

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

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loyalist
goodwill
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ORGANISING AGAINST REDUNDANCY

IN LIMERICK

Recently, a number of trade unionists organised a public meeting in Shannon town on the question of "How to Fight Redundancies". A representative and interested audience were addressed by two members of the National Federation of Shop Stewards and Rank and File Committees and local trade union militants.

The Shannon region has suffered greatly from redundancies, yet these attacks by the bosses have been met with less resistance than in any other part of the country. Considering the lack of any lead from union officials, it is not surprising that many workers seem willing to give up their jobs without a fight. Obviously, when workers are not offered a fighting strategy, they become resigned to the loss of their jobs and accept redundancies as inevitable. Most union members will accept the advice of their union officials and up to now the line of such officials has to concentrate on getting higher redundancy payments - in other words, they advise the workers to give up their jobs for a higher bribe.

All the factories in the Shannon Industrial Estate are subsidiaries of multi-national companies. Attempts to successfully resist

redundancies will depend in many cases on having built up close contact between workers in the different plants within the same corporations. Union officials have not even considered this tactic as was seen in the recent closing of IPI, the piano factory on the estate. When it seemed certain that workers would not receive even the money which they were legally entitled to, such as back wages and holiday pay, not to mention compensation for the loss of their jobs, the first reaction of the Union was to contact the Italian ambassador to ask him to plead with the Italian parent company.

No thought was given to making contact with the workers or workers' organisations in the Italian plant. A leaflet, describing how the Company was treating its Irish workers and asking for solidarity action would have worried the bosses far more than any call from an ambassador.

Another point discussed at the meeting was the mini-budget which was to be announced the next day. Given the fact that the Government had been saying for months that companies must make a bigger profit if unemployment was to be reduced and that the only way firms can up their profit is by forcing the workers to take a cut in their standard of living, the mini-budget could amount to nothing less than an attempt to make such a cut.

The unions face a dilemma. In order to reduce unemployment, workers must accept a drop in living standards, but if the unions refuse to sanction this then unemployment will continue to rise.

Unless the trade unions seriously take up the demand for nationalisation under workers' control of companies unwilling to guarantee secure employment, the choice facing workers in Shannon and elsewhere will be between a cut in living standards or unemployment. If the trade union leadership can offer no better choice, then workers will have to organise outside the bureaucracy to extend the choices available to them.

Significant interest was shown at the meeting to the idea of setting up a Shop Stewards and Rank and File Committee on the Industrial Estate, and plans are now under way for one to be set up.

If there is to be any successful attempt to fight redundancies on the estate, two conditions are necessary -

- 1 - Contact leading to support and solidarity with workers within the same multi-national,
- 2 - Well organised and sustained support from other workers on the Estate.

A rank and file committee would be indispensable in promoting these conditions.

Joe Harrington

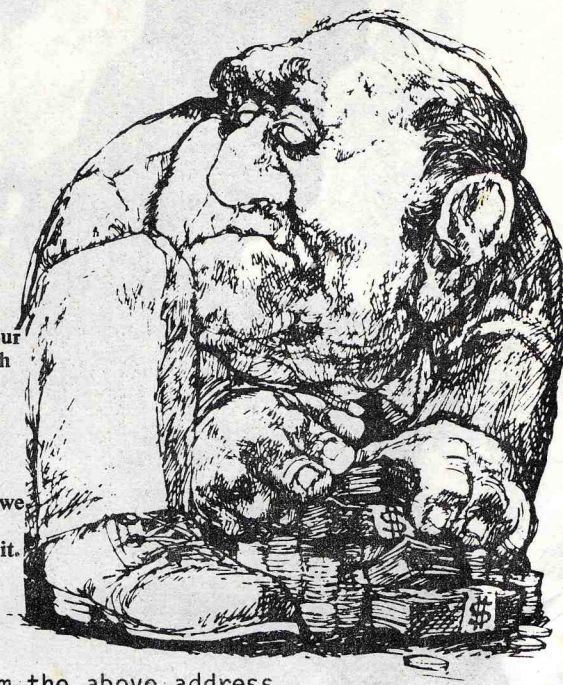
This man will never give to the fund drive or subscribe—why don't you!

During 1974 we succeeded in stabilizing production of THE PLOUGH as a monthly. We improved our coverage of all fields of revolutionary struggle, and in particular our analysis of the strategy of British imperialism and the tasks facing revolutionaries in Ireland.

Although THE PLOUGH became better known and gained a wider readership, we have for some time felt that the name has little resonance in the working class. Also, the rise in paper and printing costs meant either raising the price or adopting a new format for the paper.

So, we are now launching a new format paper under a new name - SOCIALIST REPUBLIC. The format is smaller, but includes four more pages than THE PLOUGH and we feel confident that we shall be able to maintain and even improve on the quality and range of our coverage.

Even with the change of format, the paper will not pay its way. We need YOUR cash to support it. Our target is £500 in one year, and we ask you to start sending your cheques and postal orders now to: SOCIALIST REPUBLIC, c/o 38 Clanawley Road, Dublin 5.



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In one four-day period in Belfast during June, four men were murdered by Loyalist assassination squads using the name "Protestant Action Force". It was just one particularly bloody period in a long drawn out campaign against Catholics, involving individual shootings and bomb attacks on homes and pubs.

It is a campaign designed to terrorise the Catholic population into subservience while Loyalists prepare for local control in the North.

The campaign has recently centred on the smaller ghettos and fringe areas in the North and East of Belfast. While not as dramatic as mass pogrom-type attacks, the campaign has been as effective in some ways, and even more insidious in its effects on the general morale of the Catholic community.

Workers driven out of East Belfast brewery

Catholics have been driven out of areas such as Rathcoole in the North of the city. They have been forced into tighter, more besieged ghettos. And out of some places of work.

A recent example was at the Scottish & Newcastle Brewery in East Belfast. Last year a Catholic was shot at while at work in the plant and in June this year a Short Strand man, Hugh Duffy, was shot dead on his way home from work there. In this climate the Catholics at the brewery have now decided they must all leave for their own safety.

These are concrete effects; others, such as on the general level of confidence within the anti-Unionist population, cannot be estimated.

With the assassination campaign intended by its perpetrators to have such an effect, it might be expected that the British Army and the Unionists' own forces, the RUC and UDR, would not make a serious effort to halt the murders.

And this is the case. Some 13 Loyalists have been arrested and charged during a three-year period in which nearly 300 Catholics have been murdered. At the same time, all Loyalists have been freed from Long Kesh.

