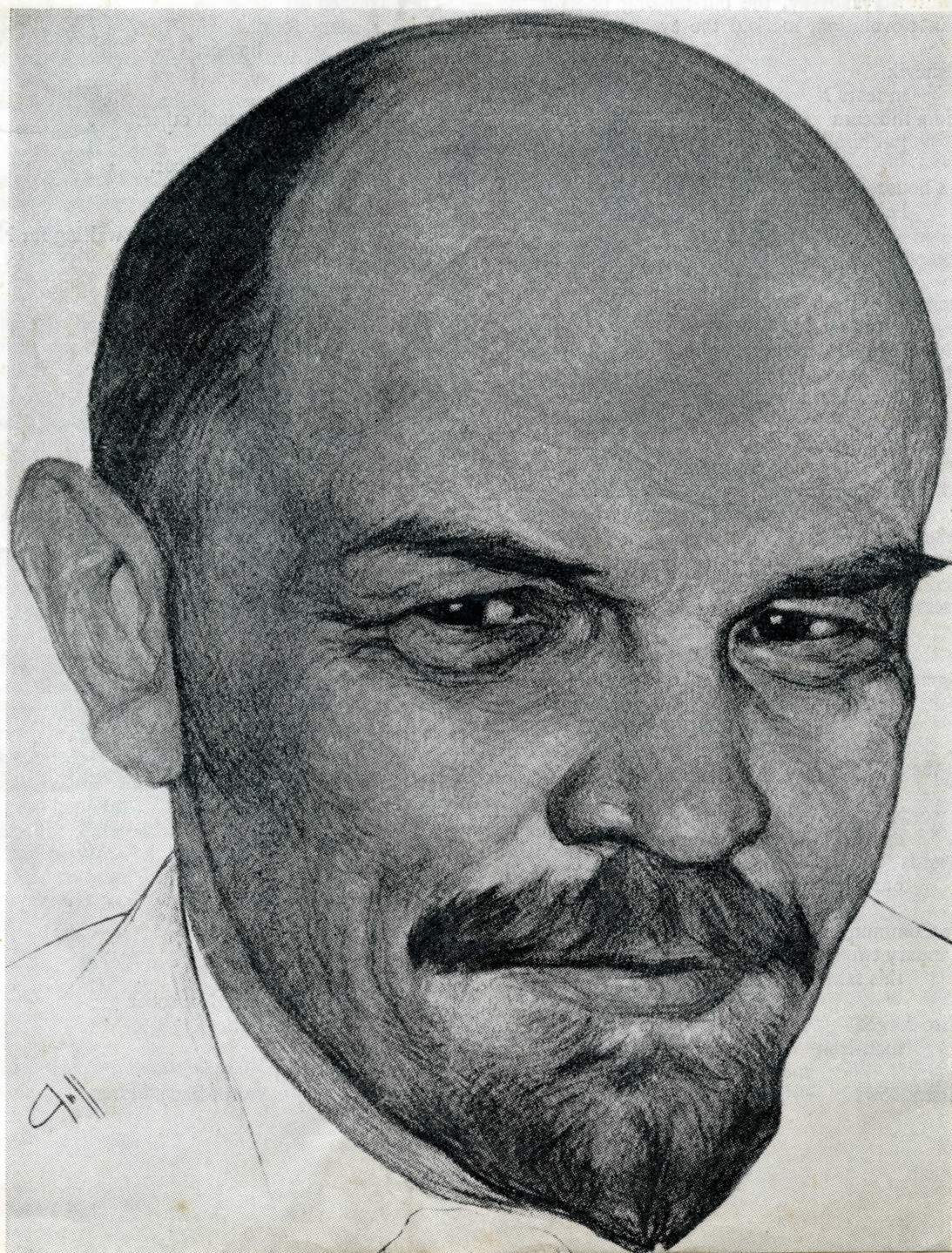


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LENIN CENTENARY NUMBER



WHEN LENIN DIED

Lenin, the Centenary of whose birth is being celebrated all over the world, died just 46 years ago. Here is an excerpt from the poem with which Vladimir Mayakovsky, the outstanding poet of the Russian Revolution, marked the event.

A Bolshevik
 in tears ?
 Should a museum
 put him
 on display,
 what a house
 he'd draw !
 Who ever saw
 a Bolshevik
 in tears !
 Mamontov's riders
 sewed us
 in sacks,
 with branding irons
 Poles carved our backs.
 The Japanese
 "pacifying"
 for the yen
 fueled their locomotives
 with our men;
 to make sure
 we were sealed
 as dead
 they served us
 drinks of
 boiling lead.
 "Say —
 'Curse Communism ! ' "
 these gentlemen
 yelled
 while the lead pot
 heated.
 Two words
 as we swallowed the drinks,
 two words
 our dying lips
 repeated —
 "Live Communism ! "
 On January twenty-second
 this same
 human steel,
 this fire-forged
 man-iron
 met;
 in patient rows

sat down
 the great
 Soviet.
 They finished off
 some routine
 bother,
 then sat there
 looking
 at each other.
 Chairlegs scraped,
 dug holes in the floor.
 It's time ! It's time !
 What's up !
 What are they waiting for ?
 Why
 are their eyes
 raw-red
 like meat ?
 Why can't Kalinin
 stand straight
 on his feet ?
 Is he ill ?
 What's up ?
 Tell me !
 That ?
 No !
 it cannot
 be !
 * * *
 "Last night
 ten minutes
 to seven
 Comrade
 Lenin
 died ! "
 The stuff of centuries
 has crammed
 this year.
 * * *
 Tonight
 children were like sober
 old men,
 and sober
 old men
 wept like children.

Editorially Speaking—

THE first number of Irish Socialist Review for the year 1970 appears as a journal of The Communist Party of Ireland. This development is explained by the fact that the Communists of Ireland, hitherto organised into the Irish Workers' Party and the Communist Party N. Ireland, have come together and reconstituted themselves into a single party, taking the designation The Communist Party of Ireland.

This decision, endorsed at a Congress of delegates of the two Irish Marxist parties, held in Belfast on March 15th, 1970, is of outstanding importance and significance for all sections of the Irish working class movement.

The unity of the Communists into one organisation takes place at a time when there is the need for the maximum unity of all the forces which stand opposed to the increasing encroachment of the monopolies into the daily life of the people and of the restrictions of democratic and civil liberties by legislation and Government decrees.

The unity resolution endorsed by the two Marxist Parties declared that the Communist Party, N. Ireland and the Irish Workers Party—had common origin in the Communist Party of Ireland, formed in June 1933. The separation into two parties was not occasioned by any ideological or fundamental political disagreements but arose out of the conditions created by the second World War.

In the ensuing years, at all times, the two parties have operated in full agreement about policies and tactics. A joint council of the two parties functioned satisfactorily over a number of years.

