

Theoretical & Discussion Journal of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party

# THEORIC



'It has sometimes been suggested that the League of Nations was founded to abolish those reasons which led to the First World War and the UN to abolish the reasons which caused the Second World War. **The task is, however, to abolish those reasons which may lead to the Third World War**'

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SEÁN CRONIN

# FRANK RYAN

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## Comment

1980 has been a great year for war-mongers. Events in Afghanistan and Iran have been exploited to the full by the enemies of detente. These same events have been equally exploited to further the political careers of Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan among others.

Nearer to home, Margaret Thatcher has seized the opportunity to strike a Churchillian pose in peacetime while, at the same time, imposing war-time austerity on the poor. Even Charles Haughey got in on the act with his talk of 'wars and rumours of wars' and his support for the abortive Olympic boycott.

The failure of the boycott and the success of the Olympics was one indication that the power and influence of the US State Department is not what it used to be. The present generation is not as amenable to a Cold War climate as was its predecessor in the Fifties.

Yet there is no doubt that the process of detente has been seriously undermined. The arms race which now consumes the bulk of the intellectual and material resources of mankind is accelerating. Sections of the Western media are acclimatising public opinion to accept a Third World War as inevitable. The same influential voices which, in the Thirties, called for appeasement with Nazi Germany can now be heard urging 'toughness' and 'firmness' towards the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

The Right is on the march throughout the Western world. The growth of neo-fascist terror is but one symptom of a more general trend. The logical conclusion of this trend is a war in which there will no be winners, only losers.

Positive action for peace on a global scale is an urgent necessity. Peace is too important a matter to be left to the statesmen or to the machinations of secret diplomacy. The best response to the growing war climate is a popular consciousness for peace. Every decent person *wants* peace; now is the time to *win* it.

# Honouring Wolfe Tone

*The following address was delivered by Francie Donnelly at the Sinn Féin The Workers' Party Wolfe Tone Commemoration.*

*Francie Donnelly is a member of Magherafelt District Council.*

I have only one theme to elaborate and that relates totally to Northern Ireland.

It is probably impossible to overstate the need for understanding the realities of life in Northern Ireland. For we have experienced a decade of violence and terrorism, a period when politics as it is generally known in Western Europe has virtually vanished, a massive upturn in unemployment with almost total economic stagnation facing us by the end of 1981, continued and tragic division in the working class and what only can be described as gross stupidity and downright criminal incompetence on the part of the responsible government at Westminster in failing to secure progressive democratic and economic development in Northern Ireland.

I think most reasonable people in Northern Ireland would agree with what I have said — and yet would want to add — 'but'.

It is that 'but' which provides us with the optimism and determination to continue working for Peace, Democracy and Class Politics.

Attitudes to Peace in Northern Ireland are a positive manner of establishing what is believed about events there.

For example if one holds that "there is a war of liberation taking place in the North" then Peace can only come when one side has won the war. Sinn Féin The Workers' Party are on record almost since the beginning of the 70s as rejecting that concept.

Our position on terrorism is quite clear, although many attempts have been made from the right to the Trotskyist ultra-left to confuse people as to what our view is.

We do not believe that car bombs at shops and

public houses, the murder of policemen, the gunning down of workers either in their homes or on the way to or from work constitute a "war of liberation" or conversely, what is understood by Protestant paramilitaries, as "the defence of liberty".

Such acts must be described by their correct name; they are acts of terrorism designed consciously or unconsciously to hinder the march of the working class to state power, towards the establishment of a socialist society.

Peace is for us an absolute priority and we are convinced that it is the view of the majority of citizens in Northern Ireland.

But let me make it clear, that we are in favour of Peace is no cunning attempt by Sinn Féin The Workers' Party to lull the Protestant majority into some sense of security. We are in favour of Peace, both nationally and internationally, because we believe that it is an infinitely more preferable state to violence, terrorism or war.

Equally we are in favour of Peace, because we believe in the unity of the working class, led by our Party, the Party of the working class, in order that we may win State power for our class.

We do not disguise our goal — it is clear — it is a legitimate, democratic political objective.

The steps to Peace are intricate and demanding; we are under no illusions. But it is obtainable. As we reject the terrorist, we equally reject those who propose military solutions, who say that Peace and consequently democratic politics can only come after. After what? The continued presence of troops on the streets, the searches, the arrests, the beating up of suspects, the ongoing use of anti-democratic legislation, the alienation of the young, the disillusionment and despair of thousands? When do we have Peace?

And let me say also that we reject that notorious sentence "an acceptable level of violence".

For us violence of any sort can never be acceptable.

The issue of Peace is linked inextricably with the fundamentals of Democracy and Human or

Civil Rights. Peace, if it is real, is woven through the political fabric of society.

We have made real gains. The progressives, the socialists, the democrats and the republicans have fought long and hard for those under the banner of Civil Rights.

However one of the lies promoted by the Hibernian-Nationalist Social Democratic Labour Party and some of their fellow travellers of the further right and the Trotskyist ultra-left is that Sinn Féin The Workers' Party favours a return to the old Stormont.

How cheap. How scurrilous but above all how damned politically and historically stupid. There can be no going back either in time or in politics. Stormont existed as the bastion of Orange-Unionist power and privilege and that power and privilege has been broken for ever.

The once Tory monolith has been broken and there are numerous contradictions between the various groups. I think that we can say also that their counterpart the Social Democratic Labour Party are equally fragmented.

We must continue to point out that serious civil rights gains have been won and established. One man, one vote, proportional representation, Fair Employment Acts, Equal Opportunity Acts, an end to discrimination in housing allocation...

And there also have been major changes in the economic structure of society with the arrival of major new industries, although not in any way sufficient.

The point is that changes have occurred in the economic and political fabric of Northern Ireland and that it is absolute nonsense to talk about a return to the "old Stormont".

But much work remains to be done on the entire range of human rights and our demand for a comprehensive Bill of Rights backed by the full weight of the law is absolutely necessary if the last vestiges of sectarian, racist and nationalistic hatred are to be weeded out of the community.

This is no empty slogan as some would have it appear, in particular the instant or "Nescafe" revolutionists who can see no reform, no transformation taking place other than the vague,

cynical and despairing slogan "Brits Out".

But rights would be meaningless in a political vacuum. Hence our demand for democracy.

Yet once again we are confronted with a set of ambiguous viewpoints. Some who are most vociferous about "smashing the Orange State" absolutely refuse to concede that the establishment of democratic politics and institutions is a major advance on previous positions.

Here one can only say that their opposition is both criminal and callous, in terms of the result of the failure to establish democracy in Northern Ireland.

We also stand firmly by the most basic

meaning of democracy and that is that the majority must rule. This has produced the most virulent outburst of hatred from the Roman Catholic Right for our Party's position.

But that position is the only tenable one, given what I have said about human rights, politics, terrorism etc. and the gains already made.

Equally we are convinced of the possibility of a democratic progressive coalition emerging which if not capable of winning a government majority in the first election, would by virtue of its make up in opposition ensure that the momentum of political and social change would escalate.

Finally, comrades and friends, in any forth-

coming elections we will be carrying high the banner of Class Politics. It is clear that the Party in the Republic have made tremendous strides forward over the past years; we are equally confident that in the coming years the seeds which have been sown and nurtured so carefully by the Party will bring forth a harvest.

The right wing parties and their allies have had it all their own way for ten years. The time is at hand I am convinced when the workers of Northern Ireland will take up the challenge and we are confident that they will be calling on The Workers' Party Republican Clubs to lead them towards the Democratic Socialist Republic.

*The following is the text of the address delivered by Joe Sherlock at the Wolfe Tone Commemoration.*

*Joe Sherlock is a member of Mallow Urban District Council and Cork County Council.*

Each year we gather at Bodensdown almost as a ritual; on that account the significance of the fact that so many come from different parts of Ireland to pay honour to the memory of Wolfe Tone can be forgotten.

It is worth reflecting therefore on the deeper meaning of Bodensdown particularly as we have concluded a decade which has brought immense suffering, death and misery to so many of the citizens of Northern Ireland and the Republic and also that we may begin this new decade inspired by what Tone and the United Irishmen stood for in their day.

That is not to say that the Ireland of 1798 is the same as the Ireland of today. That would be ridiculous. But there are lessons to be learned from the ideals of the revolutionaries of '98. There is more than homage due to that past.

Indeed some of their principles are fundamentals not yet recognised in either Northern Ireland or the Republic.

For example, comrades, there is the major principle of the secular society. That is the meaning of that much-abused sentence — the unity of Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter. It has a significance which should permeate the entire society — it would lead automatically to the creation of a secular culture.

Such a culture stresses the equality of all in the eyes of the state; it absolutely denies a privileged position to any one faith. This in itself has fundamental implications for many of our social institutions — education, the law, marriage and the family.

In that manner alone the Republicanism of '98 still has meaning today. It is a rejection of clerical domination of society; it abhors religious triumphalism whether by the long established Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches or the newer evangelical sects. Equally the Republicanism of Tone is opposed to military elitism, to rightwing nationalism and to sectarian politics in all its corrupt forms.

Our Party does not seek to dictate the religious principles of its members and equally we hold that no religion can dictate the character and content of public morality.

This is a question for the citizens of the state and for the citizens only, as citizens.

The secular society then as envisaged by Tone and his comrades is a clear statement of the need for separation of the churches from the political order.

It is by that principle which we stand today. Indeed we welcome the fact that there is a growing body of opinion within the various Christian denominations which are at one with us in that view. In our day, comrades, that secular principle is reflected in our long-standing demand for democracy. A democracy which is not simply a question of one citizen, one vote, nor of a constitutional guarantee of civil rights. It is a dynamic framework within which political culture can develop.

And the emphasis must be on politics. The need for a political culture has never been greater both in Northern Ireland and the Republic. Terrorism and violence, although rejected by the mass of the people, has created a situation in the North where the traditional and healthy scepticism of working people for politics dominated by the middle class, has become almost a complete rejection of all forms of political expression.

That apathy is manifest also in the almost unchallenged development of the cult of the leader, where the citizens are asked to believe that the problems of the country can be solved if only they would allow the "strong men" to act unhindered.

The crises of the past decade, political, economic or social, can be resolved if these political heroes are left in the field unchallenged, we are told. Increasingly the solution is being touted — leave it to Haughey, to Thatcher, to Hume, to Paisley. And as that cry is taken up and nurtured in some sections of the media, the democratic process itself is increasingly threatened. Sinn Féin The Workers' Party rejects the philosophy of the strong man. We stand firmly for democracy; nor are we overwhelmed by the various crises facing the country nor pessimistic as to the capacity and willingness of the working people to solve their problems in the coming decade.

And our optimism is not unfounded. Who can deny in spite of the efforts to stifle the consciousness of working people that there has not been an increasing awareness that the policies of both the British and Irish governments are destructive for both societies?

Were the massive demonstrations of hundreds

of thousands of PAYE workers, led by the Trade Union organisations, not clear evidence that the workers of the Republic were sick of a society that spawned privilege and wealth for a few and denied justice and a decent standard of living for the many?

Does the righteous and forthright condemnation of Thatcher's economic policies by all sections of the Northern Ireland Committee of the Congress of Trade Unions not establish that workers know their real interests in spite of the efforts to sidetrack them into bitter sectarian hatred?

Surely, comrades, the total disinterest of working people in the meeting between Haughey and Thatcher, two of the most right-wing figures in European politics, is hard evidence that workers know that there are no acceptable solutions to any of our problems from either of the Tory leaders or parties?

But we are not only optimistic for the future on account of the growing strength and consciousness of the working class. We are optimistic because we see our Party, Sinn Féin The Workers' Party, now emerging as the voice of that class.

During the past decade we have faced many difficulties and overcome many problems both outside and within our own ranks. But we have shown, not least in Cork City and Cork North East, that we have the programme which is in the interest of our class.

Let me say here and now and let there be no doubt about it, Sinn Féin The Workers' Party welcomes an election any time Haughey cares to face the people and we will be putting our programme in front of as many constituencies as the Party is capable of fighting.

We have no fears as to what the response of the working people will be. They see their livelihoods attacked, the quality of political life debased and the gomben man and his rich friends holding on to power. To what Party are working people going to turn if not their own party — Sinn Féin The Workers' Party?

We stand in defence of their jobs, their homes and a future for the youth of this country. These are our prime concerns and let no one dismiss them as timid objectives, because this is a fight that the working class must win in the coming decade.

It is a fight being conducted in an economy that is increasingly displaying all the viciousness, corruption and decay of capitalism, and where the working people are asked to pay the price for

shoring up the tottering system.

If the insane policies of Thatcher and Haughey are continued there will be 100,000 unemployed in Northern Ireland and 200,000 in the Republic by the end of 1981.

For example, in Northern Ireland over 25,000 jobs hang in the balance in the shipbuilding industry and allied engineering industries should Harland and Wolff be forced to close. Unless the Yard secures the contract for British Petroleum's two new tankers that nightmare will be the reality.

Northern Ireland's skilled engineering workforce will be dumped on the scrapheap. Not one of the many sectarian Tory parties in the North have answers to the worsening economic crisis. The Workers' Party Republican Clubs have the economic programme and will be putting that programme forward vigorously in any election to the new Northern Ireland Assembly.

In the Republic as private enterprise increasingly fails to provide the jobs needed for our vast young workforce, we find the efficient State sector coming under increasing attack from a variety of sources.

CIE, seeking to give the capital city a rapid rail service, is opposed by the rich road building lobby of Fianna Fáil in their efforts to foist a network of motorways in Dublin. A blatant and obscene example of private profit before public welfare.

The imaginative skills and enterprise of the management and workers of Bord na Mona in developing the cutaway bog as a rich source of cheap vegetables is being frustrated by the farmers' lobby who want these public lands taken into private ownership. Bord na Mona are denied the right to sell to the general public while hard-pressed working families must depend on imported vegetables from as far away as Mexico. Where is the economic logic here, never mind any minimum concept of the public good?

But one of the greatest crimes of all being planned against the public sector would deprive the giant Nitirigin Eireann plant in Cork of its raw material in order to make private gas companies a profit. Our natural gas would be burned, the most wasteful use possible, in order to make money for private enterprise.

It is no exaggeration to describe this plan as a wanton, criminal act directed against the workers of this country.

As I have already stated, we have no fears as to what the response of the working people will be to the parties which promote such a programme.

But in our optimism for the future let us not minimise the problems which face us. Indeed we are building the Party; indeed we are being listened to as never before and we can expect to reap some of the seed sown over this past decade.

But this is not a time for self-congratulations. It is a time for action, for expanding our philosophy, for taking the struggle for a wider, richer democracy into every arena where capitalism holds sway. And to do that we need a stronger, even more united Party than we are at present.

Our strides forward can be held back in a number of ways. We live in capitalist society and it is to be expected that we cannot remain untouched by the viciousness of that system.

There is the everpresent danger of individual-

ism — the dominant feature of capitalism. We welcome the contribution of every member, no matter how small that contribution may be, but where the contribution is greatest there is also the greatest responsibility to ensure that it is for the Party, not the advancement, the power, of any one individual.

Equally we face the problems of localism and regionalism.

Certainly, comrades, we recognise that the advances made by any section of the Party, any constituency or any region are to the benefit of the Party as a whole. But there is a tendency sometimes to view such gains narrowly. At times it can be forgotten that areas and sections can only exist and expand because the Party as a whole exists.

Self-sufficiency in one district therefore must not blind the members there to the continuing and growing needs of the entire Party. Those needs must be met, not as a burden, but welcomed as a primary and fundamental condition of ideological and organisational expansion.

Without the Party as such operating throughout the country as the Party of the working class, regional or local advances would pose no more threat to capitalism than would minor warlords have posed to the Roman Empire.

We must seek at all times then to ensure that it is the Party which is advancing, growing in strength, ideologically, numerically and financially. Such a clear understanding is vital if all our energies, resources and abilities are to be directed by the Party to winning State power both in Northern Ireland and the Republic.

Because, comrades, this is a decade of great opportunities, although a decade which will also be fraught with great dangers.

The right-wing, reactionary economic policies of the Tories are demonstrating to working people both in Britain and Ireland the need to maintain and strengthen their class organisations at the industrial level. Equally there is growing demand for clear and determined political leadership from the Left. Let us restate once again our willingness to join with all serious democratic, progressive and socialist forces to provide that leadership for the benefit of the entire working people.

But in seeking such a Left coalition we also restate clearly that we are not prepared to make any concessions whatsoever in our support for civil rights and democracy in Northern Ireland nor in our opposition to terrorism in any of its forms.

Terrorism, from Italy to Ireland, is in the interests and only in the interests of all those forces from the right to the ultraleft who are the enemies of democracy.

And here lies the greatest danger in the coming decade. Every effort will be made by the anti-democratic forces to prevent the unity and strengthening of the Left. Acts of violence either by the right or the ultraleft have the intended consequence of spreading fear and arousing calls for measures which are ultimately designed to restrict the development of democracy and reduce the increasingly threatened field of civil and human rights.

Sinn Féin The Workers' Party asserts

therefore that the struggle to defend and expand the democratic character of society against such terrorist acts is central to its goal to win state power for the working class both in Northern Ireland and the Republic.

As is customary on this occasion the Party sends greetings to and confirms its solidarity with all those progressive, democratic workers parties and liberation movements throughout the world struggling for peace and socialism.

We must also note the grave concern felt by the Irish people at the continued threat to world peace due to the escalation of the arms race and in particular by the decision to place the continent of Europe once again at the heart of another world war. This time a nuclear war.

The location of the Cruise and Pershing missiles by the American government in the NATO countries goes against all the progress achieved both at Helsinki and at the SALT talks. Here it is clearly the duty of the Irish government, as a neutral but peace loving country, to do all in its power in conjunction with similar peace loving states to work unceasingly for an end to this madness in the interests of humanity.

