THE IRISH QUESTION

and the British People

A PLEA FOR A NEW APPROACH

by C. DESMOND GREAVES

20p.

A WOLFE TONE BI-CENTENARY PAMPHLET, PUBLISHED BY CONNOLLY PUBLICATIONS LTD., LONDON

FOUR PROVINCES BOOKSHOP
244-246 Grays Inn Road
London WC1X 8JR
Tel: 01-833 3022

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PREFACE

TO many an Englishman, Ireland is still a nearby country of which he knows nothing. To the tourist a glittering capital, a romantic coastline and a lot of old songs, to the civil engineering contractor it is a handy place to send the man-hunters when labour runs short. To the propagandist of Empire-turned-Commonwealth it is a skeleton to be kept in a double-locked press, something nefandous, not to be spoken of. All sorts of ideas are entertained about it, among them that it is useless to try and understand it at all.

This book does not pretend to tell you "all about" Ireland. It is concerned with one aspect only, namely the "Irish question" taken in its well-established literal sense. **Ireland** is primarily a matter for the Irish people. The **"Irish Question"** on the contrary is of common concern to both British and Irish peoples. Only by understanding the "Irish Question" is it possible to see through the fog of misconceptions surrounding the subject of Ireland. And it is hoped to prove not only that Ireland is as comprehensible as any other country, but that a comprehension of the "Irish Question" is, or should be, an essential part of the mental equipment of every politically educated Englishman.

This is so not from a sentimental attachment to a beautiful country, but in his own interests. For his government has, in its dealings with Ireland, created a set of circumstances which affect him.

What, then, is the Irish Question? It is the question of whether the sovereignty of that country is vested in the Irish people or in the British Crown. It is as simple as that. The issue is joined, has been joined for nearly 800 years, between Irish democracy and British aristocracy. Which side should be taken by British democracy? Should it support those who claim that England has the right to some kind of overlordship over Ireland, or should it actively assist the Irish people to assert their complete independence? This is an issue of considerable importance for example to the British trade union movement, representing as it does, so to speak, the bone and muscle of British democracy in all practical affairs.

THIS is a partisan book, but I imagine no apology is needed. Libraries have been written to prove the identity of interest between British democracy and the "establishment." In the writer's view such an identity does not exist. There is no more reason why the British people should accept the view of their ruling class on the subject of Ireland than on anything else. Perhaps the British people can afford to be neutral? By the time he has got through the material collected here, it is hoped that the British reader will have rejected that possibility also. The consequences of British imperial interference in Ireland strike back over the narrow seas and pervert the course of progress in England as well.

Hence the axe must be laid to the root. There would be no such thing as an "Irish Question" but for a British claim to overlordship in Ireland. The "Irish Question" came into existence with that claim, and can only disappear when it is extinguished in word and deed. There will continue to be an "Irish Question" until Ireland is free, as one of her great patriots put it, "from the sod to the sky."

What view does the British Government hold? Two are possible. It could not be put past those whose leading newspaper editorially advised Welshmen to abandon the Welsh language, to dream of the complete assimilation of Ireland to the "British" nation. But it is palpably no more than a dream. The only alternative is the indefinite continuance of the "Irish Question."

This means that people who realise that they cannot settle the matter in their own favour still resist a settlement in favour of their opponents. Hence their desire to keep British democracy, which provides the blood and treasure for every Conservative act of folly in the realm of foreign affairs, as ill-informed and confused as possible. And hence the pretence

that the "Irish Question" does not exist. To resist the only possible settlement is the objective; to deny the existence of the question is the means. Assertions that the "Irish Question" is insoluble have the same significance. The only available solution being rejected, the problem becomes "insoluble."

The main purpose of this book is therefore to answer a question appertaining to this position, namely, "What is the policy of the rulers of Britain towards Ireland, and what should consequently be the attitude and actions of the British people?"

THE most striking example of the claim to overlordship in Ireland is the fact that the country is cut in two, and the British flag flies over six counties in the northeast. The focal point of the "Irish Question" is therefore that territory. That is where the claim is staked and the overlordship performed. It is therefore necessary to examine the legal status of the claim, and the social and economic results of the overlordship. That is attempted in the first two chapters. Economics is the "dismal" science, and the dryness of law is proverbial. To disentangle facts that the rulers of Britain do not want their people to know is not always easy, and the result is not always any more easy reading that it is pleasant reading. The aim of the first chapter is to establish beyond the possibility of doubt that the Westminster Parliament is legally responsible for the entire management and control of the northeastern area, and that any constitutional changes, and most economic changes of any moment, require the repeal or amendment of an Act of that Parliament, namely the **Government of Ireland Act,** 1920. It is necessary to establish this firmly since Tory propaganda constantly seeks to invest northeastern Ireland with a spurious autonomy which it simply does not possess.

The second chapter is designed to uncover the essence of the relationship between Britain and Ireland today. That relationship is imperialist. But it does not appear to be so on the surface. It is necessary to go to some pains to uncover the real economic relationship between the two countries and to demonstrate something not dissimilar to the "neo-colonialism" complained of by many newly independent nations. To find a single term to define this relationship in the case of Ireland is not easy. Consequently I have sometimes spoken of "neo-colonialism," "neo-imperialism," "imperial financial relations," etc; too much store should not be set by the terminology; the meat is in the argument. The result of the second chapter is to show that the economic problems of Northern Ireland, which form the back-cloth to its political difficulties, arise not merely from the **policies** of successive Westminster governments in United Kingdom affairs, but from the **constitutional framework** in which they operate, that is to say from the **policy towards Ireland as a whole.**

These two chapters are the only ones which should cause any difficulty. The points made in them are essential to the account that follows. The Irish reader will assimilate them easily enough, but the British reader might be well advised to give them a general "once through," and then return for a second reading.

IT has been suggested to me that this book should really be called "The Northern Ireland Question," since so much more attention is given to the six northeastern counties than to the remainder of the country. That there is required a much more thorough investigation of "neo-imperialism" in the twenty-six counties of the Republic cannot be disputed. But there is an immediate need for treatment of the question as it affects Northern Ireland, because of the advancing political movement which exists there.

But there is another reason. A book was published by two university gentlemen, Messrs Barritt and Carter, during the period the material for this one was being assembled. It was called "The Northern Ireland Problem, a study in group relations." Leaving aside whether there is any difference between a "question" and a "problem" (perhaps it might be hazarded that if you ask the wrong questions you are landed with a problem) the title "Northern Ireland Question" has not been rejected merely to avoid a clash of title.

It is the case of this book that apart from the "Irish Question," namely the issue of sovereignty between Irish democracy and the British aristocracy, the "Northern Ireland Problem" does not and could not exist. In other words, a study of "group relations" unaccompanied by a study of the international relations which created and maintain them is little more than a waste of time. It is a performance as medically useful as measuring the distance between spots on the face of a smallpox patient, and can be guaranteed to provide neither diagnosis, prognosis nor cure. The "Northern Ireland Problem" is merely the expression of the non-solution of the "Irish Question," and in the nature of things reproduces in microcosm all the issues of the "Irish Question" while remaining explicable only in terms of the question as a whole.

AS a result of this fundamental opposition of approach the present work has some features of a reply to Messrs Barritt and Carter. For the same reason it covers a wider field at the expense of much detail which they carefully assembled and, in my opinion, grievously misunderstood. Undoubtedly they believed they had brought to their study of "group relations" the highest degree of scholarly detachment, and if this had been possible no doubt they would have achieved it. But their preconceptions defeated them. Their minds seem to have moved through categories which have no existence in Irish history. Hence all that emerged in the result was the weaving of a new liberal-seeming overcoat which the Unionists will be able to put on when nationalist criticism rains too heavily on them.

Nowhere is this shown more clearly than in their first chapter, "Two views of history." In the first line one reads that the Protestant community in the six counties has both British and Irish loyalties. The same is not however asserted of the Catholic community. What is the logical conclusion? Surely that between two poles of allegiance, British and Irish, a small community is being pulled backwards and forwards; in other words the issue is between Britain and Ireland. Yet throughout the same chapter, Messrs Barritt and Carter, while disclaiming the intention of counterposing a Catholic to a Protestant view of history, in practice do precisely that.

But of course, it is all completely unsatisfactory. It is the show without Punch. It is not permissible to pose the seemingly firm views of the Catholic community against the divided loyalties of the Protestants. What is needed is to set the firm views of the Catholics against the equally firm views of opponents whose loyalties are not divided. Then we can see what it is all about. And of course, the two firm standpoints which run throughout the history of Anglo-Irish relations from 1179 to the present day are first the view of the British aristocracy (whether feudal, mercantile, industrial or financial) that Britain is entitled to overlordship in Ireland, and the opposing view that it has not.

By failing to analyse the causes of the divided loyalities of the Protestant community, Messrs Barritt and Carter keep their enquiry within the bounds of Northern Ireland, but lose all possibility of explaining what they discover. This difficulty is shown again and again throughout their book. Likewise through beginning with "views" of history, and not with history itself, they reduce what should be examinations of fact to studies of opinions. The reader comes out at the same door wherein he went.

AN attempt is made in the following pages not to dwell on what people think of each other, but to concentrate on discovering what their real relations actually are. The result is much less comfortable for Unionism and the British Government than that reached by Messrs Barritt and Carter. And it has the advantage of appealing to what is Irish in the Protestants and holding out the prospect of an end to their divided loyalties. That end can only be in a united independent Ireland living on amicable and equal relations with a Britain which has relinquished all imperial claims. Such a settlement of the Irish question might be hard for the Tory party, but it corresponds to the interests of the overwhelming majority of the British people.

In collecting the material I have enjoyed the co-operation of members of a number of political and other organisations in the six counties of Northern Ireland, so many indeed that it would be impossible to mention them all by name. I would like however to express special thanks to Miss Elizabeth Sinclair of Belfast who indicated valuable sources of material on industrial and economic matters, as well as to Mr. Cahir Healy, M.P., who answered all my questions with patience and provided me with much material. I also received help from members of the Republican movement and the N.I. Council for Civil Liberty. I have checked this material for myself and am satisfied that the facts as told me are substantially correct. I alone am responsible for the conclusions drawn. Finally I should like to express my appreciation to Mr. Anthony Coughlan of Dublin, who made several long journeys seeking material to which I had no access, and to Messrs R. H. W. Johnston and Sean Redmond for valuable suggestions and help in preparing the manuscript for the press.—*LONDON, 17th March, 1963.*

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CHAPTER ONE

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

THE legal status of Northern Ireland is in dispute. Article II of the Constitution of the Irish Republic states that

"The national territory consists of the whole of Ireland, its islands and territorial seas."