Now the important step has been taken for the two parties to end their separate existence and to reconstitute the C. P. I. as an all-Ireland party.

The political platform for the all-Ireland party is set out in the Manifesto endorsed by the Unity Congress in Belfast. This declared that the years of Imperialist domination of Ireland had stamped common features on the two areas of the country, such as constant and abnormal unemployment, heavy emigration; foreign takeovers of native Irish industries; export of Irish capital and increasing influence of foreign capital in the home economy, both sides of the Border: and disgraceful neglect of the people's needs in the underdeveloped areas of the country—West of the Shannon and the Bann rivers.

The Manifesto declared that a new stage had been reached in the Irish people's long struggle for

national and social liberation and the upsurge of the people of the Six Counties on the issues of civil and democratic rights pinpointed the fact that the British-imposed partition policies had not been successful.

For the people of the Twenty Six Counties the Free Trade Agreement is proving of no benefit; in fact, as its operation becomes more effective, its disadvantages are becoming very real in terms of more imports and a greater threat to Irish goods and the jobs of Irish workers.

The thinking flowing from the Free Trade agreement—a brainchild of Harold Wilson?—is to be seen in the increasing talk and emphasis on a new "federation" between Ireland and Britain.

The Manifesto of the united Irish Communist Congress declared that the British ruling class at the present time were searching for a form of relationship with the capitalist forces in the two parts of Ireland that would help overcome the obstacles to a stable situation whereby the monopolies could go on to new successes in their profit-making activities, and, at the same time, create a situation in which the whole of Ireland would be more effectively under the political and economic aegis of British imperialism.

The Free Trade Agreement is the instrument for the economic tie-up with British imperialism. That is already a fact.

The proposition of "federation" has yet to be effected, but the talk and ideas of Messrs Lynch, Wilson and Quinton Hogg, are designed to condition the minds of the Irish people into believing that national and social independence is not the way forward for Ireland, but rather a "new relationship with Britain", based on total absorption in the imperialist system. Seeking shelter under the British imperial umbrella, the aim is also to go in simultaneously with Britain into the E.E.C.

As an answer to these sell-out policies of the Irish capitalists, the Manifesto of the united Irish Communist movement calls for "the greatest unity and solidarity between the working people of Ireland and Britain in a common struggle against monopoly capitalism which also exploits the British working class". The Manifesto closes with the call for "an Ireland, Free, United and Socialist".

At a time when among the Left forces there is far too much in-fighting, division and quarreling about questions not immediately essential, the Irish Communists have shown the leadership and political duty of the day by endorsing a united policy in the struggle against capitalism and imperialism.

LENIN: His Life and Achievement

"LENINISM will laugh the capitalist system out of face into oblivion."—Jim Larkin, 1925.

Lenin, the man, the revolutionary, the thinker, has attracted and puzzled writers for decades. John Reed, the author of the classic "Ten days that shook the World" concluded that he was "a humourless man"!

Bertrand Russell, the famous philosopher, who at certain periods of his long and changeful life, was vehemently anti-communist, accused him of being unfeeling because he could allegedly joke about what the peasants might do to the kulaks.

On the other hand, Maxim Gorki (who often disagreed with him) wrote that he never met a man "so infectiously gay as Lenin"; he found him so exceptionally great because of his "irreconcilable, unquenchable hostility toward the sufferings of humanity, his burning faith that suffering is not an essential and unavoidable part of life."

By JOSEPH DEASY

Jim Larkin in a memorial article in 1925 described the face of the dead Lenin as wearing that intriguing smile which conveyed so much. "Lenin laughed away a corrupt despotism in an hour — a despotism that had endured for four centuries."

Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Lenin) was born on April 22, 1870 in the town of Simbirsk (now called Ulyanovsk). He grew up in a middle class intellectual family. All the Ulyanov children, with one exception who died young, became revolutionaries. The eldest son, Alexander, became a Narodnik, which involved him being a member of a secret society founded in 1879 to wage a revolutionary struggle against the Tsarist autocracy; he was executed in 1887 for complicity in a plot against the life of Tsar Alexander III. Narodism was an ideology of petty-bourgeois, peasant democracy in Russia and Lenin was later to be one of its sharpest critics. All the other children in the household were to become Communists.

Lenin, himself, was arrested for his activities while a student at Kazan university, was banished from the city and placed under police surveillance in another village. In 1891 he graduated as an external student at St. Petersburg university. Meanwhile he had become a leader among St. Petersburg Marxists. In 1894 he wrote his first major work, "What 'The Friends of the Peoples' are and How They

LENIN DEAD ! LENIN LIVES !

BECAUSE of Lenin the common people must come into their own. Ignorance, selfishness and cowardice may delay them in their march to liberty and life, but they are on the march and must arrive, for the ideas of Lenin are the need of all men and women.

A year ago he passed — the great master, the mind that shook the world, destroyed an empire and gave hope and inspiration to the common people of the earth . . .

The capitalist governments of the world and the paid defamers and the licensed liars may spit out their venom, may continue to lie and malign and even caricature the Bolsheviki and their leaders and their teacher Lenin, but he who laughs last laughs best. And to one who has been privileged to look on the face of the dead Lenin with that intriguing smile which conveys so much one understands. He laughs last. Lenin laughed away a corrupt despotism in an hour — despotism that had endured for nearly four centuries. Leninism will laugh the capitalist system out of face into oblivion.—Jim Larkin writing in the "Irish Worker," January 24, 1925 on the occasion of the first anniversary of Lenin's death.

Fight the Social Democrats." This work demolished the theory and tactics of Narodism.

In 1895 he united the Marxist groups of St. Petersburg in the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class. Soon afterwards he was arrested and imprisoned, then exiled to Siberia. In 1900 he emigrated and founded the first Marxist newspaper, Iskra (The Spark) to be widely circulated in Russia and which played an enormous part in forming a Marxist party of a new type and in working out its first programme.

Subsequently, the most historic milestones of Lenin's life were the years 1903, 1905 and 1917. In 1903 there occurred abroad the famous and vital conference of the Russian Social Democratic Party, which saw the conflict between revolutionary and opportunist wings. The struggle crystallised around the issues of the proletarian dictatorship, the position of the peasantry, the right of nations to self-determination and the party rules.

Lenin's supporters who gained a majority of votes at the ballot began to be called the Bolsheviks (majority), his opponents who were in a minority came to be known as the Mensheviks. Subsequently Lenin wrote :

"As a trend of political thought and as a political party, Bolshevism exists since 1903."

The events of the 1905 Russian Revolution and the aftermath of defeat underlined the difference between the revolutionary Bolsheviks and the opportunist Mensheviks. Subsequently the gap widened and reached a climax in the February and October revolutions of 1917. The victory of the proletarian revolution in October 1917 vindicated both the Bolshevik policies and tactics and the unrelenting leadership of Lenin.

