MY WAY OF THINKING, IT IS very obvious that any "revolutionary action" which can be initiated without transgressing the laws of the Free State, must be of a very primitive and elementary sort. How can it possibly be otherwise? However, having drawn a rather fanciful picture on the process by which the Republican Movement is to set up a "Dual government", the "plan" concludes: "Eventually ... (this) would bring the two state structures into head-on conflict. This would be the signal for the completion of the job by military action." Did anybody ever hear such crap in all their lives????? Who exactly will conduct this "Military action" is left hanging in mid-air, since the "plan" had previously proposed that "Under no circumstances should the Army recruit... on the basis of an emotional appeal to arms;" and that it would only be "necessary to train some specialist groups in techniques for the harassment of the military." This latter proposal, by the way, is deemed as

"the classic guerilla trump card." But to anyone at all familiar with the techniques of revolutionary guerilla warfare, it is obvious that it represents nothing more than a perverse form of neo-Blanquist adventurism. A war of liberation based on guerilla warfare cannot be won by "specialist groups"; it relies primarily on the armed masses; but methinks the men behind the great "plan" have as much fear of an armed populace as have the present ruling clique. The only thing such "specialist groups" could be used for is to create a temporary excitement by attacking military posts in the 6-counties, and which could be used by Sinn Fein in a Free State election as a sort of election-eering gambit to secure votes. In plain language, a so-called IRA organized along these lines, would be nothing more than a tool in the hands of politicians, who have no intention of taking any chances themselves insofar as shouldering a gun for Ireland is concerned.

FOR MY PART, I VIEW ANY proposal to limit or restrict the future size of the IRA, as a positive step to place that organization in a completely subordinate position to political horse-traders at best; at worst, I think it is a step to do away with the Army altogether. An IRA composed of a few "specialist groups", is an IRA easily dictated to, and readily shoved around. Regardless of whether or not the majority of IRA men agree with our political position, the maintenance of, and a primary reliance on, a Republican Army is, to us, fundamental to the success of a liberation struggle which must be fought in the future. Only a fool, a coward, or an enemy agent would say that the issues which separate the aspirations of Irish Republicanism from the prevailing Partitionist regimes can be resolved without the use of FORCE. The present set-up was instituted by FORCE: it has been maintained ever since by FORCE; consequently, it can only be DESTROYED BY FORCE. The manner in which FORCE will be used is immaterial at this stage, since there are innumerable ways in which it can be employed other than in the form of revolutionary guerilla warfare. But FORCE IN SOME SHAPE OR FORM will decide the issue; and to ensure that Republicanism continues to possess the chance of success, an Army must be maintained. There is no other road, there is no substitute for a strong Republican Army based on the mass of the people, and we MUST BEGIN NOW TO

BUILD THAT ARMY. As I said at the outset, the present IRA can serve as the foundation for the effort -- the struggle -- which must come if we are to be free. But it is, after all, up to the present IRA men to decide whether this be so or not. Regardless of what they decide now, the future will

still see a revolutionary army in the field in Ireland. The only difference will be: is it to be a rejuvenated IRA which will lead the fight for freedom; or is that organization, like the IRB before it, destined to end its days in NATIONAL DISGRACE?

THE YAHOOOS AND AN PHOBLACHT

IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE CONTINUED appearance of AN PHOBLACHT is having an upsetting effect on those who are strenuously labouring to deactivate Irish Republicanism of its revolutionary content. The Yahooos and political con-men, who are making so bold a bid to drag organized Republicanism into the social-democratic orbit, find it a little disconcerting to see our modest paper make its rounds regularly. They try their best to ignore it -- at least in public; but in private they fume, rave and voice all sorts of dire threats against AN PHOBLACHT and the men who publish it. We have, from time to time, been informed from friendly sources that the Yahooos are contemplating our destruction; or, as they themselves have so quaintly put it, "We will take care of that crowd." "We will do them in." Frankly, we are little disturbed by this sort of nonsense; we can take care of ourselves. And we most certainly will not desist in our efforts to EXPOSE those who are presently trying to send Irish Republicanism careering down the road to parliamentarianism in "Johnson's Motor Car."

