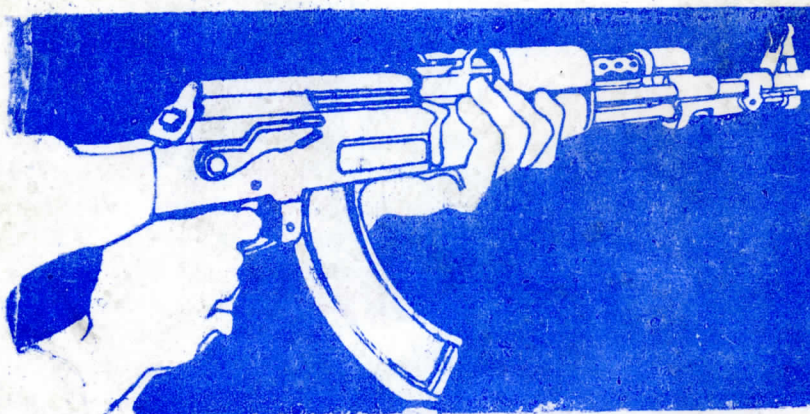


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**REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY
LÈIRMHEAS AR FANON
IMPERIALISM AND IRELAND**

R E A M H R A

In recent decades republicans have had little regard for theory, they were interested mainly in direct action. The great strength of the Republican Movement has always been its willingness to act against the enemies of the Irish people.

For decades it has demonstrated its dedication and willingness to expend all its forces in the struggle against British military occupation of our country. When the struggle was extended some years ago to the social and economic forces oppressing the Irish people the Republican Movement displayed the same energy and dedication as it had done against military oppression. No time was spent theorising, problems were isolated and met head-on. A new refreshing force had come on the scene with 'action' as its watchword and the various socialist groups who had evolved correct theories but never acted on them were forced from their backrooms on to the streets.

The weakness of the Republican Movement has always been its apparent unwillingness or inability to explain its actions or the need for action either to the public or even to its own members. Furthermore there have been many occasions when Republicans took wrong action or took the right action at the wrong time or for the wrong reasons. They have also on many occasions failed to get the full benefit in organisation, experience or knowledge from the activities in which they have been involved.

It has been obvious for some time that some theoretical work was necessary particularly in the field of analysis and assessment. It is apparent even in the purely military context that an analysis of the motivation of the enemy is necessary. This was particularly evident in the past few months in Belfast when there was substantial evidence that it was the desire of the British Army to promote conflict.

'Teoirie' is a modest effort to fill a gap in contemporary republican thinking. It does not propose to indulge in sterile theorising but in practical analysis and assessment which will be designed to lead to correct action. As in many other things Wolfe Tone is our great guide here. Before taking any action, before he even knew one Catholic, he did a careful analysis of the problems of Ireland and of the potential revolutionary forces with which he would have to work. It was from this analysis that he laid down the overall strategy which guided his political and military actions over the following seven years, and have guided Republicans of every generation since.

The activist who scorns theory is like the rifleman who scorns the sights. He can make a lot of noise without even hitting his target.

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REVOLUTIONARY OBJECTIVE

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Revolutionary Conditions and Needs

The objective of any movement dictates or determines its activity, its work, its demands. It follows, therefore, that for a movement to be a revolutionary one, or aspire to be one, it must have a revolutionary objective.

For us of the Irish Republican Movement we have declared our revolutionary objective to be the establishment in Ireland of a Democratic Socialist Republic. In simple terms this means that without a revolutionary objective there cannot be a revolutionary movement and without a revolutionary movement there cannot be a revolution.

There are several important factors that are required to be present before there can be a popular revolution and I would hope to cover all or most of them during the course of this talk. It may be that at times I am stating the obvious but I believe that the obvious things are sometimes passed over just because they are that, obvious.

A revolution cannot take place as the result of the desires, dreams or ideals of revolutionary minded people. A revolution requires a level of social/economic contradictions which makes it possible to overthrow the ruling class. A revolution needs the presence of another social class, which because of its place in society, its place in the process of production and its political potential, is able to successfully achieve this revolution.

The most important instrument in the struggle for National Freedom and Socialism is, as we have said, a revolutionary movement and the most important task a revolutionary movement has is to organise the working class and their allies in order to win the Revolution. Capitalism is a system that can and has absorbed, has integrated many reforms and it automatically rejects all reforms that run counter to the logic of the system (such as completely free public services which cover social needs). The structure can only be abolished by overthrowing it, not by reforming it.

Here it is that all who belong to the revolutionary movement should fully understand what this revolution is going to mean, in short, to know precisely what a revolution is - THE CHANGE OF STATE POWER FROM ONE CLASS TO ANOTHER CLASS. The central point of any revolution and particularly in a socialist revolution, is that the key positions in the State, in Government, Army, Police, Civil Service, Judiciary, Unions, many National Organisations, T.V., Radio and Press should pass out of the hands of those who are loyal to the Establishment and into the hands of those who represent the vast majority of the people who will use this power to build socialism where the means of production, distribution and exchange are socially owned.

At this point of time in our history as a Revolutionary Movement it must be accepted and understood that our Movement must have a National Liberation and Socialist character. In the past the Republican Movement through concentrating all its energies and resources on the question of National Liberation alone, neglected the task of organising the people in their everyday struggles. We left this most important task to those politicians who time after time sold the people

out. We, for our part, confused popular sympathy for our cause, the Freedom of Ireland, with popular support. It was only when we were beaten to the wall and almost annihilated as a political force that the true meaning of revolution began to dawn on us. We know now, and have begun to organise ourselves on the correct lines, that in order to succeed we need and must have the active and mass support of the people. This support has to be won by helping the people to fight their immediate struggles for jobs, houses, lands and civil liberties and by explaining to people how all of these issues affecting their lives are connected with the nature of capitalism, the need for socialism and above all, gives them leadership in the fight for a revolutionary change. (It is, perhaps, easy to see that many errors were committed over the years from the twenties and that little or nothing was done to correct these errors until the sixties).

In the thirties, in Ireland as in other parts of the world, there was a rise in working class consciousness. More than at any other period in recent Irish history and especially since the end of the civil war was there an opportunity to create out of the Republican Movement a revolutionary organisation with the backing and support of the working people of all Ireland than at this time. The history of the Republican Congress proves this. This struggle to create a revolutionary movement of all Ireland was lost for two reasons:-

1. The recognised leadership of whatever revolutionary group or potential that was there was not good enough and they were unable to take advantage of the crisis in Capitalist Imperialism and the rise of the workers' consciousness.
2. The grave error that was committed by this leadership and others in separating the national question from the social questions of the people.

While from the period from the end of the Civil War until our day Republicans virtually neglected to organise the people who are ultimately going to make the revolution in this country - the workers. We must be conscious and careful that we do not go to the other extreme and forsake or neglect the national question, as happened in the '30s. There is a danger that in our fight to establish ourselves among the people, and in the fight to establish the rights of the people in the everyday issues, we would tend to ignore or not continue to place enough stress or emphasis on the question of National Independence.

The centuries old struggle of the Irish people to establish an independent nation is still, today, one of the most potent weapons in the revolutionary arsenal, is in fact the one single issue on which all Irishmen can come together. We must continue to insist on linking the question of national freedom with the question of social justice and socialism. For those Irish people who, because of their religious upbringing or particular environment with its background of support for British influence and control in Ireland, we must show and prove to them by our words and, more important, our actions in all the other issues that affect them, as well as all other working class people in Ireland, that it is the Republican Movement they have most in common with and least to fear from. We must continue to demonstrate to this large number of people that we stand for the emancipation of all men and women and that our aim is to end forever the exploitation of man by a small exclusive class.

It is regrettable that we still have people in Ireland today, who have not learned from former experiences, who still insist that it is possible to achieve freedom with the weapons and instruments of former times. We have several distinct elements made up of some very sincere and dedicated people who follow this trend. Some on one hand are attempting to re-create the historical period of the twenties, attempting to translate the type of movement and the form of struggle

that was partly successful in the twenties. This attempt to have the same in the seventies is doomed to failure. Those other people who wish to impose 'freedom' on people, who form themselves into an elite, without any contact or support from the mass of the people, those elements who make the question of shooting the central point of the struggle are going to find themselves isolated from the people and will surely fail, as other efforts of a similar nature failed in the past. Unfortunately, because of our history as a movement committed to force, we are liable to be brought down along with these elements, for the establishment will have little difficulty in dealing with any movement unless the Irish people are made aware that there is a deep and fundamental difference between the Republican Movement and these elements.