His name will forever be inseparably linked with the creative development of Marxism in new historical conditions. He discovered the laws governing the economic and political development of Marxism in the era of imperialism. His analysis of the capitalist State was among his greatest achievements. He evolved the doctrine of the party of the proletariat as the leading and organising force without

which there could be no dictatorship of the proletariat or building of communist society. Lenin developed all aspects of Marxism, including its philosophy. He considered the materialist understanding of history, the greatest achievement of Marxist philosophy. His own enormous literary output includes countless works which will always rank among the classics of Marxism. His "Imperialism," "State and Revolution," "Left Wing Communism", "What is to be Done?", "Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky" and so on are indispensable reading for anyone who wants to understand the twentieth century.

His labours were herculean but exacted a heavy toll on his health, as did the wounds suffered from attempts at assassination. Even his iron will was not strong enough to resist the inevitable.

On January 21st 1925, at the comparatively early age of 54, Lenin, to the grief of all progressive mankind, died. The rich legacy of his work and writings remain of imperishable value to the peoples of the world in their struggles against imperialism and for the achievement of the socialism.

On the National Question

By SAM NOLAN

THE fight for national independence, for national liberation is at the heart of the revolutionary struggle in the contemporary world. This struggle is now an essential part of the proletarian revolution. The development and explanation of this question will help answer the widespread propaganda that Communists are unpatriotic and anti-national, and that they only use the deep-rooted national feeling of their own people for ulterior motives.

One could quote examples of Communists in many countries who have made the supreme sacrifice in fighting to free their countries from oppression and occupation, but what we must understand is their real motives. In Connolly's day he was accused of being a tool of Kaiser's Germany, and in our recent times we are often accused of being the pawns of the Soviet Union.

One can only talk of the growth of nations and national states as part of the development of capitalism. Summarising the history of this development in a scientific fashion. Stalin in his article on the National Question and Marxism, written in 1913,

defines a nation as follows : "A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life and a psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture". He further stated : "It must be emphasised that none of the above characteristics is, by itself, sufficient to define a nation. On the other hand, it is sufficient for a single one to be absent and the nation ceases to be a nation."

With the development of capitalism in a given country, the prime objective was the establishment of a stable home market for its manufactures. It was this economic motive force that welded peoples together into stable territories, and the development or existence of a common language was essential as a means of communication.

The consolidation of a national culture flowed from this growth. All these developments led to the emergence of nation states or a centralised, stable form of state machine and government.

Ireland had a fairly unique development, insofar as we experienced foreign occupation before and

after the growth of capitalism. Since the struggle between growing capitalism and dying feudalism in Britain spilled over into Ireland, it distorted and retarded the normal growth of capitalism in our country.

It became the deliberate policy of British capitalism to retain Ireland as a backward agricultural peasant country which served the needs of a growing industrial Britain. This was the background for our national struggle which was essentially a peasant struggle against landlordism. It was only around the 1800's with the emergence of Grattan's parliament did we see the first attempts of an Irish capitalist class to assert themselves.

Since this struggle was divorced from the revolts in the countryside it was quickly nipped in the bud by the Act of Union. These and earlier resistance to British oppression, together with later struggles in the 19th and 20th centuries, did create a psychological make-up manifested in a common culture which had deep roots in ancient Ireland. Since the British oppressor from the 16th century onwards was of a different religion, the Catholic belief of the people became part of their psychological make up.

GROWTH OF BOURGEOIS NATIONALISM

With the growth of capitalist nations and nation states, markets overspilled national frontiers and the more backward capitalist nations which were later upon the scene, found themselves the object of conquest by their more powerful neighbours. Since the working class was still weak, the struggles for national freedom were led and inspired by the representatives of the capitalist class of the oppressed nations.

In both the oppressor and oppressed nations we saw the growth of bourgeois nationalism. In the oppressor nations this nationalism took the form of instilling in the people the idea that they were "superior" to their backward neighbours and were destined to rule them. In the oppressed nations bourgeois nationalism took the ideological form of appealing to the patriotism of the people and love of country, but the real objective was to establish a separate capitalist state. In both cases the class struggles were subordinated to the national interests.

Connolly made a significant contribution to working class theory in his "Labour in Irish History" and his writings on Socialism and Nationalism.

In the advanced capitalist countries the working class organised in trade unions and with the emergence of Marxist political parties, the theories of proletarian internationalism were developed. Interna-

tionalism means that the workers of all countries have a common enemy in international capitalism, and workers of all countries are class brothers regardless of race, colour or creed. This does not mean that workers should not love their own country, or to be more precise, they should have a truly patriotic feeling for all that is progressive and revolutionary in their history and culture. On the other hand, they must reject what is reactionary and chauvinist.

At the Second Congress of the Russian Democratic Labour Party in 1903 there was included in its programme, at Lenin's insistence, the point of the Right of Nations to Self-Determination. There was much controversy in the Marxist parties in those years on this question, as some held the view that by supporting self-determination, the working class, in the oppressed nations, was supporting their own capitalist class.

Lenin's attitude was that we must fight against all national oppression as an essential part of the struggle for the proletarian revolution. He argued that to do otherwise was to support the privileges of dominating nations and their capitalist class, and one nation which oppresses another cannot itself be free. Marx had earlier made this point in regard to the oppression of Ireland, and the effect it had on the British working class.

Lenin summarised his attitude thus: "While recognising equality and an equal right to a national state, it (the proletariat) values above all, and places above all, the alliance of the proletarians of all nations, and evaluates every national demand, every national separation, from the angle of the class struggle of the workers."

It is therefore clear that the workers in an oppressed state, and the workers in the oppressor state must see the struggle for self-determination as part of the struggle against capitalism.

The British working class has still fully to learn this lesson, which has a relevance to Ireland.

The British Labour Party which commands the support of the mass of the British working class, is carrying out an Imperialist, neo-colonialist policy towards Ireland. Their policy on the Northern crisis illustrates this.

To be continued in Next Issue.

**A NEW PAMPHLET
LENIN ON IRELAND
Price : Two Shillings**

New Books, 16A Pearse St., Dublin 2

LENIN ON IRELAND

LENIN ON IRELAND, with Introduction by A. Raftery. (Dublin: New Books Publications, price 2s.)

Ireland as Britain's first and nearest colony was bound to have an absorbing interest for Marx and Engels. This Marxian interest in Ireland contributed no doubt to the attraction which their teachings had for James Connolly; the latter's role in 1913 and 1916 was in turn conditioned by a Marxist analysis of Imperialism. During the last days of his life Connolly expressed to his daughter his anxieties that socialists would not understand his motives. His fears about some socialists were justified; others, especially those who were Marxists, understood and fully sympathised with his objectives. Outstanding among these was Lenin, the renowned Marxist and revolutionary leader. In honour of the Centenary of his birth a invaluable booklet has been published entitled "Lenin on Ireland" with an excellent Introduction by A. Raftery.