But Article III recognises the physical fact that the Dublin Government does not rule the disputed territory.

"Pending the re-integration of the National territory, and without prejudice to the right of the Parliament and Government established by this constitution to exercise jurisdiction over the whole of that territory, the laws enacted by that Parliament shall have the like area and extent of application as the laws of Saorstat Eireann and the like extra-territorial effect."

Thus we have *de jure*, all Ireland owing allegiance to the Parliament in Dublin, as the only constituted expression of the will of the Irish people, and *de facto* the inoperability of this principle in an excluded area.

The Saorstat Eireann, by reference to whose boundaries the area of the Republic is defined, took over unchanged the territory of "Southern Ireland," which was defined in the British **Government of Ireland Act, 1920,** as consisting of all Ireland with the exception of six north-eastern counties, Antrim, Armagh, Derry, Down, Fermanagh and Tyrone. These form the area defined in the same Act as "Northern Ireland."

The Republic therefore defines the area of its actual jurisdiction in terms of the **Government of Ireland Act,** and the partition enforced upon the country by means of that British Act.

IT would be difficult for anything to be more clear. But even so, attempts are continually being made to place responsibility for partition on Irish shoulders, and even to pretend that such responsibility is admitted.

Mr. F. H. Newark[1] refers to the delegation sent by Dail Eireann (the Irish revolutionary Parliament established in January 1919) to negotiate with the British Government in 1921. The delegates signed articles of agreement restricting the jurisdiction of the projected Saorstat Eireann to the territory of "Southern Ireland" as defined in the 1920 Act. But no impartial judge could possible regard this agreement as voluntary.

First, it took place six months **after** Northern Ireland had begun to function as a separate jurisdiction. Partition cannot therefore have been initiated by the articles of agreement. At most the Irish delegation can have accepted a *fait accompli*. Second, the delegation was widely held in Ireland to have exceeded its powers.

Third, it was not unanimous. Fourth, those of its member who signed did so on the explicit threat of Mr. Lloyd George of what he called "immediate and terrible war.' And finally, they were assured that partition would be of only temporary duration.

There is therefore no escape. The origin of partition and the phase of Anglo-Irish relations that opened with it, is the **Government of Ireland Act, 1920.** The British Government abandoned the attempt to operate this Act in the territory defined in it as "Southern Ireland" (afterwards the Saorstat and *de facto* territory of the Republic) but was successful in operating it in six north-eastern counties. Successive governments of the Republic have refused to accept this arrangement, and in particular have avoided all international commitments liable to involve diplomatic recognition of the Six-County Government. Hence the policy of more or less strict non-alignment and refusal of participation in N.A.T.O.

REJECTING the Dublin claim to the Six Counties, British law on the other hand holds that the status of Northern Ireland under the **Government of Ireland Act** was not affected by changes taking place in the area defined as Southern

[1] "Ulster under Home Rule" Oxford. 1955. p.28.]

Ireland. In other words, what Dublin accepts *de facto* is the *de jure* position. This view is of course shared by the Government in Northern Ireland, though it finds it convenient for its own purposes to surround the subject with a certain fog.

All therefore meet at one point. Whether by law or merely in fact, according to one's viewpoint, the constitution of Northern Ireland is the **Government of Ireland Act of 1920,** subject to some later amendments of very restricted scope. An examination of the contents of the Act disposes at once of any illusions about autonomy, such as are sometimes loosely claimed by those anxious to invest partition with a popular sanction.

The head of state is the Queen of England, represented by a Governor who has the power to withhold assent from legislation, which then becomes void. The bicameral legislature at Stormont, Belfast, has strictly limited powers which confer nothing resembling sovereignty. It is debarred from legislating on the following "excepted matters," namely, the Crown, peace and war, the armed forces, treaties with foreign states, treason, naturalisation, trade with any place outside Northern Ireland, radio, air navigation, lighthouses, coinage, weights and measures, copyright and patents. It is also forbidden to legislate upon certain "reserved matters" which might under the **Government of Ireland Act** as originally envisaged, at some future date have been transferred to a united Ireland. Whether this was ever seriously contemplated is a matter for historians to debate[2] It did not happen. Consequently Northern Ireland lacks control of the Post Office, savings banks, and about 90 per cent of its own taxation.

Lest there be any lingering doubts as to how matters stand. Article 75 of the **Government of Ireland Act** reads[3]:—

> **"Notwithstanding the establishment of the Parliament of Northern Ireland, or anything contained in this Act, the supreme authority of the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall remain unaffected and undiminished over all persons matters and things in Northern Ireland and every part thereof."**

IN the face of such a provision in the constituent Act it would seem difficult to claim that Northern Ireland possesses anything resembling autonomy. Many would say that here is the definition of a puppet state if ever there was one. Yet there remain intellects daring enough for the most challenging feats.

Under the Act the Northern Ireland Government exercises certain transferred powers which include such matters as justice (including the police), agriculture, land purchase, housing, etc., which bear very directly on the daily lives of the citizens, and consequently distract attention from the imperial framework without which

They derive solely from the constituent Act and can be withdrawn at any time, while Articles 6 and 75 reserve the right to override them if necessary. But the chorus of indignation, accompanied by statesmanlike tut-tuts from Westminster, which greets any suggestion that Parliament should even ask how the Northern Ireland Government is getting on with the powers it has been delegated, seems to betoken a guilty conscience.

The sensitivity is the more remarkable since in its official handbook and public statements Stormont makes great play with its position as an "integral part of the United Kingdom." Its problem is to retain the advantages of this and avoid the disadvantages, which are spirited away by invoking a "federal" constitution in the United Kingdom as a whole. To foster a belief in its federal status would no doubt assist in investing the Northern Ireland Constitution with something of the sacredness of "states rights" in the U.S.A.

But it cannot be sustained. The United Kingdom is not a federation. Northern Ireland sends twelve members to the Westminster Parliament who vote (with the Conservative Party) as freely as any Londoner or Liverpudlian on purely English matters which the Westminster M.P.s find great difficulty in even discussing when they relate to Northern Ireland because they have been "transferred." There is a kind of "one-way federation" by which Tory votes count in London but Labour votes do not affect Northern Ireland.

There have been many instances where Labour Members have wished to raise questions brought to their notice by their constituents, involving grave miscarriages of justice alleged of the six-county Government. On some occasions the Speaker has declined to accept them. On others the Home Secretary has declared such matters beyond his competence, on the grounds that he is only responsible departmentally for the excepted and reserved matters, which of course constitute 90 per cent of the real control of Northern Ireland.

Reminded that under Article 75 of the constituent Act he could act through Parliament, for example by means of a motion, he has replied that "it would not be proper" for him to do so since Article 75 is merely a "general saving clause." It might then be asked what is the value of a saving clause if not to check the possible abuse of the powers which saves. *Feicimid!*

HIS reluctance has proved most encouraging to the Northern Ireland Unionists whose supporters from time to time indulge in a little flag-waving of their own. When in 1962 Mr. Martin Ennals of the National Council for Civil Liberties visited the six counties in order to find out whether there was a *prima facie* case that civil rights were being denied to a minority, and to report upon the desirability or otherwise of the Council's setting up a commission of enquiry, the Unionist "Belfast Telegraph" published an editorial headed "Keep out" and warned the inquisitive Sassenach that "as a people we are now at a stage of development where we can well be left to find our own ways of dealing with any other causes of political controversy."

So were they in 1912, and 1922, as we shall see.

But Mr. Ennals found the abuses so glaring that following his report his committee took the allegations as proved and decided to take action without waiting for further enquiry.

Unionist apologists labour hard to establish that the "transferred powers" confer autonomy on the six counties. If so, then they are magical powers. In hope of sustaining this argument it is sometimes suggested that Article 75 is a dead letter, because it has never been invoked. Some wide-ranging legal minds have sought its fellow in the **"British North America Act"** which is still on the Statute Book but cannot be enforced.

To compare a historically defunct Act with one emergency clause in an Act of which most of the remainder is in daily operation is of course ludicrous. In fact Article 75 is as alive as it ever was. But the Conservative Party would only use it so as to protect the operation of the remainder, that is to say strengthen the hands of the Unionists, not to restrain them. Mr. Newark[4] has no illusions on this subject. "This saving of supreme authority is an 'iron ration' of legislative power which remains on the Statute Book to be used in an emergency." Some of the Unionist apologists who believe that forty years' disuse will rust a provision out of a British Statute, while the power to operate it remains, have reason to hope that they do not suffer the surprise poor Casement got when he was hanged on the Treason Act of 1351.

THE view is sometimes expressed that the Ireland Act of 1949 negates the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, by conferring some kind of extra autonomy on Northern Ireland. Nothing could be further from the truth. The 1949 Act confirms and strengthens the 1920 Act by providing that without the consent of the Northern Ireland Parliament the six counties "shall not cease to form part of His Majesty's Dominions." Certainly this gives security of tenure against a British government with sympathies with the Irish epublic. But it confers no right of secession whatsoever. If a Parliament of Northern Ireland were to be returned with a Nationalist majority and was thereupon to prepare for withdrawal from Her Majesty's Dominions, either by setting up as a Republic or by joining an existing one, such legislation would be *ultra vires* and of no effect. That would be the time the old dog, so long sleeping it was thought dead, would show itself an animal with good teeths.

[2]In May 1916 Mr. Lloyd George wrote to Sir Edward Carson, "We must make it clear that Ulster does not, whether she wills it or not, merge with the rest of Ireland.]

[3]As amended by the Free State consequential Provisions Act, 1922.]

[4]Op. cit. p.30.]

It should also be noted that if the twenty-six counties were to rejoin the Commonwealth and thereby become once more a part of Her Majesty's Dominions, the Ireland Act, 1949 virtually disappears. The Unionist might note therefore that British imperialism's cupboard love for its Ulster concubine only appeared when its Leinster wife left it. A restoration of marital relations could put things back where they were and the British Parliament could vote Northern Ireland into a 32-county republic without by-your-leave.