That insanity which brings the world closer to the brink of total destruction every time there is a mechanical failure in the American so-called Early Warning system has not as yet been opposed by the Irish government.

Our Party in unity with the Irish people calls upon the government to get off the fence and act in the interests of humanity before it is too late.

Equally we support the growing concern of the people in opposition to those who would end our traditional neutrality. Ireland can play an important and honourable role for peace but not as a member of any power bloc.

We also take this occasion to congratulate the Irish Olympic Committee and the athletes who remained true to the Olympic spirit and ideal.

We wish them every success in Moscow and know that their presence there is an expression of the desire of the Irish people to build friendship and solidarity with the peoples of the USSR.

Finally, comrades and friends, I want to stress as a life-long trade unionist and activist in many working class organisations who has engaged in a variety of struggles from job-creation to health care that we are setting out in this new decade with a Party prepared to meet every challenge.

But it is a Party into whose ranks we must bring and warmly welcome the widest possible cross section of the best of our class, the young workers, the skilled and unskilled, the intellectuals, the managers and the artists.

Apart from the election campaigns we will be engaged in, the industrial struggles or the democratic issues, there is one message above all that I feel we must take with us from Bodenstown: *Build the Party.*

Build the Party not only for the political and economic emancipation of our class but also for its ideological, cultural and social emancipation.

The way forward in the coming decade will present many problems, there will be many difficulties to be faced and overcome but with each and every one of us determined to expand and swell our ranks we will move forward in our thousands towards that society of real freedom — the socialist Republic.

# Church and State in Poland

Wieslaw Myslek

RELIGION is an essential aspect of social relations that Marxist analysis could not ignore. The classics of Marxism-Leninism examined this question at considerable length, but never outside the context of the major economic, social, ideological and political problems arising in the course of man's emancipation.

There is no working-class party or socialist state whose programme does not contain clearly formulated ideological and political propositions on matters bearing on religion. A comparison of these programmes shows that they have both common and specific features. The former derive from the uniformities of social development, and the latter, from the specifics of the given society's history, traditions and culture. This also applies to the Polish working-class movement and Polish socialist statehood.

## Common struggle

In the interwar period, the main task facing the Polish Communists in matters of religion was to elaborate and popularise an approach which would make it possible to overcome the ideological barriers among the major exploited classes of society and would help to pool their efforts (irrespective of religious faith) in the name of common and overriding political goals in the struggle against the fascist threat, the bourgeois state and the greedy ruling class of property owners. In its fight for a popular front in the last few years of its activity, the Communist Party of Poland worked out that approach in detail.

During the Second World War, the key problem was to unite the Polish people for a struggle against the danger of their physical extermination presented by Nazi Germany's policy of genocide. Together with the Polish people, the Roman Catholic Church went through the inferno of fascism. Among the more than six million Polish citizens who lost their lives during the war and occupation there were several thousand clergymen of different denominations. Over that period, the Roman Catholic Church lost roughly 20 per cent of the total number of priests. There was no other country in Europe whose church suffered such heavy losses or maintained such a firm anti-Hitler stand. Defence of the country's national interests in the face of the common threat paved the way for mutual understanding among all Poles. In that period, the Polish Workers' Party took a clear-cut stand. *Okolnik*, the PWP, Central Committee's organ, wrote in September 1943: "With due respect for the believers' loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church and religion, they

should be organised for a joint struggle against the invaders."

## True understanding

So, on the eve of the establishment of the Polish people's state, circumstances seemed to favour a solution of religious problems under which the wartime awareness of the primacy of national interests would help to democratise relations in that sphere as well. One would have thought so, one would have hoped for that, all the more so since the Polish people's state had always, even when the tensions in the relations with the Church were at their worst, showed a true understanding of the religious needs of the Church and the believers.

Let us recall that right after the war the state put in a vast effort to set up a network of religious institutions in the western and northern lands and to provide material security for their existence and activities. At that time, however, in spite of the fact that there were already some periods of dialogue and cooperation and a number of official agreements were signed (like those of 1950 and 1956), conflict situations prevailed. These were due to the different attitudes to the problems of Poland's social system and development prospects — and also, largely, to the disagreements over the model of relations in religious matters resulting from these differences.

So long as the official clerical circles rejected the Polish social revolution, clashes on the first issue were inevitable. The older generation had already forgotten to some extent and the younger one had never known well enough that there had not been a single social reform that did not meet with non-acceptance and resistance. At least a section of the clerical circles actively opposed the land reform, the nationalisation of industry and, especially, the country's industrialisation.

The differences over the second issue were equally pronounced. To democratise relations in the sphere of religion, like those in any other sphere, it is necessary to abolish all privileges, to put an end to the state of affairs where some thrive at the expense of others.

The working-class parties and the socialist countries pursued the programme for the democratisation of religious relations following the programme adopted by the revolutionary bourgeoisie in the period of struggle against the feudal state, though the latter usually were under the ideological supremacy of religion guarded in many countries by the institutions of the Holy Office. Early bourgeois anti-feudal ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood could not

accept the limitations imposed on the freedom of choice and ideological self-determination. The key principle to guarantee that freedom was the freedom of conscience and conviction, and its legal guarantees. On the other hand, civil equality and tolerance was guaranteed by considering religion to be a private matter of citizens, the separation of the church from the state, the principle of secularity of the main domains of public life as the meeting place for the people of various religious beliefs and different attitudes towards religion. With the consolidation of capitalist relations, a majority of the capitalist countries curbed the democratisation of religious relations in a degree conducive to the strength of state-church alliance. For example, the Constitution of the Second Republic provided for the principle of the freedom of conscience and conviction on one hand, though on the other made it an obligation for state schools to teach religion (especially the Roman Catholic religion) even to children from atheist families.

## A secular state

The main goal of the policy on religious matters followed by the Polish people's state from its inception was to democratise religious relations, to ensure true freedom of conscience and separation of church from state. At first glance, that was democratisation for a minority: the steps taken to abolish the social privileges once enjoyed by the Roman Catholic Church, which laid claim to predominance not only on the strength of the number of believers, but also on the strength of its influence on Polish culture, restored other churches and religious communities to a sense of equality and also helped non-believers to overcome their sense of inferiority. In fact, however, the democratisation had a much greater impact. Thus, family legislation was secularised; once religious marriage was no longer regarded as the only lawful type of marriage, once civil marriages were recognised as equally lawful and a whole body of secular family law was elaborated, Catholics were also enabled to dissolve unfortunate marriages and enter into wedlock once again.

A specific feature of Poland's policy on religious matters in the recent period is that it has always recognised the connection between the state of the social consciousness and the evolution of juridical norms regulating religious relations.

The practice of the freedom of conscience and religious belief, the separation of church from state and the establishment of a secular system of education and civil law, family law in particular, was not effected merely by decree, through a one-off act of law, but was a process which unfolded as the changes in social consciousness enabled the people to recognise and accept the new juridical norm. Thus, secular family legislation was introduced at the turn of 1945, the principle of the separation of church from state was formalised in the Constitution of 1952, but the secular nature of the school — a logical corollary of that constitutional principle — was enacted only in 1961. The long, evolutionary democratisation of religious relations in People's Poland was a sign of discretion and respect for religious feelings, a recognition of the primacy of

political principles of the people and the state over ideological tenets and an awareness that the important point was not just to change the juridical norms, but also to educate people accordingly.

As religious relations were democratised and the secular principle was recognised as the optimal norm in social affairs helping to raise the standards of social intercourse and ensure ever greater civic tolerance, the former privileges of religion in the social sphere (primarily those enjoyed by the Roman Catholic Church as an institution rather than by individual Catholics) were gradually eroded. Many of the clericals opposed that policy, for up to then they had regarded genuine normalisation of religious relations, including those between state and church, solely as a return to their past privileged status.

The Polish religious policy is characterised by consistent efforts to introduce full security of public life, which by the same token means the recognition of the principle of the broad autonomy of churches and religious associations in their own area as concerns their religious activities, ministry, educational work, in the field of managing the material property and the staff of the church. The internal autonomy of churches followed by their development makes the advocates of the return to the *status quo ante*, of the restoration of privileges in the public sphere, lose their argument as to the indispensability of those privileges for the proper religious performance of the church.

### The parish and the manor

It would be a mistake to reduce the manifest changes in religious relations, in the status and affairs of the Church to the results of state policy on matters of religion. The situation was markedly influenced by the whole complex of social and constitutional transformations.

The abolition of the former ruling classes of property owners (after a definite but sufficiently long period of vacillation) broke up the traditional alliance between the clergy, on the one hand, and the landowners and the bourgeoisie, on the other, the "alliance of the parish and the manor", and enabled the Church to free itself from the ambiguous "openness" with respect to the affairs of men that it had proclaimed in the past. This has been recognised both by numerous Catholic intellectuals and by the representatives of the church authorities. One might safely say that the overall cultural development of the whole people, which has undoubtedly entailed a growing secularisation of social affairs, has also resulted in a peculiar, one might say cultural, development of Polish Catholicism, helping to purge it from the past sway of obscurantism, as J. Zawiejski and other representatives of Polish culture pointed out in their well-known assessments. This intellectualisation of Catholicism, the inception of a new, reflective religious formation would have been impossible without the socialist revolution in culture and education. At the same time, this revolution broadens the penetration of secular principles into the minds of men, teaches them to think rationally, provides them with scientific instruments for interpreting social phenomena, promotes the gradual spread of the scientific, materialist world outlook, and helps to turn the

old, one-religion society into a society that is relatively heterogeneous in terms of world outlook. The clerical circles are thus increasingly obliged to keep their distance with respect to the educational, cultural and ideological transformations. At the same time, People's Poland has seen the rise of a new phenomenon, which could hardly be possible anywhere else. It is the emergence of a well-organised socio-political left wing within the Roman Catholic Church, of secular groupings of Catholics. Roman Catholic social organisations take part in the activities of the People's Unity Front and the representative bodies (both Parliament and the People's Councils), something that has for a long time now indicated that adherence to socialism and religious convictions are not at odds with each other.

The socialist-oriented socio-political trends in Polish Catholicism have made a breach in the traditions of Roman Catholic social thinking, which was once inclined to recognise, with very few exceptions, only those social systems that were based on private property in the means of production and socio-class inequality.

The Catholic social thought of the pre-socialist period favoured generally the consolidation of social distinctions, it objectively had a disintegrating impact on society. It has only been possible under the conditions of a socialist state that the leftist interpretation of that thought could be in harmony with the transformations aimed at social progress and equality, with the processes of socio-political unification of the nation.

But decisive importance here attaches to the political changes in the mentality of broad circles of believers, who have traditionally seen religion as an autonomous sphere totally independent of politics. Millions of working people, irrespective of their attitude to religion, laid the ground-work of the socialist system and the people's well-being. Their socio-political stand in practice always manifested itself in a recognition of the primacy of general national and social principles, of their common political interests over religious and ideological distinctions.

### Religion and politics

That is not to say, however, that church circles did not put pressure on the believers, especially in the early years of People's Poland, when they urged the Catholics to follow not only religious dogma, but also the Church's dicta on socio-political matters... Up till the Pontificate of John XXIII they boiled down primarily to the dictate of absence in the activities aimed at the building and development of socialism. Let us recall here a decree of the 1949 Congregation of the Holy Office which made the Catholics involved in cooperation with Communists liable to the most severe church penalty — excommunication. What was clearly aimed at, at that time, was to place religious differences on a par with political divides. If that line eventually failed, that was because the bulk of the working people were opposed to an involvement of religion in political struggle. Although the right-wing circles are doing their utmost to whip up political hostility among the believers, current sociological research shows a continued psychological opposition to these endeavours. It shows that an overwhelming majority of Polish Catholics

believe that religion should not be tied in with politics, that the altar should serve the purposes of religious instruction and not those of political agitation against socialism.

One could suppose that the Party's and the socialist state's activities in ideological education have done much to foster such an attitude, which draws a clear line between religion and politics. There are two postulates that have taken the strongest hold in Polish society. The first is that the day-to-day struggle for socialism and the processes of socialist construction demand that the working people's common class and national interests should have the primacy over ideological differences. The other is that religion should be seen as the personal affair of citizens with respect to the state. The latter postulate, which had its origins in real life and whose purpose was to ensure, on the one hand, the actual religious needs of the believers and, on the other, the observance of civic tolerance within the framework of the secular model of social affairs, led to a gradual disappearance of the hotbeds of religion-based conflicts. Today, manifestations of intolerance can already be regarded as vestiges of the past, which have virtually no effect on the social climate as a whole.

We touch here upon the issue of essential differentiations between the religious policy and the ideological and educational policy of the state. Among its many functions the socialist state performs also the educational function. All the educational processes in our country are based on scientific ideology, which exerts an influence on the revaluation of ideology in milieu covered by the state system of national education. This function of the state is often questioned by certain church and Catholic circles. They postulate ideological "neutralisation" of the state. This postulate is illegitimate not only because there is no country in the world which could be considered as ideologically "neutral", but also because the basing of education on scientific ideology enabling man to understand better the laws governing the world of the matter and the world of human beings is an obligation of the state if the latter is to educate people who are enlightened, conscious of their place in society, of the sense of their work and life, of moral motivations for their civic and personal attitudes, all that which cannot be provided by formalised knowledge deprived of ideological foundations.

Some Catholic milieu voice an opinion according to which religion and its morality give sufficient motivations for the sense of human life and attitudes assumed in the life on earth. Let us leave aside the fact that the view is anachronistic under the conditions of ideologically pluralistic society since it concerns only the believers. Much more important is the fact that scientific ideology best corresponds to the practice of socialist social transformations and if only for this reason constitutes their essential and indispensable element. It is also important that socialist social transformations are not limited to changes in the living conditions of the people but also extend to changes in their personality. In this context, clear-cut differences can be observed between scientific and religious ideology. The resulting discussion and ideological rivalry, however, should comply with the principles of tolerance



and coexistence; they should involve a competition of authentic values and fair arguments rather than a confrontation of non-ideological pressures.

In socialist Poland, both the Roman Catholic Church as well as other churches and religious associations have significant functions and they make a full use of those opportunities. The postulates of curbing the possibilities for making scientific ideology universal by administrative measures stem from the bad traditions of the long obsolete ideological and educational monopoly, which once was the realm of the church. I think that those postulates are also underlined by an apprehension of consequences following the competition of values represented by different ideological orientations.

### Party programme

Parallel to the state programme for democratising relations in the sphere of religion, the PUPW has elaborated a set of theoretical propositions and political directives concerning the attitude of its members to religion. Its major proposition, which, incidentally, is characteristic of the whole international working-class movement, is that for Party members and for the Party as a political organisation religion is *not and cannot be a private matter*. This follows from a number of premises.

The Party's programme is based on a scientific ideology, whose substance is a close and direct connection with dialectical and historical materialism, with scientific socialism. Our Party has taken a critical stand primarily with respect to the socio-political function of religion, something that is due to our historical experience, when in the course of the political struggle against the bourgeoisie the working-class movement had to face religious institutions, which nearly always sided with the exploiting classes. Equally, the bourgeoisie and the church circles that collaborated with it usually sought to counter the class struggle and the objectively conditioned and clear-cut division into classes with an ideology and social solidarity, and also with a concept aimed at splitting the unity of the working class through an accentuation of religious distinctions.

Recognition of the principle that in a workers' party religion cannot be the private affair of its members does not mean that the party's ranks are closed to those who believe in God but are class-conscious and politically active working people. It simply means that a believer wishing to join the party should understand that one of his political obligations will be to stand together with the party in the event of a conflict with hostile political manifestations of clericalism, and that by way of ideological education within its own ranks the party seeks to foster its members in the spirit of Marxist ideology.

The PUPW's ideology is based on the scientific, Marxist world outlook. Our Party advocates an honest and sincere life aimed at transforming the present society in the interests of man, at building up the new and just socialist system, which enables the working people ever more fully to satisfy their material and spiritual requirements. The Party does not expect the Church to accept an ideological compromise, nor can the Church expect the Party to do so either.

### Progress

Considerable progress in state-church relations has taken place since 1970.

In September 1976 in Mielec, then in December 1977 in Vatican, and in the fullest manner in January last year at the Sejm session Edward Gierek described the scope of possibilities of the social involvement of the church in cooperation with the state: "The joint national work", he said, "provides room for cooperation between the Church and the state. That cooperation should embrace all that is conducive to the development of Poland, consolidation of her security and position in the world, all that is conducive to the family, civilisational progress, shaping of public discipline and civic responsibility."

Doubts might arise whether so defined social function of the church and the scope of cooperation with the state would not violate the constitutional principle of separation between the church and the state. It would undoubtedly be so if the recognition of the social importance of the constructive attitude of the Church was accompanied by a return of former privileges of the church in the non-religious sphere of public life. But in the situation where the church utilises its own apparatus of religious and educational influence, carries out the homiletic work in the institutions of religious instruction and other religious institutions it runs, the principle of separation between the church and the state is not violated.

It would be an illusion to think, however, that the contradictions between the state and the Roman Catholic Church have been fully overcome, that all the old preconceptions have been eliminated, or that the socio-political scene

in this area is totally free of conflict situations. Over a fairly long period, the right-wing political circles in Poland and abroad tried to use the potential and actual tensions in state-church relations to further their own reactionary goals, urging various church circles to work in the interests of the right. The Church is still being incited to this kind of activity. The latter-day advocates of the anti-socialist political opposition have repeatedly tried to win the moral support at least of some church leaders, who would testify to the high moral standard of their activities and back up their political aspirations. Now and again, such attempts meet with some response and to a small but active group of church leaders and slogans proclaimed by various dissidents and revisionists, who seek to compromise the socialist socio-political way of life, appear to be more attractive than the true aspirations of the people and their political leadership that are closely tied in with socialism.