It was a measure of Lenin's stature that he could write with a tremendous grasp of events and developments in countries far removed from his own; Ireland was an illuminating example of this capacity.

HE GRASPED ESSENTIALS

His analysis of events from 1913 to 1916, covering the great industrial collision, the Curragh mutiny and the Easter insurrection was unerringly dead on the nose. It is an experience to read an external appraisal of events in Ireland which is so penetrating when the opposite is so often the case.

Lenin's genius lies in a real feeling for the struggle itself allied to a knowledge and intellectual grasp of the essentials. There is a constant comparison of the relations between Britain and Ireland and Czarist Russia and her oppressed nationalities. He also draws analogies between the respective class forces, noting that "Lord Carson has threatened rebellion and has organised armed Black Hundred gangs for this purpose". He uses the Curragh Mutiny to expose for the benefit of his Russian readers the reality that lay behind the facade of the British Parliament and the pretensions of the Liberals.

In these pages we find a brilliant exposition of the Right of Nations to self determination. He upheld the conclusion of Marx that it was disastrous for a nation when it has subjugated another nation; that the British working class will never be free until Ireland is free from British rule; that reaction in Britain was strengthened and

fostered by the enslavement of Ireland. He attacked those socialists of the dominant nations who acted as if their own nation possessed the exclusive privilege of forming a state and who failed in their duties to downtrodden nations. Secession by a small nation from a larger group is not necessarily desirable; in fact it can be mistaken. Once, however, a mass national movement has begun it should be supported.

SEPARATION INEVITABLE

Lenin wrote: "Marx attached tremendous importance to the question of Ireland". He quotes Marx extensively on the question, including a letter to Engels on November 2, 1867: "I have done my best to bring about this demonstration of the British workers in favour of Fenianism. I used to think the separation of Ireland from England was impossible; I now think it is inevitable, although after the separation there may come federation". Lenin stresses, however, that although Marx admits of federation it would be only on condition that it would be achieved in a revolutionary way and not in a reformist way; it must come about through the movement of the masses of the Irish people supported by the British working class.

Lenin concluded: "Had the Irish and the English proletariat not adopted Marx's policy, had they not put forward the separation of Ireland as their slogan, they would have committed an act of sinister opportunism, would have forgotten the task of the democrat and the socialist and would have yielded to English reaction and the bourgeoisie."—February 1914. ("On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination," Collected Works, Vol. XVII).

Those words were written in 1914. It was inevitable therefore that Lenin should support the insurrection of 1916 and defend it against critics within the international socialist movement. He wrote that a blow delivered against British imperialist bourgeois rule by a rebellion in Ireland was of a hundred times greater political significance than a blow of equal weight in Asia or in Africa. This verdict coincided precisely with the reasoning of Connolly in his preparation for the rebellion. Connolly's decision to lead the 1916 insurrection fulfilled Lenin's condition that such an act was directed against an oppressor nation; against imperialism and in accord with the struggle for socialism.

A close study of this booklet is a serious political duty for every socialist and should help our struggle against the division of our country.

J. DEASY.

HOW IMPERIALISM RULES NOW

DOES Imperialism still exist or does it belong to the past? Has the break-up of the colonial empires put an end to it? Does Ireland still suffer from imperialism?

These are crucial questions and on the answers to them depends the future of the movement for progress and Socialism. The view that the main characteristic of imperialism is the military occupation of a country is widespread. The fact that the Twenty-Six Counties' area is no longer militarily occupied leads many in the Labour movement to accuse those who talk of imperialism and its effects on our country of living in the past. Attempts are made to present the role of the British Labour Government as being one of ending the old relationship. Federation is to create a new, equal partnership.

That these ideas can be seriously put forward in the Labour movement arises from the fact that there is little or no understanding of what imperialism actually is. James Connolly found the key when he pinpointed economic domination as its main feature. He pointed out that even with political freedom imperialism would dominate Ireland unless its economic basis was removed.

Connolly's conclusions ran parallel with those of Lenin, whose booklet, "Imperialism—The Highest Stage of Capitalism", gives a detailed description of what modern imperialism really is.

CAPITALISM'S HIGHEST STAGE

The title of the work gives the kernel of his ideas. Modern Imperialism is the highest stage to which capitalism can develop. It does not at all depend for its dominance on military occupation, though it will use it where necessary. Stronger imperialist countries dominate weaker imperialist countries. Britain is still an imperialist country, even though she has lost her colonial empire. The United States is an imperialist country, even though she never had an empire, in the British sense of the word.

What are the basic features of modern imperialism? Using the detailed analysis given in the book "Imperialism", by the English Liberal J. A. Hobson, Lenin distinguished the following fundamental developments in capitalism.

(1) An end to the old free-for-all capitalism and the concentration of production and distribution into fewer and fewer hands. This development leads to a situation where monopolies play a decisive part in economic life.

(2) An end to the division between banking and

industrial capital. They become one, leading to finance capital being the controlling force in the economy. This leads to the growth of financial oligarchies.

(3) Instead of, as in a previous period, relying mainly on the export of goods, the new stage is distinguished by the export of money (capital).

(4) There are International capitalist monopolies who share the world between them.

(5) The whole world is divided among the imperialist powers and this creates colonial exploitation on a world scale. This leads to conflicts among the imperialist countries and wars are the result, as each imperialism fights for a bigger share of the world.

By A. RAFTERY

Since Lenin wrote there have been big changes in the world. The Kings, Lords and Emperors who ruled "By the grace of God" have either disappeared or look rather moth-eaten. The Russian, Chinese and Cuban revolutions herald the emergence of Socialist Continents. Already a third of the world is organising its economic life on the basis of Socialism. The independence movements in the former colonies have shattered the old empires. Lenin's analysis, however still holds true for the capitalist world.

Lenin's pamphlet was written in 1916, when a war was raging among the imperialist powers. After the emergence of the Soviet Union it might have been thought that these Powers would combine and stay together to destroy the young Socialist State. Yet when the Second World War broke out in 1939 it was again, at first, a fight between imperialist countries. The contradictions between them, their greed for markets were stronger than their ideological and political hostility to Socialism. Fascism was not and is not a new system marking a break with capitalism. It is simply an extreme form of imperialism in which the monopolies cast aside all pretence of accepting the democratic liberties won by the people and rely directly through a dictatorship.

Fascism, though it often gives an appearance of strength, is in fact the last desperate throw of the monopolies to maintain their control. Imperialism, in spite of the fact that it has brought capitalism to its highest and most powerful stage, yet contains

within it the blossoming of decay. In spite of its tremendous capacity for technological advance, millions are hungry, poor and oppressed in the richest country in the world. The parasitic features of imperialism are accentuated and become more obvious. There is an intellectual and moral crisis.