As with the failures of the past the enemies of freedom will be delighted at this failure and we can hear their voices now telling the people that force as a solution to the problems of the Irish people was a failure and that it is now finally discredited and rejected by the Irish people. Here it is important that the true voice of the Irish Revolution be heard to point out to the people, to state to the establishment and most important to keep insisting to the revolutionaries, as we have done in the past, that the tactic of physical force fails for certain specific reasons. We must first recognise that physical force is a tactic and that despite all the errors, all the shortcomings over the years, the history of all successful revolutions prove that the road of armed struggle was and is the only correct one. What we learned and some didn't was that armed struggle on its own is doomed to failure, just as political action or demonstrations on their own are doomed to failure. Force must be linked with, must be integrated with, all the other forms of struggle, legal and illegal that are available to the movement.

We must understand that in all areas of revolutionary work it is often no less imperative to know what not to do as to what to do and how to do it. Such knowledge is acquired as the result of earlier trials and experiences and errors. If our history and experience have already exposed what ways and means are inadequate for to complete our task then it is obvious that correct measures should be applied as soon as these errors become known. It is in this light that we should see the past few years. What had failed in the fifties and sixties was a tactic, not a strategy. What we had to do, and must continue doing, was to correct the tactic in the course of the struggle itself. Over the past few years we have begun to take this tactical turn, to correct our methods of struggle, to deepen and expand our political organisation among the people. To begin to organise the people not for revolt, not for rebellion, not for insurrection but for revolution. A revolution that will change the entire political and social system in the country.

A point I would like to make here is that any revolutionary movement must base itself and their programme on its own people and their needs, the conditions in their own country. We have a lot to learn from many other countries in the world who have made a successful revolution or in some cases are like ourselves, trying to make a revolution. But as I said, if we cannot translate conditions and movements from our own past then it should be just as obvious that we cannot borrow or get a carbon copy of revolution from other countries. We must deal with the situation as it is today in Ireland, and build our movement accordingly.

The only hope the ruling class has is if it can isolate the revolutionary completely from the rest of the people. That is why the number one task today for those revolutionaries who really want to change the system is to know how to reach people. We must build a movement of people who are aware and conscious of all the many avenues that are open to the movement; a movement with the realisation that we need to get involved in and build on these issues to that final confrontation with the forces of the establishment. This will be a long road, but if we build our foundations on a conscious people we cannot but succeed.

Many things or incidents, events, factors are required to show the workers how capitalism affects them and helps to raise their class consciousness:-

Shifts in the trends of income and employment, decrease in real wages, increase in unemployment;

A crisis of leadership in the ruling class;

An upsurge of militancy and anti-capitalist activity in marginal areas of society like the students or teachers, a rise of national consciousness. All or some of these things go to bring an awareness to the workers and starts them questioning the employers, authority in the shops, factories, offices and in the land. When workers challenge the employers right to lay off workers, close factories or transfer equipment or men to other factories. When they raise the demand 'open the books' in answer to the employers refusal to grant demands. When they seize and occupy factories in answer to employers lockout, they raise the level of class struggle. But awareness of itself is not sufficient. It does not guide the working class once it has engaged in a general struggle, it does not answer such questions as what do we do when we occupy factories. It is at this point that many revolutions have been halted and destroyed.

The history of Europe over the past fifty years since the end of the First World War shows a few clear and distinct periods when revolution was possible, in fact was well nigh a reality, in some cases. Germany was one such country after the end of the First World War and in the thirties France and Spain, and after the Second World War, Italy. The most recent case of a European country on the verge of revolution in our day was France in May of 1968 when 10 million workers were on the streets or occupying factories. It is interesting to recall and remember, that the spark that lit the fuse of revolution in France in 1968 was the action taken by a small number of students protesting against one teacher in a little known University on the outskirts of Paris. It is of course evident to us today, that French society at that time and like all other capitalist societies all over the world was and is a mass of contradictions and gross inequalities, a powder keg of discontent only waiting for that spark.

We do not know what will be the spark for the Irish revolution but it is certain as I said before, that unless there is a revolutionary movement there to lead the people and direct them towards that central goal - 'Political Power' for the working class - it will fail as it failed so before. This is a fundamental, the key role played by the building of a revolutionary movement. There is another key and this is that there must be a certain level of class consciousness and revolutionary self activity. Without this a revolutionary movement cannot transform a struggle for immediate demands into a struggle challenging the very existence of the system.

One of the basic problems of revolutionary strategy today is this lack of class consciousness among the people of Ireland and elsewhere. We, as revolutionary socialist republicans do not believe that capitalist imperialism will suddenly collapse as a result of some miracle or inner contradictions. We do not believe that the task of revolutionaries is to sit on the sidelines and interpret current events hoping for some happening. We believe in the conscious intervention, in the key teaching role that struggle has and of the experience born from such struggles. We believe that it is only by trying to expand actual living working class struggles towards an incipient challenge against the authority of the employers and of the capitalist system, can a rise be achieved in working class consciousness. Only through such struggles can the workers build the actual organs through which they can tomorrow take over the administration of the economy and the state, freely elected workers committees at factory or street level which will federate themselves afterwards locally, regionally, and then nationally. That is what the conquest of political power by the working class really means.

Only if there exists a political leadership which can co-ordinate all the various forms of emerging revolutionary consciousness and direct them towards our final task, the overthrow of capitalism and the full momentum of the upsurge maintained and the reawakened workers fully deploy its revolutionary potential. There is in the modern industrial capitalist state a wide and tremendous potential of spontaneous initiative. Action by students, scientists and doctors, rent strikes and movements for womans' liberation, revolts against disintegrating public services and uninhabitable cities, the taking over of hospitals and factories, the constant effort and struggle to preserve and defend existing liberation and expansion in civil liberties, all these must in the last analysis be political because they pose the question of which class exercises power in society as a whole and not merely the question of who commands the machines in one factory or who controls one university or who is to run the buses in one city and in whose interests.

To initiate and broaden these experiences you need a revolutionary vanguard organisation. Without such an organisation all such experiences will remain isolated experiences. The problem of building a revolutionary movement is the problem of the working class all over the world, the main barrier between the working class and victory in the fight is the question of the leadership of the revolutionary movement. This was the primary and main reason for failure in Europe over the past fifty years. There was no revolutionary party present which was able to centralise experience, consciousness and continuity.

There must be a political leadership in existence which can co-ordinate and lead all the various forms of discontent and revolt to direct them towards the objective, power for the working class. You cannot build a revolutionary movement without a revolutionary programme for, in fact, in time the programme will create the movement, but it is here that the role of conscious leadership enters into it, to save time.

The present generation of Irish revolutionaries has the supreme duty now to examine the past and take note of the many tragic mistakes committed, in order to avoid them in the future and to replace haphazard methods by a conscious theory and a deliberate design. Given the programme, the construction of leading cadres is the key to the construction of the revolutionary movement. This movement of ours has had leadership of sorts in every generation since it was founded but, unfortunately for the Irish people and the movement, it is only too true to say that there has been very little consciousness about its selection. Too often, as many can testify, it was simply because members of the movement had been in jail or had been shot, or had been in some action or had long service as members of the organisation and was known as Mr. Republic, or was known as a militant or a good talker or, as has even happened at times, he was a good footballer, they became leaders - and for that reason the main problems facing the Republican Movement and the Irish Nation remain unsolved. In this regard our past history has many lessons on what not to do on this question of leadership.

Of all kinds of leadership perhaps the worst is that unplanned leadership of individual stars pulling in opposite directions, squandering their energies in personal rivalries, quarrelling over trifles and incapable of organising a sensible division of labour. A movement will never succeed until it learns to discipline its individual star performers and makes them work together.

Another kind of leadership that the movement has known is the leadership of a clique. In every leadership clique there is a certain co-ordination, a certain organisation and division of labour and it sometimes looks good while it lasts. But a clique is bound together by personal associations - the buddy system - and has in it by that very fact a fatal flaw, that it can be broken by personal quarrels. This is the inevitable fate of every political clique. No movement can be led by a clique, at least not for very long, anyway, for it carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction.

There is another sort of leadership, if we can once more misuse the word, and this is the personality cult. A cult requires unthinking fools for the rank and file. But that is not all. In order for a cult to exist it is not enough for the leader to have personal followers - every leader has personal influence, more or less - but a cult leader has to be a cultist himself. The members or followers of a cult are capable of jumping in any direction at any time their leader gets a revelation. A revolutionary movement cannot under any circumstances be trusted to a cult or a cultist leader.

In our movement basing ourselves on our experiences and our evaluations of the past we must have a conception of the leadership of the revolutionary movement not as a number of unco-ordinated individual stars; not as a clique; not as a cult and not as anything separate or distinct from the rest of the movement. Our conception must be that of a leading cadre. This cadre must have the following basic characteristics, it must consist of people who are first of all united on the policy and programme of the movement, not on every single issue, but united on the fundamentals. That is the beginning.

The second point is that the leading cadre must be an inclusive and not an exclusive selection. It need not and must not have a fixed membership but deliberately keeps the door open all the time for the inclusion of new people, for the assimilation and development of others so that all the time the leadership is flexibly broadening in numbers and influence. The leadership must be, and be seen to be, a widely democratic representation of all the movement.

