

RESISTANCE



Magazine of the University Republican Clubs

NO.3

UNITY



IS



STRENGTH



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SINN FEIN ARD-FHEIS

The Sinn Fein Ard-Fheis, held in the Mansion House last month, came at a time of severe crisis in the country both north and south. It was an extremely important occasion, not only for this reason, but also because it underlined once again that the Republican Movement understands the nature and causes of our problems more clearly than any other political grouping. This fact was admitted by Prof. Seán O Murchu of the U.C.C. history department (whose views are by no means sympathetic to the Republican Movement) on the RTE Féach programme. Furthermore the Ard-Fheis made clear that the ordinary members of the Movement as well as the leadership, are perfectly conscious of the exact steps which must be taken to develop a mass revolutionary movement, take state power and begin to build socialism. The clarity of mind, the articulacy, the complete lack of emotionalism, the unity of purpose and the absolute determination of all the delegates to smash the corrupt and oppressive system north and south shocked the bourgeois press hacks present and sent them away to report apprehensively to their masters. The unity of purpose and high degree of socialist consciousness of the delegates was the most important difference between this Ard-Fheis and those of previous years and this reflects the success of the work of the education department of the Movement over the past year.

Six main resolutions proposed by the Ard Comhairle constituted the principal business of the Ard-Fheis. Other motions were discussed as amendments, deletions or additions to the main resolutions. These main resolutions dealt with economic affairs, political and national affairs, cultural policy, edu-

cation and local government. The economic resolution opposed entry into the EEC, called for the suspension of the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement, nationalization of the mining industry, prevention of export of capital, nationalization of large estates which would then be run as cooperatives and diversification of trading away from Britain and towards the Socialist and Third World countries. Most of the discussion centred around the anti-EEC campaign. In an addendum to the main resolution the Liam Mellows cumann, Galway, proposed that opposition to the EEC should be based on proposing the Socialist Republic as the alternative and this view was supported by a visitor to the Ard-Fheis, Miss Devlin, Cookstown. This line was strongly opposed by several speakers who pointed out that such a policy would divide and weaken the overall opposition to the EEC. Furthermore, it was pointed out, that the Socialist Republic is not a short term solution since the level of consciousness of the people as a whole is still very low and that the progressive forces in the country are, correspondingly, still very weak. This addendum attracted a great deal of discussion and argument and was finally defeated by an overwhelming majority.

The political and national affairs resolution pointed out the key role of mass struggle i.e. involving all of the people in their own struggles rather than depending on individualist M.P.s or mowerick politicians to carry progressive charges. National unity was defined as the unity of workers, small farmers and men of no property as distinct from territorial unity or unity of two Tory establishments. National independence was defined as being the ownership of

the country's resources by the people of the country led by the working class. The resolution pledged continued support to the civil disobedience campaign and the struggle for basic civil rights in the north, called for the expansion of the workers' and small farmers' struggle for the ownership of the means of wealth and called for unity with all organizations genuinely opposing capitalism and British imperialism. The resolution also called for opposition to all legal and constitutional enactments of a confessional nature and called for a truly secular society.

The Cultural resolution affirmed Sinn Fein's socialist policy toward culture. It pointed out that "a given culture is the ideological reflection of the politics and economics of a given society." It called for struggle against imperialist culture side by side with struggle against imperialism. The resolution dealt with the role of art pointing out that its purpose must be the enrichment of humanity. Hence no artist can be neutral in the struggle against imperialism and if he does not "stand with the socialist revolution" then he must "fall with the imperialist decline" The resolution recognized Gaelic culture to be the most important strand of native Irish culture and pointed out that "the revival of Irish is part of the revival of the Irish people".

The Social Affairs resolution recognized the class nature of society and pointed out that the objective of the movement was to build a classless society. The resolution called for full employment and condemned the withdrawal of the dole from rural unemployed single men. It called for improvement of social services and declared the right of all men and women to a decent standard of living. The resolution attacked the unequal position of women in society and called for the abolition of all forms of discrimination against woman inclu-

ding unequal pay and taxation and "all discriminatory bars consequent on married or mother status." The resolution also opposed the legal prohibition of divorce and contraception and affirmed the right of women to decide how many, if any, children they should have. The resolution called for the development of regional policy and attacked the bourgeois legal system which is designed to oppress the poor and protect the rich. It also opposed the present tax structure and called for a wealth tax and capital gains tax. The resolution also called for the provision of adequate housing.

The Education resolution declared "the present educational system is a "murder machine" which distorts history, is unscientific, poorly financed and is not conducive to developing free and enquiring minds; the making of things has taken the place of the development of personality." The resolution called for the abolition of sectarian education and called for the "provision of community co-educational schools to be inter-denominational and solely under the control of the local parents and representatives of the Department of Education, or county education committee, as the case may be." It also declared the right of any parent to have his or her child educated through the medium of Irish at all levels. A motion in support of the College of Art students was also passed. The section of the main resolution dealing with university affairs was as follows:

"Sinn Fein also condemns the wastage of money and talents in the processes of higher education, and in particular calls for an end to the influence which big business and the imperialist armed forces has over research in our Universities - all research should be such as to serve the need of the Irish people and contribute to the solution of the many social and economic problems that face us, in-

stead of supplying raw graduates for the US arms programme or for imperialist monopoly companies; Sinn Fein demands that the Universities be thoroughly democratised by placing them under control of democratically elected local authorities, and that there be no bars on university attendance by reason of lack of finance (this to be achieved by the provision of free education for all) "

The Local Government resolution

was a shortened version of the draft for the Sinn Fein policy in local elections. This policy will be dealt with fully in a future edition of Resistance. Many other resolutions were discussed including several relating to the Provisional Alliance. In the discussion relating to the Provisional Alliance it became clear that Republicans have nothing at all in common with this group and it was decided to bring about a policy document which would make this clear once and for all.

