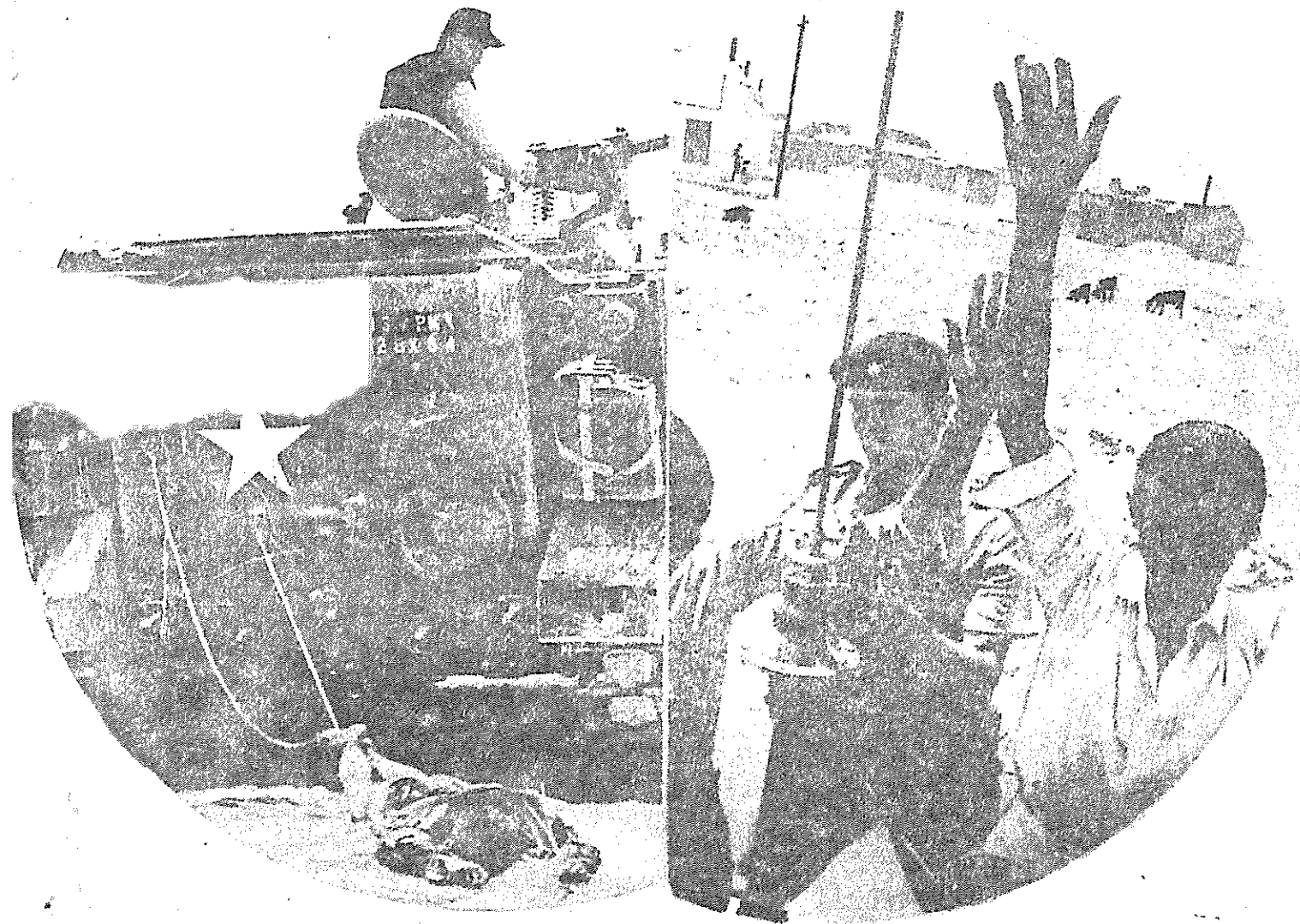


THE

WORKERS REPUBLIC

MAY — JUNE
1967 No. 18

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EDITORIAL

THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN IRELAND

A surprise guest, Terence O'Neill, opened the N.I. Regional Conference of the A.T.G.W.U. last Autumn. Of his hosts, he had this to say: "In this job I have had a chance to meet many of the leading trade unionists here in Ulster. I have been greatly encouraged to find how many of them do in fact think in this long-term dimension. It is no secret that most of those who are planning big new enterprises here have discussions with union representatives at a very early stage. If these union men were restrictive or narrow-minded

they could very easily lose for us these promising new developments. But this is not the case..." And no doubt, his hearers were gratified. In the North, where the TUC was not even recognised a short while ago, class collaboration thrives.

THE PROGRESS OF CLASS COLLABORATION

And in the South too, class collaboration progresses. A document has come into our hands, written by Ruaidhri Roberts, Secretary of the ICTU, and marked: ENTIRELY CONFIDENTIAL. ON NO ACCOUNT TO BE PUBLISHED OR DISCUSSED. This document, a note of the positions adopted by a Working Committee of the ICTU in meetings with Department of Labour officials, shows the extent of the agreement and collusion between the commanding heights of the trade union bureaucracy - particularly the ITGWU - and the Kianna Fall government.

The Department of Labour suggested seven points for discussion. These, affecting their mutual relations, and how to control the common enemy - the rank and file - are of equal concern to bureaucrats and bosses alike.

Point 1 mocks at the old Larkinite slogan One Big Union by proposing that Groups of Unions be set up in a given industry, the Group to then obtain a Group Negotiating Licence from the State. Only Unions in the Group would have the right to strike. The document says frankly that the purpose of this is to remove "much of the incentive to establish breakaway unions since no breakaway unions could in fact secure changes in the corresponding National Agreement except by negotiating through the Group and with its concurrence." The Licence would be given to all except those "whose membership was defined as negligible."

What they consider negligible is shown in Point 6: "We have already agreed to limit the right to form new unions to groups of 500 workers. We have agreed to the £5,000 lodgement for a Negotiation Licence and it is suggested that, with due regard to the spirit of the Convention on Freedom of Association a reasonable time limitation, say a year of 18 months, should be imposed."

Under the heading Unofficial Strikes the document shows us why the minister wished to prevent any worker expelled from a union from joining another for at least six months. This "was to assist unions which might be loath to impose penalties on members after an unofficial strike, lest the member transfer to another union." With state bolstered Big Unions, and a limitation on new small ones, this would be very difficult anyway.

The Document goes on: "The question arises as to whether unofficial strikes should be illegal.... illegality might apply not to the strike, but to the act of picketing". It proposes that picketing during unofficial or solidarity strikes should be illegal.

A final note of sweetness was added to this happy plan of the local Tammany hands by agreement that the state should compensate trade union officials made redundant by amalgamations.

The document we have been quoting was thrown out by the ICFU Conference. But the men responsible for it were not: they are still in control, and they are still the most reliable prop of the Irish capitalist system, an essential limb of the bosses' political and economic establishment, with the special task of controlling and policing the workers. And never has the bourgeoisie needed them more.

The Irish ruling class is in serious trouble, caught between a militant working class and overpoweringly strong neighbours. Britain's steady movement towards the Common Market, pulling her puppet after her on a string, brings no comfort at all. To prepare for heightening competition they must cut costs, amalgamate firms and fight to reduce relative labour costs. This calls for massive capital investment, which, because the Irish capitalists find it more profitable to invest well over £500m. overseas, can only be achieved by foreign investment. But the story of the attempt to develop Ireland in that way is a study in the ironies of a market economy.

ROLLER COASTER ECONOMY

With the repeal of the Protection of Manufactures Act in 1958 European and US capital flowed into the country, attracted by cheap labour and easy access to the British market. Taking off from a very low base Irish industry began a rapid expansion. From 1952-58 total expansion had amounted to only 2 1/2%. In the next six years growth equalled 28 1/2%. The number of industrial workers rose by 45,000. But wages, whose lowness had been a main attraction, also rose. In the first 5 years of the First Programme, wages rose by 22%, to only 10% - 15% short of the British level. The balance of forces on shop and factory floor changed and large incursions were made into the prerogatives of management. Growth began to undermine the conditions which had attracted foreign investment. Undesirable as this situation was to the bourgeoisie, they were powerless to change it while an expanding economy continued in Britain, offering alternative employment to victimised casualties of the Irish working class struggle.

Then in 1965 things began to get difficult for Britain and a parallel deterioration followed, as a matter of course, in Ireland. For the first quarter, Irish industrial production rose only 4% as against 7% for the same period the year before. A record deficit developed. Reserves fell. Then came the most serious blow of all, underlining once again the almost total dependence on the British economy, which takes 70% of exports - the 15% surcharge imposed by Britain on all imports. It was this which finally pushed Lemass into the A.I.F.T.A. - the new Act of Union.

Faced with the new situation Lemass turned like a cornered rat on the trade unions. The Irish Telephonist Association pickets were arrested and Lemass prepared to use the Offences Against the State Act to browbeat the unions into line. The reaction of the rank and file in the labour movement, as demonstrated by the spontaneous sympathetic strikes and marches and the protest rally organised by the National Civil Liberties League forced Lemass to draw back at that moment, but did not alter the fundamental pressure upon him to have a showdown with the working class. Thus we had the Electricity (Special Provisions)

Act. Nor did it alter the determination of the rank and file of the labour movement to strike back, bypassing the official Labour bureaucracy and drawing more and more workers into the struggle, including Irish workers in emigration and sections of the British labour movement, as witnessed by the demonstration outside the Free State Embassy in London.

- ① But two new factors then altered the situation. First, the demonstration of Wilson's desire and ability to create unemployment gave Lemass something tangible to wait for.
- ② Second, the £20m. improvement in the trading balance gave him a breathing space. We warned in Irish Militant that "Lemass will try to take advantage of this breathing space to put himself in a better position for the next showdown with Labour He will certainly try to force his supporters in the trade unions to stand up and be counted."

Amid growing pressure for a showdown with the workers, they have begun to stand up.

THE CURRENT SITUATION: OILING THE SCREWS

Reporting at the end of March on the state of the Republic's economy - after the restrictions imposed in 1965 to check the deterioration in the balance of payments situation - the O.E.C.D. noted that there had been a big improvement in the balance of payments. But growth had fallen well below the average for the boom years 1958-64. The targets for the remainder of the Second Programme of Economic expansion had been drastically lowered: Unemployment had risen to 75,000 and concurrently emigration had jumped to 30,000. Industrial production had showed hardly any increase at all in 1966. In other words, while the Balance of Payments operation was an undoubted success, the patient stopped breathing in the process. How to start it breathing again, and who is to pay for the necessary blood transfusion, is the problem facing the rulers - and their henchmen in the labour movement.

On February 4th the Federated Union of Employers had squealed about the rigours of capitalist competition as reflected in unit labour costs. For the first 9 months of 1966 unit wage costs rose 7% in Irish industry, while in wage-freeze U.K. they rose by only 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ %. And for the quarter from September they rose 7.3% as against only 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ % for the UK. The F.U.E. declared that if concessions were made to workers "our" competitive position would deteriorate further: "The Council (of the FUE) noted with concern that substantial increases in wages had been given..."

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture pin-points the situation for his class: "The question of costs is all important. In 1966, while industrial output tended to be rather sluggish, costs were increased by a substantial wage rise. Incomes in British industry - which provides the main competition to our goods in Britain and here - at the same time were subject to a wage freeze, and are still being kept under severe restraint."

(Clearly the Irish capitalists are lagging dangerously behind their UK pacemakers in holding down wages - but they haven't got such an absolutely efficient and powerful team of labour renegades to assist

them. Not quite. Not yet.

The Irish Times (10.3.67) under a heading GROWTH IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT SACRIFICE OF IMPROVEMENTS IN LIVING STANDARDS, reported The President of the F.I.I., Mr. Sydney E. Gibson: "...The positive steps necessary to achieve industrial growth could not be taken without some sacrifice of the present plans to improve living standards." (However, he took care to add that "it was necessary to get rid of the 'highly dangerous notion' that profits were 'something undesirable'".)

The Nat. Ind. and Economic Council report of 18.3.67 took up the same cry. "To maintain competitiveness, the relationship between increases in total money incomes and increases in National Production must be the same here as in the countries with which Ireland trades. To improve competitiveness, the rate of increase in money income relative to productivity must be somewhat slower here than in neighbouring countries." Like Gibson, the incomes the NIEC have in mind are exclusively those of the workers.

The O.E.C.D. report we quoted insists that the Irish capitalists hurry to catch up with Britain: "Progress towards a better control of wages and salaries and other incomes would seem to be a matter of some urgency."

How to try to control wages and salaries is the decisive question for the immediate future. The Irish Times (31.3.67) reported Labour Minister Hillery, under the headline VOLUNTARY SYSTEM MAY HAVE TO GO : "The Government is reluctant to interfere in a situation where what has to be done can best be done on the basis of voluntary restraint. If this restraint is not forthcoming ... it is foolish to think the Government should do no more than sit by the waters of Babylon and weep, for fear of treading on dreams that are charged with emotion..." In face of danger to the whole economic structure the government ... "will have to change the system if it becomes a serious threat to the well-being of the Nation."

WHOSE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES ?

A few days later, the Irish Times itself weighed in to sum up with two articles by a special correspondent. Pointing out that the existence for 20 years of the Labour Courts has added to the difficulties of controlling the labour force, it - surprisingly for some - came down in favour of Collective bargaining! "There is nothing radically wrong with collective bargaining as such, other than its unrestricted freedom"! All that was needed was in fact a new legal framework to go with an Incomes Policy: "Free collective bargaining under control" was the answer..."the social and economic objectives of today cannot be realised if the traditional freedom of collective bargaining remains unfettered..."

THE CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP

How this links up with the document of the W.C. of the ICTU will be obvious. A number of things are therefore clear. The government

Very
important.

strategy is modelled on the example of the new British system. They will strengthen the laws to gain more direct control of the unions, and they will do it in such a way that the trade union bureaucracy, on which their strategy depends, is itself strengthened; and they will back this up with incessant propaganda about the National Interest, all directed towards making the working class bear the weight of the problems of Irish capitalism. The Union Big Boys are being enlisted more actively as junior partners in the National Capitalist Firm. The various ideas being aired - for making picketing in unofficial and sympathetic strikes illegal, ways of preventing breakaway unions, the proposal to prevent workers expelled from a union from joining another for 6 months, the proposal to lift the protection of the 1906 Trades Disputes Act for 3 months after a wage settlement - all point in this direction.

At a time when all the pressures have built up for an onslaught on the conditions of the working class, we see a growing together - even more than formerly - of labour leaders and capitalists. The class forces are lining up for a confrontation, and the strongest and best fortified weapon of the capitalists is the Labour 'leadership', standing at the head of the column of Labour as their open and shameless collaborators.

Climbing on the backs of the working class by way of the union machine, the bureaucrats become emersed in the way of life, outlook and smug, easy acceptance of the system, of the typical middle class. They live by trading the workers over the counter. At their most daring they think only of a higher price for the labour of the workers - or a few state-administered reforms: when the National Capitalist Firm, in which they gratefully recognise their position as junior partner, gets in difficulties, they naturally accept wage restraint - after all, it doesn't affect their standards. Willing to admit the defects of capitalism, and even to make socialist sounding noises after Mass on Sundays, they still see capitalism as permanent. A serious fight to mobilise the workers to replace the present system can have no place in their calculations. Above all, the idea of the working class rising to emancipate itself by abolishing the class system is inconceivable to these people, who spend a large part of their working lives dealing with the bosses behind the backs of the workers. They cannot lead the working class anywhere other than the bosses' fleecing pen.

Lynch's friend Roberts said at the Law Students Debating Society recently: "Wages had to be fought for. The determination of what the workers get in the capitalist system must always be decided by conflict." He then went on to consider ways of avoiding conflict! This general recognises the class struggle - but as something to avoid rather than fight.

CHRISTIAN PINKS

The Labour Parties, North and South, are in the same line of business. Typically, Brendan Halligan, new Political Director of the

of the L.P., gave this account of himself on his appointment:
"What we are seeking to research and develop is a leftist philosophy within a Christian milieu. We will explore the Christian philosophy as the Irish people have it and see what it means in practical political terms to the Left." (I.T. 24.3.67) And good luck to him too. But what it has to do with the impending struggles of the class his party names itself after is precisely nothing. Neither was it intended to.

