

international

After the Elections

Connolly on the Partition of Ireland

Tactics in Europe

**The challenge
of the Fourth International**



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A NEW FORMAT

This is the first issue of *International* on a new bi-monthly schedule and with a new format.

The magazine was launched in May 1968; it undertook to carry on the type of agitational and co-ordinating work which its predecessor *The Week* had done, but to devote more space to longer and deeper analysis. This inevitably meant that although the magazine carried a certain amount of good analytical material in addition to a number of pointed agitational articles, it was not able, with its limited size, to carry very lengthy theoretical articles or, on a monthly schedule, to initiate and carry through campaigns satisfactorily.

The fact that we conceived and launched the magazine just prior to May/June 1968 and the French upheaval is significant: these struggles pitched Western Europe into a new era of revolutionary struggles. Since that time we have had some extremely rich experiences of struggle in Britain. To mention only a few: the mass Vietnam demonstrations, the mobilisation against *In Place of Strife*, the struggles in the universities, the repercussions of the struggles in Ireland, and finally the fall of the Labour Government. The political challenges which the revolutionary left has faced in this two-year period have been more vital, more varied, and more compressed than at any time since the Second World War.

And yet when we look back, what has been the outcome? The de-escalation of the solidarity movement while the United States has admitted that it is involved in Laos and has spread the war to Cambodia, the compromise between the TUC and the Labour Government, the fragmentation of the student movement, and the lack of solidarity while the slow-burning crisis in Ireland continues. Above all the failure of the revolutionary Left to build any effective organisation and in its place the increasing fragmentation of the movement.

These shortcomings are the result of failure to intervene effectively, to show clearly the relevance of revolutionary Marxist ideas and leadership to the thousands who were engaged in these mobilisations. They are at root *political* failures. They are the result of the backwardness of British revolutionaries, their confusion when faced with new and complex problems, and their inability to formulate a correct strategy. But their most striking aspect is the fact that none of them are original failures—they merely repeat old errors which have been made in the

past, and which have been polemicalised against by the great Marxist revolutionaries, Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg.

These last two years have shown with burning clarity the need for a revolutionary vanguard Party, a living force, leading, centralising, clarifying the struggles of workers, students and immigrants and directing them towards the overthrow of British capitalism. Such a leadership can only resolve these problems if it has a deep understanding of Marxist theory, and is striving to apply Marxism creatively to all the problems facing the world revolutionary movement, as well as to specifically British problems. This task is an immediate one; it cannot be postponed to a period when the revolutionary movement is larger and more cohesive. In fact, without prior theoretical clarity, the sharpening of the struggle in Britain will only further fragment the movement. We need now a period of polemics, of rigorous struggle to clarify theoretical concepts so that in future we can establish an authoritative strategy which can be a basis for unity and for fruitful action.

In this context we have decided to shift the emphasis of the magazine to the task of theoretical analysis, to provide the space needed for fairly lengthy articles of some depth, and to go over to a schedule which permits long-term planning and commissioning of such material. In addition we will of course publish editorials analysing more immediate events and problems, and we shall publish the important documents and statements of the Fourth International and its British section, the International Marxist Group. We will also be extending our book review section.

The new format contains approximately double the amount of words contained in a normal issue of the old *International*, and allows us to fix the price economically at 3/-, double the old price, so subscribers will get full value for their money. We hope that our readers will approve of these changes and will find the magazine a stimulating and relevant one. Articles and letters either commenting on articles or initiating new discussions will be welcome.

After the Elections

In the sense that a further period of social democrat Government carrying out anti-trade union legislation would have created more favourable conditions for the destruction of the grip of Labour on the organised working class. Their defeat in the British General Election was a set-back for the Left. Already in the last year of Labour rule there were two one-day strikes by hundreds of thousands of workers against the Government. Wilson retreated in face of this resistance but would have been forced to attack the unions again because of British imperialism's economic position.

The election result came as a surprise to most political observers who, in light of numerous public opinion polls and the municipal election results in April and May, had expected Labour to win. Indeed, among sectors of the serious bourgeois press, alarm had been expressed about the dire consequences of a third victory for Labour because this would have put big strains on the traditional two-party structure. *The Economist* in the week previous to the election had called for all-out effort by the Conservatives to prevent a Labour land-slide. These astute bourgeois thinkers realised that a defeat for the Tories (especially a massive one) would have created a grave crisis in the Tory Party and have facilitated the appearance of tendencies to the left of the Labour Party.

The Wilson leadership concentrated all its efforts on proving that it alone had been able to solve British imperialism's economic problems; citing the spectacular improvement of the Balance of Payment's position in the year ending April 1970. However, the news in the very week of the election showed how hollow this claim was: firstly, the May trade figures revealed the largest gap for any month since April 1969; then it was disclosed that the price of British exports had increased in the first three months of 1970 to the extent that at least half the advantage gained by devaluation had been lost; next news came through that there had been a dramatic decline in Britain's invisible earnings in the same three months; and finally the figures of unemployment revealed the highest April unemployment for 30 years. The capitalist press made great play of these facts, and sections of the working class, remembering the sacrifices Labour had inflicted upon them in the past when there had been a Balance of Payments crisis, said, "We have had enough." Thus Wilson's strategy boomeranged.

But this was only a small contributing factor. Whilst big sections of the organised working class remained extremely loyal to Labour, many

hundreds of thousands abstained. Direct comparisons with the 1966 General Election are difficult because of the lowering of the voting age, but one fact is extremely important: the total percentage poll was the lowest in any election since before the war. It seems likely that two distinct strata of workers abstained: large sectors of youth and unorganised workers who normally only vote when there is some feeling and elan in the labour movement.

The massive abstentions are a reflection of the feeling widespread in the working class that there is no real difference between a Labour and Tory Government. Indeed, how could people think otherwise when a Labour Government had taken the initiative in attacking the trade unions, introduced a wage freeze, and cut Government expenditure on social services; advanced and organised workers knew that the Wilson Government had done all in its power to facilitate the growth of monopolies, with consequent massive redundancies. On the other hand, there is considerable evidence to show that large sections of Irish and immigrant workers voted massively for Labour. This is explained by Wilson's demagogic attacks on Powellism and Paisleyism. But whilst the immigrant workers and liberal middle-class elements voted Labour in fear of Tory policies and the Tory Party's Powellite wing, everyone knows that it was Wilson who brought in the most racist legislation ever passed in Britain.

The Liberal Party received a blow to its pretensions of forming a third force in British politics; losing seven of its 13 seats. The election was even more disastrous for the Communist Party. Contesting 58 seats, its votes were in nearly every case less than half, or even a third, of its 1966 figures. For a party so committed to the Parliamentary road to socialism, this is demoralising in the extreme. It has no foreseeable prospect whatsoever of even winning a single seat, let alone the number necessary to appear as a serious political force in Parliament. The C.P. concentrated on warning workers against the danger of a Tory victory and had an identical political line with that of the Labour left. Thus they got the worst of both worlds—those not yet ready to vote for a "communist" party naturally voted Labour, because of its greater prospects; whilst more advanced workers who were influenced by the C.P.'s arguments about the danger of a Tory return thought a vote for Labour would be the most effective way of fighting the Conservatives. This result is bound to deepen the crisis in the C.P. and will give a boost to the pro-Moscow wing which had argued that the Party was devoting too much attention to election work as opposed to industrial activity. A very important indication of this crisis in the C.P. is the resignation of one of its leading trade union figures: Dave Bowman of the NUR. He left, according to a statement by the leadership of the Party, because of differences over the composition of the Political Committee. Whatever might be the truth of that, he has applied to join the Labour Party—thus King Street reaps the harvest of its right-wing policies. However, the

leadership shows no sign of drawing any intelligent conclusions: at the first E.C. after the election, Gollan concluded that the Party's election work had failed because its day-to-day work was not geared to electioneering.

Northern Ireland's election results indicated a growing polarisation and the break-up of the Unionist Party. Bernadette Devlin was returned to Parliament in a poll which was by far the highest anywhere; Paisley's victory, the Republican Labour Party's seat and the winning of a seat by the new moderate bourgeois party, the Unity Movement, were other blows to the Unionists.

Scotland had a much smaller swing to the Tories. Surprisingly enough this was also the general pattern in areas of high unemployment and economic under-development; no doubt reflecting a traditional hatred of Toryism.

Contradictory evidence exists on the impact of Powellism and right-wing radicalism on the election. In constituencies side by side entirely different swings were observed. Labour retained Smethwick but on the other hand Jennie Lee lost her constituency, Cannock, in the biggest swing of the whole election. Again: Rugby (also in the heartland of the Midland Powellite area) actually witnessed a swing to Labour in contradiction to the rest of the country. One thing is clear: it would be simplistic to talk of a move towards Powellism by big sections of the working class. There is some evidence that where Labour candidates made concessions to racialism they lost votes (e.g. Renee Short) and where they gave the appearance of being vigorous opponents of racialism they had smaller than national swings against them (e.g. Andrew Faulds, Smethwick; and Sid Bidwell, Southall).

The election was, of course, a very big personal success for Heath, and this fact, plus the Conservative's small majority, will assist him to control the dissident, right-wing, anti-Common Market, members of his Party. On the other side of the House, the fact that the Conservatives have a small majority will be used to try to stop any revolt in Labour's ranks because of the prospect of overturning it fairly easily.

Heath's Cabinet indicates that he is trying to project a "liberal" image and that he does not want to provoke a fight with the unions immediately. However, he is not master of his fate and the economic problems of British imperialism will impel him to settle accounts with the militant sections of the working class. There is every sign that as Heath attacks the working class, the Labour Party and the trade union leadership ("left" and right) will do all in their power to dampen struggle, whilst making loud noises. In his first speech after conceding defeat, Wilson said that Labour in opposition would not behave irresponsibly in relation to the economy and sterling; whilst Jack Jones, leader of the "left" T&GWU, made a speech three days after the election which, whilst talking tough, made it clear that he was anxious to have an understanding with the new Government (so much so that the

Sunday Telegraph expressed surprise at his moderation).

It is clear that the emergence of a radical right around Powell is a new and dangerous feature of British politics. It will be used to push the whole British political scene to the right. Any left revolt in the Labour Party will be threatened with the dangers of Powellism by Wilson, who will also seek to justify making common ground with the so-called "liberals" in the Tory Party. It is therefore important for British Marxists to have a proper appreciation of Powellism and how to fight it. The hysteria exhibited by some left groups is a barrier to such clear thinking and analysis. In particular the importance of self-defence units amongst immigrant workers must be stressed and supported.

It is difficult to work out what effect the election result will have upon the internal life of the Labour Party. There is no indication that the defeat will give rise immediately to the emergence of left currents: on the contrary Wilson was re-elected leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party unopposed, and *Tribune's* "inquest" on the election was largely taken up by the editor arguing that the election could have been won had it been held in October. The long-term prospects of a left arising in the Labour Party will depend, in the main, upon the strength of the mass movement aside.

On the trade union front revolutionaries should seek to revitalise the trade union defence committees. Broad committees bringing in all tendencies and sections of the trade union movement on an offensive transitional programme on a vital need to prepare for the inevitable attacks by the Tories. These committees must be clear about the likely role of the trade union bureaucrats and all attempts by the C.P. and others to build them exclusively around the trade union "lefts" like Jones and Scanlon must be fought.

Probably the most dynamic sector in British politics will be the Irish question. Labour succeeded in temporarily quietening the struggle of the Catholic oppressed minority in Northern Ireland. Because of the traditional hatred of the Tories in Ireland (the very word Tory in Irish means "a robber"), and Tory links with the Unionist Party, this struggle is likely to break out anew, but on a higher level. It will be combined with a much less stable set-up in the south because of the exposure of the Fianna Fail Government as British stooges, over the gun-running affair. The Tories will respond with fierce repression, as they have always done in Ireland. A very important job for socialists in Britain will be the organising of a mass solidarity movement with the Irish in face of this repression.