TRINITY REPUBLICAN CLUB

It's past, present, and future

"We must be capable, now too, of organising first and foremost that which constitutes the task of the hour, and without which all talk about co-ordinated political action will be empty words, namely the task of building a strong proletarian organization, every where carrying on political agitation amongst the masses for the revolutionary watchwords. It is this task of organization in their own student midst, this agitation based on the concrete movement, that our university groups too should tackle."

The above quotation is from Lenin's reply to a group of progressive students at St. Petersburg university, who wrote asking him for advice as to what their attitude should be towards a strike being staged by the mass of the students against repressive legislation in the year 1908. It is an answer to the question which all students who wish to change the nature of society must ask themselves, concerning the correct attitude towards agitation within the university. If the intention of a group within the university is to win support for socialist thought and movements, then, heeding Lenin's

words, their attitude towards such internal agitation should be quite obvious. We should involve ourselves at all levels of activity, with the intention of raising the political consciousness of our fellow students, at first in regard to their immediate environment, and the more widely. Not only should we be involved in such agitations that are already under way, but we should always be searching for issues which can be used to further our aims within the structure. It is against this political background that the activities of the Republican Club in T.C.D. must be analysed, the extent to which we have failed and where we have succeeded.

The Club was formed in May 1966, the year of the 50th anniversary of the 1916 rising, having as a stimulus the disgust felt by a number of conscious people, towards the hypocrisy which they witnessed during the celebrations of that year. Another stimulus to the formation of the Club was the revival in 1966 of some of the ideas of 1919, especially Connolly's, and the realization of the degree of Imperialist penetration.

The stated aims of the Club at the time of founding were twofold:

1. To further interest among T.C.D. students in the establishment of a united democratic Republic, in accordance with the 1916 Proclamation, and the democratic programme of the First Dáil.

2. To re-examine the principles of Republicanism and to discuss their relevance to the present situation, to modernise these principles, not being bound by antedeluvian thought, but only by the ideals of the movement.

The group put themselves forward as being representative of all conscious Irish students, and invited people to come and discuss the current problems with them. They reminded people of Trinity's long-standing connections with Irish Republicanism throughout the previous two centuries, and, in fact, their first meeting was devoted to an evening of discussion on "Wolfe Tone and the Republican Protestant Tradition".

Trinity in 1966 was politically a pretty static and unexciting place. There were still many students whose main reason for being here was that they had failed to enter the more socially prestigious Oxbridge colleges, and had come to Trinity as a second best. Cocktail parties, and cricket were far more popular fields of discussion than the problems facing the Irish people. The height of progressive political activity was the "Fabian Society" an example of the classical armchair socialist group. The Cumann Gaelach was in existence at the time, and it was from this source that many of the Club's first members came, a fact that was to reflect itself in the activities of the Club during its first years of activity. The I.S.M. had not yet come to life, and the situation of 1968, when the King and Queen of Belgium arrived to Ireland) was, in terms

of consciousness, a long way away at the time of the Club's birth. This situation inevitably played a part in the development of the Club's role, and from the beginning there was a great deal of emphasis on the problems affecting Ireland, and little attention given to the local environment, or the international situation.

The Club, however, functioned quite adequately on a limited basis, and meetings were held on such topics as "Connolly and Modern Ireland", "The Republican Congress", and "The Common Market". We also succeeded in bringing in outside speakers who had not been seen in College for a long time from both the Republican, Trade Union and Communist movements. This too played a great part in the gradual re-awakening of political thought within College. However, throughout the first two years, we limited our written output to a column in the "United Irishman", and it was not until April 1968, that our first magazine "Republican News" came on the scene.

The fact that the "United Irishman" was used to put forward the Club's political line and news items during those first two years, was a clear indication of how closely the Club regarded its connection with the Republican movement. By virtue of College regulations regarding political societies, the Club was independent from the outside Movement, but individual members commonly played an active role in outside agitations sponsored by the Movement. This was particularly evident in the Housing agitation, the evictions at Saragh Place being an example. This close association with the Movement, inevitable for a group who was searching for political leadership and solutions to the many problems facing it, in turn created its own problems. Many people within College distrusted the strong national undertones of the Movement, questioned their

changed attitude towards socialism, and thus avoided the Club because of this association. This, allied with the relative non-involvement in College affairs, kept many people, in particular progressive elements among English students in College - who later became involved with the Internationalists and the Socialist Society and their various fronts, away from the Club.

