
Communist Federation of Britain (ML)

Letter from Ireland

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WE ARE PLEASED TO PRINT BELOW A LETTER RECEIVED FROM A COMRADE IN IRELAND. COMRADE MCDERMOT IS A MEMBER OF THE BELFAST COMMUNIST WORKERS GROUP (MARXIST LENINIST) WHICH IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN (MARXIST LENINIST) AND THEREFORE VIEWS EXPRESSED ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE C.F.B. (ML). WE FEEL HOWEVER IT IS USEFUL TO HAVE FIRST HAND IMPRESSIONS FROM COMRADES DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE STRUGGLE IN IRELAND AND THAT THESE IMPRESSIONS WILL BE OF INTEREST TO BRITISH WORKERS.

LETTER FROM IRELAND

Dear Comrades,

The situation in the six counties in the North of Ireland is at a crucial stage. Whilst the six counties are an integral part of the British economy the working class is divided into two communities which are kept apart by history, politics and culture. With the working class divided there is a tendency to view the matter on the basis of two communities. This is an over simplification of the issue.

It should be remembered that despite these differences between the sections of the working class there has been a great deal of intercourse between both communities at many levels throughout history and in contemporary times. It is at times of political crisis that these differences are brought to the fore and are highlighted and used by the ruling class to fan hatred and bigotry. During periods of apparent peace there have been;

practically no efforts by 'working class' politicians to attempt to overcome on a class basis the sectarian divisions in the six counties.

PRESENT DIVISIONS

The present divisions of the two communities came to the fore as a result of the changing political and economic developments in the 26 counties in the South towards the U.K. and the acceptance by British monopoly capitalists for a need for a change in the political set up in the six counties. This was accompanied by agitation carried out by Catholic bourgeois politicians for their 'place in the sun'. These politicians were supported by working class Catholics and many 'left' organisations in Ireland and Britain. The revisionist Communist Party of Northern Ireland (CPNI) played a significant role in this and were involved in the leadership of the NICRA (Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association) from the beginning. It was due to pressures from leading members of the CPNI in the NICRA that 'working class O'Neillite unionists' were witch-hunted out of the NICRA in its early days thus breaking down unity on a class basis and developing sectarianism.