The permanent crisis, manifesting itself in all kinds of different ways, ranging from balance of payments problems and unemployment to Vietnam which afflicts imperialism, does not in any way mean that the imperialists lie down and give up. In fact in many ways imperialism becomes more active and in almost all ways it becomes more subtle. It is now more highly organised than in Lenin's day, more capable of exercising a certain control over the economies of the imperialist countries. The State has also become inextricably entangled in what ex-President Eisenhower called the "Military—industrial complex". We are faced with a new development of monopoly capitalism.

IMPERIALISM'S NEW METHODS

In the ex-colonies imperialism has adopted new tactics to maintain control over countries without any overt physical presence. Neo-Colonialism works on a more sophisticated variation of the landlord system in Ireland. It woos sections of the upper classes and ties them into the imperialist set-up.

As Ireland was England's first colony she was also the country where neo-colonialism was first perfected. Under the first Cumann-na-nGaedhael Government, Britain maintained her economic grip while granting the shadow of independence. Fianna Fail's attempt to create an independent capitalist economy was defeated in the Economic War which Britain waged. This Economic War took the form of putting a duty of 20% on all agricultural imports to Britain from the Twenty-Six Counties. In 1932 there was a tax of 40% on live animals. As agricultural produce was the main export at that time this had a crippling effect on the economy. 1938 was the turning point and from the agreement reached at that time springs the policy of reintegration with Britain, euphemistically called Free Trade.

If we look at the first three points of Lenin's definition we see how they fit our present set-up.

In the Northern Six Counties, there has been virtually no development of natural resources. British capital is exported to the North along with raw materials. The raw materials are processed and exported. Virtually all consumer goods are imported from Britain. The Northern economy is in a permanent state of crisis because of this. As the Isles Report pointed out, although the North

is supposed to be an integral part of Britain in trade, it is treated as a foreign country.

The way the North solves its balance of payments problems with Britain is through the creation of unemployment to cut down consumer spending on imports. (The Isles Report calls unemployment the "Balancing factor").

Money pours out of the North to Britain (under section 9 of the Government of Ireland act 1920 all deposits in the Post Office and Trustees Savings Bank must be invested in Britain) while at the same time British monopolies invest in the North.

"There is no shortage of investment funds as such", said the Isles Report, at the same time Stormont goes frantic to get foreign investment. This is how imperialism uses the North.

In the South we see the way in which industry and banking are tied up even more tightly with English finance capital through the system of interlocking directorships. An examination of bank directors and other directorships reveals how they sit on the boards of numerous other Irish and English firms. While money pours out of the South, as it does from the North, the Government offers all kinds of inducements to attract the money of foreign monopolies in.

Until the Labour movement, both North and South, grasps the basic fact that Free Trade and entry to the Common Market are not just technical arrangements but are a logical consequence of the exploitation of the Irish economy by monopoly capitalism it will be politically ineffective.

The Republican movement is closer to a proper analysis of the Irish situation at the moment than the Labour Party—because it realises this basic fact.

THE ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

Lenin's writings on imperialism give us the basis for an analysis of the present stage of imperialism. Lenin's analysis must be developed on the basis of the facts in the same way that Lenin developed Marx's analysis to fit the new situation.

The worst service that could be done to Lenin's epoch-making dissection of capitalism would be to think that no more needed to be said. Prayerbook politics are comfortable but sterile.

Fifty four years ago as the men of Easter Week were opening a new chapter in the struggle against imperialism, Lenin was writing his pamphlet. At the same time two mortal blows were struck at imperialism, one with gun in hand, the other by stripping away the mystification in which it was clothed and revealing the enemy of the people of the world in its nakedness.

LENIN ON RULE BY THE WORKING CLASS

EVERY form of State that has ever existed in this world of ours — Slave-Ownning, Feudal, Capitalist and Socialist — reflects the existing form of society and the class relations on which it is based. In a society which is based on opposed classes, the ruling class possesses not only economic power: “the ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange” but political power, control of the state — the civil service, the police, the armed forces. Marx defined the state as “merely the organised power of one class for oppressing the other” (Communist Manifesto). In other words the instrument whereby a ruling class maintains its rule, imposes its interests on all other classes, which means in essence its dictatorship.

Recognising this fundamental, Lenin wrote in “Democracy and Dictatorship”, (Dec. 23rd,

by JAMES STEWART

1918): “. . . it is impossible to emerge from a society in which one class oppresses another except by establishing the dictatorship of the oppressed class.”

Lenin was the great theoretician and builder in practice of **the dictatorship of the proletariat** (the working class) in the first Socialist country in the world. Lenin regarded the dictatorship of the proletariat “as the most important question of the entire proletarian struggle.” (Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky) Marxists he regarded as only those “who extend the acceptance of the class struggle to the acceptance of the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . . This is the touchstone on which the real understanding and acceptance of Marxism should be tested.”

Like Marx and Engels, Lenin emphasises the absolute necessity for winning **political and state power** if there is to be a successful revolution advancing to socialism: “The basic question in any revolution is that of state power. Unless this question is understood there can be no intelligent participation in the revolution, let alone guidance of the revolution.” (Lenin: Selected Works Vol. VI, “On Dual Power”):

“The Communist Manifesto gives a general sum-

mary of history, which compels us to regard the state as the organ of class rule and leads us to the inevitable conclusion that the proletariat cannot overthrow the bourgeoisie without first securing political power, without attaining political supremacy, without transforming the state into the ‘proletariat organised as the ruling class!’ ”

In other words **political power means state power**, control over the machine, not simply a majority in Parliament.

The essence of socialist revolution is that **all power must be in the hands of the working class**. “The overthrow of the bourgeoisie can be accomplished only by the proletariat as the particular class whose economic conditions of existence train it for this task and provide it with the opportunities and power to perform it; while the bourgeoisie breaks up and disintegrates the peasantry and all the petty-bourgeois strata, it welds together, unites and organises the proletariat.” (State & Revolution)

Lenin stressed again and again that the proletariat could not achieve a socialist revolution in isolation from the rest of the classes oppressed and exploited by capitalism, but only in alliance with them. He stressed that a successful socialist revolution is possible only with the support and active participation of **the majority of the people**, and that the role of the work class is **the leadership of an alliance embracing the majority of the people** in making the revolution and in building up the new socialist society.

SPECIAL FORM OF ALLIANCE

“Only if power is based obviously and unconditionally on the majority of the population can it be stable during a popular revolution, i.e. a revolution which brings into action the people, the majority of workers and peasants.

“The dictatorship of the proletariat is a special form of this alliance between the proletariat — the vanguard toilers—and the numerous non-proletarian strata of toilers (the petty bourgeoisie, the small masters, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.) or the majority of them; it is an alliance against capital, an alliance aiming at the complete overthrow of capital.” (State and Revolution).