To sum up: the Tory victory made no decisive change in British politics; it is to be regretted because it makes marginally harder the job of destroying the grip of the Labour leaders over the working class. However, all the essential tasks remain the same; the building of a revolutionary vanguard with the immediate aim of leading the fight against

anti-trade union legislation, against racialism and Powellism, for solidarity with the Irish struggle etc., is the major task facing revolutionaries in Britain.

On our tactics in Europe

1. At the beginning of the fifties, the European sections of the Fourth International adopted in general the entryist orientation to accomplish their central strategic task—building mass revolutionary parties that can win away important sectors of the proletariat from the influence of the traditional reformist and Stalinist leaderships and lead the workers towards the overthrow of capitalism and the seizure of state power. The Trotskyist movement at the time was very weak numerically and unable to exert great influence on the development of the class struggle. In view of this fact, the entryist orientation flowed from the following considerations:

(a) Throughout the entire postwar revolutionary upsurge of 1944-48, the traditional bureaucracies maintained their control over the mass movements. These bureaucracies entered the new postwar period of European history—which opened with the end of reconstruction and with the upsurge of the colonial revolution—without having lost their dominant influence over the working class.

(b) Under these conditions, the most probable projection was that any new radicalisation of the proletariat, any important growth of working-class combativity, would be expressed first inside the traditional organisations, increasing the differentiation within them and giving rise to important left currents of either a centrist or left centrist character.

(c) By promoting the organisation of such currents and by striving to win political leadership of them, revolutionary Marxists could facilitate the break-up of the traditional organisations through large splits. Under the influence of a revolutionary Marxist nucleus, one or another of the groupings produced by such splits could develop toward becoming a mass revolutionary party.

(d) By limiting themselves to existing as independent groups, revolutionary Marxists would confine themselves to propaganda activities, incapable of influencing the actual course of the class struggle.

The so-called entryist orientation in constructing mass revolutionary parties did not signify abandonment whatsoever of the effort to build sections of the Fourth International. All the resolutions written in accordance with the decision to apply this orientation implied the

maintenance of tightly organised and disciplined revolutionary nuclei, recruiting on the basis of their full programme, and utilising open Trotskyist publications for this purpose.

The decision to carry out a broad entryist turn in 1951-53 was accompanied by internal discussions and struggles on problems related to this turn but not identical with its tactical content (for example, the imminence of a world war, and its possible influence in bringing Communist parties to make a turn to the left, the forms of the disintegration of Stalinism, the internal functioning of the International, etc.) The present resolution is not intended to draw a balance sheet on the history of these internal struggles, which led to a split in the movement, but merely to recall the reasons that led to the adoption of the entryist tactic as such and the reasons and perspectives of the tactical turn which all the European sections have decided on at present.

2. An analysis of the fifteen years that have passed since the adoption of the entryist orientation at the tenth plenum of the International Executive Committee enables us to determine, in general terms, which aspects of this orientation were correct and which were faulty.

(a) The prediction that any new radicalisation of the proletariat would be expressed first by a differentiation within the traditional mass organisations of the workers movement has been completely borne out: The formation of the Bevan and Renard tendencies in the British and Belgian Social Democracies, the rupture in the Danish CP (the Larsen split), the formation one after another of left tendencies inside the Italian CP (the Young Communists, the Ingrao tendency), and the role played by struggle within the UEC (Union des Etudiants Communistes—Union of Communist Students) in the revival of the youth vanguard in France all confirm the analysis which led to the adoption of the entryist orientation. Even in Germany, which was the country in capitalist Europe where the radicalisation was the most limited during the period 1951-65, the only organisation, however small, arising from what leftward movement there was—the SDS—was the product of a split from the Social Democracy.

(b) Throughout this period, no organisation was able to score any significant success in trying to create a revolutionary party outside the traditional organisations. However, the adoption of the entryist orientation, in general, enabled the revolutionary Marxist nuclei to keep in better touch with the mass movement, to tie themselves intimately to it, and to better influence the development of the workers struggles.

(c) However, the long period of relative capitalist stabilisation in Europe, which could not be foreseen at the time the International adopted the entryist orientation in Europe, severely limited the extent of the differentiation within the traditional mass organisations. Occurring apart from broad mass struggles, or only in their aftermath

in the declining phase of these struggles, such differentiations could generally be contained essentially within the traditional apparatuses. Therefore, they led to the splitting off of small groups and marginal attrition rather than mass splits.

(d) It could have been otherwise if the revolutionary Marxist nuclei had forces within the left tendencies which arose in the traditional parties capable of organising the bulk of the members or sympathisers of these tendencies. But while the revolutionary Marxist nuclei generally gained strength in this period, the gains remained very modest. They were, therefore, confined to exercising a *political influence* within these tendencies, rather than consolidating them organisationally. This situation greatly facilitated the manoeuvres of the left currents in the bureaucracies, through which, in the last analysis, they were able to reduce the magnitude of the splits. In adopting the entryist orientation, as it was formulated in 1951-52, the inevitable relationship between the size of our own forces and those which we could draw away from the mass parties was underestimated.

3. Toward the middle of the 1960s, the situation in the workers movement of capitalist Europe began to change under the influence of the following three factors:

(a) A slowdown in economic growth, higher unemployment rates, and a sequence of recessions (Italy, France, Great Britain, West Germany) all aggravated the class contradictions and progressively stimulated a revival of workers struggles.

(b) The composition of the working class changed significantly under the combined impact of the accelerated industrialisation caused by technological changes (especially in Italy, France, Spain, the Netherlands, and Flanders), and the speed-up on the assembly lines (an important factor in lowering the age level of the workers in big plants). A whole new sector of workers, youths in the main, has appeared which is much less subject to the control of the traditional apparatuses. This has favoured a trend for much larger sections of the working class to get out of hand than in the 1944-48 period.

(c) A new youth vanguard developed on the basis primarily of identifying with the advancing sectors of the colonial revolution (Algeria, Cuba, Vietnam, Palestine). This vanguard at the same time turned towards agitation in the universities and high schools, thereby acquiring a social base that made it a real factor in the political life of a number of important capitalist countries (France, West Germany, Italy).

The characteristic feature of this change has been the great loss of influence wielded by the traditional organisations over this new young vanguard, resulting from the deep degeneration of the Social Democracy and the intensified crisis of Stalinism. Thus, for the first time since 1919-23, a rather broad vanguard independent of the bureaucratic apparatuses appeared in Europe. This vanguard has begun to alter the

relationship of forces within the workers movement and this in turn can exercise a growing influence simultaneously on the combativity, orientation, and forms of struggle of significant sectors of the working class. The same change explains why in Great Britain the growing opposition of the workers and the unions to Wilson's policies since 1964 has not given rise to a sharp differentiation within the local sections of the increasingly sclerotic Labour Party.

4. This essential change in the situation in the workers movement of capitalist Europe and the forms taken by the radicalisation of successive layers of the workers and youth is the fundamental reason for the decision of the European sections of the Fourth International to change their orientation regarding the avenues of developing mass revolutionary parties today. In the new situation in the working class and in the workers movement, it seemed most important not to lose the opportunity presented by the appearance of this new vanguard. This vanguard could not be left to founder between ultraleft spontaneism and reabsorption into the left wing of the traditional apparatuses, the inevitable alternative if no example were provided of at least a small revolutionary organisation basing itself on the new wave of radicalisation and aiming at consciously constructing a party of the Bolshevik type.

The content of the new orientation in working towards the construction of revolutionary parties which has been adopted by the European sections of the Fourth International can be defined as follows:

- (a) Giving priority to winning political and organisational preponderance within the new vanguard with the aim of considerably strengthening our own organisations, and, if possible, qualitatively changing the relationship of forces vis-a-vis the bureaucracies in the working class.
- (b) For this purpose, following a policy of taking the initiative in actions which will convince the new vanguard of the necessity of revolutionary Marxist organisations, not only on the theoretical and historical level but practically in the living struggle.
- (c) Engaging in more extensive work among the rank-and-file workers in the factories and in the unions.
- (d) Striving to build solid bases of support among the young workers from which confrontations with the bureaucracy can be mounted without risking the elimination of the opposition nuclei from the unions and plants.

This orientation increases the importance of a widely distributed revolutionary Marxist press, of intense theoretical material in our theoretical journals, and numerous books and pamphlets giving solid support for our struggle to win preponderance within a new vanguard which is distinguished by a higher cultural and political level than similar vanguards in the past. At the same time, this orientation points

up the need for our sections to function effectively and openly as real combat organisations capable of serving as poles of attraction for the best of the revolutionary youth who are repelled by Stalinism and reformism and for which spontaneism has little attraction.

5. The change in orientation decided on by the European sections of the Fourth International does not mean that they underestimate the still decisive weight of the Stalinist and reformist apparatuses in the outcome of the great workers struggles which capitalist Europe is now experiencing and will yet experience in the years to come. Neither does it mean that they hold an exaggerated and utopian view of the possibilities for reducing this influence through the intervention of vanguard groups of youth organisations on the periphery of the organised workers movement proper.

The central strategic task of revolutionary Marxists remains that of building mass revolutionary parties. In countries where there is a long tradition of mass working-class political action, where the workers movement is still predominantly controlled by mass parties claiming to represent the workers, the achievement of this task is inconceivable without the occurrence of differentiations in these old organisations, including extensive ruptures and splits. It is clear that today our sections have much greater possibilities for individual recruitment than ever and that these must be utilised to the full. But it would be just as sectarian today as in the past to insist solely on recruiting to a small group on an individual basis and to exclude the possibility of the party's progressing through regroupments and similar operations once this stage is reached and the necessary forces have been accumulated to engage in such tactics effectively.

We must also reject the illusion that because the vanguard has the capacity to outflank the traditional bureaucracies, even in determining the objectives and new forms of combat adopted in workers struggles, that these bureaucracies cannot regain control of the mass movement after a certain point in the confrontation. The recent experiences both in the limited strikes in France and in the powerful wave of strikes in Italy clearly prove the opposite.

However, this change in orientation involves the following:

(a) An understanding of the fact that the differentiation within the mass organisations today is less a result of the internal dialectic of ideological debates and factional struggles than of the repercussions within these organisations of the mass struggle and the actions of the vanguard itself. In this sense, orienting toward the new vanguards is essential even for the purpose of accelerating the outbreak of conflicts within the old parties (see the revival of struggle inside the Italian CP, the *II Manifesto* group; and inside the German Social Democracy at the Munich congress of the *Jungsozialisten* [Young Socialists, the official Social Democratic youth organisation], which very clearly resulted from the pressure of the vanguard from the outside).

(b) A realisation that in choosing the correct tactic at each stage of their struggle to construct a new revolutionary leadership of the proletariat, revolutionary Marxists must not fail to take into account their own forces, which is also an element in estimating the prospects of any tactic.

In any case, the new orientation set by the European sections continues to require them to follow attentively all developments in the mass organisations of the working class, especially inside the trade unions but also inside the mass parties claiming to represent the workers. The need for continuing or beginning fraction work inside these organisations must be examined at each specific stage in the class struggle, taking into consideration the forces at our disposal, the opportunities, the perspectives for the class struggle in the short and medium term, and the differentiation within the working class.