ONLY once has the Governor refused assent to a Bill of the Northern Ireland Parliament. This was the Local Government Act of 1922. His decision, taken on instructions from Whitehall, drew a storm of protest. "We must be masters in our own house," declared the Unionists. But this was no declaration of independence. The first section of the Act abolished proportional representation, which had been retained in the Government of Ireland Act as a protection for the Nationalist minority. The second section gave the Minister power to alter the boundaries and numbers of electoral divisions. Gerrymandering was born.

These changes had some bearing on the question of religious discrimination since the boundaries were redrawn with direct reference to the religion of the electors. Such legislation was prohibited under the Constituent Act. The British Government had every sympathy with the Ulster Unionists, but had to decide whether to go back on solemn assurances at a time when this might easily influence to its detriment events shaping in the Saorstat south of the border. The balance taken, conscience was muffled. But instead of a brave defiance of the mighty British Empire by brave little Ulster, what took place was a shabby arrangement among Conservatives to eliminate their political opponents from local government.

The reason why the saving powers of the British Government have not been used is therefore that Northern Ireland (under Unionist government since 1920) has never shown the slightest disposition to challenge Unionism at Westminster.[5]

The Stormont Government is **subordinate** not federal in status, and differs from the Yorkshire County Council only in the multiplicity of its trappings and having a smaller population to pay for them. This reality is impressively revealed by the financial relations which subsist between Northern Ireland and Westminster.

THE powers of taxation enjoyed by Stormont are very limited and effect the raising of only 10 per cent of the Northern Ireland revenue. On this subject the Isles and Cuthbert[7] report remarks that these powers are too small to make much difference to the range or scale of industrial development, partly because the main revenue-raising taxes are reserved to Westminster, and also because of restrictions imposed on the character of transferred taxation by the Government of Ireland Act.

The reserved taxes, collected by Westminster, include income tax, customs and excise, and the various profits taxes. The level of such taxation is decided at Westminster and the Northern Ireland Government has no power to vary its incidence. Among the considerations a British Chancellor of the Exchequer will have in mind when framing his Budget, the economic problems of his Tory friends in Belfast will no doubt be present. But they will scarcely be foremost. Thus one "credit squeeze" after another has selected Northern Ireland for its direst effects, without convincing Westminster of the need for making exceptions, still less stinging Stormont to defy Westminster and dare them on Article 75.

Revenue from transferred taxation is applied directly to transferred services. That is to say the money does not leave Northern Ireland. But in it, it is clear that there must be some return of the reserved taxation taken to Britain. This is effected by means of the Joint Exchequer Board, through which Westminster can exercise minute control and supervision over Northern Ireland policy. It is known for example that the Treasury was the obstacle to Northern Ireland's going into the beet sugar business in the period before the Cuban crisis because under existing international agreements the United Kingdom as a whole was permitted no further expansion.

When the Joint Exchequer Board has concluded its deliberations, the whole of the reserved taxation is returned to Northern Ireland in instalments, less a provisionally agreed sum, known as the Imperial Contribution. This is nominally Northern Ireland's share of such imperial expenditure as the Crown, defence, foreign embassies, etc. The Imperial Contribution never leaves Westminster. Those who sometimes pronounce airily that Stormont should "withhold" it, in the event of some dispute with the British Government, fail to appreciate the mechanism by which it is taken. It cannot be "withheld" because it is never held. The Northern Ireland budget is presented in May in order that the effect of the British Budget can be estimated first.

At this stage we need not concern ourselves with the amounts of the various items determined by the Joint Exchequer Board. What is important is the principle that Treasury control is exercised over practically the whole public finances of the six counties, and thereby indirectly over the entire economic life of the area. Control continues through the medium of joint consultations at about fortnightly intervals throughout the fiscal year.

The Westminster Parliament has, in sum, established the Northern Ireland Government, decided and fixed its powers while reserving its own ultimate supremacy, and insisted on checking and supervising practically all its business activities. It can therefore in no way escape its responsibility for what happens in the part of Ireland under its control. The key to the Irish question is to be found in London.

[5 This is not what is widely believed. The British public has been fed with the idea that Northern Ireland is attached by nothing more durable than the free consent of its people, and that all that is required for secession is an Act of the Belfast Parliament. There is no legal justification for this view. If the Belfast Parliament passed a secession Bill, it would be the duty of the Governor to refuse assent pending the repeal of the Government of Ireland Act by Westminster. This repeal would need to be accompanied by a "Consequential Provisions" Act transferring the "excepted powers" to Belfast, and until this became law, it would be entirely within the power of the British Government to make the secession Bill inoperative if an attempt were made to operate it without the Royal assent. For the armed forces are entirely under British orders, and control of air navigation, radio, relations with foreign states and the Post Office confers no mean power. The method of financing Northern Ireland government, as is explained later, places complete financial control in the hands of Westminster. While it cannot be denied that it is possible, indeed desirable, that there should be elected to Westminster a Parliament prepared to give up its control of Northern Ireland, there is at present no sign of it. A few years ago Mr. Sean MacBride asked the British political parties if they would make a declaration that in the event of the six counties wishing to secede they would not stand in their way. Conservatives, Liberals and Labour alike failed to make any such statement. The decision would thus be taken at Westminster in the light of the politics of the day. If the decision must be taken at Westminster the Ireland Act cannot confer autonomy, nor does it.]

[6 In the "Belfast News Letter" of January 28th, 1963 Mr. James Brown, former Unionist M.P. for South Down, demanded the "revision of part of the **Government of Ireland Act, 1920.**" He wrote: "It surely caps the climax of absurdity that here in 1963, with all the alterations in circumstances that have taken place down the years, we should still be operating under Section 4 of the 1920 Act which expressly forbids Stormont to legislate in respect of 14 matters set out therein . . ." Mr. Brown then enumerated the excepted powers. He asserted his continued adherence to the principles of Unionism, and then demanded "relentless pressure on Westminster" like a good nationalist. His letter showed that those Unionists who are prepared to admit it can describe the status of the six-county Government clearly enough. Mr. Brown described it as "subsidiary." And the very fact that "pressure on Westminster" is advocated as a means of revising Section 4, is a clear proof that Section 75 is still effective. Otherwise why not apply the pressure in Belfast? Answer: because the power is not there.]

[7 An Economic Survey of Northern Ireland, H.M.S.O., 1957.]

CHAPTER TWO

THE FACE OF NEO-IMPERIALISM

THE **Government of Ireland Act** was a turning point in the history of these islands. Although it could not be operated in the twenty-six counties, it decided the subsequent history of both parts of Ireland, and remains the basis of Anglo-Irish relations today. It has proved itself a remarkable instrument for producing deadlock and perpetuating bitterness. Inherent in the settlement it imposed are two conflicts, one between Dublin and London, over the sovereignty of the six counties, and the other within the six counties themselves. These are far from uniformly Unionist. One-third of their electorate, including one-third of Belfast, is Nationalist. Policies within the six counties remain firmly bound to their starting point in 1920. Partition (not as Messrs. Barritt and Carter[1] put it the *existence of the Six-County state*) is the supreme issue, and while it remains can be nothing else.

British aims in Ireland have of course not altered. Ever since England's emergence as a mercantile power dependent on access to the Atlantic, what Government controlled Ireland, straddling the western approaches, exceeded in importance any other external matter. The ease with which Wales and Scotland were assimilated encouraged the doctrine of the "Unity of the British Isles,"[2] which figured in the recent Lords debate on Ireland.

That Ireland could not be joined to the English Crown in the same way as the others was learned through centuries of repression and revolt. But it was still regarded as axiomatic that Britain must dominate Ireland when in 1886 Gladstone committed a somewhat reluctant Liberal Party to the repeal of the Union of 1801 and its replacement by Home Rule. His first Home Rule Bill, though the most far-reaching of four similar measures, fell substantially short of restoring the Irish Parliament of 1782. Under that arrangement Dublin had been linked to Westminster through the Crown and a partially shared executive, but enjoyed the all-important control of fiscal policy.

IT is notable that at no time during the period of legislative independence, despite the activities of the Orange order, was it suggested there were two Irelands. There have of course been no further plantations during the last two centuries. Partition likewise had no part in Gladstone's measures. Ireland as a whole was to be tied down much as Northern Ireland is today.

Partition was a Tory conception invented not for the sake of its own possible advantages but in the hope of wrecking Home Rule in the interests of the landlord class. Lord Randolph Churchill boasted of stirring up sectarian feeling in Ulster. The first and second Home Rule Bills were greeted with rioting; the third, which had a strong prospect of success, by talk of a Provisional Government to hold nine counties (sheer rhodomontade, of course) parading of armed volunteers and a successful club-room mutiny in the army. The Liberals were not loth to yield. The Nationalists, on whom they were dependent, protested. The theory of two Irelands was then invented. It goes back not to ancient history, as some pretend, but to the time when it became Conservative policy to exclude one part of Ireland from the operation of Home Rule as part of a plan to make Home Rule impossible.

The thinking of that time has curiously impressed itself on Unionist mythology. "We will not have Home Rule," declared the Covenanters who thereupon announced themselves, through their leader, Sir Edward Carson, willing to march from Belfast to Cork "even if not one of us came back." Pretending to take this nonsense seriously, the Conservatives cheered back "Ulster must not be coerced." From 1801 to 1912 literally dozens of Coercion Acts had been passed at Westminster and applied in Ireland. Only when faced with the landlords' revolt did the Tory party discover its new squeamishness.

BUT from 1920 onward the old fire-eating slogans are heard no more. The preservation of what it has gained becomes the object of counter-revolution. But tradition cannot be so easily torn by the roots. The defence of the **Government of Ireland Act** is accompanied with defiant gestures of "Ulster" separatism, the real meaning of which is that British democracy is flouted in the name of loyalty to Britain.

The measure of independence permitted by the 1920 Act was of course so modest as to be acceptable only to those who did not want independence at all. When Lloyd George failed to impose his settlement on the whole of Ireland came the parting of the ways. The old aims had to be pursued by new means. Britain had to consent to a politically-independent state in Ireland. One part of Ireland went one way, the other another. It is natural therefore that comparisons should continually be drawn, and to this day the standards of wages, employment or democracy in the Republic are constantly quoted as justification or criticism of conditions in the six counties. Thus is the one-ness of Ireland admitted even by those who deny it.

