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# MARXIST REVIEW

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**SOCIALISM**  
*and the*  
**NATIONAL**  
**QUESTION**



Marxist Review is the theoretical journal of the Revolutionary Marxist Group the Irish supporters of the Fourth International . All comments and contributions which will be most welcome, should be sent to the Editor 58, Nth. Gt. Charles St. Dublin. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the group.

# MARKIST REVIEW

Theoretical Journal of the REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST GROUP

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" The Labour movement delights in analysing and is perpetually defining and re-defining its principles and objectives. The man or woman who has caught the spirit of the Labour Movement, brings that spirit of analysis and definition into all his or her public acts and expects at all times to answer the call to define his or her position.

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### EDITORIAL NOTE

The purpose of MARKIST REVIEW is to popularise the basic tenets of revolutionary marxism; to help encourage the use of scientific thought and contribute to the solution of fundamental problems confronting revolutionaries of every tendency in Ireland today. As the reader will note, the recent issue deals mainly with the National Question, and in future issues we intend pick other interesting and important subjects as the centre of our attention.

# WHAT IS TROTSKYISM?

By Ernest Mandel

(THIS IS THE TEXT OF A SPEECH BY ERNEST MANDEL, SECRETARY OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL, DELIVERED DURING A DEBATE WITH MONTY JOHNSTON, THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN'S CHIEF "EXPERT" ON TROTSKYISM. THE DEBATE WAS SIGNIFICANT IN THAT THE STALINISTS HAVE BEEN FORCED TO DEBATE WITH A POLITICAL CURRENT WHICH THEY HAVE REPEATEDLY DECLARED TO BE DEAD AND IRRELEVANT).

The fact that Monty Johnstone is here debating with me this evening on the problem of Trotskyism today should in itself be considered evidence of what Trotskyism is not. I am not going to insult the intelligence of anyone present by saying that it is not counterrevolutionary or an agency of fascism or an agency of imperialism, or any of that nonsense. For if that were the case, not only would this debate not take place but many other things which have been happening in the world in the last few years would be incomprehensible.

One thing Trotskyism is not is a defeated tendency in the international workers movement. It is not a Menshevik-type revision of Marxism that has been crushed definitively, as was said in the Soviet Union in its fifteenth party congress in 1927; as was repeated by the unfortunate Nikita Sergeivitch Khrushchev at the twentieth party congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956; as has been repeated over and over again in innumerable publications under the control of the stalinist bureaucracy. Because, if it were really a crushed, defeated, nonexistent, eliminated, Menshevik tendency, why would anybody want to discuss with it? Why is Monty Johnstone here debating? Why is the Soviet bureaucracy after having crushed, destroyed, eliminated and vanquished this tendency, forty, thirty, twenty, and ten years ago, why are the spokesmen for these bureaucrats today forced to write books, pamphlets, and articles and keep coming back to this problem? Why have there been three or four new books on Trotskyism published in the Soviet Union in the last twelve months, if ours is a definitively defeated tendency?

So I think that the first point we ought to make this evening is to render historical justice to the founder of the Red Army and to the leader of the insurrection of the October revolution which initiated the first victorious working-class revolution in a whole country. On this ninetieth anniversary of the birth of Leon Trotsky, which coincides with the anniversary of the October revolution, the political movement he founded, the ideas he stood for, the programme he defended, live stronger than ever in the world.

There is today a vibrant youth movement. Thousands of young people are coming to Trotskyism all over the world. And that is the only reason Monty Johnstone of the Communist Party feels obliged to debate with us about Trotskyism, that is the only reason why the Soviet bureaucracy has to put out a steady stream of speeches, pamphlets, magazine articles and books on the subject of Trotsky.

Trotskyism today is mainly a youth movement, a movement of youth that is being built and expanded on the five continents. For that very same reason I am not going to dwell in the least on the question that Monty Johnstone is going

to talk about quite a lot. What Trotsky wrote or did not write in 1905, in 1912, in 1917, or in 1918. For I want to say from the beginning that this is pretty irrelevant to the actualities of the contemporary revolutionary struggles. Does anyone really think that 250,000 people vote for a Trotskyist Presidential candidate in France, does anyone really think that in Ceylon today a Trotskyist trade union leader leads tens of thousands of workers in big strikes does anyone really think that tens of thousands of people demonstrate behind banners which the whole of public opinion in Japan today calls Trotskyist, because of what Trotsky wrote in 1907 or 1912?

The overwhelming majority of these people have not read what he wrote and are not interested in reading all that - this is a mistake on their part, because everybody should be interested in the history of the revolutionary movement - but they rightly regard that as irrelevant to the main problem which we have to understand and explain: What is the origin, what is the root of the strength of world Trotskyism today, why do thousands and thousands of people flock to its banner on a world scale, and why do the Soviet bureaucrats and Monty Johnstone, their British spokesman, have to re-open a debate which they hoped had been finished with machine-gun bullets thirty or thirty-five years ago, in the period of the infamous Moscow Trials?

I will give four basic reasons why the Trotskyist movement is stronger now than ever before; why thousands of people are adhering to it throughout the world; why it has a bigger numerical, geographical and political extension than ever before, even during the 1920s, while it was still a tendency inside the Communist parties and the Communist International.

The first reason has to do with a basic problem of the colonial revolution and the way forward for the underdeveloped, semicolonial countries. Stalinism and Stalinist parties, parties which call themselves Communist, still follow a Menshevik or semi-Menshevik policy. That is, they believe as the Russian Mensheviks believed, that because these countries are backward, because the industrial bourgeoisie has not yet come to political power, that the immediate strategic task for the working class and poor peasantry is some how to establish an alliance with this national bourgeoisie against imperialism and against feudal and semi-feudal forces. The aim of such an alliance would be to arrive at a coalition form of government - a "government of the four classes" as it was called in China from 1925 to 1927 - a government of the "National Front", or a regime of "National Democracy", as it was called in the new official programme of the Soviet Communist Party.

Experience has confirmed what Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution proclaimed as early as 1906, that there is no way out for any underdeveloped colonial or semicolonial country along such a road; that any struggle that limits itself to fighting against rural feudal or semifeudal landlords, or foreign imperialism, while keeping the national bourgeoisie in power, while maintaining capitalist property relations intact, while refraining from establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat allied to the poor peasantry, will inevitably leave these underdeveloped countries backward stagnating, exploited and suexploited by international & national capital. Such a policy will not be able to tear the millions populating these countries out of their age-old miseries. Experience has also taught a much more terrible lesson. Thousands and thousands of communists in Brazil in 1964, in Iraq, in 1958, and 5 hundred thousand Communists in Indonesia in 1965 had to pay with their lives for the illusion that it was possible,

desirable, or necessary to establish durable relationships of coalition & collaboration with bourgeois or semibourgeois political forces. Such a subordination & sacrifice of independent mass struggle can only lead to crushing defeat for the working class and the poor peasantry.

Trotskyism lives and grows, wins new members, attracts new tendencies and builds new parties in the underdeveloped countries because it stands for this basic rule of revolution. There is no possibility of acquiring real national liberation, real independence from imperialism, without overthrowing the bourgeois class together with the agents of foreign imperialism and the feudal and semifeudal landlords. There is no possibility of liberating the people, peasants and workers, without establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat allied with the poor peasantry, without creating a workers state. Only in those countries where this happened—China, Cuba, North Vietnam, and it's happening now in South Vietnam—is there a way to social and economic progress. Wherever, through the responsibility of the Communist Parties following the Moscow line, which is Stalinist Menshevism, that has been prevented from happening, there have been defeats, misery, tears and bloodshed for the working people of those countries.

It is this contemporary reality, rather than quotations from 1907, 1917, or 1921, that has to be faced by anyone who wants to understand what is going on in this sector of the world revolution. For the Trotskyist movement, for the revolutionary Marxists throughout the world, it was a moment of great vindication when the leading idea of the permanent revolution—that the only road to victory in a backward country is through a socialist revolution—was taken over by the Cuban revolutionaries and proclaimed in the Second Declaration of Havana, after the first victorious revolution in the Western Hemisphere. This gave proof that Leon Trotsky and the Fourth International had been one hundred per cent correct in their strategic line for the underdeveloped countries.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY ROAD

The second reason for the growth of Trotskyism on a world scale is that we stand completely and unconditionally for the revolutionary road to socialism in the industrialized imperialist countries as against the reformist electoral road defended by the Communist Parties in Western Europe, Japan, North America, Australia and New Zealand. When we say that we follow the revolutionary road, this does not mean that we are partisans of putschism or adventurism, that we think that a few hundred people here and a few hundred there can snatch power unexpectedly without anybody taking notice of it, in the advanced capitalist countries. There the bourgeoisie represents tremendous power. It has political experience, it has the benefits of political tradition and political continuity. Its rule over these countries does not depend simply and solely upon its weapon of repression—its army and its police—but rather upon the ideological and political influence it still wields over a large part of the petty bourgeoisie and even among a part of the working class itself.

Our clear and uncompromising stand in favor of the revolutionary road to socialism essentially pivots around three points:

Firstly, objective situations independent of the will and control of any group or party periodically create prerevolutionary situations in industrialized, advanced countries. At these moments of revolutionary mass upsurge these objective situations unavoidably lead to large-scale actions of the working class such as general strikes and factory occupations which obviously go beyond the limits of struggle for immediate wage demands and working conditions. The duty of revolutionary parties

and groups representing the revolutionary vanguard is to prepare themselves and the best working class militants to intervene during these hours and days and weeks, for it is only through these periodic upsurges of the mass movement that the chance is presented to overthrow capitalist power.

You cannot overthrow capitalism gradually, you cannot abolish a bourgeois army battalion by battalion, you cannot destroy the power of the bourgeoisie piece by piece. You can only accomplish these aims through the revolutionary mobilization of the masses, and revolutionary actions of this sort are not possible every day when "business as usual" prevails. Revolutionary action is possible only during those prerevolutionary situations when the tension of the class relations is at its maximum and the class conflict is sharpest. A party, a vanguard and a class must be prepared to intervene at that juncture in a decisive manner in order to make a breakthrough toward the conquest of power and a victorious socialist revolution.

Secondly, if you want to develop a situation in which the working class wants to know what to do next, in which conditions for revolution are favorable, you must engage in prior propaganda, agitation, and action for transitional demands, especially for the key demand for workers control of production, which crowns all other demands of the working class in its struggle for power in the industrialized countries. To think that a working class which has been educated, day after day, month after month year after year, in nothing but immediate trade union demands and electoral politics will in some mysterious way suddenly become capable of revolutionary consciousness and action in a revolutionary situation is to believe in magic or miracles.

Lenin said that the ABC of revolutionary policy and the duty of a revolutionary party is to conduct revolutionary propaganda also in periods that are not yet revolutionary. Lenin said that this is precisely what makes the difference between a revolutionary and a reformist or centrist party. When revolution days break out, many people suddenly discover their revolutionary soul. But a revolutionary party has the constant duty to propagandize for revolution even if the situation has not yet reached the point of showdown between the classes. Its work in this respect can be an influential factor in accelerating revolutionary consciousness.

Thirdly, we believe that the struggle for transitional demands, for those demands which cannot be incorporated or assimilated into the normal functioning of bourgeois society should not be conducted solely by propagandistic means. Every opportunity should be taken to impel the working class into motion around such demands. They should be introduced into the ongoing daily struggle of the class by all avenues. Unless the workers acquire experience by fighting for these demands in partial struggles they will be unable to generalize their outlook at the height of revolutionary intensity. Otherwise these demands will appear to them as something that falls from the sky, that is imposed from without or advocated only by small minority groups.

I would like to ask Monty Johnstone how he squares the following quotation from Lenin regarding the obligations of a vanguard party with the course followed by the French Communist Party in May 1968. Lenin said:

Will this situation last long; how much more acute will it become? Will it lead to revolution? This is something we do not know, and nobody can know. The answer can be provided only by the experience gained during the development of revolutionary sentiment and the transition

to revolutionary action by the advanced class, the proletariat. There can be no talk in this connection about "illusions" or their repudiation, since no socialist has ever guaranteed that this war (and not the next one), that today's revolutionary situation (and not tomorrow's) will produce a revolution. What we are discussing is the indisputable and fundamental duty of all socialists—that of revealing to the masses the existence of a revolutionary situation, explaining its scope and depth, arousing the proletariat's revolutionary consciousness and revolutionary determination, helping it to go over to revolutionary action, and forming, for that purpose, organisations suited to the revolutionary situation.

Just compare that quotation, which breathes the spirit of genuine Bolshevism, with the conduct of the Communist Parties of France, Italy, Greece, Belgium and other capitalist countries over the past twenty-five years (not to go still further back to the prewar period), especially with the conduct of the French CP in May 1968, and you will understand both the fundamentally reformist character of these parties and why thousands of young rebels are adhering to Trotskyism in these countries.

#### WORKERS STATE

The third reason for the growth of Trotskyism today has to do with the crucial question of workers democracy. The main historical goal to be attained in those countries that have already abolished capitalism is the institution of democratically centralized workers self-management in opposition to the material privileges and the monopoly of political and economic power wielded by the bureaucracy. The bureaucratic rulers are the object of hatred by thousands of youth, critically minded intellectuals, and advanced workers in these postcapitalist states. That was graphically evidenced during these few months in the Czechoslovakia of 1968 when these elements of the population had the chance to speak out, at least in part their real thoughts and feelings.

The bureaucratic regimes in these countries are one of the main reasons for the discrediting of the cause of socialism in the industrialized West which deters much larger numbers of students, intellectuals, and workers from coming out wholeheartedly in favor of a socialist revolution and communism.

What I am referring to is not a full-fledged socialist society, that is to say, a society without any social differentiation, where commodity production and money relations have withered away. Such conditions cannot exist in any of the East European countries today and that is not what is involved in our discussion of their political situation and problems.

What is both possible and urgently called for in the existing situation is what I call a political revolution, a set of changes in the superstructure of the system which would initiate or fulfill the elementary demands of the Marxist and Leninist program on the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat, leading to the building of a socialist society. In none of the works by Marx and Engels will you find a single sentence, for example, which asserts that the dictatorship of the proletariat means the monopoly of power by a single party.

Nor will you find the slightest support for the abominable notion that the dictatorship of the proletariat means the application of a repressive censorship, not against nonexistent representatives of capitalism and landlordism, but against the working class. These practices have been introduced and implemented by Stalinism.

The invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Kremlin bureaucracy not only violated the sovereignty and independence of a small nation and a fraternal and allied workers state. It was equally criminal in other respects.

It identified the suppression of democratic rights such as freedom of expression for workers, students, and intellectuals, with the name of Communism by taking away from the Czechoslovakian workers the rights they had regained between January and August 1968 to vote independently on resolutions, to have them published in their trade union journals, to criticize the government if they disagreed with its policies and to criticize the managers of their factories.

These were not very extensive rights and they were a far cry from the full-fledged socialist democracy they were entitled to and striving for. Lenin in State and Revolution says that under the dictatorship of proletariat the workers should have a thousand-fold more freedom of self-expression and self-organization than they enjoyed under bourgeois democracy.

Nevertheless, even this elementary right was taken away and hundreds of thousands of soldiers were sent into Czechoslovak Socialist Republic for that purpose. That was a shameful disgrace. That is why we Trotskyists first have to reestablish what Marxism and Leninism really stand for, because the crimes of Stalinism have so distorted their true content in the minds of many workers. Socialist democracy involves far more than the self-evident right of the workers to free expression without state censorship or penalties. Socialist Democracy means the self-management of the working class on a democratically centralized basis. It means that the workers should run the factories not only as individual and separate units, but the economy as a whole. This requires the subordination of the national planning authorities to the congress of workers councils. It means that the mass of the working class actually exercises the power and determines through its discussions and decisions how the annual national income shall be divided between the consumption and the accumulation funds, that is, between what is used up and enjoyed for immediate needs, and what is set aside and reinvested for future growth. Without the possession and exercise of such rights the working class does not really rule, whatever compliments the official propagandists may offer to console it for its lack or loss of power. It is because the Trotskyist program most consistently advocates such democratic rule of the workers that it is bound to win more forces in the Soviet Union and East Europe, where the underlying trends of development are more and more directed toward a political revolution by the masses against the arbitrariness of the bureaucratic autocracy.

### INTERNATIONALISM

FINALLY, Trotskyism is most noteworthy today for its uncompromising internationalism. After August 1914 and still more after October 1917, Lenin and the Bolsheviks set about to revive the principles and the instrument of internationalism which had been trampled upon by the prowar and pro-imperialist social democratic leaders. One of the most bitter fruits of the anti-Marxist theory of socialism in one country, which Stalin originated and imposed on world Communism from 1924 on, was the violation and betrayal of the international solidarity of the working-class struggle. This flouting of inter-



nationalism culminated in the scuttling of the Communist International by Stalin in 1943 as a favour to Churchill and Roosevelt.

Now the leaders and followers of international Stalinism are beginning to taste some more of these bitter fruits, which result from subordinating the welfare of the workers movement to the narrow and selfish dictates of the Kremlin bureaucracy. They see the appalling spectacle of the two largest workers states in the world at each others throats, and even hinting at the possibilities of hostilities between each other. This situation has come about not because either the Soviet or the Chinese masses willed it, but because it is a logical consequence of the despicable petty bourgeois nationalist tendencies and outlooks that guide the bureaucratic strata at the head of these countries today.

The Soviet leaders have gone so far as to encourage and allow so-called communist journalists to talk about "the yellow peril" and to depict the Chinese people as misled by a "new Genghis Khans" and as a "menace to civilisation". The fact that such utterly reactionary and racist utterances come from a government and a party that still calls themselves communist shows the degree of degeneration to which these organisations have succumbed.

At the height of its power, Stalinism boasted of the monolithic character of the world Communist movement which was bound together by ideological terror and enforced conformity. Now all that is passed. The last Moscow conference of the "World Communist Parties" demonstrated how far disintegration has proceeded. There are hardly two Communist parties which have any measure of autonomy today that think alike and pursue the same line.

They contend against one another and harbour all sorts of divergent tendencies and factions. One can count up to fifteen different "Communist" tendencies on a world scale. The Stalinists used to deride the Trotskyist movement in the past for being ridden by incessant factionalism and splits. They are silent on this score nowadays - and for good reason! None of the splits among the Trotskyists has been comparable to the gigantic fissures that have opened up in the international Communist movement and keep widening from year to year.

Confronted with the tremendous centralized power of the imperialist counterrevolution in the world arena, the youth and the revolutionaries on all continents keenly feel the need for an equivalent centralization of their own forces. They cannot believe that the polycentrism and decentralization that characterize world Stalinism - where the revolutionary movement and the working class in each country is left to its own devices and no one is concerned with the international interests and aims of the struggle for socialism - is ideal. They cannot believe this because it runs counter to the most urgent needs of the struggle of the working masses and to the traditions of Marxism and Leninism.

They were moved to respond so powerfully to Che Guevara's famous appeal for "two, three, many Vietnams" because it corresponded to their innermost urge for an international coordination of their anticolonialist, anti-imperialist, anticapitalist efforts. Che's final message was essentially a call for some central leadership for the world revolution.

This explains why the idea of the Fourth International as a new revolutionary working-class organization carrying on the best traditions of

Marxism, which so many dismissed as unreal and utopian, is capturing the minds and stirring the imagination of thousands of young people all over the globe. The socialist revolution cannot advance and certainly cannot triumph on a world scale without the resurgence of the need for a new revolutionary international impressing itself on the consciousness of serious fighters for a new world. The international we want to build and are building will be centralized, but it will not be bureaucratically centralized. It was the bureaucratic centralism of the Stalinist type, that fake centralism which had nothing in common with Lenin's conceptions of organizing the working-class vanguard, which spawned the disintegrated and reactionary tendencies at work in the world Communist movement today. History will prove that demand obstacle but the indispensable vehicle for elaborating a programme and implementing united action against the class enemy.

These, then, are the four pillars of Trotskyism today: the theory and practice of the permanent revolution, the revolutionary road to socialism through working-class revolution for socialist democracy in the Soviet bloc and China, and proletarian internationalism. The fourth International is a growing force on all of the continents because its fundamental ideas express the objective requirements of the world revolutionary process and carry on the ideas of Leninism, of socialism and communism in our epoch.

# Theses on the National Question

The following Theses was adopted by the R G at its founding conference, Feb. 1972).

1. The basis of political questions is not to be found tautologically in the way men think, but in the way men live. Thus the content of the national question develops along with the social relations of production. The assertion of national unification and self determination was originally heard from the bourgeoisie, in the epoch of progressive capitalism, where commodity production strove to defeat feudalism. Commodity production, by definition requires a market. Generalised commodity production, capitalism, thus necessitated the unification of that market and its political consolidation. To secure this is the classic task of the bourgeois revolution. Implicit in it is the solution of the agrarian problem with capitalism, land, labour, power and the means of production become commodities. In feudalism, the social surplus is expropriated and consumed by a class. These social relations must be overthrown and the land becomes productive capital - ownership is thus transferred and capitalist accumulation is allowed.
2. In the assault on feudalism, the revolutionary class leads other oppressed classes since by itself it is too weak to challenge the state. The uneven development of capitalism leads to advanced productive forces penetrating a feudal state - thus in Russia<sup>1</sup> in 1914 enterprises employing over 1,000 workers comprised 41.4% of the industrial sector, the comparable figure in the US was 17.8%. As a consequence a strong working class rises to challenge the feudal state. The position of the bourgeoisie is therefore weak, for to defeat feudalism it requires the working class but where Cromwell could smash the levellers, the working class, provided it can gain the support of peasantry can smash the bourgeoisie. The latter, apprehending the dynamic of revolution abrogates its revolutionary role. The proletariat, in achieving the tasks of bourgeois proletariat can only consolidate them by making the revolution permanent by passing directly on to the socialist revolution.
3. The Irish National question must be seen in the context of colonialism and imperialism - the law of uneven and combined development operating both internally and externally to it. The 1798 Rebellion marked the end of bourgeoisie as a revolutionary force. Its defeat lay in part to the process which gave birth to it. Colonialism had created a sectarian division within the peasantry and other classes, which strengthened British Rule. In the North East, the Ulster Custom prevailed whereby improvements carried out by the tenants benefitted them. There were long leases granted after the Williamite Wars and these gave a measure of security. The rest of Ireland was in the grip of rack rent. Landlords often absent, screwed the peasantry leaving them the barest subsistence. This was enforced by British military coercion. Thus here the national question was closely linked to land and to the destruction of the feudal institutions of oppression.

Since the peasantry is not a revolutionary class in itself leadership must be provided by another class. This the United Irishmen failed to do. Population growth and the consequent pressure on the land led to bitter competition between the Protestants and Catholics, due to the latter's acceptance of lower living standards. The caste differentiation became institutionalised in the founding of the Orange Lodge in 1795. Its reactionary value was appreciated by the ruling class in its suppression of the '98 rebellion, thus further strengthening the divisions.

4. The United Irishmen had been Presbyterians in the North-East predominantly bourgeois but with the participation of the urban artisans. Colonialism which had split the peasantry by differing land tenure, had given birth, through the development of capitalism, to new classes which threatened to smash it. The Ulster Custom had been crucial to the rise of the linen industry. It had permitted sufficient accumulation to allow a rural manufacture to flourish. It benefitted from the protected British market and a tariff free access to it. Always constricting its expansion was the lack of credit facilities, joint-stock, banks, etc. which illustrated the difficulties of capitalist accumulation, under colonial conditions. Nevertheless this development, paralleled by the cotton industry provided a sufficient class basis for launching a revolution against the British occupation. With the crushing of the '98 the bourgeoisie as a whole renounced any revolutionary role. The course of the French revolution was greatly disturbing to them and from then on they confined their political activity to reform within British constitutional limits.

5. The peasantry as a class is atomised in relation to production and the market. With the loss of bourgeois leadership and, until the latter part of the 19th century, without a working class one, the peasantry was unable to achieve the tasks of the bourgeois revolution. The basis of the seething discontent in the most of Ireland was the system of land tenure. The destruction of feudal institutions, and thus also the solution of the national question expresses the limits of the peasant movement. The consciousness of the movement gained from the United Irishmen but could not transcend its national base, i.e. could not by itself achieve a socialist one. Organisationally, its forms were similarly limited - they were conspiratorial, as their military function demanded, but implicit in this was the abandonment of the political struggle. This is correctly illustrated by the development of the IRA.

6. Throughout the 19th century, the North-East maintained its capitalist growth. This was illustrated in the growth of manufacturing towns, the most significant of which was Belfast. At the time of the Union its population had been 20,000 by 1841 it was 70,000 by 1861 it was 119,000.<sup>2</sup> The coming of steam power in 1825 spelt doom for domestic manufacture in its full form. The Famine threw many off the land but the resulting emigration increased the wage levels of the weavers, making steam power more economic. By 1859 Ireland surpassed England in the number of spindles in linen manufacture. By 1866 there were over 10,000 power looms. These tended to be concentrated in the North East, by the middle of the 19th century 1/3rd of the mills in Ireland were in or near Belfast, which accounted for over 1/4 total production. Thus the North East developed a thorough industrial capitalism. Instead of wishing to consolidate the home market the bourgeoisie in industry depended on the imperialist markets of Britain. This developed through the colonial link during the rise of the linen back, itself based on the consequences of colonialism.

With rack rent predominating in Ireland the home market was of dubious value, especially considering the dominant form of land tenure. This illustrates well the reactionary nature of the imperialist stage of capitalism, its disinterest in building a balanced structure for the economy. Thus, although the most advanced stage of capitalism was to be found in the North East, it was not a progressive form and the layer of the bourgeoisie based upon it could not be expected to even attempt the tasks of the bourgeois revolution.

7. With the rise of industrial capitalism the Orange Order managed another great leap backwards. Even before the Famine tension especially in Belfast built up rapidly between Protestant and Catholic layers of the working class. 1835 marked the beginning of serious sectarian riots and these proceeded with ominous regularity. Apart from the obvious (and continual) short term advantage of a split working class the Orange Order developed an explicitly political function. The latter part of the 19th century witnessed the re-emergence of the Irish bourgeoisie in political leadership. Having defeated its landlord section, it could appeal to the peasantry and thereby use this considerable social force to demand concessions from Britain. Such a movement (or rather, as will be shown, the plebian Republican movement that threatened continually to seize the initiative from it) was obviously antagonistic to the north-eastern industrial layer of the bourgeoisie who required a sure Union with Britain, and whose surplus value was ensured by sectarian discrimination that would be threatened by an Irish Parliament in Dublin. Thus, the Orange Order became a real weapon against the developing progressive movement continuing thereby, its link with its pure reactionary origins.

8. The Post-Famine Irish national bourgeoisie was mainly of the "gombeen" layer (service and distributive with some small, mainly agricultural based manufacturers). It managed to utilise the agrarian interest and (helped by the post 1870 decline in rural property values) even to assuage it. It was, essentially, a comprador class based mainly on usury. Where it was industrial like its northern opposite numbers, it was dependent on Britain or its imperial markets. It was thoroughly reformist, interested only in consuming its power politically by achieving "Home Rule": its control of the (at present, British-run) state machine. It was Catholic sectarian: from 1882, the Church played an integral role in its political organisation, and in turn, this did not endear it to the Northern Protestants. Such a class could not carry out the tasks traditionally associated with "its" revolution. In 1914, it accepted not only its limited aim of "Home Rule" but the partition of its country.

The tasks of the bourgeois revolution left over from the United Irishmen were taken up by the skilled workers of the towns. In an undeveloped agrarian society, this layer of the working class retained considerable strength and confidence. However, without a conscious proletariat to stimulate it, it could not develop a consciousness in excess of those dropped by the bourgeoisie after the Famine. Its demands were no more than those that would strengthen its members. Politically, it veered between the Blanquist terrorism of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and the reformism of its most articulate and logical bourgeois politics (the building of Irish industry by tariffs, a mercantile marine, etc.) But he went further; his conscious aim was to strengthen Irish capitalism. Accordingly, on the one hand, he attacked the striking Dublin workers in 1913. Both these facts contributed towards alienating his supporters back into Fenianism.

in 1907 (after a series of false starts) a third claimant appeared for the leadership of the Irish bourgeois revolution. This was that of the unskilled workers, many of whom began to be grouped around Larkin's ITGWU. But it was both politically raw and socially atomised. This can be seen with reference to contemporary Russia. Here the vanguard of the working class was employed in huge industrial factories. This assisted the growth of revolutionary organisations as the experience of the proletariat was a distinctly social one, and the political content of its economic struggles could be demonstrated clearly. The Irish working class, was without such industrial advance - except in the north east. Its vanguard was among the transport workers, a less socially-developed grouping than those in industry. The Irish working class has been unable to develop Leninist organisations.