Non-involvement in college affairs was more evident in relation to the Club as an entity, rather than with the individual members. Some of the members had in fact taken an active interest in college affairs since coming into college, notably Alan Matthews, Eoin O Morchu and K. McCorry. They had, however, channelled their energies into the S.R.C., and, although they managed, in alliance with the more progressive elements in the S.R.C., to bring about some structural improvements, (e.g. the present committee structure), they failed to raise the political consciousness of the mass of the students. This was left to the Internationalists, who from May '68 to the beginning of January '70 provided an active focus for internal student agitation. This movement however, due to the lack of understanding of the overall political structure in Ireland, amongst other factors, soon collapsed, leaving students without any strong internal political organization. Matthews and the other progressive people in the S.R.C. recognised the futility of their task while the S.R.C. continued to function as just another College organization, and in October '68 they got out, en masse, thereby handing out complete control to the reactionary elements who controlled it for the next two years.

The Club continued to function throughout '58, '69 and '70, and was partly responsible for several advances on the national level. We helped the students of Queens, U.C.G., U.C.D. and U.C.C. to set up similar organizations, we played an active role in the anti-EEC campaign, and through our magazine and public mee-

tings we gave great publicity to the plight of Republican prisoners, in particular to Conor Lynch, a fellow student from U.C.C.. However, on the College front the Club failed to stimulate any real activity. The Club gained concessions from the authorities, acting in coordination with other progressive elements, regarding the sale of political literature on the campus, and continued to criticize the S.R.C., and the school committees. We supplied a continual stream of literature and many meetings on political topics and finally we brought about a situation where no longer can Fianna Fail or other party politicians use the universities as a virtually unchallenged platform for broadcasting their political views. Brian Lenihan in 1969, Flanagan in 1970, and Gibbons in 1971 learned this lesson from personal experience. Internal educational programs gave the Club members a sound political basis for their ideas and several of them have played active roles in the outside political sphere since leaving college. We note in particular K. McCorry, a full time N.I.C.R.A. organizer in the six counties, and Eoin O' Morchu now editor of the "United Irishman".

However, the inevitable result of not attracting the mass of students towards the Club, showed up quite clearly during the years 1970 and 1971. The people who had started the Club had by now graduated, and the Club had not mirrored the phenomenal growth of the Republican Movement during the preceding five years. In particular, the Club was failing to attract undergraduates from the Arts faculties, and this hampered the growth of its activities. The Club's magazine, originally "Republican News", now "Resistance", which had been produced 15 times between April '68 and April '70, came out only three times in the past academic year. College affairs now played an even smaller part in its topics, a reflection of the state of the Club.

The members, aware of the crucial position arrived at, discussed the situation and arrived at the following conclusions:

1) In future the Club will devote a far greater amount of time to the internal issues in college, in particular to the questions of democratization of the committee structure, re-examination of the whole system of education including exams, and a study of the relationship of the functions of the university and the need of Irish society.

2) That the Club will attempt to revitalize the political discussion in College, by inviting to speak prominent Socialists and Republicans.

3) That the Club will reactivate its internal structure, especially in re-

gard to library facilities, study groups, and co-operation with progressive students in the other centres of education. (The present agitation in the N.C.A. provides an excellent opening for such co-operation)

4) The Club will continue its policy of challenging political hacks on open platforms in the University, and will intensify its efforts to show up the bankruptcy of Free State capitalism.

However, it is obvious that there is a need for a strong Republican Socialist organization within the universities both to raise student consciousness about their own situation, and to channel this consciousness into a progressive involvement in the political and social life of the nation.

CIVIL RIGHTS - DEAD?

The national question is again at the centre of the Irish political stage. For some this means that the Civil Rights' movement has retired to the wings and is an inert spectator of the act which has succeeded it.

For Republicans, however, the Civil Rights' movement has always been and is still an essential part of the national struggle. True, there is no formal link between the two. A northern democracy can be and often is presented as a desirable end in itself. But to those who view the Anglo-Irish relationship as a neo-imperialist one, the lack of civil rights in the north is the weakest link in the chain which binds the whole country.

And yet it is the link which has had the most detrimental effect on the anti-imperialist cause making possible, through sectarianism and repression, the division of our country and of the working-class.

The historical evolution of British Imperialism's means of dominating Ireland has led to a combination of neo-colonialism in the south and colonialism in the north (altogether, neo-imperialism).

In the '26 Counties independence has been conceded in political form, but denied in economic reality. The alliance of monopoly capitalist and native large capitalist interests perpetuates this situation under free-flying green flag and all, as James Connolly predicted.

In the 6 Counties the position is a little more complicated. There, Imperialism aligned itself with pro-British big businessmen and landlords and liberally assisted them in the use of sectarianism to recruit Protestant workers to their service. In truly skilful fashion, fear of Irish national democracy as a Roman Catholic plot was engendered. Settler fears of 1640 were rekindled and the memory of '98 carefully forgotten. A valid contrast of Protestant individual

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liberty and Roman Catholic autocracy was amalgamated with a caricature of national resurgence as a bid for Catholic Power. Add to this the marginal privilege of preference in a high unemployment / bad housing situation and one has the compound of emotional and material devices used to distort the national and class consciousness of Protestant workers.

Yet another element, however, was needed to deal with recalcitrant nationalists and Special Powers and B-Specials provided that.

Yet the Six County state which these means were used to sustain, was based on a supposedly democratic right to opt out of the Irish nation. The contradiction between the outward stance of Unionism towards the rest of Ireland and its inward one towards the northern people was always its most vulnerable point. There the Civil Rights' movement aimed its blow.

