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The Socialist Party of Ireland

(BELFAST BRANCH)

The Socialist Party of Ireland was formed by the merging of the Dublin and Belfast Socialist Groups. It is an independent party, actively opposed not only to parties avowedly anti-Socialist but also to those that pay lip-service to Socialism, such as the Labour and Communist parties.

Recently in Northern Ireland we have witnessed the shifting of Nationalist Labour support from the N. I. Labour Party to the Irish Labour Party, and the decision of the former body to accept the constitutional status quo. While the wranglings of these reformist parties are of little interest to Socialists and make not the slightest contribution on the part of either body to the cause of Socialism, they have served as a practical pointer to the *conspicuous absence of a genuine Socialist Party in this country.*

Is it too much to hope that the local situation against the background of failure by the British Labour Party to eradicate even some of the more ugly features of capitalism, within the frame-work of the capitalist system, might bring the Irish workers to realize the utter futility of reformist policies, and an appreciation of the case for Socialism?

The reformist Labour parties fail miserably because of their *basic unsound economic premise.* Applying themselves to the treatment of EFFECTS, they leave untouched the CAUSE of poverty, insecurity, and war: CAPITALISM.

Capitalism has developed the economic resources of the world to that extent where Socialism, from the economic standpoint is a practical possibility NOW. The only barrier is the lack of a Socialist majority, organized for the conquest of political power and the establishment of the Socialist system of society. Consequently we consider that the task of Socialists, and the Socialist Party, is to use all means at their disposal for the making of Socialists. We contend that it is impossible to change society through the medium of reforms, and that the change to Socialism must be effected at *the base of society,* which is the ownership of the means of production (at present in the hands of the capitalist class). To convert these means of living into the common property of society and to create a classless and wageless society where "each will give according to his ability and take according to his needs" is the only true perspective of Socialists.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND "THE BORDER QUESTION"

This question has proved a fatal stumbling block to all the reformist parties. The capitalists (British and native) have found it convenient for the purpose of distracting the attentions of the worker from an ever more evil border — the class barrier between those "who own but do not produce" and those "who produce but do not own". While the Southern

capitalist — for the benefit of the Nationalist worker — hurls invective and abuse at "British Imperialism" he is not immune to an investment in the sweated labor of suffering natives in the British South African Gold Mines, or any other "good" investment, British or otherwise. Nor is the "Ulster" capitalist any more "patriotic"; a dividend of 15% in Eire is preferable to one of 12% in "Ulster".

Nor is this the only thing they have in common: they (both Eire rancher and "Ulster" linen-lord) have a common interest in concealing from the workers the "great money trick," and they would *readily unite* in face of a threat from Socialism. In a word, apart from any ostensible quarrel, they are class-brothers with a common interest: THE EXPLOITATION AND SUBJECTION OF THE WORKING CLASS, EVERYWHERE.

To talk of uniting on "political questions" with any section of this exploiting class is, therefore, sheer nonsense. Why should we, for example, at the cost of alienating one section of our own class, make common front with reactionary Nationalist elements, the native petty-bourgeoisie, the landed gentry, the ex-Imperialists and Fascists who'd prefer a dog, of any nationality, to an Irish Socialist? Why help to change a flag and leave the old enemy, capitalism, with its poverty and exploitation and its CLASS BORDER? Why should Socialists assist a clique that even now are eager to speculate with the blood of Irish workers in the markets of international catastrophe?

There is only one way to remove Borders — borders of class, race, or ideology — and that is through the medium of Socialism. The excuse of Irish Labour leaders — who are not of course opposed to class society — that they must "clean up the national question" before they attune the minds of the people to social (?) questions is so much political eyewash. No matter what means they employ, other than Socialism, they CANNOT solve "the Irish question." Certainly they might banish the Custom huts and oust Stormont but the Border in the last resort is one of ideologies.

The "national" State is an anachronism that will have no place in a Socialist world and we hold that the Irish workers' struggle should be in conjunction with the struggle of the workers international, *against the international border of class and privilege, against capitalism* — FOR SOCIALISM.

The aim and object of the Socialist Party of Ireland is:

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of society as a whole: SOCIALISM.

For further particular concerning the S. P. I., write: Secretary, Belfast Branch, S. P. I., care of 29 Lincoln Avenue, Belfast, N. Ireland.

May, 1949

"Very Hungry" Man Leaps From Bridge

NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C. May 30 (CP)—A suicide note which contained the phrase "I am very hungry" was left by a man who plunged 150 feet from the Pattullo bridge here Saturday. Police are seeking the body of a 58-year-old Vancouver man, M. J. Moran.

A witness said the man leapt over the railing after throwing off his coat, which had the note tucked in a pocket.

An election is in full swing with both Liberals and Tories promising bread and milk free and the C. C. F. willing to give honey as well and a poor devil can't wait or maybe doesn't believe it.

The last words of many of the exploited through the ages "I asked for bread and they gave me a stone," Biblical days.

"I am very hungry", in 1949.

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