Loyalists, British Army, UDR and RUC

The Paratroop Regiment responded to the murder of Tony Molloy in Ballymena Street, Oldpark, last month by coming in and lifting a neighbour, to the disgust of local people. It typified British Army policy.

Some assassins have been stopped by passing patrols but many more — and the Oldpark murder was such a case — have passed by the "averted gaze" of the British Army. Their overall role has been to disarm the Catholic working class, thus breaking up attempts to build defence against attack.

The Ulster Defence Regiments complicity with Loyalists is well known and their more spectacular 'losses' of weapons to Loyalist groups is backed up with the steady disappearance of modern rifles in ones and twos.

The R.U.C., at a composition of around 80% Protestant, is lining up as the state force of a new Loyalist-dominated Six Counties, and hopes to benefit from the assassinations by using them as an excuse to build up strength and to re-enter Catholic areas to take over the role of the British Army.

Who benefits from assassinations?

The June 26th announcement of a special 'anti-assassination' force is part of the attempt to reintroduce the RUC. It is to be a unit of the Special Patrol Group, a heavily armed, mobile anti-riot squad (the SPG has been used in Britain in defence of the fascist National Front). The most significant aspect of the announcement was the appeal by Chief Constable Flanagan for more recruits to the RUC and RUC Reserve, and for 'public cooperation', especially from the Catholic population.

But if the RUC and the UDR stand to benefit from the assassination campaign, members of the SDLP, the Free State Coalition Government, and the British Government must stand in the dock accused alongside the thugs who pull the triggers. For while they choose either to ignore the campaign or to issue hypocritical calls "for an end to violence", Messrs. Fitt, Cosgrave, Rees and Wilson follow policies which support the forces behind the assassinations and leave the Catholic working class defenceless against them.

Cosgrave and the Coalition Government are pushing forward the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill to give active support to the Loyalist-supporting security forces in stifling opposition to a Loyalist takeover.



Fitt and the SDLP have dropped demands for an "Irish Dimension" and power-sharing and are collaborating with the UUUC, thus giving the Convention and a resulting Loyalist-controlled administration a veneer of democracy and liberalism.

The British Government are happy to use the assassinations as an excuse to back the RUC and demand their acceptance in all areas. The reintroduction of this force to Catholic areas would be a major step forward in the direction of giving local control back to the Loyalists.

Unite for defence

All these elements are supporting the restoration of "law and order" in a re-vamped Unionist regime. Loyalist "law and order" based on repression of the Catholics. It means support and cooperation between them and politicians such as Paisley, who played an active part in the formation of Loyalist military groups in the late Sixties. The UUUC as a whole retains close links with the para-militaries.

And it means disarming the anti-Unionist working class, politically and militarily, leaving it open to Loyalist takeover and a continuation of the murder campaign leading up to that.

The defence needed can only be developed by the working class and the anti-imperialist organisations. It requires anti-imperialists to unite in campaigning against the Loyalist takeover and in defence of the Catholic working class; against the RUC and UDR and the British Army presence, and for the setting up of people's defence structures to defend each anti-Unionist area in the North. And in the South it requires unity in campaigning against the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill and all collaboration with British Imperialism and the Loyalists.

G. Lavery

ASSASSINATIONS — paving the way for Loyalist take-over

While talking about fugitive offenders from justice let us know what we are talking about. We are talking about people whose actions threaten the ability of this people to determine its destiny and the form and the type of the political, social and economic life that it wants to have. Such an attempt must be defeated. No matter how terrible our actions may appear, the force of this State must be mustered with greater terror than they can muster against it.

— Senator Alexis Fitzgerald (*Fine Gael*), speaking in the Senate debate on the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill, 1975 (C.L. (J.) Bill), April 29 1975.

Perhaps it may be argued that there is an element of suppression in it — Senator Jack Harte (*Labour*) speaking in the same debate.

LABOUR IN COALITION:

repression bill sharpens divisions

Clearly there are differences within the Coalition on the approach to state repression. Senator Fitzgerald bluntly advocates "greater terror", while Senator Harte tries to maintain that the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill (C.L. (J.) Bill) is only a little out of the way of 'normal' legislation.

The Labour Senator is embarrassed about a Bill, which provides for the prosecution of Long Kesh escapers ("Escape from Custody in Northern Ireland", Section 3), renders a person convicted of robbery or "aggravated" burglary liable to life imprisonment (Sections 5 and 7), and makes many more "amendments" to the criminal law, with extremely savage sentences attached.

In his embarrassment the unfortunate Senator Harte tried to compare the Bill with a G.A.A. club (!) and pathetically admitted to Noel Browne that he was "not a very clever man"!!

The Labour Party and Republicanism

Differences in approach towards the Bill have increased tensions between Fine Gael and Labour in Coalition. And Senator Michael Mullen's outright opposition has further sharpened divisions within the Labour Party.

Mullen's criticism of the government has not, however, provoked any reaction from the chief hatchetmen of the assault on Republicanism (Cooney, O'Brien and Fitzgerald). Also, there are signs that other members of the parliamentary Labour Party at least sympathise with Mullen's stand (Dr. David Thornley has expressed his total opposition to the Bill), and that the party is deeply split on the issue.

Although the Labour Party has a scandalous record of betrayal on the national question, it has always depended on a certain amount of Republican sympathy amongst its supporters. This is especially true of T.D.s from outside Dublin, who also depend on the support of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU).

Mullen — General Secretary of the Union, he recently consolidated his position at the expense of Fianna Fail — leaning Fintan Kennedy (remember his presentation to Haughey just after the Arms Trial?) —

represents both these strands of support, and so exercises considerable influence.

T.D.s such as Kyne (Waterford), Ryan (Tipperary) and Spring (Kerry) will have difficulty maintaining their positions if they support this legislation. The one advantage they had over Fianna Fail in the past was that — being out of power — they never had to support similar legislation. Now, with the Haughey wing of Fianna Fail making the most of its chance to show how Republican it is in opposing the C.L. (J.) Bill, these T.D.s must come off the fence.

To this group can be added Dr. John O'Connell, the T.D. with the largest local following in the Labour Party (and thus paradoxically less likely to get a job), who recently supported Mullen and Thornley by going to the Troops Out Movement conference in London.

The price of Coalition

A long-term coalition arrangement between Fine Gael and Labour cannot be maintained. The forces lining up against Coalition policies are too great. The participation in government of the middle-class intellectuals of the Labour Party (Keating, O'Brien and O'Leary) will result in a Labour Party decline in Dublin City — the area where it grew most spectacularly during the Sixties.