To conclude, over the past five years many changes have taken place in the Republican Movement. During that time we have clarified our objective, we know where we want to go, we know what we must do, what action we must take in order to achieve this objective. We must continue to learn from the past and our experiences, but not allow ourselves to be bound or tied to the past. Above all, it must be borne in mind that whatever actions we engage in, housing agitations, land and fishery agitations, civil rights or cultural agitations, all are bound up with and must be linked with the fight for freedom and socialism, and that in all of these fights to establish the rights of the ordinary people there is a class fight.

We must demonstrate to all the Irish people that our movement expresses the interests of that most exploited class, the working class, and that we have the programme and the policy, the aim to make that class victorious at last, in the long struggle for Freedom and Socialism.

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Scriobhadh agus foillsíodh "Damnaithe an Domhain" i mbliain deiridh a udair, Frantz Fanon. As Mairtinic de Fanon, ceann de oileain Chairbeacha, ach bhí se ag obair in otharlann ins an Ailgeir nuair cuireadh tus le reabhloid na hAilgeire. Faith na reabhloide ab ea e ar bhealach, ach amháin gur deacair a shamhailt go bhfuil moran cosúlacht idir Ailgeir a aislinge agus Ailgeir na Firinne. N'fheadar go firinneach an raibh se ag cur síos ar an reabhloid a bhí ar siúl, nó ar reabhloid eile a bhí níos congarai da mhian. Is cinnte go loiceann a easpa cruinneasa ar fhiuntas an leabhair, ach ag an am ceanna leiríonn se go maith an tabhacht ata le tuiscint reabhloideach bheith ag lucht reabhloide ma tathar le firinne a dheanamh as an aisling.

Ta clu Frantz Fanon bunaithe ar an leabhar seo. Labhrann se thar cheann na mbocht ins an domhan coilínithe. Ta an leabhar roinnte i gceithre codanna. ag ple le foreigean, le muintir na tuaithe, le tuiscint naisiunta agus le saúlacht an naisiuin. Tríd an leabhair uilig ritheann mian an udair go sabhailfidh na naisiuin choilínithe an cine daonna fein. Anseo ata laidreachta agus laige an leabhair: mar ce go bhfeiceann Fanon go bhfuil se tabhachtach go dtuigfidh reabhloidithe gur sabhailt an chine daonna ata fana gcuram, níl meas ar bith aige ar lucht oibre na hEorpa nó fiú lucht oibre na dtíortha coilínithe. Is ar mhuintir na tuaithe amháin a leagann se beim, ag fogairt sort soisialachais a cheannann neamhni de lucht oibre na gcathair. Ag scrúdu na dtuairimi seo i gcomhtheacs na hEireann, is leir nach ionann saol na hEireann agus saol na hAilgeire; fiú ma oireann a chuid cainte don Ailgeir, rud ataim fein amhrasach faoi. Mar sin fein ta rudai le foghlaim as a chuid scribhinni, agus is fiú iad a leamh.

"Sacru naisiunta, athbheochain naisiunta, athfhail na naisiunachta: cibe ainm, is rud foreigeanta i gconai di-choilíníu". Seo mar chuireann Fanon tus le "Damnaithe an Domhain". Miníonn se ar dtús an bealach ina bhfuair lucht an choilíníu (colonizers) greim ar sheilbh na hAilgeire: tre fhoreigean. Agus go raibh ceangailt na hAilgeire leis an bhFrainc, maraon le ceangailt aon tír choilínithe le "tír mhathartha", bunaithe ar an bhforeigean i gconai. Ar ndoigh ta stair na hEireann ina cruthu buan air seo, nuair is mian le pobal coilínithe saoirse naisiunta a bhaint amach, se sin athru a dheanamh ar status an duine ins an tír, is leir, dar le Fanon, go gcaithfe an duine sin bheith ullamh foreigean a úsáid chun deire a chur leis an gcoras foreigeanta ata bunaithe ag lucht an choilíníu. Mar deireann:-

"Ní feidir athru bunúsach a chur i gcrích in aon cothionól, is cuma ce comh seanaimseartha e, mura gcinntítear on tus fein, se sin on uair a chuirtear an clar ar siúl, go bh aighfear reidh le aon bhacanna a bheas sa bhealach. An coilíní a chinneann ar an gclar a chur i gcrích, ta se ullamh le haghaidh foreigin i gconai. O thus déiridh a shaoil is leir do nach feidir a dhomhan cung ata lan le coscanna a cheistiu ach le foreigean iomlán".

Cur síos an-mhaith agus an-fhíor ar an saol mar ata se ata sa chuid seo. Ní dóigh liom gur ga do mhuintir na hEireann an ceacht seo a fhoghlaim. I gconai ariamh b'e seasamh Ghluaiseacht na Poblachta e gur buníodh an coras eachtrannach le foreigean, go mbraitheann se ar fhoreigean agus go gcuirfi deire leis sa mhodh cheanna.

Mar aduirt Seamus Costelloe in oraid Bhaile Bhodain, Meitheamh 1966: - "ag deire thiar, bainfear seilbh na tire as lamha na mbarun gadacha insan mhodh cheanna is a bhfuair siad an tseilbh: le foreigean." Cruthu eile ar fhirinne an sceil seo na an bealach a d'ionsaigh Gardai Atha Cliath siuloiri síochanta o Dhún Chaoin le gairid. Cruthaíonn stair chuile thir ar dhomhan nar eirigh lucht na pribhleide as gan troid: nior eirigh san Ailgeir, is ni eireoidh anseo.

Deanann Fanon ansin cur síos ar an mbealach a fhaigheann an duine coilínithe a dhaonnacht ar ais, an bealach ina thagann se ar 'thuisceint'. "Mar is leir dho nach ainmhi e: agus díreach an noimeat a thuigeann se a dhaonnacht is ea a thosaíonn se ar uirlisi a aimsiu a chinnteos an bhuá dho." Ni hamhain go gcailleann se an mheoin a hoileadh dho ach diultaíonn se di. Dinit na daonnachta ata uaidh, ach ni feidir a leitheid a fhail gan saoirse naisiunta bheith ag an naisiun. Feicimid nios deanai nach bhfuil Fanon soileir faoin difir idir naisiun agus aicme, easpa soileireachta ata bunaithe ar a thuairimi faoi ait an lucht oibre sa reabhloid. Ach dar leis nuair a thuigtear go bhfuil easpa dinit an duine ceangailte le easpa saoirse don naisiun, ta chuile rud athraithe: mar aduirt Yeats "a terrible beauty is born." I gcas na hEireann ta se easpa a fheiceail go bhfuil dinit agus dochas an duine in easnamh. Nil iontaoibh ag an bpobal as fein; mar nach minic a chloistear gnath-Eireannaigh a ra nach feidir linn an tir a fhorbairt gan cumamh eachtrannach. Creidtear go forleathan nach ionann cumas an Eireannaigh agus cumas an eachtrannaigh, cumas an lucht oibre agus cumas na gcaipitealach, lucht an rachmais. Ni fheiceann Fanon - no ni leir go bhfeiceann - nar folair e seo a chruthu don phobal. Fen gcoras rachmasach ta dinit an duine caillte agus ta se deighilte amach on saol morthimpeall, mar ni leir dho go bhfuil an chumhacht aige ar chursai an tsaoil. Dar le Fanon is rud iontuighthe ag an duine coilínithe go gcaithfe se an lucht rialaithe a chaitheamh amach. Ni fíor sin faoi Eirinn, agus ni doigh liom go bhfuil se fíor faoi thir ar bith eile. I gconai beidh daoine ann a thuigfeas a leitheid, ach is iadsan a thiurfas treoir don chuid eile.

Tagann Fanon salach air fein insan mheid seo. Noimeat amhain ta se ag maíomh go dtuigeann an duine coilínithe o thus go gcaithfe se fein rialu, agus an noimeat eile ta se ag ra go mbíonn se caillte go dti go dtagann se ar an dtuisceint seo. Is feidir a lochtu go mor mar gheall air seo. Ta an easpa cruinneasa seo, ata luaite agam i dtus an ailt, bunaithe go mor, sílim, ar a chuid tuairimi faoi lucht na tuaithe agus lucht oibre na cathrach.