Poland's recent history confirms the thesis that in the future the country will develop according to the laws that have already manifested themselves in the past. This enables us to express the confidence that the orientation towards continued conflicts and political rivalry between the Church and the state, already on the wane, will gradually give way to a readiness for constructive cooperation and joint efforts, to an awareness of the paramount importance of the people's interests and their unity as a condition of further progress, to a sense of concern and responsibility for the general prosperity of Poland.

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# Communications, Public Opinion and Global Problems

## Tapio Varis

Tapio Varis is Director of the Tampere Peace Research Institute, Finland.

ONE OF THE main tasks of the UNESCO International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems is to define the role which communication might play in making public opinion aware of the major problems besetting the world, in sensitizing it to these problems and helping gradually to solve them by concerted action at both rational and international levels.

Global problems to a large extent determine the future of mankind. One set of global problems has been created by the increasing incompatibility between the creative actions of man to renew nature and the possibilities of nature. These problems include environmental pollution and international efforts for conservation. Other global problems are due to the growth in population and uneven development. Such problems include, among others, the energy supply of the world, sufficiency of food, utilization of the riches of the oceans, the use of space technology etc.

In addition, the arms race has given rise to a problem of mass destruction weapons. The solution of this problem has a great bearing on the solution of all other problems.

A solution to such problems becomes more and more urgent. The methods of solutions will have an increasing effect on the life of every nation and the whole structure of international relations. It is clear that development of international co-operation to use the results of the scientific-technical revolution to the benefit of mankind will promote better medicine, peaceful utilization of outer space, a solution to underdevelopment etc.

The sharpening problems of the transnational market-economic system, which led to permanent crises in the 1960s and particularly the 1970s, presented the scientists with new tasks. There is a need to find methods to predict and to steer the development of the world. Different social indicators and concepts to build global models had already been developed but the great projects of global development were for the main part not realized until the 1970s, when the researchers studied the findings of the Club of Rome and other research reports on different world models.

Efforts were made in those research projects to develop models for renewing the whole international system. An interesting research project completed in the USA in 1976, which was

commissioned by the UN, was carried out under the direction of Wassily Leontief to study the future of the world economy. Leontief identified five areas of action for successful world wide development. These are food and agriculture, sufficiency of natural resources, reduction of pollution, industrialization and investment and a programme for a new international economic order. Leontief contends that in relation to these action areas, there are no practical obstacles to the realization of world-wide development. The factors preventing even development are, consequently, socio-political.

### Arms race

The resources invested in the accelerating arms race consume the bulk of the intellectual and material resources of mankind. Military expenditure throughout the world is at present about 400 thousand million dollars a year, which is approximately twice as much as the national income of the African continent or equal to the national income of Latin America. Approximately a quarter of the world's scientists (400,000 scientists) are working on military research. Almost 40% of the financing of research since the Second World War has been devoted to military research and development. About 60 million workers get their living directly from military industry — half are soldiers. If these figures are compared to other areas of science (environmental control, energy, medicine) the proportion devoted to military purposes is unreasonably large and prevents the use of resources for other purposes. Furthermore the acceleration of the arms race in quality (e.g. militarization of outer space) is rapidly changing its dangerous and expensive nature.

For a couple of decades after the first Sputnik in 1957, outer space was not militarized to any considerable extent. In recent years however, space is rapidly becoming an expensive and dangerous arena for the arms race. Approximately 75% of the satellites in the world are under military control and about 70% of US military communication directed abroad is transmitted through satellites.

### Public opinion

The growing debate on mass communication proves that while the fight for the direction of consciousness and ideology accelerates, the area of struggle for peace is also widened. Communication is seen to have a more and more central — though not decisive — role in the creation of an international climate which can

promote or slow down disarmament and solve other global problems. To evaluate this kind of fact one constantly has to keep in mind how communication develops in content and in quality. At the same time greater attention must be paid to structural changes which are taking place.

Public opinion can be understood as a specific expression of social consciousness. Loosely used, it may refer to the attitude of a particular social group to a specific item; or again it has been used to refer to a society's traditional or accustomed outlook; or yet again it may refer to the results of systematic propagandising as *public opinion*. What each of these usages have in common is that the term is understood loosely and that there appear to be no unambiguously approved methods to outline the concept accurately. Furthermore, it may be stated that public opinion formed as a result of group pressure is often weak in terms of intellectual content and the opinions generally not supported by factual knowledge. It is for this reason that during recent years especially in the UN that the importance of *conscious or enlightened social awareness* is stressed.

When public opinion is understood as a special manifestation of social awareness its *formation* is dependent on many factors other than mass communication or information in general. However, especially in the developed industrialized countries, mass communications together with direct interpersonal communication determine the direction of the formulation of mass opinion. The importance of information policy — and especially of news policy — can be estimated according to which issues it wants the public to have an opinion on, and which issues are ignored or given only marginal coverage.

Sean MacBride seems to believe that internationally power has shifted from governments and secret diplomacy to public opinion. MacBride argues that the higher level of education in the world means that people are more conscious than before. The war in Algeria was, in MacBride's opinion, the first war in which public opinion pressurised the former colonial power (France) to leave the colony. Another example according to MacBride was the war in Vietnam. As additional examples he mentions dissidents in socialist countries, Watergate, etc. (Sean MacBride: 'Mobilising Public Opinion for Public Good? Communicator, April 1979).

Valid counterarguments can be raised to those views. The changing behaviour of colonial powers in Algeria and Vietnam was largely due to the changed constellation of world power structures. There is no evidence for example that public opinion would have concentrated on the war in Vietnam had the war progressed successfully for the aggressors. The war continued for decades before public opinion started to criticize it. In fact the polls seem to support the view that the American public was largely in favour of the war up to the end of the 1960s. Neither is it known in the case of Watergate which crucial decisions were made *within* the power elite and what the final role of mass communication was in the flow of events.

## Positive action

There is no reason, however, to deny the importance of public opinion. Presumably the existence of public opinion and peace movements were major factors in preventing the use of nuclear weapons during the Korean and Vietnam wars and in stopping the production of the neutron bomb thus far. MacBride makes a reference to the threat to mankind posed by nuclear weapons. But should attitudes towards nuclear weapons and the arms race in general be based on apocalyptic fears or on the possibilities of positive action? Surely mass information could support positive efforts in a concrete international system.

According to its covenant (1945), the United Nations strives to maintain peace and security and to strengthen international cooperation by encouraging and promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. During its existence the UN has gone through major changes, especially since problems of development and the world economy have been raised on its agenda. The preservation of peace is to a great extent dependent on how well the UN is able to adapt to the demands and tasks of any particular time. It has sometimes been suggested that the League of Nations was founded to abolish those reasons which led to the First World War and the UN to abolish the reasons which caused the Second World War. *The task is, however, to abolish those reasons which may lead to the Third World War.*

In the field of communications, international problems have commonly been those between different social systems and press systems. These are often stereotyped into differences between "east and west". There are also problems among western countries which include trans-border data flow. Developing countries and the role of communication in development have to an increasing extent formed the third group. Discussions are held under the umbrella of "North-South" on a new international information order.

For many years East-West positions dominated consideration of communication problems in the UN. Especially extreme but less fruitful were the debates on human rights, freedom of information and war propaganda. Most of the UN documents on communication do not have power of law — only moral and psychological weight.

The preamble to UNESCO's Constitution expresses the following view

That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed;

That ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war;

That the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races;

**"It has sometimes been suggested that the League of Nations was founded to abolish those reasons which led to the First World War and the UN to abolish the reasons which caused the Second World War. The task is, however, to abolish those reasons which may lead to the Third World War"**

That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and congruence;

That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.

Furthermore, the Constitution defines some of the basic functions of UNESCO as follows:

The purpose of the Organisation is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.

To realize this purpose the Organization will: Collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image...

This view expressed in the foreword of the Constitution stresses the task of UNESCO to widen the concept of peace — besides economic and political inter-governmental agreements — into all areas of cultural interaction. The first article of the Constitution demonstrates that the object of the organization is to contribute to the preservation of peace and security by promoting cooperation between nations in education, science and culture. The organization favours making good use of all mass communication media in promoting its work.

## UNESCO's role

In its General Assembly in 1978, UNESCO approved a general resolution which stressed its role in generating a climate of public opinion

conducive to the halting of the arms race and transition to disarmament.

Realization of the objectives of the UN and UNESCO is of course seen very differently by various political groups and ideologies. A popular notion in the West is that an increase of the information flow of all kinds between nations will strengthen peace and world order. The characteristics and quality of the content of communication are generally ignored. An unlimited flow of all kinds of information and communications will, it is believed, create the proper conditions for the development of accurately informed public opinion.

This view, however, is not shared by some influential Western scholars. In their book *Peoples Speaking to Peoples*, (New York 1972), Llewellyn White and Robert D. Leigh analyse the problem of increasing understanding among peoples. They say that understanding does not, by itself, guarantee order and peace but is a vital element in achieving peace. White and Leigh raise an important question:

"On what, then must the people feed in order to be capable of reaching wise decisions? Not on propaganda, surely; fortunately, an overdose of spoonfed words and images has immunized the world against its most obvious forms at least. The surest antidote for ignorance and deceit is the widest possible exchange of objectively realistic information — true information, not merely more information; true information, not merely, as those who would have us simply write the First Amendment into international law seem to suggest, the unhindered flow of information! There is evidence that a mere quantitative increase in the flow of words and images across national borders may replace ignorance with prejudice and distortion rather than with understanding." (pp. 1-2)

In addition to the view that true information should be disseminated, the receivers should also be able to place the solution of global problems into the concrete system of international relations. Journalists and other communicators should be able to see the demands and prospects of world-wide efforts to solve global problems. This demands much from media education and journalist training. If UNESCO can stimulate anything in this respect it will merely be complying with its Constitution.

International communication is sometimes depicted as a means towards solutions to international problems. It cannot be argued however that communication problems led the European colonial powers or white America to enslave peoples and plunder natural resources.

## New information order

In this respect, the state and possibilities of the new international information order must be evaluated on the basis of how well the programme for a new international economic order has been realized. Unless fundamental changes take place in the structure of multinational political and economic systems and the structure of markets, the material conditions for a renewal of communication will not come into being.

The concept of the new information order has received very confused — and even questionable — formulation in resolutions of UNESCO and the UN. Based on proposals by the Americans and the French, together with three developing countries (Sri Lanka, Tunisia and Venezuela), the organs of the UN speak about a "more just and effective" world communication and information order. One can ask what particular effectiveness is in question when the very concept of the new communication order is unclear. Is the question concerned with increasing the effectiveness of the present transnational information structure and in what respect? The most effective order could well be a Fascist one.

A publication, *International News — Freedom under Attack*, by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University (edited by Dante B. Fascell, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills 1979) regards the efforts to create a new world order as a threat to the West.

"This threat has emerged in international forums over the last few years as communist ideologies have combined with many Third World leaders in a concerted effort to frame what has been termed a "New World Information Order." (p. 12)

There is scant evidence to support this thesis; it is little more than a 'red' herring!

Reformatory actions in the framework of the new international information order aim to make alternative sources of information more available, increase equality in international information and create accurate and comprehensive information flows.

When discussing the new international information order, one must also see the connection of reform to the basic purposes of the UN which are the strengthening of peace and security, promotion of human rights and the realization of a new international economic order and development. This will not be successful unless the content of the information disseminated is also discussed, because the content will determine the tendencies into which public opinion will be directed. In a different context, heated discussions have taken place on the question of preventing the use of mass media in promoting or condoning acts of aggression and undermining peace in general. The concept of war propaganda is related to the very concept of aggression which was very precisely defined by the UN in 1974. Communication has a very central role in the creation of the international climate within which the solution to global problems can be found.

A well-known American political scientist Karl W. Deutsch discussed in the 1960s the role of communication in controlling the arms race and strengthening national security.\* Deutsch argued that a nation preparing itself for a large

scale war requires extensive preparation to condition the climate of opinion in its own country to be favourable to acts of war or to violating arms control agreements. In Deutsch's opinion, it should be possible for arms control to include a statistical content analysis of mass communication in the countries involved. This analysis would either prove the existence of large-scale psychological conditioning or the lack of it. He suggested setting a quota to mass media concerning coverage of given controversies and disputes, even though this would cause constitutional problems in some countries. But when one considers the second clause of the third article of the UNESCO declaration 1978 (Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to countering Racism, Apartheid and Incitement to War), it is clear that international action is needed. On the basis of the UN's definitions of aggression, one can define propaganda as supporting or condoning acts of aggression. Within the framework of the new information order, this has to be resisted.

### Social consciousness

Social consciousness is not created by mass media alone; other social institutions like schools, scientific institutions, legislative bodies, the churches, political parties, army etc. contribute to it. Historical experience tends to confirm the fact that due to several factors, social consciousness can be very erroneous in relation to reality.

The world-wide processes in the individual and public mind are connected to basic ideological concepts and beliefs about reality and its characteristics. Daily mass communications either confirm or question such assumptions. Different approaches are argued in all communications. For example, those who take the arms race for granted, tend to repeat that it is necessary in order to strengthen security, stimulate economic progress, promote scientific-technical development and decrease unemployment. Those who are in favour of disarmament and see it as a necessity can in turn argue that ending the arms race would increase security and confidence, would enable a fundamental reallocation of economic resources to more central sectors of social life, would guarantee engineers and scientists new areas for exploration, and would guarantee a more stable economic structure for employment.

Although communicators have different views and explanations regarding global problems, it would be in the spirit of the new international information order to have multi-dimensional and many-sided information on those problems. Although the mere awareness of the threat of the arms race and other connected problems is not enough to halt this race, it is the mass media and information which to a large extent determine the general atmosphere and climate of public opinion in which the solution can be found. This is not a new discovery but very relevant in the rapidly changing reality of the late 1970s. There is a danger that the MacBride Commission which is working under different pressures will not find enough time for these problems.

### Concrete tasks

The UNESCO expert meeting on the Obstacles to Disarmament and the Ways of Overcoming them, held at UNESCO 3rd to 7th April 1978, brought to the attention of the MacBride Commission its recommendations (see appendix). These recommendations include that the mass media should take the utmost care not to allow themselves to be used in the propagation of false or misleading information on strategic armament or other military matters. The meeting also urged UNESCO to organize seminars and training programmes in order to increase professional competence in utilizing documentary sources concerning these problems. Special mention was made of the need to study the influence of advertisements promoting the sale of implements of war on the mass media. There are signs for example in some countries of an increase in military propaganda in the mass media.

These kind of concrete tasks are not, however, adequately covered by the work of the MacBride Commission so far. The Interim Report practically ignores these aspects as well as the general resolutions by UNESCO on disarmament. The danger lies therein that the Final Report will not cover these problems in a satisfactory way. If so, the Commission will fall in one of its basic functions.

### APPENDIX

#### *Extract from Report of the Committee of Experts on the Obstacles to Disarmament and Ways of Overcoming them.*

66. The meeting suggested that the recommendations relating to the press and the mass media be brought to the attention of the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, in the hope that it may be in a position to conduct studies and give advice on these matters.
67. The expert meeting urged that the press and mass media should take the utmost care not to allow themselves to be used in the propagation of false or misleading information on strategic armament or other military matters.
68. Likewise it is hoped that the press and media will focus more public attention on the escalating danger of the arms race and the need for general and complete disarmament.
69. Considering that freedom of information is an inalienable human right, all members of the United Nations should be urged, on the occasion of the Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament to promote greater freedom of information with respect to military and disarmament affairs.
70. In order to improve international standards of information in the armament/disarmament field, UNESCO itself should organize seminars and training programmes in order to increase professional competence in utilizing documentary sources and information systems,

\* Karl W. Deutsch: 'Communications, Arms Inspection and National Security', in *Man and International Relations*, Contributions of the Social Sciences to the Study of Conflict and Integration. Volume II: Integration, pp. 848-858. Edited by J.K. Zawodny, San Francisco, California: Chandler Publishing Company s.a.

and in accounting military expenditures and other military-related statistical operations.

71. A special study to analyse the sources, content and impact of military-related information in the international mass media should be carried out by UNESCO in order to promote subsequently adequate steps to minimize the dangerous effects of false or misleading information as an obstacle to

disarmament.

72. The expanding influence of advertisements promoting the sale of implements of war upon the mass media in general, as well as the proliferation of specialized magazines relying upon such advertisements, should be investigated by UNESCO. Special reference should be made to the legal and constitutional implications of this problem.