The Dublin City T.D.s are not as dependent on the ITGWU as their colleagues outside Dublin, but their support also depends on a certain radical Republican element. Electoral support dropped about 10% in Dublin between 1969 and 1973; this happened when Labour was merely toning down its radicalism. Now they are firmly tied to Fine

Gael and their reactionary policies, unable even to get mildly progressive reforms implemented (e.g. the Cosgrave Contraception farce).

One attempt to divert attention from their failure to gain projected reforms has taken the form of virulent anti-Republicanism from a pseudo-liberal position (e.g. description of the Provos as "green fascists"). Such attempts further expose the divisions that threaten to destroy the party.

Speculation is rife that a split may occur in the Labour Party — one 'Social Democrat' element under O'Brien leaning towards Fine Gael, and another 'National' element taking a more active interest in the national struggle and pursuing populist issues, such as nationalisation of the banks and natural resources, while having friendly relations with Haugheyite Fianna Failers.

While such a development would have positive results, especially in terms of opening up debate within the Labour movement as a whole, there are considerable potential dangers.

The Left is in disarray over the national question. In particular, the false perspectives of Official Sinn Féin and the Communist Party for Catholic-Protestant unity on social and economic questions, and their portrayal of the Provo bombing campaign as the cause for the historic tragedy of sectarianism, have sown confusion in the ranks of the workers' movement. In this situation, a Labour Party split-off on the lines suggested above could find itself submerged by a Haughey-ite movement for a greener shade of Irish capitalism.

JIM GALLAGHER



An Tanaiste and Minister for Health, Mr. Corish (left), and Senator Brendan Halligan, general secretary of the Labour Party..

SHEPHERD versus FLOCK

The recent forced resignation of Father Desmond Wilson from the Ballymurphy parish followed a classic clash between one with a social conscience and a monolithic institution the interests of which were with self-preservation and its own power and wealth.

Father Wilson has been popular in Ballymurphy for his obvious interest in the local people's welfare. He stood out from the local clergy in his rejection of living in seclusion from the people in one of the Church's "big houses", occupying instead a council house in the estate, and by his support for and initiation of community self-help projects.

Not so Bishop Philbin. He was the man who made his initial mark on the diocese by shaking the hands of the Unionist hacks at Belfast City Hall and has gone on to redirect funds allocated for school development or donated by local people for community centres, into the coffers of the Church. The only apparent result of the redirection has been Church buildings totally out of proportion to the demands of the local people.

The dictatorial attitudes of both Philbin and the Parish Priest, Padraig Murphy culminated in the resignation of both Father

Wilson and Sean McKeown, head of St. Thomas' School on the Whiterock Road, last month.

But it is not Bishop Philbin or Canon Murphy who are unusual. Philbin did not become head of the diocese, nor Murphy head of the parish, by being out of line with the official policy of the Church. They take their role seriously as leaders of a Church which seeks to retain a firm hold over the flock it regards as sheep. The Church is eager to ally itself to Government, to act as an agent of social control for the state, and thus increase its strength as an institution in the state. In the 26 Counties this has long been the case. In the North the nature of society has caused complications.

The Church has sought to place a brake on militancy on the streets against repression, turning its official venom against militants within the catholic community.

There have been exceptions, individual priests who have felt obliged to respond to pressure within their parish to expose injustice, such as Father Faul of Dungannon, and who have worked to alleviate the suffering of the working class, such as Father Wilson.

And at a time when the Church is aligning itself to a Northern state in which the Unionists are set to re-establish their control, such individuals as Father Wilson are very badly out of step.

They are caught in a trap, exceptions in what Father Murphy of Ballycastle called a "middle class church". It proved too much of a contradiction in this case.

Since his forced resignation, the people of Ballymurphy have rallied around Father Wilson. A mass meeting was held calling for the withholding of funds from the Church until a full public enquiry was started. The staff of St. Thomas's have called for an enquiry into the circumstances around the resignation of Sean McKeown, and pupils have demonstrated at the home of Canon Murphy to demand the re-instatement of their former headmaster.

Plans are also under way in Belfast to form a Catholic reform group, to agitate for control of funds to be in the hands of parish councils composed of and elected by local people.

These initiatives must be supported; no longer can the working class afford to have the Church unquestioned in its dictates and its policy.

Few bob for a pint, Paddy?

The S.D.L.P. has been organising a series of meetings all over the 26 counties to raise funds for the party. All three bourgeois parties are supposed to be involved, but in reality Fine Gael is providing the main assistance.

But what are the S.D.L.P. raising funds for? To highlight the plight of the Catholic minority in the 6 counties? To aid the internees dependants? To protect the minority areas from Loyalist murder gangs?

Anyone going to one of these well publicised fund-raising sessions might expect these and other questions to be raised and answered. Their hopes, however, would be in vain. The trend at all these meetings has been to block discussion, with a directive from the chairperson that the S.D.L.P. members present were not there to answer questions but only to collect money and go!

Of course, with the SDLP's politics, it's quite understandable that their members might not want any discussion, even though they expect people in the 26 counties to fork out to further their policies. But what could they say if someone did stand up and asked them to explain why they had on one hand urged the Catholics to withhold their rent and rates until Internment ended and themselves swore never to speak with the British government until the last internee had been released, and then some months later why they had taken up positions in that puppet government — the assembly — and demanded that the people pay up their arrears! The internees had not been released, the situation had not changed, but the SDLP were taking

salaries from the British government. Should we blame them for not wanting to be pushed to give an answer.

However, at one fund raising occasion, in Limerick, in spite of the ban on questions, a group of militants at the meeting raised these points instantly. They demanded to know why the internees had been sold out, why the S.D.L.P. were to all intents and purposes supporting the R.U.C. and collaborating with the loyalists, whose ideas on civil rights are well expressed in the assassinations carried out by their military wings. These questions were, needless to say, not answered. Moreover, in spite of the fact that the group of questioners (members of R.M.G., P.D., I.R.S.P.) made no attempt to disrupt the meeting, the chairperson, Cllr. Kennedy (Mayor of Limerick and a member of Fine Gael), and both the SDLP speakers — Hume and Devlin — turned on them and continuously interrupted anyone questioning S.D.L.P. policy. In fact, helped by a few Fine Gael half-wits, they abused every person who made even the slightest critical comment.