Lenin devoted an enormous amount of time to exploding the false counter-posing of democracy to dictatorship. He explained that while bourgeois democracy marked a very great advance over other forms which had preceded it, and the democratic rights won by the working people in struggle are of great importance and need defending and extending — bourgeois democracy is in essence a form of state, a means of rule through which **the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie** (the minority) is exercised over the majority (the working class and the entire working people).

“To speak of pure democracy, of democracy in general . . . means flying in the face of the fundamental truths of Marxism which taught the workers — you must utilise bourgeois democracy as something which marks enormous historical progress compared with feudalism, but you must not for a moment forget the bourgeois character of this ‘democracy’ . . . You must not forget that even under the most democratic republic and not only under a monarchy, the state is nothing more than a machine for the suppression of one class by another.” (Lenin: Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky.)

REFLECTS NEW CLASS RELATIONS

The issue is not the abstract one of “democracy” versus “dictatorship but :

“the substitution of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the actual dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (which is hypocritically concealed by the forms of the democratic bourgeois republic.”

The dictatorship of the proletariat is the form of state which exists during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. It reflects the new class and social relations — political and economic power in the hands of the majority of the people, led by the working class. It ends for the first time in history the dictatorship of the “minority” over the “majority”.

“The dictatorship of the proletariat” is so called for two main reasons. First, the advance to socialism requires taking economic and political power away from the capitalists against their will and on imposing new relations essential to the advance to socialism on those who oppose it, thus maintaining the new social order which reflects the interests of the majority of the people against any attempts by the minority to restore capitalism.

Second, the proletariat plays the leading role because it is the most progressive, most revolutionary class in capitalist society : its immediate and long-term interests can only be realised by the advance towards Socialism. Also, the working class is the

most decisive and best organised class. Although the advance to socialism can only be accomplished by an alliance of all classes oppressed by capitalism it is above all in the interests of the working class.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a new form of state serving the interests of the working class and the entire working people in the advance to socialism. It replaces the old bourgeois state, because as Marx, Engels and Lenin point out the working class cannot simply take over the old capitalist state and use it for the building of socialism . . . it must destroy the old state machine and create a new one in the interests of the majority.

DEMOCRACY FOR MAJORITY

The establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat means “winning the battle for democracy” for it puts power in the hands of the majority of the people, led by the working class. Only when the power — economic and political — of the minority exploiting capitalist class is ended, is it possible to speak of democracy — real effective democracy **for the majority : the working class and the entire working people.**

Taking political and economic power away from the bourgeoisie, ending the exploitation of man by man, making the press, T.V., radio, public meeting places, paper stocks, printing concerns the property of the entire working people, above all involving masses of the people in the affairs of state and government means that the dictatorship of the proletariat is “a million times more democratic” than the most advanced bourgeois democracy.

Lenin’s approach to questions of democracy and dictatorship is based not on abstract purist theories but on a scientific class approach and analysis. He repeatedly emphasises that the dictatorship of the proletariat means democracy “in a new way” for the proletariat and dictatorship “in a new way” for the bourgeoisie. Because of this we can conclude that **THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT IS THE HIGHEST FORM OF DEMOCRACY AS YET ENJOYED BY MAN—IT IS THE NECESSARY TRANSITION STAGE FROM CAPITALISM TO SOCIALISM.**

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LENIN'S KIND OF PARTY

"WHAT Is To Be Done?" This was not only the title for one of the most remarkable of the many outstanding books by Lenin; it is also a question for our time in Ireland.

In the North, the Unionist Party of big business and the landed gentry, though very badly shaken, still remains in power as it has for the last 50 years. In the South, the Fianna Fail Government appears to be irremovable, and acts so. Throughout the whole country, there is constant unemployment and emigration; and alongside the growing wealth of the monied classes there is acute social distress. This distress, it is true, does not affect all of the working class, but overall, including people outside the working class, there hangs a dreaded cloud of insecurity. It is in this situation that is often heard, 'Oh, if we only had a strong Labour Party.'

THE ROLE OF THE LABOUR PARTIES

Before the creation of Lenin's Bolshevik Party, the Social Democratic parties played a role in creating amongst workers a consciousness that they were a separate class from the employers. Those parties fought elections and won seats. Their deputies campaigned for factory acts, social insurance, the legal rights of trade unions—not without some degree of success.

by Michael O'Riordan

Capitalism was then in an expanding period; it was able to concede reforms, although with reluctance and always only in response to mass pressure that existed outside parliament. With the winning of some reforms there grew amongst the vast majority of Social Democrats the illusion that capitalism could be gradually reformed altogether and particularly so by the election of Labour Governments. Such illusions still exist in the Labour Parties in the 1970's, the Irish and British ones included.

Before the end of the last century the expansion of capitalism had been checked. No more colonies were left to be grabbed, the stage of imperialism had been reached, the various monopoly capitalist powers had divided up the world between them. To further expand was only possible by grabbing colonies from each other, and the only way to do this was by war—world war. Also, in the anarchic system there developed more frequent and deeper crises which caused slumps, mass unemployment and hunger.

This situation called for struggle. Somehow or other, the capitalist system had to be overthrown and replaced by another. The Social Democrats were (and are) incapable of leadership in this new stage. All they could do was to ask "questions" in parliament. They did not know how to struggle, even if their consciences prompted them to so desire. The illusions of reforms had grown deeply in them, and it was only 'natural' that they became part of what we now call "The Establishment." They saw nothing wrong in accepting honours and favours from the ruling class. This is still with us; in Britain the finding of a niche in the House of Lords, and in Ireland seeking the Taoiseach's nomination for a Senate seat, or a Government appointment on a State Board as a Director.

LENIN'S LEAD

The Social Democratic parties were not only purely parliamentary in outlook; they also based their organisation on such forms as that of the electoral constituencies and awards. Such party branches rarely met, their membership was loose and active only at election times. Everything was left in the 'good hands' of the member of parliament.

Against this type of organisation and outlook, Lenin called for a new kind of Labour Party — a revolutionary workers' party which would be organised not only in electoral areas, but also in the streets and factories, and one that would be always active, election or no elections. A party that was prepared to fight within and without parliament. One that was highly organised under central leadership and whose membership, no matter how small, would be made up of people dedicated to the cause of Socialism. It should also be a party, Lenin maintained, that was possessed with a theoretical vision, the theory of Marxism, which it had to introduce into the general working class movement. "Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement" declared Lenin.

This was to be "a party of a new type", and as history has recorded, such was instrumental in leading the Russian people to be the first to break through the front of imperialism and to the creation of the first workers' state in the world.

What made this party so powerful? Lenin laid down five main characteristics that distinguished it from any other kind of party. Those were relevant not only to the Russian revolutionary movement; they were, and are, of universal importance.