# Marx, Engels and Ireland

Ellen Hazelkorn

IT IS very popular nowadays for people to preface their remarks on politics or economics with reference to Marx; indeed, so often is (was) the term "Marxist" used as a means to rationalise an untenable (or indeed, an un-Marxist) view, that Marx quickly separated himself from those who sought to be his adherents. Engels recorded the following conversation between Marx and Paul Lafargue: Marx announced, having cast a bewildering eye at the "peculiar product" of "so called" French "Marxism", that "what is certain is that I am not a Marxist".<sup>1</sup>

With reference to Ireland, numerous groups, organisations and individuals have sought to use Marx and Engels comments on Irish nationalism and the Fenians to justify a campaign of bigotry and sectarian warfare in Northern Ireland. Given the confusion that pervades the "left" in this country, it is imperative that we look at what Marx and Engels actually had to say on the issue. The value of historical-materialism is that it demands an analysis of the real material factors, and not those we wish to see. As such, it condemns historicism — ("because it was, it must continue to be") — and prophecy to the grave. Writing precisely on this point, Marx said: "Since it is not for us to create a plan for the future that will hold for all time, all the more surely what we contemporaries have to do is the uncompromising critical evaluation of all that exists, uncompromising in the sense that our criticism fears neither its own results nor the conflicts with the powers that be."<sup>2</sup>

## Positions of Marx and Engels

Briefly then, Marx and Engels adopted the following position on the Irish question in the 1860s, a period when Fenian activity was at its height in Great Britain and England:

Since the Great Famine of 1846-1849, a policy of replacing Irishmen with sheep and cattle had led to mass emigration from the country.<sup>3</sup> While land clearances were necessary for consolidation of the holdings, and hence preceded capitalist

production, they were discriminately and maliciously implemented without due consideration given to the Irish population. Thrown off the land, they emigrated to England where they performed unskilled labour. Their willingness to work for and under minimal conditions — a point Engels had stressed in *The Condition of the Working Class in England* — showed no hint of a working class consciousness; instead, their attitude directly benefited the bourgeoisie who prospered from the massive increase in the reserve army of labour. The English working class was effectively divided into national camps.<sup>4</sup>

On the one hand, Ireland had been transformed from a colonial (territorial) acquisition into a food-producing region of England. On the other, its status had not changed. Ireland continued to be an essential component of accumulation; under merchant capital, it had been a haven for rewarding soldiers and newly-created nobles with territory and a good income from rent. As primitive accumulation gave way to capitalist accumulation, Ireland shipped out not only money but also labour and foodstuffs, thereby aiding industrial expansion. As a region of England, it performed its role well. England had become "the 'workshop of the world'; all other countries were to become for England what Ireland already was — markets for her manufactured goods, supplying her in return with raw materials and food."<sup>5</sup>

The integration of the two economies — one agricultural and the other industrial — was a natural development given geological and economic factors; the transference between the two sectors of any economy is basic to capitalism. The rub came when in that as long as this situation continued, the flood of Irish into the ranks of the English proletariat would stymie the drive towards socialism. In Ireland, the aristocracy had proven itself to be adaptable. While various post-famine measures, such as the

Encumbered Estates Courts, had eradicated the laziest and most reactionary of the aristocracy, the majority continued to own the land, now renting to capitalist farmers rather than rack-rented peasants.<sup>6</sup>

The answer to this phenomenon was to be found only in repeal of the Act of Union; if, as was witnessed, it could not be achieved by "English working class ascendancy", then a Fenian victory was a probable alternative. Fighting for national independence had the dual advantage of attacking the English aristocracy at its source. This was its Achilles Heel. "...the abolition of the landed aristocracy...will be infinitely easier...in Ireland (because) it is not merely a simple economic question but at the same time a national question, since the landlords there are not, like those in England, the traditional dignitaries and representatives of the nation, but its morally hated oppressors."<sup>7</sup>

Independent Ireland would then be able to effect an agrarian revolution which "with the best intentions of the world the English cannot accomplish...for them...[and to introduce] protective tariffs against England".<sup>8</sup> Referring to Engels' early pronouncements on the inefficiency of Irish landholdings and the method of production, Marx agreed that land restructure remained a task of the Irish themselves. The removal of the English landowner would immediately reveal the necessity of that process; it would furthermore remove any lingering doubts that the real cause of the Irish problem came from across the Irish sea.<sup>9</sup> Finally, the implementation of tariffs would help counter the devastation incurred to Irish manufacturing since the Union, thus providing stimulation to spark an industrial revolution.

More importantly, the attainment of repeal — used synonymously with independence — would have a cataclysmic effect upon capitalist expansion in England. Deprived of a vital source of labour and capital, as well as a market for its manufactures, English capitalism would founder. On the other hand, the English working class, no longer divided would unite to "expropriate the expropriators". This was

1. Engels to Bernstein, 2-3 November 1882.

2. See also *Letters from Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, no. 3, September 1843.

3. Marx, "Notes for an Undelivered Speech on Ireland", 26 November 1867; Marx, "Outline of a Report on the Irish Question to the Communist Educational Association of German Workers in London", 16 December 1867.

4. Marx to Meyer and Vogt, 9 April 1870; Marx, "Confidential Communication", issued by the IWMA, 1 January 1870.

5. Engels, "Preface to the English edition of the *Condition of the Working Class in England*", 1892.

6. See Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1, chapter 25.

7. Marx to Kugelmann, 29 November 1867; see also Marx to Kugelmann, 11 October 1867.

8. Marx to Engels, 30 November 1867.

9. Engels, *Condition of the Working Class in England*, CW4:561

perhaps an overly mechanistic as well as optimistic vision of the political and economic ramifications of repeal but not unreasonable given Marx and Engels' reading of the situation.

### Transformation

In essence, Marx argued that, in line with the requirements of industrial capitalism, Ireland, since 1846, was being transformed from the domicile of the rent-collecting English aristocracy into the essential supplier of the bourgeoisie. The Irish experience showed that colonies under capitalism were vital for accumulation; in addition, as he explained in volume three of *Capital*, this relationship helped to counteract the tendency for the rate of profit to fall. Hence, maintenance of the England-Ireland link was essential for capitalist expansion in the former. To break that link, as the Chartists and the Fenians advocated,<sup>10</sup> would severely cripple "the metropolis of capital" and bring closer a European social revolution. "To accelerate the social revolution in Europe, you must push on the catastrophe of official England. To do so you must attack her in Ireland. That's her weakest point." The significance, then, of the Irish question was precisely its international impact.<sup>11</sup>

With that end in mind, it was "in the direct and absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connections with Ireland."<sup>12</sup> Until it does this, "the English people will remain tied to the leading strings of the ruling classes, because it will have to join with them in a common front against Ireland. Every one of its movements in England itself is crippled by the strife with the Irish, who form a very important section of the working class in England."<sup>13</sup> Above all, the Irish question was a "specific English question".

The role and leadership of the International Working Men's Association was absolutely crucial. The deep animosity existing between Irish and English workers "was rooted in differences of language and religion, and in the competition which Irish workers created in the labour market". This antagonism was "skillfully exploited", Marx argued, "by the government and the upper classes who are convinced that no bonds are capable of uniting the English workers with the Irish. It is true that no union would be possible in the sphere of politics, but this is not the case in the economic sphere...".<sup>14</sup> Both national groups were workers, and as such, reflecting back to the famous line from *The Communist Manifesto*, must unite and "advance simultaneously towards the same goal". The formation of Irish sections of the International, in England and in Ireland, was necessitated by this fact.<sup>14</sup>

This position — of which most people are acquainted — did not, however, remain constant. Ten years later, Marx and Engels, dismayed at the narrowing trade-unionist interests of the English working class, and what Engels described as the increasingly "economist" actions of the Fenians<sup>15</sup>, came to consider that the parliamentary campaign for Home Rule could yield tremendous pressure on the English class structure. They now argued that Parnell and his party — the bourgeois nationalists — could perform a revolutionary role. By playing the government at its own game, through

the ballot-box, Parnell could find himself "wield[ing] dictatorial powers in Great Britain and Ireland".<sup>16</sup>

In effect, by the time of their deaths (Marx died in March 1883; Engels died September 1895), both men had abandoned any idea that a national revolution in Ireland would contain any social content. Still keen that Ireland should achieve independence for the sake of its effect upon England, they accepted a move towards parliamentary Home Rule achieved by bourgeois nationalists. Seeing that as the immediate issue, Marx and Engels severed the link between nationalism and socialism, which early Fenian actions might have spawned. Socialism would only be the contest between a bourgeoisie and proletariat within an independent Ireland. To examine the reason for this shift in thinking, we need to reconsider the Fenians.

### The Fenians

The Fenians, or the Irish Republican-Brotherhood (IRB), founded in 1858 by James Stephens, was a populist secret society desiring to attain national independence for Ireland by overthrowing the English. Given the existent political void among the English working class in the 1860s, Marx appreciatively regarded Fenianism as a "socialist, lower class (non-Catholic) movement" with no representation in Parliament, but with the strength and capability to operate simultaneously in America, England and Ireland.<sup>17</sup> That its attention was directed towards the eradication of the English landlord — and hence foreign "appropriation of the soil" — contributed to Fenianism's attraction for Marx and Engels. In this regard alone, Fenianism displayed "socialist tendencies".<sup>18</sup> Finally, and most significantly, the Fenians were a movement rooted "only in the mass of the people, the lower orders".<sup>19</sup> Otherwise, taking its place alongside peasant-agrarian resistance and liberal-bourgeois constitutionalism, Fenians were petit-bourgeois nationalists capable of donning a revolutionary cap only under the immediate circumstances of the 1860s. For this reason, Marx attempted to steer the International Working Men's Association and the English working class to support Fenianism.

Separately, Marx and Engels became intimately involved in an amnesty campaign urging the release of Fenians imprisoned in English jails. Marx admitted he had been "consulted from all corners about the Fenians affairs",<sup>20</sup> and Engels contributed financially, in addition to providing a convenient refuge for Fenians.<sup>21</sup> Even Marx's family became involved; Eleanor was so active in the amnesty campaign as to be dubbed a "head-centre" by Marx,<sup>22</sup> while Jenny, under the pseud. J. Williams, penned several articles for the French paper *La Marseillaise* about Fenian prisoners. Although concerned with the treatment of all Fenians, most attention was devoted to O'Donovan Rossa.

However despite open support for the IRB, both Marx and Engels privately sheltered misgivings about their actions. Engels' own thoughts on the matter were succinctly phrased in a letter to Marx: "As regards the Fenians you are quite right. The beastliness of the English must not make us forget that the leaders of this sect are

mosty asses and partly exploiters and we cannot in any way make ourselves responsible for the stupidities which occur in every conspiracy."<sup>23</sup> The attempted bombing of the Clerkenwell prison in December 1867 was a case in point. Charged with the notion that "after all something must happen, after all something must be done", several Fenians sought to free imprisoned members from the prison. Criticising these adventurist stunts, Marx argued that such actions would have the adverse effect. While the International had engaged itself with mobilising the English working class behind the just demands of the Fenians, the latter by their actions, proceeding only in driving "the London masses... into the arms of the government party. One cannot expect the London proletariat to allow themselves to be blown up in honour of the Fenian emissaries."<sup>24</sup>

### Delicate relationship

Ironically, many Fenians were anxious to create as much distance between themselves and the International — on the grounds that the latter were atheistic communists — as the

10. In 1842, the Chartists' Second National Petition included, along with its 6-point programme for democratic reform, the demand that the Act of Union be abolished.

11. Marx to Paul and Laura Lafargue, 5 March 1870; see also Engels to Kautsky, 7 February 1882.

12. Marx to Engels, 10 December 1869; see also Marx to Meyer and Vogt, 9 April 1870.

13. Marx to Kugelmann, 29 November 1869.

14. Marx, "Position of the IWMA in Germany and England", from a speech of 22 September 1871 at the London Conference. IWMA.

15. See in particular Engels to Bernstein, 17 June 1879; Engels to Sorge, 10 November 1892; Engels to Bernstein, 26 June 1882; Engels, "The Irish Struggle", 13 July 1882, *Der Sozialdemokrat*.

16. Engels to Liebknecht, 1 December 1885; see also Engels, "The English Elections", 4 March 1874, *Der Volksstaat*; Engels to Becker, 5 December 1885; Engels to Bebel, 23 January 1890.

17. Marx, "Notes for an Undelivered Speech on Ireland"; Marx to Engels, 30 November 1867.

18. Marx to Engels, 30 November 1867. Cf. T.W. Moody, "The Fenian Movement in Irish History", in Moody, ed. *The Fenian Movement* (Dublin, 1978): Fenianism was "simply nationalistic; it had no specific social programme for the Irish republic of its dreams" (p.107); W.P. Ryan, *The Irish Labour Movement* (Dublin, 1919) states "Fenianism...turned several of the sturdiest Irish elements from immediate social issues..." (p.131).

19. Marx, "Outline of a Report on Ireland".

20. Marx to Engels, 27 November 1867.

21. See Ralph Fox, *Marx, Engels and Lenin on the Irish Revolution* (London, 1932) p.22.

22. Marx to Paul and Laura Lafargue, 5 March 1870.

23. Engels to Marx, 29 November 1867.

24. Marx to Engels, 14 December 1867; see also Engels to Marx, 19 December 1867.

International, or more precisely Marx and Engels, were between themselves and the Fenians — on the basis of the latter's terrorist-style campaigns.<sup>25</sup> Regarding this delicate relationship, John Devoay said of James Stephens: "Dr. Cullen based his assumption of an alliance with the Carbonari on the fact that James Stephens while a refugee in Paris had fought at the barricades in the Red resistance to Louis Napoleon's Coup d'Etat in 1851, and claimed that he was an enrolled member of the Communist Party (Communist League). Even if he were, he never tried to convert Fenians to communism, and his chief lieutenants, O'Leary, Luby and Kickham were most conservative men."<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless in 1866, there is a record of Stephens seeking membership to the International.<sup>27</sup> It seems likely that Stephens' brief flirtation with the International was occasioned by his desire to establish links with any society likely to aid the Irish cause. It is clear that he misunderstood the politics of the International, seeing it as an international conspiratorial society, more Bakuninist than Marxist. Recognition of the fallacy of that view led him to an almost immediate easing of the link. By 1872 Stephens, as well as Luby, had adopted an openly hostile attitude towards the International. Reacting to the Paris Commune, Luby publicly repudiated any attendance or sympathy with it.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, O'Donovan Rossa used the columns of *The Irishman* to condemn the Commune after the death of the Archbishop of Paris.

While the break with Stephens was most likely not regretted, Marx and Engels were undoubtedly shocked by the treatment the International received from O'Donovan Rossa. Jenny, Marx's daughter, was particularly vexed, because she had written numerous articles in Rossa's defence. "The letter they found on me was the one I had written to O'Donovan Rossa. It was in answer to his smearing condemnation of the Commune movement in the *Irishman*. I expressed my amazement that he of all people believed the fabricated disgraceful scandals against the communists which were printed in the worthy police organ *Le Figaro* and *Paris Journal*. I demanded his compassion...and the compassion of his fellow countrymen for the heroic front fighters of a new society."<sup>29</sup>

O'Donovan Rossa's stance obviously remained unchanged because Marx, a year later, found it necessary to set the record straight for his friend Sorge. "As to O'Donovan Rossa, I wonder that you quote him still as an authority after what you have written me about him. If any man was obliged, personally, to the *International*, and the French Communards, it was he, and you have seen what thanks we have received at his hands."<sup>30</sup>

## Paris Commune

The underlying tension between the Fenians and the International came to a head with the Paris Commune of 1871. That this should provoke such heated exchange between the sides is not surprising; the Fenians, like most Irish nationalists, were not anti-religious or anticlerical in the continental sense of the word. They deplored priestly involvement in political affairs, but not Catholicism itself. Above all,

they were not atheists. In this light, E.R. Norman's comments are most interesting; he suggests that "although impossible to prove, it is most likely that many of the earliest Fenian recruits were Irishmen from the Papal Brigade of 1860, returning home disillusioned with the service of the Pope but willing to recapture their crusading zeal in the service of the 'virtually established' Irish Republic."<sup>31</sup>

Marx clearly did not and could not appreciate the prestige that the Catholic Church enjoyed in post-famine Ireland, making it an absolutely integral part of the Irish political culture. Both he and Engels tended to dismiss Catholicism too quickly, seeing it, for the most part, an adopted response to Protestantism. They implied that the religious divide was the result of manipulative practices institutionalised by England, stretching as far back as Elizabeth in the 16th century. Its disappearance would come about through an altered British policy. Marx not only belittled the depth of the religious divide, but also saw religion as completely separate from politics. In this regard, he termed the Fenians a "non-Catholic" movement. The events surrounding the formation of a branch of the International in Cork show how erroneous that view was.

The clash between the International and Catholicism — and hence Irish nationalism — was no more obvious than in the events that led to the General Council resolution, "Police Terrorism in Ireland", in April 1872. This declaration was issued in response to the disruption of several meetings of the International in Cork and Dublin. It claimed that the British government through the police attempted to "nip in the bud the establishment of the International in Ireland" because the spread of the International threatened to put an end to the "national antagonism between English and Irish working men, in England..." What the resolution did not mention was the Church's role in encouraging attacks upon the International, leading to its eventual withdrawal from the country.

## Antagonism

The particular events in Cork are worth recording in so far as they illustrate the antagonism that developed between nationalists and internationalists, and the Church and the International Working Mens Association. On another level, internationalists were desperate to point out that their membership was not tantamount to atheism. Very briefly the events are as follows:

*The Freeman's Journal* of January 8, 1872 reported that the International Working Mens Association "was making good way in Ireland. Many of the most intelligent and influential working men were successfully engaged in establishing branches in Dublin and other centres throughout the country." By March, the Cork branch had made sufficient progress to have raised opposition from the alter of Canon Maguire. Canon Maguire's outburst followed the International's support for a coachmakers strike in the city.

On Saturday, March 16th, a notice appeared in Tuesday's *Cork Examiner*, whose publisher was the Canon's brother, J.F. Maguire, former mayor of Cork and then MP for Cork. It read: "We are authorised to state that a meeting of the

working classes of Cork will be held in a few days to repudiate the principles of the International, and to denounce its introduction into this city." *The Freeman's Journal* noted that the meeting was organised by "leading nationalists" who were concerned about the International's presence.

The tone for the meeting scheduled by Sunday, March 24th, was further set by Wednesday's *Freeman's Journal*. "If anyone had a few weeks since stated that the infamous International Society — its hands red with the blood of priests, and its coffers filled with the produce of the sack of Churches — would make a serious attempt to establish itself in Catholic Ireland, he would be laughed at as a lunatic." The paper made it clear that the meeting would receive the full support of the Catholic Church.

A meeting to denounce the International was held in the Athenium in Cork on March 24th. Approximately 3,000 people gathered to hear the International attacked; however, shortly before the meeting began, John de Morgan, secretary of the Cork branch of the IWMA, arrived with about 100 men. Almost from the moment of their entrance, the meeting collapsed into sheer pandemonium; chairs were flung across the hall, as were various other objects. Eventually the meeting was forced to end. The Internationalists, in so far as they succeeded in disrupting the gathering, were the victors.