Outside these classes were the peasants: themselves not only atomised, but divided increasingly with the process of the land reform. The larger peasants became associated increasingly with their former landlords, prospering through their co-operative creameries. The smaller peasants (mainly in the west) suffered from problems of land hunger and were less able to buy out their landlords. And over all was the method used to buy out the latter: the annuity system of tenant purchase, originally counterposed to the traditional Republican demand for land nationalisation. Their heir to feudalism could only be ended by a separate Irish Parliament. And it is in itself would only be the beginning of the land nationalisation of the Land League of 1879, though by 1914, this demand was weakened as a result of the British Land Acts. Until after 1916, the Irish peasantry as a whole, with the exception of some small tenants in large farm areas, was satisfied to follow the gombeenmen as it had since 1880.

Thus in the actual Irish bourgeois revolution, no class was able objectively or subjectively to achieve the aims of such a struggle. Up to 1916 the leadership thereof was headed by a coalition of the movements of the skilled and unskilled workers. After Connolly's murder, his epigones led the subjectively working class organisations out of the War of Independence into the Socialist demand of building the workers' economic power within the political power of the bourgeoisie. This left the petty bourgeoisie to Arthur Griffith and through him to the gombeen men. Helped by the support of the peasantry which it gained through supported agitation against congestion, it could push the gombeenmen somewhat further than they wished, but in practice, it couldn't gain more than formal parliamentary separation: Secretet Bireann instead of Human Rule.

In the north east, the economically most advanced section of the Irish bourgeoisie turned its back finally and decisively on the Irish bourgeois national revolution. On the one hand, the activities in Belfast of Larkin in 1907, Connolly in 1911 and the leaders of the Belfast General Strike in 1919 united Protestant and Catholic workers all determined the Ulster Protestant bourgeoisie to strengthen the sectarian divisions in its working class. On the other hand, the Catholic nature of the bourgeois leadership of the Irish national revolution, and its demand for tariffs, however, formal gave more immediate reasons for the Protestant capitalists founding of a separate state of Northern Ireland. This meant the institutionalising of the division in the working class (through giving 1/3 of the population as Catholic: a permanent but futile threat. The Orange Lodge became an integral part of the ruling party of the new state, further substantiating its ideology.

Similarly, the subsequent Anglo-Irish Treaty and the military suppression of the opposition to it signalled the gombeen men's victory, not over the British but over the vigorous, though leaderless, Irish working class and peasantry. The Gearstat Eireann was more than the 1914 settlement, but itself, only enough to split the Republicans enough to defeat the irreconcilable wing thereof (and then economically the trade unions) without trouble - first. The Government of Gearstat Eireann accepted a Free Trade policy, in contradiction to the traditional aims of the petty bourgeois artisans whose movement its founders had been able to subvert. National unity lay far beyond it - And, as ever the gombeen men's government lent heavily on the Catholic Church, thus further justifying Orange denunciations of "Rome Rule". And the workers who alone could fulfill the tasks of national and agrarian revolutions were divided and demoralised.

10. The world capitalist depression of the thirties developed the contradiction within Irish society. The working class could not take advantage of them. The victory of the Fianna Fail Party in 1932 was based on the social unrest among the small peasants. The victorious Party implemented the economic policies of the young Griffithy, as the Cosgrave Party (Cumann na nGael) had failed totally to do. The ending of the land annuities to Britain began protectionist phase in Ireland's manufacture.

The advanced capitalist layers retaliated by attempting a union with fascism as it was precisely this section which structurally required access to the British market. O'Duffy's Blueshirts were drawn up against the Republicans, as the classes they represented were. Leadership again proved the crucial weakness. The IRA failed to transcend its military structure and develop politically. Thus between the antagonist classes De Valera was allowed to crawl on to the Bonapartist throne. The radical republican wing was played against O'Duffy. The differsion which was achieved tended to blunt the class conflict. Bonapartism can only exist in times of sharp class conflict and thus the stage is soon reached when the party in power, having achieved a measure of stability must then choose its class base. De Valera was true to the tradition of Bonapartist grave diggers. The Coal-Cattle Pact was signed in 1935.

In Belfast, the economic crisis combined with government arrogance, managed to temporarily unite the working class. IRA and UPA fought shoulder to shoulder defending Shankill and Falls against the forces of the crown. What should be noted is not the breaking of the Orange ideology, but its amazing resilience. There were sectarian riots in 1935, directly induced by the Stormont Government.

The profound economic and social crises had revealed that the land and national questions were still concrete. The failure of any viable revolutionary leadership to materialise had allowed Republicanism to be channeled into the Fianna Fail Party. Its strength, however, can be gauged by the defeat of the Blueshirts, even though de Valera conceded. In the North, the survival of the state illustrated the durability of the sectarian institutions and thus of the ideology

11. The IRA campaign 1956-62 illustrates the limitations of a purely military organisation. The relation between the political consciousness of its class base and the military structure is an arbitrary and non dialectical one. The Republican community community was not mobilised and defeat was the only conclusion.

The theory of the IRA was basically an idealist diversion of the materialist dialectic - the fish were stranded on high ground. In revolutionary theory, military tactics only override political directives when the stage of civil war is reached. It is not military action which brings about the civil war, but the political struggle which differentiates the class structure into its antagonistic sections. Only in the time of sharp class struggle does the military perspective prevail, and even then it is within strict political limits. In contradicting this the IRA illustrated its petty bourgeois (peasant and artisan) conspiratorial origins.

12. The original material base for the national question, land, had been eroded in accordance to the law of capitalist accumulation. There has been a drastic and continuing fall in the number employed in the agricultural sector<sup>5</sup>. The solution of the land question was found in massive emigration from the land. There has been a progressive increase in the weight of the industrial sector and thus of the proletariat, especially in the 26 counties. The conclusion from this is that the basis of the national question is no longer to be found in the land. In the same way, with the development of capitalism, independent skilled workers, from whom the Republican Movement drew its most active members was steadily driven out of business and proletarianised. This was a quantitative rather than a qualitative process.

Further, the visible basis for old Republican beliefs - the continued survival of an independent Irish Industrial capitalism was eliminated the development of that capitalism in practice and its inability to grow as an independent force.

13. The declaration in 1965 of Free Trade between the 26 counties and Britain (after 10 years of "open house" to foreign industries) marked the burial of "progressive" capitalism, and its failure to resist imperialism. The 26 counties has been assimilated within the British economic structure and its character is of neo colonialism. Entry into the Common Market will see the further decline of Irish manufacture. Any control over the economy that the rich bourgeois has will increasingly be surrendered to international capital. Already Free Trade has helped towards large redundancies and high unemployment. The traditional remedy of emigration has been restricted by the recession in the British economy. The British bourgeoisie therefore wish to consummate the bourgeois revolution in Ireland by introducing the democratic norms of the Orange Order and prevented in the early 20th century. The implementation of this would ensure the first operation of commercial relations.

14. The bourgeois democratic demands of the Civil Rights Movement were met, not with concessions, but with the violence of the state. The national question returned forcefully to the political scene with the Catholic section of the N. Ireland working class militantly Republican. The Northern ruling class has no longer any economic need of the imperialist market of Britain. The sectors which required this at the beginning of the century have declined substantially and the main development has been in the attraction of international capital. The interest of the ruling class thus lies in democracy. However, the government of N. Ireland, itself is an expression of sectarianism in its constitution - clising of the Orange Order. A thoroughly reactionary structure is thus called upon to undertake progressive tasks, i.e. the granting of democracy.



The Junkers of Germany were instrumental in the development of capitalism thus transcending the contradiction between feudalism and capitalism. However, the analogy is lost in the case of Ireland. There is no progressive capitalism, and there are no feudal relations to break - the existing social relations are thoroughly capitalist. Thus the task of the ruling class is a purely political one. But to dismantle the state of Northern Ireland, which the removal of the Orange Order from the institution would amount to, would be the ideology upon which they rule.

Being determined, the Protestant layers of the N. Ireland working class exists in a privileged position vis a vis the Catholic layers. This is the concrete expression of the Orange ideology. The forces of production, slow as they have moved, have outstripped the super structure. It was the primitive response of the state to the Civil Rights agitation which insured its escalation to armed struggle. The IRA was positioned within the Catholic layers of the working class. This strengthened the Orange ideology in as much as it made it explicit. The croppies were to lie down.

Thus the ruling class of N. Ireland and its manipulator, British Imperialism were faced with the choice - either smash the basis of state by exercising the Orange Order or suppress the Catholic layers and then reform. There has been an historical tendency for the Orange Lodge to assume a dynamic of its own. If the bourgeoisie abdicate control the conditions would favour a very strong reaction. With the British Army being increasingly used as a political weapon of Stormont the choice taken has become clear. Either involves a contradiction: the motive behind any political action of the British is to ensure class stability, and both the courses open to it require a powerful military involvement.

15. (a) The incompleteness of the bourgeois revolution has led to political contradictions which are based upon the national question.

(b) National unity, the introduction of bourgeois-democratic norms require the smashing of the Orange ideology, which is institutionalised in the Northern State, and (though this may be less of a task) of destroying the confessional nature of the 26 County Republic.

(c) The only class capable of this is the working class as neither section of the Irish bourgeoisie is capable of mobilising sufficient force without contradicting the class interest motivating it.

(d) The socialist revolution cannot develop without the Protestant layers of the working class, but its inclusion first requires the destruction of its ideology.

(e) As part of the task the Catholic sectarianism of the 26 County Republic must be exposed and denounced at every turn. This is particularly necessary in that there is a real danger that as the national struggle develops the bourgeoisie of the Republic will try to divert it into introverted Xenophobic and Catholic Sectarian lines.

16. Our tasks therefore are to extend political and national solidarity to those forces which are attempting to crush the Stormont state. This is most vigorously undertaken by the Provisional IRA. This organisation particularly suffers from the historical limitations of the petty bourgeois conspiratorial groups

It is essentially non-political - which means that it is open to influence from non-Socialist, or even anti-Socialist forces. Its limitations are shown by its opposition to spreading the national struggle into the 26 Counties, as exemplified most concretely by its action (or rather, inaction) in the Republic during the week after the Derry murders.

Gardiner Place is more correct on the all-Irish nature of the struggle, but its tendency is to depend on the peaceful struggle - north and south. This is shown most glaringly in Northern Ireland for which the United Irishman is still calling on British Imperialism to implement a Bill of Rights.

The political perspective of both wings of the Republican Movement is bound to lead into a blind alley. (i) The illusions of the Provo leadership in Fianna Fail and their refusal to link the struggle North and South. (ii) The Reformist politics of the Official leadership as expressed in their stages theory, undermines the basis for a victorious solution to the national question. It must be politically and socially deepened and made total. The Six County Statelet must be smashed and the struggle linked north and south in face of Orange opposition.

Therefore we should support the Civil Resistance Campaign in Northern Ireland in Northern Ireland insofar as it is:-

- (a) based on the democratic street committees of the nationalist community;
- (b) backed by the militant Kevin Street Republicans;
- (c) backed also by the socialist People's Democracy.

(This does not exclude our support for the progressive struggles of other groups such as NICRA.

VICTORY TO THE NATIONAL STRUGGLE - SOLIDARITY WITH THE IRA

SLASH THE ORANGE STATE

SPREAD THE STRUGGLE - NORTH AND SOUTH

FOR A SECULAR SOCIALIST WORKERS' REPUBLIC

FOR A UNITED SOCIALIST STATES OF EUROPE

FOR WORLD SOCIALISM

(Note: It may seem a bit abstract just saying that the working class is the only class capable of achieving the tasks of the bourgeois revolution. Unfortunately, there is little more concrete to say due to the political development of the class. Its strongest (though only partial) expression is in the Republican Movement. The Provos operate in a political vacuum and the "Stickies" accept reform content to allow the bourgeois democrats to power on the backs of workers. Thus the orientation to the National Question is precisely to develop the political consciousness of the working class, to attempt to draw the struggle from its present blind alley. In the 6 Counties it is of vital importance, while in the 26 Counties a much more broad Secular Socialist approach is likely to be more successful. Needless to say the conclusions will be the same.

# Permanent Revolution

To make the proletarian revolution one needs the revolutionary party, but equally, the purpose of such a party is to make the revolution. To oppose the two tasks as is done by on the one hand, the sectarians, and on the other, the hard-line Castroites, is, in itself, wrong. The party is strengthened by involvement in revolution and, more importantly, the revolution itself is likely to be carried to success only by the party.

These truisms probably accepted by all sections of the Irish left that have pretensions to being followers of Lenin- from the BICO to tendencies in Sinn Fein(Gardiner Place). But it is the question of how to interpret this idea in practice that divides these groupings. All are agreed that the revolutionary party must base itself on something called "Dialectical Materialism" but what this means in revolutionary practice, is a cause for dissension.

The Revolutionary Marxist Group is a Trotskyist group. As such it holds that Dialectical Materialism finds its expression in the strategy of Permanent Revolution and that accordingly, the organization to carry it out is a party of international revolution. Against it, on the one hand are those who insist, dogmatically, that the revolution will be in "two, distinct stages"(or, often, more than two stages). On the other hand are the ultra-left economists who insist, equally dogmatically, on a "One Stage" theory of struggle on purely proletarian issues, leaving the tasks associated with the bourgeois revolution to the bourgeoisie!

As against these, the Permanent Revolution is less easy to formulate- which is why so many have failed to carry it out. Its basic tenet is not so much to ignore the stages as to avoid being hypnotized by them. Its practitioner insists on utilising the energies of all classes and of activists in all causes that can help the proletariat towards state power, but, at the same time, he never forgets that the purpose of the exercise is that the proletariat take this state power. In its turn this seizure of power must be no less than a step towards the world-wide classless stateless society. Such a recognition means a constant refusal to allow the given situation to consolidate, except where it cannot be avoided or where few developments towards a revolutionary situation. As its title implies,, Permanent or, more correctly, uninterrupted Revolution means working to establish and maintain a revolutionary situation. However, this is rather different from the Stalinites'slander that it means seeing revolutionary situations where there are none. The Trotskyist knows well enough Lenin's definition of such a situation: one in which the mass of the people want a change and in which the government cannot continue in the same way. However, unlike the Stalinite, he turns his energies to help achieve this desirable position, unlike the Stalinite, he uses every opportunity towards this(as Lenin pointed out the very bourgeois case of the wrongfully condemned Captain Dreyfus was one such), and, unlike the Stalinite, he struggles to force through the revolution "in permanence" to the end.