In his book, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back", Lenin made it clear that a party of a new type in relation to the working class should be :—

1. THE VANGUARD : That is composed of the best elements of the working people; the most advanced section, giving organisational form to what Marx and Engels had called . . . "the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section that pushed forward all the others . . ."

Though by no means a rule, that is why Communist parties are invariably small in their beginnings. The term 'Vanguard' has military connotations. It is that small body of picked fighters who march ahead of the main army (of Labour) into territory that may be unknown to the main body, but of which the vanguard has a theoretical briefing. A vanguard because of its position can also see further ahead. It must be composed of fighters who will not be frightened by the first salvos of the enemy. It must be always ahead in the leading position, but never that far that it can be cut off or isolated from the main army (of Labour).

2. AN ORGANISED DETACHMENT : Every member an active one, taking part in collective discussions and conforming to discipline and the rule of the majority. In such a party there never could be the situation in which prominent personalities, who have never been members, are canvassed to stand as elections candidates, as happens in the Irish Labour Parties, who by seeking 'big names' reduce the party to what Lenin termed a "mere agglomeration of persons." Another view of Lenin is not without relevance to contemporary politics in Ireland: "The proletariat is not afraid of organisation and discipline. . . The proletariat will do nothing to have worthy professors and high school students, who do not want to join an organisation, recognised as Party members merely because they work under the control of an organisation."

3. THE HIGHEST FORM OF ORGANISATION : The Party is but one of many organisations of the working people. There are trade unions, unemployed organisations, associations for old age pensioners, tenants, students, etc., co-operative societies, housing action committees, cultural groups and a host of bodies that cater for one or other aims of the people. The Party is the highest of all these organisations, not that in any sense that it is superior, but because it sees the need to unite the various sectional aims into one specific class aim, and to integrate each struggle into the general one. It is so able, and is obliged, to guide all other separate organisations, thus winning for itself a leading role.

4. A PARTY LINKED WITH THE PEOPLE : It cannot live in splendid isolation. No matter how theoretically correct its programme, this will be useless unless the Party is linked with the people. That is why in such as the Irish Workers' Party and the Communist Party (N. Ireland) there is the obligation on every member to be in his, or her, trade union or appropriate organisation, and that they must be active members of such, not as has been alleged for the purpose of taking them over, but in order to link the people and the Party close together. The confidence of members of other organisations in the Party cannot be won by conspiracy, but only on the example of unselfish work and correct leadership.

5. GOVERNED BY DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM : A detailed explanation of the application of the principles of Democratic Centralism would need a full article by itself. Lenin, himself put it succinctly when he wrote : "Formerly, our Party (i.e. the old Social Democratic one) was not a formally organised whole, but only the sum of separate groups, and therefore, no relations except those of ideological influence were possible between these groups. Now we have become an organised Party, and this implies the establishment of authority, the transformation of the power of ideas into the power of authority, the subordination of lower Party bodies to higher Party bodies."

AN IRISH PARTY OF A NEW TYPE

A voluntary, dedicated, highly disciplined, united and highly organised Party, armed with a knowledge of Marxist theory, linked with the people; with one discipline binding equally on leaders and rank and file — such in short is the Leninist Party of a New Type.

This article does not deal with all that was involved in Lenin's task of creating such a Party. Long before, side by side, and even after its creation he had to conduct a hard ideological struggle against many influences and diversions. All of those struggles are of value to us in Ireland. Who does not recognise the familiar ring, in the "Narodnaya Volya" secret society which believed that by individual acts of bravery the people could be roused to follow the perpetrators of heroic deeds on a revolutionary path? ; or the "Economists" who opposed the idea of a centralised revolutionary party, believing that the emphasis should be on "the economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government?"

Since we had them all, and have them still, in Ireland there exists the task of building an Irish workers' party of a new type.

Broadly speaking, we find the present position of the political Labour movement in Ireland, thus :—

In the North, the Northern Ireland Labour Party ignores completely the national question, and equally so the class question, and at the time of writing strives for amalgamation with Harold Wilson's British Labour Party.

In the Twenty-Six Counties, the Irish Labour Party now calls itself "socialist", but equates its socialism with what the Social Democrats are doing in Sweden, and with Herr Willy Brandt in West Germany.

Neither of the two Irish Labour Parties can lead the workers to socialism. This cannot be seriously questioned. It is a fact that no Social Democratic Party (of the old type) has ever even with governmental power, succeeded in establishing socialism in any country. On the other hand, parties of the Leninist new type, have led the people of 14 countries in Europe, Asia and Latin America to sweep capitalism aside and to build socialist societies. Together, these countries are a great force and, with Lenin's own Soviet Union foremost among them are helping the peoples of other countries fighting for freedom.

ALWAYS A VANGUARD

Throughout the years there has always been a vanguard section of the Irish working class that has endeavoured to build and develop a working class political party having as its aim the ending of capitalism and the winning of an Ireland independent and socialist. Such vanguard actions grasped the essential teaching of Lenin on the importance of a party of a new type.

James Connolly started as far back as 1896 with the Irish Socialist Republican Party. There was the Socialist Party of Ireland in the post-Truce days of 1921, which soon transformed itself into the Communist Party of Ireland and became a section of the Communist International.

Jim Larkin and his supporters, on his return from America in 1923, became identified with the international Communist movement through the Irish Worker League and took a firm stand against the Labour reformists who had shamelessly betrayed the socialism of Connolly and co-operated with the Free State regime.

The Revolutionary Workers' Groups, formed in 1929, with its weekly paper, Irish Workers' Voice, laid the basis for launching of the all-Ireland based Communist Party of Ireland in 1933, with the late Sean Murray as its General Secretary.

The Communist movement has had to contend with very considerable difficulties, hostilities and

opposition; however, it has functioned, over the years, in the Six Counties as the Communist, N. Ireland and in the Twenty-Six Counties as the Irish Workers' Party.

This year, which celebrates the centenary of the birth of Lenin, and also marks the 50th anniversary of the imposition by British imperialism of the infamous Government of Ireland Act, which imposed partition on the country, the Irish communists have come together and reconstituted the all-Ireland-based Communist Party.

In showing the ideological and organisational contrast between the reformist type Labour party and the party of a new type, there is not the purpose of posing, in an antagonistic manner, an Irish Communist Party against an Irish Labour Party. On the contrary, the closer the fraternal relations between them, the better the interests of the whole working class will be served.

But the lesson of history that is contemporaneously relevant necessitates a clear demand for the building up of a strong Irish workers revolutionary party of a new type.

A change of the capitalist system in Ireland will not take place without a party of the new type. Not that it will necessarily do it alone. This will be done by the people roused by the unity in action of all progressive forces in the country. In the task of leadership, the vital role can, and will, be played by a Communist Party modeled on Lenin's principles and teachings.

These have withstood the greatest test of all, that of history.