However, the victory was short-lived. Immediately Canon Maguire continued his attack on the International. He appealed to the people of Cork to avert the influence of the International "by earnest prayer and every exertion they could make". He was joined by Father Lavelle, who, in an open letter "to the young men of Ireland", called upon them in the name of patriotism and catholicism, to avoid the International.

Most prominent in its criticism of the Internationalists were those described by the Irish newspapers as "nationalists". One correspondent to the *Cork Examiner* called upon "Irish Nationalists" to ensure that the "accursed Internationalists will never again dare to pollute the soil of Ireland with their unhalloved steps". Indeed, one writer claims that many of de Morgan's "most strenuous assailants had served prison sentences in the Fenian cause."<sup>32</sup>

25. As an example, see Marx's contribution to the General Council meeting of 6 June 1871; cf. Marx, "Fourth Annual Report of the General Council"; discussion within the Council on the issue of the "Belgian Massacres", 11 May 1869.

26. John Devoay, *Recollections of an Irish Rebel* (Shannon, 1969).

27. Marx to Engels, 17 December 1866.

28. Luby to *The Irish Citizen*, 30 March 1872; Luby to *The Irishman*, 20 April 1872.

29. Jenny Marx to Kugelmann, 3 October 1870.

30. Marx to Sorge, 20 November 1871.

31. E.R. Norman, *The Catholic Church in the Age of Rebellion, 1855-1873* (London, 1965) p.89; see also pp. 51, 86-134.

32. Henry Collins and Chimen Abramsky, *Karl Marx and the British Labour Movement* (London, 1965) p.246.

## Church influence

So powerful was the influence of the Church, that of Morgan was deprived of his students — he was a teacher of elocution — and run out of Cork. Attempts to establish a branch in Limerick were continually delayed; again, the papers claimed that nationalists, joined by local clergy, stopped the formation of any branch there. By mid-May, the *Cork Examiner* proudly announced its triumph: the International had "resolved to abandon for the present the Irish organisation awaiting more favourable auspices for re-establishment. The foreign agents who came to promote the movement have left Ireland."

Given this background, Marx and Engels' support for Parnell and bourgeois democracy takes on added significance: When Fenianism proved to be a political handicap (and embarrassment), they suffered no emotional delay in breaking links with the IRB and turning to Parnell. Years earlier, Marx and Engels had considered that the Fenians could provide a fundamental social upheaval by expelling the English aristocracy and forcing the re-structuring of Irish land holdings. The newly independent country — which would certainly follow either directly or indirectly advances made by the English proletariat — would experience an industrial revolution. The capitalist mode of production would become dominant leading inevitably to the Irish proletariat's triumph.

Implicit in this scenario was, at least initially, the belief that Fenianism was the most serious challenger to English capitalism because it was both nationalist and socialistic. Neither man expressed any further details about landownership in Ireland, but it is sufficiently evident from Marx's speeches to the First International, that they considered land nationalisation as the only possible and prosperous answer.<sup>33</sup> Open rejection by Irish tenants of Davitt's flirtation with nationalisation in favour of ownership in the 1880s suggested to Engels that the small tenant would not disappear without a struggle. Given the obviously small Irish working class — obvious in that neither Marx or Engels considered its existence — Engels accepted that the immediate future would see the creation of a transitional farming petit-bourgeoisie from among the tenants. The transference of land into communal holdings would be delayed as Irish tenants insisted in their determination to avoid the economic probabilities of mortgages, indebtedness, and competition.<sup>34</sup>

While the Fenians never espoused any communalist notions of landownership — Marx had spoken of them having only "socialistic tendencies" — the clean break between nationalism and social change (or socialism) came with their demise. An attempted unity of socialism with nationalism was resurrected by the labour movement, most notably James Connolly at the turn of the century; but in the period under consideration, nationalist aspirations quickly became dominant. Even those desiring only to assuage their material hunger gladly offered up the vision of Celtic Ireland as their guiding light.

Engels was clearly aware of this departure; it attempted to establish a branch in Cork illustrated that Irish nationalism was not heavily bound to socialism. In turn, his support

for Parnell and the land acts was given in acknowledgement that they might solve the nationalist aspect of the Irish question. Home Rule would leave the Irish to sort out their own more serious and more fundamental problems;<sup>35</sup> on the other hand, it would bring to a close the continued weight of the Irish question upon English politics, and hence aid the advancement of the English working class. Hence, in all respects, promotion of socialism in England remained the core of Marx and Engels' attention.

## Influence of the Irish Question

How valid were Marx and Engels' assumptions about the impact of the Irish question on England, most particularly its working class? Although Home Rule did not come about as quickly as Engels had envisaged,<sup>36</sup> debate on the subject did have tremendous repercussions on class politics in England. The Liberals under Gladstone faced internal disintegration, and their demise as a potent political force was well established by the turn of the century. Engels' support for Parnell and bourgeois nationalism was based on the notion that the Parnellites would find themselves holding the balance of power in the House of Commons; holding power, they could bargain for Home Rule. By 1910, debate over Home Rule had finally cast the Irish into a parliamentary force.<sup>37</sup>

Apart from these similarities — which bear out the essence of Marx and Engels' original thesis — Home Rule, restricted only to the South, did not bring with it the end to social and economic divisions in Ireland. The expulsion of the English aristocracy from Ireland was not a result of forced expropriation incurred under independence, but of the tremendous shift in landownership, which, ironically, was aided by various land acts introduced by the English Parliament. Nor did the removal of the aristocracy's economic presence in Ireland lead automatically to the denial of it political power; sensing the mood in 1910, the Lords chose themselves to redraw their terms of reference and hence reduce their political authority.

Nor did Marx and Engels contemplate the territorial division that would occur in the country as a result of unionist demands. Here it can only be said that they, the most Irish nationalists of the day, stood in complete ignorance of either the origins or concerns of Ulster unionism. This is particularly surprising given Engels' enthusiasm for Parnell's pursuit of Home Rule; Engels lived to see two Home Rule Bills defeated by unionist opposition. Neither man understood the complexity of the issue.<sup>38</sup> Marx suggested that as the Protestant Church owned a great deal of property, the overthrow of landlordism would also affect the religious question.<sup>39</sup> The only hint that Engels had begun to appreciate that unionism was not a mere facade was in a letter in 1888. Discussing the Irish flag, Engels said that "In Fenian days, 1865-67, many wore green and orange to show Orangemen of the North that they would not be destroyed, but accepted as brothers. However, no question of that any more."<sup>40</sup>

As for the newly created Irish Free State, it unconsciously adapted Marx's advice, and imposed tariff barriers on most items by the 1930s. Perhaps had they been introduced fifty years earlier the situation may have been

different, but that is speculation. Tariff protection did not bring about the prophesized gold-rush, instead Ireland entered into a thirty year period of under-industrialisation and unemployment relieved in part only by state intervention. In addition, the notion and then the actual imposition of tariffs did more to isolate and distance the south from the industrial north.

In conclusion, Marx and Engels based their assessment of Irish self-determination principally on the issue of the establishment of bourgeois democracy. The newly independent nation-state would be the political expression of the bourgeoisie. As such the working-class could owe it no allegiance. While bourgeois democracy was undoubtedly a progressive development, the condition of the working-class could only be finally improved under socialism. In so far as nation-states, and hence nationalist movements, created the conditions under which working-class parties could operate more freely, they were to be supported. Hence in a word, nationalism was linked with democracy. It was not linked with socialism; that was another process.

Ultimately then, Marx and Engels did not believe that national independence in Ireland was tantamount to social revolution. In the first instance, independence would only create the conditions enabling the Irish to see that their economic problems were indigenous and not imported. Secondly, while the land question was the prime social question of 19th century Ireland, a solution to that problem did not mean socialistic reorganisation of landholdings. In the end, the social revolution would have to be postponed until capitalism had forced the reorganisation of agriculture, creating it its wake a massive proletariat, urban and rural, posed in opposition to the bourgeoisie.

33. See Engels, "American Food and the Land Question", 2 July 1881, *The Labour Standard*, no. 9; Marx, "The Nationalisation of the land", *International Herald*, 15 June 1872.

34. "Interview with Engels", 20 September 1888, *New Yorker Volkszeitung*, no. 226. In answer to the question of whether there was any prospect for a socialist revolution in Ireland, Engels replied, "A purely socialist movement cannot be expected in Ireland for a considerable time. People there want first of all to become peasants owning a plot of land, and after they have achieved that mortgages will appear on the scene and they will be ruined once more..."

35. Marx to Jenny Longuet, 29 April 1881.

36. Engels to Becker, 5 December 1885; Engels to Sorge, 7 December 1889.

37. Cf. George Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England* (New York, 1961).

38. See for example, Marx, "The Excitement in Ireland", 24 December 1858.

39. Marx to Kugelmann, 6 April 1868; See Jenny Marx to Kugelmann, 12 December 1868.

40. Engels to Liebknecht, 29 February 1888.



# Terrorism and the Bourgeoisie

Zinovy Mirsky

*We make no apology for returning to the theme of terrorism in this issue of Teoric. For us, it is not an academic preoccupation — it is a real problem which is tearing society apart in Northern Ireland.*

*In a previous issue of Teoric, we outlined our position on this question. 'Sinn Féin The Workers' Party is quite clear on terrorism. We are unequivocally opposed to it — from whatever source. We make no distinction between the Shankill Butchers or the La Mons Bombers. There are no "ifs" or "buts" in our policy.'*

*This position is not generally accepted on the Left in Ireland. The ultra-Left supports the Provisionals as 'anti-imperialist freedom-fighters'. There is no such thing as an anti-imperialist who does not support the Provos,' according to the Trotskyist Eamonn McCann. 'And no such thing as a socialist who is not anti-imperialist.'*

*Michael O'Riordan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland appears to have no qualms about supporting the Provisionals either. 'We're with the Provos when they say they're fighting for a united anti-imperialist Ireland.' This is akin to an Italian communist in the Thirties saying 'We're with Signor Mussolini when he says he's endeavouring to get the trains running on time.'*

*Michael O'Riordan's logic is no less distorted than Eamonn McCann's. A similar logic seems to exist among the Left abroad. There are communists and socialists who can correctly identify the terrorism of the Red Brigades, the Red Army Faction and the neo-fascists. But they seem to have a "soft spot" for the Provisionals. In reality, it is a blind — and ultimately fatal — spot.*

*There is no qualitative difference in terrorist outrages in Birmingham or Bologna. Those who gun down policemen in Northern Ireland are no less terrorist than those who murder policemen in Italy.*

*The article below (reprinted from New Times, No. 34, 1980, a Soviet weekly of world affairs) analyses terrorism in mainland Europe. We look forward to an extended analysis which incorporates terrorism in Ireland.*

ON August 6, the very day all Italy bade last farewell to the 80 victims of the terrorist-perpetrated Bologna explosion (which also left 200 critically wounded), in Palermo, another Italian city, Right-wingers shot dead Gaetano Costa, the city's chief procurator, a convicted anti-fascist. He was the fourteenth high-ranking court official to have been assassinated in Italy in the last nine years.

A day later, it was reported from the F.R.G. that in a school in Rinteln, Lower Saxony, West German Right-wing extremists had smashed up an exhibition, destroying many documents exposing neo-Nazi activities in West Germany. In the meantime, the British magazine *Searchlight*, carried an article which made public an agreement the British neo-Nazis had concluded with the neo-fascist party Italian Social Movement — National Right Forces on a "personnel exchange". The "guests" from Italy will be accommodated in one of the British neo-Nazis'

paramilitary camps.

In those same days, the Turkish press reported operations in Tuncela Province by army units supported by helicopters against extremist groups which had lately staged a series of armed attacks on state and public institutions. The wave of terrorist acts carried out chiefly by the paramilitary groupings of the neo-fascist organizations has assumed incredible proportions in Turkey, taking a toll of more than 1,700 lives in the first half of 1980 alone. Among the victims are the writers U. Kaftancıoğlu and D. Tütençin, and A. İpeci, Editor-in-Chief of the *Milliyet* newspaper. Almost a third of Turkey's provinces have been under martial law for months. In the eight months of the current year the authorities have arrested more than 10,000 members of diverse neo-fascist and Leftist terrorist groupings. Yet the wave of terrorism keeps swelling — and not only in Turkey. All manner of terrorist groups are beginning to

operate ever more brazenly in France, the Netherlands, Belgium, the Scandinavian countries, Japan and the U.S.A.

At the end of the seventies, when terrorism — both ultra-Left and ultra-Right — swept the West, many political observers predicted that the eighties might be even worse in this respect. Judging by everything, this seems a most likely prospect. There are many indications that the reality will prove ever gloomier and more tragic than expected. In any case, the bloodbath at the Bologna railway station appears to bear this out. This heinous crime, this act of mass destruction of innocent people, was committed by neo-fascists, by the ultra-Right. But is it accidental that their activation was preceded by the sorties of the Leftists of the so-called Red Brigades?

It may appear at first glance that ultra-Left terrorism and its neo-fascist version differ both genetically and ideologically. Actually they have much in common. The terrorism of the Leftists and of the neo-fascists springs from the same soil; both use the same methods and, what is most important, both are objectively pushing political development on the same reactionary course.

"In politics it is not so important who directly advocates particular views," Lenin pointed out. "What is important is who stands to gain from these views, proposals, measures." It doesn't really matter much that the Red Brigade terrorists call themselves revolutionaries and, in words, are opposed to the bourgeois system, while the ultra-Rightists make no secret of their spiritual kinship with Hitler and Mussolini and wish to consolidate the bourgeois system by means of "strong rule". What does matter is that the extremism of the Leftists and the terrorism of the neo-fascists, all their "measures" benefit the reactionaries, the monopolists, the "black colonels" and the generals. In the final analysis, they play into the hands of the bourgeois society's privileged few who, according to Professor Lynd of Yale University, want everything to remain as it was and would rather destroy the world than let it slip from under their control.

Political terrorism has always played into the hands of the bourgeoisie, and quite often served as a means of preserving and maintaining its dictatorship. In recent years the capitalist system has been in ever greater need of terrorism owing to the deepening of the general, ideological and political crisis of capitalism and to the fact that this crisis, as the 25th CPSU Congress pointed out, "afflicts the institutions of power and bourgeois political parties, and impairs elementary ethical standards". Paradoxical as it sounds, terrorism is becoming a vital necessity for the capitalist system.

It is perfectly true that at the present level of human civilization terrorism is nonsense, a social anomaly. Nevertheless, this social anomaly is becoming a real fact of life in modern bourgeois society containing it as a drug does an addict. Those are right who say that the sweeping scale and the bloody forms of political terrorism in the West point to the fact that capitalism is doomed. It is only a hopelessly sick society, a society without a future that can resort to monstrous, anti-human and anti-social methods like political terrorism in order to survive. Political terrorism is a form of the "tension strategy" the

imperialist bourgeoisie has adopted.

The Western ruling circles turn to this strategy every time the bourgeois parliamentary machinery backfires, every time it fails to keep the situation in the country under control, to break down the growing resistance of the working people to the monopolies' home and foreign policies. The "tension strategy" is designed to shock the Western public into being manageable again, into accepting the bourgeois order of things as a "paradise" by contrast with artificially induced horror. Extra-parliamentary (essentially, criminal) methods are used to this end. By pursuing the "tension strategy", the bourgeoisie in effect oversteps the bounds of bourgeois legality, doing this not on its own or in the open, but by means of Leftist or neo-fascist political terrorism.

Communists and other progressives — the main targets of Leftist and neo-fascist terrorism — get killed in the process, but so do representatives of the ruling circles (and not small fry, either). The terrorists have killed Siegfried Buback, the F.R.G. Procurator-General, Hans Martin Schleyer, President of the Federal Association of Employers' Unions and the Federation of German Industries, Aldo Moro, Chairman of the Christian Democratic Party. The bourgeois class readily reconciles itself to that, however. It is prepared to sacrifice a great deal for the sake of preserving its domination, its class dictatorship.

Buback, Schleyer and Moro were assassinated by Leftist extremists from West Germany's RAF (Rote Armee Fraktion) and Italy's Red Brigades. In the seventies it was precisely the Leftist terrorists who were "entrusted" with carrying out the "tension strategy" — although the Right terrorists were not idle either.

Leftist terrorism did the bourgeoisie a great service. The thing is that the seventies witnessed some major revolutionary events: the triumph of the Revolution of Carnations in Portugal, the collapse of the fascist dictatorship in Greece, the emergency of People's Angola on the world map, the rise of revolutionary sentiments in Latin American countries.

In these circumstances, the Western imperialist circles deemed it especially important to retard social progress, to discredit its motive forces, primarily the Communists, to denigrate revolutionaries and the Revolution and their Red Banner. The bourgeoisie wanted to turn the public against the genuinely Left-wing, progressive and democratic forces, to scare the man in the street — as had repeatedly been done in the past — with the "bloodshed of the Revolution" and with the spectre of "Red terror". Hence the value of the political gamblers of diverse pseudo-Red and pseudo-revolutionary organizations, whom imperialist propaganda presented as the real Red, as Communists, as Marxists-Leninists.

There is abundant evidence showing that the Red Brigades recruits were actually in cahoots with the out-and-out reactionaries. At the end of 1978, the Spanish *Triunfo* magazine and the Italian *L'Europeo* discovered and made public the top-secret FM 30-31 instructions of the Pentagon and the CIA on the planting of special agents in various radical organizations. "At the beginning of 1970," *L'Europeo* wrote, "when the first Leftist groups went underground and

established international contacts, American special services decided to infiltrate these groups with a view to impelling them to terrorist actions."

