



Ireland is One and Ireland is a Nation. The English imperialist and US newspapers constantly repeat that the Protestant majority of the six northern counties wishes to remain tied to England. On this point they base their arguments for continued English control. It is true that the Protestants are a majority and most of them favor English control, but can the destiny of nations be decided by counting majorities within the borders set up by English colonialism?

We think not. We take a Marxist-Leninist position that a nation is "an historically evolved stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture." (J. V. Stalin, Marxism and the National Question.)

By this definition all 32 counties of Ireland constitute one nation. The territory, culture, history and economy of the six counties developed as part of the Irish, not the English, nation. As a nation Ireland has a right to unity and independence from English imperialism which has long been her cruel oppressor.

POPULATION CONTROL: ENGLISH STYLE

The Protestants came to Ireland as part of a policy completely opposed to the development of the Irish nation. The English, attempting to make Ireland a food-producing

estate for England, met the stiffest resistance from the strong clans of the north. These Irishmen could not be subdued and made to produce for the English. In 1609 the Ulster plantation was set up and Scotsmen and Englishmen were brought in. The native Irish soon owned only one-tenth of the land and on most estates were not even allowed to be tenants.

What was the result of turning Ireland into a food-producing estate to feed the English? The peasants were reduced to a diet of oatmeal, potatoes and buttermilk.

From 1845 to 1850 a horror known as the Great Starvation was inflicted on the Irish people. Ireland produced foodstuffs in plentiful quantity, corn was growing and cattle were healthy. The corn, cattle, etc., exported to England would have fed the hungry twice over. But when Ireland's potato crop failed deaths from hunger, hunger-typhus and cholera were so great that numbers are unknown.

The population dropped two million in a few years, probably half from deaths and half from emigration. The rural population declined by 50 percent. Genocide by English imperialism is the name for this horror. In other European countries the potato crop also failed but famine struck only in Ireland where the English took all the other foodstuffs.

The population of Ireland, 8,500,000 in 1845, is only 3,500,000 today north and south. The English drove the people off the land and at the same time crushed the development of Irish industry. The Irish peasant chose between emigration and starvation. The English starved and drove out five million and then talk about the Protestant majority of a few hundred thousand in a few counties.

This drastic cut in population should have eliminated unemployment and crowded housing conditions according to our modern Malthusians such as pro-abortion and women's liberation groups. All the Irish should be prosperous. This is obviously not the case. The main effect is that there are fewer Irishmen left to fight the English and regain their land.

WHY IS IRELAND DIVIDED?

The division of Ireland is a cruel trick of English imperialism to maintain its control of the Irish economy. Most of Ireland's industry is in the north and much of the raw materials needed for industry is in the south. This makes it difficult for a national economy to develop. The twenty-six counties still send their livestock and raw materials (lead, copper, zinc and silver) to supply English industry. Emigration continues for want of land and industrial employment.

It must be remembered that the Easter Rising was defeated. The present "Irish" governments north and south are not fruits of revolutionary victories but the tools of English imperialism. True, some concessions were made to the Irish bourgeoisie and to the abstract ideas of democracy and independence. After the rising, World War I and the birth of the USSR, which supported national liberation, England could no longer rule in the old way.

But neither could the Irish national forces win independence. Why was this? Lenin emphasized the timing, before the great October Revolution. Ireland, being a small nation, close to England, lacked the allies needed for victory.

The rising in Dublin was quickly crushed. It soon revived in the countryside but the best leaders, the organized battalion of Irish volunteers and most of their weapons and ammunition were lost in Dublin. Had the leaders of the Easter Rising focused on mobilizing the land-hungry peasants they could have waged the protracted struggle necessary to defeat English imperialism.

As it was, England won and partition followed. The six counties became a gendarme state with which the English could threaten all of Ireland and keep their Dublin servants in line.

The partition was anticipated by anti-Catholic pogroms in Belfast and other northern cities. Rioters led

by special constables tried to drive the Catholics out of the industrial areas in the summers of 1920 and 1921. Every Catholic was driven from the shipyards; every Catholic was driven from factories where Protestants prevailed.

The government in Dublin showed from the beginning that it was a tool of English imperialism determined to subjugate the Irish nation economically and politically. As the Irish expression puts it: "Nothing changed but the flag."

IRELAND NOT ALONE

Ireland is not the only nation to suffer imperialist oppression. Most of the nations of Africa, Asia and South and Central America are oppressed even more brutally. Scotland and Wales are oppressed by England and in North America, Quebec and the Afro-American nation in the Black Belt are oppressed nations with the right to self-determination.

Since World War II there has been a great upsurge in the struggle of these nations against imperialism. This struggle has become the focal struggle in the world and the United States has become the leading imperialist force.

The Irish with their great experience in national liberation struggle have much to contribute. Those who

sympathize with Ireland must extend their sympathies to other oppressed nations who will be the main allies of the Irish in their continuing struggle.

Ireland is a small nation and is isolated from most oppressed nations. Irish patriots must give primary attention to developing an international movement that will coordinate and support national liberation struggles. This means that at the present time the main task is developing the necessary ideology to unite the oppressed peoples.

Those who know the history of how England grew rich by squeezing the life out of the Irish tenant should recognize that the United States became rich by robbing the land from the Indian people, oppressing the Afro-Americans as slaves or share-croppers and stealing land from Mexico.