6. The exact organisational forms by which this new orientation in building mass revolutionary parties should be implemented depends on the particular conditions in each country and no general formula can be given. Broadly speaking, nowhere are the revolutionary Marxists able at present to constitute a party in the Leninist sense of the term, that is, a party capable of leading a significant minority of the proletariat and other exploited layers in a revolutionary struggle. At best, as in France, the revolutionary Marxists constitute only the initial nucleus of such a party. There are various ways revolutionary Marxists can try to improve their situation for establishing themselves as the preponderant force within the new vanguard in the short run—giving priority to building a youth organisation focussed from the outset on the three areas of work (the universities, the factories, and the high schools); or giving priority to building an adult organisation (where the vanguard movement has already passed a certain threshold or where the new vanguard is still in its incipient stages); or by a combination of the two. The precise form of the youth organisation—whether it is an avowed revolutionary Marxist organisation or a vanguard organisation encompassing, besides a revolutionary Marxist nucleus, broader layers of youth developing towards revolutionary Marxism but not yet fully convinced—likewise depends on the specific conditions in each country. The Fourth International can maintain a great deal of tactical flexibility as to the precise organisational forms in each country, if it is well understood that the essential condition for carrying out the tasks of party building in the present stage is that the revolutionary Marxist nuclei show a public face, both through their publications and through practical work among the new vanguard and in the class struggle.

7. The main axes of political work by the sections of the Fourth International in the immediate future derive from:

(i) a correct appreciation of the objective conditions which have arisen since 1965 and have been powerfully reinforced by May 1968 and the strike wave in Italy [see the editorial in the November 1969 issue of

Quatrieme Internationale, an English translation of which appeared in the December 15th issue of *Intercontinental Press* under the title "The Strike Wave in Europe"] ;

(ii) a thorough understanding of the meaning of the turn taken by the revolutionary Marxists in the struggle to build mass revolutionary parties.

(a) The strategy of transitional demands continues to be the basis for propaganda, and, on occasion, agitation and active intervention in the struggle of the working class. This strategy centres more than ever around the themes of workers control.

(b) Propaganda for workers power and a more precise determination of the concrete implications of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Western Europe in our time assume growing importance in the present stage of rising workers struggles which have been accompanied by a succession of prerevolutionary and revolutionary crises (May 1968 in France, autumn 1969 in Italy).

(c) A specific analysis must be made of the strategy for workers struggles in each country both as to the methods of struggle and the most appropriate organisational forms (action committees, strike committees, trade-union fractions, oppositional formations in the trade unions).

(d) The struggle for workers democracy assumes prime importance in this new phase where the relationship of forces between the union bureaucracy and the working masses is beginning to change, but it cannot be said for sure that the workers are capable of rapidly eliminating the bureaucrats. Defending and strengthening union democracy are not only ways of altering the relationship of strength between the bureaucracy and the masses, thus releasing greater forces for the fight against capitalism, but they are also essential means of combating the growing integration of the unions into the bourgeois state and everything that goes with this (wage restrictions, limitations on the right to strike, prison sentences for wildcat strikes, etc.).

(e) The tendency towards a "strong state", the strengthening of the repressive apparatus, the reappearance of semi-fascist goon squads, and racist and xenophobic propaganda against immigrant workers all renew the vital importance of intransigently defending the workers' rights and civil liberties, and extending them to all the minorities which are excluded from these rights (foreigners, youth, soldiers), and consolidating them by building workers' self-defence groups.

(f) The crisis of bourgeois leadership, the crisis in the Common Market, and the sharpening inter-imperialist contradictions are creating a favourable climate for propagandising for a Socialist United States of Europe as the overall solution for the problems afflicting and tormenting bourgeois society in Europe, that is, as a synonym for workers power on a European scale. The revival of proletarian internationalism,

moreover, especially in the young generation, makes such propaganda more fruitful for the revolutionary vanguard. This campaign must be accompanied by an attempt to develop forms of international collaboration and coordination of struggles simultaneously among the revolutionary Marxist organisations, among the broader youth vanguards, and among certain sectors of the European working class where that becomes objectively possible.

(g) The appearance of university and high-school students as a distinct political force beginning in 1967 makes it necessary to formulate a definite strategy for revolutionary Marxists in this milieu so as to avoid the double trap of underestimating it (dismissing it as "petty bourgeois") or overestimating it (which is done primarily by the spontaneist tendencies who disregard its specific social strengths and weaknesses, its place in the productive process, the instability of its situation, and so forth). The predominance in the student vanguard of tendencies favouring a "worker-student link-up" makes it more important than ever to reaffirm that a revolutionary Marxist organisation is the only means of achieving this tie effectively and giving it an objectively revolutionary meaning.

(h) More attention must be paid to the specific demands of young working men and women. These super-exploited layers are more capable of suddenly breaking out of the bureaucratic crust. In addition to specific demands, special forms of action must be investigated for tying up with these groups.

(i) Anti-imperialist action and solidarity with the principal sectors of the colonial revolution now in motion (Vietnam, Palestine, Bolivia) have lost none of their value as themes around which to agitate and mobilise. This is still the area where the differentiation among the various currents appears most clearly. It is still where the organisational and theoretical superiority of the Fourth International over sectarian and ultraleft tendencies, such as the Healyites and Maoists and primitive or super-proletarian tendencies like the spontaneists and the Mao-spontex groups, is most obvious.

(j) Action in solidarity with the anti-bureaucratic communist opposition in East Europe and the USSR also assumes growing importance as a result of the increasing sensitivity of the youth vanguard to this question produced by the events in Czechoslovakia and the acute crisis of Stalinism; and as a result of the splits that have occurred in the Communist youth organisations in Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Belgium, and elsewhere. Finally, the importance of this issue is magnified by the opportunity it offers to advance our ideas about democratic centralism and workers democracy—which are the keys to projecting an image of communism radically different from that which repels the great majority of young workers, students, and high-school youth in West Europe today.

Marxists and Youth Radicalisation

The following is an edited version of the resolution on the struggle of youth passed by the last National Conference of the International Marxist Group.

It contains the main political and theoretical ideas of IMG's youth cadres in the work of building the newly-formed revolutionary youth organisation, the Spartacus League.

The decisive battles for a mass revolutionary party in Britain can only take place within the organised workers movement. However, the unevenness of development of the class struggle has led to a situation *now* where the qualitative transformation of the strength of vanguard organisation in relation to Social-Democracy and Stalinism lies *outside* or on the periphery of the organised working class.

The transformation of the vanguard which is at present on the agenda is *not* the breaking of large sectors of the workers movement from the Labour Party and the C.P., but *is* the breaking of significant social movements on the periphery of the working-class movement from the grip of the bourgeoisie and the working-class bureaucracies, and, in providing leadership for these movements, creating a political pole of attraction for the most conscious elements within the mass organisations of the class.

Such peripheral social movements are Black and Irish workers, the women workers, young workers (particularly apprentices) and secondary school students, above all else the students in higher education. The reason for making the construction of a revolutionary youth organisation the central axis in the coming period is because this is the most effective way to modify the relationship of forces between the revolutionary vanguard as a whole and the class enemies of the proletariat. Conversely, a youth organisation must act fundamentally as a *political* organisation, attempting to operate along Leninist lines with a definite political practice principally in the student milieu, and in the framework of a revolutionary Marxist programme. The youth work will construct depots, base camps, training centres and conveyor belts, a whole supporting network for the strategic battles ahead inside the trade unions and bureaucratic parties.

Sectors of Intervention—The University Student Front

The universities remain the weakest link in the chain of bourgeois power: this is due to the following broad factors:

(a) the crisis of bourgeois ideology, though it affects youth as a whole, is experienced most acutely by students who are called upon to glorify and perpetuate the intellectual and moral heritage of the ruling class. The technical function of the university places it in a more exposed position in relation to the global crisis of capitalism than any other institution in society.

(b) the era of neo-capitalism has thrown the universities into a profound institutional crisis produced by their necessity to respond to contradictory demands from the ruling class.

(c) the universities lack adequate structures of integration and regimentation. The notions of personal and financial independence, of "academic freedom" and of "character-forming" cultural pursuits, hang-overs of a previous era, provide room for political mobilisation and education, while attempts to introduce "reforms" which integrate the students more effectively into the structures of capitalism (such reforms are being voted now by the DES) threaten to produce a powerful response from the students without resolving the institutional crisis. The transitional character of the milieu further opens possibilities for political action.

(d) thus the crisis of bourgeois ideology and the institutional crisis of the universities—both in the last analysis reflections of the fundamental contradiction between the productive forces and capitalist relations of production—have produced powerful student movements exploding the traditional rules of the game, using direct actions, violence, etc. and expressing revolutionary aspirations.

Whereas in past periods the student milieu reflected ideologically the class struggle in general (the colonial revolution, the fight against fascism, etc.) and thus the role of revolutionaries on the campus was to make propaganda and agitation related to these general questions, in the period of neo-capitalism the appearance of the fundamental contradictions of capitalism within the universities means that the student population can be mobilised around demands specific to the university and educational system.

But the very fact that fundamental contradictions within the capitalist system have entered the universities and thrown up a student movement means that the *solution* of the contradictions within the universities lies beyond the power of the *student* movement. If the students focus simply on the immediate phenomena of the crisis within their college, they will inevitably fall prey to reformism. But if they put forward demands which fundamentally challenge the bourgeois education system, they find themselves without the means to fight for those demands. This can lead them to ultra-leftism—despairing of winning victories through mass struggles on the campus, they confine themselves to abstract revolutionary propaganda. Thus the student movement is caught between its revolutionary vocation and the objective limits of the university community.

A programme for students must therefore, if it is to mobilise masses of students, be related to issues specific to the university, but at the same time must transcend the campus in its goals if it is to avoid the reformist trap. Secondly the programme must not be simply a series of demands for changes on a campus but must be a programme of struggle.

The following are foci for such a programme:

- opposing all ideological manipulation of the students.
- opposing all regimentation of student life.
- political freedom on the campus.
- breaking all connections between the university and imperialist interests; support for anti-imperialist struggles.
- break the ties of the university with monopoly capital; support for workers' struggles.
- fighting all technocratic reforms; put forward demands that link the different sectors of the education system. Free higher education for all.
- no decline in living standards of students.

The effective struggle around this programme presupposes the existence of an organised vanguard within the universities pursuing this theme of struggle through concrete slogans and campaigns as a subordinate part of its overall strategy.

While the need for such a vanguard presses itself on the student movement, the required commitment, discipline, perseverance, are far from inherent in the unstable, unremembering university population. Hence the tendency towards student left coffee-bar circles producing all kinds of sophisticated ideologies which are simply escape-routes from the fundamental task of building a revolutionary organisation. Hence also the need for the vanguard youth organisation to be not simply a university student organisation but one which incorporates students from other sectors of the educational system and proletarian youth. The organisation must therefore fuse university students with a highly developed abstract consciousness but a lower level of commitment and students from other sectors of education and young workers who will tend to have a high level of commitment but a less highly developed conceptual apparatus.

The forms which the vanguard youth organisation will give to the student movement will not be the trade union of the classical type but the political mass movement which will include different tendencies, which is structured in united front action committees at the base and which has as its field of privileged, but not exclusive, intervention, the student milieu.

The building of this political mass movement within the universities, autonomous of the bourgeoisie and working class bureaucracies—which

we might term the Red Base or Red University—is the strategic task of militants within the university milieu.

—The Lower Half of the Binary System

Whereas in some advanced capitalist countries the contradictions within higher education express themselves within a single institution—the university—in Britain their field of operation extends through a series of institutions divided within the binary system. The state is attempting to insulate the universities from the pressure of numbers, declining teaching resources, poor facilities, cultural sterility, etc., by concentrating most of the expansion in the non-university sectors of higher education. Students in the Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, will tend therefore to be much more acutely oppressed in a material sense. At the same time, however, the students in these sectors, largely proletarian in origin, maintain a far stronger contact with their social class origin and are more directly tied to specific occupational features, and therefore the corporatism, anti-intellectualism and conservatism which is the reality of the working class under social-democratic hegemony.