SURELY, IT MUST BE APPARENT TO all that the Yahooos are in a very weak position, when the only answer they can give to our exposure of their tactics and politics is a series of threats against our paper. If their position was one truly in accord with the revolutionary traditions of Irish Republicanism, they would have little difficulty in demolishing any statements forwarded by ourselves, or any one else for that matter. A movement which is pursuing a course of action that is in harmony with the principles on which it was founded, has little need for ambiguity and double-talk when presenting its policies; it has little to hide either from its friends or its enemies. If its leadership are attacked on the basis of non-allegiance to principles, they can answer loud and clear and defiance of all assailants. However, it is very apparent that

the present clique at the head of the Republican Movement are in no such a position. They are formulating and implementing policies diametrically opposed to basic Republican values; and when they are charged on this count, all they can do is try and cover their tracks by attacks and threats against people like ourselves, who have every RIGHT as Republicans to be concerned with such goings on. As Republicans who have served under arms in the cause of Irish Republicanism, we of AN PHOBLACHT have EVERY RIGHT to voice our opinions. Most assuredly, we have a FAR GREATER RIGHT to be concerned with the fortunes of Republicanism, than a few of the characters who are presently exercising considerable influence in the direction of Republican affairs, and who have never shown a willingness to fight for the cause.

FOR OUR PART, WE HAVE SHOWN a willingness from the start to debate the issues which, in our view, constitute a downright betrayal of Republican traditions. When we have made charges, we have always elaborated on them; and have even offered our opponents space in our paper to contest any statement we make at any time. We will debate the issue in any paper the Yahooos decide on; we have nothing to hide.

IN OUR OPINION, IT'S ABOUT TIME Republicans throughout the country awoke to the fact that there's something damn rotten about the present set-up. The Republican cause is being manipulated by social-democrats, who are endeavoring to steer it along a course compatible to their own goals, and not ours. We would suggest that the proteges of the Connolly Association, etc. return to the orbit of the British Communist Party, and keep their cotton-picking-fingers out of our business. The Irish revolution can do right well without their "contributions," either to the "theory" or the practice of our struggle; AND THAT'S A FACT !!!!

FREEDOM!

BY EOIN MACDONAIL

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

TERMS SUCH AS FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY and independence, to name but a few, come readily and easily to the lips of all politicians. For their part, Free State politicians can and do wax eloquently on the bountiful benefits of FREEDOM now being enjoyed in the 26-county zone; and for good measure they will also throw in references to the INDEPENDENCE of the state since the Treaty, and the DEMOCRATIC manner in which it functions. For my own part I will, in a moment of weakness, admit to the distinct possibility that at least a goodly number of these Free State politicians are actually sincere when they use such terms. Because when all is said and done, the most of them are a little short on brain-power anyway, so that it is highly improbable that they could, even if they wished, master the intellectual demands of a Machiavellian career. On the other side of the coin are Irish Republicans, of whom very few will be found to entertain even for a second the notion that such interpretations on the part of Free-staters could come within a mules screech of legitimacy. When I say Irish Republicans, I naturally refer to that hardy class who wholeheartedly subscribe to our traditional revolutionary position; and do not include the milk-and-water variety who, it would appear, cannot make up their minds one way or the other. Such a division of opinion is a very rough one; but at least it serves as a simple means to demonstrate that unqualified references to freedom, democracy and so forth, are totally meaningless, since one man's concept of freedom could to another mean nothing short of slavery.

ALL OF THIS IS BY WAY OF AN introduction to a very serious, and a very pressing subject, which is: the paramount need on the part of Irish Republicans to place before the people their exact definition of freedom, democracy, national sovereignty and equal justice, as they apply to the social, political and economic status of the national community. By now the majority of the people have had a bellyful of rhetoric and cross-roads oratory when it comes to talking about our fight

for Freedom. So that it is about time, I think, that all Irish Republicans, and especially those who aspire to positions of leadership, did some long-neglected homework on this whole question, and came up with some straightforward and meaningful answers for a change. Certainly, such an undertaking would prove by far more productive in the long run, than all this grandiose and meaningless chatter at present about building mass movements, marshalling united fronts and what have you. Surely, it must be obvious to all sensible men and women that Irish Republicanism can never get anywhere until it has first established precisely where it is heading. As things now stand it would require the combined efforts of an astrologist and a numerologist to come up with even a calculated guess as to the direction organized Republicanism is headed with respects to social, political and economic goals.

IN AN ATTEMPT TO THROW SOME light on the whole subject, and at the same time give our views on the matter, I will outline briefly some of our ideas as they pertain to social, political and economic freedom.