The British Government did not now withdraw attention from the twenty-six counties. Imperialism is not parochial and its representatives never seriously believed in the humbug of two Irelands. The first aim was to make Northern Ireland secure. Militarily Britain looked after this herself. Politically the task devolved upon her agents, the Northern Ireland Government. This arrangement still operated satisfactorily to Britain during the second world war, and continues today. Mr. Cyril Falls[3] as recently as 1955 warned against relinquishing direct military control of Northern Ireland even in the event of the Republic's adhering to N.A.T.O. His grounds were that the duties of membership of the United Kingdom provided "less latitude in interpretation" than those of membership of an alliance of sovereign states.

The way actualities are glossed over as time passes is amusingly illustrated by Mr. Falls's account of the conscription issue. He writes[4] "The Northern Ireland Government is thus excluded from initiative or responsibility in the matter of defence, either in preparation or in action. When conscription for military service was introduced in Great Britain the Northern Ireland Government requested that it should be extended to Northern Ireland. The British Government refused on political grounds." This is quite true. But what is omitted is that the "political grounds" arose from mass demonstrations and indignation meetings in the Nationalist area. The British Government was trying to persuade the twenty-six county Government to abandon neutrality. The issue was thus decided between the Irish people and the paramount power.

BUT despite its military concern with Northern Ireland, the British Government was concerned to preserve every vestige of her former position in the Saorstat area. This should be borne in mind when comparisons are made. What it available for comparison is not an entirely free country, still less a united free country.

While abrogating the Government of Ireland Act in favour of the representatives of Dail Eireann, the British ruling class cried more than their hurt really warranted. Observers might have been excused thinking the whole fabric of Empire crumbling to dust.

They lost most of the reserved and excepted powers, which passed to Dublin. But they kept the oath of allegiance, generally believed to preclude neutrality in war. They kept two important naval bases, and the farmers' State mortgage payments (land annuities). All those were held only for a time. But more fundamental than these things, however dear

[1 "The Northern Ireland Problem," Oxford University Press, 1962]

[2 Historically speaking the "Pretanic" islands of Greek geographers included both Britain and Ireland because both were reputedly inhabited by Pretani or Picts. The word "Britannia" seems to have entered Latin from Gaulish and came to be applied to the Roman province alone. The words Pretani and Britain are believed however to be originally one. The principal inhabitants of the two main islands have not been of the one stock for over two thousand years, though of course Picts, Belgae, Gauls, English and Danes have lived simultaneously in both for longer or shorter periods. Contrary to what every British schoolboy believes, the term "British Isles" confers no special right of hegemony on England.]

to the traditions of sectional interests, they preserved their economic control and political influence. The greatest factor in this direction was the existence of partition, which took out 40 per cent of the taxable capacity and one-fifth of the area, correspondingly reducing the internal market, and creating a serious economic disbalance in favour of agriculture.

The currency remained sterling. The Irish banknote issue was backed by large, and many consider excessive, holdings in London. The banking system remained as before, common to Britain and all Ireland, with substantial and even majority representation of British directors on the boards. There was no border for high finance. Free movement of labour and capital assured investors their access to the most profitable openings, while bringing punctually on the British scene the annual crop of human labour-power for consumption in field, factory and pit.

OF the greatest importance was the maintenance of a "garrison class" sometimes direct successors of those who functioned in this capacity as landlords. As Mr. Brian O'Neill[5] put it "landlordism was replaced by bondlordism." The holdings of this class in the British economic system continually increased, though Irish industry starved for want of capital. The consequent shortage of metal products (in particular engineering capital goods) preserved the dependence on England, and gave fullest application to the disparity in prices between agricultural and manufactured goods.[6]

No detailed economic balance has ever been struck, but it seems probable that notwithstanding the large invisible exports of their rentier class, the twenty-six counties to this day can only balance their trade deficit thanks to a net influx of foreign (mostly British) capital. "It is this influx of capital," said Mr. James Dillon in Dail Eireann on February 5th, 1963, "that is maintaining our balance of payments," and he went on to point out the danger of a situation where for every £10 million invested from outside an annual charge of £700,000 was incurred. Incidentally, seven per cent is quite a modest return on capital of this kind and in certain cases Government assistance might have to be taken into account as well.

When the incoming capital takes the form of new investment it may add to the economic strength of the state. When it takes over existing Irish installations, and especially when the capital released by the purchase is invested abroad, it may be purely parasitic, and if leading to closures even retrogressive. It should be noted here that capital imports tend to be different in character from capital exports, in that the imported capital is monopolized already, bringing with it foreign control, whereas the outgoing capital where it does not represent purchase money, consists of accumulation which only becomes monopolistic by export and incorporation in the structure of imperial finance capital. The latter change represents, from an Irish point of view, a loss of control. But to measure the total movement of imperial finance-capital, the figures for capital imports and capital exports, which are subtracted in striking the balance of payments, should rather be added.

Against this conservative side of the picture another must be set. Britain was out to impose her Irish settlement which contained much of what is now called "neo-colonialism." The rich and comfortable were duly accommodating. But an independent Irish state existed. This was controlled by parties still dependent on mass support gained in a recent revolution. The leaders were not yet accustomed to real power, and leaned on London more than was necessary at the outset. They were likewise deprived by the tragedy of civil war of that greatest asset of a newly independent state, the enthusiasm of the people to build a new country. But despite these difficulties the new State became the centre of Irish national aspirations.

Slowly it began to establish itself and show its value. In the early twenties the Shannon electrification scheme was begun. In the thirties Mr. De Valera's Government laid a useful infra-structure without which neutrality in the second world war could never have been sustained. State enterprises produced turf, electricity and beet sugar; the state established shipping and insurance companies. Simultaneously a number of consumption goods industries were set up behind protective tariffs. Rural housing was provided on an unprecedented scale; farm electrification became all but universal. The weakness remained however, that without an adequate industrial base to begin with, industrialisation could not proceed rapidly enough to absorb those disemployed by the mechanisation of farming.

Such have been the two tendencies at work in the twenty-six county area, one imperialist, the other national. The struggle continues to the present, and indeed dominates the political life of the Republic. Broadly speaking the problems of the six counties were not dissimilar, but rather like the same object reversed in a mirror. For Northern Ireland was denied the decisive weapon of a native state with which to tackle its problems.

IT is said that the six counties have spent 40 years living on a British subsidy. The Unionists dispute this. "Ulster more than pays its way," declared Lord Brookeborough in April, 1948, after a run of good years. This reply then gave rise to allegations of exploitation. While it is of great importance to come at the truth, the antithetical approach, either subsidisation or exploitation, misses the fullness of the matter. Those who imposed the partition settlement had a policy towards Ireland as a whole. This being so, the question was how to carry it out, at worst with minimum expense, and at best with maximum profit. The scheme stands or falls as a whole.

If the Northern taxation can feed the Exchequer, all well and good. If not, perhaps there is a net gain from the economic exploitation of the south. Failing both, the deficit must be set against the disadvantages of some alternative policy, including that of abandoning Ireland altogether. It is important to grasp this principle because once Ireland was partitioned, Britain's classical policy did a kind of vanishing trick and cannot be pinned down in relation to only one or other of the two areas.

The fact that Northern Ireland was "an integral part of the United Kingdom" did not confer upon it some special immunity from the effects of British economic imperialism. The loss of its hinderland across the border has been brushed aside as of negligible importance. "The economies of the two parts of Ireland were never complementary," it is declared. Or again it is urged that the Saorstat was to blame for introducing tariffs which the six counties never desired—never desired along with other forms of protection against imperialism. The fact is that the six counties were set on a course of development which ignored the inland areas and drained everything towards Belfast, the one great port and industrial district. Trade with the interior was never taken seriously. The dereliction of Newry, Enniskillen, Strabane and Derry City was matched in Clones, Ballyshannon, and Lifford across the border but no alternative centres could be developed comparable with Dundalk, Ballybay, Sligo and Letterkenny.

The loss of the hinderland did not only mean the depression of the border areas, it meant the abandonment of all prospects bound up with a balanced distribution of industry. It is admitted in the Hall Report[7] that "there is a tendency for industry to require a location within the industrial belt referred to above," namely, Belfast Lough and the Lagan Valley.

Northern Ireland was born with a home Market too small to support a diversified industry. Her industrial imbalance was of a peculiarly intractable kind. She had only two major industries, linen and shipbuilding, which to this day provide about 40 per cent of the total employment in manufacturing industry. These, while vital to the prosperity of the Six Counties have powerful competitors in Great Britain, and produce almost entirely for export. Flax cultivation was virtually abandoned in the nineteen-thirties and both industries became dependent on imported raw materials. The same applied to the important aircraft industry established just before the second world war. Yet the Government of Northern Ireland has no control over trade with any place outside the six counties.

Generally speaking fuel and raw materials are brought from Britain. Here Northern Ireland industry encounters not only monopoly prices but high transport costs. It is alleged that the shipping lines use their strong position to extract unduly

[3"Ulster under Home Rule," p.89]
[4Ibid., p.79]
[5"The War for the Land in Ireland," 1934.]
[6The magnitude of this disparity is shown by the cost of removing it—agricultural subsidies of the order of £400,000,000 in the U.K., £40 million in the Six Counties alone.]

high freight rates. Even the National Coal Board has come under accusations of driving too hard a bargain, and in this instance, the enemy being a nationalised industry, the Stormont Government has not thought it beneath its dignity to enter into public controversy.

Distance from markets imposes a further disability. These facts are signalised in a succession of Government reports on Northern Ireland's economic problems. A part of the United Kingdom, indeed, she is as remote from its heart-beat as the Scottish Highlands. Such are the difficulties imposed by the present Anglo-centric system. The result is as if Northern Ireland's industries paid a special rent. Full employment is only practicable when general demand pushes up prices high enough to provide this rent. Naturally therefore industrial growth has failed to absorb those displaced by the mechanisation of agriculture, though thanks to the fact that only 14½ per cent of the employed workers are engaged in agriculture (as against 40 per cent in the Republic), unemployment derived from this source has been less serious in the six than in the twenty-six counties. Emigration, though running at the high figure of 9,000 per annum, has failed to remove the total natural increase of population except in the small farm county of Fermanagh.