Such leaderships have betrayed the workers in crisis after crisis. They are the direct conductors of the demoralising propaganda of the bourgeoisie into the ranks of the workers. When the feeble capitalists whine for a wage cut so as to maintain their profits in face of international difficulties, or because the British ruling class (aided by their Roberts & Co.) have managed to do it - these Labour leaders do not say bluntly: "You organise this system - therefore you are responsible for what happens in it, you must bear its burdens. And if you can't, then get off our backs and we will build a different system". What they do is make speeches about raising productivity and make self-serving deals with the bosses' state.

We have said again and again in IRISH MILITANT and WORKERS' REPUBLIC that the major weakness of Irish labour is the treachery of the existing leadership. The main, most pressing task for Irish Marxists and militants is to build in struggle against these renegades a revolutionary socialist party based on the traditions of Connolly and the lessons learned and codified in the founding programme of the Fourth International. A complete transformation of the dominant outlook, philosophy, leadership and organisation of the Irish working class movement is urgently needed.

ORGANISE THE RANK AND FILE

In the period leading to the crucial ICTU Conference in July, and in preparation for the battles to come, what are the concrete steps towards fusing the programme and theory of class struggle that is Marxism, with the actual struggle? Marxists must develop in practical detail a strategy of battle for the defence of our class. We must call into united action the disorganised and diffused militants, socialists and other would-be revolutionists (i.e. those Republicans seeking a way forward, who won't be satisfied with the petit-bourgeois pink tint which embarrassment at its own political nakedness has put on the face of Sinn Fein) for a defence that becomes an offensive against capitalism and the remaining bastions of Imperialism.

A major step forward would be the coming together of the separate and isolated groups of trade union militants with those fighting for socialism in the Labour Parties. This could have its beginning in organising defence measures against the threatening wage freeze; in opposition to state control - and for rank and file control - of the unions; the development of an inter-union movement of the rank and file to mobilise the class and co-ordinate the struggle against the anti-labour united front of the state and the union bureaucracy.

This would necessarily mean a return to the class approach, labour solidarity. Only Larkin's great message A Blow Against One Is A Blow Against All, meaning in practice the sympathetic strike, could serve as a guideline for a serious inter-union rank and file movement.

At the same time Labour Party socialists must turn themselves, and attempt to turn their branches, towards active involvement in the local and national industrial actions that are now inevitable. Conversely, workers drawn into the struggle on the industrial front should join in the fight for socialism in the Labour Party. The struggle for wages and conditions is essentially a political fight - and becoming ever more openly so. The fight for socialism is necessarily also an industrial struggle. Only when the two are fused together and guided by Marxism as a conscious working class strategy will we be able to settle with the bosses and their lieutenants, and apply our incomes policy to their wages of exploitation - for good.

Wage control is proposed on the grounds that the British bosses have it. The two islands' economic siamese-twins connection naturally also applies to the working class. It follows that we must aim for as close a liaison as possible between the labour movements in both countries. If the present holding down of the British workers - and of course the million-odd Irish immigrants as well - leads to an attack on the Irish section of the class, the opposite is also possible. A determined resistance to all wage restraint by the Irish workers could be the spark that kindles the inevitable rebellion of the British workers against the present system. The Irish capitalists are least strong, and face a working class which has been exceptionally militant in recent years: theirs is the weaker link in the chain. Today in both islands the official Labour leadership is equally treacherous - in both the struggle can only take the form of a rank and file movement.

Long ago at the political crossroads marked Reform or Revolution, subtitled bourgeois subservience or workers' power the unions and Labour Party opted for reform and subservience. For 50 years, as a protagonist pursuing its own goals and with its own class solution, labour has been out of ^{the} arena. The Red Flag was torn down and has been hidden in the mud of rotten deals with the capitalist system. The end of that road is the readiness of the Labour leadership to hamstring the unions in an act of self-immolation on the altar of Capital. Marxists must now signpost the direction of the only other road.

((See also the article by Leon Trotsky, p.30.))

Note: We haven't dealt here with the other, rather more spectacular, struggle, that of the farmers. Despite appearances, this is not the decisive conflict in Irish society. The future of the small farmers will be determined by the outcome of the developing clash between Capital and Labour. The working class of town and country is the only class which carries its own solution within itself, and only under its leadership will the small farmers find the solutions to their own problems.



by Anthony Mahony

Scenes of savage brutality during the abortive UN mission to Aden at the beginning of April showed British soldiers, their voices shrill with tension or fear, smashing rifles and boots into demonstrating Adenese trade unionists. These scenes were pumped, apparently not censored or cut, onto the screen of every TV set in Britain. The Labour Government, posing as 'peacemaker' and victim of circumstance, its hands held high in hypocritical denial of responsibility, takes such scenes in its stride. No doubt the real reasoning behind this 'frankness' was that if the troops of occupation were shown to be merely cracking a few skulls or just kicking in a few Arab faces, it would disparage reports such as the recent one that more than 50 demonstrators had been shot (8 were in fact admitted to have been killed.)

Aden is in complete opposition to both direct British rule and the neo-colonialist, undemocratic Government of the Federation of South Arabia (F.S.A.) which is dominated by some of the most backward, pre-feudal states in the entire world, and which Britain has spent 10 years building up. When the UN mission arrived there was a general rebellion of the whole population of Aden and Crater City, with a complete General Strike, mass demonstrations and gun battles engulfing the whole area. And in the aftermath the British didn't dare interfere with processions of the Nationalists to bury their dead in Crater City. The processions were preceded by stengun carrying commandos - while the British troops watched from the rooftops.

WILSON'S LAST STAND FOR EMPIRE

From all corners of the world the British Imperialist octopus has slowly withdrawn its tentacles one after the other. Now, not only has the sun set, but midnight has fallen on the Empire. Neo-colonialism - where the US dollar is all-powerful and Britain relatively weak - has taken over. Aden is one of the last places left where Britain could have got embroiled in a futile attempt to hold back the march of a people in revolt against colonialism. And how appropriate that responsibility for supervising this bloody business should have fallen to the leaders of Queen Elizabeth II's loyal Labour Party! After all, the existence of the reformist Labour Party has depended on the crumbs from the self-same Empire which the ruling class felt like throwing down to keep the workers quiescent.

THE MILLIONS FROM OIL

Aden has been the main strategic garrison of British Imperialism in the Middle East,

headquarters of the Middle East Command of, at present, 17,000 troops. It was also one of the strategic points in the single line east from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean and the East Coast of Africa. Beginning at Gibraltar, this line runs between the continents through Malta, Cyprus, Suez, the Red Sea - and finally Aden, the eastern Gibraltar.

But things change - Britain declines, the peoples rise - and the new dominant Imperialists develop different techniques of control. Now the problem for Imperialism is to secure a stable neo-colonialist set-up in the area after Britain withdraws. Not only is the F.S.A. involved here, but also Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Iran, the whole Persian Gulf. The richest field of oil in the world is at stake.

The Middle East contains 60% of the world's known oil deposits and accounts for one quarter of current world production of crude oil. Its cost of production is only one quarter that of Russian oil - and one eighth that of US oil. One reason for this, of course, is the very low wages of the Arab oil workers. But what this means is that fabulous profits, amounting to hundreds of millions of pounds every year, are extracted from this area by a handful of giant monopolists such as Standard Oil, Royal Dutch Shell and BP.

There are seven of these in all and, backed by all the diplomatic and military resources of the main Imperialist states, they hold by the throat this region of staggering mass poverty. Where there is a share-out it goes to a Sheik of Kuwait or Bahrein or a King of Saudi Arabia. Thus the most advanced powers in the world and some of its most backward forces lock themselves in a mutually protective embrace - and stand against all progress. The maintenance and consolidation of a section of this neo-colonialist arrangement is the main issue at stake in Aden. Though without oil itself, it is an issue between, at one pole, the forces of Arab Nationalism, typified by Egypt with its radicalism and state capitalism at home and opposition to Imperialist exploitation of the Middle East (for its own purposes, naturally); and at the other pole by Islamic traditionalism, typified by Saudi Arabia. In Yemen, which borders the F.S.A., and with which the Adenese revolutionaries want unity, these forces have been engaged in a bitter civil war for 4 years, in which 100,000 people have died. It is possible that this struggle and the Aden battle ground will coalesce.

The conflicts in the Arab world are subject to all sorts of shifting, unstable alliances as is shown by the recent adherence by the old reptile ex-King Saud (deposed by the US in Saudi Arabia) to the Egyptian and Yemen Republican cause. The Arab Nationalists are of course not a socialist ideal, with their dictatorial regimes and general repression of the working class. They are, nevertheless, the progressive forces in this conflict.

ARAB REVOLUTION

The Arab revolution, rising and declining, ebbing and flowing erratically from Egypt to Syria, Iraq and Algeria, is the background to the Aden conflict and at the same time the issue at the heart of the division between the Adenese revolutionaries and the British with their Federal Government. Aden State is the most advanced in the area and thus most sensitive to the movement for progress; the Federation is among the most backward. There is a very large traffic of migrant workers to and from Yemen and thus an interaction between advanced Aden and Yemen. No doubt this

extensive traffic has contributed to the development of the situation in Yemen, where Egypt and Saudi Arabia confront each other directly.

Another factor is an ominously growing US involvement, particularly in Saudi Arabia. Already, the concessions there of the American owned Arabian American Oil Co. (Aramco) amount to about one sixth of the total US home territory - 444,000 sq. miles. When Egyptian planes bombed a base for supplying Yemeni Royalists in Saudi Arabia, the US seized the chance to install their own jets in Saudi Arabia. They are undertaking a military build-up of Saudi Arabia costing \$600m. They organised, if not a face lift for the regime, at least a change of mask, installing a new king - Feizal. Clearly, with stalemate in the F.S.A., US involvement could escalate still further, particularly if there is any threat to their interests in Saudi Arabia.

There exists what can be called a single Arab Nation, culturally unified and historically united. Towards this the Imperialists have pursued the classic policy of divide and rule, taking advantage of the many local differences. The existing Arab states derive from the Imperialists' carve-up of the area. Some states, such as the well-protected little oil sheikdoms, are artificial to a rare degree. And to a lesser degree this is true even of the bigger states such as Iraq and Syria. Hence the talk of 'Arab Unity' which is an aspiration of the masses throughout Arabia. But what began with the Imperialists' divisions is perpetuated by the regional self-centredness of the ruling classes in the different states. Added to this is the Radical-Feudal polarisation. The net result is that attempts at unity, either between the Radical-Feudalist blocks or within them, meet with major obstacles. The union of Egypt and Syria, for example, led to divorce at the first hint of consummation.

UNITE AND RULE

Within the broader Imperialist strategy of divide and rule, Britain pursued a policy in relation to Aden of unite and rule. After being first dislodged from control of Suez, and then humiliated trying to get it back, Britain's Tories began to build a stable base in South Arabia. Aden Colony, with its politically active, modern working class, numbering tens of thousands, presented them with the biggest headaches. The solution was to lock it into an artificial Federation with the backward Sheikdoms bordering it.

Aden is a tiny enclave, 75 miles square, with a population of 230,000 which includes 90,000 immigrant Yemeni workers. As a port it is comparable with Liverpool. Occupied by Britain in 1839, Aden grew as a fuel bunkering port, and later as a military base. She still fuels 6,000 ships a year, and about a third that number again of Arab dhows. B.P. moved there after being thrown out of Iran by Mossadeq in 1951, and erected a great oil refinery, which processes over half the crude oil from Kuwait, Iran, Quator and Iraq for fuel to supply international shipping.

To the east and north fan out the old Aden Protectorate, 20 states, of which 16 are now joined to Aden in the F.S.A. The Protectorate/Federation is poor mountainous country, with only 1% of the land cultivable and a population of one million. In effect it forms a cordon sanitaire around the bustling Aden State. Socially, the hinterland is tribal and so primitive that bullets are used as currency. Lately there have been reports of dissatisfaction, perhaps spreading from the Yemen.

SHOTGUN WEDDINGS

When it began, with six small states of the Aden Protectorate, in 1959, the F.S.A.

was one of a crop of artificial federations, bringing together disparate elements without real unity, blatant attempts to gerrymander on an international scale. The model was, of course, the Central African Federation of the (then) two Rhodesias and Nyasaland. In the Protectorate the Sheiks themselves opposed Federation, and the largest states are still not members today. But the Imperialists pushed it through ruthlessly, bribing and harrying the Sheiks; large sums of money changed hands, and the unco-operative were deposed. The Federation was to have been governed by a Federal Council, each of the internally self-governing states sending its representatives. It was explained officially that there were different ways of selecting these. The normal one was, naturally, nomination by the Sheiks, over whom the British Empire was merely erecting an umbrella. From this Federal Council of sheikly nominees was elected a Supreme Council of 15 ministers. And that's the Federal Government of today: ally-stooge of Britain, so nervy about an early British withdrawal, pleading for time to train a better army to repress the population. It is to give them this time that the Labour Government is manoeuvring with the U.N.

But if the Sheiks were reluctant about Federation, Aden was violently opposed to being submerged inside the undemocratic Federation of the Emirates. Nevertheless, at the beginning of 1963 it was forced in, with the obvious intention of neutralising what was a centre of Arab Nationalism in the area. To do that, a medieval constitution in Aden itself was needed.

Under the Aden Constitution the Executive was in the hands of a British High Commissioner, normally advised by a Council of Ministers. Whether these were heeded or ignored was at the discretion of the Gauleiter. At first sight the Legislature seems surprisingly liberal, with 16 elected members to 6 nominated ones. The catch was that the franchise was limited to males over 21, born in Aden, or whose fathers were. This meant complete disfranchisement for the officially estimated 90,000 Yemeni workers in the Port, ie for a majority of the workers.

ADEN LABOUR MOVEMENT

But the strongest opposition of all to the Federation came from the Aden workers' movement, led by the TUC. The TUC was politically active through the People's Socialist Party, which was later to merge in OLOS (Organisation for the Liberation of the Occupied South) and is now in FLOS (Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen). The FSP opposed the consolidation of an artificial reactionary neo-colonialist Federation, and began to look to the Yemeni Republicans. It became a main driving force in the mounting struggle against Imperialism.

In the middle 1950s there had taken place a large scale growth of Trade Unions, leading to the foundation of the TUC in 1956. These militant unions suffered for a period under laws which restricted their right to strike. Objective conditions were perhaps the most favourable of all in that part of the Middle East for building a class conscious Marxist workers' party, armed not only with a programme of struggle against Imperialism, but also with the essential perspective that this struggle could only be consolidated for the masses as a workers' government. But in fact the FSP became impregnated with the ideology of the Aflakite Baath Socialism - a petit bourgeois tendency mainly centred in Iraq and Syria, and politically impotent. This is not the sort of socialism that arms the working class with an independent conception of the world which enables it to struggle for its own class power. After the terrible and

bloody defeat to which it led the Iraqi masses in February 1963, the CP in the area was completely and deservedly discredited: it offered no alternative road either. Lately the Adenese leaders seem to have moved closer to the ideology of Nasserism (FLOSY's headquarters is in Cairo). The Aden workers came under the influence of petit bourgeois 'socialism' because of the vacuum in world revolutionary socialist politics.

Resistance to the Federation, and the lack of democracy, grew to such an extent that in September 1963 a State of Emergency was declared in Aden. Then followed violent clashes, even in the backward states, between Yemeni Republicans and British and Federal troops. Things were going from bad to worse. In December 1963 the UN passed a Resolution in favour of self-determination and independence for South Arabia, repeal of the State of Emergency, a general election throughout the area on the basis of universal franchise under UN supervision. Britain simply refused to accept it! Naturally.

LABOUR TO THE RESCUE

But now a New Day dawned: the Labour Government took office and the new Colonial Secretary Greenwood - not just ordinary Labour but Left Wing as well! - approved a declaration of the Aden and Federal Governments in favour of a unitary sovereign and "democratic" state. In May 1965 Greenwood announced the setting up of a commission to find a constitutional structure for such a state. The Federal Government agreed to support it - but the Aden Government and the mass organisations in Aden refused co-operation on the grounds that a complete course of constitutional developments had been laid down in the UN Resolution. The Commission collapsed.

In July Greenwood tried again. The Republicans agreed to a London working party, with Greenwood as chairman, to work out an agenda for a constitutional conference in Dec. '65. The working party met in August, but floundered because 'Left Wing' Greenwood refused to lift the Emergency: "it was necessary in order to maintain the British base"!