But all this is still, very schematic. To understand the Permanent Revolution, it is necessary to relate its operation-or the failure to operate it- to the concrete historical situations in which its practitioners (or betrayers) found themselves.

## HISTORICAL ORIGINS

As a concept it dates back to the Communist Manifesto. However it was inherent in the situations of bourgeois revolution going back to the Reformation. In 1536, the Reformers took power in the German diocese of Munster. However, it soon became clear that the situation resulting was not to be stabilised as it had been elsewhere in Germany. The Anabaptist artisans rose up after the Lutheran bourgeoisie, seized control and proclaimed the Kingdom of Christ on Earth. This was quite different from previous peasant-based risings. These were limited in their aims either to bourgeois reforms (the ending, or reduction, of Feudal dues, etc.) or to a return to a previous Golden Age. The workers of Munster spoke for the future and were punished far more ferociously than the revolting peasants, when their rising failed. Of course, it is not necessary to explain why it had to fail, or why such succeeding precursors of Permanent Revolution as the Levellers struggle in the British bourgeois revolution or Jacques Roux or Gracchus Baboeuf's struggles in that of France had to fail. It is enough to say that each of these represents a development in the consciousness of the revolutionaries concerned from Protestant mysticism to petty bourgeois Socialist nationalism. Again, it is worth noticing another strand of the theory in embryo; all these outbursts were part of international proletarian struggles.

After Baboeuf the decisive revolutionary role, aided by the growth of the proletariat moved to that class, and, with it, along with the formulation of Dialectical Materialism, went the formulation of the strategy of Permanent Revolution. In each case, the original exponents were Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels.

In section IV of their Manifesto of the Communist Party, the first Communist theoreticians present briefly the basics of the strategy. There are, firstly, the working of the proletariat for the bourgeois revolution as an entity independent and critical of the revolutionary bourgeoisie and purely as a means of building up their own strength vis-a-vis that bourgeoisie for their own, proletarian, revolution. Secondly, there is the international aim of world revolution that is to be achieved through the victory of the revolution, in this case, in Germany.

Of course, the Communist Manifesto was written in a revolutionary situation that proved to be abortive. On the one hand the German proletariat (the most developed on the European sub-continent at the time) was still not developed enough to take the lead in the struggle for state power. On the other hand, it was long enough for its bourgeoisie to avoid fighting too actively for sole state power and to compromise in its struggle with the landlord class against which it was supposed to fight. On this basis, and helped by an economic boom, reaction was able to establish itself firmly.

However, before its strength had been made clear, Marx & Engels expanded and developed the strategic theory of Permanent Revolution in their First Address of the Central Committee of the Communist League to its Members in Germany, written in March, 1850. This document was, of course, a call to arms in a struggle that was not to be immediately joined. Nonetheless, 36 years later Friedrich Engels was to commend it as a guide to action "on the occasion of the next European upheaval now due."

The First Address (the Second was, by the way, merely a more detailed account of the international situation) was not simply written at the end of a period

of bourgeois revolution. It was written after the revolution had achieved its chief aim; the bourgeoisie held state power. On the other hand, it was not able to do anything with it (though, as Bismark was to show, it could still do more than similar bourgeoisies in the era of the "Highest stage of Capitalism"). Accordingly the tasks associated with the bourgeois revolution were taken up by a petty-bourgeois opposition to the successful bourgeoisie. This "Democratic Party" gained some support among the more backward workers and sought to gain more support by the offer of reforms in working class conditions. Thus it hoped to cause the class to desert and avoid the Communist League. This tendency was complemented by a Syndicalist-Economist movement under one Stephan Born, which concentrated mainly on economic issues and trade union organization. While Born's movement was smashed, after 1850, his activities had and helped weaken the German Workers vis-a-vis the "Democratic Party". Thus, the tendencies in and of the working-class against which Marxism has always been opposed had already appeared. Thus, too, the First Address is, in part, the description of the alternative strategy to those of the petty-bourgeois tendencies.

This strategy consists firstly in simply maintaining intact an alternative political and military leadership of the working-class during the petty-bourgeois democratic stage of the revolution. Secondly it consists in that leadership preventing the victors of that part of the struggle from consolidating their power against the workers. To that extent, the workers' leaders must ignore all petty-bourgeois appeals for unity and assert their separate identity and the extreme actions and specific, separate demands of their class. They must put themselves one jump ahead of the petty-bourgeois democrats (no consideration here of the cry that they might isolate themselves from the workers). And, finally, they might anticipate the aid given their cause by a French proletarian revolution and act, accordingly, as part of an European struggle.

The work concludes with the actual words of a battle cry for the League, "The Permanent Revolution!"

The strategy of Permanent Revolution as seen by Marx & Engels is significant, more generally, for two things: it is, in the literal sense of the word, a strategy of two stages (or, indeed, three; before, during and after the petty bourgeois revolution). But the point is that it refers to these stages according to their objective nature, rather than according to the tasks set themselves by the petty bourgeois revolutionaries. For the Central Committee of the Communist League, the petty bourgeois seizure of state power was simply to be related to the seizure of state power by the workers. Whether the petty bourgeois Democrats ever, actually, carried out any of their proposals was not so much unlikely as irrelevant. The workers were, basically, not interested in the petty bourgeois revolution, except insofar as it weakened the political and social order to help them to power.

It is particularly important to notice this for one reason, the development plotted for the Permanent Revolution in Germany was very like that actually carried out by the process in Russia, 67 years later.

But, in the meantime, the revolutionary promise that the Communist League had been in March, 1850 was wiped out by the objective facts before the year was out. The League split between the Marxists and the Ultra-Leftists who accepted the Utopian beliefs of the petty bourgeois revolutionaries in the revolutiona-

ry possibilities of the situation. In two years both factions had been liquidated.

For more than 50 years, there was little development of the strategy of Permanent Revolution beyond the framework described by Marx & Engels. This was not because the period was uneventful. On the contrary, it saw the rise and fall of the First International and the rise of the Second. It saw the Paris Commune, or the World's first working class government. It saw the building of several industrial states of mass working-class parties paying lip-service to Marxist politics. It saw in other countries smaller parties paying such lip-service. The two last points deserve more mention.

While Marxism affected the proletariat of many lands, it was misunderstood by the their leaders in many cases. In particular, the strategy of Permanent Revolution was confused by those who might be expected, on their claims, to understand it. In Germany, the Social Democratic Party was founded in 1875 by a fusion of the actual Marxists with the group founded by Ferdinand Lassalle. Lassalle had understood the strategy so little that he was prepared to offer his services and those of his followers to the right-wing bourgeois Chancellor of Prussia, Otto von Bismarck. While this tendency was attacked by the Marxists, there was a long period of persecution, followed by one of consolidation and legal activity all within the context of the relatively peaceful expansion of the new German imperialism. This led many Social Democrats to doubt the need for revolution, let alone Permanent Revolution.

#### IRELAND AND CONNOLLY.

Among the small, non-industrial, where Marxism appeared on a relatively small scale, was Ireland. Marx and Engels had given critical support to the Fenians and had backed the struggle of the Irish for self-determination and independence, land reform and tariffs. However, they did not believe that any Revolution could work in Ireland until Britain had been forced, either by constitutional means, or by embarrassment during an imperialist war, to surrender to its colony some form of self-government. Permanent Revolution certainly could not be carried out, either, until the peasants had been emancipated.

But, towards the end of Engel's life, the conditions for Socialism in Ireland began to appear more hopeful. The growth of foreign competition in agricultural goods reduced the value of land and justified the state's subsidies of the peasant's purchase of his own land. The Irish bourgeoisie interpreted self-government as "Home Rule" (for the control of government patronage in Ireland). The Revolutionary Nationalist Fenian Movement (always an organisation of the skilled workers) began to split, some of its members drifting into Socialism. In 1896 James Connolly set up his Irish Socialist Republican Party and began the struggle against the bourgeois tendencies in the Irish working-class. In practice, he put his tiny group at the head of nationalist agitations such as that against the Jubilee of "The Famine Queen" Victoria, and that commemorating the national bourgeoisie rising of the United Irishmen in 1898. The undeveloped nature of the Irish working-class enabled the bourgeois politicians to outflank him after 1900 and he emigrated in 1903. However, the development of the industrial organisation of unskilled labour gave him a basis from which he could develop his strategy and he returned in 1910. His strategy is important because he was one of the first to realise that not only would the workers be unwise to allow the capitalists to carry out the tasks associated with their evolution, but that such tasks could no longer be carried out by the capitalists, in the period of developing imperialism.

For, while the development of the Working Class Movement had proceeded, so too had that of the capitalism. The bourgeoisie became increasingly cosmopolitan and, increasingly contracted. Industrial and finance capital began to merge, with finance capital taking the dominant role. In this way, the remaining progressive functions of the industrial capitalists and their parties were eliminated the petty bourgeoisie became less able to carry out progressive tasks by themselves. As against this, there was a general growth of the proletariat both in numbers and in consciousness and, outside Europe the growth of national feeling against the exploitation stimulated by the new, imperialist, trusts. The bourgeoisie could no longer play a progressive role in practice. Its principal tasks had to be taken over by the workers.

This was particularly true of Russia, where the contradictions of capitalism in its imperialist form were more extreme than elsewhere. Industry had been established over a small part of the country, but it had developed to a higher technical degree than elsewhere. a larger proportion of Russian industries employed over 1,000 workers than in other countries. At the same time, the bourgeoisie that presided over this development was weak, unable to stand up by itself either to the landlords and international cartels on the one hand or to its own workers on the other. Thus absolutism still dominated and the serfs were liberated only on terms satisfactory to the landlords. The bourgeois revolution and its tasks had yet to be achieved. The bourgeoisie was unable to carry them out.

Yet the proletariat was stronger and better disciplined than in the more advanced capitalist states.

In these circumstances, a Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, affiliated to the Second International was formed in 1898. It soon divided along the lines previously distinguished: between the Marxists who aimed at creating a vanguard party to seize state power, and the Economists, or Mensheviks, with their emphasis on the economic struggle of the workers as the means of raising the latter's consciousness.

These facts must be kept in mind when considering the development of theory on the subject of Permanent Revolution. It has suited the interests of Lenin epigones to portray his writings at the time of the defeated Russian democratic revolution of 1905 as being directed against Trotsky's perfection of the strategy. The facts are rather different. In Lenin's Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution, Trotsky is mentioned only twice: in footnotes added after the event. The brunt of the attack falls on the minority (Menshevik) wing of the RSDCP in general and, in particular on its prominent ideologist A Martynov (Incidentally, Martynov became subsequently, and after service in one of the counter-revolutionary governments of the Russian Civil War, a loyal follower of J V Stalin). As a result of their economism and their downgrading of the political struggle, Mensheviks had committed themselves to accepting the claims of the Liberal bourgeoisie as to its ability to achieve the full democratic programme associated with its revolution. As a result, they took an abstentionist line towards the state power that would be needed to carry out such reforms.

#### THE TACTICS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

In reply to this attitude, Lenin wrote his Two Tactics. This is a pamphlet that requires the Marxist technique in reading it. It is a positive fools gold mine of quotations to be torn from their context in the use of incorrect ideologists. Perhaps more than anything else, Lenin wrote, it has to be read as a whole, its parts related to each other and to the totality. In particular, "The Resolution on a Provisional Revolutionary Government" towards the defence of which Lenin directs most of the pamphlet cannot be understood properly without his analysis of the situation in which it was passed and his explanation of what it means.

The Resolution is to the effect that, to achieve the aims of the democratic revolution, a revolutionary provisional government will have to be established. Social democrats might hold office under such a Government, although under the strict control of their Party. In any case, such participation would be solely for the purpose of obtaining all reforms of the democratic revolution. This might seem to be a revision of Marx and Engels' Address. But it is based on Lenin's class analysis: his recognition of the treachery of the bourgeois leaders of the revolution arising out of their class position. Accordingly only the proletariat and the rural petty bourgeoisie (the peasantry) can carry out the revolution's programme.

For Lenin, the revolution under the leadership of the objectively democratic classes cannot go beyond the minimum reforms of the Social Democratic programme. It cannot be a Socialist Revolution. However, he does point out that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry is only an intermediate stage and he does not estimate how long it will last. However, his expectation (surprising for the author of a work that would be used by advocates of "Socialism in a Single Country") is that the revolution will be helped to its socialist stage most likely by setting off revolutions of the larger proletariats of Europe. He does not go into these matters very deeply. He does not answer Trotsky's objections to them, mainly because at the time of his writing, Trotsky had not presented them formally.

When Trotsky did finally produce his work Results and Prospects as a prisoner of the counter-revolution, it was as the result of two years consideration. His pamphlet is considerably more finished than the essentially polemical Two Stages. He is able to reconsider points that Lenin prepared to reiterate as being of little importance. In these circumstances, he points out the two significant facts that Lenin had ignored. (Again, neither of them, concerned directly, the International Nature of the Socialist Society) which they both agreed Trotsky's analysis brings out, firstly, the role of the peasantry in the revolution as being, necessarily subordinate to that of the proletariat (due to its fragmented individualist nature). Secondly, and partly arising from this, he insists on the counter-revolutionary nature of any attempt to limit the revolution to its democratic stage or to prevent its development into a Socialist dictatorship. He points out the very real possibilities of crisis facing a "democratic dictatorship" which has not moved to limit drastically capitalist property relations. For example how can one of the traditional minimum demands of social democracy, the eight hour day be enforced except through nationalising industries? A government that tried to enforce the eight-hour day (as the democratic dictatorship must do or lose its proletarian support) without nationalisations would face economic blackmail (lockouts, boycotts, etc.) from the employers. These two findings are backed by considerable historical and political analysis of the nature and development of the bourgeoisie both in Russia in particular, and internationally, in general. In particular, in an analysis of the democratic revolutions of 1848, he distinguishes four groups besides the bourgeoisie, that might have taken the leadership of the democratic struggle: the proletariat and the peasantry, plus the two sections of the urban petty bourgeoisie that class proper (the artisan) and the intellectual democrats (mainly the students). Like Lenin he writes off the role of both these groups last named in the Russian revolution - correctly as it proved. The significance of these groups will be seen in relation to Ireland. The great weakness of Results and Prospects is its author's avoidance of the role of the Bolshevik Party. Eleven years after the publication of Results and Prospects Russia rose again in the February (March) Revolution of 1917. A provisional government was established, but so, too, as in 1905 though on a broader scale was an alternative network of Workers' Councils, or "Soviets". The Mensheviks, believing in the ability of the bourgeoisie to carry out its progressive role preached the subordination of the soviets to the provisional government.