An chuid den leabhar is tabhachtai no is achrannai is ea an cur síos ar ait an mheanaicme, ait an lucht oibre agus ait na dtuataigh san troid naisiunta. Ni hamhain nach bhfuil aon mheas ag Fanon ar an meanaicme, ach nil aon mheas aige ar lucht oibre na gcathair. "Agus is leir gurb iad na tuataigh amhain ata ina n-abhar reabhloidithe sna tíortha coilínithe, mar nil rud ar bith le cailliúint acu agus chuile rud le fail. I measc na mbochtan se an tuatach ocrasach an chead duine a thuigfeas nach bhfuil aon dul chun cinn gan fhoreigin." Bhi sin fíor in Eirinn san 18u cead, nuair a bhi na buachailli bana ann. Ach ni feidir na buachailli bana a chur i gcomparaid leis na hEireannaigh Aontaithe ag deire an cheid cheanna. Bhi tuiscint reabhloideach ag na hEireannaigh Aontaithe; bhi mian díoltais ag na buachailli bana. Mar an gceanna insan Ailgeir, sílim.

Dar le Fanon, ta lucht oibre na gcathair ag deanamh go maith as an status quo; go mbíonn siad ceangailte le saoru aicmeach na tire matharthaigh in ionad le saoru naisiunta a dtir dhuchais fein. D'ionsaigh Nguyen Nghe, cóchumannach Vietnamach, an tuairim seo go gear: "Ni feidir leis an tuatach, ina aonair, tuiscint reabhloideach a fhorbairt; se an gníomhai ona cathracha a chaithfeas na tuataigh bhochta is fearr a aimsiu go foighdeach agus oideachas a chur orthu..." Cuimhnimis arís ar an difir idir na hEireannaigh Aontaithe agus na buachailli bana.

Ta traidisiun reabhloideach ag tuataigh na hEireann; is iad a throid i gcogadh na saoirse, agus ina dhiaidh. Ach theip ar an reabhloid naisiunta sa tir seo toisc go raibh ceannas na reabhloide ag an meanaicme agus nar ghlac gluaiseacht oifigiuil an lucht oibre le fealsunacht Uí Chonaola. Ag deire thiar is ag an gConaolach agus ag daoine ar nos Uí Mhaoiliosa agus Gilmore a ghlac lena sheasamh a bhi an t-aon fhealsunacht a threorodh lucht oibre agus lucht tuaithe go saoirse. "Gan teoiric na reabhloide ní feidir gluaiseacht reabhloideach bheith ann; gan gluaiseacht reabhloideach ní feidir reabhloid bheith ann."

Leanann Fanon an pointe seo. Deireann se go mbionn ceardchumann na n-oibrithe ceangailte le ceardchumann na tire matharthaigh agus faoina smacht pholaitiúil. Bhi sin fíor faoi Eirinn nuair a chuir an Conaolach agus an Lorcánach Ceardchumann Iompair agus Ilghneitheach na hEireann (ITGWU) ar bun. Ach mas fíor é, ceard faoi? Ta na ceardchumann ann le na hoibrithe a chosaint agus le bheith ina n-uirlis polaitíochta ag na hoibrithe. Ní rabhdar a dheanamh sin i gceart aimsir Uí Chonaola, agus cuireadh an ITGWU ar bun da bharr. Caineann Fanon an lucht oibre mar seo: -

"Ní feidir a ra ro-laidir gurb é prolatairiat na gceantar coilinithe bunús an daonra coilinithe a cothaidh go príomhda ag an re coilíníoch. Ta an prolatairiat og seo in ionad príbhleideach go leor. Sna tíortha rachmasacha, níl aon rud le cailliúint ag an lucht oibre; ag deire thiar ta chuile rud le fail acu. Sna tíortha coilinithe ta chuile rud le cailliúint ag an lucht oibre; go fírinneach se an chúid den naisiun coilinithe é ata riachtanach agus nach feidir a athru ma ta an t-inneal coilíníoch le gluaiseacht i gceart: ina measc seo, ta stiurthoirí busanna, tiomanaíthe taxianna, mianadóirí, dugairí, aistrítheoirí, banaltraí agus mar sin. Is iad is dílse a leanann na páirtithe naisiunacha (i.e. páirtithe an mheanaicme), agus mar gheall ar an ionad príbhleideach ata acu sa choras coilíníoch is iad an dream 'bourgeois' den phobal coilinithe."

Mar sin is bourgeoisie an lucht oibre. Níl cinnte an dtuigeann Fanon cad ta a ra aige, ach is leir gur seafoid a thuairim. Níl dabht ar bith ach go raibh soisialaigh san Ailgeir mar ata in Eirinn nach bhfaca aon tabhacht le saoru naisiunta, ach ta se cruthaithe ag stair na tire seo nach leor dearcadh naisiunach foreigeanta a bheith ag duine. Ní mor dearcadh soisialach a bheith aige; agus ta an soisialachas bunaithe ar an lucht oibre, mar astu siúd amháin a fhasann fealsunacht na fíor-saoirse. Níl ag ra nach bhfuil ait ag muintir na tuaithe sa reabhloid. Ta. Seans maith gurb iad a spreagfas an reabhloid, mar muintir na Gaeltachta. Ach ní eireoidh leis an reabhloid saol na ndaoine a athru mura bhfuil se bunaithe ar fhealsunacht an tsoisialachais a d'fhas as tuiscint an lucht oibre. Cruthaíonn ar stair é.

Fagaimis sin. Ní saineolai me ar chursai na hAilgeire agus ní feidir liom a ra go cinnte nach bhfuil Fanon fíor faoi, ach ní oireann an tuairim d'Eirinn, agus níl aon rud le foghlaim ag an leightheoir Eireannach as. Mar sin fein, tuigeann Fanon go maith gur paca fealltóirí na páirtithe naisiunacha. Miníonn se go bhfuil meanaicme na dtíortha coilinithe ceangailte le trachtail. "Saolaítear na páirtithe naisiunacha sna tírthe coilíníthe nuair a thagás elite eolasach ata ag brath ar thrachtail." Nach mar sin a bhi in Eirinn le Donal O Conaill, le Grattan, le Fianna Fáil fein ag deire thiar. Dar le Fanon deanann na hImpiriúlaigh dearmad ar an naimhdeas a bhi acu doibh roimh saolu an ghluaiseacht um di-choilíniu agus deanann siad margadh le cheile. Nach é sin a tharla in Eirinn leis an Treaty?

Ba chuma le daoine ar nos Uí Ghriofa cen sort saoil a bheadh ag na gnath-dhaoine. Chain Art O Griofa an Leathlorach as ucht an chath un athghabhail na talun a chur trasna ar bhothar athghabhail an naisiúin. Níor dhein seisean, no deí álera ina dhiaidh, aon iarracht oideachas a thabhairt dona daoine no cumhacht a thabhairt doibh. "Ní theann siad amach le bualadh leis an bpobal mor. Ní thugann siad a dtuiscint teoiriciúil do sheirbhís an phobail; ach togann siad bunús thart ar an bpobal a leanann sceideal a priori." Toisc nach dtuigeann an pobal an phoilitíocht leanann siad an phearsantacht. Agus nuair a dioltar amach ar an reabhloid ní thuigeann an pobal cen fath. Tugann+ ánon an fath: "Ta mian an phairtí naisiúnaigh um briseadh le coilín-íochas ceangailte le mian ata eagsuil ar fad: an mian um margadh cairdiúil a dheanamh leis."

Cen freagra ata ag Fanon fein don dream fealltach seo? Lucht na tuaithe. Ta feicthe againn conas mar deanann se neamhni den lucht oibre. Anois miníonn se bunús reabhloide na tuaithe. "Níl acu ach an t-aon teagasc amháin; gníomhu amhlaidh ionas go mbeidh beatha ag an naisiún. Níl aon chlar ann; níl aon oraideacha ann no runta, 'sníl aon claonadh polaitiúil. Ta an fhadhb soileir: caithfidh na Gaill imeacht: mar sin deanaimis coghluaiseacht ina gcoinne agus treisimis ar lamha tre cath armtha." Sin an fhealsúnacht a bhí ag gluaiseacht na saoirse insan tír seo; agus theip orainn ar ndoigh mar níor leanadh comhairle an Chonaolaigh: "mura dtugann tu faoi Poblacht Shóisialach na nOibrithe a chur ar bun is leamh agus is follasach do chuid iarrachtaí." Níos deanai amh miníonn Fanon go bhfuil se tabhachtach go mbeadh tuiscint polaitíochta ag an bpobal. Tagann se salach air fein arís. Mura bhfuil sin acu, deir se, ní thuigfidh siad nuair a dhiolfas an meanaicme amach orthu. Is trua nach raibh se fein ní ba shoileire faoi níos tuisce.

San triú caibidil pleitear ceist an dearcadh naisiúnach agus a laigeacht. Feiceann Fanon go raibh meanaicme na hAilgeire ag cuidiú leis an Impiriúl-achas, go raibh se frith-naisiúnach go firinneach. Nach bhfuil sin fíor faoi Éirinn an lae inniu ina bhfuil an meanaicme ag iarraidh bheith níos gallda na na Gaill fein. Ní bheidh an meanaicme seo abalta bheith ina fíor-bourgeoisie. "Ta se sean sar a raibh se of.....ní bheidh aon rud níos fearr le deanamh ag an meanaicme naisiúnach na bheith ina mbainisteoirí do comhluchtaí eachtrannacha, agus deanfaidh se meirdreachlann na hEorpa den tír." Oireann sin d'Éirinn. Mura bhfuil tuiscint polaitíochta ag an bpobal roimh se ní thiocfadh leis aon cheo a dheanamh faoi.