What a contrast between the attitude of the S.D.L.P. to these people — asking only after all, where the money was going and suggesting where it might best be spent to help the minority — and the attitude of the same S.D.L.P.ers to the U.U.U.C. We may be sure that Paddy Devlin does not act like a drunken heckler when Glenn Barr expresses his opinions in the cosy chats of the Convention.



Why should we contribute money to a party which is already receiving salaries from the British government? To a party that claims to speak for the minority in the 6 counties, but which in government did nothing to end internment? To a party whose voice is heard stridently bewailing the death of an R.U.C. gangster, but scarcely raises a whisper at the mounting toll of Catholics killed daily by the Loyalists. Its talk of peace contrasts with its collaboration with the British government and army, whose imperialist oppression causes the war. The truth is, there is no reason for supporting them.

BOYCOTT ALL SDLP COLLECTIONS!

IF THE SASH

The SDLP has accepted that the Northern Ireland Convention will lead to the re-establishment of a loyalist dominated administration in the North. This has forced the party on to a course of intensified capitulation to Loyalism.

The dilemma of the northern catholic middle class is reflected in the strains and tensions within and around the SDLP. In January, the Party's Chairman, Dennis Haughey stated the likelihood of a loyalist takeover in the North. In October last year Ivan Cooper warned of possible civil war. In the following months John Hume put forward a resolution within the Party that it should threaten the British Government with a boycott of the Convention unless power sharing structures were guaranteed. The majority of the SDLP adopted its present policy of participation in the Convention in the hope of salvaging a minimum presence within an emerging administration.

The crisis facing catholic middle class politicians in the North springs from the strength of Loyalism as expressed both in electoral and mass action forms which have sent the North on to a path to the restoration of the loyalist forces as the policeman for Britain in the six counties.

Two basic courses are open to the catholic politicians. One, to co-operate in the rebuilding of a loyalist dominated state in the hope of gaining nominal roles in administration, must of necessity involve the increased watering down of former pillars of policy such as power sharing and the "Irish Dimension". Such a dilution inevitably conflicts with the interests of the catholic working class but also with the immediate interests of sections of the middle class.

For the SDLP it is to risk fragmentation

THE ABSENCE OF MASS ACTIVITY AGAINST REPRESSION HAS ALLOWED THE SDLP ROOM FOR MANOEUVRE

and the formation of alternative catholic political poles. For the anti-unionist population it means the SDLP giving a cover of respectability to the restoration of Orange supremacy, or once again seeking to politically disarm the catholic working class for the tasks ahead.

Indeed, alongside the fragmentation which may rise from such a course, it can do nothing more than to temporarily postpone the explosive eruption of the contradictions between Loyalism and the needs of the catholic working class for a limited period, and certainly cannot rule out such an eruption.

The absence of mass activity against repression has allowed the SDLP room for manoeuvre and to increase its accommodation to loyalism.

NOT ONLY DOES THE TREND OF SDLP POLICY REPRESENT A SURRENDER TO LOYALISM BUT IT CAN BE SEEN AS A GROWING TOGETHER OF THE LINES OF THE SDLP AND OF THE CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN WING OF THE LEINSTER HOUSE GOVERNMENT

Difficult and dangerous as this strategy might be for the SDLP it is to them more attractive than the alternative. This would be not to capitulate to Loyalism but to combat it and encourage mass mobilisations of the catholic working class against repression. But the SDLP is well aware that if successful such a strategy would set off a militant dynamic across the 6 and 26 counties that it would place the ability of bourgeois parties to retain control of the movement in severe jeopardy.

Thus the SDLP has opted for the less adventurous of two alternative courses.

In practice this has meant the dropping of demands for power sharing and an "Irish Dimension", now replaced by a call for support for Northern Ireland institutions.

Speaking at the Convention in mid-June John Hume stated the SDLP did not seek a "meaningless" united Ireland but "they (Convention members) should try to arrive at a situation in which Northern Ireland institutions were supported not only by those who produced them, but by the people of Britain and Ireland as a whole".

On June 5, Gerry Fitt had expressed his acceptance of the loyalist imposed status quo and of the undemocratic six county state. He explained why he did not object to the UUUC claiming a majority on the Convention Business Committee by saying, "The electorate had decided that was to be the structure. At the end of the day the UUUC's will would prevail".

Not only does the trend of SDLP policy represent a surrender to loyalism but it can be seen as a growing together of the lines of the SDLP and of the Conor Cruise O'Brien wing of the Leinster House Government.

The SDLP has dropped its political demands in order to accommodate loyalists and has extended this with a series of initiatives.

John Hume and UDA member Glenn Barr issued a joint call for moves to deal with economic

problems in the Derry area. It was an initiative to which the local Official Republican Movement gave support, totally failing to place it in the overall political context, and to recognise it as a move which might create dangerous illusions in the Convention and SDLP-UUUC cooperation.

North Belfast SDLP Councillor Tom Donnelly has issued a joint call for an end to violence with his UUUC counterpart John Carson, obscuring the role played by a number of UUUC leaders in initiating and supporting loyalist murder campaigns.

In the Convention itself, closed discussions between Paddy Devlin, Austin Currie and John Hume, representing the SDLP and Harry West, Reg Empey and Paisley's right hand man, William Beattie, have been taking place regularly since June 3, intended "to assist our various parties in their objective of ensuring a successful outcome of the Convention", in the words of a joint press statement.

The result has been a "gentleman's agreement" between the SDLP and Loyalists to avoid "contentious" points in open debate at the Convention. It is an agreement which can only serve to obscure the real nature of the SDLP's capitulation to loyalism by dodging central issues.

Similarly, Paddy Devlin's suggestion that the Convention should present an all-party report on economic issues fulfills a similar obscuring role. It was no breakthrough for co-operation, as some sought to present it, but the SDLP aiding the unionists in presenting the convention and the resulting administration in a liberal mask.



FITTS, WEAR IT!

The SDLP strategy has also been extended to local councils. In Newry and Mourne SDLP bloc voting brought the election of the first Orangeman ever to be chairman of any council in the South Down-Armagh area. Needless to say this act of appeasement also was presented as an indication of "trust" and cooperation.

In Derry the SDLP offered the UUUC a deal to rotate the city's mayoralty between the two parties. This sought not only to gain the UUUC's "confidence" but also to stifle any possible

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future threat which might arise, whether from what remains of the Nationalist Party in the city or from any other catholic party. The loyalists rejected the scheme.