Now the Labour Government began to write its own footnote to Labour's odious past record in the colonies. The medieval constitution the Tories had given to Aden was still too liberal to allow the repression which was now needed to keep control. The Aden State ministers began refusing co-operation with Britain and they would not denounce the now mounting guerilla campaign. So an Order in Council was issued suspending the pseudo-democratic parts of the constitution - the non-stooge ministers and the Legislative Council were sacked. The other Federal states were unaffected by this.

Britain meant business - and went ahead with the plans to consolidate the Federation as a formally independent neo-colony. Two British constitutional experts were lent to the Federal Government and their report was published in February '66; concurrently, the Labour Government announced Independence and withdrawal of troops by 1968, leaving the provisions of the report in operation in the F.S.A. The Report made detailed proposals: Aden was to be the Capital Territory of the new Unitary Republic of South Arabia; the National Assembly would be elected by "wide and liberal franchise" and "wherever possible, through direct elections"; "indirect elections might be necessary in certain tribal areas". A President, indirectly elected, would choose the P.M. as having "in his judgement" the support of the National Assembly. Aden State would have special treatment, direct elections, a special Minister for Aden Affairs, and not less than one third of the ministers.

GUERRILLA ACTION

The fierce struggle that has raged ever since was the answer of the people of Aden to

this. They want real democracy, and unity with the Yemen Republicans. The Adenese Republicans think Britain has no intention of withdrawing in 1968 - and there is talk in the press of British troops remaining ... wearing UN berets. Britain has now belatedly been converted to the UN Resolution - now that the resistance of the local people is out of hand and UN mediation could only mean easing the pressure on Britain, coaxing the Freedom Fighters from behind the barricades. (There's a lesson here on how useless abstract resolutions are. There is also a lesson that, whatever pious phrases it uses, the only time the UN ever acts is when it suits the Imperialists.)

Under the excuse that there is now no time to organise elections before handing over to their own creation, the existing Federal Government, Britain is strengthening the Federal Army to double size (10 battalions) and equipping it with artillery. There is a commitment to contribute £10m. p.a. to the military budget until 1971, and talk of a possible commitment to give air support to the Federal Army. It is a mark of both her economic weakness and perhaps of her lack of confidence in the stability of the F.S.A., that Britain felt unable to offer her child a "Defence Treaty". Already there are elements even in the backward areas of a spreading of the Yemeni Civil War, and the NLF, a more strictly Nationalist group, has a following in these states and possibly even in the Federal Army itself, to match FLOSY's in Aden and among the Yemeni workers.

OUTLOOK

And what of the future? If, or when, Britain withdraws, the Federal Government will be left holding the baby. Stabilisation is highly unlikely. Already the British Press ^{speculates} on a future role for the army, which is now being strengthened, as the local equivalent of the man on horseback. A split in the NLF-FLOSY nationalists complicates the picture. And to what degree will the demands for union with Yemen voiced by the combatants be a guide to action if they come to power? Arab Unity is the catch phrase for all from Nasser down. But there can be no confidence in a regime which remains within the bounds of bourgeois society of achieving even that minimal of Arab Unity, let alone solving the social problems that beset the area.

The economic consequences of the British withdrawal will hit the Aden economy severely, and exacerbate the problem of the estimated 5,000 unemployed already existing. 15,000 workers are involved in the British installations and the Financial Times estimates a possible 25% unemployment potential. Aden has grown enormously over the past 100 years - but it has an unbalanced economy. The problem of balancing it will perhaps raise the most explosive issues yet in Aden. The reactionary Federal Government is all set to solve the unemployment by victimising and deporting unemployed Yemeni immigrants. It is here that the Aden TUC will again bear the brunt of the struggle - they will clearly refuse to accept such a solution. But what will they offer as an alternative? The activity of the Aden workers' movement, because it is not yet on the basis of a genuinely, consistently revolutionary Marxist consciousness, is one big missed opportunity. The only possible solution, to Aden as to the whole Arab world, the only sufficiently deep-going solution is the workers' revolution against the bourgeoisie to establish the United Socialist States of the Middle East, with full rights for minorities. Within this framework the great wealth of the area as a whole, now siphoned off by Imperialism, can be used to overcome the backwardness and the degradation of the people which this generates, and build a framework for socialism.

ART & THE WORKERS' STATE

THE BOLSHEVIK DISCUSSIONS ON THE ARTS

by Rachel Lever.

((The question of the relationship of artistic culture and the Workers' State is posed imperiously for all socialists in the light of the experience of the cultural ice-age of Stalinism. Before going on, in a final article next issue, to discuss art under Stalinism we must refer back to the illuminating discussions on this subject which were held while discussion was still possible - i.e. during the Bolshevik period dealt with in the last article.))

The Marxist method is indispensable for an understanding of the class connections and relations of a work of art and its function within class society. This does not mean, however, that having established this class identity the Marxist proceeds, on this criterion alone, to pile the treasures and positive achievements of class society into the dustbin alongside the bonds, bombs and debentures. Every great work of art has, as well as its passing function and connection with its society, a more lasting significance by reason of its embodiment of an archetypal emotion or image, or a form whose truth to nature is still universally recognisable. In this sense the Parthenon is no less a distillation of perfect harmony once we have understood that it belongs to slave society; (as Engels put it "When... Herr Duhring turns up his nose at Hellenism because it was founded on slavery, he might with equal justice reproach the Greeks with having no steam engines and electric telegraphs") we need not be Christian mystics to appreciate the soaring ethereal beauty of the Gothic cathedrals, or the intricate patterning of the Book of Kells; Michelangelo worked for popes, Bach and Beethoven for princes, Diderot for merchants - but they all created works full of meaning to people outside their own time and class. This much is recognised by all but the servile half-literate cranks crawling in the wake of Mao Tse-tung's latest piece of populist demagogy. By the same token, future generations of workers will find something of lasting value in Schonberg, Kafka, Samuel Becket and Kandinsky, long after the 'capitalist road' has grown over with weeds.

When class society was born into this world, it heralded the start of the long, steep climb to the domination of man over nature. But class society also brought that great fall from grace in human relations - the relation of slave and slave-owner. And with that, the division between them of mental and manual labour. Ever since, all branches of thought and knowledge, artistic creation or scientific investigation (developing as society developed) have been more or less directly geared to the needs, the tastes and the drives of society's ruling class. Occasionally here and there artists, writers etc., have anticipated a little, forged ahead a little - but always within the limits set by their pay-masters. The ruling class monopolised patronage, and could make heresy pretty uncomfortable.

In the period of transition to capitalism this situation was somewhat modified.

The rising bourgeoisie was rich enough to employ artists and writers on its own terms, to set itself up as a second pole of attraction. Artists in 18th century France stood between two opposing classes: the conservative aristocracy with its traditional, absolute values, and the progressive bourgeoisie standing for new, changing ones. Those, like Diderot, who chose to side with the bourgeoisie, were probably the first intellectuals ever to fight for a class which was not yet in power. And in fighting, they found themselves actually forging the new ideology, they became the advocates and teachers of their public; whereas hitherto they had merely accepted and confirmed the tastes and principles of their age.

Once in power, however, the erstwhile progressives turned their attentions to the headlong pursuit of profit, and their tastes and attitudes very quickly changed. The newly rich set the fashion: they were pompous and expensive, indiscriminately ostentatious, mixing each and every style they could lay their fat hands on to make a show, erecting a splendid facade of unorganic, amorphous but rich decoration. They were "the bored 'upper ten thousand' suffering from fatty degeneration" (Lenin) and their art life was dominated by easy and agreeable productions for the lazy-minded, luxury, amusement and ready-made pleasures.

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Those intellectuals who, having tasted the relative independence of a long leash, were not prepared to sell themselves to such masters (and it must be said that they were in the majority among those with any originality and artistic integrity) now found themselves out in the cold. They were reduced for patrons to a handful of individuals, enlightened connoisseurs. The new opposition to the new ruling class was the proletariat - and by its very condition of life it was unable either to support or understand the artist; it was no less excluded from the charmed circle than the chattel-slave and the serf had been.

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ARTISTS IN THE COLD

Thus the avant garde intelligentsia was alienated from the ruling class as well as from the masses. In one way or another this has affected the arts ever since, propelling artists in numerous directions in search of a solution. The first reaction was to escape the new environment: the 'Romantic generation' of Byron, Chopin, Delacroix, cultivated subjectivism, turned its back on society, each artist seeking refuge in his own individualism; his works became a kind of self-revelation to emphasize his difference from his unpalatable surroundings. These artists not only accepted their new status of outcasts, but regarded material success as a sure sign of artistic accomodation to the philistine bourgeoisie. They escaped into introversion, mysticism and nostalgia for a lost past or exotic foreign parts.

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The trouble was, that there is no escape from society. The English Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood went back to pre-Renaissance Medieval 'simplicity' - but their paintings today appear exaggeratedly Victorian. Awareness of the unreality of this kind of escape sent the next generation off in search of nature: they rejected the 'scenic' and pursued the little tangible details of reality, taking an almost scientific interest in how a tree grows and what a cloudy sky looks like in motion. They began to paint out of doors, and moved out of the rapidly growing cities to little villages in the country. The more militant of them declared themselves for the workers or the peasants, like the great caricaturist Daumier, or Courbet who was exiled for

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his participation in the Paris Commune, or Zola. But the workers could provide no permanent foothold, and the next generation saw art ever more confined and enclosed within itself, given over to the enjoyment of pure colour, pure sound, pure poetry - thus Impressionism, which in all the arts was a kind of watershed for 20th century developments that have flowed out of both logically and organically. Anyone who wants to object to these developments (as 'bourgeois formalism', for example) must first be prepared to say that art should have stopped still, or started going backwards, at this date or that: then they will honestly admit their affinity with the people who had tried to do just that - the academicians of Queen Victoria and Louis Bonaparte. } } }

HASTY DISMISSAL

Many people in the workers' movement today regard all the artistic culture of the last 100 years as being specifically bourgeois - more so than earlier bourgeois art whose class nature is half-forgotten, and which is taken for granted for its other qualities. This hasty dismissal is often born out of puzzlement at the obscurities of present day art. But these obscurities are not, however, its most bourgeois qualities; and the bafflement of workers faced with the art of the 'charmed circle' is nothing new, but a product of the division between mental and manual labour which began with the dawn of class society. *→ yes, but more so now in certain ~~modern~~ trend than before?*

While no art in class society is neutral, it adheres to the ruling class in markedly varying degrees - particularly since the 19th century. It is not merely a matter of personal taste how one differentiates between art which is bourgeois by default, indirectly, because there can be no neutrality or real freedom in a class society, and that art which directly serves the tastes and needs of the bourgeoisie as a class. They are separated by a clear line.

The 19th century saw a divergence between the avant garde art, and "art" produced at the service of the factory owners and coupon-clippers. The former led to the whole modern school; the latter was interred with its owners, to be resurrected later for commercial re-hash through the mass media. *→ But former used in many ~~modern~~ ^{modern} ~~media~~ ^{media} ~~style~~ ^{style}. not so very demoralized... by side*

COMMERCIALS

The vast, pompous academy canvases depicting so-called 'history' as an excuse for a bit of Roman decadence, live today in the films of Cecil B. de Mille; Landseer's stirring 'Monarch of the Glen' (a Scottish deer) survives in Walt Disney; operetta is today's musical - put The Sound of Music ^{by side} with Franz Lehar or Johann Strauss, and the similarity is remarkable - except that the later production is just that bit more nauseating. Millais' "Dubbles" became famous as a Pears' soap advert and very appropriate it was, too. The semi-draped Victorian Nude (her drapery being a sentimental name) had about as much aesthetic value as Hugh Heffner's Playmates - and served much the same purpose. The bourgeoisie's reading matter was the pseudo-moral love novelette - today's teenage comic. Their architecture was an appropriation of the Gothic - with St. Pancras station as second choice for the Houses of Parliament. Perhaps the only thing which this tasteless mish-mash has in common is the utterly hack, greedy, careerist mediocrity of the people bought to produce it. } } } ✓

On the other side, the artists who ignored that smug maxim of the cultural prostitute -

"one has to eat" - and stood up with an empty belly to proclaim the principle of the hegemony of art over the money-bags, made the way for what I believe has been a great unleashing of creative energy, full of variety and inventiveness. Real freedom could never be won in a society dominated by the power of money, and soon the grubby speculators caught on and converted works of art into international hard currency. But those who fought managed to crash through some of the barriers set up by tradition and vested interest. Had they done nothing more, had they not even created great and lasting beauty, they would deserve our gratitude as a vital link to the future.

FREE INSIDE A PRISON

The way they lived was as totally different from the lapdogs of capital as was their art. Monet saw his wife and child die for lack of food, and then had to watch the reception as the bloated bourgeois critics stood before his paintings and had a good laugh. Daumier, old and blind, was kept alive by his friend Corot, who had managed to live a 'double life', producing a set of paintings for bourgeois taste, and another for his own. Others worked as navvies through the winter, or had to content themselves with being 'Sunday painters'. The madness of Van Gogh is legendary, and only a little less so the alcoholism of Rimbaud and Toulouse-Lautrec. "Independence" had its price. "La Boheme" was more often squalid than romantic.

They moved in a limbo of isolation with no class to turn to, until they landed in the gutter of Capitalism along with its other victims, to form a company of vagabonds and outlaws. By the end of the century they were to be found in asylums, in brothels and out on the streets - tramps, globe-trotters, miserable demoralised desperados who had broken not only with the bourgeoisie but with the whole of European civilisation. Gauguin tried to escape to the South Seas, but found that 'civilisation' had gone before him and reduced the islanders to a state of listless apathy; and when he stood with them in a dispute with ^{the} French colonial authorities, he was himself imprisoned for 3 months, and he died shortly afterwards.

As little groups and lone individuals, the artists registered their protestations against Capitalism, and as such they were easily crushed. Only the might of the working class could actually overthrow Capitalism and so release the artist. In the last article I described the enthusiastic reaction of the avant garde to the October Revolution. The attitudes of the leaders of the young Workers' State to art must now be discussed.

A WORKERS' ART FOR A WORKERS' STATE ?

In his preface to the first Italian edition of the Communist Manifesto in 1893, Engels had asked: "Will Italy give us the new Dante, who will mark the hour of birth of this new proletarian era?"

(Ten years later his question was answered for him by Rosa Luxemburg: "The working class cannot create its own art and science until after it is completely emancipated from its position as an actual class". (Vorwaerts, March 1903). In 1925, Leon Trotsky elaborated on this. The bourgeoisie, even though they came to political power after a long period of gradual accumulation of independent wealth and culture, took several centuries to develop their own art. How can the proletariat, which comes straight to power from a state of wage slavery, be expected to produce

from its sleeve a fully grown culture. But will it ever develop its own culture? Trotsky argued that since nobody envisaged the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as lasting long enough to do this before altogether abolishing classes in society, including itself as a class, the proletariat would never find the time, historically, to create its own independent art: "The proletariat acquires power for the purpose of doing away forever with class culture, and to make way for human culture...."

By then, proletarian culture had become quite an issue. Within the Party, there were very few who felt like being dogmatic about it, and I know of no official statement on the matter being made until 1924; then a special Party conference on art declared that the hegemony of the proletariat must be won in the field of art by superior productions, that there must be free competition among all groups, and that the main task in any case was to raise the cultural level of the masses. Its conclusions were published by *Krassnaia Nov* as a pamphlet entitled "On the question of the Policy of the Russian CP in Artistic Literature". At the same time, it sharply denounced all forms of "pretentious, semi-literate and self-satisfied combigotry" (a term to describe bureaucratic, pompous self-importance.)

This was particularly aimed against Proletcult (Organisation for Proletarian Culture) which was a seedbed for the assumptions which were to prevail in the coming Stalinist era in the arts. Its ideology was a convenient one for use later by the bureaucracy, so that all the issues which arose in the discussions around this (in itself sincere and fairly harmless) organisation were perfectly relevant to the period of Stalinism. In effect, the last free discussion about the '30s and '40s took place in the early and mid-1920s.

There were two mainstays to its credo: (1) that the arts must be strictly organised and regimented to act as a weapon of the proletariat, and that to this end a new mass culture must be created, which would be proletarian not because it came from the workers, but by virtue of having been cultivated in the hothouses of Proletcult itself. The founding President, Bogdanov, actually declared that proletarian poetry was neither proletarian nor poetry - which gives the measure of his patronising attitude.

"WHAT A MESS" !