A week after Aldo Moro had been kidnapped, The French *L'Humanité* wrote: "Neither Communists, nor Socialists, nor Christian Democrats doubt the interference and the role played by foreign secret services without whose assistance it would have been hard to plan and carry out an operation like the kidnapping of Aldo Moro with such professional skill."

Already at that early stage the Red Brigades terrorists were believed to have their informers in the state machinery and in the top echelons of the judiciary. Last spring, these assumptions were weightily confirmed when the police learned that the son of Senator Donat-Cattin, Deputy Political Secretary of the Christian Democratic Party, belonged to the Prima Linea Leftist terrorist organization. Characteristically, the offspring of a leader of Italy's major bourgeois party, which had been headed by the Leftist-slain Aldo Moro, and whose representative, Francesco Cossiga, is now the country's Prime Minister, managed to slip away from the police. That he could do this only with the help of his high-ranking father's retinue is pretty obvious.

Another example: a certain Durand, a French police inspector, has been found by his colleagues to be a contact between Italian and French neo-fascists, and is implicated in the explosion in Bologna.

These ugly stories demonstrate the hypocrisy of the ruling circles which condemn terrorism (especially of the "Red" variety) in words while actually covering it up. It is not that the bourgeoisie fears exposure as an accessory to the terrorists' bloody crimes; it is just that terrorism gives the bourgeoisie legal grounds for tightening the screws, retarding democratization, curbing the Left-wing forces and suppressing anti-imperialist attitudes.

The West German Bundestag, for instance, adopted a series of laws in 1977 known as "anti-terrorism acts". As *Stern* magazine put it, these laws threaten all those who, while not supporting the terrorists and having nothing to do with them, permit themselves to hold political views which are not to the authorities' liking. Under cover of the "anti-terrorism" legislation, the Right-wing forces and the West German reactionaries have launched a new offensive against the Communists, against real democrats, peace champions and progressive intellectuals. Voices were heard demanding that the writer Heinrich Böll be expelled from the Federal Republic, that the books by the anti-fascist poet E. Fried be burned, etc.

The Left extremists' excesses in the seventies helped, and still help, the Right and the neo-fascists to muster their forces, to regroup, to recruit new followers and to close their ranks on the national and international scale. Bülent Ecevit, the leader of Turkey's Republican People's Party, said on June 3 that the ultra-Rightists have no less than 200,000 men under arms in the country. According to the West German Ministry of the Interior, the numerical strength of the neo-fascist groups in the F.R.G. more than doubled between 1976 and early 1979.

This is only natural. The bourgeoisie has a marked preference for Right-wing, neo-fascist

terrorists who are actually its own flesh and blood. It is on neo-fascist terrorism that the bourgeoisie depends, in the final analysis, for effecting its "tension strategy". The Right and neo-fascists miss no opportunity to make their appearance on the political scene. The Western bourgeoisie's "black hundred" competes with the Leftist extremists in vicious blood-letting; the tragic events of the past few weeks bear this out.

It is noteworthy that the "tension strategy" the imperialist bourgeoisie has adopted is of international as well as national character. At the end of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties neo-fascism was given a strong impulse "from without" when the governments of the U.S.A. and a certain other NATO countries virtually legitimized the principles of détente and steered a course towards revival of the cold war and military confrontation with the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty countries.

With their pathological hatred of the USSR, their yearning for revenge and their orientation, in the context of aggravated international tension, on a military, nuclear-missile solution of the historical contest between socialism and capitalism, the neo-fascists are becoming imperialist's faithful henchmen.

The neo-fascists have long been spoiling for a fight, reviling détente and all it stands for and calling upon Washington and NATO to give up all contacts with Moscow and to talk to it only from "positions of strength". Back in the autumn of 1977, against the background of the "anti-terrorist" hysteria in West Germany following the kidnapping of Schleyer, young NDP neo-nazis got together in Osnabrück and demanded that an end be put to détente, that the Bundeswehr be armed with nuclear weapons and the Helsinki accord boycotted. Besides, they demanded a return of "the German lands in the East" and a revision of the postwar boundaries in Europe.

The anti-détente line which Washington and NATO have been actively steering over the past few years has certainly encouraged the neo-fascists. For its part, imperialism, bent on aggravating the international situation and spurring on the arms race, is in ever greater need of internal support, of a social and political force that would stop at nothing in its drive to break down the resistance of the democratic public. Specifically, the imperialists reckon — and with good reason — on the neo-fascists' anti-democratic activities, their bloody outrages above all.

The American *International Herald Tribune* rather candidly observed that "for the last 35 years, the U.S. government has made regular use of terrorism as an instrument of foreign policy". The chain of that terrorism stretches from the cold-war days through the bloody aggression in Vietnam, through the anti-Cuban campaign and attempts on Fidel Castro's life, through the interference in Chile's affairs and the murder of President Salvador Allende, to the recent brigand action against Iran which was to have led to a coup and to the assassination of Ayatollah Khomeini.

This external terrorism of the No. 1 imperialist power links up with internal, above all, neo-fascist terrorism, confirming the wisdom and intransigent truth of Lenin's conclusion that at its highest stage capitalism engenders and fosters reaction everywhere.

# Intellectuals & the Working Class

Eamonn Smullen

CONOR Cruise O'Brien's version of Burke's "Reflections on the Revolution in France" says a lot about Mr O'Brien. It also raised serious questions for the working class. Because of the activities of some of their number when they join working class parties, should intellectuals be regarded with suspicion by the working class?

We can, of course, define the working class as those receiving a wage or salary as their sole source of income. This definition would include many people with a university education who could be called intellectuals. But the activities of some intellectuals has seriously damaged the working class movement — the activities of George Orwell and Connor Cruise O'Brien are just part of a long list.

Intellectuals must be given every opportunity to contribute to the development of society. They should provide the lion's share of ideas which help the human race step from a lower level of civilisation to a higher level. To deny intellectuals this role while at the same time attacking society based on the profit-motive is "workerism", is a serious barrier to the development of ideas.

People from universities sometimes complain that they are classed as bourgeois and are not accepted wholeheartedly and as full comrades by the working class — the class conscious, politically-minded working class. When such attitudes exist within the working class they must be condemned and combated — contributions from intellectuals, from university people, are important, vital additions to the armament needed to demolish the present unjust society.

The reverse side of the "workerism" coin is as great an evil. It does not have a clearly defined political name, and perhaps does not need one, because it is usually just a case of plain, old-fashioned intellectual or social snobbery — a foolish disorder in this day and age — but to pretend that it does not exist is both fairly widespread and dangerous would be a mistake.

People who court and patronise "the working class" sometimes cannot stomach un-conventionally or informally educated and talented members of that class when they claim intellectual equality. The reservations and barriers that "workerism" erects against progressive bourgeois intellectuals are erected by some bourgeois progressives against working class intellectuals when they move outside the boundaries involving use of the brain which are considered to be "their proper field of activity".

They are forced to fight an uphill battle, proving their knowledge on subjects outside their normal activities again and again and on every step of the way. The natural assumption is that

bourgeois intellectuals do have a wide knowledge outside their field of work and this is by no means always true.

Sean O'Casey is possibly the best known victim of this sort of development. People like O'Casey get the name of being "difficult to work with"; "to be handled with care" when the root of the whole problem is a full and whole-hearted acceptance of intellectual equality in one field or another when talent and a wide knowledge exists.

It is well to remember — while at the same time giving the greatest possible respect — that the university qualification of Bachelor, Master and Doctor in some cases mark nothing more than a degree of knowledge in, sometimes a very narrow field. These qualifications may mean, especially in the early years, that the individual concerned is something in the nature of a forced growth, a hot-house plant, and lacks an extensive knowledge of many of the facts, and more especially, the flavour of life outside their chosen field.

Real revolutions put everything into the melting pot and accidents of birth and formal educational qualifications count for nothing — talent and ability counts for all. It is this side of revolution that sends the Burkes, Solzhenitsyns and Conor Cruise O'Briens running to "Established Orders", "Royal Families", "The Importance of Blood" and "Stars and Garters". They wish to hold what they have by claims based on the accident of birth, the accident of a formal education or by using some privilege, hold the line against the claims of new talent, new ability and new justice.

To put relations between academic life and ordinary life into a proper perspective it is well to remember that Maxim Gorky was never allowed to pass the gates of Karsan University — he sold bread-rolls to students from a basket outside the gates. But who remembers who held the professorships and the doctorships in Karsan University at that time, while all the world knows Gorky.

There is a lot more to the class question than one side possessing almost all the wealth. To a person like Gorky, denied formal education and an outlet for his talent, class injustice cuts much deeper than the mere ownership of possessions.

Why has Burke such a strong attraction for Conor Cruise O'Brien — such a strong attraction for an Irishman who is determined to be more English than the English? He feels that they are more civilised, in much the same way that Solzhenitsyn feels that the Germans are more civilised than the Russians. The two men suffer from the same complaint — they are sour with

life because it has changed and they were not born into the world that they believe they have the right to inherit.

It is interesting to note that Conor Cruise O'Brien and like minds in the British and Irish Communist Organisation and the Socialist Party are at one with the Arch Racistial Enoch Powell in the solution that they put forward for the problems of Northern Ireland.

On reflection perhaps this is not as surprising as it at first seems, because "Nation" is obviously just a euphemism for "race" — the most discredited word in the political dictionary. Bad politics and a degree of snobbery are the root cause of the attraction of Britain and the attraction of Burke. It is not in any way an intellectual approach to politics. But there is a more sinister side — from a working class point of view — to the whole exercise.

AFTER the Spanish Civil War "the right" achieved some success in undermining the idea of revolutionary change. The Soviet Union was presented as "a land of tired revolutionaries" or as "a place that had not lived up to its early promise". The man who made the greatest contribution to this development, working of course from the ultra-line of attack, was George Orwell; an Eton educated policeman, Trotskyist, anarchist — when did he cease to be one and become the other? Did he ever really drop his first occupation? A leading propagandist for "the right" with a claim to having a foot in the working class camp, he achieved a measure of success in making "the right" intellectually respectable. It became possible to say, even in fairly radical circles: "all are equal but some are more equal than others".

Two very serious attempts were made in the late fifties and mid sixties to make the politics of "the right" intellectually respectable. When the attempts were made politics of "the right" were associated with Fascism and with the name Senator Joe MacCarthy although it is obviously impossible to dress that sort of thing in intellectually respectable clothes. In the late fifties and in the sixties, in Asia, Africa and Latin America movements of "the left" were achieving spectacular successes and this was having an impact on American youth — particularly youth at the universities.

In the new intellectual offensive of "the right" Henry Kissinger, professor of history at Harvard University, produced "A World Restored". The book is a sympathetic study of, mainly, the arch-reactionary Metternich. Conor Cruise O'Brien, when occupying the Albert Schweitzer professorship of Humanities at New York University, made a similar effort. He unearthed Burke's "Reflections on the Revolution in France" and polished up that reactionary gentleman's ideas with a long introduction by another reactionary gentleman, Conor Cruise O'Brien himself. The purpose behind both books is obvious — to make reaction once more intellectually respectable.

Kissinger later became Special Advisor on Foreign Affairs to Nixon — known as "MacCarthy in a White Collar". Conor Cruise O'Brien became Minister for Posts and Telegraphs in a coalition government in Ireland. He was known as the Minister, expert on every-

thing except Posts and Telegraphs. He spoke long and often and some of the things he said appeared at first careless reading to be progressive. He, for example, appeared to condemn the Provisionals — certainly a progressive person would condemn the Provisionals.

The whole Conor Cruise O'Brien exercise against the Provisionals was and is designed to link Sinn Féin The Workers' Party with that kind of politics. He made a big effort to do this at a time when members of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party were being killed and wounded by the people with whom he was attempting to link them. Never once have they been given credit for seriously bringing good politics into a very difficult area of politics; the attitude of condemnation is consistent. If further proof of this is needed it can be discovered by a careful reading of his book "States of Ireland". The Provisionals are condemned but it is also stated that they met a need in the Catholic Ghettos — a statement which would have toned down the condemnation to a considerable degree in the year the book was first published — 1974.

If the Provisionals had done this or that, he says, then they would have won mass popular support.

Mr Charles Haughey is also condemned but his "ability and style" are presented in such a way that the general impression that comes across is very favourable. The condemnation of the politics which are a background to the development of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party and that Party's politics, receive absolute downgrading, distortion, absolute condemnation. Conor Cruise O'Brien quite obviously considers carefully the effect the use of one word rather than another will have before he puts it on paper. The impression he gives when he writes is never a matter of chance, never accidental.

The Provisionals have no intellectual standing and, therefore, they cannot be discredited intellectually by Mr O'Brien. It is strange that a foreign visitor was given this impression. Who is using false credentials as a progressive to sell this arch-reactionary to visitors who cannot be expected to have a full knowledge of his real political character.

The Provisionals have a seeming "respectability" and this impression is given by the devout Catholics, literate Trotskyists, competent musicians and footballers who are members or supporters. Almost daily some of these people are engaged in aiding and abetting murder most foul. Those who have not seen the remains of innocent victims of both sexes and all ages — in imagination or as actual broken and charred flesh — can accept the Provisionals as "civilised".

There is a similarity between this situation and a woman's warning on the more polished Nazi Party members in the 1930s. "They seem to be cultured and civilised because they enjoy music and admire paintings, click the heels and kiss the hand. They are in fact the most terrible vandals and barbarians who voluntarily organise the killing and torture of the innocent — often the best human beings. When I look at them I see the faces of my dead comrades". The Provisionals, like the Nazis, have their seemingly "nice

people".

What did Burke say about the French Revolution that is so wise that it merits being taken up, explained and republished by Mr Conor Cruise O'Brien almost two centuries later. "Royal Birth" was certainly a matter of importance to Burke. Conor Cruise allows him to make his arguments about it without dissociating himself from it in any way. He does not attack Burke nor laugh at him, as is his way with political opponents. One is reminded at his horror at the bloodshed in 1916 and his silence about the much greater amount of bloodshed in Flanders. The Irish Party, led by Redmond, sent 50,000 Irishmen to death in Flanders — more than were killed in all the rebellions in Ireland. To put the matter as mildly as possible, it is intellectual dishonesty.

"The Princess Sophia", says Burke, "was named in the Act of Settlement of the 12th and 13th of King William, for a stock and root of Inheritance to our Kings, and not for her merits as a temporary administratrix of a power, which she might not, and in fact did not, herself ever exercise. She was adopted for one reason, and for one only, because, says the Act, 'the most excellent Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, is daughter of the most excellent Princess Elizabeth, late Queen of Bohemia, daughter of our late Sovereign lord King James the First'".

Burke writing such rubbish is foolish enough but for it to be repeated almost two hundred years later is really beyond all reason. Conor Cruise O'Brien knows all about Bonaparte and the Hapsburgs. The Hapsburgs had a verifiable pedigree, at that time, going back five hundred years. The Hapsburgs were the Royal family of Austria and Bonaparte's cannon killed thousands of Austrians at Mononotte, Arcola, Rivoli, Ulm and at Austerlitz. In the interests of Austrian foreign policy Marie Louise, daughter of Francis, The Emperor of Austria, was married to Bonaparte's bed only a few months after the battle of Wagram and the Austrian blood was hardly dry on that battlefield before the marriage.

The Hapsburgs were, no doubt, aware that Royal Families as well as revolutions sometimes come out of the mouth of a cannon; they were probably grateful to Bonaparte for using his cannon against the people of Paris in 1799 and against the doors of the Trinity Church, the meeting place of the Lower House of the French National Assembly, in order to put an end to that body. The fact that he slaughtered thousands of Austrians with the same cannon was only by-the-way.

Before Marie Louise was born human nature had betrayed another Austrian Princess — she had a child without the formality of marriage. And that is not the worst part of the story — she was aided and abetted in the matter by a person who would never have received official sanction to slip between the sheets of a bed in the company of a Royal Person.

The marriage of Marie Louise to Bonaparte was a hurried affair; they were married by proxy so when she arrived in France everything was signed, sealed and delivered. She was completely ignorant of the facts of life. So great were the precautions taken to prevent a repeat of the

unhappy episode, which marred the life of another Hapsburg Princess, that all her reading material was strictly censored and all the animals and even birds she was allowed as pets were females of the species.

On the wedding night Bonaparte — an impatient man at the best of times — had great difficulty in convincing his bride that what he was about was not only a very common practice but was also extremely popular. It was the way all humans, common and Royal, came into being and if an Empress had another purpose in life then he did not know of it.

And Conor Cruise O'Brien intellectually repeats Burke's rubbish about Royal families.

Burke does not like Danton's words: "flung down to the Kings of Europe the head of a King as a gage of battle".

The tragedy of the French Revolution was the fall of real revolutionaries like Murat, Robespierre and Saint Juste and the degeneration into military dictatorship. Bonaparte betrayed the revolution, he was the carpet-bagger of the revolution, but one lesson he did not forget. He understood war and for this purpose one revolutionary principle remained — "every soldier in the ranks carries a marshal's baton in his knapsack". It is one explanation for a remarkable series of military successes at a time when officers and commanders in the opposing armies came from "good families".

The French Revolution was popular in England during the first few years of its life — meetings of support were held and messages of friendship sent to the French National Assembly. One poem of Robbie Burns is in praise of the event.

A meeting of this nature in London particularly annoyed Burke; a Cleric, Dr Price, was the main speaker at the meeting. He said "I have lived to see thirty millions of People, indignant and resolute, spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice. Their king led in triumph, and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects!" Because he was a Cleric, no doubt, he said during his speech: "What an eventful period is this! I am thankful that I have lived to it; I could almost say, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation".