The Bolsheviks were less certain. Many of those who had stayed in Russia notably G B Kamenev, but including J V Stalin, supported the Menshevik line. They pointed out that the tasks of the bourgeois revolution (most notably in the sphere of agrarian reform) had not been achieved. Accordingly, was not it the duty of Bolsheviks to enter the Provisional Government, to push it to the left and to carry out agrarian and constitutional reforms? They considered that the Provisional Government could be forced to drop its bourgeois ministers and become "the Dictatorship of Proletariat and Peasantry, i.e. the first stage of the revolution.

On his trip to Russia from Switzerland, Lenin denounced this view in his April Theses. Here he explains the concrete situation to his party, warning them against too rigorous an adherence to outworn revolutionary formulae. He pointed out that a situation of dual power existed in Russia; that, because of the failure of the proletariat to push through the recent February Revolution the bourgeoisie had been able to usurp state power through its Provisional Government. However, it had been unable to prevent the establishment of the Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry. What had happened was that it had limited a potential Socialist Revolution to just such an order. Its organs now existed in the form of the Soviets. The task of revolutionaries was to assert this Dictatorship against that of the bourgeoisie. Only by doing so, could they carry out the tasks associated traditionally with the revolution of the bourgeoisie which could not achieve them itself.

To this policy, Lenin won the Bolshevik Party. On the basis of this, Trotsky joined the Party. In October (November) 1917, the Democratic Dictatorship of Proletariat and Peasantry overthrew that of the bourgeoisie, upon which Lenin announced the Bolsheviks' intention of establishing the Socialist Order. The "Democratic Dictatorship" could only exist under "Dual Power". With the triumph of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat albeit backed by the Peasantry, Russia was, in fact, a Socialist State; it looked to the developing international revolution to establish a Socialist Society.

### THE STRUGGLE IN IRELAND

In the meantime, in Ireland, the revolution was being lost. As in Russia, the bourgeoisie could not carry out the tasks of its revolution: the industrial bourgeoisie had acclimatized itself to the status quo of the British market and was not interested in national independence for Ireland. The very numerous gombeen (or "usurious") bourgeoisie had little interest in much beyond "Home Rule" or the transfer of control of the Irish State bureaucracy to its own class. The larger and medium peasantry had been quietened by its "purchase" of its own land. In practice, the leadership of the national democratic revolution passed to the working class along with the artisans and, particularly, the "intellectual Democrats". In the background was the smaller peasantry, but in 1916, it was not directly represented.

Of these classes, only the workers could provide consistent leadership of the national struggle, such as would mean its continuance into the establishment of a Workers' Republic and International Socialism. The leader of the Citizen Army, the specifically working class force in the Rising in 1916, James Connolly, certainly had such a perspective.

But like Trotsky until 1917, and like Rosa Luxemburg until even later, he did not know how to organise to achieve this. He did vaguely see the Citizen Army as a future centre of proletarian struggle even against his comrades in the national fight. Even so he did not encourage its expansion vis-a-vis the petty bourgeois Irish Volunteers. Indeed there is evidence that he may even have discouraged it. He was in organisation theory, a Syndicalist, a developed type of Economist. For him, the industrial union, the ITCWU could build up workers' power within the shell of the bourgeois state, perhaps even regardless of the political situation. This optimism was shared by all the advanced elements of the Irish working class. It was the product of that class lack of development: of its lack of an industrial base comparable to that of Russia: of the late development of its industrial organisation.

And so, once Connolly was murdered, there were no cadres able to take his place. Scientific socialism went into suspended animation. The Syndicalism of the remaining leaders of Irish Labour was far more pronounced than that of Connolly. They carried it into the full range of political strategy. Again, they adopted a "Two Stage" strategy summarised in the formula: "First the Republic, then the Workers' Republic". They gave formal, if often useful support to the struggle for the former. Their main energies were given to building the industrial organisation that, they thought, could alone secure the latter.

Without working-class leadership, and with the enthusiastic support of such as Arthur Griffith, the petty bourgeois Republican leaders accepted the influence of Unionist and "Home Rule" businessmen. Such people got their reward when the struggle against Britain was stopped, rather than escalated (which would have meant far reaching Socialist policies) in 1921. They accepted readily and consciously, a compromise agreement.

The rank and file Republicans were mainly working class (or small peasant), they recognised that the new "Saorstát Eireann" was not (even in name) the Republic for which they had fought. The country was partitioned: the hegemony of the King of England was recognised. They tried to hold up the betrayal. The result was Civil War. In it, because of leaders who mostly shared the petty bourgeois outlook of their Treatyite opponents, the Republicans were smashed.

But this was merely the political shadow of the current economic struggle that was proceeding between Irish employers and their workers. While the leaders of the former were united behind the Saorstát, the leaders of the latter were divided. Many had already taken a more active Republican line than their leaders and had, accordingly, entered consciously petty bourgeois (or like Joseph McGrath) pure bourgeois, Saorstát politics. Those who remained divided as working class bodies on the Treaty. The majority declared that it was neutral on the issue, but in fact, it accepted that it had solved the national problem. It soon revealed itself as openly reformist and concentrated increasingly on the results of Saorstát elections. This was the Irish Labour Party. The other, minority group, the Communist Party of Ireland, continued to apply what amounted to a tailist line towards the petty bourgeois Anti-Treatyites. Neither group tried to escalate the national struggle into a social struggle. Accordingly, the Irish working-class was disarmed and then suffered the greatest defeat in its history.

#### SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY v. THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION

In turn, this was just one, national event in the overall defeat of the world working class in the early 1920's - outside Russia. Even in Russia, the isolation of the world's first workers' state resulting from its comrades' defeat elsewhere encouraged a regime of scarcity. This meant that the governing

bureaucrats of the state were able to gain a definite advantage over the workers and peasants themselves. They thus had a vested interest in keeping Russia isolated. They found their spokesman in the new General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: J V Stalin..

Stalin's attack on the fully developed theory of Permanent Revolution was initially published in his Foundations of Leninism during the Spring of 1929. It was put forward as part of a political faction fight with Trotsky, as his rival for the succession to Lenin. To discredit Trotsky, he had to destroy his (and, of course eventually Lenin's) strategy. Accordingly, Stalin began to praise "Leninism" - but a selective "Leninism": literally the "Leninism" of before 1917 as if not Results and Prospects, but April Theses had never been written. The immediate theoretical result of this was merely greater confusion. The questions of the relationship of proletariat and peasantry and of the bourgeois revolution that Lenin and Trotsky had answered, were raised, again, as if no such answer had been given.

But the full development of Stalinist ideology came several months later, in the Autumn of 1924. In the Foundations, Stalin had recognised the international nature of the struggle for Socialism. Now, he turned the emphasis in a direction to help the interests of his friends, the bureaucrats, far more. He began to announce the possibility of building a Socialist society in one country. This was not new in itself. The Social Democratic Parties that, in 1914 accepted the leadership of their national bourgeoisies in the First World War were, expressing their beliefs in this, in a very practical way. Stalin did not write much to expand this idea, perhaps because it could not bear development. However, in one important matter Stalinism departed from the Social-Chauvinisms of the Mendersons and the Eberts. Unlike their Chauvinisms, it represented the interests of a Labour bourgeoisie in an established Workers' State. This did not make it altogether superior to its predecessors. In one matter Stalinism outdid them. Stalin killed more Communists than either Menderson (one of Connolly's killers) or Ebert, the murderer of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

But what was involved in the adherence of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union towards "Socialism in One Country"? In the first place, it meant that, as Socialism could thus be achieved, the forces of the Communist Parties of the World, the Communist International had to give this job priority. The Communist Parties were discouraged from seeking state power for fear of rocking their national boats and causing their national governments to attack the USSR.

This was not done deliberately. Dependence on the unvarnished line of the Two Tactics provided theoretical justification for the strategies that the national Communist Parties followed. Thus the idea "Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry" justified the subservience of the Communist Party of China to Chiang Kai Shek's Kuomintang until Chiang was ready to turn on it and to exterminate it. Even more significant was the use of the confusion as to the bourgeois revolution. Lenin made clear in April Theses that, once the bourgeoisie had taken power, its actual revolution was at an end. The proletariat now had to begin to overthrow the new regime. The new, Stalinite line that developed was one of support for the bourgeoisie until "its" revolution was completed. To attempt to achieve power for the proletariat was out of the question. That class (a wry, and unacknowledged, gesture to Trotsky, here) would try to act irresponsibly, to force the revolution into its Socialist stage, thus alienating the peasantry.

This view was the justification for the refusals to advance on the part of the Communist Parties of Spain (in 1936), Greece (1944) and Vietnam (in 1945), all of whom paid in blood for their mistakes.

Incidentally, the "Two Stage" theory did not exhaust Stalin's inventiveness. It is worth noticing (especially when we consider the fuss made about the notorious "Northern Irish Bill of Rights") that for under-developed countries, notably China, he developed a Three Stage Theory. This was not just "First the Republic; then the Workers' Republic, but "First the Democratic Republic; then the non-colonial Republic; and only then, the Workers' Republic".

Against Trotskyism, the Stalinites levelled the charges:

- (1) That it ignored the clear difference between bourgeois and socialist revolutions.
- (2) That it excluded the peasantry from its calculations, accordingly.
- (3) That it underestimated the power of the Western European proletariat not at this time to take power (Stalin was less than interested in it doing that) but to pressurise its bourgeoisie not to attack Russia.
- (4) That it denied the ability of the Russian proletariat to achieve "Socialism in One Country".

Trotsky replied to these charges in 1928 in the summary of his theory Permanent Revolution. He pointed out, at first, three main points: that the democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolutions in the underdeveloped countries led directly to the dictatorship of the proletariat: that permanent revolution meant that for the imperialist age, a constantly fluctuating social and political situation, and that to achieve the Socialist society, the national revolution had to be continued on to the international sphere. At the end of his pamphlet, he expanded these points into 14 statements. Shorn of the polemic, these stressed again, the points mentioned, as to the "Permanent Uninterrupted" character of the Revolution. They stressed also to the subordinate but in colonial countries, necessary role of the peasantry to the proletariat in the struggle to achieve the national and agrarian reforms. They stated the necessity for a Communist Party to lead the proletariat to power and pointed out that the laws of the combined and uneven development meant that there was no class or country that could be written off or its objective conditions as ripe for the proletariat to take state power.

This last thesis of Trotsky has been abundantly justified in the history of the Socialist Revolution. Since he published his statement, China, Vietnam, Korea, Yugoslavia, Albania, Cuba: none of these would be considered ripe for proletarian revolution by Stalin's Comintern of the 1920's.

But what of the other points. There is certainly no reason to believe that a Socialist Society can be achieved in one country, as long as the proletariat has achieved state power. Stalin declared that it had been done in 1936 and he promptly massacred his old comrades in case they might disagree. Even so, his achievement is very little compared to Cuba's communal (and free) services.

On the point of the Communist Party, Cuba stands as evidence that this is not always necessary. Nonetheless, it is very much the exception that proves the rule.

The real query comes on the original point. How far (if at all) is the Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry a possible (let alone a necessary) stage in the Proletarian Revolution? It has often been assumed by the Maoists that the rôle of Mao Tse Tung during the War of Liberation against Japan amounted to a similar rôle to that of the Soviets during the period of Dual Power in 1917. Hence, it is argued that Lenin's concept of "the Democratic Dictatorship" is a normal and necessary stage as part of a "Dual Power" situation preparatory to full Proletarian Dictatorship.

This is, of course, an improvement of normal Stalinite theory - just as Nazism has been able to ignore much of the worst crudities of Stalinism. Nonetheless, there are objections to it. For example, it does not altogether account for the course of the revolutions in Yugoslavia, or in Cuba. It might be argued, too, that the Maoite view is excessively schematic: that there is no guarantee the "Dual Power" situation, as both Mao and Lenin found, does not provide a sure passage towards the Proletarian Dictatorship (though this is a weak argument, a sophisticated Maoite would point out, correctly that there is no sure way to Workers' Power). Finally, there is the somewhat nit-picking point that in China during its War of Liberation there was not "Dual" but "Treble Power", there being three governments claiming control of China: that of Mao, that of Chiang and that of the Quisling, Wang. This is not really so academic, for of course, Mao was (formally) in Coalition with Chiang and the "Dual Power" that existed was, strictly, as between the Chiang regime, of one area of which Mao was in control and the Japanese and their support. And the Chiang-Mao relationship was no more the "Democratic Dictatorship" than the previous Kuomintang-Communist combination of the 1920's. Above all, even in the Communist held areas the Democratic forms of the 3-Party Governments concealed the reality: that actual power was in the hands of Mao's People's Liberation Army.

But the most telling charge yet to be made by history as well as by Maoites and Foguistas - against Trotsky's Strategy of Permanent Revolution. Does not the victory of the essentially peasant - based struggles of China and of Cuba prove that, in his insistence on the subordinate rôle of the peasantry, Trotsky was, after all underestimating the peasants? There is something in this, but it is not very much. Certainly, Trotsky did not imagine that the proletariat could come to power from such a rural basis as Mao and Castro used. Nonetheless as has been shown he carefully ruled out excessive emphasis on the objective situation in a country. And while there was, no doubt, an element of substitutionism on the process, there can be no doubt that, in composition and ideology the CPC and in composition alone, the Castro Foco were working class bodies, representing the leadership of the Proletariat over the peasantry. It should however be recognised that the peasants of China and of Cuba (as of elsewhere in the "Third World") were at a lower stage of liberation than those of Russia. Though not proletarians, their potential was closer to that of proletarians than was their opposite number in Russia or, certainly the developed capitalist countries.

#### PERMANENT REVOLUTION IN IRELAND

(And this brings the paper to Ireland and to the perspectives for Permanent Revolution here.)

Certainly it can be agreed that what will achieve the Workers' State will only be described by Diplomats as the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry. In Northern Ireland, it is only Gardiner Place and Pearse Street that

hopes to limit the struggle to democratic aims. Except in certain areas, the rural population has been liberated far enough to be no longer an inherently revolutionary force. Certainly their support will be needed and may even be of crucial importance in the coming struggle for working class power. But it is true that the role of the small farmers, even in the national struggle, will be (and is) relatively small. But this is not new. The main force of the said struggle has rarely been the peasantry, but rather, the undeveloped Irish working class. At crucial times (as in the years after 1917) small farmers have been won to the Republican movement by its espousal of specific agrarian reforms, nonetheless until the defeat of the workers in 1923 - 1924 the movement itself survived in urban rather than rural areas.