POLITICAL FREEDOM:

WHAT IS POLITICAL FREEDOM? Or at least, what do Irish Republicans consider to be political freedom? For example, do the theoreticians who presently chart the course of the Republican Movement consider an executive power, based on a parliamentary majority within a legislative assembly elected by universal suffrage, to embody the essence of a universal political freedom? Personally, I would deduce this to be the case from the various statements emanating from the present Republican leadership; although it must also be granted that they have generally enveloped their position on this matter with such confusion and contradiction, that all deductions are extremely hazardous affairs at best. However, for the sake of argument, it is allowable to speculate when concrete evidence is lacking; and if the Republican leadership does accept the foregoing political arrangement

as an essential basis for political freedom, then, for one thing they have neither political nor moral justification for persisting in their Abstentionist policy towards the Free State Parliament, since political freedom, as they accept its definition, flourishes in the Free State. Should the Republican leadership reject the foregoing basis for political freedom, what then do they propose in its place? To date, no alternative has, to my knowledge, been forwarded. Which would tend to imply that these people, if they have thought at all on the subject, accept the prevailing parliamentary system of government as being essentially indicative of political freedom as they themselves would practise it. Of course, they will tell you that they stand for a National Parliament, as against the two regional bodies now in operation. However, the fact remains: freedom does not relate to geography, but only to theoretical principles which govern the operation of the state. So that, if the principles of parliamentary government are deemed productive of a universal political freedom when applied to a 32-county assembly, they must also be accepted as producing the same thing when operative in a lesser geographic area such as the Free State; because neither the addition nor the subtraction of territory can be construed as having any logical relationship to principles of government as such. By the same token, if the parliamentary system is considered to inhibit or restrict the benefits of freedom to the majority when it functions in one section of the nation--the Free State for example; then, the same system of government cannot do otherwise than act imprecisely the same fashion if it were used as the basis for a National Government. It would be extremely interesting to hear what the theoreticians of the Republican Movement have to say on this subject. Perhaps they could be enticed to give us all their opinions?

FOR OUR PART, POLITICAL FREEDOM, insofar as the Nation's majority is concerned, implies both the absence of external or foreign influence and the absence of a native minority ascendancy, in the political life of the nation. On this basis, we of An PHOBLAcht reject all ideas that political freedom exists in the Free State zone at present. We do so firstly, because we contend that British imperialism continues to exert an indirect, but nevertheless a very positive influence on Free State

politics, through an uninterrupted domination of its economy. It should be readily apparent that this condition automatically places severe restrictions on the freedom of the state as a political entity. Secondly, we maintain that the parliamentary system through which the Free State is administered, imposes considerable limits on the political freedom of the majority of the people. That is to say, the system favours a minority at the expense of the majority. Thus, insofar as the Free State is concerned, there presently exists two distinct forms of restrictions on political freedom: 1) the state itself is not a free agent politically; 2) the majority class within the state do not enjoy a political freedom equal to that ensured to a minority by virtue of the system of government in vogue. It is important to understand the fundamental differences between these two limitations on freedom; especially when it comes to deciding on the form of government best suited to a 32-county nation state. It is easy enough to see that such a nation state must be liberated from the domination of all external influences; but it could be as easily overlooked that unless the class factor is also taken into consideration, a 32-county nation state will as readily exhibit all of the social inequalities and injustices as presently flourish in the Free State.

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE: THE GREAT MYTH

ALTHOUGH IRISH REPUBLICANS reject the proposition that political freedom exists in the Free State; their objections are invariably tenuous, especially when they are presented with the rejoinder that the government of the Free State is demonstrably based on the democratic foundations of universal suffrage. The protagonists of parliamentary government will say: the Free State is duly elected by the people; it is completely dependent on the will of the people, who can reject it through the democratic process whenever they so feel. This is a glib, and much used defence of parliamentarianism; and how often have Irish Republicans heard it, both in defence of the Free State, and as a basis for condemning their own alleged "undemocratic" activities? Many times! And yet, despite the fact that this transparent hoax can easily be demolished, I have yet to hear it contradicted by the intellectual elite who lead the Republican Movement; and who aspire to lead the people to freedom through that movement.

Obviously, such a failure must be attributed either to a complete lack of political education; or, to the fact that the present Republican leadership, being itself committed to the ideology which perpetuates the hoax, has no intention of enlightening either the movement which they lead, or the people in general. It has to be either one or the other!

TO EXPOSE THE HOAX WHICH CLAIMS that parliamentarianism, being founded on universal suffrage, automatically signifies the presence of a general political freedom, it is necessary, first of all, to reiterate an essential and undeniable historic truth. Which is: that all hitherto society represents a multi-class structure within which an unceasing conflict for ascendancy has prevailed between the various classes. Wolfe Tone underlines this class struggle during his own time, when he wrote, "the French Revolution became the test of every man's political creed, and the nation was fairly divided into two great parties, the Aristocrats and the Democrats." From the existence of such a class struggle it follows as a logical consequence that a particular form of government, functioning in any particular social structure at any given time, must invariably represent an administrative medium through which the interests of the class then in power are protected and forwarded. Because, while class struggle remains the rule, class power must remain the object. This means, of course, that social class is the only conceivable basis on which it is possible to determine the values of freedom, as it applies to the political, economic and social affairs of any country. And, as a consequence, when Irish Republicans are determining the extent of political freedom in the Free State, or, when they are formulating ideas on an order of things for a 32-county Republic which is to incorporate a popular social, political and economic freedom, they must proceed on the basis of class evaluations and none other.