Thus was it sought to create a situation where the progressive forces could work without fear of proscription and harassment. They could work at building a new alliance in the north on the ruins of the old unionist one which would be based on the identity of class and nationality rather than religion. Special Powers would be gone and Unionist landlord and employer could no longer buy off the Protestant worker by means of job and house discrimination.

This strategy implicitly rejected two others which we shall call "pure"

social struggle and "pure" national struggle.

The first finds its most coherent exponent in the Derry Labour Party. It recognises that democracy in the north means the end of the marginal privilege doled out to Protestant workers and the emancipation of the northern "blacks", the Roman Catholic population. This alone, it predicts, will simply provoke increased hostility within the working-class.

In order to avoid this we are told to raise the demand of the "socialist workers' republic". (Not just ultimate objective, mind you, but immediate demand). By calling for socialism now one offers both democracy and the liberation of the whole working-class in one fell swoop. This, the Protestant worker will fight for in unison with his Catholic counterpart as he is on the whole gaining not losing.

Rather than a confrontation of the Northern problem this is an evasion of it as it advocates an historically invalidated strategy. The experience of "bread and butter" socialists of previous decades speaks eloquently to us on this count. Their efforts were constrained by the ghetto and when breakthroughs seemed imminent as at the height of the Depression they were bludgeoned back into their corners by the repressive measures and sectarian agitation which they neglected to attack first.

Democratic rights in our situation are a prerequisite in a struggle to unite



the Irish working-class. The historical fact that these are denied mainly to Roman Catholics cannot allow us to eschew the battle to attain them. It means we must emphasise the essentially democratic and not Catholic nature of the battle and so minimise Protestant working-class opposition. Those who complain of "bitterness" and "hostile feelings" thus produced, speak as though these can long survive the institutions and material differences which sustain them.

So far as developing the social contradictions in Unionism is concerned, it has been democratic rather than "pure social struggle at this stage which has done this. Democratic Unionists, Right wing and liberal official Unionists and Alliance Party unionists are all a reaction to the civil rights' struggle.

Although the populist element in Paisleyism is now a stick to beat the official party into further repression, it could become a weapon against Imperialism when civil rights are won, the old leadership exposed and the mists of sectarian fear begin to disperse.

"Pure" national struggle goes to the other extreme from "pure" social struggle. It sees anti-imperialism in oversimplified military terms. The British are to be got out of Ireland by force of arms and whoever assists them

must be dealt with as a collaborator. Therefore, the Protestant working-class is delivered a simple ultimatum rather than opened up through democratic channels for mass agitation to develop its objective interest against Imperialism.

The effect of this apolitical course has been to consolidate the Unionists and align the British firmly with them again. Continuing British support may be doubtful but even then the logic of such a campaign is to force British withdrawal in order to fight a Civil War with a million armed Orangemen, most of whom might, given the chance, support the national cause. The materially daunting prospect and politically barren nature of such a course endorses further the wisdom and value of the democratic approach.

In immediate practical terms the way forward lies in procuring a new democratic constitution for the north which explicitly allows the politics of reunification. Republicans and Socialists should also demand of the British, and press the Dublin Government to demand of them, a recognition of Irish national integrity and a programme of disengagement from Ireland.

Taken altogether, these demands present the most peaceful, progressive and realistic path ahead.

CONT FROM P. 10

complete dependence on the big imperialist neighbours market as shown by Cuba, the victory of people's unity in Chile and the determined stand for their rights of small islands like Malta and Iceland. Standing ovations were given when fraternal delegates from 13 countries expressed the support of their respective parties for the Irish struggle.

On the whole the 15th Congress has been extremely positive, one which points out the role of the Communist Party of Ireland as a vanguard of the working class, the role of the working-class in leading the struggle for national independence and the inheritor of Connolly's

ideas and of Marxism in this country. On the other hand, the way forward has been clearly pointed out in the resolutions and in the summing-up speech by Mick O'Riordain, General Secretary, in his call for Unity, "the greatest explosive weapon - one that can destroy the old and construct the new" unity of anti-imperialist and anti-unionist forces, unity of all democratic and progressive people. The practical job of establishing this unity on a working basis is the most important task facing us now, and we believe that, as students, we have a vital contribution to make to this unity both in the student movement and in the community at large.

Communist Party of Ireland

Congress Report

The 15th CONGRESS of the Communist Party of Ireland was held in Belfast on 16th and 17th October last. It was attended by some 100 delegates. The resolutions adopted by Congress covered the whole spectrum of the Irish political scene both North and South, ranging from the Labour movement to the EEC, civil rights, education and pollution.