The SDLP strategy cannot yield any advances for the catholic working class and leaves the basic contradictions of Northern society intact. Even for the SDLP the immediate results have been strictly limited.

UUUC William Douglas was accurate when he gave his view of the convention recently. He was quoted as saying the Convention could not fail,



he hoped it would succeed with the consent of all the members and some would stop trailing after the idea of a united Ireland. He said that while the SDLP had modified their Republican attitude there were a number of members he would have great difficulty in trusting.

On June 5, even John Hume recognised this in one unguarded moment, "The UUUC was saying there would be trust - but they were not taking any chances".

And as on the same day the pro-SDLP "Irish News" reported with unconscious irony, "Trust has become the new key word in the Northern Ireland Convention. It was used hundreds of times before loyalists won a vote yesterday on the question of who will decide what members will debate".

It is inevitable that such a degree of accommodation to the Loyalists will have repercussions within catholic middle class politics. The crisis may not yet be deep enough to see the emergence of a new formation to challenge the SDLP or a split-up of that party, but as the new loyalist state starts to take more visible shape these developments will become inevitable.

Evidence of the strains already growing have been visible.

At the May Convention election Tom Conaty gained over 2,000 first preference votes in West Belfast despite a limited campaign, and it can be seen from the distribution of transfers that the major part of these came from former SDLP support. Rumours spread, or were "leaked" as a kite flying exercise, in the following weeks that catholic business-men and members of the clergy among others had met in Belfast, Armagh and Mid-Ulster to discuss the setting up of a political party around Conaty.

No grouping has emerged from these individuals as yet. Any new formation might be

FOR ALL THE MILITANT TONE OF DEVLIN, ... HE POSES "SOLUTIONS" WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF EXISTING BOURGEOIS STRUCTURES. HE SEES AS DEFENDERS OF THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, THE LEINSTER HOUSE GOVERNMENT, BUT CERTAINLY NOT THE WORKING CLASS OF THE 26 COUNTIES, OR EVEN THE SELF-ACTIVITY OF THE 6 COUNTY ANTI-UNIONIST WORKING CLASS ITSELF

on the model of traditional catholic nationalist parties combining a harder line on loyalists with stronger ties to the Catholic church and the virtues of segregated catholic education, such as Conaty champions, or there could be a split from the SDLP of its more populist elements. Fragmentation might encompass both developments, this cannot be predicted precisely at this stage. But it can be said as a certainty that although such formations might use populist rhetoric and even seek militant action to gain support they will be unable to supply the political leadership needed by the working class.

The briefest look at recent statements can show this.

Immediately following the May loyalist election victories Paddy Devlin recognised the threat posed to the catholics of the North. On the assumption, he said, "that the UUUC press ahead towards a complete takeover of northern institutions and that the Westminster Government refuse to face them as it did last May when the UWC brought down the executive then there is no one to secure or underwrite that part of the national majority that lies north of Dundalk.

"The possibility of the SDLP exerting pressure on the Irish government is not so remote (as on

THERE CAN BE NO ALTERNATIVE TO WORKING CLASS LEADERSHIP

the British Government) and may well be the correct thing to do", he stated in articles in the "Sunday World". For all the militant tone of Devlin, and indeed of Ivan Cooper who has recently criticised the UDR and has also called for Irish Army support in the event of civil war, he poses "solutions" within the framework of existing bourgeois structures. He sees as defenders of the catholic community the British Government, the Leinster House Government, but certainly not the working class of the 26 counties, or even the self-activity of the six county anti-unionist working class itself. That is the crucial weakness of the middle class politicians.

But just as statements such as these indicate the limitations they also are evidence of the stresses within catholic middle class politics, for they are out of line of the central SDLP strategy.

It is indicative of the impasse of the SDLP and the growing trend towards fragmentation as the conflict between catholic working class aspirations and loyalist intentions are exposed in the coming period.

The nature of any formations emerging from the middle class political re-alignment re-emphasises that there can be no alternative to working class leadership to carry forward the struggle against Imperialism and the restoration of loyalist supremacy.

This perspective highlights a number of tasks for the revolutionary movement. The strategy of the SDLP must be combatted and the trend towards fragmentation aided. There must be no credibility given to illusions that cooperation with loyalist organisations can in anyway benefit the anti-unionist working class.

All moves towards restoring an Orange regime must be exposed and SDLP capitulation along with them.

If the revolutionary movement is to benefit from and develop fragmentation of the political force which at present holds hegemony over the catholic community, it must be able to break out of its isolation within the anti-unionist working-class.

Uniting in street demonstrations and protests for an end to internment, against the British Army presence and the loyalist security forces, RUC and UDR, which prevent organisation by the working class against the loyalist assassination squads, in the North; and against the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill and Leinster House accommodation to Imperialism and the loyalists, would be first steps in this process.

J. LAVERY

A PROGRAMME



*We print below the outlines of a programme of demands, many of which have been put forward by the Revolutionary Marxist Group in the course of its activity in various fields of revolutionary struggle. Also, the content of the demands has been implicit in *The Plough* and other RMG publications.*

These are not intended to provide an absolute, or finished programme, but are the practical demands on the basis of which the ongoing struggles of workers and oppressed sectors of society can be carried forward.

*In subsequent issues of *SOCIALIST REPUBLIC* we shall be expanding on the outlines of this programme.*

1. **Self-determination for Ireland;** for the elimination of imperialism's political and economic control in all parts of Ireland.
2. **For the abolition of partition;** for full democratic and civil rights and an end to all sectarian powers and the sectarian privileges based on them, and for equal housing and job opportunities.
3. **For the separation of Church and State:** for a completely secular state, an end to Church control over education, an end to all repressive sexual legislation and to Church influence on moral and social laws.

1. **Against all forms of wage restraint;** for a national minimum wage for all employees, for a national minimum income for all, for a maximum limit to professional earnings. For every percentage increase in the cost of living — based on a Consumer Price Index drawn up by the Trade Union movement — an equal percentage increase in real wages.
2. **No unemployment;** reduce working week with no loss of pay to ensure work for all; unemployment benefit should be equivalent to the National Minimum Wage.
3. **No redundancies;** nationalise under workers' control all firms which threaten to close and all foreign-owned and major native-owned firms (in the Six Counties, in as much as this would not hinder the anti-imperialist struggle); immediate withdrawal from the E.E.C.
4. **For the independence of the Trade Union movement;** for the withdrawal of trade union representatives from all joint labour, management and state bodies; no anti-trade union legislation; for the right of the Trade Union movement to organise freely North and South. Fight the betrayals of the Trade Union bureaucracy; organise at rank-and-file level to wage a real fight. Democratise the Trade Unions; all officials to be elected, subject to recall, and paid the average basic wage of their members. For the development of elected works committees.