UNESCO RESOLUTION

On November 19, 1968, the General Conference of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) at its fifteenth session adopted resolution 3,112 in which it authorised the Director-General to initiate activities to commemorate the centenary of the birth of V. I. Lenin, including the organization of a symposium on the theme "Lenin and the development of science, culture and education."

Subsequently, on 13 March 1969, the Commission on Human Rights, at its twenty-fifth session, adopted a similar resolution, No. 16 (XXV), on the commemoration of the centenary of the birth of V. I. Lenin.

Soviet Historian on Connolly

(In January of this year James Connolly's "Labour in Ireland" was published in the Russian language in Moscow. It is the first time that any of Connolly's writings has been translated and published in a language other than English.)

An introduction to the volume is written by Professor A. D. Kolpakov, a lecturer in history at the Moscow State University. We publish some extracts from this Introduction which deals with the first part of the book, "Labour in Irish History."

The concluding part of the Introduction examines "The Re-Conquest of Ireland" and we will publish this in a future edition of Irish Socialist Review.

A Preface to the book is by Michael O'Riordan.

Thanks are due to George Jeffares for the translation from the Russian.—Editor.)

AT the beginning of the present century, when the Marxist trend in world historical science was still only in its formative stage, James Connolly revealed himself as both an outstanding and original Marxist historian, the first person to apply the Marxist materialist method to the study of modern Irish history.

During the years when he brought out his works on history, Irish historical science was completely dominated by the essentially idealistic, national-romantic approach: the bourgeois historians concerned themselves almost exclusively with the political, military or cultural history of Ireland, ignoring the socio-economic factors and the class struggle.

"Irish history has ever been written by the master class—in the interests of the master class", wrote James Connolly.

FIRST IRISH MARXIST ANALYSIS

When one attempts to evaluate Connolly's main work, "Labour in Irish history" (1910), one can only describe it as a feat. What strength of spirit, what deep conviction and selflessness it was necessary to possess to complete such a work; he was outside of academic and university circles, and did not have at his disposal the necessary leisure or means to carry through to its conclusion the first Marxist analysis of the national history of his country; his book has not lost its importance to this day.

"Labour in Irish History" does not claim to be an all-embracing treatment and analysis of events. Connolly says so frankly, pointing out that he set himself the task, not of writing the history of the

Irish working class, but of clarifying its place in the history of Ireland. However, in spite of this, Connolly's book is an outstanding historical work based on a great number of sources and a considerable amount of literature. Here we get agrarian statistics, parliamentary documents, the immense pamphlet literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including pamphlets of the secret Irish revolutionary societies and organisations, a large amount of highly diversified material extracted from the Irish newspapers of different leanings in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; there are documents of the first Irish socialist communes, materials from memoirs, numerous papers on the history of the Ireland of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, etc. All this varied material is used by Connolly to show the groundlessness of the bourgeois-nationalist interpretation of the history of Ireland, and to cast down the "idol" before which it was proper for the Irish to bow down. Instead, in the centre of the historical struggle he consistently puts forward the class struggle and social relationships as the origin of the economic processes. The Irish working people becomes the principal, active force in the historical process.

MATERIALIST APPROACH

An example of Connolly's materialist approach to Irish history is his examination of the period of the Jacobite wars in Ireland (1689-1697), when the Irish Catholics stood behind the banner of the Stuart James 2nd, who had been driven out of England.

Basing himself on Marx's thesis of the key role of the means of production and exchange in any given historical period, Connolly states that "the prevailing method of economic production and exchange was the feudal method based upon the private ownership of lands stolen from the Irish people, and all the political struggles of the period were built upon the material interests of one set of usurpers who wished to retain, and another set who wished to obtain, the mastery of those lands".

There is manifested here, as in a number of other chapters in the book, a tendency—characteristic of early Marxist works—towards a purely economic explanation of historical events, against which Engels in his time warned, pointing out that various elements in the superstructure can exert an important

and, at times, decisive influence on the forms of historical struggle.

Of special significance are the chapters which throw light on the national revolutionary-democratic development in Ireland at the end of the eighteenth century. In those years there lived and fought the man to whom Connolly constantly pays honour—Theobald Wolfe Tone, the founder of the revolutionary-democratic “Society of United Irishmen”, which had as its aim the overthrow of English rule and the setting up in Ireland of a democratic republic.

Connolly knocks down from his pedestal the favourite of the bourgeois historians, Henry Grattan, the leader of the Volunteer movement of the 1780’s, which had won certain political concessions from England. Connolly notes the compromising, class-limited character of the so-called Grattan revolution, which slid to a stop as soon as the question was raised of granting the poor the vote. Dethroning Grattan and his lieutenants, he exalts the revolutionary democrats of the “Society of United Irishmen” and their leader Wolfe Tone, who had tried to carry out a genuinely democratic revolution in Ireland. On the basis of documentary material, Connolly reveals the true character and the basic principles of the “United Irishmen”. He attaches particular importance to Tone’s slogan of uniting all the democratic forces in Ireland for the common struggle, independent of their religious convictions.

IDOL OF THE BOURGEOISIE

Before the bar of scientific history, Connolly judges yet another idol of the bourgeoisie, the famous Daniel O’Connell, leader of the nation-wide movement for Catholic emancipation, which in 1829 extracted from the English Government a law which alleviated their position. He shows how this national leader was the bitterest enemy of the Irish workers who had joined together in trade unions, and how he was the staunch supporter of the English capitalists. Emphasising the class unity of the exploiters in England and Ireland, Connolly relates with satisfaction the international links of the workers of both islands (in particular the Chartist organisations set up in Ireland in the 1840’s).

Connolly frequently adverts to the Gaelic problem, telling of the English conquest of Ireland, affirming that in the course of the latter a struggle took place between two forms of landownership—the feudal-English one introduced from outside, and the truly Irish form of clan, or common ownership. The exploiting classes in Ireland—the landlords and capitalists—he shows, adopted the alien system and broke with the primordial Gaelic tradition. Connolly

repeatedly notes the wholesomeness of the Gaelic principles and the attempt of the English conquerors, the Catholic Church, and later the Irish politicians too, to exterminate them from the memory of the people. This indicates a certain idealisation by Connolly of the primitive order of ancient Irish society and the primitive-feudal relations which lasted in Ireland up to the beginning of the seventeenth century, and also his over-estimation of the so-called Gaelic “Golden Age”.

However, it should be noted that his conception of a Gaelic Ireland—a country strong, free, knowing nothing of private property and living by the common labour of the people—was nevertheless closer to the historical truth than the “aristocratic myth”, created by bourgeois-nationalist historians, of an ancient Ireland as an association of kings, tribal aristocracy and their faithful men-at-arms, which left no place for the communal tiller of the land. Sharply opposing this myth, Connolly tried to create among the Irish people a correct notion of their historic past and traditions, and to use these in the interests of the struggle of the Irish workers for their freedom.

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