The main Political Resolution, some 3000 words, dealt with the responsibility of British imperialism for the present political situation in Ireland, the partitioning of the country and the resulting social and economic consequences, such as unemployment, emigration, bad housing, low living standards and underdevelopment, both North and South. The Resolution pledged its support for the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association and its present mass Civil Disobedience Campaign, stressing that the CRA "stands as the unifying and rallying centre of all the anti-unionist forces", and as such, capable of providing a political alternative to the present crisis. The Resolution called for the immediate and unconditional release of all those detained under the Special Powers Act and the immediate cessation of internment, arrests and detentions without trial, a public inquiry under the auspices of the International Red Cross into allegations of brutality by the armed forces against the internees, and people in areas subject to resent British Army action, the withdrawal of British troops from these areas, the enactment by the British Parliament of a Bill for Northern Ireland which would contain the legislative basis for democracy, the removal of all forms of coercive legislation from the Statute Book, such as the Special Powers Act, and the provision of a basis

for democratic elections. Pending such elections, the present Stormont Administration should be suspended and be replaced by a democratic administration composed of representatives of the people's organizations. The Resolution called for a united anti-Unionist front in the North on the basis of such demands, condemning blind acts of violence by "elitist" anti-Unionist groups pointing out that "the state terror inaugurated by the British Army cannot be defeated by such acts of counter-violence directed at civilians in their places of work, their centres of social gatherings and in other public places. Such acts only help to grievously divide the working people."

The Resolution pointed out the tremendous responsibility which lies on the Irish Labour Movement in the present crucial situation. "North and South, it must recognize once again the emergence of the national question, this time in conditions where British Monopoly capitalism though weakening in the overall context of the international capitalist scene, is extending its power in Ireland. It is tightening its grip over all spheres of the Irish economy by means of the merger of financial corporations, by industrial take-overs, large scale property purchases, and by towing behind it the two parts of Ireland into the EEC.

Referring to the Labour Movement in the South, the Resolution stated that "there must be an end to the divisive and diversionary attacks by prominent figures on other organizations who are opposed to British monopoly capitalism. Instead there should be a clearer realization of the need for the leading role of the organized working-class movement

* The above article is the personal view of an individual member of the Club.

in the struggle for National Liberation, and a vigorous concentration on the ways and means of achieving a united people freed from the political and economic domination of British Imperialism. "

The EEC was dealt with in a separate resolution which pointed out the disastrous effects of entry into the Common Market on the economic and social aspects of Irish life, and called for a united "people's alliance" with the object of defeating entry. A people's alliance uniting working-class organizations, small farmers, tenants organisations, small businessmen's associations, citizens and housing action groups and other progressive political and cultural organisations, clubs and groups, could work on a program based on:

Withdrawal of the application for Common Market membership, the scrapping of the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement and the negotiation of a new trade agreement on a mutually equitable basis, which would provide for more North-South trade and economic relations; immediate contact with Labour and other anti-Common Market forces in the other applicant countries; extension of trade contacts with all other countries and especially with the socialist countries, whose expanding and crisis-free economies can provide stable markets, also with the ex-colonies and underdeveloped nations whose economies, like ours are subject to imperialist pressures. Among other things, this People's Alliance should work actively on a program demanding: Public ownership of principal foreign concerns and big Irish industries connected with them; development of our natural resources by the State, division of large estates and cattle ranches among the landless and small farmers, with Government incentives for machinery, seeds, fertilizers, stock cooperative farming, public ownership of inland fisheries, development of rural industries using local raw materials, protection of small self-employed businessmen

and the prohibition of foreign-owned supermarkets.

United anti-imperialist and anti-Unionist forces North and South are the best weapon to defeat repression. "The present political situation", stated the Resolution, contained grave dangers, but, at the same time, opened up greater possibilities than ever before for the people to advance together to a new situation."

Such an alliance would lay the basis, first for a united opposition, and later, for alternative governments to the Unionists at Stormont and Fianna Fáil in Dublin. Such a development would create, for the first time in Ireland two governments with similar democratic programs, bringing about a situation in which the structural problems of forming one progressive government for the whole of Ireland would be tackled in a fraternal and peaceful manner.

A highlight of the Congress proceedings was the receipt of two handkerchiefs smuggled out of Long Kesh internment camp and from Crumlin Road Prison which were displayed to the delegates.

International Solidarity

The Congress supported unanimously resolutions on Vietnam and Angela Davis, reaffirming its solidarity with the national liberation struggles in Asia, Africa and Latin America, its support of world socialism against world capitalism, stating the inevitable decline of imperialism and the creation of favourable conditions for the Irish people to advance to full freedom.

The change in the world balance of forces is illustrated by many examples specifically relevant to the Irish struggle against British Monopoly Capitalism such as the success of national liberation struggles, the ability of a small country like Vietnam when supported by Socialist countries and an international solidarity campaign to withstand successfully the aggression of USA, the demolition of the argument of

GRANTS - U.C.D.

A REPUBLICAN VIEWPOINT

As we go to press, we observe that the fees campaign "led" by the S.R.C. is gradually completing its full circle of frustration, which was inevitable from the outset. At the start of the campaign the S.R.C. has inevitably embarked on the same bankrupt policy of last year: i.e. the withholding of half the fees. It was only when mass support had been aroused by a number of radical students, including the U.C.D. Republican Club, that the S.R.C. was forced reluctantly to adopt the more radical action of occupation and prevention of Registration. The vast majority of the S.R.C. was never really committed to this policy, nor were they capable of obtaining long term student support. The S.R.C. had thus been forced into a radical position, for which it was completely unprepared. The S.R.C. has up to the present time been a glorified services committee periodically releasing "paper tigers". The whole of the S.R.C. executive is geared to running dances, printing exam papers etc., and as such is reasonably efficient.