The fact is that the bourgeois style agrarian reforms that destroyed feudalism in Ireland are one aspect of the unusual Irish situation that is not to be changed. Ireland is a neo-colonial country which has developed many features of the west European (or, rather, North Atlantic) democracies. The feudal question no longer exists. Emigration has prevented the appearance of the sort of shanty towns that exist on the suburbs of the cities of the Third World. Emigration and the decline of the Catholic Church in a rural and industrially only semi-developed state have enabled the bourgeoisie to maintain a parliamentary democracy. As the world capitalist crisis deepens, the last two facts will be weakened. Emigration is already stopping and, despite the efforts of the Irish bourgeoisie, a revived national movement of some potency is threatening (however slightly, as yet) the stability of the 26 County State. Of course, the farmers (especially the smaller ones) are going to be hurt, too but on the one hand their crisis will be overcome, subjectively as well as objectively, only by Socialist means, and on the other hand their bourgeois status, however miserable, makes it difficult for them to accept such means for liberation. And, as a further complication, there is another potentially revolutionary element in the petty bourgeoisie: as the crisis develops, more of Trotsky's strategy of intellectual democrats will find themselves either unemployed or under-employed.

Much talk and writing has been spent arguing as to whether the situation from which the revolution will spring (and is, indeed, preparing to spring) will correspond to the classic formula that Trotsky finalised in 1928. In arguing on the subject, comrades are concentrating on the forms, the dogma, of revolution in an unMarxist fashion. Certainly, the small farmer class will not be the centre of national insurrection. Certainly, its liberation can, now, only come in a Socialist form- the capitalist formula being now exhausted. Neither of these facts mean that the Socialist struggle will not develop from the present bourgeois, national, struggle nor that the proletariat will be able to seize power by itself without aid from the subordinate classes (it is, in reading Permanent Revolution, worth remembering that Trotsky was answering the specific charge that he had neglected the peasantry in under-developed lands) The forms change; the reality goes on.

What can be said is that the present national revolution can only be achieved if it is forced over into the Socialist Revolution: that if it is not so forced the situation at its end will be worse than at its beginning. There can be no successful perspective based on limiting demands immediately to a "Northern Irish Bill of Rights" which can only stultify consciousness when it should be developed and thus limit even the response to its inevitable

sell-out. It can be said, too, that the small farmers aid will be needed to bring the revolution to success, It can also be recognised that elements of the intelligentsia, who feel threatened by the growing retreat of the Government into superstition and anachronistic dictatorship and its reply to the national struggle will have their part to play. But such interests can only be led by the proletariat, itself led by a Vanguard Party. The total result will not be exactly what Leon Trotsky wrote in the Epilogue to Permanent Revolution; it will include the realities of the strategy concerted: the bourgeois/petty bourgeois struggle growing over into the Socialist one, the use of the powers of intermediate classes between capitalists and workers (he stipulated usually but not always the peasantry alone) to help in the struggle and finally the struggles' further growing over into the international sphere. In Ireland, as elsewhere, the revolution will be permanent, or uninterrupted, or it will be nothing.

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### TROTSKY ON IRELAND. (contd.)

bourgeoisie capable of capitalising on it, has veered steadily to the left under pressure from the syndicalist traditions.

If we are able to appreciate the relationship between syndicalism and nationalism in Irish working class consciousness, then we can easily see how meaningless it is to speak about eliminating either one or both elements of that consciousness. Of course they must be negated. But negation must be understood in the Marxist sense and not in the formal metaphysical sense of Lane and his B.I.C.O. colleagues. We " must not only negate but also sublimate the negation" says Engels. Syndicalism and nationalism must be negated not simply by dismissing them from our minds but by giving them a higher unity in the theory and practice of Marxism.

#### Conclusion

It is not accidental that the axis upon which the B.I.C.O. revolves consists of, at one end, the comprador Two Nations Theory and at the other end, Anti-Trotskyism. For five years the B.I.C.O. has stuffed its journals with " critiques " and " analysis " on both these subjects. To justify their reformism on the national question they have been forced to slander and distort Trotskyism which alone gives a coherent revolutionary perspective in the struggle for national liberation. We offer this simple truth to those who genuinely believe that Trotskyism is synonymous with cosmopolitanism and ultra-leftism. We also take the opportunity to thank the B.I.C.O. for publishing Trotsky's 1916 article accompanied with a perfect example of Stalinist " objective " and " scientific " analysis !

# Marxism and the National Question

(In the following article we piece together from various sources the Marxist position on the National question).

Scientific Socialism - Marxism - is international in scope, both in its aims and in the objective circumstances for achieving them. This does not mean that a revolution can only be successful if it is carried out at one moment on an international scale. Leon Trotsky has been, most often, reported inaccurately as arguing this. However, he made his position to the contrary quite clear:-

"We had a socialist revolution in the Soviet Union. I participated in it. The Socialist revolution signifies the seizure of power by a revolutionary class, by the proletariat. Of course, it cannot be accomplished simultaneously in every country. Some historic time is given for every country by its conditions. A socialist revolution is not only possible but inevitable in every country. What I affirm is that it is impossible to construct a socialist society in the environment of a capitalist world."

'On the Eve of World War II' - Interview 23.7.'39, from Writings of Leon Trotsky (1938 - 1939), New York, 1969 Merit Publishers.

Subsequently Trotsky reinforced this statement:-

"Help comes to him who helps himself. Workers must develop the revolutionary struggle in every country, colonial or imperialist, where favourable conditions have been established and through this set an example for the workers of other countries. Only initiative and activity, resoluteness and boldness can give reality to the call "Workers of the world, unite!"  
Manifesto on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution - 1946.

What proletarian internationalism does mean is that socialist revolutionaries in each country strive against developing nationalist tendencies in their working classes into policies complete in themselves, or into spheres where Lenin, the great authority on this, wrote in "Critical Remarks on the National Question".

"Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism, be it even of the 'most just' purest, most inspired and civilised brand. In place of all forms of nationalism Marxism advances internationalism, the amalgamation of all nations in the higher unity, a unity that is growing before our eyes with every mile of railway line that is built, with every international trust, and every workers' association that is formed (an association that is international in its economic activities as well as in its ideas and aims).

"The principle of nationality is historically inevitable in bourgeois society and, taking this society into due account, the Marxist fully recognises



the historic legitimacy of national movements. But to prevent this recognition from becoming an apologia of nationalism, it must be strictly limited to what is progressive in such movements, in order that this recognition may not lead to bourgeois ideology obscuring proletarian consciousness.

"The awakening of the masses from feudal lethargy, and their struggle against all national oppression, for the sovereignty of the people, of the nation are progressive. Hence, it is the Marxist's Bounden duty to stand for the most resolute and consistent democratism on all aspects of the national question. This task is largely a negative one. But this is the limit the proletariat can go to in supporting nationalism, for beyond that begins the 'positive' activity of the bourgeoisie striving to fortify nationalism.

"To throw off the feudal yoke, all national oppression, and all privileges enjoyed by any particular nation or language, is the imperative duty of the proletariat as a democratic force, and is certainly in the interests of the proletarian class struggle, which is obscured and retarded by bickering on the national question. But to go beyond these strictly limited and definite historical limits in helping bourgeois nationalism, means betraying the proletariat and siding with the bourgeoisie. There is a border-line here, which is often very slight..."

"Questions of National Policy and Proletarian Internationalism" PP 27-28  
Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1967.

Later, in his article, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination" he deals with this matter again:-

"The proletariat....while recognising equality and equal rights to a national state....values above all and places foremost the alliance of the proletarians of all nations, and assesses any national demand, any national separation, from the angle of the workers' class struggle....

And:- "The International's resolution reproduces the most essential and fundamental propositions in this point of view; on the one hand, the absolutely direct, unequivocal recognition of the full right of all nations to self-determination, on the other hand, the equally unambiguous appeal to the workers for international unity in their class struggle."

And for James Connolly:-

"Under Socialism, states, territories or provinces will exist only as geographical expressions, and have no existence as sources of governmental power, though they may be seats of administrative bodies."

"Socialism Made Easy", p.40, Plough Book Service, 1971.

What does this mean in practice ? Connolly never defined his concept of a nation, (In practice, he seems to have confused "nation" with "race"). Lenin accepted, indeed he may even have inspired, J.V. Stalin's definition:- " A historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of

culture...like every other historical phenomenon (it) is subject to the law of change, has its history, its beginning and end."

This cannot develop before the rise of capitalism. As Lenin remarked:- "Throughout the world, the period of final victory for capitalism over feudalism has been linked up with national movements. For the complete victory of commodity production, the bourgeoisie must capture the home market, and there must be politically united territories whose population speak a single language, with all obstacles to the development of that language and to its consolidation in literature eliminated. Therein is the economic foundation of national movements. Language is the most important means of human intercourse. Unity and unimpeded development of language are the most important conditions for genuinely free and extensive commerce on a scale commensurate with modern capitalism, for a free and broad grouping of the population in all its various classes and, lastly, for the establishment of a close connection between the market and each and every proprietor, big or little, and between the buyer.

"Therefore, the tendency of every national movement is towards the formation of national states, under which these requirements of modern capitalism are best satisfied. The most profound economic factors drive towards this goal, and therefore, for the whole of Western Europe, nay, for the entire civilised world, the national state is typical and normal for the capitalist period."(Lenin, op.cit. PP 46 - 47.)

But economic differences - the law of combined and uneven development - mean that all nations do not appear at the same moment in time. To quote Stalin again:-

"The British, French, Germans, Italians and others formed themselves into nations at the time of the victorious advance of capitalism and its triumph over feudal disunity.

"But the formation of nations in these instances at the same time signified their conversion into independent national states. The British, French and other nations are, at the same time, British, French, etc., states. Ireland, which did not participate in this process does not alter the general picture.

"Matters proceeded somewhat differently in Eastern Europe. While in the West the nations developed into states, in the East multi-national states were formed, each consisting of several nationalities. Such are Austria, Hungary and Russia. In Austria, the Germans proved to be politically the most developed, and they took it upon themselves to amalgamate the Austrian nationalities into a state. In Hungary, the best adapted for state organisation were the Magyars - the kernel of the Hungarian Nationalities - and it was they who united Hungary. In Russia, the role of welder of nationalities was assumed by the Great Russians, who were headed by an aristocratic military bureaucracy, which had been historically formed and was powerful and well-organised. Such was the case in the East, and this peculiar method of formation of states could take place only where feudalism had not yet been eliminated, where capitalism was feebly developed,

where the nationalities which had been forced into the background had not yet been able to consolidate themselves economically into integrated nations.

"But capitalism also began to develop in the Eastern states. Trade and means of communication were developing. Large towns were springing up. The nations were becoming economically consolidated. Capitalism, erupting into the tranquil life of the ousted nationalities, was arousing them and stirring them into action. The development of the press and the theatre, the activity of the Reichstag (Austria) and of the Duma (Russia) were helping to strengthen 'national sentiments'. The intelligentsia that had arisen was being imbued with 'the national idea' and was acting in the same direction.

"But the ousted nations, aroused to independent life, could no longer shape themselves into independent national states, they encountered the powerful resistance of the ruling strata of the dominant nations, which had long ago assumed the control of the state. They were too late!

"In this way the Czechs, Poles, etc., formed themselves into nations in Austria; The Croats, etc., in Hungary, the Letts, the Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Georgians, Armenians, etc., in Russia. What had been an exception in Western Europe (Ireland) became the rule in the East.

"In the West, Ireland responded to its exceptional position by a national movement. In the East, the awakened nations were bound to respond in the same fashion."

Similarly, in Asia, national demands were made after the appearance of the West European nation-state.

"The revolutions in Russia, Persia, Turkey and China, the Balkan wars - such is the chain of world events of our period in our 'Orient'. And only a blind man could fail to see in this chain of events the awakening of a whole series of bourgeois-democratic national movements which strive to create nationally independent and nationally uniform states" - Lenin op.cit p.56.

The stimulus for the Asiatic national movements and for the subsequent struggles that they had to fight was not the growth of capitalism within a multi-nation state, but, of course, the development of the capitalism of established national capitalist states into imperialism. As Lenin wrote in his analysis of this phenomena:-

"The characteristic feature of the period under review is the final partition of the globe - final, not in the sense that a repartition is impossible, on the contrary, repartitions are possible and inevitable - but in the sense that the colonial policy of the capitalist countries has completed the seizure of the unoccupied territories on our planet". Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism P.90, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1969.

The reasons for this are simple:-

"The principal feature of the latest stage of capitalism is the domination of monopolist combines of the big capitalists. These monopolies are most firmly established when all the sources of raw materials are captured by one group, and we have seen with what zeal the international capitalist combines exert every effort to make it impossible for their rivals to compete with them by buying up, for example, iron ore fields, oil fields, etc., Colonial possession alone gives the monopolies complete guarantee against all contingencies in the struggle with competitors, including the contingency that the latter will defend themselves by means of a law establishing a state monopoly. The more capitalism is developed, the more strongly the shortage of raw materials is felt, the more intense the competition and the hunt for sources of raw materials throughout the whole world, the more desperate is the struggle for the acquisition of colonies"

- P.98

"Finance capital is interested not only in the already discovered sources of raw materials but also in potential sources, because present-day technical development is extremely rapid, the land which is useless today may be made fertile tomorrow if new methods are applied (to devise these new methods a big bank can equip a special expedition of engineers, agricultural experts etc. and if large amounts of capital are invested. This also applies to prospecting for minerals, to new methods of working up and utilizing raw materials, etc., etc. Hence the inevitable striving of finance capital to enlarge its economic territory and even its territory in general. In the same way that the trusts capitalize their property at two or three times its value, taking into account its 'potential' (and not present) profits and the further results of monopoly, so finance capital strives in general to seize the largest possible amount of land of all kinds in all places, and by every means, taking into account potential sources of raw materials and fearing to be left-behind in the fierce struggle for the last scraps of undivided territory, or for the recognition of those that have already been divided.

"The interests pursued in exporting capital also give impetus to the conquest of colonies, for in the colonial market it is easier to employ monopolist methods (and sometimes they are the only methods that can be employed) to eliminate competition, to make sure of contracts to secure the necessary connections, etc." - Ibid P.P. 99-100.