Bogdanov's successor Pletnev wrote an article for *Pravda* (Sept. 27, 1922), on which Lenin made his views clear by writing in the margin of his copy such telling comments as "Ha, ha!" "What a mess", "arch-fiction" and "bunk". In October 1920 he had made his views known more publicly. At the 3rd All Russian Congress of Communist Youth he had said: "The proletarian culture is not something that jumps up from nobody knows where. It is not a thought-up scheme of some people who call themselves specialists in proletarian culture. That is all pure nonsense. The proletarian culture must appear as a natural development of those stores of knowledge which man has worked out under the yoke of the capitalist society, the landlord society, the bureaucratic society."

To Lenin, there were certain pre-conditions for any art of the whole people. Whether or not the proletariat would still exist as a class, these pre-conditions were the same as those for socialism: "In order to have a culture a certain development of the material forces of production, a certain material basis, is necessary." (On

(Cooperation). In this sense, the mass culture would develop organically, together with socialism: neither can be instituted by decree. It was, above all, a question of broad general education. Vyacheslav Polonsky, (1) in 'Lenin's views on Art and Culture', quotes him as saying: "In order that art may draw near to the people and the people to art, we must in the first place raise the existing level of culture and education." And again, 'Page from a diary', Jan.1923: "While we were jabbering about proletarian culture and about its relation with bourgeois culture, facts have been presented to us and figures demonstrating that even in the matter of bourgeois culture things with us are weak indeed. It became known that ... we are still far behind the goal of universal literacy ... This will serve as a warning threat and rebuke to those who have been soaring and are soaring in the empyrean of 'proletarian culture'. That shows how much real dirty work remains for us to do in order to attain the level of an ordinary civilised state of western Europe. It shows, moreover, what a mountain of work stands before us now before we can attain, on the basis of our proletarian acquisitions, any kind of real cultural level at all."

But what about the question of the use of art as a class weapon? Here again I feel one could do worse than turn to Lenin, the greatest of revolutionists, whose views most likely sum up the outlook consistent with ^{the} healthy workers' state. Lenin neglected nothing he considered vital for the proletariat's fight for power, using to the full every possible weapon and front of the class struggle, and in particular waging a constant struggle on the front of ideology. Far from wishing to organise and use the fine arts, he always aligned them with the goal, rather than the instrument of the revolution; the theatre, he said (and art) is the only single thing that can replace religion in the consciousness of the masses. It must be for enjoyment and relaxation - "A theatre is necessary" he had said in 1919 during a debate on whether to close the Bolshoi Theatre "not so much for propaganda, as to rest hard workers after their daily work. And it is still early to file away in the archives our heritage from bourgeois art." But perhaps more eloquent than anything he did write on this subject, is what he didn't write. Not a word could the Stalinists later find to suggest that Lenin would have approved of "socialist realism", of the 1934 Writers' Congress, or of Zhdanov's regimentation.

NEW NARODNIKS

Unwittingly, the Proletcult organisation was instrumental in reviving many of the old Narodnik approaches, of worshipping the masses at their existing level and thus standing in the way of the future. Trotsky in Literature and Revolution described the attitudes which led from the genuine wish for an art of the proletariat, back in the opposite direction:

"It would be monstrous to conclude ... that the technique of bourgeois art is not necessary to the workers. Yet there are many who fall into this error. "Give us" they say, "something even pock-marked, but our own." This is false and untrue. A pock-marked art is no art and is therefore not necessary to the working masses. Those who believe in a "pock-marked" art are imbued to a considerable extent with contempt for the masses and are like the breed of politicians who have no faith in class power but who flatter and praise the

(1) Polonsky was described by Louis Fischer (!) as 'the most talented and cultured of Soviet critics'. He had joined the CP in 1919, when a bloody end seemed imminent. Founded and edited the Bolshevik journal 'Press & Revolution', edited Novy Mir, and was Curator of Moscow Museum of Fine Arts, until he was hounded to death by RAPP, Proletcult's successor.

class when "all is well". On the heels of the demagogues come the sincere fools who have taken up this simple formula of a pseudo-proletarian art. This is not Marxism, but reactionary populism, falsified a little to suit a "proletarian" ideology. Proletarian art should not be second-rate art. One has to learn regardless of the fact that learning carries within itself certain dangers because out of necessity one has to learn from one's enemies. One has to learn and the importance of such organisations as the Proletcult cannot be measured by the rapidity with which they create a new literature, but by the extent to which they help to elevate the literary level of the working class, beginning with its upper strata."

The ideas and attitudes which Proletcult fostered were later caricatured by Stalinism, which had arrived at the end of the trail towards populism when Trotsky wrote, in 1936 - "'What is not wanted by the people', Pravda dictates to the artists, 'cannot have aesthetic significance'. That old Narodnik formula, rejecting the task of artistically educating the masses, takes on a still more reactionary character when the right to decide what art the people want and what they don't want remains in the hands of the bureaucracy." (Revolution Betrayed, p.185)

It need hardly be said that the alternative to Proletcult was not a passive acquiescence in the continued separation of the artist from the masses. The evidence of the early period of the revolution clearly shows a constant striving by the avant garde artists and poets to find new forms which would bring them closer to the workers. To a large extent they met with success. But this success in reaching the workers, in their case, meant looking to the future, and not, as in the case of the hacks of the thirties, bringing out of the past all the stale, ready-made bourgeois entertainment-"art" forms. They were constantly seeking new forms, not for the sake of novelty, but with the consciousness that art could make a big break through the walls and barriers which stood between it and the life of the workers.

OTHER ROADS

El Lissitsky, in an article written in 1927 called 'The future of the Book', wrote of even the forms of books changing to make communication less static and more versatile, where type-faces would express the content and be combined with pictorial images, and recognising that at the beginning "the audience has become the masses, the semi-literate masses." In this context "We ripped up the traditional book into single pages, magnified these a hundred times, printed them in colour and stuck them up as posters in the streets. Unlike American posters, ours were not designed for rapid perception from a motor-car, but to be read and to enlighten from a short distance."

He introduced the idea that the book printed with symbols, or hieroglyphics, was potentially international, as opposed to the alphabetic book which is national and depends on knowledge of the specific language. (Already now the language of music, mathematics, chemistry, physics etc., are international). "...if a Russian, a German or an American fixes the sign (picture) of a concept in his mind he can read Chinese or Egyptian (soundlessly), without learning the language, for language and writing are always one creation as far as he is concerned."

Lissitsky is just one example of how the impulse to bridge the chasm between the

creative intelligentsia and the masses could produce a truly proletarian drive towards greater communication, towards a fluid and flexible synthesis of the arts and interrelation of the arts and actual life - away from, as Marx and Engels put it: "The subordination of the artists to local and national narrowness which arises entirely out of the division of labour, and the subordination of the individual to a given art so that he is exclusively a painter, a sculptor, etc." (The German Ideology.)

In 1937 the Soviet Bureaucracy invented 'formalism' to silence Lissitsky, Tairov, Meyerhold and others seeking new forms through which to liberate art. It even brought in 'dialectics' to claim that such over-insistence on forms at the expense of content was 'anti-socialist'. Of course it never occurred to these gentlemen, who didn't know Matisse from Michelangelo, that perhaps the real content of these 'empty forms' was the laying of roads to the future.

THE LIMITS OF REVOLUTIONARY CENSORSHIP

Proletcult implied, and Stalinism of course instituted, censorship over artistic productions. The C.P. had clearly gone on record in 1924 in favour of a variety of groups and styles. Did this include openly counter-revolutionary propaganda? Where was the line to be drawn?

Trotsky had then defined the question thus: "while holding over them all the categorical criterion, FOR the revolution or AGAINST the revolution, to give them complete freedom in the sphere of artistic self-determination." At the Special Conference on Art (see above) in 1924 he had spoken of the dangers of revolutionary censorship, which was of course essential within strict bounds, spreading uncontrollably: "Our standard is clearly political, imperative and intolerant. But for this very reason, it must define the limits of its activity clearly."

His view that: "A work of art should be judged by its own law... The Marxist methods are not the same as the artistic. A philosophy which 'conceives' reality in the form of a practical procedure towards a goal cannot give directives to creative art, which perceives reality and carries a goal within itself" was not limited to the Left at this Conference. Even Bukharin declared for a separation of creative endeavour from the Workers' State machine: "It seems to me that the best means of ruining proletarian literature ... is to reject the principle of free anarchist competition. If we take our stand for a literature which is to be regulated by the State power and enjoy all kinds of privileges, then there is no doubt that we will put an end to proletarian literature." Prophetic words indeed!

The heyday of Stalinism saw a censorship which broke all bounds - a closer look at this will be the subject of the next article. Perhaps its most repugnant aspect was the tight grip of the state in every sphere of the arts on form and style -- in the name of 'Marxism'. In this connection I shall say no more, and let Marx himself speak:

"My property is form, it is my spiritual individuality. The style is the man. And how! The law allows me to write, but on the condition that I write in a style other than my own, I have the right to show the face of my spirit, but I must first set it in the prescribed expression! What man of honour would not blush at such presumption and prefer to hide his head under his toga? At least (the toga suggests the head of Jupiter. The prescribed expression only means putting a good face on a bad situation.

You admire the delightful variety, the inexhaustible wealth of nature. You do not demand that a rose should have the same scent as a violet, but the richest of all, the spirit, is to be allowed to exist in only one form? I am a humorist, but the law orders me to write seriously. I am bold, but the law orders me to be modest. Gray and more gray, that is the only authorised colour of freedom. Every dewdrop in which the sun is reflected, glitters with an inexhaustible display of colours, but the sun of the spirit may break into ever so many different individuals and objects, yet it is permitted to produce only one colour, the official colour. The essential form of the spirit is gaiety, light, and you make shadows its only proper manifestation; it must be dressed only in black, and yet there are no black flowers. The essence of the spirit is always truth itself, and what do you make its essence? Modesty. Only the knave is modest, says Goethe; and you want to make a knave out of the spirit? Or should the modesty be that modesty of genius of which Schiller speaks, then first transform all you citizens and above all your censors into geniuses."

(Ueber die Neueste Preussische Zensurinstruktion. MEGA, Part I, Vol. 1, p.154)

the people's republic

a chinese mystery play

Reviewed by Gerean Mat Morless.

"Workers' Republic" is more than a name: it is a political slogan. The Irish Workers' Group is the single organisation which believes that a workers' socialist Revolution in Ireland is not merely possible, but the only important next step forward, which will solve in passing all the outstanding issues of the past, defeated and deflected, attempts at revolution in Ireland. On this perspective we direct our resources towards building a revolutionary Marxist organisation composed of militants actively fighting the proletarian class struggle. Whatever may be our subjective failings, this is an honest attempt to build on the great heritage of Connolly and Larkin, assimilated critically and in the light of later experience. The adoption of "Workers' Republic" as the name of our magazine was part of a process of clarification in the group, growing naturally out of our politics.

But there are people for whom the revolutionary past of Irish labour, Connolly's name - and only his name - and the title "Workers' Republic", are merely convenient pieces of self-aggrandising camouflage; this gaudy plumage is emptied of all meaning and used to clothe practical politics and ideas with which it has nothing in common. Just as certain boneless fish crawl inside existing sea-shells for protection, they empty the content from slogans and titles, and play with carefully selected, finely-chopped phrases from the writings of a Lenin or a Connolly, as

with so many loose bricks to build themselves a political house to live in.

The "Connolly" Association - a liberal organisation pure and simple - comes to mind here; so does the recent crop of social-democratic 'converts' to their own brand of "Connollyism". And there are others. There is a minuscule 'Chinese' Stalinist sectlet which knows itself as the Irish Communist Organisation.

Up in the political hills, among the ever-growing proliferation of Maoist dukedoms, clique chieftaincies and minor local kingdoms which have sprung up in the last 3 or 4 years, these Irish devotees of Mao and the stinking carcass of Joseph Stalin have pitched their tent. They belong to the species of 'Highland Maoists', unlike the honest militants of the CP who are repelled by the right wing politics of the Party and attracted by the trenchant criticisms of the Chinese, for example the comrades around 'Marxist'. Unlike these lowland Maoists, the highland Maoist is generally a bit of a crank.

HILL TRIBES

These highlanders come in all shapes and sizes. Among them are to be found some old CP stalwarts, the strong silent men who shed salt tears into their cocoa when Stalin's corpse was kicked out of the mausoleum, and love Mao because Mao loves Joe. There are the scholastics, unable to believe in a prospect of genuine workers' power, who glorify instead the contortions of the Chinese Bureaucracy. There are the aspirant pocket-Maos who have gathered a small clique to sit at their own feet and who compete together, outbidding each other in developing the inherent absurdities of their positions just that bit further - ever further.

All of them are characterised by sectarianism, passivity, pedanticism, ludicrous and senseless text-chopping. Some of them deny that the British, West European and US workers are exploited at all. They mouth platonic sympathy for a bonapartist dictatorship thousands of miles away, committing themselves to nothing, snobbish about their alleged 'Marxism'. Sipping their orange juice, they savour the fading glories of the Stalin dictatorship in Russia, political necrophiliacs sensuously sniffing and fondling the decomposing carcass of the Dictator himself, impudently identifying all these horrors with the DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT (!), hopefully looking for a repeat performance in China.

A leader of one of the Mao-sects on the lower slopes of the highlands described them as:- "...concealed, conspiratorial and impotent groups at war with one another merely for the purpose of personal prestige and dominated by neurotic phrazemongers, the mainspring of whose energies is not political conviction but merely the need to extract a little soothing syrup for their hard-pressed egos and inferiority complexes by posing as 'leaders' and 'makers of history'". That just about sums them up!

SNATCH AND GRAB

Most of our readers will not have heard of the I.C.O. - and if it were possible we would spare you the ordeal of seeing Stalinism stripped naked. Up to now we have ignored them, despite the fact that almost every issue of their paper "Irish Communist" contains a long attack on the "counter-revolutionary Trotskyites of the I.W.G." To argue, two people need a common language - and with the mind-bending nonsense of the I.C.O. we have nothing in common. How can one argue with people

for whom the real world is lost in a mystical fog, or seen only through the fixed patterns of a Maoist mystery play? But if there is some virtue in ignoring people like the I.C.O. up to a point, there also comes a time when they must be picked up and shaken a little - in the interests of sanitation.

That point for us was reached when the I.C.O. responded to the announcement in the February Irish Militant that this magazine's name was now Workers' Republic, by issuing a new fortnightly broadsheet called.....Workers' Republic!! From internal evidence, the hasty production, etc., it is obvious that the point of this slightly ludicrous exercise in snatch and grab was to get "Workers' Republic" as a piece of decoration for the I.C.O. No.1 was dated Jan.28th, predating our last issue by 3 days - but that tells us nothing. (In the March editorial of the I.C. they said: "Last month" ie February "the Dublin comrades of the I.C.O. produced for the first time a broadsheet called Workers' Republic") This curious publication consisted of just one foolscap sheet: the name Workers' Republic and a single essay rehashing the well-known history of the title!! In other words - "I am The Workers' Republic".

If the I.C.O. honestly came out for the Workers' Republic it would be very good and we'd be very pleased; it might lead them to reconsider some of their other positions and move away from the crank fringe of Maoism. It would be very good - but it isn't true. It's still the same I.C.O., even in the new suit of clothing it tried to snatch.

Only a few inches down the page from where someone had scrawled the stolen title Workers' Republic, the real politics of the I.C.O. forced them to deny it categorically and talk about another, quite different, 'Republic': paying lip-service to the Workers' Republic, the I.C.O. advocates for the immediate future a PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC. Their banner-snatching emerges even on their first page as a bit of political conmanship. After all, that's the purpose of symbols and ideas for Stalinists, isn't it? Look what fun they've had for 40 years with the embezzled moral capital of the October Revolution!

But what is this PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC ?

The I.C.O., under their Great Helmsman Brendan Clifford, hold that the "Main contradiction" in Ireland is not between workers and capitalists, but between the "Irish Nation" and Imperialism. The bourgeois revolution is yet to be completed in Ireland, and this process will culminate in a "Joint Dictatorship Against Imperialism" of the anti-Imperialist classes - ie The People's Republic. To attain this glorious goal, the proletariat must accomodate politically to the other well-known revolutionary classes, such as our old friends the National Bourgeoisie - more usually known as bloated capitalists - or sections of it, and the petit bourgeoisie. The proletariat will do all this because the People's Republic will be a stepping stone to the eventual Workers' Republic. For any counter-revolutionary minded readers this will recall the 1922 Stepping Stone, on which Ireland is still stranded, with the cold water lapping about her ankles.