OF ACTION



1. For withdrawal from the E.E.C.
2. For the expropriation of all unearned income such as share profits, rents, etc.
3. For the expropriation of all foreign-owned land and large estates.
4. For an upper limit to the size of all privately owned farms.
5. For a restructuring of all agricultural grants to favour the small working farmer.
6. For the public ownership of all natural resources — the sea, the oil and mineral rights.
7. For an immediate 50-mile fishing limit.

1. For immediate implementation of full civil and democratic rights for women, including divorce and all forms of birth control.
2. For equal pay (i.e. male rate for the job) and equal opportunity at work for all women.
3. For full recognition of the special needs of women at work, including adequate maternity leave with full pay, and state financed child care centres.
4. For a proportionate number of places to be reserved for women in all courses at all levels.

1. End the exploitation and oppression of youth; raise the minimum working age to 17 and abolish the youth differential in wages. For guaranteed day release for all who want it.
2. For full free secular education up to and including further or third level education.
3. For the provision of adequate cultural, sport and recreational facilities for youth.

1. For the withdrawal of the British Army, the disbandment and disarming of the Ulster Defence Regiment, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and Loyalist para-military organisations. For an end to collaboration between the Free State army and British Imperialism, for the disarming of the Gardai, and the disbanding of the Special Branch.
2. For an end to all repressive legislation North and South, for an end to internment, the release of all Republican and Socialist prisoners in the North, South and in Britain, and full freedom of assembly.
3. End the peace hypocrisy: for the mass self-defence of the Catholic minority; organise street and area councils, relief committees and vigilante groups.
4. No collaboration with British Imperialism or its allies; no common law enforcement area, no power sharing with Unionists or other representatives of British Imperialism.
5. For a workers and small farmers government; forward to a 32-County Workers Republic.

"Starting thus, Ireland may yet set the torch to a European conflagration and 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." — James Connolly.

For a United Socialist States of Europe; towards a socialist world.

Revolutionary Marxist Group

IRISH SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST GROUP

NAME

ADDRESS

Send to: The Secretary, R.M.G., 38 Clanawley Road, Dublin 5.



irish women united

DECIDES IT'S VITAL TO BACK CHARTER AS A WHOLE



PICKETS DEMAND FREE LEGAL CONTRACEPTION

More than thirty women and men took part in three simultaneous pickets in Dublin on Friday June 27th. Placards called for 'Women's Right to Choose', 'Free, Legal Contraception' and 'Women to Decide Their Fate - Not the Church, Not the State'; and several hundred copies of a leaflet were distributed to passers-by.

The pickets - on the Department of Health, Department of Justice and the G.P.O. - were the first in a series of initiatives planned by IRISH WOMEN UNITED to build a nationwide campaign for free legal contraception.

The ad hoc grouping, *Irish Women United*, held its first conference in Liberty Hall on Sunday June 8th.

Approximately 100 women, some as delegates of organisations, some in an individual capacity, took part in discussions on both the draft Charter (drawn up by the steering committee for the conference) and ideas for building a campaign around the charter.

The conference began with 6 papers, given by members of Irish Women united, on the 6 sections of the Charter: women and the law, the right to control one's own body, the family, women in education, the needs of working women and the idea of special women's centres.

Although some women felt that the Charter as proposed was either too specific or too far-reaching, there was an over-whelming vote for the Charter with only a few amendments and additions.

The conference also passed a draft Constitution which establishes Irish Women United as an independent grouping, and gives a broad framework for the group's future development with emphasis on internal democracy and a communal approach to the group's administrative work.

Carrying the Charter into broader layers:

Due to an extended discussion on the Charter itself, only a few ideas were worked out for building support for the Charter and getting its demands implemented. However, the conference did decide on several main guidelines: i.e. that it was vital to popularise the charter as a whole (although at different times some demands would be more to the fore than others); and that the work of the group on the Charter would be uneven, some demands being more long term than others.

Out of this discussion came concrete proposals for the demands of the Charter to be raised and discussed where possible in the student and trade union movements, and for the group to make a broad based campaign for free legal contraception one of its first projects, as this issue was a vital one and one on which it would be possible to unite a broad spectrum of women's and civil rights organisations.

A new women's movement in Ireland?

This development in the Irish women's movement, so long dormant, is extremely encouraging for those of us who see women's liberation as a key part of the struggle for socialism in Ireland. If Irish Women United are able to build on this initial success, it could, through the Charter, form

the pole of attraction to unite radical women, whether workers, students or housewives. Also judging by the response from the delegates from Galway and Cork it could break out of the purely Dublin-orientated syndrome and build a nationally representative organisation. An important part of this perspective, must be also, to make contact with militant women in the 6 counties, and establish itself on a 32 county basis.

However the next few months will be crucial, although we recognise the natural decline in activity through the summer, it is important that Irish Women United is able to maintain its presence and build a base for more extensive activity in the

At its first general assembly since the June 8th conference, *IRISH WOMEN UNITED* announced its plans for a campaign for free legal contraception.

Their immediate aim is to popularise this demand by a series of small-scale activities during the summer, including a picket on the Dept. of Justice and meetings in Limerick and Cork. These will culminate in a rally and demonstration in October, to which they hope to invite representatives from all organisations which support the central demand: Free Legal Contraception.

IRISH WOMEN UNITED is also holding ongoing workshops on women's history and working in the Trade Union movement. Any women interested in the campaign or its other activities, should contact *IRISH WOMEN UNITED*, c/o 32 Clarinda Park East, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.

Next general assembly meeting will be July 20th at 4 p.m. in the International Bar, Wicklow Street.

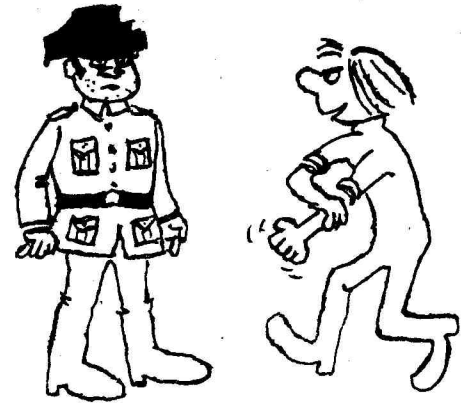
autumn. This will depend on the commitment of the women involved, the development of an imaginative if limited programme of activity; and to a certain extent, various organisations who support the right of women to organise themselves autonomously, putting their resources where their mouth is!