Mar chuid de dioladh amach an mheanaicme, measctar poilitíocht agus pearsantacht. Sin a tharla in Éirinn le de Valera. Bhí an ceannaire, an fuhrer, abalta baidh an phobail a choinneail ce go raibh se ag díol amach orthu. Miníonn Fanon mar seo e:- "An pobal ata ag breathnú ar an gceannaire seo le blianta agus a chuala ag caint e, a lean a throid leis an rialtas coilíníoch i gcineal briongloid, cuireann siad a muinín ann d'aon turas. Roimh neamhspleachas, seasann an ceannaire i gcoitinne le mian an phobail um neamhspleachas, saoirse phoilitiúil, agus dínit naisiúnta. Ach nuair ta neamhspleachas fogartha, in ionad bheith ag comhlíonadh riachtanaisí an phobail i dtaobh arain, talun, agus athghabhail na tíre do lamha naofa an phobail, leiríonn an ceannaire a aidhm fein: bheith ina uachtaran ginearalta ar an gcomhlucht sin de rachmasaigh ata sa mheanaicme naisiúnta." Mar de Valera, feachann an ceannaire isteach ina chroí fein agus chionn se toil an phobail. "Cíunaíonn an ceannaire an pobal" deir Fanon. Nach sin a dhein de Valera?

Leiríonn Fanon baol chult an cheannaire, agus 'speaineann se gur cuid de dioladh amach na tíre ag an meanaicme ata ann. Ní hé an pobal a rialaíonn an tír ach an ceannaire; ní riachtanaisí an phobail a spreagann polasai ach mian an cheannaire. Ta se do-sheachanta deir Fanon go n-iompoidh

an cineal stait seo ar ais ar nua-choiliniochas. Ta an ceart aige, mar ta se do-sheachanta mura bhfuil treoír na reabhloide i lámha an phobail mhoir (masses) o thus, murab e a bhfealsunacht a stiuras an cath. "Eilíonn an tír coilíníoch níos mó, bailíonn sí geillíuintí agus gealluntai, agus is lu íarracht a dheanann sí a greim ar an rialtas naisiunta a cheilt." Nach cur síos breá e seo ar an doigh ina bhfuil Fianna Fáil ag tabhairt na tíre seo ar ais isteach san Impireacht, a ceangal níos doichte le coras eacnamaíochta Shasana? Ach toisc go bhfuil iontaobh ag an bpobal as an gceannaire mar gheall ar an troid le haighidh saoirse ní thuigeann siad a fheall. Sea, diunaíonn an ceannaire an pobal. Níl ach an t-aon bhealach amháin ann lena leithéid seo a sheachaint: tuiscint phoilitiúil bheith ag an bpobal." "Guth an phobail mhoir is ceart a bheith sa phairtí."

Miníonn Fanon go maith sa chuid seo go gcaithfe oideachas poilitíochta a thabhairt don daoine, go gcaithfe gluaiseacht phobalta a dheanamh. "Ní coir dhuinn laoch a lorg ata ina short ceannaire. Is coir dhuinn an pobal a ardu; ní folair a n-aigneacha a fhorbairt, iad a líonadh le smaointe, iad a athru agus daoine daonacha a dheanamh díobh."

Ní leor, dar leis, oraid a dheanamh; is coir fíor-oideachas a thabhairt díobh go mbeidh siad in ann chuile rud a stiuru. "Is feidir chuile rud a mhíniú don phobal, ar an gcoinníol amháin go dteastaíonn uait go fírinneach go dtuigfeadh siad thu.....Oideachas poilitíochta a thabhairt don phobal mór ní chiallaíonn se, ní feidir go gciallfaidh se, oraid phoilitiúil a dheanamh. Seard a chiallaíonn se na iarraidh, gan stad gan geilleadh, a mhúineadh don phobal mór gur orthusan a mbraitheann chuile rud; gur orthusan an locht mura ndéantar dul chun cinn, agus ma déantar gur díobh an moladh, nach bhfuil aon fhear cluiteach ann a ghlacfaidh freagarthacht ar chuile rud air féin ach an pobal féin." Cuimhnimis air seo; mar se an botún is mó a ndéanadh i rith stair na hÉireann nar tuigeadh e. Is fíu an leabhar seo a léamh díreach ar mhaithe leis an bpointe seo a fhoghlaim i gceart.

Ní leor ar ndoigh go mbeidh tuiscint ag an bpobal; ní mór clar a ullmhú a bheas bunaithe ar an dtuiscint sin. Is leir dúinne o stair na hÉireann go gcaithfe a leithéid a bheith ann, mar muna bhfuil clar oibre ní feidir go mbeidh ach íarrachtaí croga gan aon seans go n-éireoidh leo; arist an difir idir na hÉireannaigh Aontaithe agus na Buachaillí Bana. Míníonn Fanon e:

"Mar feicthear dhuinne, tá ga go mbeidh clar ag rialtas ata dairíre ag iarraidh an pobal a shaoru go poilitiúil agus go soisialta. Ní mór clar eacnamaíochta a bheith ann; ní mór, leis, go mbeidh fealsunacht ann i dtaobh roinnt na maoin agus i dtaobh ceangailt soisialta. Go deimhin, ní mór go mbeidh tuairim faoi an gcine daonna agus a bhfuil i ndon do; se sin le ra, nach feidir aon fhormuil oraideach nó cuidiu leis an sean-re a chur in ionad an chlaíre."

In Éirinn mar is eol dúinn d'éirigh le de Valera na daoine a mhealladh le focla breatha; d'éirigh leis toisc nach raibh clar cruinn oibríthe amach ag lucht na Poblachta. Feiceann Fanon an baol ata ann don ghluaiseacht reabhloideach mura bhfuil clar cinnte aici; ach ce go leiríonn se an tuairim seo go cinnte sa chuid deiridh den leabhair níl se chomh soileir sa chuid tosaigh, mar shampla, cuirimis an sliocht ata luaite thuas i gcomparaid le sliocht eile: "níl ach an t-aon bhealsunacht amháin acu: gníomhu sa doigh go mbeidh beatha ag an naisiún. Níl aon clar ann; ní bhíonn oraideacha nó runta, nó claonadh poilitíochta. Tá an fhadhb soileir: caithfear na Gaill imeacht; deanaimis comhghluaiseacht ina gcoinne agus treisimis ar lámha tre cath armtha." Le bheith macanta dho tá Fanon ag iarraidh a cruthu

go bhfasann an tuisceant seo as an troid, ach ag breathnu siar ar stair na hEireann is leir go gcaithfe a leitheid a oibriú amach roimh re. Ni leor a ra: saoraimis Eirinn agus ansin beidh muintir na hEireann abalta a rogha coras a thoghadh. Ta an iris seo ina cruthu go bhfuil an ceacht sin foghlamtha ag gluaiseacht na Poblachta, ach is ceart cuimhniú air i gconat.

San cheathru chuid den leabhar ta cur síos ar cultúr naisiunta. Ar dtús miníonn se go scriosann an coilíníochas an cultúr dúchasach d'aon ghao leis na daoine a lagú. Magtar faoi na nosanna dúchasacha agus muintear cineál staire a dheanann neamhni den phobal agus a n-ait sa stair. I gcomhtheacs na hEireann is leir go bhfuil an ceart aige. Ta an Ghacilge mar ghnaththeanga cumarsaide na ndaoine imithe anois as an gcuid is mó den tír, maraon leis an gcultúr a spreag agus a chothaigh an teanga. Ma scrúdaitear an coras oideachais sa tír seo feicfear an neamhthabacht a deantar de chuile rud a bhaineas le fíorstair na tíre. An chead rud a tharlaíonn nuair ata tír a díchóilíniú, dar le Fanon, na go bhfaigheann an naisiún a mortas cine ar ais treana stair a fhail ar ais: "ba le rimead a fuarthas amach nach raibh aon rud naireach ina stair, ach in a ionad an dinit, an ghloir agus an naofacht."

Cén bhaint, amh, ata ag an gcultúr naisiunta leis an troid um saoirse naisiunta? Taimid ag caint in Eirinn faoi athghabhail na hEireann, se sin muintir na hEireann a chur ar ais in uachtar insan tír. Cuid den athghabhail sin, ar ndoigh, sea an cultúr dúchasach a chur ar ais in uachtar sa tír. Ni feidir e san a dheanamh faoin gcoras sóisialta ata i bhfeidhm faoi lathair, agus is ceart go mbeadh muid a' cur in iúl do lucht cultúir, lucht athbheochain na Gaeilge agus aon dream eile ata ag ple le cultúr, nach bhfuil aon fhas no forbairt i ndon don chultúr mura mbristear an coras seo. Ar leibheal eile is gleas e cultúr leis na daoine a neartú ionas go mbeidh ar a gcumas troid in aghaidh an Impiriúlachais, go dtuigfidh siad a neart.