All this means that the objective basis for revolt exists within the lower half of the binary system, and that in the event of such a revolt this sector presents a much more direct conveyor belt of revolutionary consciousness into the working class milieu, both through origin and destination, but at the same time the integration of the student population means that it is slower to move and is less sensitive to our politics than is the case of the university student milieu. The issues on which it will be mobilised are much less those reflecting the class struggle in general—to which they are not highly sensitive—than questions relating to their future role in the productive process and their education in relation to that.

Thus teachers training colleges students can be mobilised around questions affecting the teaching profession, day-release students around the exploitation of apprentices, both these and Poly students around the material deprivation they face. They cannot be mobilised and reached unless the specificity of the situation is grasped.

At the same time, the student movement within the universities, because of the very importance and predominance of these institutions within the Binary system, will have an impact within this sector both directly and through the NUS which, in an effort to head off revolt within the universities by moving itself to the "left", precipitates an ideological re-evaluation within the colleges. Such an impact is clearly already being felt, as witnesses by the first struggles within the Colleges of Education and Poly's and by the spontaneous emergence of socialist societies in these institutions over the last six months.

—The Secondary School Front

The extremely repressive and authoritarian nature of the milieu, in con-

junction with the school revolt against bourgeois culture and morality makes the secondary school sector an extremely explosive one. The size of the secondary school student population means that mass movements within this sector can have a profound impact on other social layers.

But at the same time the absence of basic democratic rights of students and the arbitrary power of teachers over their futures, coupled with the dependence of school students on their parents, places school militants in extremely vulnerable positions (cf. SAU victimisations).

The struggle in the schools must be built around campaigns against regimentation and for democratic rights as well as around general political questions, especially those brought up by teachers.

The forms of organisation should again be Action Committees (which may go under the name of SAU etc.) independent of "schools' councils" etc., which combine all tendencies in actions on specific issues: the aim should be to involve the mass of students in actions against the school authorities.

But given the repressive nature of the institutions, the militants in many places are forced to operate semi-secretly: using discotheques or film clubs and debating societies as propaganda instruments. External political help is therefore of decisive importance: leaflets produced and distributed by an external body to the school students can then be explained by the militants within the school. Thus in practice the schools movement in its still embryonic stage has relied upon the university student vanguard for help of this kind.

Attitude to SAU

The rapid spread of SAU branches round the country has testified to the ripeness of the schools for political struggle. At the same time SAU has shown ultra-leftism on organisational questions and a sloppiness over tactics which has led to the victimisation of many of its militants. It has tended to substitute revolutionary phrase-mongering for mass political action. Revolutionaries must win SAU members for the construction of a programme of transitional demands within the schools.

—The Workers Front

A youth organisation would not in the immediate future be doing *systematic* work in the working class organisations, but for two reasons it must possess a clear understanding of the perspectives needed for such work: first because it will constantly have to take into account developments inside the workers movement; secondly because it will be involved in solidarity actions with workers' struggles and must grasp the general framework of such actions. The youth organisation must be educated in the technical aspects of the workers movement and in the programmatic acquisitions of the revolutionary movement. In the present document it is worth pointing out only a few points:

(a) In this period the worker-student relationship has undergone a number of important changes:

(i) On the side of the students, the student movement has changed the dimensions of the workers-intellectuals problem: the role that was previously played by a few revolutionary intellectuals can now be played by a whole movement of young intellectuals. Thus the emergence of the student movements tends to make revolutionary ideas more accessible to workers, both directly through contact with revolutionary students and indirectly through the outpouring of cheap literature on revolutionary socialism catering for the student market.

(ii) The opening of a front of struggle in the student milieu to some extent modifies the relationship of forces between the workers vanguard and the class enemy, while the exemplary actions of the student movement can in certain situations (a rise in working-class militancy) revive explosive forms of struggle long suppressed in the working-class movement by the bureaucratic leadership.

(iii) The mobility of the student movement offers the possibility of direct intervention in workers' struggles on occasions. On occasions the student movement has actually influenced the line of workers' struggles.

On the working class side, new layers of the population must objectively be defined as working class, and the workers are now increasingly passing through institutions of higher education. While the precise forms of this cross-fertilisation are complex, the fact that it can take place is beyond doubt.

(b) As well as stressing the modifications in the worker-student relationship, we must constantly reiterate certain basic lessons about the workers movement which tend to be forgotten:

(i) The strategic problem is not simply to recruit as many workers as possible to the organisation, but to train the working class *vanguard*. This vanguard is the leadership trained over years of struggle in the factory and trusted by the workers. It is the section of the working class most active in the mass organisations.

(ii) To win a substantial section of this vanguard away from the bureaucratic leadership will require struggle *within* the mass organisations, based upon the struggle within the factory.

(iii) The working class vanguard will not break from its present leadership unless it is presented with a real organisational alternative.

The Youth Vanguard in Britain

Internationally, the youth vanguard has found organisational expression in splits from the youth organisations of social democracy and Stalinism in organisations more or less spontaneously thrown up by the mass movement itself, in various splinter groups that represented the old vanguard, or in combinations of these three.

In Britain the leftward evolution of NALSO occurred in a vacuum, divorced from any organic development in relation to a political base in the student milieu. When its funds were cut off by Transport House, the organisation collapsed without any response from the student population. The YCL, being a youth club formation in a period when young people were turning away from Youth Clubs to politics, has suffered a catastrophic decline over the last three years. Nationally, it has never been more than marginal to the youth radicalisation, although in certain localities it acquired an ephemeral presence in the schools movements. The *politics* of the C.P. have exercised no attraction for students, although its *trade union base* has enticed some workerist militants—a striking example being the Cambridge I.S. branch.

The two youth organisations with the greatest potential for becoming the vanguard formations within the youth were the *Keep Left* Y.S. and the RSSF. The Y.S., armed with the writings of Trotsky, with the educative experience of a fight with the Labour bureaucracy, and with a substantial base among youth, had the opportunity in 1964 to win hegemony within the various sections of young people. But its failure to win any hold within the crucial student milieu, linked with its sectarian mould, has reduced it to youth club activities with little influence over the politicised elements.

The RSSF represents a polar opposite to the KLYS and was born of the vacuum created by its failure and that of NALSO and the YCL. The strength of RSSF lay in its extreme implantation within the student left; its crucial tasks were to transcend the limitations of its milieu by raising itself to an overall strategic perspective within which the student struggle could be situated and by developing a firm organisational framework able to withstand the fickleness and instability of its milieu. Instead of this, however, RSSF became the passive reflection of those weaknesses its task had been to transcend: organisational chaos and a refusal to confront the strategic problems of revolutionary politics. Far from being able to organise and lead a national student movement and develop into a homogeneous political formation, it succumbed to ideological confusion and political fragmentation, united only in its rejection of revolutionary organisation, which, far from expressing its future, poses the threat of its own negation.

The degeneration of RSSF was not caused by any "inner sectarian logic", but by the lack of a cadre capable of providing political leadership to the organisation. When it was founded in 1968, the IMG had just begun to recruit its first handful of student comrades and was in no position to service the organisation. The great opportunity of using RSSF as a vehicle for the creation of a united student movement was presented to the I.S. group. But since the I.S. group itself lacked programmatic coherence or organisational solidity, it could scarcely provide RSSF with them. Consequently, by the second conference (Nov. 1968), RSSF, weakened by five months of inactivity in a period

of great opportunities (especially the October Vietnam demo.), fell into the hands of the NLR comrades. They were able to provide a central office and information service and take some political initiatives, especially in relation to the LSE lock-out. But their programmatic vagueness, coupled with and reinforced by the absence of an organisational dimension in their work, meant they were unable to transcend the limits of a purely student organisation. An additional factor leading to the progressive decay of RSSF was the withdrawal from the arena of the large I.S. student contingent. Neither the Maoists nor the RSL were able to present a serious challenge within the student movement, the latter because it was busy in the Labour Party, the former because of, among other things, their obscure fratricidal disputes.

The Need for a Vanguard Youth Organisation

A revolutionary organisation within the student milieu cannot avoid fundamental questions of revolutionary programme. These problems are posed not only in relation to solidarity actions within anti-colonial struggles and anti-capitalist struggles within the working class, but also crucially in relation to the student movement itself. Such debates could be avoided within RSSF only by bureaucratically manipulating the organisation to muffle tendencies within it which had global political positions.

The notion that a loose federation of discussion/action circles linked to a national office could give coherent political leadership to the student movement has proved to be quite illusory. What is required is a real political organisation of revolutionaries, with definite rights and responsibilities of membership within a democratic centralist structure, built from the top (national conference) down.

This new organisation should have the following main features:

1. A global programme: permanent revolution in the colonial world; political revolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; the revolutionary road to socialism in the imperialist countries; for building a revolutionary international.
2. A democratic centralist structure.
3. The main milieu of intervention to be the education system, but active role in solidarity actions with working-class and anti-imperialist struggles.
4. Membership would require acceptance of the programme and a commitment to activity; the political level required from young workers would be lower than that demanded from students.
5. The organisation must have its own press, must be able to polemicise with other political organisations and must have an active political centre.

Build the Party! Build the International!

The following is the text of a document from the discussion which took place in La Ligue Communiste, the French Trotskyist group, over the question of affiliation to the Fourth International.

It is a very succinct examination of the meaning of revolutionary internationalism, and the concrete importance of the work of building a revolutionary international, which the Trotskyist movement has been engaged in since the triumph of Hitler in 1933, a triumph which marked the final degeneration of the Communist International.

Quite apart from its theoretical value, it answers many of the questions and arguments about the Fourth International with which Trotskyists are confronted in their day-to-day political activity.

The document *Internationalism and International* declares war on organisational fetishism, which, according to the authors, consists in particular in "identifying internationalism as international organisation". Truly, it's a grave sin to wish to harmonise our analysis, our concepts, with our action and our organisational forms. The interest of the debate for the International itself doesn't need to be demonstrated. It is not a matter, nevertheless, of professing faith in a vibrant internationalism (even the worst social-democrats or Stalinists do that gladly), but to set ourselves the task of solving the problems of the construction of the International starting with the present situation. However, this debate is important because it clarifies also our conception of building a revolutionary party, which cannot be separated from the International.

Specific National Characteristics and World Revolution

Starting with a phrase of Marx's and passing across twenty years of the contribution of Lenin and Trotsky—not forgetting Rosa Luxembourge and many others—the document *Internationalism and International* reproaches some comrades for under-estimating the "specific national characteristics" of the revolution, which will start in one country and extend itself internationally. "The classics of Marxism have taught us that each revolution occurs under specific national conditions." For some comrades, on the contrary, it is a question neither of peoples nor circumstances, but only of "fetishism" of the International.

Since the document sees fit to repeat that "the living soul of Marxism is concrete analysis of a concrete situation", let us see if we

can, by such an analysis, concretise the relations between the national specificity of the revolution and the international nature of revolution in our epoch.

1. The specific national characteristics of revolution in the imperialist epoch are themselves, at least partially, a function of the international context. The underdeveloped countries are underdeveloped in relation to the industrialised countries (and not in the abstract or absolute). Monoculture is literally "imported" from abroad. Russia and China were the "weakest links in the imperialist chain" because of the way they fit into the world market. The "pure" specific national characteristic of Russia was the muzhik, who by himself would never have made the revolution. The "concrete" specific national characteristic combined this muzhik with the proletariat (produced by the entry of foreign capital into Russia), the weakening of Czarism (due to its international defeats at the hands of Japan, Germany, etc.), and the role of the international social-democracy (produced by European developments as a whole).

