

Manifesto of Revolutionary Socialist Party of Ireland

TO THE IRISH WORKING CLASS:

Fellow Workers,—There has not been a cause in Ireland for which Irish workers have not fought on the side of the oppressed against the oppressors. The time has at last come when they must fight for their own—for the emancipation of their class. The time has come when we must organize towards the establishment of our liberation from the wages system which exploits our human power to labor and produce wealth.

If Ulster Unionism prevails there will still remain an Irish working class. If Sinn Fein prevails there will still be an Irish working class. There will still remain an Irish master class, content to be masters of Irish human beings.

Let us determine that we who produce all that is produced in Ireland—that we who make Ireland habitable and fertile shall not longer yield the produce of our labor to the masters who whip us with the tyranny of wages. Let us resolve that we shall no longer “build and another inhabit—sow and another reap,” but that we shall make Ireland a Socialist Republic, wherein shall dwell no parasite nor profit-taker and all will contribute to the needs of all and the harmony of the commonwealth.

Irish Labor has been organized to a high percentage during the last two years particularly. All over Ireland are trade union branches. On the basis of “increased wages,” workers have organized. The working class represents the vast majority of the people, and yet, even with “increased wages,” its standard of living never exceeds the bare subsistence level and never will as long as the wages system endures, because wages, or the purchasing prices of human labor are always measured by the employing class according to the minimum level of quarrying and sustaining the wage laborer.

James Connolly pointed out that “Capitalism is the most foreign thing in Ireland.” It has now become the most obsolete because the national, or mass mind of the rank and file see far beyond it in their conception of industrial democracy. They respond with an irrepressible fellowship to the new economic order with which Russia has begun to deluge the vile tyrannies of the capitalist system of the world.

Capitalism, which originated in aggrandizement and wholesale expropriation, has endured into the warfare of exhaustion.

We can dispense with the capitalist. We cannot dispense with labor and the power to produce wealth.

Only the working class possesses this power. The working class of the world has begun to assert this power.

The working class of Ireland is ripe for the same assertion.

The leaders of official Labor have failed during the revolutionary years of 1917-1919 to formulate or direct an economic policy upon the basis of the emancipation of the exploited Irish people.

They have now admitted their failure and claim that, as leaders, it is their function to be led by the rank and file.

Let us lead them! Let us see to it that they become the obedient servants of the class whose interests they advocate. Let us point the way and see to it that they neither impede nor fail us, but that they march side by side with us in fidelity to the magnificent cause of our emancipation. Remember! There is but one thing to destroy—capitalism; one thing to construct—Socialism.

It is impossible for us to take immediate control of the land of Ireland—the industries of Ireland because the existing organization of the workers is based on surface trade union safeguards and reform of present conditions.

Reform is no use to us. We require a revolution of the existing economic order, so that the many who have-not shall come into control and possession, and the few who have all shall become

(From “The Socialist,” June 5)

dispossessed of all but the right to co-operate with us on terms of mere human equality.

We must organize ourselves into workers' committees round the factories, farms and workshops where we are employed, and from these workers' committees elect in all the existing Parliamentary Divisions of Ireland Workers' Councils, i.e., councils of working men and women, to whom we can depute the fulfilment of the social and industrial needs of the special areas which elect them.

By organizing on these lines we shall be liberating the local forces of the Irish working class. We shall create the incentive towards control and ownership of the means of production and social life, which at present, in the hands of the master class, are used as the means wherewith to exploit the mass of the Irish people. Fellow-workers, it is in the power of the rank and file to do this. It is in our power to transform existing organizations of our class out of their present appeals for “increased wages” and similar palliatives into forces which will function toward control of the means of life, and establish us once and for all above our present slavery into a moral standard of human life. Let us be fearless. In liberating the Irish working class we are lifting Ireland into the lofty purpose of the Russian pioneers who have turned the base greed of the European war for possession of fresh markets of exploitation into the tremendous redemption of the world's working class.