"Is cultúr faoi leigear an cultúr naisiunta fe smacht an choilíníochais agus ta a dhithiú a lorg ar bhealach leanúnach. Eiríonn se ina chultúr, runda go luath. Ta an cineál cultúir runda seo le feiceail on doigh a ghníomhaíonn an t-udaras gabhala a thuigeann dílseacht do sean-nosanna mar dílseacht do anam an naisiúin agus mar diúltu do geilleadh." Leiríu maith e seo dar liom, mar in Eirinn is amhlaidh a dhein na Sasanaigh, agus is amhlaidh a ghníonn an t-Impiriúlachas inniu. Is cuid de athghabhail a ndinit dhaonna agus a mortas cine athghabhail a gcultúr naisiunta: agus is cuid thabachtach i seo d'athghabhail na hEireann.

Ceapann a lán daoine macanta go bhfuil sóisialachas idirnáisiunta agus athghabhail naisiunta i gcoimhlínt le cheile. Ni doigh liom go bhfuil sin ceart. Freagraíonn Fanon mar seo e:-

"Ma aithnítear an duine treana chuid gníomha, deirfaimid mar sin gurb e an ní is prainní don intellectual le deanamh na a naisiún a fhorbairt. Ma deantar an fhorbairt seo i gceart, se sin ma leiríonn se toil an phobail agus muintir na hAfraice fein, de riachtanas mar sin bíonn fail amach faoi fiuntaisi uiledhaonnacha agus a gcothu ag dul in éineacht le forbairt an naisiúin. Go deimhin in ait a bheith deighilte o naisiúin eile, mar sin, se saoirse naisiunta a threoraíonn an naisiún go nglacfaidh se a phairt ar staitse na staire. IF AG CROÍ AN TUISCINT NAISIUNTA A MHAIREANN AGUS A FHASANN TUISCINT IDIRNAISIUNTA. AGUS AG DEIRE THÍAR SE AN FAS DA-THAOBHACH SEO ATA MAR BHUN AR CHUILE CHULTUR."

Braitheann fealsunacht an tsoisialachais ar dhaoine; is rud daonna é. Ni dheanfadh an fhealsunacht sin dearmad ar phobal ar mhaithe le teibíocht eicint. Sin é a dheanann Impiriúlachas, agus se sin ceann dena fathanna nach feidir leis an gcoras Impiriúlach sasamh a thabhairt don chine daonna, agus ceann dena fathanna go bhfuil reabhloid shoisialach ag teastail in Éirinn. Tá fíor-idirnáisiúntacht bunaithe ar mheas ar náisiúntacht.

Leabhar tabhachtach is ea "Damnaithe an Domhain" mar sin, agus tá a lán le foghlaim ag an leightheoir Éireannach ma cuimhnítear i gconai gur reabhloid Éireannach atá le deanamh sa tír seo agus nach ionann i gconai cursai na hÉireann agus cursai na hAilgeire nó na hAfraice. Cur síos ar reabhloid na hAfraice atá ag Fanon, ach is cinnte go n-oireann a lán da chuid cainte don tír seo fiú mura bhfuil chuile rud amhlaidh.

Ní leabhar gan locht é, nó leabhar gur feidir glacadh leis ar fad gan iniúchadh gear. Tá samplaí tugtha agam den easpa cruinneasa atá i gcodanna airid den leabhar, agus den bhealach a thagann Fanon salach air fein go minic. Insan mheid seo tá an leabhar lag, go hairid insan tuairim sheaf-oideach atá ag Fanon faoi áit an lucht oibre sa chath náisiúnta: na glactar leis sin. Ar an dtaobh eile, amh, tá an leabhar laidir sa mheid a labhrann Fanon amach thar cheann phobal na hAfraice ag fogairt fuath ar an gcoras coilíníoch agus ag leagan síos bealaigh lena scriosadh. Tá ceachtanna tabhachtacha sa chuid deiridh den leabhar.

Fíú i dtaobh na gcodanna ina bhfuil Fanon contrailte is ceart iad a scrúdu, mar is mithuisint a ghlactar leis go minic, ionas go mbeidh muid i ndon iad a fhreagairt agus polasaithe cearta ciallmhara a dheanamh a oirfeas dar n-ionad stairiúil. Criochnoidh mé le sliocht eile as Fanon a choimrionn meoin an leabhair:

"Teanam, mar sin, a chairde; bheadh se chomh maith duinn ar n-aigneacha a dheanamh suas go n-athroimid ar modhanna oibre. Ní folair dhuinn fail reidh leis an dorchadas trom ina rabhamar ceilte, agus é a fhagail inar ndiaidh. Tá fainne geal an lae ar tí a thíocht cheana agus ní mór duinn bheith reidh do."

p.s. Tá an leabhar ar fail faoin teideal "Wretched of the Earth" atá foill-sithe ag Penguin Books ar 6/- nó 30p. Scriobhadh i dtosach baire i bhFraincis é faoin teideal "Les Damnés de la Terre." i 1961.

IMPERIALISM AND THE STRUGGLE FOR IRISH FREEDOM

Modern Imperialism is a world system. Capitalism has developed to the stage where it can no longer confine itself to the nation-state, because it has become monopolistic: if it is to expand further - and the dictates of capitalism call for continual expansion - it must transcend national barriers and become international. Lenin described imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. What he meant by this was that as early capitalism had grown out of the old feudal system, which had itself replaced the tribal system of common ownership, so capitalism itself had acquired new peculiarities, had developed its present day international nature. There was no further room for development within capitalism after the imperialist stage; human progress demanded socialism.

The capitalist knows no patriotism: the basis of capitalism is that the investor will invest wherever he will get the highest return. It is irrelevant under the system that the withdrawal of investment will cause social ills - unemployment, emigration, social frustration. Profits come before people's needs.

Early Imperialism could be said to have arisen about the time of Europe's great maritime expansion. The age of discovery, of Columbus and the New World, co-incided both with the Protestant Reformation and the real conquest of Ireland. Leaving aside the doctrinal points, the Reformation represented in political terms part of the struggle of the new capitalist merchants against the old feudal aristocrats. Henry 8th's policy of 'surrender and regrant', by which Irish chieftains were induced to handover the clan lands they did not own to Henry in return for receiving them back from him as personal possessions, represented the overthrowal of native Irish law and the imposition of a foreign law and an alien economic system that was the basis of that law.

This early Imperialism wanted colonies in which the imperialist countries could settle their surplus population (these surpluses were often the result of artificial clearances as in the Highlands of Scotland or Ireland of the famine days), and whose produce and wealth could be milked for the benefit of the 'mother' country. In this regard Ireland was England's first colony, as the native Irish social system which was both democratic and stable - was replaced by the colonial system - which was both undemocratic and inhuman: the Irish people were subjected to the needs of the British economy.

Imperialism has always had this characteristic: the domination of one country over another to the economic benefit of the dominant country and the impoverishment of the dominated. The development of capitalism to its imperialist stage proper (the modern stage) did not alter this; it merely increased the economic necessity of dominating and exploiting. The essential economic characteristic of imperialism today is the export of capital from the imperialist country to the colony or neo-colony. Under this system, for example, money from Britain or America is invested in Ireland, not with the intention of increasing the prosperity of the Irish people but to extract the maximum profit out of Ireland. We all know how £230,000,000 will leave Ireland from the mines in the 26 counties in the next ten years.

The mining scandal in fact is a very good illustration of how imperialism works. For generations the Irish people have been assured that there was no mineral wealth in Ireland, and since we did not control our own country we were in no position to make the necessary surveys, let alone harness the resources of the country for the good of the people. Under imperialism, a subservient Irish government can allow foreign mining companies to make these surveys and extract the wealth of Ireland not for the Irish people but for the shareholders of these foreign companies. It doesn't make a great deal of difference, of course, to the ordinary people whether it is foreign companies or native ones that exploit the wealth that should of right belong to all the people of Ireland, but the fact that it is foreign companies means that even less of this wealth is ploughed back into developing the Irish economy. In relation to the exploitation of Ireland, there is no appreciable difference between the 6 and the 26 counties: the 6 is a direct colony while the 26 is an indirect neo-colony.