This process was described, also, by Leon Trotsky in his article "The Nation and the Economy". (This was denounced by Lenin for its form but its content is relevant.) -

"France and Germany in the past period approached a type of nation state. By no means did this prevent their policy of colonialism, nor their present plans to expand their respective frontiers to the Rhine and the Seine. An independent Hungary, Bohemia or Poland will, in exactly the same way, seek an outlet to the sea by means of the violation of the rights of other nations, as Italy is seeking to do at the expense of the Serbs and as the Serbs themselves are seeking at the expense of the Albanians. National democracy is awakened by capitalism which strives to weld as many elements of nations as possible into one economic unit. But it is this very capitalism which strives everywhere it sets down roots to expand

the limits of the internal market as widely as possible, to create as many favourable outlets as possible to the world market, to impose its domination over regions with an agrarian type of economy. The national principle is for national capitalism neither an absolute idea nor the final crowning of the edifice. It is only the springboard for a new leap - in the direction of world domination. At the present stage of development, the national idea appears as a banner of struggle against feudalism, particularist barbarism or foreign military aggression. In the long term, by creating a self-sufficient psychology of national egoism, it becomes itself a tool of capitalist enslavement of weaker nations: an indispensable tool of imperialist barbarism". - Mashe Slov. 3.7. '15.

With these facts in mind:

"There is every sign that imperialism will leave its successor, Socialism, a heritage of less democratic frontiers, a number of annexations in Europe and in other parts of the world. Is it to be supposed that victorious socialism, restoring and implementing full democracy all along the line, will refrain from democratically demarcating state frontiers and ignore the sympathies of the population? - Lenin, Questions of National Policy and Proletarian Internationalism P.P. 128 - 129

In fact, the Socialist must choose between nations. In the World Wars of the Twentieth century, the leading participants (apart, by its Socialism, from the U.S.S.R. in the Second World War) were all struggling equally as oppressors (as Trotsky pointed out, above). But, at the same time, there were nations such as the Irish, the Arabs and the Chinese (and, indeed, many of the oppressor nations that had the misfortune to be occupied such as France) whose struggles were on a different level: they were oppressed nations struggling against imperialism (in the first cases) and to complete the tasks of their bourgeois revolutions. Such struggles had to be supported.

"Limitation of freedom of movement, disfranchisement, suppression of language, restriction of schools and other forms of repression affect the workers no less, if not more, than the bourgeoisie. Such a state of affairs can only serve to retard the free development of the intellectual forces of the proletariat of subject nations. There can be no possibility of a full development of the intellectual faculties of the Tartar or Jewish worker if he is not allowed to use his native language at meetings and lectures, and if his schools are closed down.

"But the policy of national repression is dangerous to the cause of the proletariat also on another account. It diverts the attention of large strata of the population from social questions, questions of the class struggle, to national questions, questions 'common' to the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. And this creates a favourable soil for lying propaganda regarding 'harmony of interests', for glossing over the class interests of the proletariat and for the intellectual enslavement of the workers of all nationalities. If a considerable proportion of the Polish workers are still in intellectual bondage to the bourgeois nationalists, if they still stand aloof from the international labour movement, it is chiefly because the age-long anti-Polish policy of the powers that

be' creates the soil for, and hinders the emancipation of the workers from this bondage.

"But the policy of repression does not stop here. It not infrequently passes from a 'system' of oppression to a 'system' of inciting nations against each other, to a 'System' of massacres and pogroms. Of course, the latter is not everywhere and always possible, but where it is possible - in the absence of elementary civil rights - it frequently assumes horrifying proportions and threatens to drown the cause of unity of the workers in blood and tears. The Caucasus and South Russia furnish numerous examples 'Divide and rule' - such is the purpose of the policy of inciting nations against each other. And where such a policy succeeds it is a tremendous evil for the proletariat and a serious obstacle to the work of uniting the workers of all the nationalities in the state.

"But the workers are interested in the complete amalgamation of all their comrades into a single international army, in their speedy and final emancipation from intellectual subjection to the bourgeoisie, and in the full and free development of the intellectual forces of their brothers, whatever the nation to which they belong.

"The workers therefore combat and will continue to combat . . . policy of national oppression in all its forms, subtle or crude, as also the policy of inciting nations against each other in all its forms".

Thus Stalin (Marxism and the National Question). Lenin is equally definite: "In their fear of playing into the hands of the bourgeois nationalism of oppressed nations, people play into the hands not merely of the bourgeoisie but of the reactionary nationalism of the oppressor nation" Lenin op.cit. 910.

"If we do not want to betray socialism we (MUST) support every revolt against our chief enemy, the bourgeoisie of the big states, provided it is not the revolt of a reactionary class. By refusing to support the revolt of annexed regions we become objectively, annexationists. It is precisely in the 'era of imperialism', which is the era of nascent social revolution, that the proletariat will today give especially vigorous support to any revolt of the annexed regions so that tomorrow, or simultaneously, it may attack the bourgeoisie of the 'great' power that is weakened by the revolt."

Ibid. p.137

"In my writings on the national question I have already said that an abstract presentation of the question of nationalism in general is of no use at all. A distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of an oppressed nation, the nationalism of a big nation, the nationalism of a small nation"

Ibid.p.168

And Trotsky agrees:

"Social Democracy stands always and everywhere for the interests of economic development and opposes all political measures capable of holding it back. However, it understands economic development, not as a self-sufficient, extra-social, productive -technical process, but as a basis for the development

of human society into its class groupings, with a national political superstructure, etc. This viewpoint leads in the last analysis, not to insuring for local or national capitalism success over the capitalism of other places and countries, but to insuring the historic progress and systematic growth of mar.'s power over nature. The class struggle of the proletariat itself is the most important factor ensuring the further development of the productive forces - by leading them out of the imperialist blind alley into the broad arena of socialism. A state of nationalities and national groups, which exists through force (Russia and Austria are examples) may, without doubt for a certain time, develop the productive forces by creating for them a broader internal market. But, by generating the bitter struggle of national groups for influence on the state power, or by working 'separatist' tendencies - that is the struggle for separation from that power - such a state paralyses the class struggle of the proletariat as the most important force of economic and general historic progress. The workers are deeply interested in the elimination of all artificial frontiers and barriers, in the greatest possible extension of a free area of development. But they cannot buy this aim for a kind of price which, above all disorganises their own historic movement, and thus weakens and lays low the most important force in contemporary society". - The Nation and the Economy - I

On this basis both Lenin and Trotsky could approve the Easter Rising. Lenin approved on several occasions the participation of Socialists in national struggles.

"K Kautsky... opposed Rosa Luxemburg and proved that her materialism was extremely 'one-sided'., according to Kautsky, the International could not at the time make the independence of Poland a point in its programme; but the Polish Socialists were fully entitled to put forward such a demand. Even the socialists' point of view it was undoubtedly a mistake to ignore the tasks of national liberation in a situation where national oppression existed" - Lenin Op.Cit. p.82 (Emphasis added by present author.)

"The working class should be the last to make a fetish of the national question, since the development of capitalism does not necessarily awaken all nations to independent life. But to brush aside the mass national movements once they have started, and to refuse the support what is progressive in them means in effect, pandering to nationalistic prejudices, that is recognising 'one's' own nation' as a model nation or, we would add, one possessing the exclusive privilege of forming a state." - Ibid. p.87

"We would be very poor revolutionaries if, in the proletariat's great war of liberation for socialism, we did not know how to utilise every popular movement against every single disaster imperialism brings in order to intensify and extend the crisis". Ibid p.162

To defeat the reactionary tendencies that exist in the national claims of even an oppressed nation, Lenin declared:-

"A Social Democrat from a small nation must emphasise in his agitation the second word of our general formula: 'voluntary integration' of nations. He may, without failing in his duties as an internationalist, be in favour of both the political independence of his nation and its integration with the neighbouring state of x,y,z, etc. But in all cases he must fight against small nation narrow mindedness, seclusion and isolation, consider the whole and the general, subordinate the particular to the general interest." Ibid. p.152

In his 1915 article quoted above, Trotsky put forward the call for a United States of Europe to encourage internationalism on the part of the national movements of the workers.

Connolly can be seen not to have opposed this line (as some have claimed he did); he made it clear that the Irish national revolt was but the beginning of a European Socialist one: -

"Ireland may yet set the torch to a European conflagration that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist bond and debenture will be shrivelled on the funeral pyre of the last war lord". - Irish Worker 8th August 1914

In the second place, the revolutionary socialist in the oppressed country has a duty to maintain the democratic nature of that country's national struggle.

"The proletariat demands a democracy that rules out the forcible retention of any one of the nations within the bounds of the state. 'In order not to infringe on the right to self-determination, therefore, we are duty bound to vote for the right of the seceding region to decide the question itself". Lenin Op.Cit. p.9

"The right to secession presupposes the settlement of the question by a parliament (Diet, referendum, etc.) of the seceding region, not by a central parliament." Ibid. p.100

"By transferring capitalism into socialism the proletariat creates the possibility of abolishing national oppression; the possibility becomes reality 'only' - 'only' with the establishment of full democracy in all spheres, including the delineation of state frontiers in accordance with the 'sympathies' of the population, including complete freedom to secede. And this, in turn, will serve as a basis for developing the practical elimination of even the slightest national friction and the least national mistrust, for an accelerated drawing together and fusion of nations that will be completed when the state withers away." p.130

"The national programme of working class democracy is: absolutely no privileges for any one nation or any one language; the solution of the problem of the political self-determination of nations, that is, their separation as states by completely free, democratic methods; the promulgation of a law for the whole state by virtue of which any measure (rural, urban or communal, etc., etc.) introducing any privileges of any kind for one of the nations and militating against the equality of nations or the rights of a national minority, shall be declared illegal and ineffective, and any citizen of the state shall have the right to demand that such a measure be annulled as unconstitutional and that those who attempt to put it into effect be punished." p.15

Accordingly:-

"The bourgeoisie nationalism of any oppressed nation has a general democratic content that is directed against oppression, and it is this content that we unconditionally support. At the same time we strictly distinguish it from the tendency towards national exclusiveness, we fight against the tendency of the Polish bourgeois to oppress the Jews, etc., etc."p.62



In the last resort application of the principles of self-determination are dependent on the Marxist analysis of the specific circumstances of their spheres of action. -

There can be no question of the Marxists of any country drawing up their national programme without taking into account all these general historical and concrete state conditions". - Lenin Ibid p 52

"The several demands of democracy, including self-determination, are not an absolute but only a small part of the general democratic (now general socialist) world movement. In individual concrete cases, the part may contradict the whole: if so, it must be rejected. It is possible that the republican movement in one country may be merely an instrument of the clerical or financial monarchist intrigues of other countries: if so, we must not support this particular concrete movement, but it would be ridiculous to delete the demand for a republic from the programme of international Social-Democracy on these grounds." Ibid. p.146

"No democratic demand can fail to give rise to abuses, unless the specific is subordinated to the general; we are not obliged to support either 'any' struggle for independence for 'any' republican or anti-clerical movement.

Secondly, no formula for the struggle against national oppression can fail to suffer from the same 'shortcoming'. - Ibid. p.154

# TROTSKY ON IRELAND

A Reply to the IRISH COMMUNIST No. 80

The Stalinists and their friends have always attempted to depict the Trotskyists as (1) cosmopolitans who make no distinction between advanced and backward countries (2) as ultra-leftists who are unable to comprehend the role of non-proletarian classes, or of seeing the distinction between the national and social tasks, in a revolution. What has annoyed these people, whether they be in the Communist Party, the Macists and Stalinist sects, or hanging on to their position in the Official's leadership by the skin of their teeth, is that in concrete reality the Trotskyists have given the lie to this characature. So instead of rational polemic they resort to abuse. A number of ill-tempered outbursts have appeared in that dawdy, sober, journal, the Irish Socialist, while in the United Irishman, which is undemocratically controlled by trendy, Eoin O Murchu, who has fellow trendy, Anne Harris who doubts the possibility of achieving socialism in Ireland at all, writing feverishly to expose the confusions and mystifications of Trotskyism, which she admits the people are not even aware of! Even 'Advance' loses its usual composure at the mere mentioning of the word 'Trotskyism'.

But the list would not be complete without mentioning the vanguard anti-Trotskyists, the British and Irish Communist Organisation. Their latest flash of pique has been expressed by Jack Lane. "At the present time" he writes in No. 80 of the EICU's theoretical journal, "Irish Communist", "Trotskyism is a vociferous supporter of the Catholic Nationalists' offensive against the Protestant nation. The different Trotskyist organisations are competing with each other as to which of them can give most effective support to this campaign". But unlike their fellow critics the EICU dispense with apolitical name calling and dress-up their criticisms in pseudo-scientific, objective, phraseology.

## THE NATIONAL REVOLUTION

Lane, in his article "The National Question in Southern Ireland - Trotsky on Ireland" attempts to counterpose the views expressed by Trotsky in a piece he wrote on the 1916 uprising, to the positions held by Trotskyists today. In the process, lane is forced to misrepresent and distort what Trotsky wrote.

He begins by saying "What is most obvious in this article is Trotsky's underestimation of the struggle of the national movement, his view being that the whole thing was fading away, since the land question had been solved". This conclusion is based on a passage in Trotsky where he says "The historical basis for national revolution, even in backward Ireland, has been swept away by agrarian reforms". All Trotsky is saying here is that the historical basis of the national revolution and not the national revolution as such had been eroded by the extreme class differentiation brought about even in backward countries, by the penetration of imperialism. In other words, while the tasks of the national revolution remain, the historical agent of these tasks, the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, are unable to accomplish them, either because they are too

dependent on imperialism or because of the liberating effect this would have on the working class. In the epoch of imperialism, paradoxical as it may seem, the working class becomes responsible for carrying out the tasks of the bourgeoisie and leading the national revolution to victory. Thus Trotsky concluded "The 'national revolution' even in Ireland, has in practice become an uprising of the workers."

This in fact, is the same conclusion which Connolly arrived at a few years earlier when he proved in his book, *Labour in Irish History*, that "the working class alone remains as the incorruptable inheritors of the fight for freedom in Ireland". Even the strategical slogan formulated by Connolly to express the new dynamic of the national struggle, the Workers Republic, differed in no way from the slogan of Soviet Power advanced by Trotsky.