To lead a campaign such as the present one a well structured body with a long term program and a competent analysis of the role of students in the universities, and of the relation of the university to capitalist society is necessary. The present fees increase must be seen in the light of:

a) the class basis of society.

This years' fees increase did not affect all students in the same manner. A distinction must be made between the selfish demand of the

middle class students that fees be reduced, and the basic working class demand of lowering the fees in order to make education open to the mass of the Irish people.

b) The present overflow of graduates. The present stagnation in the development of Irish capitalism has led to an inevitable depression in the number of jobs available to graduates. Consequently an increasing number of student are becoming frightened, that when they qualify they may not take the exalted position in the ranks of the bourgeoisie.

We as Republicans do not claim to have all the answers to these problems, and the purpose of this article is to promote a constructive discussion on the real issues involved rather than to offer a utopian solution. What is needed in U.C.D. at present is a broadly based Progressive Student Group to examine the dynamics of education in Ireland, while recognizing that the problems of education are related to those of the struggle for Socialism and National Independence.

PS We welcome approaches on the setting up of such a body from groups and people genuinely interested.

The U.C.D. Republican Club needs committed socialists.
For Real Political Involvement JOIN NOW.
MEETINGS : THURSDAY NIGHT, 8 pm - Room P.101, Belfield

THE EUROPEAN MYTH

Some part of the success of the European Economic Community until now must be attributed to the strength of the 'European' ideology. This attitude sees in the Common Market an institution devoted to world peace, benign in its attitude towards third countries, and concerned solely with the prosperity of its members and particularly its smaller members. It is necessary to deal at length with these arguments because very often the more intelligent proponents of EEC entry fall back on them when their economic arguments are received in stony silence. The Taoiseach, for example, in opening the Dáil debate on 23d June 1970, said:

"In this debate we will be concerned with the obligations and advantages of membership for Ireland, but we must not lose sight of the larger issues involved. The European Communities have sprung from the determination of the member states to end the long history of wars in Europe, wars which, in recent years, have involved all the continents of the world. By pooling their resources the member states have not only removed any danger of war between them but have also enhanced their ability to promote the maintenance of peace throughout the world. This is a cause which we, as a nation, are anxious to support. We also wish to participate in the contribution be-

ing made by the member states to the less developed countries." (1)

Developing this theme, Michael Sweetman uses it in his criticism of Anthony Coughlan's pamphlet. "For the EEC was established because a number of leading statesmen (many of them socialists) having seen Europe plunged into the slaughter and devastation of two major wars within thirty years, shared a keen anxiety to build a new order in Europe which would make such disasters less likely, or even impossible in the future Thus it was political idealism rather than economic opportunism that led to the settling up of the EEC. To pretend otherwise, as Mr. Coughlan does, is to fly in the face of the known facts of history."

Mr. Sweetman's view of history is a notoriously ahistorical one. Indeed, we shall find this a characteristic of the arguments put forward by the EEC proponents. It is a view which looks only at the speeches and statements of leaders and politicians, and then takes them at their face value. If we dig deeper into the political, economic and strategic forces at work in Europe in the post-war period, a picture emerges which is directly opposed to Mr. Sweetman's thesis. The key to our understanding of the post-war attempt at international cooperation, which culminated in the Treaty of Rome, is the attempt to reintroduce West Germany as a military power.

Mr. Sweetman's 'new order' is strangely reminiscent of the old. In 1944, the San Francisco Conference established the United Nations. The framing of its constitution pandered to the concept of the "Big Powers" by allowing states to ignore those resolutions that ran counter to their national interest. In the new post-war era, we have become familiar with the operation of Great Power politics, in

every way similar to national rivalries before World War II except that it is now the United States that pays the piper and calls the tune.

The United States emerged as the foremost industrial power after the War. Its national output twice exceeded the combined output of all the Western European nations. The countries of Continental Europe lay ravaged, their industries devastated. Britain was crippled by the size of the war-debts she had incurred. Only towards the East in Russia lay a threat to American hegemony.

American policy proceeded in two directions. One was to further weaken the British imperial position and so transfer British territories into the U.S. sphere of influence. The other was to prevent a resurgence of German militarism. A plan for the level of the postwar German economy was drawn up, some industries, such as armaments and heavy industries such as aircraft, were prohibited altogether. Production levels in other industries such as steel were restricted. The Ruhr coal was controlled first by the British and by 1948, through the International Ruhr Authority.

It quickly became obvious that the main threat to American primacy would not come from Germany but from Russia. At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the Western powers had recognised the predominant influence of the Soviet Union throughout Eastern Europe, but this was intended to be only temporary. Instead, the People's Democracies consolidated their hold until by 1947 Cominform was formed and the Iron Curtain fell. 1947 thus represents the year of change in American policy, from a fear of the resurgence of German power to active encouragement of German resurgence under American direction to counter Soviet strategic aims in Eastern Europe. A food and fuel crisis throughout Europe in that

year also helped to persuade the
Wittes that their German policy was
wrong.
55 June 1947, General Marshall offered
US aid for the rehabilitation of
Europe. The striking nature of the
alignment of forces that had occurred
in the two years is shown by the fact
that participants included former ene-
my states and former neutrals as well
as Allied powers. An important point
was that the aid was made conditional
on the European states coming together
to agree on how to allocate the assis-
tance and how to coordinate their eco-
nomic policies to make that assistance
effective.