2. The specific national characteristics of any revolution are only relative, partial and not absolute. Otherwise, no strategic rule, no historical law could be formulated and Marxism would be completely useless. The heralds of the absolute "specific national characteristics" of the Russian revolution were the Narodniks and their social-revolutionary heirs, who denied the capitalist development of Russia and the leading role of the proletariat in the coming Russian revolution, and who thought a leap from the primitive peasant commune to modern communism possible. To detach "specific national characteristics" from their wider historical context is the classic excuse of all opportunists for rejecting the strategic teachings of Marxism. Under the pretext of the "specific national characteristics" of the Chinese revolution, Stalin-Bukharin subordinated the Chinese Communists to the Kuomintang in 1925-1927 with well-known results. In Indonesia, under the pretext of "specific characteristics", Aidit maintained, until the eve of the generals' coup d'état (and with the approval of Mao) that the Indonesian state was a "special" state: half bourgeois and half popular. We all know the disastrous result.

3. If every socialist revolution starts on the national level, the rhythm of its international repercussions is extremely rapid. A year after October, Russia was at war with a dozen foreign interventionist armies. Less than a year after the victory of the Chinese revolution, China was confronted with US imperialism in Korea. The logical conclusion is that this will be repeated next time.

4. The internationalisation of capital, which, in comparison to the years before the Second World War, has recently made very pronounced progress, confronts revolutionaries with complexes of "specific national characteristics" and "specific international characteristics" which cannot be separated as easily as some comrades suggest. France

possesses a specific imperialist state, within the framework of the Common Market (which severely limits its own economic and commercial independence, and tomorrow will perhaps limit it equally on the monetary and budgetary level), within the framework of the Atlantic Alliance (which limits this independence on the military level also, whatever the Gaullists may say). It is foolish to speak of inter-imperialist competition in the abstract, without taking into account this international interpenetration of capital in our epoch, in the concrete circumstances of *today*. Of course, there is no such thing as "super-imperialism"; inter-imperialist competition is always an important factor and even intensifies. But it exists in a concrete world context *qualitatively different from the situation before the first and second World Wars*. No great inter-imperialist war is conceivable in this new context. It is competition in the framework of an alliance. For failing to understand this, the PCF burned its fingers in the CED affair. The pro-Chinese almost did too at the time of the De Gaulle-Peking flirtation.

When this document says that internationalism is first of all a taking of positions on all questions (which are of determining importance for the international movement); when it adds that "an analysis of the world situation is the prerequisite for any technical, structural scheme for constructing an international organisation";—it, in reality, creates a cleavage between the immediate national practice of class struggle, and the international dimension of this struggle which is added "by the analysis". This distinction is incomplete and therefore false, mechanistic and abstract. In the imperialist world, all revolutionary struggle, even if it starts in a national framework, *immediately* has an international dimension. The armed resistance in South Vietnam was no more "purely" Vietnamese than the May revolution was "purely" French. It has not taken long to see this borne out in real life, as much by the enemy camp as that of the revolutionaries.

Therefore it must be concluded that the international character of the class struggle and of revolution in our epoch has objective roots in the structure of world economy and of world politics (including "military politics"). This internationalism, then, is first of all *the conscious recognition of this objective reality*. Analysis is conditioned by this reality, that is, conditioned by a more effective intervention to change it.

To be internationalist means to understand that it is impossible to overthrow capitalism in France without overturning the Common Market and the Atlantic Alliance, i.e. without running up against the international bourgeoisie. There is no revolutionary struggle in France "which is sustained" by an international analysis. *There is a revolutionary struggle in France which possesses immediately and inevitably an international dimension*. This dimension exists independently of our will.

The relationship of forces on a national scale exists in an international context, and this international context (the relation of forces on the international scale) reacts on the national relation of forces. All revolutionary action always has international implications, whether one realises it or not. The whole question is whether or not it isn't better to be conscious of them, if it isn't better to orient, at least partially, the international implications in a desired direction, towards desired ends. In other words, the whole question is to know whether or not it is advisable to abandon oneself in this area to the spontaneity of the "repercussions", or if it is not preferable to prepare them, even with limited means.

Mass Revolutionary International and Organised International Vanguard

The comrades wax ironic about the illusion of artificially creating leadership or leading from a central point "The NLF, Black Power, Castroism, student struggles (everywhere in the world), mass strikes (everywhere in the world), the Cultural Revolution in China", etc. What this caricature is supposed to demonstrate is the impossibility of creating, at the present stage in the process of the world revolution, a "mass revolutionary International" right away. Clearly our proposal to join the Fourth International does not proceed from a grotesque illusion of giving leadership to all these mass movements; it raises, more modestly, the question of whether those revolutionary Marxists, who have common programmatic views on the central strategic questions of our epoch, should associate their efforts on an international scale.

But our comrades' logic takes the risk of leading them astray. In the world today there exists an entanglement of the most complex, the most contradictory and the most irregular sorts of mass movements which are all, objectively and on the historical scale, "progressive", that is, which ultimately bring closer the world socialist revolution. But precisely *because* of this irregular, entangled, contradictory and complex character of the "actual movement", revolutionary Marxists cannot content themselves, each one in his own country, to adapt to it.

Was it merely necessary to be a good militant of the May revolution in France; without critical perspectives, without any opinion on the way the spontaneous movement could open the way towards the initiation of dual power, towards the overthrow of French capitalism, without any effort to correct the lack of organisation, the insufficient consciousness, etc.?

Should a Chinese Marxist be content to be a good Red Guard without any opinion on the problem of how to put a brake on bureaucratisation, whether this should be achieved by selection or, instead, by election of organs of leadership; without any opinion on the Mao cult, of freedom of tendencies for all comrades of the workers movement?

Should an American revolutionary be content with advocating Black Power, without asking the question of how the major social forces can be mobilised against the power of big capital in the United States, without trying to develop a revolutionary socialist programme for all of the workers?

The passage in the Communist Manifesto which our comrades use as evidence proclaims that in all actual liberation movements throughout the world, communists "count first of all interests which are independent of nationality and common to all the proletariat", and that they "represent always the interests of the movement as a whole."

When we re-examine the list which they present to us, it is hard to maintain that the predominant ideological orientation of the NLF, of Black Power, of the "Cultural Revolution", of Castroism, of the anti-authoritarian student movement, of the mass economic strikes, "count first of all interests...common to the whole proletariat" or "represent the interests of the movement as a whole."

Don't revolutionary Marxists have the duty of carrying out precisely the tasks which these mass movements are not yet, at the present stage, able to carry out? And won't they be able to do this all the more effectively if they are organised internationally?

It is not a matter of a mass revolutionary international; it is a matter, more modestly, of an international vanguard organisation such as it is today: weak, too weak in relation to its tasks, but stronger than its numbers would imply, both by the force of its programme and by its organisational cohesion. Neglect this cohesion, and you modify the situation only in one direction: weakening the vanguard. It is hard to see how this weakening would contribute to the progress of the socialist revolution.

But here their opportunist slip is showing, as it is after the appeal to principles. "If under the pretext of building an organisation, we proceed to a cascade of preliminary expulsions (voluntary or involuntary), we will cut ourselves off from the international revolutionary movement as it exists today." Clearly this means: if those who, all the while basing themselves on the objectively progressive character of the struggle of the "NLF, of Castro, of the Red Guards, of Black Power, of the student rebellions, of economic strikes", try to go beyond the limits of the movements, and defend within them the interests common to the whole proletariat and "represent always the interests of the movement as a whole", they will cut themselves off from this actual movement!

From this position, the only way open is that of adaptation to the "actual movement" with all its imperfections, in other words vulgar opportunism and tailism. It goes without saying that in order to be consistent, this reasoning cannot limit itself exclusively to the international domain. Its implications on the national level would incontestably have a liquidationist conclusion. It is, on the contrary, vital to

participate in the actual mass movement, while defending within it the programme, strategy and organisation of revolutionary Marxism; and this defence is the best way to assure the worldwide victory of the movement. From this it follows that there is no contradiction whatsoever between immediate national and international organisation, and participation in the day-to-day mass movement.

We agree completely with our comrades when they proclaim the primacy of programme over organisation: "From now on we must ask ourselves the decisive questions for the whole international movement; these questions don't come out of our heads, but are posed concretely across the cleavages and lines of separation in the world working class movement."

But why the question's exhortative form? Are these questions only posed right now? Is our movement to be deprived of all reference, all its past, all its experiences? Has it not furnished the answers to the "important questions" such as social-patriotism and imperialism, "peaceful roads to socialism" or proletarian revolution, "revolution by stages" in the underdeveloped countries or permanent revolution, the one-party regime, the dogma of the infallibility of the general secretary or socialist democracy, self-management and the right of tendencies and of a plurality of workers parties in a socialist regime?

On all these "important questions", the positions we have defended conform to those of the Fourth International; they are wholly or in part different from all other large currents (reformist, Khrushchev, Maoist, Castroist, anarchist), of the international working class movement. Is it not up to us from now on to associate with those with whom we agree in order to carry on a more effective struggle as part of an international revolutionary tendency?

When our comrades say that "an analysis of the world situation is a prerequisite for any tactical-structural scheme for constructing an international organisation", they commit a double error of method.

"The analysis" of the world situation must include elements of different quality: structural elements, which refer to historical tasks of the world revolution (in each of the three sectors of the world revolution: imperialist countries, semi-colonial countries, bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers states); and conjunctural elements which involve tactical estimations. To refuse to join with those who share our strategic views under the pretext of differences over conjunctural problems, or simply the possibility of such differences, is to exhibit an obvious organisational "fetishism".

"The analysis" of the world situation is detached from *revolutionary practice* on the international scale. What then is this analysis? A literary exercise? A perusal of the newspapers, with commentary? Our comrades can't seem to understand that to affirm that a revolutionary analysis is the work of an international organisation, does not mean that "good

structure produces good thought" but signifies simply that a *theoretical analysis can be verified only in practice*.

And how could anyone wish to have an international analysis without international practice? How could anyone wish to have a concrete analysis of the problems of the Latin American revolution unless this analysis is to be applied by Latin American revolutionaries, and results in part from this practice; to analyse Black Power unless this analysis is to be applied by North American revolutionaries, to analyse the mass strikes in Great Britain unless this analysis is to be verified by the action of British revolutionaries? And how could an international analysis be verified without permanent contacts, discussions, exchanges of experiences, international coordination, that is to say without an international organisation?

The comrades add a bizarre argument: "Why shouldn't another revolution tomorrow introduce another perspective? Why wouldn't this other perspective today introduce another organisation, another revolution tomorrow?"

Unless it is only a pun, all that this seems to mean is: we will not associate ourselves internationally with the Fourth International, since that would cut us off from *future* organisations (that is, presently non-existent!) and would make it more difficult to join with them. This replaces the construction of the vanguard by a dependence on spontaneous generation, awaiting the coming of the Messiah. And what then is this new perspective which will give rise to "another" organisation and "another" revolution? Why do they wait before revealing to us this miraculous solution which will open to us so many new doors? Do our comrades hold this perspective in reserve or do they hope to discover it by way of a long work of analysis and brain-racking? In any case, it is still a matter of gratuitous hypothesis and the only alternative they offer consists of a pyramid of hypotheses. It is curious that at this point these comrades totally abandon the "realistic" point of view that they have pretended to defend.

The current association of the Marxist revolutionary vanguard on the international scale, we repeat, *is not* a mass revolutionary international. No one pretends to foresee the precise forms and stages by which we will pass from the first to the second step, any more than anyone can foresee all the phases of the construction of the revolutionary party. If the given factors of the problem were found to be modified—by new *realities*, massive ones, and not by hypotheses—it would be necessary to re-examine the question.