As such, building for a contraception campaign could provide part of this activity, but it is also very important that the group develop its ideas on the Charter in general, and begin to produce their own propaganda material on its aims, giving its present main campaign a clear context and a basis for further development.

PAT MAC DONOGH

spain

THE DEATH OF FRANCOISM



The Basque struggle for national self-determination has become the central point of a massive wave of unrest in Spain, which is threatening to bring about the fall of Franco's regime.

Last month one hundred thousand workers took part in a general strike in Euzkadi (the Basque country) demanding the release of all political prisoners and an end to political repression. The dictatorship has established a state of martial law in Euzkadi and instituted a new wave of repression and terror. In addition, the unofficial right-wing "Warriors of Christ the King" (composed mainly of off-duty policemen) has engaged in a campaign of random bombings and assassinations in Euzkadi, which aims at terrorising the Basque population into submission to the Francoist regime.

But the terror campaign — far from crushing militancy — has caused a stiffening of the resistance, and a sharpening of the political crisis.

Against capitalism, against the Church, against the Army!

The heroic struggle of the Basques is a symbol for the whole working class movement in Spain. The working class has learnt over the last century to see the Basque struggle for national self-determination as an integral part of their own struggle for emancipation — against Capitalism, against the Church, and against the Army.

The wave of illegal strikes throughout Spain has seen attempts by the reformist Communist Party to keep workers' demands within a purely economic framework. The momentum of the political struggle and the growing influence of the revolutionary left, however, have frustrated such attempts; and within the illegal trade union

network, the Workers' Commissions, there has been a major swing to the left in recent internal elections.

No retreat in face of capitalist recession

The unrest and repression in Euzkadi highlights the deep political crisis in which the Francoist regime has found itself. With economic development and modernisation in the Sixties, the dictatorship attempted to liberalise itself politically — allowing some freedom of the press, tolerating reformist currents, etc. However, the dictatorship's 'tolerance' helped strengthen revolutionary currents and increase the confidence of the working class. Now, with the international economic recession hitting Spain particularly hard, the dictatorship faces a working class which is determined to resist any cuts in its standard of living.

The forces which constituted the social basis for the Francoist dictatorship are themselves divided as to what course of action should be taken.

Some, notably the Falangists, criticise the government for being too soft on oppositionists and seek a return to the general reign of terror and suppression.

Franco's final hour

On the other hand many elements, notably the Catholic Church — always a pillar of Francoism — realise that the dictatorship is a sinking ship which they must desert to save themselves; they are now calling for "social justice" for the workers.

Such pressures are tearing the dictatorship apart, and it is now only a matter of time before it collapses. When it does, it will be up to the revolutionary left to see that there will be no repetition of what happened in the Thirties, but that instead power passes into the hands of workers' councils and the road to socialism begins.

IAN MACLEAN

Birmingham meeting

Revolutionary greetings were extended to those fighting for free abortion on demand in Britain by a representative of the Revolutionary Marxist Group, at Digbeth Civic Hall in Birmingham on Wednesday June 18th.

Militant Irish women, he said, were showing a new combativity and confidence, expressed recently in the uniting of members of women's liberation groups and socialist organisations. Although small forces were involved at present, Irish Women United were raising the question of women's oppression in several spheres. They were building a campaign around a Women's Charter, and mobilising in defence of women political prisoners.

It was well understood, he said, that women's liberation was an international struggle; and Irish Women United had recently picketed the British Embassy in Dublin to protest the Law Lords' ruling on rape, in solidarity with their British sisters.

The main speaker at the meeting was Dr. Berry Beaumont, a leading activist in the Medical Committee Against Private Practice (MCAPP) and a member of the International Marxist Group

The meeting was one of a series organised throughout Britain by the IMG, British Section of the Fourth International, to mobilise for the June 21st National Abortion Campaign demonstration in London. The success of the abortion campaign can be gauged from the fact that, despite having only a relatively short time to build for it, the demonstration was the largest seen in London since 1968.

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international press correspondence