Trotskyism has always recognized the importance of national revolution, but unlike the Stalinists at one extreme and the mere nationalists at the other, it has seen it as a class issue; as an issue which can be used to bring the working class to power

#### LENIN ON KARL RADEK AND "REACTIONARY" REVOLUTIONS

Sensing that his criticisms of Trotsky are strained and misdirected, Lane tries to transfer Lenin's criticisms of Karl Radek to Trotsky to reinforce his argument. He claims that Trotsky's view (see bot. of para.) which lead him (Radek) to dismiss it (1916) as a "putch". Then Trotsky is demolished with the help of a few hammer blows from Lenin which were originally directed at Radek. Unfortunately for Lane, Trotsky's and Radek's views on the national question were not "exactly the same". Radek never accepted the theory of Permanent Revolution, and although he supported Trotsky's struggle against the Soviet bureaucracy, he eventually broke from Trotsky on precisely this question. Indeed it was Radek's attack (from the Stalinist viewpoint) on the Permanent Revolution which provoked Trotsky into writing his famous defence of this theory. (insert: on the national revolution "is exactly the same as

Karl Radek which lead ...etc.) But there is a specific reason behind Lanes' efforts to introduce Radek into the discussion. He wishes to use Lenin's attack on Radek to prove that "Lenin obviously did not regard the (1916) Rising as progress, we, as anti-imperialist in itself". As far as Lane is concerned the progressive side of the 1916 uprising consisted solely in the fact that "The rebellion occurred at a particular time in the international situation that made it of use to the proletarian revolution" And he adds later that "In any other context or in any other situation, a 1916 - type uprising would have no interest in the working class as it would only promote nationalism and national conflict". All these amazing revelations, are but a part of the BICO attempt to rewrite history in order to make it fit in with the Two Nations dogma. In view of some of the other bizarre positions of the BICO it comes as no surprise that they should try to establish that even Lenin had taken a stand against "bourgeois catholic Nationalism"!

So let us take a brief look at what Lenin actually wrote, keeping in mind the questions: What was his evaluation of the objective content of the

uprising itself, and whether or not he objected to it on the grounds that it promoted "national conflict" and "nationalism".

It is true that Lenin saw the international significance of the 1916 uprising. "A blow delivered against the power of the English imperialist bourgeoisie by a rebellion in Ireland" he wrote "is a hundred times more significant than a blow of equal force delivered in Africa or Asia" (Questions of National Policy and Proletarian Internationalism p151). But it is also clear that he recognized the intrinsically revolutionary character of the rebellion. In particular he saw its anti-imperialist nature, and viewed it as the latest climax of the generations old struggle against British imperial domination. For example, he writes, "The centuries old Irish national movement, having passed through various stages and combinations of class interests ... manifested itself, in street fighting conducted by a section of the urban petty bourgeoisie and a section of the workers after a long period of mass agitation, demonstrations suppression of newspapers, etc. Who ever calls such a rebellion a 'puisch' is either a hardened reactionary, or a doctrinaire hopelessly incapable of envisaging a social revolution as a living phenomenon". (ibid p160).

Secondly, the fact that the uprising occurred under an "archaic flag" and articulated its feeling in nationalist terms, did not prevent Lenin from judging it as objectively progressive. Indeed, he used this particular article on Ireland to combat the notion of pure revolutions. He explained that any mass movement inevitably brings the petty bourgeoisie and backward workers within its compass, "and just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors" but nonetheless the struggle is directed against capitalism. It is the duty of revolutionaries to take advantage of such movements and "express (the) objective truth of (this) variegated and discordant, hotly and outwardly fragmented, mass struggle", and in this way advance the march towards state power. To ascribe to Lenin the view that revolutions and mass struggles which do not express themselves in clear Marxist terms are reactionary is patent falsification.

In the context of the struggle in the Six Counties, the lesson of Lenin's article could still be learned by some of today's self-professed revolutionaries. The latest phase of the fight for national liberation confirms the views of Lenin. Behind the backwardness and prejudices of the Catholic community in the Six Counties lies the objective reality of their genuine social, economic and political discontent. That is why it is wrong to counterpose the entire revolutionary Marxist programme to the on-going struggle or opt out of that struggle as the sectarians do. It is the duty of Marxists to merge with the main thrust of the upsurge and become the conscious articulator of the unconscious process.

#### TROTSKY AND CASEMENT'S THEORY

One must admire Lane's scrupulousness (a less charitable person would call it 'nit-picking') in attacking Trotsky's every second word. This method leads Lane into absurd positions where he is forced to make gross over-simplifications. This is particularly so when he criticizes Trotsky for the importance which he attaches to Casement's so-called "Naval theories" - Roger Casement's contribution to the Catholic

Nationists was not his naval theories which were not taken seriously by them" Casement, it would seem had only the value of a mascot, and "compared with any of the other leaders he was an eccentric and represented no social forces within the Catholic nation". The credence which Trotsky puts in Casement's writing therefore testifies to his superficiality.

On the contrary, all that Lane has written testifies only to his own superficiality and particularly to the fact that he is obviously not acquainted with Casement's views. Accordingly he is hardly in position to judge Trotsky's assessment of them. The very fact that Casement was arrested, tried and executed, despite the dramatic sensation which the whole affair provoked is evidence that the British did not consider him as a simple eccentric. In their estimation he was at least as dangerous as the rest of the nationalist leaders and that is why he met the same fate as they.

To understand why the British treated Casement so severely, one must realise what his views represented. They were not the pathetic "Naval theories" which Lane imagines them to be.

Ireland's geographical position had for long been a resource of worry to Britain. The possibility that some hostile power might use Ireland as a base for action against England was a major consideration in the Tudors' decision to conquer and subdue the country. Speaking of Elizabeth's policy, Beckett, who is by no means prone to eccentricities, writes that "nothing but the risk of leaving an opening for Spanish intrigue would induce her to face the cost of campaigns in the more remote parts of the country" (The making of modern Ireland, page 20) and later he says of the conquest "The motive behind this expansion was essentially defensive, for it was inspired by fear of Spain" (ibid. p. 20)

In successive epochs, during the periods of primitive capitalist accumulation, merchantile capitalism, and even up to the present imperialist stage (as proven by the elaborate plans of both the British and Germans, for the invasion of Ireland during the last war), the strategic military position of Ireland had always to be kept in mind. The revolutionary national movement was also well aware of this fact and endeavoured to turn it to their advantage. From this awareness was formulated the maxim "England's foe is our friend". This maxim became enshrined as a basic tenet of the revolutionary national ideology. The United Irishmen attempted to forge links with the French; the Fenians with the Americans; the Volunteers with the Kaiser, and the IRA with Hitler.

It was this aspect of Irish nationalism, based on very real and objective circumstances, which Casement made his own and articulated better than other nationalist leader of his generation. But Casement did more than this; we nuanced the theme and gave it extra dimension. In his hands it was transformed from being a purely military-geographical matter into a political, economic consideration of the highest order.

Casement, like Lenin (see quote above) saw that Ireland was not a threat to Britain merely because of its location and military importance, but more importantly because of the economic interdependence of both countries. He realised that the independence of Ireland would be a severe blow, struck right at the heart of the Empire, capable of racking it to its foundations. He took advantage of every opportunity to convince continental Europeans, especially the Germans, that the liberation of Ireland, was the only hope they had in competing with, and challenging, the mighty superiority of the British.

"The British Empire is founded not upon the British Bible, or the British Dreadnought, but upon Ireland" said Casement "The Empire which began upon an island ravaged, sacked and plundered shall end upon an island which whether it proceeded from the very genius of the soil or the influence of the stars, or that Almighty God had not yet appointed of her reformation, or that He reserveth her in this unquiet state still for some secret scourge which shall by her come unto England it is hard to be known but yet much to be feared" (The Keeper of the Seas - Aug. 1911 - ). Casement understood

that the oppression of Ireland was the secret of Britain's greatness - "To subdue that ocean-closing and western island and to exploit its resources its people and above all, its position, to the sole advantage of the eastern island has been the set aim of every English government from the days of Henry VIII" (ibid)

But the continentals were to their own detriment, unaware of the secret source of Britain's power. "The vital importance of Ireland to Europe" he continued "is not and has not been understood by any European statesman. To them it has not been a European island, a vital and necessary element, but an appendage of England, an island beyond an island, a mere geographical expression in the titles of the conqueror" (ibid)

As we have said Casement spent most of his time and energy trying to convince the Europeans that a British Empire without Ireland was impossible and that this would be to their own great advantage. "Detach Ireland from the map of the British Empire" he exhorted them "and restore it to the map of Europe and that day England resumes her native proportions and Europe assumes its rightful stature in the empire of the world" (ibid). Later he warned the Germans that any purely military defeat of Britain would benefit them little unless Ireland was granted self-determination. "To leave a defeated England still in the full possession of Ireland" he warned "would be not to settle the question of German equal rights at sea or in world affairs, but merely to postpone the settlement to a second and possibly far greater encounter". (The Balance of Power, Sept. 1912)

These ideas marked a very real advance in nationalist thinking and the British government were painfully aware of this. They were confronted by an eminent spokesman who had discovered their Achilles heel. "The vital importance of Ireland to England is understood but never proclaimed by British spokesmen". Casement had noticed. Now he had pledged his life and cast himself in the role of "traitor" in order to expose Britain's weakness to her enemies, that Ireland might win her freedom. This was Casement's contribution to the Irish national movement. Both he and the British were aware of it, and it was for this that he paid with his life.

It is in the context of this understanding of Casement that we must examine Trotsky's assessment of his writings. When Lane informs us that it was not specifically military considerations which brought about the agrarian reforms and the Gladstone Home Rule bill, he is not saying anything which Casement or Trotsky did not already understand. It is because Lane is not familiar with Casement's position that he misinterprets what Trotsky means when he speaks of the "Military-imperialist" premise

premise of Gladstone's agrarian and Home Rule policy. Trotsky, taking up Casement's train of thought, was referring not merely to the geographical relationship between Ireland and Britain, but also to the more important economic and political relationship. As far as Trotsky was concerned, a military occupation of Ireland by a power hostile to Britain would be devastating not only in military terms, but also in terms of Britain's position on the world market. It was to forestall any alliance between the Irish gombeen and the Petty-bourgeoisie and such a hostile power, and to prevent a complete and revolutionary separation which would undermine the stability of the Empire, that the British bourgeoisie accelerated the political liquidation of the Anglo Irish aristocracy.

### Trotsky on Irish Syndicalism and Nationalism

On the most important idea in Trotsky's article, Lane is forced to make a concession. Trotsky's description of the Irish working class consciousness swinging between nationalism and syndicalism, he grudgingly admits "is fairly accurate". But then he tries to negate this by chiding Trotsky for not indicating how these two aspects of consciousness, or at least the nationalist aspect, could be transcended. The way Lane poses the question shows that he misunderstands the basic problem involved. Such a misconception is common to the Irish Left, whether would be Trotskyist, Stalinist or Republican, it is worth dwelling on it for a few moments.

We must begin by dispensing with the eclectic approach of seeing Syndicalism and Nationalism as separate and unrelated polar opposites which exclude each other. In fact they form a Dialectical contradiction and find their unity in the immediacy of British imperialism domination of Ireland. Let us, then, trace the origins of the two immediate terms Syndicalism and nationalism and show how they find their unity.

Syndicalism is a general phenomenon experienced in many countries particularly those with a large agricultural sector and a large concentration of industry. These twin economic factors work together to the Syndicalist consciousness. Firstly, the agricultural sector under capitalism ensures the steady flow of workers fresh from the land into the factories. Here the lives of these workers are disciplined and regimented in a tormenting and agonizing way.

Secondly, the lack of industrial concentration hinders the development of a unified movement which can challenge the power of the capitalist society as a whole. In this way the factory is made the centre of everything : on the one hand it becomes an object of hatred and on the other hand it becomes the major arena of political struggle because of the inability of the class to confront the might of the capitalist state. It is not surprising that Ireland, with such an economy should have produced its own syndicalist movement. But in most countries Syndicalism was only a phase through which workers passed. This in turn was due to the fact that the economies of these countries were only passing through a stage of their evolution towards

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a more advanced capitalist system. But the Southern Irish economy has been unable to advance past this stage of development. Due to imperialist domination a stagnant extensive agricultural sector side by side with a capital intensive export orientated, consumer goods industrial sector, continues to characterise the Irish economy. As long as British imperialism continues to dominate Ireland, this economic structure is bound to remain more or less constant, and the Irish working class will spontaneously gravitate towards syndicalism.

Working class nationalism stems from the same basic economic factors. Nationalism was not particular to the generation of 1916. At all times the workers have been the vanguard of the national movement. As early as 1798 before class differentiation had gone very far, it was the artisans, the future working class who were the strong driving force of the insurrection. Some years later, Emmet built his "conspiracy" through the weavers unions in the Liberties. The Young Irelanders spread their organisation through the Chart-ist Clubs, and the Fenians found the large-store assistants and building workers foremost among their ranks.

Clearly it was no abstract and mystical love of an equally abstract and mystical "Mother Ireland" which was at the root of this. Rather the workers were instinctively aware that it was the domination of Ireland by British imperialism which prevented the growth of a healthy economy which would add to the strength, social, political and economic of the workers; they were instinctively aware that it was the domination of British imperialism which caused unemployment, emigration, low wages and bad social conditions in general. Thus while British imperialism continues to abort the growth of the productive forces in Ireland, an important aspect of Irish working class consciousness is bound to be expressed in Nationalist terms.

The latest phase of the national struggle shows how these apparently mutually exclusive aspects of consciousness shoot from the same root. Following the attempt to develop a native Irish capitalism Fianna Fail was forced to abandon Sinn-Feinism and seek the aid of foreign, mainly British capital.

The influx of capital which occurred raised the organic composition of capital and the rate of exploitation. Almost immediately a massive strike wave which has not receded at the present time, was set in motion. This strike wave has been characterised by unofficial action sympathy strikes, sabotage and factory sit-ins but has found no expression in the growth of Marxism. In short, the response of the working class to the sudden rise in exploitation was to a lesser or greater degree within the general syndicalist framework.

At the same time this influx of capital brought Ireland much more within the orbit of British imperialism, laying the basis for a second "Act of Union" and a federal solution to the border problem. The possibility of a forthright integration of Ireland into the United Kingdom and a settlement of partition at the expense of the oppressed Catholic minority in the Six Counties, has given a new lease of life to Irish nationalism, which because there is practically no national .....(continued under Article on the Permanent Revolution).



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