

TO ALL MEMBERS.

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Ireland CC Working Resolution NOVEMBER 1979

A. ONE NATION DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS AND TWO COMMUNITIES

The Irish people are one nation. As a result of colonialism and imperialism, the Irish nation is territorially divided into two parts, that in the Irish Republic and that in northern Ireland, which is a colony of British imperialism. That part in northern Ireland consists of two communities, the Protestants and Catholics. This contradiction originated in the contradiction between the colonial settler population and the native population, which in time became fundamentally non-antagonistic. However, political, social and economic discrimination and historical ideologies have been promoted by British imperialism to create antagonism between the two communities in order to continue its oppression of the Irish nation as much as possible. It is essential that the anti-imperialist movement has deep roots in the masses of both communities in northern Ireland.

B. STAGES AND TARGETS OF THE REVOLUTION

Northern Ireland is a colony directly oppressed by British imperialism; southern Ireland is indirectly oppressed by British imperialism through its comprador bourgeois agents. In both parts of Ireland the role of U.S. and West German imperialism has become more significant in the last ten years. Soviet social-imperialism threatens to subvert the Irish national democratic revolution particularly through its principal agent, Official Sinn Fein.

The strategic stage of revolution throughout Ireland is the national democratic revolution against British and other imperialisms. Its completion will be the establishment of an independent peoples democratic dictatorship under the leadership of the working class. The re-unification of Ireland and the separation of church and state are tasks of the national democratic revolution.

The national democratic revolution in Ireland consists of separate substages in northern and southern Ireland. It is a rightist deviation not to see these as subordinate to the stage of national democratic revolution as a whole. It is a leftist deviation to leap over the particular characteristics of the substages in the two parts of Ireland.

The substage of the revolution in northern Ireland is a national democratic one for independence from British imperialism. The target of the revolutionary struggle is British imperialism, its direct agents, and those comprador monopoly capitalist elements in league with it.

The substage of the revolution in southern Ireland is also national democratic, for complete independence from British and other imperialisms. The target of the revolutionary struggle is British imperialism and those comprador monopoly capitalist elements in league with it.

It is essential that the working class strives to win leadership of the national democratic revolution, allying itself with the small farmers, and that it both unites with the national bourgeoisie and also struggles firmly against its vacillation.

The Manifesto should be amended to clarify the use of the terms "stage" and "target" in conformity with these points.

C. TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM

Because of the relatively advanced development of the relations of production in Ireland, the revolutionary forces must prepare to move rapidly from the stage of national democratic revolution to the stage of socialist revolution. The comprador bourgeoisie form the largest and most decisive section of Irish capital, and their inclusion in the target of the national democratic revolution facilitates the rapid transition to the stage of socialist revolution.

D. DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

The development of the national democratic revolutionary movement in both parts of Ireland depends greatly on whether the proletariat can win significant influence in it.

If the struggle for independence of northern Ireland from Britain is conducted under bourgeois leadership it will result in the formal independence of northern Ireland within the EEC. Although this would be a progressive step in weakening the overall oppression of the Irish nation by imperialism, British imperialism would still oppress the Irish nation to a substantial degree, and other western European imperialisms would increase their relative oppression and exploitation.

Such a development might lead to a degree of Irish reunification, perhaps in a federal arrangement. This reunification would be under continuing imperialist exploitation and under a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, but provided it took place in such a manner as to increase the overall unity of the Irish nation and promote the conditions for winning complete national liberation, this reunification would be progressive. The revolutionary line would be to support such a development while particularly exposing the imperialist motives of British imperialism concerning the plan. The revolutionary line would not tail behind the bourgeoisie; it would expose the fact that such bourgeois reforms cannot lead to full national independence and that working class leadership is necessary to carry the national democratic revolutionary movement through to the end.

There is a particular danger of British imperialism setting up or making use of a neo-colonial fascist Orange state which is formally independent but under the control of British imperialism. While continuing the fight for the separation of northern Ireland from the British state and for the strategic goal of independence, and while taking advantage of the development of contradictions between a section of the Protestant community and British imperialism, the revolutionary forces must vigorously attack this solution as a complete travesty of national independence and as severely anti-democratic.

In the two parts of Ireland the revolutionary Communist line must be to strive to win the masses to carry through the struggle for complete national independence, integrating this with the different concrete conditions and the uneven development of the struggle in the two parts of Ireland. It is important to do propaganda and agitation on the complementary nature of the struggle in both parts of Ireland, and encourage mutual support to strengthen the unity of the Irish nation in the course of the common struggle against British and other imperialisms. If people's democratic rule is established in either part of Ireland, unity must take place on the basis of people's democratic revolution in the other part.

E. THE RE-UNIFICATION OF IRELAND

The re-unification of Ireland is an essential aspect of completing the national democratic revolution. In this the revolutionary line is to pay particular attention to strictly differentiating contradictions with the enemy and contradictions among the people. Revolutionary Communists must struggle hard against all manoeuvres by British imperialism and its agents to continue the division of the Irish nation. At the same time they will strive to promote the principle that contradictions among the people are resolved through patient persuasion and discussion in the course of strengthening unity against the main enemy. Resolving these contradictions among the people will take a number of years, and will be complicated by the manoeuvres of British and other imperialisms, and therefore the particular steps and the precise form that re-unification will take cannot be predicted with certainty at present.