Let us contribute our heroism to the class war which is spreading over the world, so that from “generation to generation” those who come after us will do homage to our courage in an era of human release and golden opportunity, an era wherein the common and equal peoples of the future will tread across the memories of our age of degradation into the happy triumphs of human attainment such as the world has never heretofore known.

CRITICAL CHRONICLE

Reaction and Ruin in Russia.

(From the “Justice,” London, June 12, a Bitterly Anti-Bolshevik Journal.)

The capitalist Press seems to consider that Admiral Kolchak has done a good stroke in agreeing to acknowledge Russia's responsibility for her debt to Western Europe. We object to this view altogether. That is for the Constituent Assembly, when it meets again, to decide. We hope and believe it will vote against accepting any such ruinous charge upon Russia. To pay interest upon Russia's liabilities will call for not less than £100,000,000 a year. It is impossible for the Russian Republic to discharge her indebtedness to that amount without hopelessly ruining the Russian peasantry. That is the bare truth, and the sooner France and Great Britain face it the better. Before the war the drain from Russia to Western Europe, as we have stated before, was £55,000,000 a year. This without any commercial return. The total exports of Russia were £160,000,000. One-third of this export—very nearly—was capitalist “drain” of agricultural produce. Even so, Russia had to meet her payments from 1909 to 1914 by extra borrowing. No wonder the peasantry were being crushed by taxation. How is Russia to pay double the pre-war amount? Perhaps Mr. Winston Churchill will tell us? Meanwhile, we are told, on good authority, that some of the richest portions of Russia are being grabbed by international financiers with the aid of the War Office.

Let us not dream now, but arise and act. Let us act quickly. Let us escape from a neutrality which supports the master class of the world and take our stand firmly with the working class of the world in the class war which is thundering over the earth. All power to the Workers' Councils of Ireland and the speedy emancipation of the Irish working class!

On behalf of the National Executive of the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Ireland. Thomas Pennycook (Nat. Sec.)

THE IRISH SOCIALIST.

The disruption in the Dublin Trades Council must bring great glee to the master class, which revels in the disunity of the working class. The rank and file need not be disturbed. When officials fall out, the rank and file has a chance of self-determination and when moderate and reactionary elements squabble and intrigue amongst themselves, honest revolutionaries come a little closer to direct action.

It is noteworthy that the expressions of the revolutionary workers have, since Connolly's death, ceased to emanate from Dublin. Limerick proved beyond all the arguments of the superficial that Dublin is no longer the source or inspiration of the Irish working class. It was Dublin which supported the Berne International. The rest of Ireland will go to Moscow. And no matter how much official Labor may try to camouflage its international purposes, facts remain beyond all erasion, and prove that they hailed Berne as the true International. They put their faith in the Berne Conference just as official Sinn Fein put its faith in the Peace Conference at Paris. The common people of Ireland are now aware that Berne and Paris formed a coalition, which served no interests of the master class. They have turned their eyes towards the home of the Soviets, to the pioneers who have set the world's workers out to make the world safe, or the only meaning of the phrase, for the proletarian dictatorship.

Selma Sigerson.

BOLSHEVIKS' ANSWER TO NANSEN.

The Russian Government sends out from Tsarkoe Selo the following radio showing their attitude to Dr. Nansen's proposition:—

An American radio sent from Lyons on May 14, states that the answer given by Soviet Russia to Fridtjof Nansen concerning his plan for the revictualling of Russia signifies the failure of this offer. This statement is all the more astounding considering that the Soviet Government not only did not reject the Nansen offer, but has even conformed to all the propositions embodied in it with but one exception—the question of suspension of hostilities, as this is a purely political question, and should be discussed directly by the Governments concerned.

The promptness with which the American T. S. F. has seized on this reply to accuse the Soviet Government of having refused such a humanitarian offer shows not only an absolute lack of good faith, but also shows that the Allied Governments' chief aim is still the same—to do as much harm as they possibly can to the Russian Soviet Republic.

We repeat once more that the Russian Soviet Government replied affirmatively and categorically, even to an expression of gratitude, to Dr. Nansen.

Humanite, May 22.

Propaganda meetings every Sunday in Empress theatre, corner Gore and Hastings, 8 p.m.