THE operation of the imperialist financial system is not so easily uncovered as in the twenty-six counties. This is because the Northern Ireland balance of payments is wrapped in mystery thanks to its integration with that of Great Britain. Considerable sums may pass from one country to the other without published record. The striking of a balance of payments is never required for the practical purposes of a non-sovereign administration, and public accounts are not presented in such a way as to facilitate it. It is however extremely important to try to get a general picture, even though any estimates so far attempted vary widely. The most that can be done here is to construct a rough model of the **type** of balance of payments that is involved. But quite important conclusions can be drawn from this.

It is not in dispute that the adverse balance of trade in both 1960 and 1961 was about £36,000,000. Unlike the Republic the Six Counties enjoy a favourable balance on manufactures, and the deficit arises from imports of fuel, raw materials, and foodstuffs including animal feed. For the year 1960-61 before paying back to Northern Ireland the residuary share of reserved taxation the imperial exchequer retained an Imperial Contribution of £6 million. Northern Ireland has thus to find a figure of £42 million on invisible import account.

According to the Hall Report (page 75), the British Government provided the sum of £28 million in the form of agricultural subsidies. This figure may be low, since in reply to a question on the 1961-62 subsidies, Mr. Cahir Healy, M.P., received the much larger figure of £3?/ million for the later year.[8] Taking the Hall Report as correct, however, the biggest item countering the adverse balance of trade consists of agricultural subsidies amounting in the year in question to 31 per cent of the value of output. The deficit is now down to £14 million.

The Government figure for the proceeds of tourism is £11 million, against which would possibly have to be set a counter-figure of, say, £3,000,000 spent by six-county residents visiting Britain and the twenty-six counties. The deficit is thus reduced to £6 million, and it may be guessed that the payment of pensions not otherwise included in the social service accounts, and emigrants' remittances, by providing another £2 million might bring it down to £4 million. There are then certain non-agricultural subsidies which amount to £6 million. There is thus finally a discrepancy of £2 million which (bearing in mind that the trade figures are between £300 and £400 million) is within the bounds of error a level balance.

The impression at first glance is thus that Northern Ireland cannot pay its way unless the British Government meets its total Trade deficit by means of a subsidy, and the question then arises of why the British Government is so kind.

UNFORTUNATELY there is more to it than this. There are two other accounts which have not been mentioned and whose figures cannot be estimated except in the most roundabout way. These refer to the income from British and other investments in Northern Ireland, consisting of dividends etc. that are taken out, and conversely dividends from Northern Ireland investments abroad, and secondly to capital movements inwards and outwards. From what we have seen above though these should roughly balance, taking the two accounts together, we should be biased if at all, in the direction of expecting more to come out than goes in.

According to the Hall Report (page 10),

> "There is lack of information on this subject. Isles and Cuthbert have estimated (though, as they admit, on slight evidence) that in 1950 the amount of Northern Ireland capital held outside Northern Ireland exceeded the amount of external capital held in Northern Ireland."

It is characteristic of the uncertainties of this subject that the authors of the Hall Report should think it quite possible that Isles and Cuthbert could be a cool £300 million out in their estimates![9] For this is the figure that would have to disappear if in 1950 the amount of external investment exactly equalled that of outsiders in the six counties. This would seem unlikely. But possibly the methods used by Isles and Cuthbert (unquestioned experts who took immense pains over a number of years) over-estimated one side of the balance and underestimated the other.

The external investments of residents of the six counties were made by sampling death duty accounts and multiplying by an arbitrary factor. Those of banks had to be disentangled and deduced from all-Ireland accounts.[10] The reverse side, investments of outsiders in the six counties, was obtained by examination of companies operating in the six counties, and some intelligent guesswork about branches of imperial concerns.

GRANTED these reservations regarding the Isles and Cuthbert figures, let us see what they would mean in pactice. There was said to be [11]£200 million invested in the imperial system through the agencies of banks and institutions, and another £200 million held by private investors. The first sum represents the savings of working class and middle-class people, yielding a low rate of interest and a loss of control by Irish people over their own capital. The second sum will represent the more profitable investments of the remaining landowners, rentiers and the reserves of medium business people.

From published figures it seems likely that if all the component factors of these sums rose in the same proportion, the 1960 figure would be something like £520 million, corresponding to a drain of capital at the rate of about £10 million a year. When it is recalled that two of the three six-county based banks are British owned, and the financial system as a whole dominated by Britain, it emerges that Northern Ireland may have to increase the financial resources of British imperialism by some £100,000,000 in order to add a measly £5 million a year to its invisible earnings. On this basis, then, the capital export will now be £10 million per annum, and the receipts from external investments £25 million. The figures, however, as has been indicated, may be too high.

In 1950 Isles and Cuthbert could discern only £83 million of imperial and foreign investment in the six counties to offset Northern Ireland savings channelled abroad. This consisted of about £38 million invested in local companies, £12 million in private building, an estimated £11 million in branches and subsidiaries of British concerns, and a miscellaneous £22 million mainly consisting of investment in public institutions.

At least half of the capital could be expected to return a distinctly higher rate of profit than that obtainable by Northern Ireland investors abroad. It would be

[7]Jt. working party on the Economy of Northern Ireland. Cmd. 1835, October 1962, p.85.]

[8]"Hansard" (Stormont), 29 Jan. 1963.]

[9]The complexities of this question can be illustrated by a single example. Messrs. Gallahers Ltd., who have a capital of £30 million of which 50 per cent is held by the Imperial Tobacco Company, in December 1962 announced the purchase from the American Tobacco Company in return for a 13 per cent stake in Gallahers of its subsidiary in Britain, Messrs. J. Wix & Sons Ltd., makers of Kensitas. Here a Northern Ireland investment in Britain and a U.S. investment in Northern Ireland were created simultaneously by the stroke of a pen. The reality is of course the expansion and centralisation of monopoly capital.]

[10]See "The Banker," July, 1948, for an account of the intertwining of six and twenty-six county finances.]

[11]Isles Report, p. 467 et seq.]

monopoly capital already,[12] whereas that exported would only become monopolised in the process of export. As was indicated in the case of the twenty-six counties, the movement of imperialist finance is measured by adding the two figures which are subtracted in the balance of payments.

But here critics of the Isles report have suggested that the figures are too low. They do not take account of ground rents collected by landlords resident in Britain nor of the operations of British chain stores, hire-purchase agencies etc. These might account for some millions of pounds, possibly £10 million or over.

Working from the estimates given by Isles and Cuthbert, it might be expected that their figure of £80 for external investment in Northern Ireland might have risen to £100 million by 1961, through the further operation of the causes which originally brought it about.

In order to estimate the present position, however, we must take note of the special measures taken by the Northern Ireland Government to stimulate foreign, and mainly British investment, since 1954. The Hall Report (page 10) comments that even if Isles and Cuthbert were correct in asserting a net outward flow of capital, in the year 1950, this must, however, "have been reduced in the past decade by the inward movement of capital invested in new industries."

The question which now arises is to estimate this fresh influx. On the basis of the number of fresh jobs created the capital investment (less Government aid) could be of the order of £80 million. It would seem reasonable to expect a high proportion of this investment to have come from Britain. There must also be a high figure for "take-over" investment, but since presumably the bulk of the sums received by Northern Ireland residents is invested outside Ireland in a sense it could be deducted from outward investment rather than entered here. It seems desirable however to try to estimate its order.

In 1938, according to Isles and Cuthbert, an analysis of the places of residents of shareholders in companies comprising 80 per cent of the total investment in public companies in Northern Ireland showed that 72 per cent of their capital was held outside the area. By 1948 the latter figure had risen to 75 per cent. If the trend continued, and nobody has suggested that it has not, then by 1960 the figure must surely have reached 80 per cent. The market value of four per cent of the total investment in public companies can be estimated as about £8 million, so that if the rate of take-over kept steady, something less than £1 million a year changed hands in this category. But it is common knowledge that take-overs have sharply stepped up.

Hence it is not unreasonable to allocate to the year we are considering (1960-61) an investment from outside of say £1 million on this account, and £8 million for the decade 1950-1960. All in all therefore the present investment by British (and other outside) investors in the six counties probably stands near to £200 million, and further investment may be taking place at the rate of as much as £18 million a year.

APPROXIMATION TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

Category	Receipts	Payments	Net receipts
TRADE	334	370	−36
Imperial Contribution	—	6	− 6
Agricultural Subsidies	28	—	28
Non-agricultural subsidies	6	—	6
Tourism	11	3	8
Pensions	1	—	1
Emigrants' remittances	1	—	1
Dividends and Profits*	25	20	5
Capital Movements*	18	10	8
TOTAL	424	409	15

The interest payments Northern Ireland indebtedness gives rise to will then approximate to something like £20 millions, since the type of investment made by outsiders within Northern Ireland almost certainly earns a higher rate of interest than that of Northern Ireland investors abroad.

IT is now possible to construct a hypothetical table showing the type of balance of payment problem which exists in the Six Counties.

A glance at the table suffices to show that the total of the first column is £15 million too high, that of the second £15 million too low, or there must be some mutual adjustment to bring them into line. In other words some of the figures must be inaccurate, and the question is which. The position is, sums appear to be entering the Six Counties without their equivalent leaving it. This arises from the fact that the subsidies, investments and dividends coming in appear to wipe out the adverse balance of trade and leave £15 million to spare. What is the most likely, that we have exaggerated income, or that there is some unrecorded process of outgoing?

No doubt the fact that there is this type of discreprepancy led the writers of the Hall Report to look doubtfully at the Isles and Cuthbert figures for Six-County capital invested abroad. One should be very reluctant to reject Isles's highly professional and painstaking work. But let us suppose for the sake of argument that he pitched his figures for external assets one-quarter too high—then the figure for income from dividends and profits might be reduced to £20. Let us say likewise that we have exaggerated inward capital movements (and outward interest payments by a smaller figure), and in place of £18 million let us write £15 million. Is the £7 million discrepancy that remains small enough to be dismissed in a balance as rough as this? Does anything need to be sought to put in the other column? And if so what it it likely to be?