The US strategic aim was clear
enough to emphasize the primary im-
portance of this factor is not to de-
ny that on a political level the reac-
tion and revision towards the horror
of war was unimportant. In 1943 the
first Hague Congress of world federal-
ists was held. But this political
attitude was merely a permissive fac-
tor which without the underlying pro-
dding from the United States would not
have achieved results.

1948-49 saw the Berlin blockade
and the Communist takeover in Czecho-
slovakia. The Russian attempt to com-
mander the resources of the East Ger-
man economy played into the hands of
the West. In 1950 the Brussels Treaty
was signed and the following year
was expanded into NATO. The Cold War
was on with a vengeance.

1949-50 saw most of the restrictions
on German production lifted. Ship-
building (at 70% the prewar level)
synthetic oil and rubber plants were
permitted to function again. In 1950
the Schuman proposals for a Coal and
Steel Community were made. One obser-
ver comments: "If Germany was expected
to contribute her own quota to the in-
tegration of Europe and to the defence
of Europe against the Soviet block,
she must regain some voice in the de-
velopment of the Ruhr." (3).

The plan was more far-reaching in
that not only did it allow Germany to
regain access to the Ruhr steel com-
plex but it proposed that the whole
of Franco-German steel production be
merged. For France, the attraction lay
in the continuity of coal supplies to
the French steel mills and the possi-
bility that the proposed Moselle canal
could now be undertaken within the
framework of a Coal and Steel Commu-
nity.

In 1951-52 the Treaty forming the
ECSC was signed. It is significant
that besides the strategic importance
of the industry, it was in this most
highly cartellised industry that in-
tegration first took place. Indeed,
the Germans held a condition in the
negotiations that the cartel arrange-
ments that linked steel works to col-
liers not be broken up.

But in the meantime the Korean war
had begun. US troops had to be
ferred from Europe and this increased
the need to the U.S. to press for a
limited German rearmament; the only
possible alternatives were to admit
Germany to full membership of NATO,
or alternatively to admit her to full
equality in a European army with joint
European control.

At first the second course was cho-
sen with the proposal for a Euro-
pean Defence Community. But in 1954
this failed on the supranational issue
with both Britain and France refusing
to participate. Instead the Western
European Union was formed in the same
year which achieved essentially the
same purpose though allowing Germany
control of German rearmament. It ter-
minated the occupation of West Germany,
and her full membership of NATO.

In 1951-52 the Treaty forming the
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that integration first took place.

Indeed, the Germans made it a condition during the negotiations that the cartel arrangements that linked steel works to collieries not be broken up.

In 1955, the Benelux countries proposed the creation of the EEC. The UK, as a member of the WEU, was invited to participate, but dropped out when it saw the trend of the talks towards supranational institutions. Finally in 1958, the Treaty of Rome was signed.

The lesson of this narrative is

that European integration is primarily the result of an American initiative prompted by fears of Soviet encroachment on Western Europe. It was necessary to find an institutional environment in which the West German economic and military revival could proceed. The EEC is a defensive ring set up to protect capitalist interests in Western Europe. Though political idealism may have motivated some of the individuals involved, and undoubtedly inspired many of the ordinary people, it is the nature of the underlying forces which determines the nature of the Community.

Activities of UCC Republican Club 1970/71

The U.C.C. Republican Club was resurrected during last year after being defunct for some time due to the imprisonment of Conor Lynch and Pat O'Sullivan who originally founded the Club, three years ago. The Club, at one of its first meetings, voted in favour of affiliation to Sinn Féin Gardiner Place. The Club pledged itself to work for the realization of the ideal of a thirty-two county Socialist Republic. In accordance with this, one of the primary aims of the Club is the education of its own members and other students through the distribution of Socialist literature. Our first sale of the United Irishman amounted to 25 dozen copies within the College and large numbers of pamphlets such as the Mining Document (T.C.D. Resources Study Group) were also sold. A collection was held during the year in the City for the members in Prison and despite the obstacles put in our way by the forces of "law and order" a substantial amount was realised. We made every effort during the year to send as many as possible of our members to the North to see the situation for themselves and we also tried to organize a broadly based Socialist Alliance of left-wing groups such as the

Markievich Society, the Labour Party, the Maoists on such common issues as E.E.C. These groups however seemed to be more interested in talking for the most part about their own policies and refusing to give any ground on them. The Alliance petered out.

The main work of the Club this year is hoped to be the formation of better ties with the other Republican Clubs and the attraction of more members into the Movement. We also hope to be involved in the struggles of the Cork working-class tenants and the students who live under deprived conditions because of the unequitable system of higher education grants.

PUBLIC MEETING

IRELAND: "THE ALTERNATIVES
FACING US"

TUESDAY 7th DEC

8 P.M.

GMB

How could students participate in working
class activities - a worker's viewpoint

Dublin is a University Town; as such there should be some degree of contact between students and workers, but there is in fact very little. In those far off days when the gay young blades of Trinity fought pitched battles with the Butchers Gangs and the Liberty Boys, fraternisation of sort existed. It is safe to assume that in less bloodthirsty days they all argued and drank together. By the turn of the century this relationship remained intact though the class distinctions between students and workers became more manifest. They no longer fought as equals, yet the student continued to court the kitchen maid, workers still went along to Trinity to participate in the various sports, worker and student still drank in the same city pubs and student "characters" such as the Bird Flanagan were household names in the City's tenements.