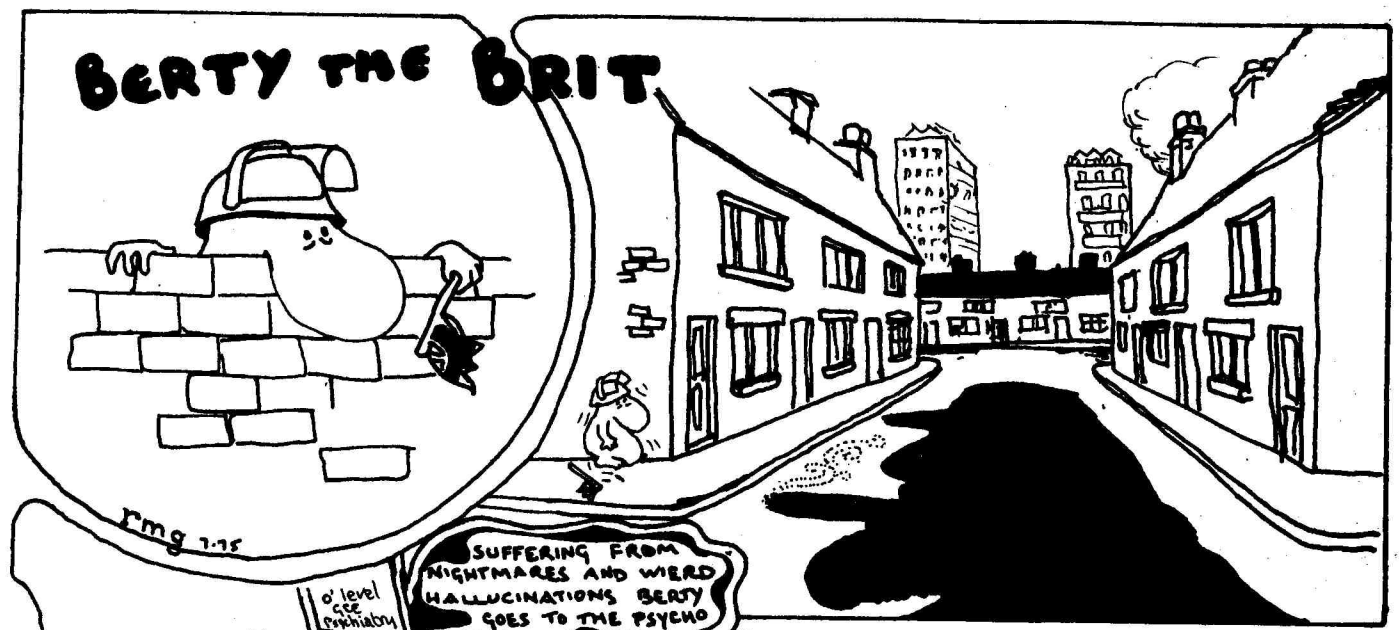
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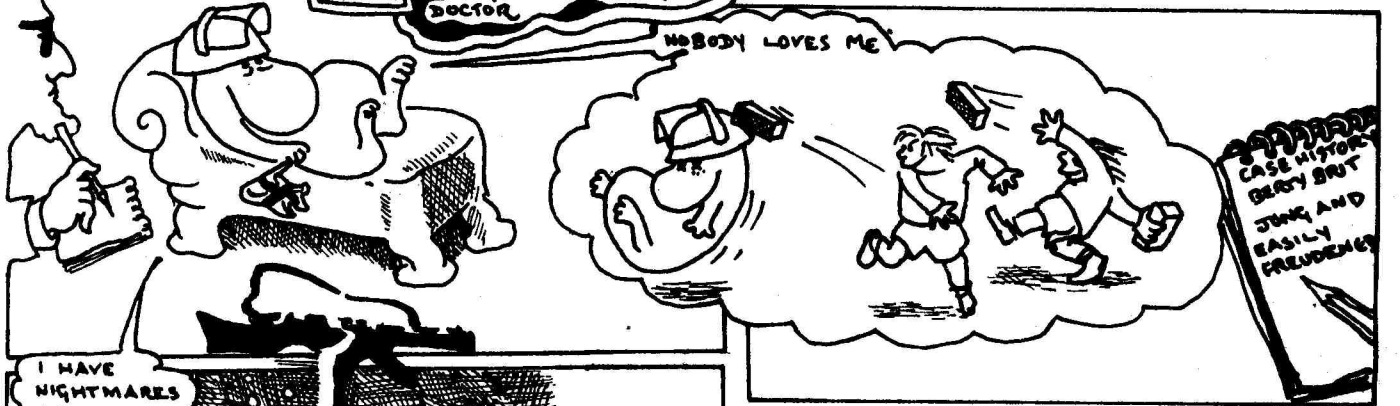


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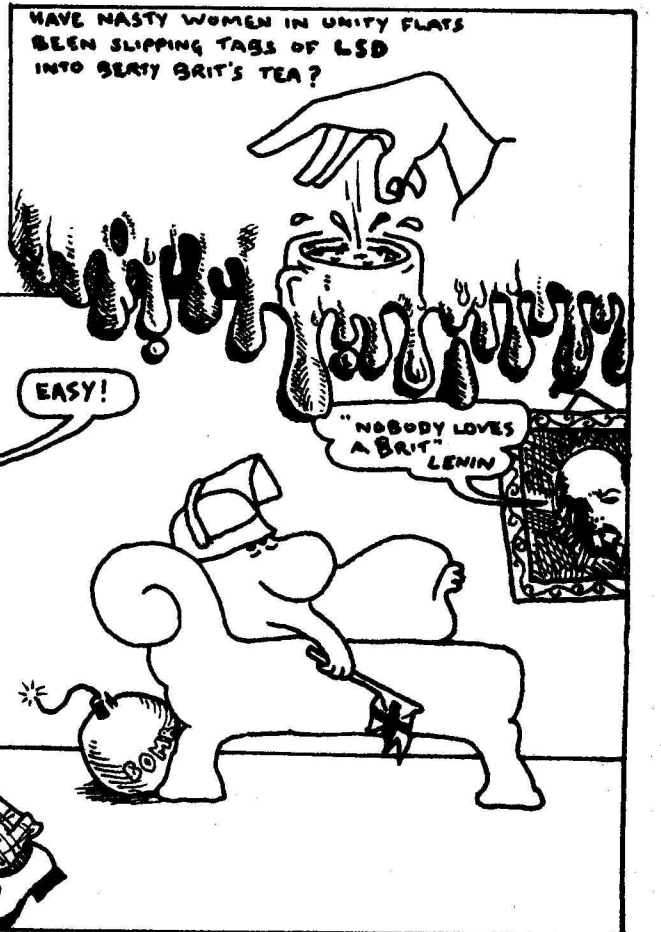


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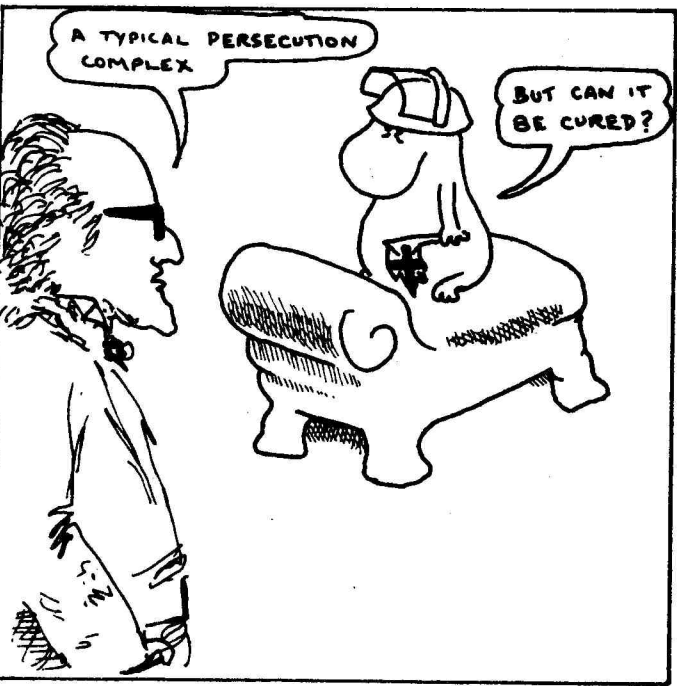
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HAVE NASTY WOMEN IN UNITY FLATS
BEEN SLIPPING TABS OF LSD
INTO BERTY BRIT'S TEA?

EASY!

"NBODY LOVES
A BRIT" LENIN



A TYPICAL PERSECUTION
COMPLEX

BUT CAN IT
BE CURED?

Title: Socialist Republic, No. 1

Organisation: Revolutionary Marxist Group

Date: 1975

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