Those who understand how the English drove the Irish off the land should see that millions of Afro-Americans have been driven out of their nation in the southern Black Belt of the US.

Those who know that cutting Ireland's population by more than half has not solved the problems of poverty and unemployment should fight against the imperialist, Malthusian argument that the problems of the oppressed nations are caused by overpopulation.

Some Irish-Americans claim sympathy with the Irish national struggle. However, as members of the white US

nation they receive bribes from US imperialism and are deeply infected with white and great-power chauvinism.

The Irish received privileged positions in the United States because they spoke English and were among the early immigrants. As policemen, civil servants and church leaders they helped keep down the later immigrants. Today, like most US whites they serve US imperialism against the Afro-Americans and Vietnamese. Spectators at the 1973 St. Patrick's Day Parade in South Boston applauded Mrs. Hicks--white supremacist politician--and ignored signs demanding "England Get Out of Ireland."

The US has investments in Ireland. The US Marines help train English soldiers for work in Ireland. One cannot support the US in Vietnam and the Black Belt and still support Irish liberation.

The US pretends to be neutral in Ireland. This is a ruse so that in case of a defeat for English imperialism it will have a better chance to move in. The Irish must fight the English as their main oppressors but also expose the US as the kingpin of the imperialist system. The US is the most vicious, dangerous imperialist force in the world.

FALSE FRIENDS

Many forces that were revolutionary in the past are unwilling to fight US imperialism and support the oppressed peoples. China and Russia are now making economic and political deals with the US and betraying the oppressed peoples. Just when the imperialists are having some financial troubles the Russians and Chinese rush in with new trade deals designed to bolster the US dollar.

The Russian and Chinese governments gave a few guns to the Vietnamese but not the ships and planes and atomic weapons that could have met the US military might on equal grounds. Instead they pressured the Vietnamese to accept a political solution that divides their country and perpetuates imperialist control much the same as partition in Ireland.

Russia openly supported the slaughter of the Ibo people in Biafra because they tried to win national independence. China did the same in Bangladesh. Why should the Irish trust such "Marxists" and "revolutionaries" to be their allies?

Russia and China not only use their guns and money against the oppressed nations. They mislead them with pro-imperialist ideas dressed in Marxist phrases. In the name of class struggle they deny the need for national liberation struggles.

Such revisionist nonsense is welcomed by the English working class. For many generations they have gotten bribes for helping to oppress other nations. Many "Marxist" trade union leaders promise them more of the same while they attack the Irish national struggle. Why should the Irish trust such "Marxists" and "revolutionaries" to be their allies?

IRA NOT IMMUNE

Revisionism has also influenced the IRA. In the past the IRA was a bourgeois organization that was fairly consistently anti-imperialist. They never accepted partition and recognized the government in Dublin as an imperialist tool.

But in the 1960's the IRA was taken over by "Marxists". These revisors of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin denied the need for anti-imperialist struggle. They told the people to direct their fight against the Irish bourgeoisie in order to establish Socialism. In the north they emphasized that they would have to wait until they had won over the Protestant working class. This meant they would wait forever since the Protestants receive benefits from English occupation. When the struggle in the six counties became sharper the IRA was a roadblock.

The Provisionals correctly broke away from the Official IRA. They correctly rejected such "Marxists" and fought on against partition.

But the "class struggle" line has not disappeared in Ireland. It is a standby of the revisionists for diverting people away from the national struggle. The Official IRA and such prominent leaders as Bernadette Devlin still call on the people to "fight for Socialism".

The Provisionals are not free of revisionist influence. They concentrate their struggles in the cities where the imperialists are strong. They should build rural base areas and win support of the peasants who have always provided the main force for Irish national liberation. While correctly aiming their struggle against the direct imperialist occupation of the six counties they have not mobilized the people of the south which is predominately agricultural.

The lack of leadership in the twenty-six counties was clear in the recent election. The people were so confused and apathetic that neither party had to make even a pretense of struggling against partition. It is adventurism to try to win revolutionary victories in Belfast or Derry without mobilizing the whole of Ireland. The urban proletariat should lead but the main force will be the peasants fighting for land.

A NATION ONCE AGAIN

In 1870 a northern Irish Protestant clergyman wrote,

"All that is really important in the history of Ireland for the last three centuries is the fighting of the two nations for the possession of the soil. The reformation was in reality nothing but a special form of the land war. The oath of supremacy was simply a lever for evicting the owners of the land." (Quoted in T. A. Jackson, Ireland Her Own, 1947.)

This struggle goes on. It is not clear to which nation the Protestants belong. In the past Protestants have joined and even led the struggle against English occupation. Today there is little Protestant sympathy for Ireland's national aspirations. The best way to win over some Protestants is to develop further the national liberation struggle and thereby undermine their support from England.

The Protestant Irish must support national liberation for Ireland, leave the country or be destroyed.

After centuries of cruel oppression Ireland will yet be free, united and independent! By mobilizing the peasants of all 32 counties a powerful revolutionary movement will be built. By allying with the liberation movements of Asia, Africa and Central and South America as well as the Black Belt, Quebec, Wales and Scotland, Irish patriots can defeat English and US imperialism.

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