We are not fetishists about organisational forms. If tomorrow mass Marxist revolutionary parties arose in one or many countries, outside the Fourth International, we could only be pleased by this fact and examine the organisational conclusions which would have to be drawn from it. But today, these parties don't exist. Refusing today to associate the existing revolutionary forces internationally is assuredly not the best way to hasten their rise.

1. They declare that Lenin "refused" to build a new International from 1914 to 1919.
2. They declare that Trotsky hesitated for a long time before founding the Fourth International, from 1933 to 1938.

The reality is otherwise. *Right from the time* that the political collapse of the Second International had become apparent, Lenin proclaimed: "The Second International is dead, long live the Third International" (article of 1st November 1914). *Right from the time* that the political collapse of the Third International had become apparent, by the capitulation of the German Communist Party before Hitler, Trotsky proclaimed: "The Third International is dead, long live the Fourth International."

And, *right from the time* that Lenin and Trotsky made these declarations, not having the habit of opposing their practice to their theory, they set themselves the task of organising the new International. A reading of the articles and letters of Lenin from 1914 to 1918 will show how passionately he followed the factional struggles in the social-democracy of every country, in order to separate the internationalists from the social-patriots and the partisans of revolution ("of transforming the imperialist war into a civil war") from the centrist pacifists. His *organised* international faction saw the light of day at the Zimmerwald Conference: this was the "Zimmerwald Left."

Trotsky didn't act any differently. He began by organising on the international scale those partisans of the Fourth International who had a broad programmatic agreement with him.

Our comrades manifestly confuse international organisation and "official proclamation" of the International or the latter's title. It is true that Lenin and Trotsky waited five years before "proclaiming" the International (others believed—like Rosa Luxembourg—that the proclamation was premature.) *But they didn't wait one day to organise internationally those comrades in struggle who shared their programmatic ideas.*

That is what the discussion today is all about. One may believe that the International was born "prematurely". It is true that it is not a mass international; that remains to be built. But the Fourth International is a reality; it has cadres, organisation, activities in about fifty countries. Our programmatic orientation is identical with that of the Fourth International. Is it not necessary, under these conditions, to wage together the struggle for the mass revolutionary international? If one wishes to consult what Lenin and Trotsky did, *the answer is obvious.*

It is also interesting to note the continued existence of the centrist arguments against the necessity of a new revolutionary international organisation. At the Zimmerwald Conference, Lenin prides himself on having gathered around the Bolshevik Party "the Marxists of consequence of Russia, Poland, Lettonia, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Swit-

zeland and the Netherlands." (That is, having created the embryo of an international organisation: an international faction.) (*The Revolutionary Marxists at the International Conference of 5–8 September 1915*, article of 1st October 1915).

But at this same Conference the French delegates hesitated to approve his line. "We didn't come here with the idea of finding a formula for the Third International," they say, (Lenin answers them: but the compromise manifesto that you have approved already contains a formula for the Third International!), "in France the workers are different." Here is how Lenin answers the centrists who in 1915 hesitated on the question of the new International:

"But from this fact (that the situation in France is 'different') the only conclusion that can be drawn is that the French socialists will arrive later at the general European level of revolutionary actions of the proletariat; not at all that these actions are useless. The problem of finding out at what rhythm, by what path, and in what forms the proletariat of different countries is capable of realising the transition toward these revolutionary actions is a problem that has not even been posed at the Conference, and couldn't be posed there. For that, the prerequisite facts are lacking. Our task for the moment is to convey the correct tactic, and afterwards events will indicate the *rhythm* of the common movement and the modifications (national, local, syndical)."

So we see: Lenin doesn't say: since there is no mass movement to coordinate everywhere, let's wait before putting the organisation, the international, into practice. No: he says, until these movements are produced, in order to accelerate their ripening and raise the level of consciousness, let us organise immediately internationally so as to propagate these actions.

Let's return for a minute to the famous "tasks that revolutionaries assign themselves" on which would depend "the need that revolutionaries have for an international". These tasks must be specified on two levels:

(a) On the level of *objective historical necessity*, it is clear that the worldwide character of the class struggle, the centralisation of imperialism's counter-revolutionary role, *demand* an international coordination of revolutionary activities, the absence of which considerably strengthens the enemy. That is what Che Guevara expressed in his famous proclamation on the war in Vietnam: "Create two, three, many Vietnams." The experience of Stalinism undoubtedly sustains no small degree of distrust by people who, fearing manipulation, have a tendency to identify centralisation with bureaucratisation. But it is really exhibiting very little comprehension of the *immediately and concretely international* character of struggles throughout the world to get heavily ironic on the subject of this "centralisation, even peremptorily condemn it as contrary to the initiative of the masses".

Undoubtedly, the international of the masses, *which corresponds to an urgent and permanent necessity in relation to the daily reality of the class struggle in our era* is not realisable today because of the gap which continues to exist between this historic necessity and the insufficient maturity of the consciousness of the masses and the weakness of the organisation of the vanguard. But it is necessary to realise that this gap is an *evil*, for which humanity pays and will continue to pay a very heavy price (the comrades in Vietnam, Brazil and Indonesia have already paid very heavily in the course of the last few years). At the moment, we cannot, with the limited forces of the vanguard at our disposal, modify this situation in a decisive way.

(b) But what we *can* do is to join immediately, internationally, with the vanguard which shares our programmatic and strategic views. This association, considering our tasks, permits at the same time a better grasp of the international reality (an international theory verified by international practice); therefore more effective activity on the national scale, continued activity on an international scale, thus accelerating the reinforcement of the vanguard and the reduction of the time which separates us from the advent of a mass revolutionary international.

It should be added that the necessity of this international vanguard organisation even emerges from immediate practical tasks: coordination of specific actions in the student, worker and anti-imperialist milieu; preparation and support for revolutionary initiatives in certain countries (Latin America, Africa), solidarity which goes beyond the financial stage, or that of Platonic demonstrations; acceleration of the ripening of consciousness by critical communication and the assimilation of the experience of the vanguard of other countries. We can only realise this imperfectly because of our limited forces. But this is certainly not a reason to refuse under the pretext that it cannot yet be done "perfectly", any more than we should refuse to build a political organisation knowing perfectly well that it is not a mass revolutionary party.

Organisational Fetishism and Bureaucratic Messianism?

To show that the necessity of an international organisation flows from the international nature of the class struggle, it would seem, is to exhibit "organisational fetishism". But to deduce from the specific national characteristics of revolution the need for a national organisation "for the moment", is this not succumbing to the same "fetishism"?

"The connection between the world revolution and the world organisation is neither an abstract political or a moral tie." Quite right. We agree. "It should be thought of first as a function of the world situation and secondly as experienced not by international offices, but by the revolutionary movements which exist effectively throughout the world." Here the non sequitur, or more precisely the accumulation of non sequiturs, is bewildering.

If we are to understand correctly, everything that is not "thought of in relation to the world situation" and "experienced by the existing revolutionary movements" is "abstract". This is at best a narrow and arbitrary definition of the word "concrete"

Why should the *world situation* be more concrete than the structure of the world market or the military strategy of imperialism? And why should what has already been experienced by every "effective" revolutionary movement be "concrete", but not what has been experienced by a third or even a tenth of them? Was the guerrilla war not "concrete" when Fidel was the only one to apply it effectively in Latin America? Did the Zengakuren's demonstrations have no international value until the French and German students had imitated them? Isn't this *struggle* for this international transplantation of experiences "concrete"?

Is any struggle for a programme not yet applied by the masses, "abstract"? Was Karl Liebknecht "abstract", when he alone distributed leaflets with the slogan "the enemy is in our country" during the imperialist war, inasmuch that this programmatic slogan had not yet been "tested" by any "mass movement" in any country? Didn't Lenin, from his office, invite *all* socialists to do the same before having permitted the masses to "experience"? But he was surely a great "fetishist" about organisation. In order to bring their battle against "organisational fetishism" to its conclusion, our comrades have had to elevate tailism to the level of a principle.

The glorification of the "actual movement" and the "spontaneity of the masses" as an antidote for international organisation condemns our comrades to use the arguments of all the partisans of "national communism" in favour of "national roads" towards socialism: "We feel that these images", they write, "camouflage poorly what they cover up: the underestimation of the initiative of the masses and of the national or continental conditions which give revolutions their rhythm and their form, in other words, their specific strategies." Since it is the Fourth International that is under discussion, it would be better to specify where and when it "underestimates the national or continental conditions" which give revolutions their specific strategies. In Latin America? In North America? In Africa? In Western Europe? In eastern Europe? In the Middle-East? The discussion would gain clarity if this had been done.

In reducing the problem to two factors: the "world situation" and "the experience of the actual movements", the comrades eliminate the *key factor*, that is, *the conscious role of the vanguard and its programme*. Do they think that the initiative of the masses, however heroic, can by itself spontaneously reach the level of consciousness and organisation necessary for the overthrow of world capitalism? Do they think that the masses are capable of reproducing spontaneously the lessons of a century of accumulated experience in revolutionary proletarian struggle,

in other words the programme of world revolution? Should those who have assimilated this programme not organise themselves to make it understood to the rest (naturally not only by propaganda, but also by action as well)?

Our comrades declare that Lenin would never have taught that it is impossible to have revolutionary *theory and practice* without a revolutionary vanguard organisation, and in this way they show a failure to grasp the very essence of the Leninist theory of the party. In Chapter 1 of *What is to be Done?*, in the same chapter (d) entitled "Engels and the importance of theoretical struggle" where we find the famous phrase "without revolutionary theory no revolutionary movement"; there is also the sentence underlined by the author: "Only a party guided by vanguard theory can play the role of vanguard combatant." All of Lenin's *What is to be Done?* is centred around the idea that outside of a revolutionary organisation, the worker or intellectual, even with the best of intentions, risks falling under the influence of a petty-bourgeois or bourgeois ideology; and that between organisational cohesion, revolutionary practice and revolutionary theory, there is an indissoluble dialectical interaction. In the same work, written in 1902, Lenin mentions the international essence not only of the movement, but also of the analysis. However we are told that in 1969, "specific national characteristics" must once again get the upper hand...

Spontaneity And Organisation

In the course of the discussion we have drawn some conclusions upon which it is necessary to throw some light. The argument being put forward by the comrades against international organisation is in reality an argument which belongs to the spontaneists. It is opposed not only to international organisation, but to organisation as such. It is opposed in reality to both national and international organisations.

If the comrades were consistent, they would reject the construction of a vanguard organisation in France with *the same arguments* which they used to demonstrate that it is not necessary to build an international organisation, or at least that the conditions for its construction are not present today.

The accusation against the Internationals made by our comrades, great amateurs of the concrete, sins in a small detail. It does not try and understand where the failures of these Internationals have come from. They didn't fall from the sky, dear comrades. They didn't emerge from a sort of original sin attached to all Internationals. They are very simply and very directly the consequence of the degeneration of the principal parties, or in the case of the Third International, of the principal party, the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet State. This elementary fact has escaped the notice of our comrades. But therefore the accusation should be extended and directed primarily against the parties which are the source of the bankruptcy of the Second and

Third Internationals. It is in any case impossible to dissociate the bankruptcy of the Internationals from the bankruptcy of the parties. It would be good to know what conclusions our comrades draw here.

What do our comrades finally propose? To start again from the beginning, disregarding the principles which have guided our action in the past and which have successfully undergone the test of events. They feign ignorance that these points of reference coincide broadly with the programme of the Fourth International, which in their view should not be "privileged" in relation to the positions taken by other tendencies. They propose a rupture with the past without advancing any perspective to replace it other than a stammering spontaneism. It is necessary to be clear and not to play games with methodological debates: their hostility to the Fourth International is a hostility to its programme. It would be better for the clarity of the discussion if the debate frankly and freely unfolds on this terrain.

Andre. February 1969.