As has been indicated above, there have been suggestions[13] that items of outgoing rent, interest and profit escaped the Isles and Cuthbert net, despite their careful probing, and that the figures for sums withdrawn by branches of British concerns, owners of ground rents etc, if fully estimated, could raise the figure in the second column by £10 million. Great care should be exercised over this. Certainly there is no claim that the balance of payments of Northern Ireland has now been demonstrated—this is not possible. It is not even possible to take the Trade balance for granted within a certain margin. Who knows, for example, what goes through the parcel post, or people take backwards and forwards with them on the boats? What has been shown, however is that there is nothing unreasonable in suggesting that the Balance of Payments may in reality have the form shown at the head of page eight.

The meaning of such a Balance of Payments is that the subsidies and inward dividends and capital movements do not result in the stimulation of industry and employment with a consequent favourable balance of **trade,** but instead merely facilitate the establishment of industries considered useful to imperialism, taking over the resources of local capitalists, and meanwhile guaranteeing the annual outflow of a substantial sum in interest and profit, plus the entire savings of the ordinary people.

Reference has already been made to the fact that by 1948 mainly British interests had secured at least 60 per cent of the total investment in public companies. Even in the case of 55 private companies[14] of whose capital 11.8 per cent was held abroad in 1946, **only two years later** this proportion had risen to 16.1. If the process had continued throughout the following decade at the same rate about a third of these companies' capital would be held outside Northern Ireland by 1960. The commanding heights of the Northern Ireland economy have long been conquered by British imperialism; what are going on now are profitable mopping-up operations.

NO wonder therefore that the take-over is the typical feature of Belfast today. The "Belfast News-Letter" 1961 annual review describes in glowing terms the changes in the face of the city:—

[12]On the composition of British capital investments in Northern Ireland see R. H. W. Johnston, "Irish Democrat," Dec., 1959, Jan. 1960.]

[13]See for example, "Irish Democrat," May, 1958.]

[14]Isles Report, page 472.]

REVISED APPROXIMATION TO NORTHERN IRELAND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

Category	Receipts	Payments	Net receipts
TRADE	334	370	−36
Imperial Contribution	—	6	— 6
Subsidies	34	—	34
Tourism, etc.	11	3	8
Dividends and Profits	20	25	− 5
Capital Movements	15	10	5
TOTAL	414	414	

"In High Street for example, the site has been cleared for Woolworths stores . . . and for the erection of a new building on the other side of Crown entry . . . a newly-constructed building erected for Great Universal Stores who also owned the adjoining Whitehall buildings taken over by Littlewoods . . . a six-storey structure will have bank premises on the ground floor, an insurance company is to occupy 17,000 square feet . . . closing of the Empire theatre to give way to a further development of Littlewood's premises . . . the conversion of the Gaumont cinema to a multiple store . . . a tall building on the site formerly occupied by Finlay's soapworks to house Imperial and Northern Ireland civil servants . . . the Prudential Assurance Company will have a new five-storey corner block . . . a building which is nearing completion is that of the Norwich Union Insurance Company . . . others to be erected are for the Royal Globe Insurance Company and for the Commercial Union Insurance Company . . . " . . . and so ad infinitum.

The clearest comment on such a situation was given by a County Longford man two centuries ago.

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

For wealth undoubtedly accumulates in Northern Ireland. The total paid-up capital of all public and private companies in 1958 is given as £58 million. In 1961 the corresponding figure is £67 million. Deposits in banks with head offices in Northern Ireland rose from £120 million in 1952 to £152 million in 1961.

Income tax and sur-tax rose from £26 million to £33 million, and there have been substantial "capital gains." An increasing proportion of the wealth of Northern Ireland is owned by non-residents. And while the take-overs proceed, and the interest and savings go out, the Unionist party congratulates itself on the regular arrival of the subsidies which make this process possible without provoking a revolution.

ONLY one more comment needs to be made. Summarising and simplifying it may be stated that in effect its incorporation in the United Kingdom imposes on Northern Ireland a disability which compels it to suffer a dual process. The disability is an artificially imposed adverse balance of trade arising from the interplay of factors already mentioned, chief among which is the fact of partition. The dual processes consist of the denudation of local savings which are channelled to Britain, and the injection of increasing amounts of foreign capital. The final comment is that this process is NOT self-correcting. On the contrary it is a progressive disease. Each year the situation becomes more desperate, another batch of emigrants gets on the boat, and the owning class is compelled to sell up another instalment of the national heritage. This means a still worse position, and a further repetition of the same process.

The powers of the Northern Ireland Government are totally inadequate to modifying this process. It would be quite mistaken to imagine that the gentlemen who compose it are either unaware of or incapable of using adequately the powers they possess, though possibly the fortnightly consultations with the Treasury contribute to the chilling of the spirit of enterprise. But to have any decisive effect, their powers would have to be of a different order of magnitude, of the order of magnitude of those possessed by sovereign states. For the powers of sovereign states include the fiscal and treaty-making capacities without which a country is a plaything of world economic (and in this case imperial economic) forces.

It is agreed by experts that the rate of profit, Government assistance excluded, tends to fall below the United Kingdom average in a Northern Ireland which is an integral part of the United Kingdom. Isles and Cuthbert argue, and Hall agrees, that failing the acceptance by its workers of a lower standard of living (actually earnings of employed workers are only about 80 per cent of those in Britain) then capital will be exported until its scarcity, and the corresponding surplus of labour power, so adjust prices that the average profit is earned again. This process is limited by the unwillingness of the working class to be its unprotesting tools. The end point can never be reached partly because of mobility of labour, and also for political reasons. Whether this theory is sound or not, and its mechanism is not yet fully explained, the condition of its operation is agreed on all sides. It is the fact that Northern Ireland **is an integral part of the United Kingdom.** This is the crux of what is called the Northern Ireland problem.

TO the all-important working of private finance and investment, a public finance so hedged with restrictions, plays second fiddle. Economic crisis developed in the twenties. The British Government took the only action available to it under the **Government of Ireland Act.** It so scaled down the Imperial Contribution that Northern Ireland was no longer paying its due proportion towards the purposes for which it was levied. In a nutshell she got free defence and national debt, whereas the Republic had to pay for hers. This was equivalent to reducing the incidence of taxation in the area. During the war period when the special disadvantages of Northern Ireland were at a minimum (though unemployment was never eliminated) a substantial Imperial Contribution was retained.

But after 1947 the net Imperial Contribution was not sufficient to meet the cost of food and producers' subsidies, training and rehabilitation schemes, the so-called agency services. In recent years the food subsidies have been abolished, but one particular agency service has acquired enormous importance, namely, the agricultural subsidies at present paid to Northern Ireland from the Imperial Echequer amount to no less than £28 million,[15] and consequently wipe out four times over the Imperial Contribution of about £7,000,000.

It should also be noted that while, of course, the agricultural subsidies may in fact represent the very wisest way of expending a gift of £28 million, the Government of Northern Ireland has no choice in the matter. Its opinion is not asked. Financial policy encourages what Britain wants encouraged, restricts likewise always in the primary interests of imperialism.

It has been stated by Mr. H. B. Newe, however, that despite everything, agricultural prices in Northern Ireland constantly fall below those in Britain. It is not by an means certain that the subsidies fully compensate the Northern Ireland farmers for their unfavourable position on the periphery of the United Kingdom. Whatever the truth here, and it is likely to be complicated, the effect of the subsidies is to facilitate exploitation, as indeed the effect of the whole system of public finance in Northern Ireland is to facilitate the movement of imperial finance.

A COMPARISON between Northern Ireland and the Republic thus shows the enormous advantage of a native government. Despite the opposition of a powerful imperialism and while remaining financially and economically within its orbit, despite partition and the aftermath of revolution and civil war, the Republic has established a viable independent State in twenty-six counties. Its future is not yet certain. Its problems are far from solved. But it has taken a positive direction and its immediate future depends on those who reside in it.

On the other hand, Northern Ireland with all the seeming advantages of imperial support, finds itself stagnating as a result of the terms on which that support can alone be given—complete subservience to external interests. Its rulers are not, as their supporters sometimes try [15]In the year under review.]

to make out a vigorous growth of native capitalism.[16] They are not normally connected with the great industrial and financial undertakings of the area, though this was true to some degree in the 'twenties. Their independent industrial base has been gobbled up. Just as the members of the old industrial families remain in certain areas as managers, in others only as names, so the Unionist politicians are not now even junior partners of British imperialism, but merely its local agents. Sometimes when the policies they have to carry out arouse too much indignation, they join with their charges in protest actions. They are soon back doing as they are told.

It follows therefore that Unionism cannot solve the problems of Northern Ireland. Ultimately these have to be tackled at their source, the **Government of Ireland Act,** whose consequences they are. There are forces in Northern Ireland which are making for precisely such a basic reorientation. Their weakness lies in their division. Before returning to the subject of the 1920 Act, therefore, it will be necessary to make an examination of the forces of democracy and the issues that divide them. First, however, we must consider the internal aspect of British policy.

From what has been said it is clear that the "Northern Ireland Problem" is in no way a matter of "group relations" within Northern Ireland, as Messrs. Barritt and Carter believe.[17] It is a problem of Anglo-Irish relations, a problem created by a British Act of Parliament, and only soluble with the repeal of that Act.

[16] In Northern Ireland Ministers in the Government are permitted to retain their directorships while in office. Following challenges in Parliament in February, 1963, these were disclosed. Lord Glentoran was shown to have held a directorship in the Commercial Insurance Co. of Ireland. The Minister of Health was head of a firm of haulage contractors, the Home Secretary was a director of the Belfast Collar Co. and Faulat Shirts. Another Minister was a director of the Belfast Steamship Co., and of a family business in Comber. Mr. Terence O'Neill was at one time a director of the Ulster Bank but resigned on taking office as Finance Minister.

[17] "The Northern Ireland Problem," Oxford University Press, 1962.]

CHAPTER THREE
THE WALL OF SILENCE

AS well as the economic and strategic, there are important political factors influencing British policy towards Ireland, which help to explain Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule, and Lloyd George's imposition on the Ulster Unionists of transferred powers they were sworn not to accept.