After the restoration of Charles the second a Cleric called Rev. Hugh Peters was executed for high treason. The high treason amounted to an expression of opinion in relation to Charles the First. Burke in his warning says: "It was deposed that when King Charles was brought to London for his trial, the Apostle of Liberty in that day conducted the Triumph. 'I saw', says a witness, "his majesty in the coach with six horses, and Peters riding before the King triumphant".

Dr Price, when he talks as if he had made a discovery, only follows a precedent; for, after the commencement of the King's trial, this precursor, the same Rev. Peters, concluded a long prayer at the royal chapel at Whitehall. He said: "I have prayed and preached these twenty years; and now I may say with old Simeon, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation". Peters had not the fruits of his prayer; for he departed neither so soon as he wished, nor in peace. He became himself a sacrifice to the triumph which

he led as Pontiff. They dealt at the Restoration, perhaps, too hardly with this poor good man.

Both Burke and Dr O'Brien knew the manner of the Rev. Peters death. He was literally hanged, drawn and quartered — that is he was half-hanged and when still alive his stomach was slit open and his intestines drawn out and burned. His body was then quartered.

Charles the Second and his Aristocratic friends had a ringside seat at this spectacle. Another victim was treated in this manner just before the Rev. Peters and when the executioner was half way through the operation of disemboweling, he stopped work and rubbing his bloody hands together called to the Rev. Peters to ask "how he liked his work". Charles the Second and his Aristocratic friends laughed loudly and long and considered that it was a terrific joke.

It is, of course, quite in keeping with other examples of royal barbarism.

One of the King Richards was executed by his successful royal rival by having a red-hot poker pushed up his backside and this was such a common method of execution favoured by royals that it has a special latin name — seldom translated by classical scholars — they do not even mention it. The practice was revived in Ireland during the '98 period under the more vulgar name of "making freemasons". The military went about the country flogging, rapping, picketing, pitch-capping, half-hanging, hanging and "making freemasons".

These events did not really get into their stride until after Burke's death; Dr. O'Brien knows about them but prefers to allow Burke's statement on executions in France during the early difficult years following the revolution to stand unchallenged. Burke's statement was a part of the effort he was making to prevent a peace which seemed a possibility following on the defeat of the foreign armies which the King of France called to his aid against his own people.

Dr O'Brien prefers to quote from Burke's "Letter on a Regicide Peace". It was his effort to prevent the resumption of diplomatic relations between the Government of the French Republic and the Royal Courts of Europe. "At the opening of those doors, what a sight it must be to the plenipotentiaries of royal impotence, in the precedence which they will intrigue to obtain and which will be granted to them according to the seniority of their degradation, sneaking into the regicide presence, and, with the relics of the smile, which they had dressed up for the levee of their masters, still flickering on their curled lips, presenting the faded remains of their courtly graces, to meet the scornful, ferocious, sardonically grin of a bloody ruffian, who, while he is receiving their homage, is measuring them with his eye, and fitting to their size the slider of his gulletine."

On Marie (let them eat cake) Antoinette Burke really excels himself. How did Dr O'Brien's reputation as a "liberal" survive raising this sort of material from the dead.

"It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France, the Dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated

sphere she had just begun to move in, glittering like a morning-star, full of life, and splendor, and joy. Oh! What a revolution! and what a heart must I have, to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disaster fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult — but the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more, shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience."

It is a strange sort of mind which believes that this can be a barrier to revolution. This sort of writing is resurrected and put forward against the revolutionary ideas Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. It is easy to understand, if occupying a certain position in society, the attraction of words of like — "that proud submission, that dignified obedience". In a stratified society words of that nature do not mean just homage to Royals; they mean homage to those above from those below, all through society. The Royals just happen to be at the top of the pile; the greater part of the population is at the bottom.

Extreme reactionaries always attempt to defeat logical arguments in favour of changing society with highly emotional language which pictures a complete breakdown of society if a change is made. Burke is possibly the father of the idea of discrediting progress in this way. Echoes of his language can be heard in the O'Brien writings and statements.

Burke presents the arguments against abolishing the French monarchy in this way: "On this system of things, a King is but a man; a Queen is but a woman; a woman is but an animal; and an animal not of the highest order. All homage paid to the sex in general as such, and without distinct views, is to be regarded as romance and folly. Regicide, and parricide, and sacrilege, are but fictions of superstition, corrupting jurisprudence by destroying its simplicity. The murder of a King, or a Queen, or a Bishop, or a father, are only common homicide; and if the people are by any chance, or in any way the gainers by it, a sort of homicide much the most pardonable, and into which we ought not to make too severe a scrutiny."

The dishonesty of Burke and, of course, Dr O'Brien is also a part of the deception, is well illustrated by a piece of rubbish which Burke wrote about the King of France as a prisoner in the fourteenth century. "If the King and Queen of France, and their children, were to fall into our hands by the chance of war, in the most acrimonious of all hostilities (I deprecate such an event, I deprecate such hostility) they would be treated to another sort of triumphal entry into London. We formally have had a King of France in that situation; you have read how he was treated by the victor in the Field; and in what manner he was afterwards received in England.

Four hundred years have gone over us; but I believe that we are not materially changed since that period. Thanks to our sullen resistance to innovation, thanks to the cold sluggishness of our national character, we still bear the stamp of our forefathers. We have not (as I conceive) lost the generosity and dignity of thinking of the fourteenth century; nor as yet have we civilized ourselves into savages. We are not the converts of Rousseau, we are not the disciples of Voltaire."

BURKE was not ignorant of history; when he distorts history he is obviously doing so with deliberate intent. Dr O'Brien is not ignorant of history. When he talks about the fourteenth century Burke is obviously referring to the "Black Prince". This gentleman captured King John the Second of France and he was later taken to England as a prisoner. The "Black Prince" behaved in a most chivalrous manner towards his Royal Captive. He waited on him at table but it is a well known fact that in feudal times — before states had a sharply defined image — the nobility had much more in common with their own class in places under other rulers than they had with the common people under their own rule. The "Black Prince" and his chivalrous treatment of John the Second of France is usually used as an example to show how far apart were ideas of chivalry and common humanity in the middle ages. Neither Burke nor O'Brien mention what used happen when soldiers under the command of the "Black Prince" captured a town. It cannot be said that the awful barbarities committed against the common people were done without his knowledge; it is a well known fact that witnessing such spectacles was one of his "entertainments". Both the "Black Prince" and the King of France regarded themselves as a part of Christendom — part of a common chivalry. They had nothing in common with the ordinary people.

King John the Second of France was captured and taken prisoner to England at the beginning of the bloody Hundred Years War. At the end of that war his descendant, the Dauphin Charles, became King of France with the aid of Joan of Arc. She was his best general but she was a woman and of the common people; when she was captured she was threatened with the rack and some other instruments of Royal persuasion and then most chivalrously burned at the stake. This is a very well known fact but Burke and O'Brien somehow managed to miss it. It did not go with the lie they were telling so they left it out.

No one can pretend that Burke was a democrat. To him the leaders of the French Revolution were: "suddenly and as if it were by enchantment snatched from the humblest rank of subordination". And "supreme authority was placed in the hands of men not thought habitually to respect themselves; who had no previous fortune in character at stake; who could not be expected to bear with moderation, or to conduct with discretion, a power which they themselves, more than any others, must be surprised to find in their hands".

It would be difficult to get the impression from reading that piece that Burke represented two rotten boroughs in Parliament.

Karl Marx is not only an intellectual but is

generally recognised to be one of a small number of really great minds which the human race has produced. Dr O'Brien's views on Burke differ from those of Marx who was very blunt and to the point when expressing his opinion of the man. He called Burke, "A syphiant in the pay of the English Oligarchy", "an out and out vulgar bourgeoisie". Burke was the Senator Joe MacCarthy of the eighteenth century. He used "guilt by association" and language that was deliberately highly coloured in order to distort plain facts out of all recognition.

Dr O'Brien uses the very same techniques in an endeavour to discredit the only serious party of the left in Ireland. This sort of thing, for example, is straight from the pages of Burke: "To belong to a military elite is noble — in the strictest and earliest meaning of the word — and the authority of a military elite is the real present-day meaning of this movement. The dead can only validate; real power is wielded by the living military elite. They decide who is to die and when, and they possess the prestige which the power to decide confers. Unpretentious though they may sometimes be in dress and manner, they are in fact aristocrats, Samurai, no ordinary people, and subject to no common measure. Mr MacGiolla is the spokesman here for that military elite, and for nothing else."

That Burke-like rubbish was first published in

1974. The words were first spoken by the reactionary Doctor in October 1971. They are included in an Appendix to the 1979 edition of his book "States of Ireland". The piece has a style and a distortion of facts worthy of Burke — with whom the Doctor quite obviously identifies. Every word is carefully weighed and balanced to have the maximum effect in presenting a picture of a Party completely divorced from the people and their interests. The very opposite is the truth. Attacks of this degree of viciousness and distortion are now usually reserved for the Party's Economic Affairs Department.

In spite of O'Brien, and quite a number of others, the working class should welcome intellectuals to its ranks with outstretched arms. They have given, many of them, the greatest possible service to the working class — have endured every sacrifice in the service of the working class. There must be no shadow or reservation against accepting intellectuals as full, loyal comrades.

It is, however, necessary to keep two eyes open for "the out and out vulgar bourgeois" and "expensively educated fools" posing as "intellectuals in the service of the working class". It is absolutely necessary to ruthlessly drive such people out of a serious party of the working class, if for no other reason than to protect the good name of real intellectuals who

have a full commitment to the working class.

If we do need inspiration from the eighteenth century then let it be Murat, Robespierre and Saint Just; let it be Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. A serious Party of the working class must accept the Jacobin words, the Jacobin slogan, sincerely and in full measure; its individual members must accept the Jacobin words in spirit and in fact. A serious working class Party or its individual members cannot play games and only pretend to accept Jacobin principles because if this happens the politically educated, class-conscious workers quickly find ways and means of expressing their revulsion.

Orwell, the Eton educated policeman; Solzhenitsyn, the man from the family owning one of the few Rolls Royce cars in Czarist Russia and Dr O'Brien from the family owning one of the few ocean-going yachts in Edwardian Ireland have, none of them, anything of value to say to the working class. Politics of the right will never be intellectually respectable to class-conscious workers; they are seen to belong to the same category as those of the now politically discredited Kissinger.

Dr O'Brien has now moved on to his real home. He is editor of the American owned, British establishment, Sunday paper *The Observer*. George Orwell used work for that paper.

# Loyalism

## Henry Patterson

THE TERM "loyalism" is such a vague and general one that it should not be used as anything more than a convenient shorthand. If it is not, there will be a dangerous tendency to treat Ulster Protestants as a basically homogeneous group. However, any serious analysis of the past history of this community, or of its contemporary politics, reveals no such simple unity. It is crucial that it is grasped that the Protestant community has only been unified on one issue — opposition to inclusion in a 32 county Irish state. For Irish nationalists, of course, this is all it is really necessary to say. For them the only important contradiction is between the "Irish People" and "British Imperialism" — the Protestants are a misled "loyalist" minority who support the enemy. Their anti-nationalism is regarded as sufficient justification for treating them as a unified group.

For Marxists the question of the nature of Protestant unity should be more problematical. After all, it should be well known that with its long history of capitalist industrialisation, the Belfast area has a powerful labour tradition in its

trade union movement. A serious marxist history of class conflict in Ulster from the 1890s to the 1950s has still to be written. But enough is known to undermine all attempts to treat the Protestants as one reactionary mass. From a materialist position one would expect that the existence of class conflict has had its inevitable effects on forms of Protestant politics and ideology. One might expect Marxists to start off with the recognition of the need to go beyond the obvious unity which is all the ideologues of nationalism are concerned with, and to be wary of accepting stereotypes which portray the Protestants as one bowler-hatted, marching mass of Orange bigotry. Unfortunately such expectations would be disappointed.

### Marxism and Ulster

The potential student of Ulster politics has been faced, at least until recently, with "Marxist" approaches to Loyalism which are written from within a simplistic nationalist frame of reference. Geoff Bell's *The Protestants of Ulster* is a recent example. From this perspective the Protestants

have the unity of a "problem" — they are an obstacle in the struggle to attain national unity. In fact the key question which such an approach can't deal with is the basis for the Protestant class alliance which came into existence at the end of the 19th century and which formed the basis for the Northern Ireland state throughout its history from 1921—1972.

One of the reasons for this is the inadequacies of the "master's" writings on Ulster. This is certainly the case for Marx and Engels — not one of their many discussions on Ireland addresses itself primarily to the Ulster question, and in particular the uneven development of Irish capitalism which is important in any attempt to explain Loyalism, is simply not acknowledged. For Lenin the Ulster question was significant mainly for its delaying effects on the granting of Home Rule — the limited form of self-government which the Liberals proposed before 1914. There was no basis in his approach for understanding the origins, support, durability and contradictions of the Protestant class alliance. It is clear that he lacked adequate knowledge of the situation referring to the Ulster Volunteer Force as an instrument of English landlords and its composition as "armed gangs of Black Hundreds". He consequently seriously underestimated its strength as a popular movement.

James Connolly, the creator of Irish Marxism, despite his period in Belfast as a union organiser from 1911—14, has, in this area at least, left an unfortunate legacy for later generations of Irish marxists. He tended to treat the Unionist movement simply as a manifestation of religious bigotry instigated by the Belfast bourgeoisie to keep Protestant and Catholic workers divided. By treating Unionist ideology simply as religious bigotry, he hopelessly underestimated its

strength. This strength arose from the fact that it wasn't simply lies and illusion, but gave a specific form of expression to a real structural division in the geographical entity called "Ireland". Ulster was dominated by a mode of production — capitalist machine industry — that was distinct from the dominant mode of production in the rest of Ireland — commercial capitalist agriculture. This of itself does not explain everything about Loyalism, however the tradition of analysis initiated by Connolly which did not take it into account can only be seriously defective. A more critical approach to these writings of Connolly is necessary if there is to be any advance in Marxist analysis of Ulster.

### The Labour Aristocracy theory

This theory is much in vogue amongst "critical" and uncritical supporters of the Provos "anti-imperialist" struggle. Despite its superficial Leninist gloss it departs fundamentally from Lenin's injunction that the "living soul" of Marxism was the "concrete analysis of concrete situations". Its point of departure is the undeniable existence of a differential between the Protestant and Catholic communities in areas like jobs and housing. However, this fact is then abstracted out and becomes the key to unlock all the mysteries of Loyalism. In fact it is used in such an imprecise way that in explaining everything it explains nothing at all. The work of Hobsbawm, Foster and Gray has demonstrated that if the notion is to be used then it must be done rigorously and with precision. Its use in explaining Loyalism is imprecise and reductionist.

Imprecise because it often slides from defining a specific section of the Protestant workers — skilled and unionised workers — to the Protestant working class as a whole. However in what way an unskilled or unemployed Protestant worker living in Sandy Row or Ballymacracret can be seriously regarded as a "labour aristocrat" is never explained. However, even if the term was used a bit more seriously, to refer only to skilled workers it is beset with problems. There is the massive one involved in explaining the politics and ideology of the majority of Protestant workers who were not labour aristocrats. There is the question of its use to cover a far longer period of time — right up to the present — than serious Marxists have thought appropriate. For Lenin and contemporary Marxist historians like John Foster, the labour aristocracy was the temporary product of a particular phase in the development of British capitalism. It is a sign of the bankruptcy of much that passes for Marxism in Ireland and Britain, that the most basic questions of the periodisation of capitalist development in Ulster have not even been raised.

The other fundamental objection to this theory is its crude reductionism which violates a central component of the Leninist use of the term. For Lenin, the labour aristocracy was not simply defined by a privileged economic position. Its formation was also linked to the development of specific ruling class policies towards sections of the working class. In other words, its classical use was inseparable from an analysis of the state. But to analyse the state is to analyse all the main conflicts and contradictions in society, for the capitalist state is the

fundamental weapon by which the bourgeoisie attempts to control and resolve these conflicts in its own interests. The labour aristocracy theory produces a crude and one-dimensional history of the Northern Ireland state. The Protestant masses have supposedly supported this state through thick and thin because it defended their privileges. What is missing from this is any notion of the struggle involved in the Protestant bourgeoisie gaining and holding power. Its victory here was one not only over Ulster Catholics but over the traditions of secular labourism and class consciousness in the Protestant working class. This had manifested itself in the mass strike of shipyard and engineering workers in 1919 and would reappear at intervals throughout the history of the state.


The strategy of the ruling class was to endorse, accentuate and develop sectarian and discriminatory traditions amongst sections of the Protestant population including the working class. The result was the infamous "Protestant Parliament for a Protestant People". It was a state where policies, particularly in the field of employment and law and order, favoured Protestants at the expense of Catholics. However, just because the Protestant masses were not simply the bearers of sectarian traditions, but also of class conflict, the ruling class could not always rely on sectarianism to maintain its dominance. After the Second World War and at the end of the fifties under the pressure of working class dissatisfaction and potential and actual defections to the Northern Ireland Labour Party, the government had to adopt new policies on welfare and planning which were very unpopular with its own bourgeois supporters.

### Political Implications

The labour aristocracy theory by assuming an unproblematic unity based on privileges is incapable of registering divisions amongst the Protestant masses. This has disastrous political implications. For an essential pre-requisite for the development of progressive politics is to build on the traditions of labourism and class awareness amongst Protestant workers and in this way to undermine the Loyalist traditions of sectarianism and discrimination. This does not mean "economism", for it is essential that the left takes up a position on the "national question". This would involve recognition that re-unification has little more than sentimental value for the majority of workers in the Republic, and that the impetus for the Civil Rights movement amongst northern Catholics was for an end to their position as an oppressed minority — for a substantial democratisation and reform of the state, not its destruction. But even if the demand for re-unification had a much more substantial basis of support amongst the Catholic masses, north and south, no democrat could support a demand which could only be implemented by the forcible suppression of the Protestant population. As far as Marxists are concerned, the national question is subordinate to the task of creating the best possible conditions for the struggle for socialism. By arguing that the national question has primacy in the North, some Irish Marxists are blind to the fact that as long as the existence of the Northern

Ireland state is contested, the constituency for radical politics amongst the Protestant working class will be a very limited one. A pre-requisite for left advance in Northern Ireland is a separation of the question of democracy from the national question. Whilst all manifestations of Loyalist sectarianism should be opposed, Protestant desires to stay within the United Kingdom have to be respected.