THE MAKING OF NORTHERN IRELAND: And the Basis of its Undoing by D.R.O'Connor Lysaght.

Published by the Citizen's Committee, Dublin. Price 3/-

Available from Red Books, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. Also available a wide selection of literature on Ireland, including the works of James Connolly. We also stock the paper of the Irish Republican movement, "The United Irishman".

IRELAND. IMG Statement

The struggles which have followed the arrest of Bernadette Devlin highlight the completely unstable social situation in Northern Ireland. As we have stated many times before, the basic cause of this instability is the exploitation of Ireland by British imperialism—the direct military occupation of the North and the neo-colonialist domination of the Republic. The victory of the Tories in the British General Election and the split in Fianna Fail in the south have contributed to the sharpening of the situation. Civil war is on the order of the day; the present stage of the struggle has transcended the question of civil rights. The question now posed, which was obscured by the origins of the conflict last summer, is the continued existence of the Northern Irish state. This struggle can only be ended by the abolition of the border, setting the stage for a struggle by the entire Irish working class for the final liberation of Ireland, the Workers Republic, or by the infliction of a catastrophic defeat on the nationally conscious workers of Northern Ireland. A defeat which would make the repression they have suffered up to now seem mild in comparison.

Stormont's response to justified protests at Bernadette Devlin's arrest has been the mailed fist. Their own bigotry, combined with a fear of Paisleyism has led them to abandon any pretence of a reformist solution. The British Government, while making an appearance of working for a compromise, backs this policy of force, as their dispatch of 3,000 more troops makes clear. The role of these troops is clear; "Shoot on sight" is fascist language. Those who were confused about this question must now realise the disastrous mistake they made. The fact that Belfast and Derry exploded in their fiercest violence yet, despite the 8,000 British occupation troops, despite the Whitehall-imposed "reforms" of last year, and despite the fact that the provocation of the 12th of July Orange parades is still to come, shows the complete inability of British imperialism to find even a short-term solution to the Irish question. On the contrary, worsening economic conditions and British entry into the Common Market will exacerbate the crisis. The only perspective is of continuous struggle—political, economic and social.

In this situation every political tendency in Britain will be forced to take a stand. For the left, Ireland will be an acid test. So far the response has been pitiful: political confusion has vied with organisational ineptitude. Now is the time to make amends for the traditional backwardness on Ireland of the British Left. The arrest of Bernadette Devlin, and the heightened interest because of the riots and violence,

make it necessary to move immediately and decisively. The success of the Vietnam solidarity movement showed that it is possible to build a mass anti-imperialist movement on a principled basis in this country. It should be even more possible on the Irish question. Ireland is nearer, Ireland directly concerns British imperialism, and there are one and a half million Irish people living here.

The International Marxist Group points out the imperative need for unity in solidarity with the Irish people's struggle for self-determination. It is vital to build at every level a united front between all who support that struggle, left groups, the labour movement, and Irish exiles, particularly republicans. This united front should organise mass activity, and give practical help—political and organisational—to those organisations struggling for Irish self-determination. It should support in every way possible the right of the oppressed Catholic minority in the North to defend itself by all means necessary against violence from the Orange extremists, the police, and British troops. It must fight the widespread chauvinism in the British labour movement which has its roots in centuries of ideological "justification" of the exploitation of the Irish people. We must act quickly. Every day the authorities are allowed to implement their "shoot on sight" policy damages the prospects of unity between the Irish and British workers against their common foes.

For a united front on the basis of:

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR IRELAND!

WITHDRAW ALL BRITISH TROOPS NOW!

RELEASE BERNADETTE DEVLIN, AND ALL IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS!

Extracts from James Connolly

INTRODUCTION

The new upsurge of struggle in Ireland compels the most rigorous analysis of the Irish question by revolutionary marxists. Such an analysis must get back to first principles, there has been too much specious reasoning, which has led to blind alleys, either in the struggle in Ireland or in the attempts to aid that struggle in Britain.

The main weakness of the left, in Ireland and in Britain, has been to underestimate the importance of the National question in Ireland, the civil rights struggle has been in isolation, and not in its deep connections with the historical struggle against British Imperialism in Ireland.

The civil rights movement arose as a response to the intolerable position of Catholics within the Northern Irish state, but the very existence of that state represents a historic defeat for the forces, not only of the struggle for national independence in Ireland, but of the working class. The extracts from the writings of James Connolly, which we publish here, explain very clearly why this is so.

At the time when these pieces were written, the British Government was in the process of capitulating to Sir Edward Carson over the Third Home Rule Bill. An alliance of the most reactionary elements of the Ulster, and British ruling classes were threatening armed insurrection. The Government, in order to appease them, proposed to exclude Ulster from the Bill.

Connolly issued a clarion call of alarm at this, he saw that not only would the workers of the North be delivered into the hands of a bigoted and reactionary ruling clique, but the issue of Partition would dominate Irish politics for decades, preventing the growth of an independent workers movement and dividing the Irish working class on religious grounds. His warning at that time was followed by action at Easter 1916, to rouse the Irish masses for a struggle against British Imperialism.

Today we can see how clearly Connolly saw the problem. How in contrast the Irish Bourgeoisie, through the Nationalist Party, and the British Labour Movement combined with Carson and Lloyd George in supporting Partition, and how this evil division has caused decades of misery and suffering for the Irish people.

Today, when the fight once more breaks out, and challenging first the lack of civil rights in Northern Ireland, goes over to the attack on the central problem—Partition—marxists must be absolutely clear what

the struggle is about. A return to first principles, which means a return to Connolly, is the way to achieve that clarity.

THE FIRST HINT OF PARTITION

Here in Ireland the proposal of the Government to consent to the partition of Ireland—the exclusion of certain counties in Ulster—is causing a new line of cleavage. No one of the supporters of Home Rule accepts this proposal with anything like equanimity, but rather we are already hearing in North-East Ulster rumours of a determination to resist it by all means. It is felt that the proposal to leave the Home Rule minority at the mercy of an ignorant majority with the evil record of the Orange party is a proposal that should never have been made, and that the establishment of such a scheme should be resisted with armed force if necessary.

Personally I entirely agree with those who think so; Belfast is bad enough as it is; what it would be under such rule the wildest imagination cannot conceive. Filled with the belief that they were after defeating the Imperial Government and the Nationalists combined, the Orangemen would have scant regards for the rights of the minority left at their mercy.

Such a scheme would destroy the Labour movement by disrupting it. It would perpetuate in a form aggravated in evil the discords now prevalent, and help the Home Rule and Orange capitalists and clerics to keep their rallying cries before the public as the political watchwords of the day. In short, it would make division more intense and confusion of ideas and parties more confounded.

Forward, March 21, 1914.

LABOUR AND THE PROPOSED PARTITION OF IRELAND

The recent proposals of Messrs. Asquith, Devlin, Redmond and Co. for the settlement of the Home Rule question deserve the earnest attention of the working class democrat of this country. They reveal in a most striking and unmistakable manner the depths of betrayal to which the so-called Nationalist politicians are willing to sink. For generations the conscience of the civilised world has been shocked by the historical record of the partition of Poland; publicists, poets, humanitarians, patriots, all lovers of their kind and of progress have wept over the unhappy lot of a country torn asunder by the brute force of their alien oppressors, its unity ruthlessly destroyed and its traditions trampled into the dust.

But Poland was disrupted by outside forces, its enemies were the mercenaries of the tyrant kingdoms and empires of Europe; its sons and daughters died in the trenches and on the battlefields by the thousands rather than submit to their beloved country being annihili-

lated as a nation. But Ireland, what of Ireland? It is the trusted leaders of Ireland that in secret conclave with the enemies of Ireland have agreed to see Ireland as a nation disrupted politically and her children divided under separate political governments with warring interests.

Now, what is the position of Labour towards it all? Let us remember that the Orange aristocracy now fighting for its supremacy in Ireland has at all times been based upon a denial of the common human rights of the Irish people; that the Orange Order was not founded to safeguard religious freedom, but to deny religious freedom, and that it raised this religious question, not for the sake of any religion, but in order to use religious zeal in the interests of the oppressive property rights of rackrenting landlords and sweating capitalists. That the Irish people might be kept asunder and robbed whilst so sundered and divided, the Orange aristocracy went down to the lowest depths and out of the lowest pits of hell brought up the abominations of sectarian feuds to stir the passions of the ignorant mob. No crime was too brutal or cowardly; no lie too base; no slander too ghastly, as long as they served to keep the democracy asunder.

And now that the progress of democracy elsewhere has somewhat muzzled the dogs of aristocratic power, now that in England as well as in the forces of labour are stirring and making for freedom and light, this same gang of well-fed plunderers of the people, secure in Union held upon their own dupes, seek by threats of force to arrest the march of ideas and stifle the light of civilisation and liberty. And, lo and behold, the trusted guardians of the people, the vaunted saviours of the Irish race, agree in front of the enemy and in face of the world to sacrifice to the bigoted enemy the unity of the nation and along with it the lives, liberties and hopes of that portion of the nation which in the midst of the most hostile surroundings have fought to keep the faith in things national and progressive.

Such a scheme as that agreed to by Redmond and Devlin, the betrayal of the national democracy of industrial Ulster would mean a carnival of reaction both North and South, would set back the wheels of progress, would destroy the oncoming unity of the Irish Labour movement and paralyse all advanced movements whilst it endured.

To it Labour should give the bitterest opposition, against it Labour in Ulster should fight even to the death, if necessary, as our fathers fought before us.

Irish Worker, March 14, 1914.

IRELAND AND ULSTER: AN APPEAL TO THE WORKING CLASS

In this great crisis of the history of Ireland, I desire to appeal to the working class—the only class whose true interests are always on the side of progress—to take action to prevent the betrayal of their interests contemplated by those who have planned the exclusion of part of Ulster from the Home Rule Bill. Every effort is now being made to prevent the voice of the democracy being heard in those counties and boroughs which it is callously proposed to cut off from the rest of Ireland. Meetings are being rushed through in other parts of Ireland, and at those meetings wirepullers of the United Irish League and the Ancient Order of Hibernians (Board of Erin) are passing resolutions approving of the exclusion, whilst you who will suffer by this dastardly proposal are never even consulted, but, on the contrary, these same organisations are working hard to prevent your voice being heard, and have done what they could prevent the calling of meetings, of holding of demonstrations at which you could register your hatred of their attempt to betray you into the hand of the sworn enemies of democracy, of labour, and of nationality.

An instance of this attempt to misrepresent you may be quoted from the Irish press of March 26. In a letter from the Irish Press Agency it says:—

“The proposal, representing the limit of concession and made ‘as the price of peace’ would only mean, if accepted, that the Counties of Down, Derry, Antrim and Armagh would remain as they are for six years at the end of which time they would come in automatically under Home Rule. They know, too, that the Nationalists in these four counties are perfectly willing to assent to this arrangement and that they are the Nationalists most concerned.”

Remember that this is a quotation from a letter sent out by the Irish Press Agency and that copies of it are supplied by the agents of the Irish Parliamentary Party to every newspaper in Ireland and to Liberal papers in England, and you will see how true is my statement that you are being betrayed, that the men whom you trusted are busily engaged in rigging up a fake sentiment in favour of this betrayal of your interests. For the statements contained in the letter just quoted are, in the first part, deliberately misleading and, in the second part, an outrageous falsehood.

The statement that the counties excluded would come in automatically at the end of six years is deliberately misleading because, as was explained in the House of Commons, two General Elections the Tories got a majority—and it is impossible to believe that the Liberals can win the other two elections successively—it would only require the passage of a small Act of not more than three or four lines to make the exclusion perpetual. And the Tories would pass it. What could prevent them? You can prevent them getting the chance

by insisting upon the whole Home Rule Bill and no exclusion, being passed *now*. If you do not act *now*, your chance is gone.