The long term aim of Irish unity must be made clear on our propaganda. But to raise Irish unity as an agitational demand of the national democratic revolution in the present phase in fact harms the mobilisation of all possible forces against British imperialism by impeding the unity of the two communities in northern Ireland against the common enemy. As a strategic aim Irish unity is an essential product of the struggle against British imperialism, but as an immediate tactical demand it is sectarian and counter-productive. As our aim is to overthrow British imperialism it should therefore be opposed as an agitational demand.

F. PARTY BUILDING

It is essential to unite all who can be united against the common enemy under a strong democratic-centralist party. This almost always requires a single party for a single state, even in multi-national states. Close unity of the struggle in north northern Ireland and the struggle in Britain is extremely important both for the national democratic revolution in Ireland and for the socialist revolution in Britain.

However the need for overall centralised leadership of the Irish national democratic revolution is also a very important concrete application of the Marxist-Leninist principle of the vanguard revolutionary Party giving united leadership to the struggle of the masses. Because of our own immature development and because of the complications caused by British imperialist interference and sabotage in Irish national affairs, and caused by the uncertain direction of developments within the EEC, it is not yet possible to know the correct answer to this contradiction. Therefore our policy will be to deepen our understanding of the objective laws of governing the Irish national democratic revolution in the course of supporting the struggle against British imperialism, and to strengthen unity by mutual assistance and exchange of views with developing Marxist-Leninist forces in both parts of Ireland.

G. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MOVEMENT IN IRELAND AND THE MOVEMENT IN BRITAIN.

The development of the Irish national democratic revolution is a decisive factor for the success of the socialist revolution in Britain. Imperialist oppression and exploitation of Ireland and the Third World remains the principal political & economic basis for the domination of social democracy and social chauvinism over the working class movement in Britain. British imperialism would now clearly like to extricate itself from the unwinnable war in the six counties and end direct occupation, but meanwhile it is exploiting the situation to gain invaluable experience in combatting urban guerilla warfare, and to intensify its dictatorship and increase repression at home. The interests of the working class movement and the socialist revolution demand above all, the defeat of British imperialism and the ending of the system which perpetuates the ideological-political domination of opportunism.

A solidarity movement in Britain is important for carrying forward the national democratic revolution in Ireland, particularly in northern Ireland. It is also part of the struggle for socialist revolution against the British monopoly bourgeoisie. Ideologically it is important in educating the British working class in the strategic alliance with all nations and peoples oppressed by British imperialism. The solidarity movement must oppose British imperialist oppression and exploitation of the Irish nation of both a colonial and a neo-colonial type. The immediate aims of this movement are to get British Troops out of Ireland and for the separation of northern Ireland from the British state.

The proletariat should oppose any national movements which strengthen or preserve imperialism. The RCLB will therefore oppose any tendency to make the Irish national movement subordinate to any imperialism. We will expose any reactionary actions which hold back the anti-imperialist struggle. We will refute any claims made by bourgeois nationalist organizations to be proletarian revolutionaries.

H. SELF-CRITICISM

The section in the Manifesto on Ireland was drawn up too speedily prior to the founding Congress and contains errors of one-sidedness. Although some of these are serious, it should be pointed out that they would have been re-examined and corrected earlier but for the splittism and disruption of the anti-league faction.

The section of the Manifesto on Ireland made a social chauvinist error in not grasping the primary fact of the overall strategic unity of the national democratic revolution in Ireland, and speaking only of the common struggle in both parts of Ireland for independence against imperialism, especially British imperialism. This failed to place tactics firmly in the context of strategy and was therefore a form of rightism. This was a serious weakness in view of the importance of the vanguard of the proletariat in the metropolitan country guarding strictly against any tendency not to give full support to the nations and peoples oppressed by its own imperialist ruling class. However the more widespread and dangerous error on the left in Britain and Ireland on the Irish revolution is the leftist error of not paying sufficient attention to the particular characteristics of the different substages in northern Ireland and southern Ireland. The Manifesto was right to draw a line of demarcation with this, and this struggle must continue in order to aid the Irish national democratic revolution as effectively as possible.

On Party-building the Manifesto correctly spoke of the importance of building a single Party for a single state, but was dogmatic in stressing this principle with

out also adequately paying attention to the importance of a single Party to lead the Irish national democratic revolution as a single strategic whole. In view of the complexity of the situation and the relative immaturity of the Marxist-Leninist movement, it was an error of idealism to assert the existence of a definite answer to this question without gathering much more experience as the mass struggle unfolds.

CC. November 1979.

Explanatory introduction to members.

This resolution is to a large degree a major product of a long and principled struggle for unity between the RCL and the CWM, in which one-sidedness has been substantially corrected on both sides. The NC of the CWM also passed a resolution on this question in November which has important similarities.

This CC resolution develops our understanding and support for the Irish struggle by overcoming one sidedness in our previous position, which manifested itself in a social chauvinist error and a dogmatist error, as explained in the final section of self-criticism. It may be useful to look at this section first by way of orientation before studying the resolution as a whole.

This CC resolution will be used to guide our practice, although it will not be published itself. It is being circulated for study of this important question and for further strengthening through discussion.