We can thus see that the aim of imperialism is for the 'mother' country to gain and maintain control over the wealth of the colonised country. During the period of great imperialist expansion, the scramble for Africa at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the imperialist nations relied on direct annexation and domination, as the English ruling class had consistently done in relation to Ireland. It was soon realised, however, that the same domination could be achieved without the expense or the blatancy of direct colonialist aggression. Hence, there arose the policy of neo-colonisation: the granting of formal independence while maintaining very real economic control over the lives of the people of the former colony. As in so many other aspects of imperialism, Ireland was the first country in which this policy was tried and found successful; during the debate on the Treaty - which was the introduction of the neo-colonialist solution - Countess Markiewicz accurately warned that even if the British Army were withdrawn from the whole of Ireland Britain would still rule us through her hidden army of financiers and industrialists and landlords, through her whole apparatus of empire. She re-echoed the warnings of Connolly who had said that unless those who were fighting for Irish freedom set about the organisation of a socialist republic their efforts would be all in vain.

It has taken imperialism many years to discover that neo-colonialism is a more efficient and cheaper way of maintaining the security of its investments. It learned this lesson only under the challenge of national liberation struggles, such as the War of Independence waged by the I.R.A. against the Black and Tans. Neo-colonialism was a way of deflecting a national liberation struggle, and so long as that struggle is led by the political representatives of the middle class, of native capitalists, it always will be. From the imperialist point of view it is obviously necessary to make sure that if decolonisation takes place that it does so to the imperialist advantage. Wherever necessary it can always resort to the use of force as in the past. This is what is happening in the North of Ireland at the moment, where imperialism is using force to quieten and confuse the democratic forces while it integrates the economy of the whole of Ireland closer to that of Britain through the federal solution which is connected to the common market threat. This use of force in Ireland has its parallel in the U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic, the Cuban blockade and, above all, the Viet Nam war.

I stated at the beginning of this article that imperialism is now a world system: the same forces, inter-connected through the imperialist financial system, oppress all the subject people of the world. It is therefore necessary for any movement that has as its objective the achievement of genuine freedom and national unity for the Irish people to analyse and recognise the forces of imperialism against which it has to fight. From a point of view of an examination of imperialism and neo-colonialism, the common market represents an alliance between the governments and monopoly concerns of Western Europe so that they may be better able to withstand the competition and capital penetration of American big business, as well as maintaining their present position of dominance over the economies of the underdeveloped nations, amongst which Ireland must be included.

From the point of view of the working people of Ireland, the common market is the biggest single imperialist threat yet. The EEC will mean an acceleration of the depopulation of rural Ireland, a depopulation that could be avoided if the farming community was organised co-operatively. It will mean the steady worsening of the position of industrial workers, as more unemployed look for fewer jobs. It will eventually mean emigration for large numbers of workers and rural unemployed, who will compete in the Ruhr with the masses of Turkish and other migrant workers for the industrial jobs there. It may well mean race-riots in German and Belgian cities as the Paddy fights to gain a few inches on the ladder. It will certainly mean the destruction of the nation, an end to the possibility of ever building in Ireland a genuinely independent united socialist republic. The defeat of the EEC threat would open up new vistas of advance for the democratic forces of the Irish people, laying the basis for a challenge of the whole imperialist system. If, on the other hand, the imperialists are successful we will be faced with fighting a continual rearguard action that would probably collapse in some adventurist campaign doomed from its inception to defeat and frustration. There is a dreadful urgency about this EEC threat which many Republicans do not seem to be aware of, even. It must be defeated.

The existence of the common market, or of the British Empire, has not meant any great improvement in the living conditions of the people of the common market countries or of Britain. The steady inflow of migrant workers faces native workers with constant competition, and helps hold their wages down. Many socialists tend to be confused by this into thinking that the working class of the imperialist nation is doing well out of it all; that it forms some sort of labour aristocracy. This is not so. The working class of the imperialist countries is just as oppressed as the people of colonised countries, as any Irish worker in Britain could testify. The real problem is the ignorance of the workers of the imperialist countries about conditions in the colonised countries. One of the tasks that faces the Irish revolutionary movement is to explain to English workers what is happening here, and so obviate the possibility of a Coventry type chauvinistic backlash: every time an attempt is made in Coventry area to explain the Irish situation the local Tory papers carry scare banners referring to the bomb explosion in that city which occurred during the I.R.A. bombing campaign of the 30s/40s. There is another more immediate reason for our concern to educate the English working class as to what our struggle is about: if a revolutionary situation did develop in England the strength of the imperialist forces in Ireland would be correspondingly weaker.

The history of Ireland over the last 800 years is inextricably bound up with the relationship between the Irish people and the aggressive English ruling class; even as the EEC is the most important issue facing the Irish people at the moment. The conquest of Ireland occurred gradually. The Conquest really meant the replacement

of a native, democratic, system of social ownership with an alien, aristocratic system of feudal ownership. The struggle of the Irish people against this alien system was never a question of flags or colours, but was always concerned with recovering the lands and liberties which had been stolen from the Irish people. The existence of Irish nationality was never in doubt, for the people had a distinctive culture and language. It is only since the middle of the 19th century that the Irish language and culture have been in danger: nearly 700 years after the original Norman invasion of 1169.

The culture strength and cohesiveness of the Irish people can be seen from the ease with which the Normans were assimilated into the Irish nation, becoming Irish-speaking and practising Irish customs within a few generations. The real conquest stems from the defeat of Kinsale and the subsequent dispossessions of the people. This conquest had the classical hallmarks of imperialist subjugation of the early stage: land was stolen for the resettlement of the surplus population of the imperialist country, and the Irish economy was never allowed to develop in areas where it might have been a threat to that of England. The suppression of the Irish woollen industry and the starvations and evictions of the famine years are instances of the effect of imperialist domination over Ireland.

During the 19th century the emergent middle class decided that its future lay in collaboration with Britain and in becoming thoroughly anglicised. O'Connell was the champion of their sell-out - a sell-out which culminated in the forced starvations and clearances of the 1840s. This compromising and collaborationist middle class would have been powerless against the democratic aspirations of the people - who still remembered the social teachings of the United Irishmen and Robert Emmet - if it had not been for the support given it by British imperialism. To this extent Ireland was thoroughly dependent on the British Imperial government which could condemn millions to death by starvation or emigration without any thought for the welfare of the Irish people. Obviously for the mass of the people the connection with imperialism was a bad thing, but the lack of a well-organised and theoretically competent organisation left the people defenceless.

The rising of 1916 and the subsequent war of independence was the first effort at national freedom that really had success in its grasp. It failed for two main reasons. Firstly, the leadership of the national liberation struggle was in the hands of the middle class that was most likely - and turned out - to be compromising and collaborationist. By the 1930s deValera had evolved a sort of nationalism that was not anti-imperialist. The second reason is tied up with that. The failure of the Republicans to develop, or even assist, the social struggle (the strikes and land seizures) to any large extent provided it with no basis to answer the imperialists' orange card. The defection of the Treatyites to the Empire - largely not understood by Republicans of the time - and the failure to win the Protestant working class to an anti-imperialist position crucially weakened the national liberation forces and strengthened the hand of imperialism.

The problems of building a united anti-imperialist movement, uniting Catholic and Protestant, rural and urban workers, Gaeltacht and Galltacht are indeed formidable. They are so formidable that many would be socialists suggest that the issue of national liberation should be forgotten; that we should concentrate now on making a socialist revolution. I believe that these people do not understand what is entailed in the building of socialism. Socialism is not an instant solution to be made by mixing water and powder. It can only emerge from the will of a united people to achieve human liberation. While the people of Ireland are faced with outside interference

in their affairs it will be impossible to lay down the groundwork for a future socialist society. National liberation must be achieved first, so that the people will have the ability to progress democratically and ensure that the state acts according to the needs of the vast majority of the people: those who work.

The reason for this misconception as the necessity for national liberation which affects instantaneous socialists is due, I believe, to an incorrect assumption that national liberation is always led by the middle class. This need not necessarily be so, and is certainly not the case in Viet Nam. If the middle class did provide the ideological leadership they would probably compromise in the fashion of de Valera or Boland. It is essential if national liberation is to benefit the mass of Irish workers, farmers, fishermen and small businessmen that the workers provide the leadership and decide the policies of the revolutionary movement and especially of any alliance for national liberation. This is the Vietnamese position. It is not correct for that reason alone, but because it represents the only way of uniting the greatest numbers of people and class forces against imperialism and minimising the numbers of those who support imperialism.

It is clear, I hope, that imperialism has profoundly affected the lives of the Irish people, that the biggest threat to our existence as a nation comes from a continuance of the imperialist system. Therefore the prime task facing a revolutionary movement lies in combating imperialism, of building an alliance of all those who do not benefit from the imperialist set-up and especially who will suffer as a result of the proposed common market. A revolutionary movement cannot allow itself to be side-tracked into adventurist actions or militant phrase-mongering. Its job is simple at this stage: to unite the Irish people against imperialism to build an independent united democratic republic that will be anti-imperialist and lay the grounds for building a socialist society in a free Ireland, in which the Irish people will be able to achieve their centuries' old aim: the Reconquest of Ireland.