The second part of the statement I have quoted is an outrageous falsehood, as every one knows. The Nationalists of the four counties have not been asked their opinion, and if any politician would dare to take a plebiscite upon this question of exclusion or no exclusion, the democracy of Ulster would undoubtedly register a most emphatic refusal to accept this proposal. And yet so-called Home Rule journals are telling the world that you are quite willing to be cut off from Ireland and placed under the heel of the intolerant gang of bigots and enemies of progress who for so long have terrorised Ulster.

Men and women, consider! If your lot is a difficult one now, subject as you are to the rule of a gang who keep up the fires of religious bigotry in order to divide the workers, and make united progress impossible; if your lot is a difficult one, even when supported by the progressive and tolerant forces of all Ireland, how difficult and intolerable it will be when you are cut off from Ireland, and yet are regarded as alien to Great Britain, and left at the tender mercies of a class who knows no mercy, of a mob poisoned by ignorant hatred of everything national and democratic.

Do not be misled by the promises of politicians. Remember that Mr. Birrell, Chief Secretary, solemnly promised that a representative of Dublin Labour would sit upon the Police Inquiry Commission in Dublin, and that he broke his solemn promise. Remember that Mr. Redmond pledged his word at Waterford that the Home Rule Bill would go through without the loss of a word or a comma, and almost immediately afterwards he agreed to the loss of four counties and two boroughs. Remember that the whole history of Ireland is a record of betrayals by politicians and statesmen, and remembering this, spurn their lying promises and stand up for a United Ireland—an Ireland broad based upon the union of Labour and Nationality.

You are not frightened by the mock heroics of a pantomime army. Nobody in Ulster is. If the politicians in Parliament pretend to be frightened, it is only in order to find an excuse to sell you. Do not be sold. Remember that when soldiers were ordered out to shoot you down in the Belfast Dock Strike of 1907 no officer resigned then rather than shed blood in Ulster, and when some innocent members of our class were shot down in the Falls Road, Belfast, no Cabinet Ministers apologised to the relatives of the poor workers they had murdered. Remember that more than a thousand Dublin men, women and children were brutally beaten and wounded by the police a few months ago, and three men and one girl killed, but no officer resigned, and neither Tory nor Home Rule press protested against the coercion of Dublin. Why, then, the hypocritical howl against compelling the pious sweaters of Ulster and their dupes to obey the will of the majority? Remember the A.O.H., the U.I.L. and the Irish Parliamentary Party cheered on the Government when it sent its police to bludgeon the

Nationalist workers of Dublin. Now the same organisation and the same party cheers on the same treacherous Government when it proposes to surrender you into the hands of the Carsonite gang. As the officers of the Curragh have stood by their class, so let the working-class democracy of Ulster stand by its class, and all Irish workers from Malin Head to Cape Clear and from Dublin to Galway will stand by you.

Let your motto be that of James Fintan Lalor, the motto which the working class Irish Citizen Army has adopted as its aim and object, viz. :

That the entire ownership of Ireland (all Ireland)—moral and material—is vested of right in the entire people of Ireland. And, adopting this as your motto, let it be heard and understood that Labour in Ireland stands for the unity of Ireland—an Ireland united in the name of progress, and who shall separate us?

Irish Worker, April 4, 1914.

HOME RULE, ETC.

By George N. Barnes, M.P.

EXTRACT

.....But I have taken my line, along with my colleagues from the Irish Nationalists. I note that an Irish correspondent in your columns takes me to task for following the lead of Irish Members of Parliament instead of Irish Trades Councils and Labour bodies generally. In regard to which I have only to say that the Nationalists of Ireland have sent men to Parliament and the Labour men have not. I assume that the Irishmen know their mind and business best, and I take it as expressed in the fact. Your correspondent has also a good deal to say about the merits—or rather the demerits—of the suggested compromise, and points out to me that the cutting out of Ulster from the rest of Ireland will divide A.S.E. membership in Ireland into two different political camps. It is sheer waste of fact arguing about it. Nobody defends it on its merits. It is put forward as the price of peace. If peace is not brought by it, then it goes by the board. And so I leave it.

Forward, April 11, 1914.

THE SOLIDARITY OF LABOUR

This being Easter week, the news from Ireland for the readers of *Forward* will necessarily be of a short and scrappy character. We are all busy enjoying ourselves, and as this is the last Easter before the red flames of war will light up our hilltops and the red rivers of blood

flow along our valleys (ahem!), our amusements must perforce be absorbing and exciting. For it is an awful and serious thing to think that in a month or two the wooden guns of Ulster may go off, and the trained ambulance corps may be wrestling with the problems of how to tie up broken heads or staunch the flow of blood from bleedings noses.

We may not see "red ruin and the breaking up of laws," but we may see the breaking of windows panes and hear the rattle of cobble stones upon our doors.

The wooden guns of Ulster! Aye, but let us be frank with ourselves and confess that the wooden guns of Ulster have, at least, succeeded in frightening the Liberals, or if they have not frightened them, then the Liberals are engaged in the greatest game of sham these countries have ever seen. They are pretending to be frightened in order to cover their action in going back on all the promises with which they have held the Home Rulers of Great Britain and Ireland in leash for a generation. Charles Stewart Parnell could have got Home Rule with Ulster excluded thirty years ago. We have been told *ad nauseam* about the statesmanlike qualities of John E. Redmond as the leader of the Irish race, and yet it appears that his statemanship has brought his followers to the point of accepting with joyful eagerness and gratitude that which Parnell rejected with scorn thirty years ago. A more miserable fiasco than this ignominious collapse of a great national movement is not recorded in history. To this poor end have come all the glorious promises, and this poor reward is all the Irish Party can show for its persistent fight against Labour in every three-cornered election in Great Britain, in every municipal election without exception in Ireland.

It is to us a grim comment upon the boasted solidarity of Labour when we see a Labour M.P., in Great Britain, calmly announcing that he prefers to follow the official representatives of Irish capitalism rather than the spokesman of 86,000 organised Irish workers, and that he does so because the latter are yet too weak to protect themselves politically—have no votes to deliver in Parliament, whereas their enemies have.

Personally I make no complaint about the position taken up by Mr. George N. Barnes, M.P. and his colleagues. I do not complain because I expected it. I have always preached in Ireland that politically we were far behind the English and imperative necessity were already in working order in Great Britain, and that it was absurd to expect the British working men to turn aside to fight our political battles when his own required so much effort and sacrifice.

On these lines of argument I have fought for the establishment of a Labour Part in Ireland, for the separate political organisation of the Irish workers and for the separate economic and industrial organisation of the Irish workers on a more revolutionary basis than was usual in England and Scotland. This I felt to be wise, because, as much as of Ireland is practically *v* organised, I do not see the necessity of us committing all the mistakes in organisation already made in Britain,

when we have so much practically virgin soil to till in industrial organisation here.

In doing this, in carrying on such a propagand, I have been continually subject to misrepresentation and even abuse. I have been told that I was no Internationalist, that I was preaching hatred of England, that I was a disruptor. In vain for me to insist that the usual mistake of the Englishman, viz., that he understood Irish problems better than the Irish did themselves, applied quite as strongly to British Socialists as to the British ruling class, and that therefore the Irish Socialists should work out their own policy and create their own literature, and that we must expect to be misunderstood until we could compel recognition by our own strength. For preaching this doctrine I have generally suffered the boycott from official socialists in Great Britain, and dislike from those in Ireland who followed their lead. But now along comes Comrade George N. Barnes, M.P., and he blandly acknowledges that Socialism in England in the votes of its parliamentary representatives will take its cue from the representatives of an Irish party that openly avows in Ireland its hatred of Socialism and its opposition to independent Labour representation in this country. This, I take it, is a confirmation of my position that the Irish workers must work out their own salvation, and that in the process of working it out they need not be astonished if the working-class leaders in Great Britain utterly fail to understand them.

This question of presenting socialism so that it will appeal to the peculiar hereditary instincts and character of the people amongst whom you are operating is one of the first importance to the Socialist and Labour movement. A position, theoretically sound, may fail if expressed in terms unsuited to the apprehension of those to whom you are appealing. For years I fretted at what I considered the utterly foolish arguments of certain Socialist propagandists in Great Britain. Their arguments did not appeal to me, and I did not believe that they could appeal to anyone else. Since then I have come to believe that these people, perhaps, understood the psychology of their own countrymen better than I did, and that this question of psychology or mental make-up was of fundamental importance. Since that dawned upon me, I have painstakingly stuck to the endeavour to translate Socialist doctrines into terms understood by the Irish, in or out of Ireland. I fancy that I have at least in that respect set a headline for abler persons than myself to copy in future. But we cannot deal with Ireland without getting entangled in the question of religion. Hence I have got frequently involved in disputes centring around that point.

Now observe this confession! I have, I believe, fairly well presented my case on that subject, but my case was the case for workers to whom the traditions and aspirations of Irish Nationality had been of prime importance. That achievement was reserved for, and I think has been most excellently performed by our Comrade John Wheatley and his colleagues of the Catholic Socialist Society. Nowhere have I come across literature so well suited for the purpose of making Socialists out of Catholics; my own poor attempts have been, as I have said, directed to the enrolment in my ranks of Irish workers.

All this is a digression in a sense, but an understanding of it may explain to the reader "that tired feeling" that comes across us in Ireland when we witness the love embraces which take place between the Parliamentary Labour Party and our deadliest enemies---the Home Rule Party. I say our deadliest enemies, because the Unionist Party is only a negligible quantity except in a small corner of Ireland, and in that corner it is not destined to be permanent. We do not get angry when we see these things or read such letters; we simply say-----"What the devil is up with these fellows?"

There will be no bad feeling over such letters as Mr. Barnes', or the implied refusal of the Labour Party to pay any attention to the request of organised Labour in Ireland, but it will not help on a better understanding between the militant proletariat of the two islands.

Forward, April 18, 1914.

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A NEW FORMAT

This is the first issue of *International* on a new bi-monthly schedule and with a new format.

The magazine was launched in May 1968; it undertook to carry on the type of agitational and co-ordinating work which its predecessor *The Week* had done, but to devote more space to longer and deeper analysis. This inevitably meant that although the magazine carried a certain amount of good analytical material in addition to a number of pointed agitational articles, it was not able, with its limited size, to carry very lengthy theoretical articles or, on a monthly schedule, to initiate and carry through campaigns satisfactorily.

The fact that we conceived and launched the magazine just prior to May/June 1968 and the French upheaval is significant: these struggles pitched Western Europe into a new era of revolutionary struggles. Since that time we have had some extremely rich experiences of struggle in Britain. To mention only a few: the mass Vietnam demonstrations, the mobilisation against *In Place of Strife*, the struggles in the universities, the repercussions of the struggles in Ireland, and finally the fall of the Labour Government. The political challenges which the revolutionary left has faced in this two-year period have been more vital, more varied, and more compressed than at any time since the Second World War.

And yet when we look back, what has been the outcome? The de-escalation of the solidarity movement while the United States has admitted that it is involved in Laos and has spread the war to Cambodia, the compromise between the TUC and the Labour Government, the fragmentation of the student movement, and the lack of solidarity while the slow-burning crisis in Ireland continues. Above all the failure of the revolutionary Left to build any effective organisation and in its place the increasing fragmentation of the movement.

These shortcomings are the result of failure to intervene effectively, to show clearly the relevance of revolutionary Marxist ideas and leadership to the thousands who were engaged in these mobilisations. They are at root *political* failures. They are the result of the backwardness of British revolutionaries, their confusion when faced with new and complex problems, and their inability to formulate a correct strategy. But their most striking aspect is the fact that none of them are original failures—they merely repeat old errors which have been made in the