RETURNING NOW TO THE QUESTION of freedom as it pertains to a mode of government incorporating universal suffrage, it can be seen that the class factor must also be introduced into calculations before an equation is complete which can produce a meaningful resultant relating to freedom in political, economic and social terms. For instance, it can be held that universal suffrage plus majority

class rule equals a popular freedom; whereas it cannot be said that universal suffrage alone equals the same thing, or, that universal suffrage plus minority class rule will equal popular freedom. Proceeding from this it is, therefore, obvious that the association of universal suffrage with the contemporary parliamentary form of government is not of itself sufficient for claiming popular freedom to be the inevitable result. Quite the contrary, since the class factor associated with parliamentary government is undeniably bourgeois or capitalist; this automatically indicates the existence of a minority class rule which must, due to the dynamics of the class struggle, result in limitations on freedom as it applies to the working classes. All Irish Republicans who are in any way perceptive can readily see that such limitations exist in the Free State, and in any other state for that matter which is run according to the principles of parliamentarianism. What they do not seem to grasp as a rule, is the real cause of this state of affairs. Generally, Irish Republicans view the inadequacies of parliamentarianism in Ireland as resulting mainly from the partitionist origins of the two parliaments, and the partitionist framework generally within which parliamentarianism now functions. According to this simplified approach, the limitations now so obvious, especially with respects to economic and social matters, will swiftly disappear once the nation is politically re-united under a 32-county parliament. Unfortunately, there exists no historic precedent to justify such a sanguine view.

IT IS AS WELL, PERHAPS, TO elaborate further as to why universal suffrage lacks any real substance, insofar as the working classes are concerned, when it relates to parliamentarianism; because it is apparent that many Irish Republicans continue to be greatly captivated by the illusions of freedom this particular gimmick inspires. To the working class majority, the right to vote is practically useless as a means of improving their status in a capitalist-run state, for the very simple reason that the working classes possess neither the leisure nor the material means to make any real use of the political power accorded them in theory in a parliamentary democracy. The masses can vote on which capitalist-accredited group will operate, or at

least appear to operate, the state apparatus for five years; they cannot vote on how that apparatus should be operated. In practice, neither elections nor the alternation of executive power between parties, has any fundamental bearing on the course the state will take. In fact, the state would function in exactly the same manner, perhaps even a little better all round, without any elected assembly whatever; and it is conceivable also that the general condition of the masses could very well be better, rather than worse, were this to be the case, since the state apparatus as a whole would at the least be relieved of the corruption and general thievery that is so much a part of party politics.

THE MAGNIFICENT ILLUSION:

WHY THEN DOES THE CAPITALIST class go to all the trouble of perpetuating such an expensive circus as an elected assembly which, for the most part, is capable of influencing nothing other than the state's supply of hot air? It is obvious that as a minority group within any social structure, the capitalist class must manoeuvre with considerable flexibility, talent and ingenuity if they are to hold on to state power. Therefore, to maintain such objects the capitalist class must: 1) broaden its working base in society, by securing the collaboration of the more "susceptible elements" of the working classes; 2) offset the natural instincts for freedom in the masses, by presenting an operating mode of politics which has all the attractions of proffering an easy means of securing and retaining a popular freedom, while at the same time ensuring that it can by no means effect such conditions; 3) design an efficient administrative apparatus with which to control the state, and which can function independently of the preceding two categories, while at the same time inheriting the faculty of appearing to be completely subordinate to them. Having as their guide that political philosophy so ably formulated by Niccolo Machiavelli, the original bourgeois theoretician, as well as possessing the inordinate faculty to cultivate and sharpen man's primitive instincts of competitive cunning, the capitalist class perfected over the years a composite structure, incorporating the preceding requirements in proportions which vary from time to time according to the dictates of conditions and

general politico-economic pressures. They styled their brain-child PARLIAMENTARIANISM; which is, to say the least, a magniloquent misnomer, since it falsely infers the centre of power to rest in precisely that area where in fact it touches the least -- in parliament.