The workers will lead this class alliance, though naturally immediate socialist slogans cannot be raised because that would frighten the 'National bourgeoisie' and generate class struggle, which would soon blow to smithereens the National Alliance against Imperialism and the supra-class People's Republic. But Clifford doesn't need socialist slogans to build a workers' party, nor, for that matter, any connection

with the workers and their struggles. The workers will follow his leadership from sheer awe at the volume of his turgid Stalino-Menshevik prose.

And if you aren't convinced that this is the only way to achieve the Workers' Republic, just look at the alternative: class struggle against fellow Irish anti-Imperialists like Lemass, Lynch or your boss; class alliances with other workers in foreign countries; disruptive raising of premature socialist slogans and demands. That is the only other way - and that is the mark of the counter-revolutionary Trotsky beast. If you act like that you'll upset the other potentially revolutionary Irish classes on the point of biting our class-alliance bait - and you wouldn't want to do that, now, would you? Don't become a counter-revolutionary Trotskyite, lad - you'll frighten the bosses!

A HEALTHY CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

So if you are a backward worker who spits on the ground after your boss has passed by -- better catch yourself on! Don't you know he is an Irishman too? A member of the National Bourgeoisie - he might even be a supporter of Sinn Fein! It looks like you might be catching the counter-revolutionary Trotsky bug - and that's a deadly disease. Pull yourself together man, and have a good brainwash, before it gets a hold on you! Next time you see him, a worried frown on his poor face through thinking too much about his contradictions with Imperialism - don't spit. Develop a healthy Maoist class-consciousness! walk up, put your arm round his shoulder, kiss him on both cheeks - and ask him for a class alliance to build a People's Republic. He'll appreciate that. Afterwards you can go off together, chanting that old revolutionary slogan: "People of the World, Unite!"

The beauty of the I.C.O. Road To The Workers' Republic is that it is so easy. No need to make a strenuous effort to organise a hardened socialist party to fight the bosses - Clifford has an easier way than that. First, the workers must fight for the People's Republic. The foolish, soft-headed "National Bourgeoisie" must be coddled into lining up for a war against the Empire under the leadership and control of the working class. By repeated playing of "Ireland Mother Ireland" in the streets of Dublin, they will be induced to isolate themselves with British Imperialism at their front and the workers at their back, waiting patiently to be expropriated once the gates have been slammed on Imperialism. For this purpose the I.C.O. is saving its pennies (and rumour has it that Roy Johnson has offered a loan) and will shortly turn itself into a four-man Brass Band; Clifford, of course, will have his very own trumpet to blow. The People's Republic against Imperialism is thus the web into which the crafty proletarian spider lures the poor gullible National Bourgeois fly!

Isn't that clever! "Away with all this counter-revolutionary Trotskyite nonsense about fighting the Irish bosses," says Mao Tse-clifford to the $3\frac{1}{2}$ workers who sit listening at his feet. "Just sit with me and wait for the day when the National Bourgeoisie will take up my invitation to cut its own throat - after that we can talk about socialism and the Workers' Republic."

You still can't picture it? Well, this is the scene, captured one night by a remarkable feat of modern technology, from the murky depths of Clifford's mind as he sat in his little coterie dreaming up his Grand Design. He has lately commanded gigantic forces in Ireland which, after a Long March from Grafton Street to O'Connell

Bridge, now makes an alliance with Vivian de Valera, Tom Gill and Archbishop McQuaid against Britain and the Irish 'commercial capitalists'. Immediately after the English retire to their offshore island, taking the compradors with them, Mao Tse-clifford, now universally acclaimed as the "Great Supreme Commander", "Bright Sun of the Red Peasant Armies of Dublin", declares a People's Republic (de Valera - Gill - Clifford, minus McQuaid by now), with all power to manipulate the "contradictions in the People" and at a leisurely pace establish a model Stalinist state, concentration camps (for the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites) and all. At a certain stage of evolution this will become the Workers' Republic. And God help the workers!

Meanwhile, back in the real world, the capitalists of Ireland, merchants, ranchers and manufacturers alike, get on with the business of exploiting the workers, exporting meat - people and cattle - and hugging the softly padded chains of economic interest that bind them to the declining British Empire.

It's a bad joke and it isn't funny - and we can't imagine how it has any more to do with the Marxist conception of the State than the Right Stalinist theory of peaceful revolution. Maybe in some better world than ours there exists a supra-class Republic. For that matter, maybe Heaven exists - but no-one knows the geographical location of either the one or the other. As a fantasy, Clifford can keep it. But in practical politics, do you want to know what it means? Then read again the accounts of the Indonesian rivers and ditches, choked with the bodies of communists who had put their trust in a supra-class state. This People's Republic, whose parents dare only whisper its name and desperately need to appropriate an honest suit of clothes for it to hide in, is a reactionary and crippling myth.

The only thing that the I.C.O. ideas on People's Republic and Maoist Revolution can lead to is a sterile sectarian binge. For all practical purposes Clifford is identical with Desmond Greaves except that his accent is a little Chinese. And Greaves is not mad - he gets paid for what he does. The quarrels between the Chinese "Connolly Association" and the other one are those of two huxters on a street corner squabbling over a pitch - both regard talk of a struggle for socialism as heresy, both tail after the bourgeois nationalists. Luckily, no class-conscious worker would touch Brendan Clifford with a ten foot pole - and even if his best friends do tell him, there's not much he can do about it.

BRONTOSAURI

Who are these 'Irish Communists', who have nothing to do with real communism or socialism, and need the name 'Workers' Republic' to disguise their own politics? Where have they come from, these unashamed high-Stalinist Brontosauri who still walk among us, these last of the mighty company of bards who once sang the glories of Djughashvili the Great, these last-ditch defenders of the old counter-revolutionary butcher? We thought they were extinct! But by some freak of nature we have before us a crystalline particle of refined political silt left behind by the receding high tide of Stalinism - essence of its purest muddy water. Let us hold our noses and look a little closer.

When Stalin's heirs and successors denounced him posthumously for a small selection of the crimes he and they had committed against the working class, Jim Cannon recalled

Shakespeare's lines on Caesar: "But yesterday the word of Caesar might have stood against the world; now lies he here, and none so poor to do him reverence" and we thought it just about summed it up. But we were all dead wrong about that: in crawled Clifford on his knees to call us liars. Clifford and the I.C.O. are poor enough to do Stalin reverence! They now carry the torch in Irish politics for Stalin, patron saint and life-long benefactor of gravediggers. They strive to continue his tradition. How well they succeed, at least on a literary level, is testified in the pages of their magazine.

In the I.C.O. we have a little clique which devotes itself with complete abandon to the grosser arts of Stalinism - shameless lying, distortion, misrepresentation, intellectual jerry-building and demagogy. This is a fair description of their magazine "Irish Communist", designated their theoretical (really!) paper. There the wonderful idealist trick-logic of the Good-Marxist Clifford is given free rein to turn any summersaults it likes. There too you will find one whole undoctored fact for every snow-flake in the Sahara desert. Initially, in its first issues, they gave the Irish Stalinist (oops... sorry, 'Communist') a green cover the colour of arsenic: but someone must have told them it gave the game away on the contents inside - so they changed it. But it remains just as poisonous.

They fly^{as} a masthead a quotation from Lenin(!). "Without a Revolutionary theory there cannot be a revolutionary movement". So don't say you haven't been warned! Their 'theory' is less revolutionary than that of Desmond Greaves - and since their practice is spewing out their own theory, that isn't revolutionary either. Perhaps they want to show their high devotion by illustrating Lenin's point. It is, of course, a negative illustration.

The I.C.O. are the inheritors of all the large mountain of anti-Trotskyist rubbish which Stalin forgot to mention in his will. The psychopathic denunciation of demon Trotskyism, the badly tattered lies and distortions (minus the charge of being paid Imperialist agents), all the treasures of anti-Trotskyism built up by Stalin's Dictatorship of The Lie in many decades of sustained effort, all the files of assorted twisting and lying to justify any treachery - all have passed into the keeping of the I.C.O. and cram the pages of the I.C. The sole political diet of the I.C.O. is the great mountain of dung accumulated over 3 decades by one of the most powerful totalitarian dung-collectors in history.

"MY OLD MAN'S A!"

Just how this had happened puzzled us for a time. Then the mystery cleared itself up. In the I.C. Clifford tells his indulgent readers how he once found a great pile of unsold copies of the Irish Democrat - while rummaging in the Connolly Association's dustbin. (I.C. May 1966 p.18). That, of course, explains everything! Clifford rummages in dustbins: where else could all the cast-off Stalinist clap-trap with which they fill the pages of the I.C. have come from, except the dustbins at the back of No.374 Greys Inn Road and No.16 King Street? One day soon he will tell us also his adventures in John Gollan's back-alleyway - how he happened upon all the once-glittering, now discarded riches of the Palme Dutt stable of hacks - all the fools' gold for which they had sold their revolutionary birthright - and the working class.

But the Dutts and the Gollans could say they embraced Stalinism gradually, without understanding it until too late, until they were hooked and corrupted. And what could Clifford and the I.C.O. say? They consciously, in full knowledge, eyes wide open, swallow down the putrifying poison: what kind of people are these Irish Stalinists?!!

The I.C.O. clique would like to dignify itself by demanding political, social or economic reasons for its peculiarities. The real explanation is psychological. For example, Clifford can be seen clearly through material he contributed to a student magazine four years ago - when he was already a stalinist; this shows a posturing cynicism, which makes a cult of 'demonism' and perversity. Much of it foreshadows the full-blown Maoist of today:

"To be completely honest is to admit that even honesty is worthless. Where there is worth there is dishonesty: worth has its origin in fear and dishonesty."

And again, another concept which is very relevant to the I.C.O.:

"The strongest assertion of beliefs are needed where the greatest doubt prevails: by our beliefs we hide our doubts from ourselves, and often by our beliefs we hide our knowledge from ourselves."

In an essay on Freedom and human evolution he wrote the following, which we doubt if he quoted when applying to join the "Ireland Mother Ireland Club" of which he is today a proud member:

"The Englishman is freer than the Russian: that is indisputable, but it only means that the Englishman is a less complex being than the Russian. Irishmen are freer than Englishmen: baboons are freer than Irishmen. Freedom increases as one goes down the evolutionary scale..." (Hua, Sept.1962, p.24)

Well, as we were saying.... Behold the man!

Finally, we will quote Brendan Clifford giving vent to a piece of self-knowledge on which he should be complimented. If there is any sane person within 5 miles of the I.C.O., who seriously wants to fight for socialism, he should read it very carefully.....

"A freak should surround himself with normal people: this both sets off his freakishness, and supplies him with a solid groundwork of normality and sanity, which will permit him to be extremely daring in creating monstrosities: in making himself a monstrosity. A freak among freaks has nothing to build on, no environment of normality which he can pervert, and which in the long run will preserve his sanity despite his perversions."

("Hua", September 1962 p.16. This, and the first two gems above, are from a collection of self-contained Mao-thoughts entitled, appropriately, "Pearls Before Swine".)

P.S.: As we go to press there is visible activity in the ICO. There has been much rattling recently on the outside of Brendan Clifford's quotation-shell home, and it has disturbed him. So he reaches out for more quotation camouflage. We will not stay to watch any alterations to the shape of his political dwelling which he works out. No doubt it will still be a blue-print from the realm of Stalinist confusion. If he wants to slither around from quotation to quotation, let him. We won't pursue him. Let him scurry under the dresser - we won't bother to poke him with the broom handle any more.

THE ARSENAL OF MARXISM

TRADE UNIONS IN THE EPOCH OF IMPERIALIST DECAY

BY
LEON TROTSKY

(The manuscript of the following article was found in Trotsky's desk. Obviously it was by no means a complete article, but rather the rough notes for an article on the subject indicated by his title. He had been writing them shortly before his death.)

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

There is one common feature in the development, or more correctly the degeneration, of modern trade union organisations in the entire world; it is their drawing closely to and growing together with the state power. This process is equally characteristic of the neutral, the Social Democratic, the Communist and "anarchist" trade unions. This fact alone shows that the tendency towards "growing together" is intrinsic not in this or that doctrine as such but derives from the social condition common for all unions.

Monopoly capitalism does not rest on competition and free private initiative but on centralised command. The capitalist cliques at the head of mighty trusts, syndicates, banking consortiums, etcetera, view economic life from the very same heights as does state power; and they require at every step the collaboration of the latter. In their turn trade unions in the most important branches of industry find themselves deprived of the possibility of profiting by the competition between the different enterprises. They have to confront a centralised capitalist adversary, intimately bound up with state power. Hence flows the need of the trade unions - insofar as they remain on reformist positions, i.e., on positions of adapting themselves to private property - to adapt themselves to the capitalist state and to contend for its co-operation. In the eyes of the bureaucracy of the trade union movement the chief task lies in "freeing" the state from the embrace of capitalism, in weakening its dependence on trusts, in pulling it over to their side. This position is in complete harmony with the social position of the labour aristocracy and the labour bureaucracy, who fight for a crumb in the share of superprofits of imperialist capitalism. The labour bureaucrats do their level best in words and deeds to demonstrate to the "democratic" state how reliable and indispensable they are in peacetime and especially in time of war. By transforming

the trade unions into organs of the state, fascism invents nothing new; it merely draws to their ultimate conclusion the tendencies inherent in imperialism.

Colonial and semi-colonial countries are under the sway not of native capitalism but of foreign imperialism. However, this does not weaken but on the contrary, strengthens the need of direct, daily, practical ties between the magnates of capitalism and the governments which are in essence subject to them - the governments of colonial and semi-colonial countries. Inasmuch as imperialist capitalism creates both in colonies and semi-colonies a stratum of labour aristocracy and bureaucracy, the latter requires the support of colonial and semi-colonial governments, as protectors, patrons and, sometimes, as arbitrators. This constitutes the most important social basis for the Bonapartist and semi-Bonapartist character of the governments in the colonies and in backward countries generally. This likewise constitutes the basis for the dependence of reformist unions upon the state.

In Mexico (1) the trade unions have been transformed by law into semi-state institutions and have, in the nature of things, assumed a semi-totalitarian character. The statification of the trade unions was, according to the conception of the legislators, introduced in the interests of the workers in order to assure them an influence upon the governmental and economic life. But insofar as foreign imperialist capital dominates the national state and insofar as it is able, with the assistance of internal reactionary forces, to overthrow the unstable democracy and replace it with outright fascist dictatorship, to that extent the legalisation relating to the trade unions can easily become a weapon in the hands of imperialist dictatorship.

SLOGANS FOR FREEING THE UNIONS

From the foregoing it seems, at first sight, easy to draw the conclusion that the trade unions cease to be trade unions in the imperialist epoch. They leave almost no room at all for workers' democracy which, in the good old days, when free trade ruled on the economic arena, constitutes the content of the inner life of labour organisations. In the absence of workers' democracy there cannot be any free struggle for the influence over the trade union membership. And because of this, the chief arena of work for revolutionists within the trade unions disappears. Such a position, however, would be false to the core. We cannot select the arena and the conditions for our activity to suit our likes and dislikes. It is infinitely more difficult to fight in a totalitarian or a semi-totalitarian state for influence over the working masses than in democracy. The very same thing likewise applies to trade unions whose fate reflects the change in the destiny of capitalist states. We cannot renounce the struggle for influence over workers in Germany merely because the totalitarian regime makes such work extremely difficult. We cannot, in precisely the same way, renounce the struggle within the compulsory labour organisations created by fascism. All the less so can we renounce internal systematic work in trade unions of totalitarian and semi-totalitarian type merely because they depend directly or indirectly on the workers' state or because the bureaucracy deprives the revolutionists of the possibility of working freely within these trade unions. It is necessary to conduct a struggle under all these concrete conditions which have been created by the preceding developments, including therein the mistakes of the working class and the crimes of its leaders. In the fascist

and semi-fascist countries it is impossible to carry on revolutionary work that is not underground, illegal, conspiratorial. Within the totalitarian and semi-totalitarian unions it is impossible or well-nigh impossible to carry on any except conspiratorial work. It is necessary to adapt ourselves to the concrete conditions existing in the trade unions of every given country in order to mobilise the masses not only against the bourgeoisie but also against the totalitarian regime within the trade unions themselves and against the leaders enforcing this regime. The primary slogan for this struggle is: COMPLETE AND UNCONDITIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE TRADE UNIONS IN RELATION TO THE CAPITALIST STATE. This means a struggle to turn the trade unions into the organs of the broad exploited masses and not the organs of the labour aristocracy.