The huge Corporation housing schemes on the outskirts of the City put an end to all this; a new generation of students and workers grew up with almost nothing in common. The workers played soccer or one of the Gaelic games, the student sports were rugby and tennis. Students drank in the pubs clustered around Grafton Street - Stephen's Green, the workers drank in the new pubs of Suburbia. Students organized their dances during the week nights at a time when most working lads would be broke.. Working class teenagers occupied those same dance-halls at the week ends. True, many working class girls attended the dances of the A.G.S., the Yerrawaddies, the Philanthropists, etc. It is equally true that they felt it necessary to deny, or at best conceal, their class origins. Boys of the same background, and often the same family, were easily identifiable by their accents and even their manner of dress and were as often as not denied admission to these student dances. The polarization of student and worker was almost complete.

The student led demonstrations in France with their consequent repercus-

sions here in Ireland has helped to lessen the gulf, so too has the esy minute amount of working class child entering University. While the slight change in the status quo is encouraging it gives little cause for optimism.

If we accept the above assessment of the situation to be true and if we also believe that a sufficient number of students are willing to work to bring about an end to this sorry state of affairs what then is to be done?

To my knowledge two attempts have been made by students recently to bridge the gap. One was the Internationalist-Maoist efforts to organize at factory level by having their members take up jobs in places such as Shannon the other was (and perhaps still is) the Dublin Tutorial Group, a group of students who set up headquarters in Liberty Hall and held regular classes for the children of Sheriff Street, with the sole aim of teaching these children of Dublin's dockland an appreciation of the Arts.

The revolutionary Maoists adopted a "bull in the china shop strategy": superficially it may appear a correct even courageous action, on the part of a student-revolutionary who takes up a job in a factory, thereby hoping to raise the political consciousness of workers he will come into contact with. From the worker's viewpoint the situation may not be so clear-cut. He knows there is vast unemployment in the country: he will most likely have a relative or friend searching for a job, yet he is a member of the privileged classes denouncing on the one hand the rottenness of the political system we live under and on the other hand helping to exacerbate the problems created by that system by taking up a job he doesn't need thus depriving the worker's relation friend.

The limitations of the reformist Tutorial Group became obvious when some of their more progressive members played a picket on the Children's Courts in protest against the conditions prevail-

Marlborough House Remand Home. This action was not in keeping with the objectives of the Tutorial Group and their name had to be dropped from the protest. Bringing Art education to the children of one ghetto, laudable though it may be, will not put an end to that ghetto, nor will the working class contacts made by students through such activities ever regard those students as anything other than do-gooders, since political motivation is at no time evident in their actions.

Which working class organizations then, in existence at present, offer the possibilities for students,

A) to create positive contact with the working class (or at least the active members of such organizations),

B) to take up the positions of tutors - leaders their intellectual capabilities would seem to fit them for and

C) to form an alliance with the more progressive members of such organizations in the struggle for Socialism?

I would suggest the following though there are of course many others.

Trade Unions: The Jesuit Order has made an indelible mark on Irish Trade Unionism with their lectures and courses in Milltown. What is to prevent students organizing classes for shop stewards and branch committee members in subjects such as political science, economics, Union history etc. The possible rewards should be obvious.

Tenants Associations: This field in particular offers great scope. Students could for instance form a Tenants Association Support Group through the medium of N.A.T.O. They could offer their help to local Associations who may be short of the manpower or expertise to deal with issues such as publishing, research, negotiating etc, in which case the students group could second one of their members to the local Association to help provide the know-how.

Citizens Advice Bureau: The need for an active C.A.B. in most working class areas is great. Students, with their training and connections are the ideal people to staff them. Law students

for instance would be able to explain to people their rights on issues such as Hire Purchase agreements, appearances in Court due to non-payment of rent, children in trouble with the Law etc. Social Science students could point out the benefits and facilities available to the people under the Health Acts, they could be of assistance in making out applications for Medical Cards (and investigating and appealing the refusals by the Department to grant same). Those studying to become teachers could assist in establishing parent-teachers associations through the C.A.B. thus helping to diminish the autocratic powers enjoyed by school managers in working class areas at present. Most important-

ly the Citizens Advice Bureau in each area would provide an acceptable base from which literature, highlighting the superior conditions enjoyed by workers living in Socialist countries by comparing them to the conditions prevailing in Ireland, could be distributed.

There are many other opportunities for dedicated students with a little time to spare to use that time to help break down the barriers between themselves and the workers. In most cases the organizations are already established in the areas. One thing is certain though, the students will have to come to the housing estates with the intention of involving themselves in the more progressive working class activities; any other course, such as wishing to lead these activities from the beginning, or perhaps hoping to bring a greater political awareness to the people of Finglas or Coolock, Ballymun or Ballyfermot by establishing student dominated political groups in these areas would be doomed to failure. Students and intellectuals do not enjoy the confidence of the working class at present. Such confidence must be created before the often heard phrase "the working class and its allies" becomes reality. If we believe in the necessity of such an alliance we must accept the responsibility for bringing it about.

Title: Resistance, No. 3

Organisation: University Republican Clubs

Date: 1972

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