If this was done, and as yet only Republican Clubs/The Workers' Party have moved far in this direction, the left could hope to take advantage of the important divisions that have developed in Loyalist politics since the imposition of Direct Rule in 1972. The dominance of the Unionist Party up to 1972 had been crucially tied to its control of the central and local state apparatuses. When this control was lost after 1972, the party entered a period of strategic disarray which has allowed Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party to set the tone of Loyalist politics. The predominantly negative reasons for Paisley's successes are obvious — the weaknesses of Official Unionism and the fears and insecurities created by the continuance of the Provo campaign. This and the fact that he has only begun to make inroads into Protestant working class heartlands in the Belfast area, means that the prospects for the development of class politics, though bleak, are not non-existent. As Thatcher's policies accentuate Northern Ireland's already chronic problems of unemployment, poverty and urban decay, Loyalist politics and ideology could be increasingly questioned by sections of the Protestant working class. But economic crisis will not by itself destroy the power of Loyalism. This demands a coherent political strategy on the part of the left. This article does not have as its object the discussion of that strategy. However what it can say is that such a strategy will demand a much more serious analysis of Loyalism than most of the left in Ireland and Britain has yet produced.



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# Book Reviews

## The Tragedy of Palestine Eqbal Ahmed

Edward W. Said *The Question of Palestine* (London, Routledge 1980); 265pp £7.50.

EDWARD SAID'S *The Question of Palestine* is by far the most impassioned and morally compelling book by an Arab since George Antonius wrote his classic *Arab Awakening* in 1938. But, unlike Antonius, who documented imperial Britain's betrayal of its First World War Arab allies and foresaw the tragedy of Palestine, Said is profoundly optimistic. In the awesome uncertainties and violence of Middle Eastern politics, he knows two things to be certain: that 'the Jews of Israel will remain; the Palestinians will also remain'. Therein lies the uniqueness of this book, for Professor Said, a member of the Palestine National Council and one of the most influential Arab intellectuals today, is the first Palestinian writer to argue for the necessity of a full-scale political encounter between the Jews and the Palestinians 'whose past and future ties them inexorably together'.

Since he is likely to be attacked by die-hards and apologists on both sides, it should be stated at the outset that Edward Said's is an essay in reconciliation. He writes with apparent conviction that 'both Palestinians and Jews in Palestine have much to gain — and obviously something to lose — from a human rights view of their common situation, as opposed to a strictly national perspective on it'. He argues that a political settlement requires the recognition of some fundamental realities by the parties to this conflict. He contends that while 'most Palestinians fully realise that their Other, the Israeli Jewish people, is a concrete reality with which they must live in the future', it is Israel's refusal to recognise the reality of Palestinian existence which prevents a resolution of the conflict. This is a contention which his adversaries will undoubtedly challenge, but he shows, quite convincingly, that historically and ideologically, in politics no less than in law, in diplomacy and war, 'negation' of the Palestinian reality is the 'most consistent thread running through Zionism'. He insists that peace depends on acceptance by Israelis and Americans — the two being the last to hold out — that one people has been rendered homeless and is still subject to dispossession and discrimination for the benefit of another.

For more than a millennium, the boundaries of Palestine, often fluctuating, had always included the land between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River. The rich country in the fertile crescent was inhabited by a relatively prosperous

and distinct people — the Filastini — the large majority of whom had, in the seventh century, converted to Islam, thereby integrating into an Arab cultural life nourished by cities such as Hebron, Haifa, Nablus, Nazareth, Ramallah and, above all, Jerusalem. Within the framework of a great medieval civilisation, the small Jewish and Christian minorities of Palestine — both *Ahl al-Kutub*, the kindred peoples of the Books — were well-treated, notwithstanding occasional lapses such as under the Caliph al-Hakim (996-1021 AD) who was harsh to Jews and Christians. In time, conquerors and immigrant people came, settled or went away, but the Arab majority held; even in 1947, when the United Nations took up the question of Palestine, 1,237,000 of its population was Arab, 614,000 were Jews. In 1948 the centuries-old continuity of Palestinian life was completely broken. Palestine, as Said puts it, 'ceased to exist except as a memory, as an idea, as a political and human experience, and an act of sustained popular will'. Zionism put into question not merely their national rights or distributive justice but the Palestinians' very commitment to their land. It happened violently, in telescoped time, and under British colonial domination — facts which intensified this ancient people's attitude towards their dispossession, discrimination and exile.

How did the Jews, who constituted less than 10 per cent of Palestine's population in 1919, succeed in establishing there in 1948 a Jewish state from which the majority of the natives became exiled, while the remnants were made, by law, second-class residents? And why did the secular and liberal West give its unquestioning support to so obvious and monumental an injustice, such overt discrimination based on religion and ethnicity? To answer these questions Said draws heavily on his resources as a literary critic and returns to the themes of *Orientalism*, his highly acclaimed earlier work. His answers are difficult to summarise, for he knows that the creation of Israel resulted from a 'complex, many-sided struggle, and a full-scale war'. Yet, because they bear on a present situation which includes the Zionist attempt to colonise the West Bank of Jordan, the Golan Heights and Gaza as part of Eretz Israel, one must note his major themes.

First, having 'internationalised imperialist perspectives on the "natives" and their "territory"', the Zionist movement leaned heavily on the West's racism, and its deep prejudices about the Arabs and the Orient, in order to establish the Palestinians' inferiority, to dehumanise them, 'render them dispensable, and ultimately deny their very existence. Thus, the Zionist slogan about Palestine as 'a land without

people, for a people without land' was not an expression of sheer ignorance; rather, it was an ideological statement, the declaration of a political programme totally congruent with the contemporary ethos of imperialism. Using a wide range of writers from Alphonse de Lamartine and George Eliot to Reinhold Neibuhr and Edmund Wilson, Edward Said shows that it was the dominant ethos of *mission civilisatrice* — based on the notion of inequality between races and cultures — which turned the Zionist-Palestinian struggle into one between a 'higher' mission and a 'humble' reality; it helped the Zionist 'interpretation' of Palestine triumph over the Palestinian 'presence'. It was thus that Lord Balfour, Britain's Foreign Secretary, could write in 1919 that Zionism's 'present needs' and 'future hopes' were 'of far profounder import than ancient land'. Said shows that, in time, the language changed but the mission did not. After the Second World War, when the US inherited much of Britain's imperial reach, Reinhold Neibuhr, jointly with six other American notables, would proclaim that American interests 'dictate speedy modernisation of the Middle East'; that the Muslims present a 'hopeless' picture of backwardness and despotism, and that 'there is only one vanguard of progress and modernisation in the Middle East, and that is Jewish Palestine'. Gentiles and Jews thus became united in denying the native Palestinians 'their status as sovereign and human inhabitants'.

Secondly, the Palestinians' cause went unrepresented in the western world, whose support for Israel was decisive in the outcome of the struggle. Rather, as westernised and emancipated Semites, the Zionists sought to be and increasingly became the interpreters of Arabs and Islam in the West. In one of the finest sections of this book, Said shows George Eliot, in *Daniel Deronda* (1876), portraying an idealised Zionist state as a 'voice among the people of East and West', a 'medium of transmission and understanding'. And it was 'to bring the brightness of Western freedom amid the despotisms of the East'. The idealism legitimised policy, consecrated influence and determined representation at the same time as it depreciated the culture, the humanity of the native. Said gives ample evidence of Zionist leaders and ideologues from Herzl through Weizman to Ben Gurion and Yakov Harkabi interpreting the 'treacherous', 'devious', 'cruel', 'despotic', 'greedy', 'backward', 'cunning' and 'medieval' Arab and his culture to the West. Idealism also yielded omniscience; since 1917 Zionists have been claiming to know better than Arab leaders and organisations the unexpressed — suppressed, repressed, misdirected and unformed — wishes of the backward Palestinian mass. To anyone who follows the US media's discussion of Islam and Arabs, or the 'progress' of the Israeli-American-Egyptian talks on Palestinian autonomy, the argument must be obvious. For those who need convincing, Said offers ample evidence that, an occasional dissenting voice notwithstanding, the Middle East is still seen in the US 'from the Zionist perspective'; and in more than one way the Palestinians still await a fair hearing and the right to self-representation.



Thirdly, the strength of Zionism lay in combining its messianic drive with extraordinary attention to detail. From the beginning of the movement, Zionist leaders spoke of 'reconstituting' and 'rebuilding' Palestine; and they knew that this was to be done 'on the ruins of the Palestinians' homeland'. Thus, in 1895, Theodore Herzl wrote in his *Diaries* of the eventual necessity of 'spiriting the penniless population...across the border', noting that 'both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discreetly and circumspectly'. Forty-five years later, in 1940, Joseph Weitz, then Director of the Jewish National Land Fund, would write in his diary that 'there is no room for both peoples in this country'; that 'the only solution is Eretz Israel, or at least Western Eretz Israel, without Arabs. There is no room for compromise on this point... We must not leave a single village, not a single tribe.'

Doing this with 'discretion' involved a complex and well-organised policy — backed by such 'moderate' entities as the Jewish National Fund and such 'extremist' pioneering groups as the Stern and Irgun gangs — leading to the encirclement and emancipation of the native communities by the technologically-advanced Jewish pioneers. Said describes it as 'a discipline of detail' — a colonisation that creeps 'inch by inch, step by step, "another acre, another goat" (as Chaim Weizman put it). Unlike South Africa or Algeria, these settlers sought to exclude rather than exploit the natives, "extra-territorialise" the land and establish upon it the superior right of even the absent — Russian, American, German — Jew over that of the native Palestinian.'

The Palestinian peasants and workers responded as beleaguered, helpless people always do — with protest and resistance, involving sporadic and generally uncoordinated violence. The elite met Zionism's specific, organised, institutionalised challenge with representations and legal briefs invoking general principles — their right to self-determination, legal claims to Palestine, moral appeals for justice. They had no parallel organisations and institutions capable of responding to Zionist colonisation; no strategy to hold the land; no programme of assisting the besieged Palestinian communities and of shoring up their defence and morale. Hence, when the final confrontation occurred, the people (780,000 of them) fled the war zones in a 'psychological mood of failure and terror', hoping to return home after the fighting subsided. It is this environment, rather than the unproven Zionist allegation of orders from Arab governments, which caused the Palestinian exodus.

Edward Said notes, unfortunately without fully exploring its fateful implications, the many parallels between 1917-48 and the new stage of Zionist colonisation which began after the Israeli-Arab War of 1967. By 1978, when Said was writing, 27 per cent of the West Bank's Arab-owned land had been confiscated by Israel; nearly half a million Arabs had evacuated the occupied territories; there were seventy-seven illegal Zionist colonies and twenty new ones were announced on the day the Camp David Agreement was being signed. More ominously, by means of a series of land sales regulations, by

discriminatory distribution of water supplies, by a selective policy of deportations, and sometimes by naked force, Israel has begun to suffocate the occupied native population. Neither Egypt, nor Syria, nor Jordan, nor Saudi Arabia, nor even the PLO, have so far countered this fateful development. Assuming the Israeli occupation lasts two more decades — and there is no reason to doubt this — the land alienation and dispossession of a majority of the Arabs in the West Bank, Gaza and Golan is virtually assured. Said, who supports the PLO's demand for a separate state on the West Bank and Gaza, obviously knows but does not openly state the tragic fact that what the Palestinians are demanding today is not so much the restoration of lost rights as the prevention of a final round of dispossession, of another choice between exile and servitude.

The encounter with Zionism has defined for the Palestinians their contemporary experience, and distinguishes them from other Arab and Third World people. 'To us,' writes Edward Said, 'Zionism has meant as much, albeit differently, as it has to the Jews.' For 'it has been the Palestinian who has borne Zionism's extraordinary human cost, a cost not only large but unacknowledged'. Since he considers such an acknowledgement basic to reconciliation, he dwells not only on the Palestinians' physical and material losses, but also on the more painful and permanent psychological and moral costs. His chapter, 'Zionism from the stand-point of its victims', is by far the most powerful; it is also likely to be the most controversial. Its power lies not merely in his analysis of the collective humiliation and sorrows of the Palestinians as they experienced ideological deprecation and dehumanisation, physical dispossession and ultimate exile. Rather, it derives from the fact that Said evinces a compassionate understanding of his unlikely victimiser.

He believes, as do all Palestinians, that there is an inherent racism in the exclusionary idea of a Jewish state, in the discriminatory land regulations, in the much admired 'socialist' Kibbutzim, which effectively practice a system of apartheid, and in a Law of Return which guarantees to a Sacharansky of the Soviet Union the right to settle in Jerusalem while denying his natural rights to Said who was born there. Yet he does not subscribe to the familiar equations of Zionism and racism, Israel and South Africa. Such parallels 'get badly shaken', he says, when a Palestinian 'reflects seriously the differences between white settlers in Africa and Jews fleeing European anti-Semitism'. He understands 'the meaning of Israel for the Jews', of the 'terror and exaltation' which have nourished Zionism. Indeed, he seems to know the sorrow of being a Jew so well that inadvertently at times the Palestinians appear in this book like reflections of the Jews. And he writes sadly of his people's 'extraordinary bad luck' in having to resist dispossession and colonisation by 'the most morally complex of opponents, Jews, with a long history of victimisation and terror behind them'.

A distinguishing feature of this book is Said's insightful and sharply critical discussion of Arab states and inter-Arab politics. These parts, welcome and refreshing to western readers, will undoubtedly produce controversy in the Middle

East. He has a good eye for the paradoxes of elite politics. Although every Arab government champions the Palestinian cause, 'the number of Palestinians dead at Arab government hands is appallingly high'. He is hard on the 'antiquated and oppressive structures of most of the Arab countries', and condemns Arab rulers' 'minority cast of mind', their 'uncritical commitment to state power for its own sake' and their 'perpetuation of police states in the name of fighting Zionist aggression'. He is critical of Palestinians, also, for making 'historical appearances largely in the form of refusals and rejections'; and for 'mindless violence which cost innocent lives. He is at his best, though, when he draws on Palestinian literature to portray their refusal to "construct life outside Palestine", the 'ironic tensions between Palestinian and other Arabs'; when he shows how a character in Ghassan Kanafani's novel 'understands his location...by way of a recollection of his past', or how there occurs in Emile Habib's fiction 'the Kafkaesque alternations between being and not-being there for Palestinians whether inside Israel or in the Arab world'. From these pages of literary analysis there emerges an unmistakable picture of a self-conscious and determined people whose will to recover their national sovereignty increases with adversity to challenge their enemies, embarrass their friends and unsettle many a grand design in the Middle East.

In view of Said's achievement, it would be churlish to carp — but this review would be incomplete without pointing to some of his omissions. There is much that is missing in Said's analysis of Anwar Sadat's policies and their potential impact. His critique of Camp David is familiar, and he does not show an awareness of the Arabs' many lost opportunities. At places he judges hastily. In discussing terrorism, for example, Said contrasts Palestinian violence with the 'completely asymmetrical records' of Israeli terror against Palestinians. This is true, but unhelpful in the sense that balance sheets of this kind add to neither good morals nor good politics. That he is 'horrified at the hijacking of planes...at the terror in Palestinian men and women who were driven to do such things' reflects his humanity; that a committed partisan of the Palestinian resistance openly expresses this feeling also shows courage. But there is in this also a failure to examine the complex and pivotal role which the PLO's violence played in focussing world attention on the question of Palestine. After all, for two decades before the hijackings, the Palestinians had engaged in representational politics; more than a dozen ignored UN resolutions on their behalf were all they had to show for it. Similarly, hijackings became a typically Palestinian form of revolutionary violence because they responded not only to their conditions of exile but also because these were acts which the Israelis could not use as pretexts for collective punishments and mass deportations of the people in the occupied areas; given Zionism's demographic war against the Palestinians this was, for the PLO, not a minor consideration.

This review was first published in *Race & Class*, Summer 1980.

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They call us aliens, we are told,  
Because our wayward visions stray  
From that dim banner they unfold,  
The dreams of worn-out yesterday.  
The sum of all the past is theirs,  
The creeds, the deeds, the fame, the name,  
Whose death-created glory flares  
And dims the spark of living flame.  
They weave the necromancer's spell,  
And burst the graves where martyrs slept,  
Their ancient story to retell,  
Renewing tears the dead have wept.  
And they would have us join their dirge,  
This worship of an extinct fire  
In which they drift beyond the verge  
Where races all outworn expire.  
The worship of the dead is not  
A worship that our hearts allow,  
Though every famous shade were wrought  
With woven thorns above the brow.  
We fling our answer back in scorn:  
'We are less children of this clime  
Than of some nation yet unborn  
Or empire in the womb of time.  
We hold the Ireland in the heart  
More than the land our eyes have seen,  
And love the goal for which we start  
More than the tale of what has been.'  
The generations as they rise  
May live the life men lived before,  
Still hold the thought once held as wise,  
Go in and out by the same door.  
We leave the easy peace it brings:  
The few we are shall still unite  
In fealty to unseen kings  
Or unimaginable light.  
We would no Irish sign efface,  
But yet our lips would gladlier hail  
The firstborn of the Coming Race  
Than the last splendour of the Gael.  
No blazoned banner we unfold —  
One charge alone we give to youth,  
Against the sceptred myth to hold  
The golden heresy of truth.

*George Russell (AE)*

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