The second slogan is: TRADE UNION DEMOCRACY. This second slogan flows directly from the first and presupposes for its realisation the complete freedom of the trade unions from the imperialist or colonial state.

. . .

In other words, the trade unions in the present epoch cannot simply be the organs of democracy as they were in the epoch of free capitalism and they cannot any longer remain politically neutral, that is, limit themselves to serving the daily needs of the working class. They cannot any longer be anarchistic, i.e. ignore the decisive influence of the state on the life of the peoples and classes. They can no longer be reformist, because the objective conditions leave no room for any serious and lasting reforms. The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.

. . .

The neutrality of trade unions is completely and irretrievably a thing of the past, gone together with the free bourgeois democracy.

. . .

From what has been said it follows quite clearly that, in spite of the progressive degeneration of trade unions and their growing together with the imperialist state, the work within the trade unions not only does not lose any of its importance but remains as before and becomes in a certain sense even more important work than ever for every revolutionary party. The matter at issue is essentially the struggle for influence over the working class. Every organisation, every party, every faction which permits itself an ultimatum position in relation to the trade union, i.e., in essence turns its back upon the working class, merely because of displeasure with its organisations, every such organisation is destined to perish. And it must be said it deserves to perish.

. . .

Inasmuch as the chief role in backward countries is not played by national but by

foreign capitalism, the national bourgeoisie occupies, in the sense of its social position, a much more minor position than corresponds with the development of industry. Inasmuch as foreign capital does not import workers but proletarianises the native population, the national proletariat soon begins playing the most important role in the life of the country. In these conditions the national government, to the extent that it tries to show resistance to foreign capital, is compelled to a greater or lesser degree to lean on the proletariat. On the other hand, the governments of those backward countries which consider inescapable or more profitable for themselves to march shoulder to shoulder with foreign capital, destroy the labour organisations and institute a more or less totalitarian regime. Thus, the feebleness of the national bourgeoisie, the absence of traditions of municipal self-government, the pressure of foreign capitalism and the relatively rapid growth of the proletariat, cut the ground from under any kind of stable democratic regime. The governments of backward, i.e., colonial and semi-colonial countries, by and large assume a Bonapartist or semi-Bonapartist character; and differ from one another in this, that some try to orient in a democratic direction, seeking support among workers and peasants, while others install a form close to military-police dictatorship. This likewise determines the fate of the trade unions. They either stand under the special patronage of the state or they are subjected to cruel persecution. Patronage on the part of the state is dictated by two tasks which confront it: first, to draw the working class closer thus gaining a support for resistance against excessive pretensions on the part of imperialism; and, at the same time, to discipline the workers themselves by placing them under the control of bureaucracy.

MONOPOLY CAPITALISM AND THE UNIONS

Monopoly capitalism is less and less willing to reconcile itself to the independence of trade unions. It demands of the reformist bureaucracy and the labour aristocracy who pick the crumbs from its banquet table, that they become transformed into its political police before the eyes of the working class. If that is not achieved, the labour bureaucracy is driven away and replaced by fascists. Incidentally, all the efforts of the labour aristocracy in the service of imperialism cannot in the long run save them from destruction.

The intensification of class contradictions within each country, the intensification of antagonisms between one country and another, produce a situation in which imperialist capitalism can tolerate (i.e., up to a certain time) a reformist bureaucracy only if the latter serves directly as a petty but active stockholder of its imperialist enterprises, of its plans and programmes within the country as well as on the world arena. Social-reformism must become transformed into social imperialism in order to prolong its existence, but only prolong it, and nothing more. Because along this road there is no way out in general.

Does this mean that in the epoch of imperialism independent trade unions are generally impossible? It would be fundamentally incorrect to pose the question this way. Impossible are the independent or semi-independent reformist trade unions. Wholly possible are the revolutionary trade unions which not only are not stockholders of imperialist policy but which set as their task the direct overthrow of

the rule of capitalism. In the epoch of imperialist decay the trade unions can be really independent only to the extent that they are conscious of being, in action, the organs of proletarian revolution. In this sense, the programme of transitional demands adopted by the last congress of the Fourth International is not only the programme for the activity of the party but in its fundamental features it is the programme for the activity of the trade unions.

((translator's note: At this point, Trotsky left room on the page to expound further the connection between trade union activity and the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International. It is obvious that implied here is a very powerful argument in favour of military training under trade union control. The following idea is implied: Either the trade unions serve as the obedient recruiting sergeants for the imperialist army and imperialist war or they train workers for self-defence and revolution.))

The development of backward countries is characterised by its combined character. In other words, the last word of imperialist technology, economics, and politics is combined in these countries with traditional backwardness and primitiveness. This law can be observed in the most diverse spheres of the development of colonial and semi-colonial countries, including the sphere of the trade union movement. Imperialist capitalism operates here in its most cynical and naked form. It transports to virgin soil the most perfected methods of its tyrannical rule.

In the trade union movement throughout the world there is to be observed in the last period a swing to the right and the suppression of internal democracy. In England, the Minority Movement ⁽²⁾ in the trade unions has been crushed (not without the assistance of Moscow): the leaders of the trade union movement are today, especially in the field of foreign policy, the obedient agents of the Conservative Party. In France there was no room for an independent existence for Stalinist trade unions; they united with the so-called anarcho-syndicalist trade unions under the leadership of Jouhaux ⁽³⁾ and as a result of this unification there was a general shift of the trade union movement not to the left but to the right. The leadership of the C.G.T. is the most direct and open agency of French imperialist capitalism.

In the United States the trade union movement has passed through the most stormy history in recent years. The rise of the C.I.O. ⁽⁴⁾ is incontrovertible evidence of the revolutionary tendencies within the working masses. Indicative and noteworthy in the highest degree, however, is the fact that the new "leftist" trade union organisation was no sooner founded than it fell into the steel embrace of the imperialist state. The struggle among the tops between the old federation and the new is reducible in large measure to the struggle for the sympathy and support of Roosevelt and his cabinet.

No less graphic, although in a different sense, is the picture of the development or the degeneration of the trade union movement in Spain. In the socialist trade unions all those leading elements which to any degree represented the independence of the trade union movement were pushed out. As regards the anarcho-syndicalist unions, they were transformed into the instrument of the bourgeois republicans; the anarcho-syndicalist leaders became conservative bourgeois ministers. ⁽⁵⁾ The fact

that this metamorphosis took place in conditions of civil war does not weaken its significance. War is the continuation of the self-same policies. It speeds up processes, exposes their basic features, destroys all that is rotten, false, equivocal and lays bare all that is essential. The shift of the trade unions to the right was due to the sharpening of class and international contradictions. The leaders of the trade union movement sensed or understood, or were given to understand, that now was no time to play the game of opposition. Every oppositional movement within the trade union movement, especially among the tops, threatens to provoke a stormy movement of the masses and to create difficulties for national imperialism. Hence flows the swing of the trade unions to the right, and the suppression of workers' democracy within the unions. The basic feature, the swing towards the totalitarian regime, passes through the labour movement of the whole world.

We should also recall Holland, where the reformist and the trade union movement was not only a reliable prop of imperialist capitalism, but where the so-called anarcho-syndicalist organisation also was actually under the control of the imperialist government. The secretary of this organisation, Sneevliet, (6) in spite of his platonic sympathies for the Fourth International was as deputy in the Dutch Parliament most concerned lest the wrath of the government descend upon his trade union organisation.

In the United States the Department of Labour with its leftist bureaucracy has as its task the subordination of the trade union movement to the democratic state and it must be said that this task has up to now been solved with some success.

The nationalisation of railways and oil fields in Mexico has of course nothing in common with socialism. It is a measure of state capitalism in a backward country which in this way seeks to defend itself on the one hand against foreign imperialism and on the other against its own proletariat. The management of railways, oil fields, etc., through labour organisations has nothing in common with workers' control over industry for in the essence of the matter the management is effected through the labour bureaucracy which is independent of the workers, but in return completely dependent on the bourgeois state. This measure on the part of the ruling class pursues the aim of disciplining the working class, making it more industrious in the service of the common interests of the state, which appear on the surface to merge with the interests of the working class itself. As a matter of fact the whole task of the bourgeoisie consists in liquidating the trade unions as organs of the class struggle and substituting in their place the trade union bureaucracy as the organ of the leadership over the workers by the bourgeois state. In these conditions, the task of the revolutionary vanguard is to conduct a struggle for the complete independence of the trade unions and for the introduction of actual workers' control over the present union bureaucracy, which has been turned into the administration of railways, oil enterprises and so on.

Events of the last period (before the war) have revealed with especial clarity that anarchism, which in point of theory is always only liberalism drawn to its extremes, was, in practice, peaceful propaganda within the democratic republic, the protect-

-tion of which it required. If we leave aside individual terrorist acts, etc., anarchism, as a system of mass movement and politics, presented only propaganda material under the peaceful protection of the laws. In conditions of crisis the anarchists always did the opposite of what they taught in peace times. This was pointed out by Marx himself in connection with the Paris Commune. And it was repeated on a far more colossal scale in the experience of the Spanish revolution.

Democratic unions in the old sense of the term, bodies where in the framework of one and the same mass organisation different tendencies struggled more or less freely, can no longer exist. Just as it is impossible to bring back the bourgeois-democratic state, so it is impossible to bring back the old workers' democracy. The fate of the one reflects the fate of the other. As a matter of fact, the independence of trade unions in the class sense, in their relations to the bourgeois state can, in the present conditions, be assured only by a completely revolutionary leadership, that is, the leadership of the Fourth International. This leadership, naturally, must and can be rational and assure the unions the maximum of democracy conceivable under the present concrete conditions. But without the political leadership of the Fourth International the independence of the trade unions is impossible.

COYOACAN, 1940.

NOTES.

(1) Under the radical Cardenas Government in Mexico there took place an agrarian reform and nationalisation of foreign-owned oilfields and railway companies. To overcome the resistance of landowners and the Catholic Church, the government leaned heavily on the working class and the unions involved in running the nationalised oilfields.

(2) The Minority Movement: in Britain in the 1920s, in the aftermath of the great betrayals of the working class by the trade union bureaucracy, this rank and file movement, led by the C.P. and the British section of the R.I.L.U., worked for militant policies within the trade union movement, gaining a great deal of influence. At one ^{time} it led perhaps a quarter of union members. Having weakened its prospects during the General Strike period in the middle twenties by pussyfooting around the bureaucracy, the CP finally killed off the Minority Movement during the Ultra-Left Third Period (1929 to about 1934) by trying to turn the sections into independent unions.

(3) Jouhaux, French syndicalist, elected Secretary of the C.G.T. in 1909; merged during the Popular Front with the C.P.F.'s C.G.T.U. In 1947, Jouhaux led a break-away from the joint organisation, now C.P. dominated.

(4) C.I.O. Until middle-thirties, the majority of American workers were unorganised. Under the blows of the Depression, spearheaded by a breakaway from the craft union A.F.L. (the United Mineworkers) there took place a great mass drive for organisation, eg among car workers, leading to the formation of the C.I.O.

(5) On November 4th 1936 four CNT Ministers entered a coalition Government, in which they remained while it censored their press, disarmed anarchist militias and smashed down their own supporters. Then they were ditched.

(6) Sneevliet. A founder of the Indonesian CP, later expelled from CP of Holland. Executed by Nazis in 1942 after a public trial, together with 9 Trotskyist and pro-Trotskyist leaders of the R.S.A.P.

FRANCE: POPULAR FRONT AGAIN

In the 1965 French Presidential elections the second largest Communist Party in Europe supported the joint candidate of the Socialist Party and sections of the "left" bourgeois Radicals, Francois Mitterand, who openly supports capitalist nuclear alliances and capitalist rationalisation of French industry. He disagrees not with de Gaulle's aims, but (formally) with his methods. This alliance was carried a stage further for the March 1967 elections to the National Assembly. In December '66 the CP, the PSU (Parti Socialiste Unifier - left social democrats led by Mendes France), the Federation of the Democratic and Socialist Left and the S.P. led by Guy Mollet, each agreed to stand down in the second round of the elections if one of the others received more votes, transferring their votes to the joint candidate.

OPPORTUNIST ALLIANCE

During the election the PSU's campaign was based on the legitimacy of parliament as against presidential rule, and 'social justice'. The Left Federation's platform also stressed this, together with the demand for British membership of the Common Market, less defence spending, more for schools, hospitals and modernisation investment - a capitalist reform programme if ever there was one. By standing only for an end to the "personal power regime", and "democratisation of the state", the CP restricted itself to this programme.

This alliance had nothing to do with a united front tactic as understood by Leninists. A United Front means unity to struggle against the enemy around concrete demands with freedom to criticise one's allies, while striking together. For revolutionaries in the era of Imperialism this means uniting the workers around a struggle for demands which hit at capitalist power and lead to its overthrow as the logical culmination of the struggle. This is what the CP didn't do. This new alliance was similar to the Popular Fronts of the thirties when the petit-bourgeois and reformist parties were given a free hand to spread their demoralising propaganda and the communist workers were tied ideologically and organisationally to their perspectives, whilst the capitalist class armed itself to the teeth. *

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THOREZ

Waldeck Rochet, CP General Secretary, in his pre-election address on television, made absolutely no socialist appeal to the workers and could only bring himself to ask for "a little bit more justice" for the working man. In an interview in the Morning Star (16.3.67) Rochet had the following very frank admission to make: "The French CP did not sacrifice any of its principles to reach this rapprochement, nor did we expect the Socialists to sacrifice any of their principles." Their joint "immediate democratic objectives" included the fight for the "re-establishment"(?!)"of a truly democratic regime in France, for social justice and for a foreign policy of peaceful co-existence." The CP did not sacrifice any of its principles - and neither did the Left Federation. They both have the same principles - those of class-collaboration.

PHANTOM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The CP's sowing of illusions in parliament is the worst kind of treachery, because the road to the removal of Gaullism will certainly not be through the exercise of peace-

* Editors' Note: Liam Dalton has promised an article on the record of the CPF.

ful parliamentary democracy. De Gaulle's own ministers quite blatantly said that it made not the slightest difference to his rule whether or not he obtained a majority. Pompidou, the Premier: "Eventually we may have to dissolve Parliament." Article 16 of the Constitution gives full power to the President to do this "legally". Again, M. Alain Peyrefitte (Gaullist Minister) said on Feb. 21st. "that if the Gaullist majority in the Assembly became a minority, the President would still rely on his mandate from the people, as executive power depended on him alone". (Times, 22.2.67) ... "The Assembly meets less often and has much less power than in the old days" (Times 14.3.67). De Gaulle obviously understands the nature of the state even if the CP doesn't want to. His Eve of Campaign statement, Feb. 9th, said "History, the Constitution and the people's vote oblige me to maintain the continuity of the state and to ensure that the powers of the Republic continue to function."

The bourgeois politicians also understand better than the CP the unstable, unreliable, capitulatory nature of the petit-bourgeois radicals and Mitterand. In the eventuality of a U.N.R. minority with de Gaulle as President and Mitterand as Premier heading a CP, FSU, Left Federation Government, Pompidou was quite sure (speech, 28.2.67) that Mitterand would be only too ready to espouse de Gaulle's interpretation of his powers.

This deception by the CP as to the nature of parliament, the state and the "democratic" propensities of petit-bourgeois politicians throws the working class off its guard and will doubly embolden the capitalists in their future attacks on working class conditions. As Lenin very aptly stated in "Marxism and Revisionism", written in 1908 against the Revisionists in the Second International: "Since they say 'The will of the majority'" (c.f. "re-establishment of a truly democratic regime" P.S.) "rules under a democracy, one can neither look upon the state as an organ of class domination" (c.f. "democratisation of the state" P.S.) "nor refuse alliances with the progressive social-reformist bourgeoisie against the reactionaries". (Marx-Engels-Marxism p.76)

To show the uselessness of the National Assembly is not to dismiss the elections out of hand. They provided ample opportunity, had the CP been revolutionary, to expose the nature of the Gaullist dictatorship and its relation to the state machine, which intervened actively for the Gaullists in the elections. They would then have used the election as a platform in the fight for workers' state power, rather than as an end in itself. The overall result was a bare majority for the Gaullists - 244 seats out of 486. The centre parties had their share of the votes reduced, being caught in a polarisation process. The masses have moved left in spite of their leaders, and the Right has crystallised out: there is no room for "centre" politics. The masses have voted in increased numbers for "their" parties in spite of the confusionist tactics of the leaders. Objective developments have been the compelling force behind this. As in the thirties, the masses are impelled forward by events and their leaders apply every brake and diversion to stop them.