There were three main factors involved. One was the necessity of placating Irish nationalism while if possible drawing its teeth. A second which became important as Britain slowly lost her pre-eminence and became dependent on American goodwill, was the desire to present a clean shop-window to the world. But perhaps the most decisive was the third, the need to take the Irish question out of British internal politics.

Since at least 1848, the British ruling class has been obsessed with the fear of social revolution. The Union which took Irish democracy prisoner in 1801 carried with it a serious danger, namely the development of a United Kingdom democracy which would shatter not only the United Kingdom but the power of the landlord-industrialist oligarchy. Broadly speaking the nightmare of both Tory and Liberal ascendancies was that of a social revolution in Britain coinciding with a rising for national independence in Ireland.

To hold Ireland Britain had been denuded of troops more than once. Irish regiments had been used to put down social disturbances in Britain. The sons of British radicals had sullenly assisted at evictions in Ireland, and many are the stories of unexpected sympathy for the tenants from English soldiers. All was well for the Tories as long as the two currents of disaffection merely overlapped and did not merge. But what would happen if the rulers of Britain had to face both peoples simultaneously?

There were many reasons for fearing such a possibility. The process of expropriation of the Irish peasantry accelerated sharply during the crisis of landlordism in mid-nineteenth century. The result was a vast wave of emigration which broke both on British and American shores. The newly arrived Irish were competitors of the British workers who accused them of lowering wage-levels. The Irish in turn had every reason to hate everything English and could not be expected to discern fellow-sufferers in those who vociferously resented their appearance. So far so good. But the growth of working class organisation inevitably brought the two peoples together

One of the worst aspects of Daniel O'Connell's leadership was his hatred of the Chartists and his determination at all costs to insulate Ireland from the spread of their ideas. The inclusion of O'Connell's demand for the repeal of the Union in Feargus O'Connor's People's Charter was an act of wisdom by O'Connell's rival and attracted many Irish workers to the Chartist cause, as well as winning the alliance with the Young Irelanders.

WHEN modern British Socialism began in the eighties, the same process was repeated on a broader scale. The Irish party under Parnell's brilliant leadership held the balance of power at Westminster and made and unmade governments at will. It did so moreover with the support of the British radical working class whose minds were beginning to turn towards independent political representation. Michael Davitt's regular appearance on the platforms of the Social Democratic Federation, may be forgotten today. It was menacing enough in its time. Such developments indeed impelled Gladstone to seek a means of sending the Irish representatives packing or reducing their effectiveness by transferring Irish questions to Dublin. This would confine their interventions at Westminster to British and imperial affairs where the common interests of property-holders might come into play against the Irish tradition of opposition to imperialism.

Gladstone's neat scheme was foiled by the stupidity of the Tories. Working-class organisation continued to grow in both countries. An Irish Trade Union Congress was established. James Connolly united the Socialist off-shoots of Fenianism with later cross-channel importations into a Socialist Republican party which represented Ireland as a distinct nation at the International Socialist Congress in Paris in 1900. Each election brought an increasing number of Labour members who mostly voted with the Liberals but made no secret of their desire to supplant them. Add to this the women's suffrage agitation, and the great industrial unrest beginning in 1911, and the internal British reasons for the third Home Rule Bill become very apparent.

The lesson was well rubbed in during the great Dublin lock-out of 1913 which dominated British working-class politics for several months and found the British Socialist Party collecting funds for the Dublin workers alongside the London Gaelic League. The Liberals were trying to buy time with judicious reforms. Getting the Irish question out of British politics was as much a part of this policy as old-age pensions and National Insurance. But once more Tory stupidity diverted British ruling-class policy, already beset by difficulties, on to the hardest track.

ONLY the experiences of the first world war, the insurrection of 1916 and the Russian revolution, convinced the Conservatives, now in coalition with the Liberals, that Ireland could not be, and indeed must not be, governed in the old way. The **Government of Ireland Bill** was carefully thought out and prepared. The fact that it was only operated in six counties should not be allowed to obscure that fact. But it was a generation out of date. While it was being drafted the Irish people were conducting the greatest national liberation struggle of their history, which was winning support among many sections of the British workers, especially those of Irish birth or descent.

At the same time the actions of the British Government in Ireland were alienating all that was best and most democratic among the British public. This was a dangerous time. Social revolution was in the air of all Europe. Thrones were toppling and de-crowned heads with their retinues bobbed in profuse anonymity in the streets of the few remaining centres of stability. The **Government of Ireland Act** was designed to split the Irish people, separate them from their allies in the British working class, deprive that class of the support of the Irish in Britain, and simultaneously create a favourable climate for the naval negotiations which ended with the Washington Pact of 1921.

This time the schedule was set awry by the Irish people. It was too late to win their acceptance of a Home Rule Bill. British imperialism was forced to concede more than it intended, while making an international virtue of the necessity. There were painful adjustments in the military and economic fields, but these did not come all at once. The aim of removing the Irish question from British politics was thereby facilitated.

If Labour now asked why Special Powers were being used to dragoon nationalists into accepting gerrymandering, the Government could now reply that this was a matter for the Belfast Government. The supply of arms to enable the Treatyites to defeat the Republicans in the Saorstat was "legitimate aid to a friendly Government in the restoration of order." Lord Birkenhead presented the matter simply in the House of Lords when he said of the civil war, "I for one rejoice, as I have said before in this House, that this task, painful, costly and bloody as it must ultimately prove, is being undertaken by those to whom it properly falls." There was coercion still in Ireland, but the British Government need not answer for it.

Thus was criticism diverted. The opposition was deprived of a rallying cry. The remains of the great electoral organisation of the Irish in Britain, built up in Parnellian days by Denvir and T. P. O'Connor crashed to the ground. The Irish Self-determination League split down the middle. Instead of being a political force on the side of progress in Britain, the Irish community turned in on itself and while never abandoning its sympathies and aspirations took on a predominantly social or religious character, only to be disturbed by the arrival of fresh immigrants from an Ireland now changed and only half-understood. The British "Hands off Ireland" Movement, which had crammed into the Free Trade Hall the greatest meetings since the days of Chartism, was deprived of its purpose. The great lie of modern Irish history was then invented, the lie that the Irish had been given what they wanted, that imperialism was dead, that the Irish question was now settled in the only fair way it could be settled.

BEFORE the advent of the popular press, ruling-class ideas about the Irish were conveyed to the British workers through the music hall. Its main stock-in-trade was the "stage-Irishman" to whose Gaelicisms were added bullish conventions never heard in Ireland since it was inhabited. First Ireland must be represented as loyal, which was proved by the number who escaped beggary by taking the Queen's shilling. Second her perennial discontent must be explained. The stage-Irishman achieved this since his essence was self-contradiction. Why are Irishmen pugnacious? Not because landlords are evicting them from their holdings, but because they like fighting. Why are they poor? Because they are lazy good-for-nothings, or alternatively lofty spiritual dreamers who despise wealth and comfort, and of course have to be looked after. Why do they emigrate? Not because their own country is made too hot to hold them, but because it is overpopulated anyway, or alternatively because they like wandering.

From the music hall anti-Irish idioms passed into English slang. Among those in an extant dictionary are "an Irishman's rise" (reduction in pay), "to get one's Irish up" (lose one's temper), "Irish toothache" (pregnancy), "How Irish!" (how inconsistent or nonsensical), "Irish wedding" (emptying a cess-pool) and "Irishman's dinner" (a fast).

Most of these betray plainly their nineteenth-century origin. They indicate clearly the picture of the Irish which their rulers wished the British people to have. From the period of the Home Rule Bill another note is sounded and rapidly gains predominance. The Irish are said to be unable to agree among themselves. Hence Britain has a plain duty to decide for them.

AS a consequence of the Government of Ireland Act, the old themes required further development and modification. This must now be done through the agency of press and radio, though cultural means were not abandoned. In place of the picture of "loyal Ireland discontented through love of ructions" we got "the Irish who have got what they want and are not satisfied with it." But now the north and the south must be treated separately, and the ridicule of Irish political leaders must be somewhat muted. Indeed after 1920 the Irish nation began to breed "statesmen" and only those who opposed the partition settlement were still revolutionaries or nincompoops.

The notorious incapacity of the Irish to govern was swept to one side and vested exclusively in that section which opposed the governments promoted or accepted by England. The twenty-six counties were represented as controlled not by incompetent but rather by mistaken men whose national feelings had run away with them and blinded them to the self-evident fact that no matter how well they governed their countrymen, Britain could do it for them better. The six counties were on the contrary the seat of unbreakable loyalty to Britain ruled by strong men, who were moreover despite their wild past, law-abiding men.

It was natural in such a mythology that wisdom was rewarded and folly got its deserts. The six counties were therefore stable and prosperous because they stood by Britain. The twenty-six counties were unstable, backward and impoverished, because they tried to stand apart from Britain. The alleged difference could alternatively be attached to religion and hard work.

The north was Protestant and thrifty. The south was Catholic and feckless. The two rival philosophies of Irish history discerned by Messrs. Barritt and Carter are of course not "Protestant" and "Catholic," but national and imperial. It was the aim of imperialist propaganda to create in the minds of the British people a feeling in favour of Northern Ireland and a prejudice against the Saorstat Eireann.

HOW this has worked out is interesting. When the "extremist" De Valera came to power and demanded a revision of the Articles of Agreement he was represented its turning on his benefactors. Britain had abandoned free trade, but Irish protectionism was denounced as the height of folly. Even after the war, a Conservative journalist could refer to the Dublin authorities as "this rebel government of doubtful authenticity"—a dictum which betrays the basic opposition of British Toryism to the existence of an independent Irish **state.**

When the state was established beyond the possibility of doubt, criticism increasingly turned on the social aspects of Government. When Labour introduced social welfare legislation after the second world war, people who had been utterly opposed to it in Britain asked indignantly why "Eire" was lagging behind. Their bait was snapped at by ultra-left Socialists who discovered that all was hopelessness and backwardness in the twenty-six counties and that "Socialism was a dirty word."

It is extremely important here to distinguish between the Irish Government and the Irish state. The establishment of an independent Irish State was a breakthrough for the forces of progress in Western Europe. The rôle of that state both in the old League of Nations and in the U.N.O. has shown its possibilities. But the realisation of all the possibilities which follow from an independent Irish state, in particular the carrying to its conclusion of the struggle against imperialism ,and the consequent era of social changes, depends on the Government.