THE CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT OF modern parliamentarianism, is that it has succeeded in projecting an image of itself which is in violent contradiction to reality. During the early period of capitalist development, it seems probable that at least a great number of major decisions relating to state affairs were decided within the body of parliament. But in those bygone days it must be remembered, parliament was a very select club with an exclusive ruling class membership; and the management of the state was a relatively simple matter then compared to the complex demands of its contemporary counterpart, so that the present bureaucratic machine was only in the embryo stage. However, due to various political pressures resulting mainly from the social repercussions of the industrial revolution, the typical parliamentary assembly today houses a considerable percentage of petty bourgeois and working class representatives. With such a "watering down" in class purity the predictable result was that the centre of real power moved, as a gradual process to be sure, from parliament, where the ruling class could not hope to retain a majority, to a bureaucratic apparatus, wherein it can assure an ascendancy of influence due to its economic power in the state as a whole. The growth of this bureaucracy has to a great degree paralleled the forementioned broadening of parliamentary representation; and in the main, this parallelism in development can be attributed to the same basic source.

DESPITE ITS BREVITY, THE foregoing should suffice to demonstrate that the politico-economic dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, originally upheld through a one party concept of parliamentarianism, was maintained by transferring the real centre of power to a bureaucracy, when necessity dictated parliamentarianism be extended to its present multi-party format. As a corollary to this manoeuvre there then arose, however, the matter of maintaining the myth on the power of the "democratically

elected assembly"; because the assembly must perforce continue to appear to rule. Perhaps even to itself, if it is to effectively perpetuate the delusion of its power to govern. This difficulty was resolved by the emergence of a "Cabinet Autocracy" within parliament itself which, in effect, serves as a transmission belt between the real rulers operating behind the scenes, and the alleged rulers operating in the public's view. Most people accept the fact that the Cabinet is the government, although it should be apparent that this is in direct contravention of the alleged democratic principles of parliamentary government. However, the Cabinet is the government, at least in the sense that it represents the sole connection a parliamentary assembly has with the real source of state power. In theory this Cabinet is subject to the control of the assembly; or at least an elaborate case has been made to show this to be so; but in reality Cabinet ministers, as party leaders, are in the position to dictate to those who allegedly control them through the discipline of the modern party machine. Thus a Cabinet can and does carry through policies which the "House" has no hand in making or influencing, and they can do so against the wishes of the majority of the "House". However, despite this apparent power of a Cabinet, it must always be remembered that its autocracy relates to the elected assembly, and not to state power as such. Because the real power to govern must, of necessity if nothing more, rest with the administrative bureaucracy enjoying a continuity of tenure in the regions of the means of state power. Anyone who has even a cursory acquaintance with the history of Cabinet Government knows this to be true; and indeed plentiful examples abound to show that even Cabinet Ministers, who can invariably be deemed to subscribe wholeheartedly to the bourgeois philosophy of politics, are not in all cases even informed of, not to mind consulted on, very "sensitive issues". Such "issues" usually concern foreign affairs, military affairs and matters of internal security --- a very vital issue is the latter.

WHEN REFERRING TO THE POWER of a state bureaucracy--the Civil Service, what is meant is that power exercised by the higher civil servants; because that vast ant-heap of humanity who keep the

wheels of administration turning possess but a robot-like relation to the state. The elected assembly has no control whatever over the selection of these bureaucratic moguls; and for that matter, neither has the Cabinet or Executive authority, since a Minister has almost no power to appoint, dismiss, promote or transfer his own staff. As Nicholas Mansergh so smoothly put it in The Irish Free State, its Government and Politics: "The assumption that the less the control of the political executive over the appointment of permanent officials, the better it is for the administration, has been accepted." Of course it has; and if you substitute "the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie" for "administration," it can be seen why this is so. Once the relationship of a bureaucratic elite to the regulation of state power is grasped, then it is relatively simple to comprehend the process of "class dictatorship" in a bourgeois democracy. In capsule form it can be said that: a bourgeois democracy, through its class-controlled bureaucracy, endows the masses with a freedom from responsibility in the management of a nation's affairs. Obviously this is a negation of real freedom; since real freedom is not a freedom from responsibility, but a freedom for responsibility. Herein lies the great delusion of parliamentarianism!

NOTE

IT was found necessary to hold over the remainder of this article due to lack of space. The concluding portion will appear in the next issue.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4.

sounds revolutionary; but when qualified by Tony Meade's statement it falls flat on its face. It is precisely this sort of double-talk which we have objected to all along; and if we may say so, Irish Republicans have never been ones for this sort of underhand operation. Incidentally, we can inform Mr. Meade that there's nothing "NEW" in the idea of employing force DEFENSIVELY. It was exactly this question which caused all the trouble in 1916 between the IRB and MacNeill's crowd. For God's sake man read your history!

FIGHT FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY!

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