Meanwhile, the class struggle intensifies. Miners are facing pit closures up and down France; 12,000 car workers have been locked out in Lyon by their Gaullist Minister employer; 3,000 engineering workers have recently struck in St. Nazaire, and big upheavals have been taking place throughout the artificial textile industry. These incidents only attest to the tightening of the screws on the French workers.

'COMMUNISM NOT THE ISSUE'

As to the future, the Morning Star (22.3.67) quotes Rochet: "(it is) now possible to draw up a real joint programme to be implemented by a left wing majority and a government of Democratic Union." Meanwhile there will be a "permanent delegation of the Left" whose task will be to co-ordinate the tactics of the CP, Left Federation and FSU. In a speech on 30th March, Rochet crowned the capitulation: "it is not true that the choice



THE SOLDIERS OF GOD

(The recent showing on Telefis Eircann of a series of U.S. propaganda films about the War in Vietnam - THE STRUGGLE FOR ASIA - testifies once more to the venality and hypocrisy of the rulers of the Little Republic. In between the interminable parades in honour of the past struggles of the Irish people against British Imperialism they turn their propaganda machinery over to justification and defence of the mechanised massacres in Vietnam. While reminiscing at length about Black and Tan atrocities they endorse the American genocide - beside which Mallow, Lidice and Guernica are beginning to pale into amateurishness. The following article, compiled entirely from Western press reports, is a contribution towards establishing the true picture. See also Editorial Note on p.)

THE WESTERN PRESS AND U.S. WAR CRIMES. by Bertrand Russell

The United States maintains an army of occupation in Vietnam, engaged in suppressing a movement of resistance which, by humane standards, commands the support of the vast majority of the people. The Resistance in Vietnam advances demands for national sovereignty and independence, the right to self-determination. It is in this setting that we must study the record of American actions.

"Anyone who has spent much time in the field has seen the heads of prisoners held under water, bayonet blades pressed against throats, victims (with) bamboo slivers run under their fingernails, wires from a field telephone connected to arms, nipples or testicles".

This statement appeared in the New York Times Magazine, November 28, 1965, and was written by the correspondent of Newsweek, Mr. William Tuohy. Such torture and mutilation on the part of American forces has been described with increasing frequency. Earlier, Donald Wise, the Chief Foreign Correspondent in London of the Sunday Mirror, reported:

"No American is in a position to tell his pupils to stop torturing. They are in no mood to, either. Standard tortures are dunking men, head first, into water tanks, slicing them with knives, swinging silk stockings full of sand against temples and hooking them to the electric generators of military headquarters". (Sunday Mirror, April 4, 1965.)

This documentation is verified in independent reports by American correspondents: "One of the most infamous methods of torture used by the Government forces is partial electrocution, or "frying". This correspondent was present when the torture was employed. Wires were attached to the thumbs of a Vietcong prisoner. At the other end of the string was a field generator. The mechanism produced electrical current that burned and shocked the prisoner."

American reporters have stated that electrical torture is employed throughout Vietnam by American forces, including the battlefield, where small, portable generators have been "modified" for torture purposes and "are prized for high mobility."

"The ding-a-ling method of interrogation involves connection of electrodes from the generator to the temples of the subject. In the case of women, the electrodes are attached to the nipples". stated A.P. correspondent, Malcolm Browne. An American soldier wrote to his sister, in the Spring of 1965:

"Our platoon leader stuck one end of this wire to the lady's chest. It was a kind of electric shock, because she got a real bad burn. They took the same wire and tied it on the lady's husband and brother, but on their lower parts."

The New York Herald Tribune is more detailed:

"Techniques designed to force prisoners to talk involve cutting off the fingers, ears, finger-nails or sexual organs of another prisoner. A string of cars decorate the wall of a Government military installation. One American installation has a Vietcong ear preserved in alcohol." (April 25, 1965)

Malcolm Browne of the Associated Press writes:

"Many a news correspondent has seen the hands whacked off prisoners with machetes. Prisoners are castrated or blinded. A suspect has been towed, after interrogation, behind an armoured carrier across the fields. Many soldiers enjoy beating up Vietcong prisoners. The subjects of interrogation so often die after questioning that intelligence seems to be a secondary matter." (The New Face of War, 1965)

The Australian journalist, Wilfred Burchett, gave this description, substantiated by the International Control Commission, of a young girl:

"The girl bared her right shoulder. I wanted to vomit. The satiny skin ended in small, cauliflower-like eruptions, where the flesh had been torn out with red-hot pincers. There were half-a-dozen searing scars on the upper part of the arm. The girl was tortured for months. She had soapy water and urine forced down the mouth and nostrils, electricity applied to the vagina and nipples, flesh torn from the breasts, thighs and shoulders by red-hot pincers, a ruler thrust into the vagina. These were interspersed with beatings, starvation and milder forms of torture."

This reporting has been so considerable that we begin to understand how it is possible for more Vietnamese to have died before the National Liberation Front began its resistance in the South than since. The years of peace between 1954 and 1960, so-called, claimed more lives in Vietnam than the period since 1960, which includes nearly two years of bombing of the North with tonnages, according to Secretary of Defence McNamara, of four million pounds daily. The American Press, in its descriptions of the treatment of prisoners speaks freely:

"A helicopter pilot looked up from his drink to relate what happened to a captive. The man did not respond, so the officer heaved him out of the helicopter from 2,900 feet."

Similar reports appeared in the Herald Tribune:

"Vietcong prisoners were interrogated in an airplane flown towards Saigon. The first refused to answer questions, and was thrown out of the aircraft at 3,000 feet."

Again, in the New York Times of July 7, 1965:

"One American Helicopter crewman told friends that he had become infuriated by a youth, pushed him out of the helicopter at 1,000 feet."

In the New York Herald Tribune of September 29, 1965, a detailed description is given of the treatment of prisoners after capture:

"They get a V.C. and make him hold his hands against his cheeks. Then they take wire and run it through the one hand and through his cheek and into his mouth. They pull the wire out through the other hand. They knot both ends around stakes."

The New York Times Magazine of November 28, 1965, states:

"Further villagers were rounded up and one man was brought before the company commander. The Vietnamese officer turned to his advisor and said: 'I think I shoot this man. O.K.?' 'Go ahead', said the advisor. The officer fired a carbine round point blank, striking the villager below the chest. The man slumped and died. The patrol moved on."

The Houston Chronicle of December 24, 1964, described the fate of captured prisoners:

"There were four, all suspected of being Vietcong. They lined them up and shot the first man. Then they questioned the second. They shot him too."

David Halberstam reports in 1965:

"The marines simply lined up the seventeen and shot them down in cold blood."

Reuter's reports on November 18, 1965:

"In one place, Americans found three Vietnamese wounded. 'You won't smile anymore', said one of the soldiers, pumping bullets into his body. The other two met the same fate."

The Chicago Daily News reports, November 19, 1965:

"It is almost impossible to walk without stumbling upon a body. Suddenly, a wounded soldier lifted one arm weakly. An American sergeant poured a long burst of rifle bullets into him. 'I'd like to find more of those bastards trying to give up', the sergeant said. No-one disagreed with him."

The New York Times of October 14, 1965, quotes a former executive of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva:

"When (the Vietcong prisoners) were tortured, the American army started to destroy Vietcong hospitals and to cut off medical supply."

U.P.I. reports on August 3, 1965:

"I got me a Vietcong. I got at least two of them bastards.' The Americans ordered a Vietnamese to go down into the hole to pull out their victims. The victims were three children, between 11 and 14."

Malcolm Browne of the Associated Press reported again:

"A man leaped up fifty yards away and began to run. Every machine gun poured fire at that man. Finally, he went down silently. We found him on his back in the mud, four bullet holes across the top of his naked chest. He was alive, moving his legs and arms. The squad looked down at the man and laughed. One of the men picked up a heavy stake, lying in the mud, and rammed one end of it in the ground, next to the wounded man's throat. He forced the stake down over the throat, trying to throttle the man. Someone stamped on the free end of the stake, to break the wounded man's neck, but the stake broke instead. Another man tried stamping on the man's throat, but somehow the spark of life was still too strong. Finally, the whole group laughed and walked back to the path.

Two women ran up from one of the huts. One of them put a hand to her mouth as she saw the wounded man, whom she recognised as her husband. She dashed back to her hut and returned in a moment, carrying a bucket which she filled with water. She poured paddy water over the wounds, to clean off the clotting blood. Occasionally she would stroke his forehead, muttering something. Slowly, she looked around at the troops, and then she spotted me. Her eyes fixed on me, in an expression that still haunts me sometimes."

The New York Post of April 30, 1965, quotes a marine who, after having shot a villager in the back, said:

"Don't think we're killers. We're marines."

The New York Journal American on September 16, 1965, states:

"This is a new breed of Americans that most of us don't know about, and it is time we got used to it. The eighteen and nineteen-year-olds have steel in their backbones and maybe too much of the killer instinct. These kids seem to enjoy killing Vietcong."

I have concentrated on the small daily events of this war, as reported in the Western Press, because these accounts disclose more than the equally full Western descriptions of the experimental weapons, which have been developed on a vast scale against the Vietnamese people. The casual accounts of the behaviour of the American occupying army in Vietnam have been published without noticeable protest from significant numbers amongst those who have read these articles. It is necessary to understand why.

Two weeks ago, one of the Editors of the New York Times, Mr. James Reston, wrote an article entitled: "That Coon Skin on the Wall." In this article, he quotes the President of the United States in his remarks to American troops at Cam Ranh Bay: "Come home with the coon skin on the wall." "Coon skin" referred to Vietnamese. "Coon skins" are an American expression for Negroes. "Coon skin" explains how it is possible for the most esteemed paper in the Western world to print, without inhibition or apparent embarrassment, descriptions which are just those we have come to know in Auschwitz, Dachau and Buchenwald. The President of the United States who so addressed his soldiers is the same man who said in

the House of Representatives of that country on March 15, 1948:

"No matter what else we have of offensive or defensive weapons, without superior air power America is a bound and throttled giant, impotent and easy prey to any yellow dwarf with a pocket knife."

This is the legacy, the true and direct inheritance of the extermination squads and the gas chambers to which the yellow dwarfs and the coons and the gooks were sent to inferior extermination.

The New York Times of September 25, 1966, published a lengthy article by the leading military correspondent, Hanson Baldwin:

"The Defence Department contends that our utilisation of chemical agents in Vietnam is not only militarily useful, but more humane than bullets or explosives."

Mr. Baldwin states:

"Production of many types of chemicals has been expanded in the United States since 1960. These include the deadly nerve gases and the newer so-called 'benevolent incapacitators'".

He continues:

"Many of the experts add that modern chemical agents offer greater hope for humane warfare than any other weapons."

Documented reports of these chemicals and gases establish that they result in paralysis, convulsions, asphyxiation and blindness. They have been used throughout South Vietnam. A Washington official stated on November 1, 1965, at the National Foreign Policy Conference:

"We are making limited use of arsenic and cyanide compounds in the southern part of Vietnam, but not yet in the North."

The documentation which I possess concerning the bombing of hospitals, schools and sanatoria, consciously and systematically, is taken from Western sources. The use of such weapons as bombs containing millions of razor-sharp steel fragments, jelly-gasoline in immense quantity, phosphorus and bacterial devices is considerable. The development of forced labour camps and a policy of scorched earth, which has led to the imprisonment of 59% of the rural population of South Vietnam, numbering eight million people, is Western in origin and has been reported in Time Magazine and the London Observer.

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today is between Gaullism and Communism. It is between personal power and the democratic forces, with the communists forming an integral part of these democratic forces." Defining Gaullism as "the power of the (economically dominant) monopolists," they propose - not forward to workers' democracy but - backward to the pseudo-democracy which they didn't lift a finger to 'defend' in 1958 against the army. Their current treachery is justified by the need to recoup the losses from their capitulation of yesterday. The Times post-election editorial summed it up: "The Popular Front before the War was not the end of the world, and communist ministers (sic) sat in the French post war governments till 1947. Communists gave useful support to various governments of the Fourth Republic."

REVIEWS

WHAT IS ? AUTOMATION

The Age of Automation.
Leon Bagrit. Penguin. 3/6.

Bagrit's 1964 Reith Lectures, published in this volume, are lucid on the technological anatomy of automation, and indicate the tremendous possibilities which its rational application would open up. They also indicate the dilemmas that the ruling class is confronted with when trying to face the upheavals that automation would inevitably bring if implemented in a capitalist society. Bagrit is one of Wilson's advisors and his explorations therefore provide a key to many of Wilson's and the Labour bureaucrats' utterances on the 'Technological Revolution'.

What is automation? In order to answer this, one must lay bare some of the fallacies which surround the conception of automation. Bagrit does this admirably.

NO LEVERS TO PULL

One misconception is that automation is equivalent to mechanisation. It does, it is true, embody all the most up-to-date machine techniques, together with all the achievements of electronics, wave mechanics and mathematical systems analysis. It is a "machine system which is caused to operate with maximum efficiency by means of adequate measurement, observation, and control of its behaviour". But this is

achieved not by pulling levers or setting the machine by hand, but by an adjustment which comes from within the machine system itself in response to external and internal stimuli.

In the British steel industry automation has, to an extent, been introduced. Information is fed into a computer as to the best combinations of given temperature with raw materials, heat radiation and a number of other variables for the process under way. Once done, the computer, which is the "nerve centre" of the system, on the basis of measurements which it records, brings about an adjustment of the whole plant in accordance with these measurements and the specifications as laid down in the initial programming. If the temperature goes down, the import of raw materials, speed of machinery, heat radiation etc. would mutually adjust to produce the best result for the type of steel being made.

An example which drives home the differences between automation and mechanisation can be taken from Chaplin's film 'Modern Times'. This film, portraying the dominance of the machine over man under capitalist mechanisation, shows a machine which feeds people with cups of tea. As well as pouring pre-made tea into cups, it has an 'arm' which is preset at a certain level to correspond to the height of the mouth concerned. It grips the cup and tilts it so as to pour the tea into the mouth of the recipient. However, since everything has been preset, if he were to move his head away the tea would spill down his shirt. With automation, the height and distance of the man would be recorded with the computer and this would automatically adjust the height, angle, distance of the arm to suit the man.

If he were at an awkward angle (the requisite angle of tilt, with distance etc, would have to be programmed first) then the tea would not be poured until the man was ready and in a position to receive it. Instead of man having to work at the preset pace of the machine, the machine could be made to work at the pace of man - a trem-

-enthusiastically humanising development.

TECHNICAL POSSIBILITIES

Thus the use of automation and computer technology can manufacture uniformly precise commodities on a scale of complete abundance, with the expenditure of little human labour. Not only uniformity, but diversity could be created by differential programming. This is all in the realm of what is now immediately possible, technically, not some wild fantasy. Man could be freed from the drudgery of mechanical work for self-development, with a great unleashing of creative energies. As Bagrit says - "Mechanisation has sometimes given millions of people sub-human work to do. Automation does the exact opposite."

More to the point - it could. But this will depend on its social use. (Relativity physics and nuclear fission do not necessarily lead to atomic weapons. But given the prevalence of capitalist relations, they have.) Automation can not only reduce but almost eliminate the labour content from the process of production. But what does this mean in the context of capitalism, where these tremendous new tools are private property? Here Bagrit betrays a complete lack of understanding. In spite of all his contentions to the contrary, his visions of a future automated society fall within the national capitalist framework.

THE NEW TECHNOCRACY

Bagrit voices what must surely be in the minds of British capitalists - the need to modernise the archaic machinery of British capitalism: "It is essential for our future national prosperity in Britain that we should modernise this country, by spreading an understanding of the most advanced forms of technology as rapidly as we can... We must somehow induce industrial concerns to adopt these new techniques quickly and intelligently..." and, "nations are adopting automation faster than we are, with all that it implies in terms of political power and the ability

to compete in trade," and - "all political parties are concerned with this problem. It is now widely recognised that we must automate our industry or else we shall find ourselves unable to compete."

