Can they do this, however? Socialists give but one answer — an emphatic one — No! And the Socialists give proof of the impotency of such parties to deal with the situation. Before the problem of poverty can be tackled, its cause must first be known and understood. Now, it's quite obvious to anyone of normal intelligence that the world to-day *can* provide sufficient food, clothing and shelter for *all* of its inhabitants. Overwhelming evidence of this is to be had from the experience of the recent devastating war which gripped the world for nearly six years. During that period a relatively small minority were alone engaged in the production of the necessities of life, yet huge armies, navies and air-forces were housed, clothed and fed — not to speak of the millions of workers engaged in the production of armaments plus myriads of officials, etc., playing no part whatsoever in production. Further proof can be gleaned from the reports submitted by such people as Seebohm Rowntree, John Boyd-Orr, and other capitalist economists. But why, you may ask, if such things are true — and even our capitalist newspapers recount many instances of where food was (and is) destroyed wilfully — we yet read of statements like the following? "Three-quarters of the world's population, including 30 million children, are suffering from food shortages, according to an estimate from M. Andre Mayer, former chairman of the executive of the World Food and Agricultural Association." (*Evening Herald,* Dublin 7/13/48.)

If, then, the problem of production has been overcome — what? Does the fault lie in distribution? Ah! but here's where the "snag" comes in: You cannot distribute what you do not own — even if you have produced it. Socialists claim, substantiate, and prove conclusively that it is this private ownership of the means of production and distribution by a privileged few which gives that few the power to doom the great majority in society to a life of insecurity, poverty and misery, intermingled, every few years, with the horrors of a capitalist bloodbath.

There are many contradictions to be found in the world to-day; but one in particular which Socialists seek at all times to have explained is this: If all wealth is socially produced, why is it not socially owned? Men and women of the working class play their part in producing this wealth, yet having done so, they are quite content to hand over the greater portion of it to a parasitic minority who are totally divorced from all production. This is a contradiction which surely needs explaining, and on its explanation rests the whole future of mankind. Will man arise from his slumber, live as befits a human-being, and partake of the fruits of a bountiful earth — or shall he, as hitherto, continue to be a mere beast of burden, fettered more effectively by the chains of wage-slavery than the serf of old?

This is our modern, capitalist, society — composed of two distinct classes, classes in opposition to each other. The capitalist class owning the land, factories, railways, etc., and the working class who own nothing but their power to labor, and this they must sell if they wish to go on "living." And now, in Eire — what role does the Irish Labor Party play in this class-struggle? On whose side are their forces aligned? The Irish Labor Party plumps for the capitalists — make no mistake about this. Like their "comrades-in-arms", Fine Gael, Clann-na-Poblachta and Clann-na Talmhan, and National Labor (the present Irish Coalition Government parties), the Labor Party hold the divine rights of private property sacred. Like the others, *they* have pledged themselves to administer capitalism.

It matters not to them that wage-labor creates no property for the laborer. Many Irish workers have been led astray by the one-time revolutionary speeches of men like Wm. Norton (the L. P. leader), now Deputy-Prime Minister plus the portfolio of Social Welfare. Was it not this same Mr. Norton who said: "But under our present social system, greater productivity means a lower wage for the worker, higher profit for the owner of industry." (*Labor News,* Dublin, 1/29/38)? Aye, but that was ten years ago, and many a family has passed under the portals of St. Kevin's Institute (a Dublin workhouse) since then. To-day, a wiser, more respectable, Mr. Norton joins with his Cabinet colleagues of the other parties in extolling the worker to produce more. He sings seconds to this recent wail of Mr. Morrissey, the Minister for Industry and Commerce: "If we fail to increase our production, we cannot maintain our present standards of employment, wages or living." (*Irish Times,* Dublin 11/4/48). And to quote the man of the moment himself, the Prime Minister, Mr. John Costello: "If our national income becomes stagnant, if we refuse to work hard and produce more, social security becomes merely a delusion and a deception." (Source as above.)

But what was that you said about production under the present system, Comrade Norton? ("Oh, damn these Socialist fellows anyway! Where do they dig up those old papers from? After all, a fellow has to live . . .") Sure, you've got a right to live, Mr. Deputy-Prime Minister — but not on the backs of the Irish working class. And say, Bill, does a blush ever darken those rosy fat cheeks of yours when you sit down at those well-filled tables with "John" (Costello) and "Sean" (McBride)? But seriously, Bill, *do* you ever really blush? Because you weren't very complimentary you know back in '38 to those same personages you rub friendly shoulders with now. Remember when you said: "This Govt. (Fianna Fail), like its predecessor (Fine Gael — yes, John Costello's party), is implementing the capitalist system of society. Its policy betokens that it has not made and is not making any serious break with the long capitalist tradition here." (*Labor News,* 1/29/38.) ("Damn that paper again! Who published it, any way?") The Irish Labor Party, Mr. Norton.

No doubt that other stalwart of the Labor Party, Alderman Martin O'Sullivan, felt like throwing out his chest when, speaking to a motion for the abolition of Old-aged Pensions' Means Test, involving an expenditure of £12 million, he said: "As one of those who sponsored that motion may I say that even through it did involve an expenditure of £12 million, it was for a good purpose, namely, to raise the social condition of one of the most deserving section of the community." (Parl., Report, col. 1415. 6/25/46.) But did he draw in his chest again and cover his face with shame when he heard the High Priest of the Labor Party cry out that "the country" couldn't afford a mere £3 million — the sum required to abolish the Means Test at present (*Irish Independent,* Dublin, 7/30/48)?

Men and women of the working class, if you are waiting for parties of the calibre of the Irish Labor Party to lead you to happiness, you will wait in vain. Put your trust in leaders and you will suffer the fate of the poor sheep — you'll be sheared. There is but one solution to your problems, and that is Socialism. Capitalism cannot work in *your* interests. Let them call it Nationalization, Vocationalism, or what you will — let them hire as commercial travellers, The Nortons, The McBrides, or The Costellos, the result will be the same: Cake and cream for the Bosses, the bread crumbs and sour milk for YOU.

Workers of Ireland, it is your historic mission, in alliance with your fellow-workers everywhere, to organize for your emancipation! When your brothers elsewhere are ready to cast off the shackles of capitalism, let ye not be found wanting. A full life where production will be carried on for *use* and not for profit, and where you shall have an opportunity at last to share in the fruits of your labor — this life awaits you. Cast from off your backs the parasites and lick-spittles and toadies of this superfluous and decadent class — the capitalist class! Stand up on your feet, organize and fight, and taste the wine of life — under Socialism.

— A. FAHY (*Dublin Socialist Group.*)