WHAT SHOULD N.I.C.R.A. DO?

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Any organisation which does not constantly clarify and develop its objectives in the light of a rapidly changing situation will very soon be relegated to the scrap heap. NICRA is no exception to this rule. There have been important changes in Northern Ireland particularly over the last few years and an awareness and understanding of them is essential if we are to successfully involve the hundreds of thousands of people necessary for victory in the struggle for equality of opportunity in jobs, housing and political organisation. Despite numerous set backs the last few years has seen definite gains made by those forces which are struggling for a broadening of democracy in Northern Ireland. On the political front one of the important factors contributing to this has been the end of the so-called Westminster convention which prevented any real discussion of Northern Ireland affairs at Westminster. This has considerably extended the options open to the Civil Rights Movement and has done a lot to expose what has been happening in Northern Ireland for the last 50 years. Our responses to all the negative features of the increased Westminster political and military involvement in Northern Ireland should be based on an awareness of this important gain.

Inside Northern Ireland the Unionist Party continues to show all the signs of disintegration. The accession of Faulkner to the leadership of the Unionist Party and the inclusion of prominent right-wingers in the same cabinet as prominent ex-members of the liberal wing of the Party such as Robin Baillie must be seen as a compromise at the top levels of Unionism to maintain unity in the face of the challenge of Dr. Paisley on the one hand and the Alliance Party on the other. Mr. Craig's silence since Mr. Faulkner became Prime Minister shows that he too soon expects to join the cabinet as forecast by Mr. West. Mr. Faulkner's problem is thus that he must stave off the breakup of this alliance while at the same time be answerable to Westminster, should he engage in any politically embarrassing escapades. The criterion which the Westminster Government will use to judge these activities will be the Callaghan/Clarke communique of 1969. The reform package promised then along with the gains won by the Civil Rights struggle before then is thus the basis of Westminster/Stormont relations on reform and is our starting point in assessing what has been won to date.

One man one vote which was the central mobilising demand of the early Civil Rights Movement has been won. Universal suffrage at 18 and an end to the property vote has represented a considerable stride forward. The appointment of an independent commission to draw up local government boundaries represents still further progress. For the first time since the '20's the question of Proportional Representation elections has become a serious possibility both at local and Stormont level. Redress for grievances against either a Government department or a local authority has also become possible through the establishment of the Parliamentary Commissioners and Commissioners for Complaints office.

The battle against discrimination in jobs and housing has led to the fact that all local authorities have had to make a declaration that they operate fair and impartial employment policies and also a points system in the allocation of houses. The setting up of the Central Housing Authority and the recommendations of the MacRory report revealed that the existent local government structures as well as being discriminatory were also totally inefficient. The supply of houses which was always a central issue to the Civil Rights question has been slightly stepped up and the government have declared a housing emergency.

The RUC have been disarmed and the B.Specials have been disbanded and the entire police structure has come under a degree of democratic control with the appointment of the Police Authority, another gain in this respect of course has been the wearing of identification numbers on police uniforms. Sectarianism has been pinpointed as one of the main evils in Northern Ireland with the establishment of the Ministry of Community Relations and the Community Relations Commission, and a gain in this respect has been the introduction of the Prevention of Incitement to Hatred Act. Finally, the rule of one of the most corrupt councils in the world ended with the abolition of Derry Borough and Urban District Councils. After a bitter struggle the people of Derry are beginning to see the effects of the increased investment in the Area at least in terms of an increase in the number of houses being built.

The balance sheet of gains is extremely significant and reveals the massive impact which the Civil Rights Movement has made on the political scene. A failure to recognise the gains which have been won will only lead to the sterile politics of the Armageddon, which is the politics of those who do not recognise and accept the power of peaceful mass action.

Because the gains of the Civil Rights Movement were made through the involvement of thousands of people in peaceful mass action in the face of stubborn resistance from elements of the ruling clique at Stormont and successive Westminster governments which were not and are still not committed to granting full democracy to Northern Ireland. Westminster wants to end the political embarrassment which the pre-reform set-up was causing them. Mr. Faulkner is too clever to allow a head-on collision between his government and Westminster. But the anti-reform pressures on him and his predecessors forced a whittling down of agreed reform package drawn up between Westminster and Stormont. This is what people mean when they talk of the Unionists failure to give a commitment to the "spirit" of the Reform programme.

Thus the gains which were won in the field of voting rights have been taken away from everybody by the postponement of elections to at least 1972. Meanwhile corrupt and exposed Councils continue in existence in Fermanagh and County Tyrone. The scope of anti-discrimination legislation has still not been extended to cover private employment. The Prevention of Incitement to Hatred legislation has been made into a complete farce by the failure of the Attorney General to initiate proceedings in a number of obvious cases where the law has been broken. The Ministry of Community Relations and the Community Relations Commission have not been given the necessary teeth to deal with sectarianism in the community and has been relegated to the position of just another pressure group providing additional marchers for May Day parades and speakers for women luncheon functions. Local government reform as outlined by MacRory and the establishment of the Central Housing Executive is a classic example of where the "spirit" of the Reform programme has been ignored.

MacRory specified a number of serious flaws in the existant system of local government, points which were all valid but the report ignored the central argument which had led to such a fundamental questioning of local government structures in the first place namely the fact that so many of the local authorities had been guilty of gross maladministration. Thus the MacRory arguments did not centre around the question of popular involvement in the running of local affairs, which had been effectively denied by the old system but rather on making local government more efficient similarly with the question of commissions. The line of reasoning set up a false antithesis between decentralised local government and efficiency. Thus it was quite acceptable for government to exclude representa-

Thus it was quite acceptable for the Government to exclude representatives of popular mass organisations such as Tenants and Residents Associations from the Central Housing Executive because such representation was not necessary for efficiency. A further example of the failure of Stormont to incorporate the spirit of Reform into their legislative programme is to be found in the Police Authority which the police seem to ignore.

But the most obvious characteristic of the present Northern Ireland power structure has been the sheer physical repression, which has always been necessary for the continued existence of the Unionist Party but which has become more necessary with the obvious disintegration of that party. It must be emphasised that such repression is not essential to the programme of a political party which favours the UK link as is evidenced in the stand of political parties such as the Alliance Party, the NILP, the Liberal Party and others which favour the UK link and yet oppose repression. The most obvious elements in the system of repression is undemocratic legislation such as the Special Powers Act, the Public Order Act and other kindred legislation. On top of that the close connection between the Northern Ireland judicial system and the Unionist Party has produced a judicial system flawed with social, religious and political bias. Furthermore the ease with which the military have been able to place themselves inside and use this repressive system reveals them as a further agent of repression.

These remarks do not point to a programme but they are meant to be a guide to such a programme. In the past it has been lack of analysis which has contributed more to confusion and demoralisation than inactivity. The "spirit" of existing and proposed reforms must be made more democratic and less towards rationalising a discredited political system. Thus we must take stands on faults in existing reform measures to ensure that they are developed in the interests of democracy. We must also ensure that repressive laws and institutions are repealed and reformed.

The campaign to ensure this must be non-violent, because non-violence is the proper basis for a mass organisation such as ours. Resistance to State oppression can only successfully involve the mass of people through non-military, through militant action. The real case for non-violence is the use that direct violence has and can be put to by the Unionist Party.

The Civil Rights Movement is non-sectarian. There is a good deal of nonsense talked about non-sectarianism, including the view that only if you can select an issue that means nothing to Catholics or Protestants alike, can you be said to be truly above sectarianism. Sectarianism means either consciously using existing religious divisions to further a political or other purpose, or deliberately pursuing the interests of one religious group, Catholic or Protestant, to advantage unjustly over another. Civil Rights issues and the Civil Rights Movement has not been sectarian, though some individuals have shown a degree of bitterness towards Protestants as such, which to put it at its most charitable displays a failure to comprehend what Civil Rights are about. The Civil Rights Movement must also be non-sectarian politically. The present situation does not allow for 'holier than thou' politics. The only way by which we can know our enemies is if they act against us. Our objective should be to mobilise as many people and organisations as possible in the fight for equality of opportunity in jobs housing and political organisation, and on nothing else. Our enemies are those who would hinder that struggle and nobody else.

Am 2014

There remains the need for a programme of action for the year.

- 1) To secure the out-standing reforms and demands of the Civil Rights and Democratic Movement.
- 2) To demand the immediate end of all repressive legislation
- 3) To secure the immediate demilitarisation of life in Northern Ireland and the withdrawal of troops to barracks.
- 4) To resist any attempt to backtrack on reform.

END.

NOTE:

The views contained in this bulletin are not necessarily those of the Republican Movement. They are to form the basis of discussions within the movement, on important issues.

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