It is, as he sees it, not a party problem, is 'above politics'; all parties should agree on the fundamental direction to be travelled, and then education, export policy, investment policy etc. would fall into place in an over-all pattern. The envisaged new society is a 'technocracy' and is to be the same the world over - "due to the creation of a new technological class on a world scale orthodox political theories are now beginning to be amended, if not to crumble, and the process must inevitably continue. So it is possible that both capitalism and communism will find common denominators as a result of the forces let loose by the productive power of automation."

Considering that Bagrit is Chairman and Managing Director of Elliot Automation, it is not surprising that, after all this talk about capitalism and communism being outmoded, he should go on to sketch the course for automation under contemporary capitalism.

He sees automation as speeding up the monopolisation process and therefore - "In this case, and assuming a free economy, it is interesting to wonder what the basis of competition would be between two or more fully automated, and therefore, presumably, fully efficient concerns." (my emphasis) Yes indeed, the mind boggles!

Bagrit mentions in passing that unemployment is increasing among certain groups in the working class in the USA, especially amongst the negro youth, as modernisation and automation sets in on a limited scale, eliminating unskilled, semi-skilled and even some skilled occupations. However, this is glossed over and lost in the delirious optimism of an age of goodies administered from on high by an educated elite trained in a "sense

of social responsibility which an age of plenty is going to demand." The employers, government, civil service, are all going to co-operate and "the educational authorities, with the full support of the government, should institute a course which would be specifically aimed at creating a new breed of administrator". (My emphasis). A wonderful corporate unity, no doubt!

The effects of automation are that it enters into the unevenness and rivalries of world capitalism and adds to them. And, while a fully automated model economy on capitalist lines would be ^{an} absurdity, large scale automation is perhaps possible for an America, which would partially solve her problems by squeezing out weaker countries from the glutting markets. Britain has the problem of finding the material means to compete with infinitely superior economies - hence the attempts among the former giants of Europe to pool resources, eg the Concord project, and provide for themselves a wider market - the EEC.

The intensified competition must mean putting the squeeze on the working class, and making attacks on their organisations. The task of socialists must be to work out in relation to the concrete developing situation transitional slogans. The demand for drastic cuts in the working week and a sharing of existing work, with rising wages geared to productivity is only one of these. Defence against capitalist automation must be coupled with the fight that will lead to socialist automation.

P.S.

OF PIN-STRIPPED YOBS

The Harp that Once.
Patrick Hall. Heinemann. 21s.

A telephone call from a man named Donnelly tells Michael Marler that his father is dying, and this sets the stage for ten

riotous days in the life of the uneasy business executive trying hard to forget his Irish working class background. Old John Marler dies in a pub brawl, the killer is known and Michael's ex-friends want to know what the London turncoat is going to do about it.

This is the first novel by Patrick Hall, a Birmingham-born university lecturer. His rather weak introduction to the build-up of tension will give a lot of people the mistaken impression that Marler's home town is somewhere on the outskirts of Dublin, and it is not until halfway through the book that one is finally convinced it is Birmingham.

In the earlier stages reminiscences of the one that had gone dominate the atmosphere. In this respect the author like many another labours under the delusion that most Irishmen before entering a boozier must be capable of rendering forty songs ranging from Kevin Barry to the Bard of Armagh (an eventuality to which Desmond Greaves has been devoting his minstrel and political talents for a whole generation.)

The period twixt death and burial of his old man, with inquest, wake, requiem and other trappings is a long drawn out sequence. In the intervening period Marler returns to his other world to be told by his insipid wife that the death of his father cannot interfere with the lavish party laid on for her golf club friends and social-climbing mother. Michael is suddenly revulsed by it all and it is near midnight when he arrives at the party and proceeds to bolt hell out of his wife, fellow directors etc. and ends up getting himself suspended.

For sheer brutality it would be difficult to better the descriptive carnage when he finally catches up with Jones, his father's killer, and scythes the legs from under Jones' girl friend and stamps viciously in the direction of her cries, with her screaming she will have his cobblers off.

In this "all-in" hectic week Marler also finally breaks with his wife, has two affairs with older women, one of which provides some earthy reading but generally the author's excursions into sensuality are more akin to the contents of cheap paperbacks.

The book has no political 'message' but it is a pity that the author fails completely to get to real grips with the business executive world of Marler; whilst L'Estrange, Bishton and Co are to an extent depicted as the 'con men' and 'bum boys' they are, the author does not lift the lid sufficiently to expose the stranglehold these pin-striped yobs of Mayfair and Park Lane have on the destiny of millions of workers on both sides of the Irish Sea. Michael Marler actually sees it but is too much a part of the racket to expose it. In consequence he does not even emerge as an anti-hero of the Joe Lampton type portrayed by John Braine in "Room at the Top".

P.McK.

COMMEMORATIVE
HAGIOGRAPHY

The Bold Fenian Men. Seamus G. O'Kelly
A.I.Books. 3/6.

After the spate of commemorative material produced by the fiftieth anniversary of Easter Week we had grounds for hope that the centenary of the Fenian Rising would do as well if not better. We were disappointed; apart from the brief and rather scrappy Irish Times Supplement, nothing at all interesting has appeared on the subject.

The Bold Fenian Men fails absolutely to do more than state and restate the details of the foundation, growth and failure of the Fenian movement. Set out in the form of a series of potted biographical essays on the leading Fenians, it is repetitious, unanalytical and almost completely uncritical. True, it takes Devoy to task for supporting the Free

State in the '20s but lets him off the hook rather easily in concluding:

"He gave a lifetime of service to Ireland. May he rest in peace, mingling his dust with that of his Fenian comrades in Glasnevin."

This quotation incidentally gives a fair sample of the general hagiographical temper of the entire book. All Fenians, we are led to believe, are singleminded adorers of 'the auld sod'. What form of society they foresaw as the end product of their revolution remains a well preserved secret. That they were determinedly anti-landlord can be established by the most casual glance at the files of the Fenian paper 'The Irish People', but this antipathy found its expression in the restatement of the Jacobin ideology of previous generations.

The Fenian movement rose and declined against a background of falling population, consolidation of agricultural holdings and a reduction of real wages. This process meant that the percentage of agricultural goods consumed by the producers fell, and a higher percentage became a commodity on the market. So the terrible drain of population increased rather than reduced the surplus product of agriculture, and proved a stimulus to the growth of a native bourgeoisie. Ireland was at this stage in the anomalous position of being a proto-feudal enclave within the most highly developed capitalist state in the world, and since the Act of Union Irish industrial development had been absolutely at the mercy of the more powerful British economy. It was impossible for the Irish bourgeoisie to have an independent existence of its own separate from the British bourgeoisie. Therefore the alternatives facing the Fenians were an all-out demand for a workers' state or a retreat into a 'Free State' type setup which left the Irish economy still at the mercy of British capitalism.

The Fenians appear never to have fully understood the implications of this situation, and despite their working class

support, despite their sideline support for industrial struggles, their chief emphasis was purely anti-aristocratic. In this context it should be remembered that the only trade unions in Ireland at that time were craft unions of the Applegarthian type, an offshoot of the 'amalgamated' unions in Britain, symptomatic of little more than the period of defeat for the English working class following the collapse of Chartism, and completely lacking in revolutionary perspective.

When the time finally came in 1922 for the I.R.B. to make a choice about the future of Irish society they gleefully joined Kevin O'Higgins, Tim Healy, Eoin O'Duffy & Co. in the creation of the ruthlessly militaristic and reactionary Free State.

All this is not to say that the Fenians weren't a progressive force in their time. The Irish landlord system was a social cesspool which belonged on the dunghill of history - and in the 1880s the Fenians played a leading role in putting it there. But this does not excuse them for being lacrimose patriots who, as far as clarity of thought and decisiveness of objective are concerned, represented a definite retreat from the standards of analytical thought and clearheaded judgement set by their Republican predecessors Tone, O'Connor, Hope, Mitchel and Lalor. Mr. O'Kelly has done Irish history a grave disservice in not saying so.

B.M.

THERMIDOREAN
DEFENSISTS

Soviet Military Policy. R.L.Garthoff.
Faber.

This is a most interesting book by an American scholar who works for the State Department and, although it is often phrased so that Russian actions appear

evil and sinister while similar U.S. ones are fine, yet it is well researched and its statements and conclusions are backed up by solid documentation from Soviet sources.

He sees Stalin's objectives in Eastern Europe and the Far East as limited to securing the safety of the Russian State, and not to extending the world revolution. Thus very little help was given to the Chinese Revolution, only some captured Japanese material, in fact; for Stalin seemed to prefer the prospect of a weak and friendly, if capitalist, state, to a strong Communist one, and to this end Manchurian industry was plundered and aid and recognition given to the Nationalists. Once the Chinese Peoples Republic was established, a treaty, concerning a Russian base at Port Arthur, utterly colonialist in character and even more favourable to the USSR than that concluded just after the War with Chiang Kai-shek, was forced on the Chinese leaders. This treaty was revised and Port Arthur handed back to China with extra military equipment as a bonus after Stalin's death by his successors, in 1954. Incidentally all the Korean War military equipment used by the People's Liberation Army was bought from the Russians, although they sometimes provided low interest loans to cover these. Even Stalin's successors refused to wipe out this debt. Later on of course, the most important military cause of the quarrel was the refusal to supply atomic weapons to China in 1958.

Other aspects of great interest concern the very limited aid that the Soviet Bureaucracy can give or wishes to give to struggles in other countries, and their complete lack of any perspective of social transformation in the advanced areas of the world. The State Department has been looking hard enough but just cannot find any doctrine for a 'Communist' take-over of the developed nations of the world - apart from references to the peaceful transition to Socialism in a sort of hopefully hopeless way, which even they can laugh at. The Soviet Officer Corps

is discussed and though 90% are members of the C.P. they are thought to be a-political technicians, a very unsurprising conclusion to any but a John Birch-er. The military aspect of the interven-tion in Hungary, and the lack of such intervention in Poland, is most carefull-ly analysed and here the crucial dist-inction seems to have been the loss of control by the national government over the Hungarian masses and its correspon-ding success in Poland. Here the secur-ity services acted with zest for Gomulka against sections of the army officered by Russianised Poles. Garthoff entirely loses his unsympathetic tone at this poi-nt, talking about the Russian difficult-ies.

All in all a rewarding book, as long as the author's qualifications are clearly kept in mind.

E.C.

NOT THE BEST

The Best of Connolly.

Ed. by Proinsias MacAonghusa and Liam O'Reagain. Mercier Press. 10s.

"During the lifetime of great revolution-aries, the oppressing classes constantly hounded them, received their teachings with the most savage malice, the most furious hatred and the most unscrupulous campaigns of lies and slander. After their death, attempts are made to con-coct them into harmless icons, to canon-ise them, so to say, and to surround their names with a certain halo for the "consolation" of the oppressed classes, and with the object of duping the latter, while at the same time emasculating the essence of the revolutionary teaching, blunting its revolutionary edge and vul-garising it."

What Lenin wrote on the traders in a castrated Marxism also describes the posthumous fate of James Connolly, to-day a national icon and a distant father-figure to all sorts of pinks - ranging from Labour Party right-wingers through the CP factions up to demagogic pseudo

left journalists on the make. The con-trast between the living man and the use to which the remains are put is startl-ing. MacAonghusa's close connection with the Irish Independent is no secret - and this paper stands now for precisely the same things as when it played a perhaps decisive part in nerving the Imperialists to finish off the wounded Connolly. Yet today an editor of Connolly can have a foot - or maybe two feet - in the camp of his murderers and still do a nice trade in 'Connolly'ism.

Any relatively cheap selection from Con-nolly such as this one (to be published on May 1st) is particularly welcome now that the ITGWU has withdrawn the subsidy from Desmond Ryan's 4-volume selection. But this 'Connolly' is tailored very much to his editors' dimensions. They have managed to include casual pieces of journ-alism and exclude all but the barest min-imum of the earlier, De Leon period, art-icles. They also omit such programmatic articles as "Our duty in This Crisis", written at the beginning of World War I, which gives a far better, less impress-ionistic picture than much of the mater-ial of this period which they do present.

However, the material the editors had to work with placed a definite limitation on their ability to pull it down to their own level. They could find no such rub-bish in Connolly's writing as the schema they quote at the head of their introd-uction - from Mazzini! - admonishing the working class to line up, with proper re-gard to rank, behind the weaker bourgeois-ies of the world.

This volume shows well Connolly's ambiv-alent attitude to Catholicism. The For-ward to Labour, Nationality and Religion is a damning list of the crimes of the Catholic Church against the people of Ireland over 7 centuries - and yet evi-dence throughout the articles leaves no doubt that Connolly was a Catholic of sorts. He had a persuasive propoganda line towards Catholics of denying any contradiction between socialism and rel-igion; and at the same time as damning the record of the Church, he held out hope for an opportunist adaptation to

socialism on its part. Holding to the concept of the historical derivation of ideas from the social environment, he nevertheless received Extreme Unction while men like Clarke and others of 1916 refused it. His Catholicism was more than mere propagandist adaptation. In this he was not a Marxist, and he showed an underestimation of the power of ideas, of the battle on the ideological front for a consistent humanistic working class world outlook, without princes, popes or gods, which was the over-riding conception of all Lenin's activities.

Two of the articles alone, Economic Conscriptioⁿ, Jan, 1916, which Connolly outlines his conception of what the first independent Irish government would have to do; and 'Revolutionary Unionism and War', March 1915, whatever one may think of its line on Germany, justify the book and make it well worth buying and circulating. The title, though, tells us more about the editors than the author. This may be a more or less representative selection from Connolly, but it is certainly not his best.

S.M.

■ M A C I N ■ M A C I N ■ M A C I N ■ M
T O D I E I N M A D R I D .

In July 1936 a sharp polarisation took place in Spain. Landowners, the Church and the bourgeoisie gave their support to the military conspiracy led by the fascist generals Sanjurjo, Mola and Franco, and aided by Falangist and monarchist volunteers. Workers and peasants seized factories, mines and land, and formed themselves into militias to defend them.

Rossif's Civil War documentary tells the story of the rise of the Republic and of the long bitter war that ended in its fall. It attempts no analysis, and so leaves untouched all the myths and ill-fitting cliches constructed by those who undermined the Republic long before Franco's troops marched in triumph through Madrid: the Stalinists and 'liberal bourgeoisie'. Dolores Ibarruri is presented as the Great Revolutionary La Passionaria, while no mention is made of her Party's disarming of the workers' militias, dissolving of their soviets and forcibly handed back the expropriated property to its former owners. It does, however, movingly show the Spanish workers' spirit of self-sacrifice and determination, it does not spare the Church, and gives a strong visual impression of the War - particularly memorable are the scenes of the International Brigade leaving Madrid, slogan-covered carriages and clenched fist salutes to the crowds at the station. Rod Baker.



Francisco had not only God on his side, but the Church as well. Above, one of his army chaplains blessing troops.

the legacy

by

JAMES CONNOLLY

"Thy father is a poor man", mark well what that may mean,
On the tablets of thy memory that truth write bright and clean,
Thy father's lot it was to toil from earliest boyhood on,
And know his latent energies for a master's profit drawn.

Or else, ill-starred, to wander round and huxter-like to vend
His precious store of brain and brawn to all whom fate may send
Across his path with gold enough to purchase labour's power,
To turn it into gold again and fructify the hour
With sweat and blood of toiling slaves like unto us my son;
Aye, through our veins since earliest days, 'tis poor man's blood has
run...

Treasure ye in your inmost heart this legacy of hate
For those who on the poor man's back have climbed to high estate,
The Lords of Land and Capital, the slave-lords of our age
Who of this smiling earth of ours have made for us a cage...

And how soe'er you earn your wage, and where soe'er you go,
Be it beneath the tropic heat or 'mid the Northern snow,
Or closely pent in factory walls, or burrowing in the mine,
Or scorching in the furnace hell of steamers cross the brine...

The men and women of your class, tell them their wrongs and yours
Plant in their hearts that hatred deep that suffers and endures,
And treasuring up each deed of wrong, each scornful word and look,
Inscribe it in the memory as others in a book.
And wait and watch through galling years the ripening of time,
Yet deem to strike before that hour were worse than folly - crime!

The robbers made our fathers slaves, then chained them to the soil,
For a little longer chain - a wage - we must exchange our toil.
But open force gives way to fraud, and force again behind
Prepares to strike if fraud should fail to keep man deaf and blind.
Our mothers see their children's limbs they fondled as they grew,
And doted on, caught up to make for rich men profits new.
These things belong not to the past but to the present day,
And they shall last 'til in our wrath we sweep them all away!