Imperialism has used its economic strength and political influence to maintain in power Governments hesitant in the realisation of their state's potentialities. It has then striven to turn the resultant discontent not against the Government, but against the state. Thus the very success of imperialism in thwarting the further advance of the Irish people, and bringing their struggles and sacrifices to nothing, is used to discredit the goal and throw doubt on the validity of the cause. Plays and songs displaying a spurious critical-realism centred on the limitations of Irish progress up to the present find ready acceptance and approval on radio and television. Some of the revolutionary national songs are banned to this day. But while on the whole, ballads have received their due, Irish achievements in

peat development, cancer-research, cosmic physics and Celtic philology have had no attention at all.

THE general anti-Irish tenour of the Tory press has been extended to the citizens of the offending state. An investigator found the following headlines in the pages of a local London newspaper in 1962.[1] February 23rd, "Irishman jailed, stole O.A.P. handbags," March 2nd, "Irish girl came to plunder," March 9th, "Irishman caught in the act," April 2nd, "Irishman fined for vicious attack," May 1st, "Irishman jailed for theft," May 25th, "Reluctant Irishman. Invented wife and family to claim allowance." It is only fair to record that when representations were made to the Editors of this newspaper the practice of reporting the nationality of offenders was discontinued. But it is widespread and builds up a public impression.

Who would draw the conclusion from it that crime is much less prevalent in Ireland than in England? Yet this is the fact. And many an Irishman has been amused to see his successful footballers and vocalists turned into Englishmen on the day of their triumph, while some shocking scallywag remains an Irishman even though born and bred in Glasgow. What many British people believe about Ireland and the Irish is thus still very much what their rulers want them to believe.

It might be thought that anti-Irish prejudice would disappear from at least the large national dailies as soon as air transport made them freely available in Ireland. The danger of winning an Irish circulation only to lose it is avoided by the publication of Irish editions. It is therefore possible for a British newspaper to conduct a campaign as preposterous as that on the export of Irish horses without their Irish readers becoming aware of it. Generally speaking great care is taken that the editions are not mixed up; it is next to impossible to buy an Irish edition at a London newspaper office. When the comparison is made, the result is often amusing. Irish circulation does not justify separate editions for the Six and Twenty-Six Counties. British newspapers, like British banks, treat Ireland as one country, while busily assuring the British public that it is not.

IF the Tory press treats the Republic by giving prominence to its deficiencies while concealing their origin, its task in relation to Northern Ireland is more difficult. Its general policy is to give no more news than it must. The very existence of the Nationalist minority is ignored. The myth of Six-County prosperity was sedulously maintained until in 1959 unmistakeable Protestants arrived in Britain a few hundred strong and began parading in Liverpool and Birmingham, and lobbying at Westminster. Northern Ireland thereupon became a "problem," that is to say something a Government proposes to do nothing about.

Only those who have endeavoured to secure press publicity in the Nationalist interest can appreciate the strength of the wall of silence which has been erected. The Mallon-Talbot murder trial took the main headlines in all Irish papers over the August holiday period of 1958, the height of the silly season when editors are reduced to discovering ghosts, metempsychoses, sex-changes and red plots. Only the extreme left among British newspapers reported it at all.

In the midst of the campaign against the export of horses from Ireland, a number of London Irishmen were lobbying at Westminster for the release of political prisoners interned without charge or trial. British pressmen actually believed they were lobbying against the export of horses and turned up complete with notebooks and cameras. They were very disappointed to find the lobby concerned with their fellow human beings instead of the brute creation, and expressed their dissatisfaction, not a bit thankful for small mercies. "But only yesterday you described Crumlin Road jail as an Alcatraz," one of the Irishmen ventured. "That," replied the journalist, "was only because Hinds was in it."

Early in 1962 much publicity was given in Northern Ireland to the fact that the Government proposed to stage an official commemoration of the "Ulster Covenent" signed in 1912 as a threat of armed defiance of the British Government. To revive memories of that year of bitter sectarian disorder was to invite its repetition. A number of quite distinguished individuals addressed a letter to a leading Sunday newspaper drawing attention to the danger and expressing the hope that the Northern Ireland Government would have second thoughts. The Editor kindly gave grounds for his refusal to publish. The letter was "not of general interest" to the readers of a paper whose contemplation each week "surveys mankind from China to Peru." Four days after the jubilee the expected riots took place. Nobody was killed but a number were taken to hospital. Again the British press left its readers in ignorance. "The British public has no interest in it" is the stand, and care is taken to keep away anything which might whet its appetite.

IT is difficult to believe that the wall of silence which screens off Northern Ireland from the British public is not the product of official encouragement. The London Stationery Office does not carry Northern Ireland publications, except for one or two general items of no serious import. The Northern Ireland Government has a species of representation in London, which exhibits a marked coyness over its doings.

When Governments want the public attention fastened on some subject, they take steps to feed the press with everything relevant. Northern Ireland is not one of those subjects. And the reason is that a constant flow of information regarding the area would run counter to the set policy of keeping the Irish question out of British internal politics.

If there is to be any change, the Irish question must be brought back into British politics. The legal position and daily course of events equally demonstrate that its banishment is artificial. The problem is therefore to break down the wall of silence and allow the British public to know what is going on.

[1]D. Logan, "Irish Democrat," Aug., 1962.]

CHAPTER FOUR

CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT

NORTHERN IRELAND is acknowledged as an under-privileged area of the United Kingdom. It can act as a source of profit, say the experts, only thanks to sustaining a chronic state of under-employment, a reduced level of working-class and small farmer earnings, and the stimuli of capital influx and Government subsidy.

To what degree are its people underprivileged?

Social services are nominally based on the principle of "parity" with Britain. While this is certainly true of the unemployment and medical services, it is not universal. The principle of "parity" is not what it seems. In the tug-o'-war behind the closed doors of the Treasury the Joint Exchequer Board decides what sum shall be allotted from reserved taxation for transferred services.

As Mr. Thomas Wilson[1] explains, "Parity does not mean uniformity" and "the consequences of lower taxation or higher expenditure cannot be evaded by claiming more assistance from Whitehall."

Isles and Cuthbert[2] express the view that consequently "the standard of services is not in all respects as high as in Great Britain." In any case, the Northern Ireland Government has to finance its own schemes for aid to industry and agriculture from the sum allocated by Westminster, if it is not to adopt a policy of special taxation which (owing to the limited choice of taxes available) would fall mainly on the rentier class, whose ability to slip through the taxman's fingers is well known.

Northern Ireland's available sum for internal expenditure is externally decided. It tends to be minimal, and capital expenditure must be watched carefully. In the competition for resources, housing (through the Housing Trust) is allocated only one quarter of what is variously spent on "aid to industry." Yet the North of Ireland inherited a serious housing problem, dating from the days of rapid industrial expansion in the main towns.

Employment, therefore, and housing

[1]Ulster and Home Rule," page 121.]
[2]Isles Report, pp. 163-164.]

are the social requirements in shortest supply. How are they distributed? The answer is, not according to need, but as a political weapon to divide the people and bind the more favoured section to the support of the Government. This is the significance of religious discrimination.

AS has already been indicated, religious sectarianism originated not in Ireland but in Britain, whose revolution was fought under the slogans of the reformation. The final expropriation of the Irish tribal lands proceeed under the only excuse which would justify naked robbery to the British people. This was protection against the papacy, for their practical purposes enshrined not in the spiritual power of Rome, but in the military designs of Spain and France. Inevitably any movement for democracy in Ireland from then on must centre on Catholic emancipation and the land to the people.

It was his realisation of this fact which made the greatness of Wolfe Tone. Ireland from 1782 to 1800 had legislative independence. But only Protestants could vote or sit in Parliament, which thus became the central executive committee of the landlord class. His proposal was to enfranchise the Catholics when inevitably landlordism would be swept away, Ireland undergoing a revolution similar to that of France. Rather than face such a prospect the landlords fell in with the British oligarchy in submerging the Irish representation in Westminster through the Act of Union.

It is of interest that the Orange Order made its first appearance in connection with these events, and that its militant Protestantism had no political importance again (save for a brief period when Dublin Castle armed selected Orange lodges against the revolutionaries of 1848) until the eigtheen-eighties, when the Act of Union itself became due for repeal.

The slogan "Home rule would be Rome rule" does not mean the same thing to everybody. Many progressive English people, their thoughts coloured by their own history, think it means that Ireland would be subjected to the control of the Catholic Church in its practical affairs. Its meaning is that universal suffrage in Ireland must mean a predominantly Catholic electorate, which can thus determine the complexion of the Government unless the Irish representation is merged in that of Westminster. But of whom did this electorate consist? The small men, the majority of them workers, farmers, shopkeepers and small professional people, as opposed to the landlords, financiers and top merchant and professional people. "Rome rule," in other words, was the rule of the masses, the great unwashed, the vulgus mobile.

In the 18th century the Orange Order played on the guilty consciences of planters and settlers who knew they had what Prendergast[3] called "defective title deeds" to their estates. Orangeism redivivus, a century later, had no such simple basis. Its achievement was to manufacture a hysteria comparable to anti-semitism and to divert a section of the working class from its own interests to those of its enemies.

IT is important to recognise that religious sectarianism in Ireland does not consist of some inborn antagonism between Protestant and Catholic which reaction merely "makes use of." It is a one-way gun, built and loaded by the Tories, and directed against the Catholics. Before partition it was openly anti-democratic. Now it is directed against a section placed in an artificial minority by a British Act of Parliament and can put on a show of democracy.

That the aggression comes from the Protestant side is illustrated by the content of Orange songs and slogans, which play such an important part in the political life of the Six Counties. One of the songs promises to "kick the Pope over Dolly's Brae," another to "scatter the Papishes every one," adding by way of encouragement that "if that doesn't do, we'll cut 'em in two, and give 'em a dose of the Orange and Blue." A typical Carsonite street chant reveals its intrinsically anti-popular character. It runs:—

"My Da's a volunteer,
He wears a bandolier.
He marches up and down the town
Knocking all the people down.
My Da's a volunteer."

Lest this be thought merely a child's jingle, another Orange favourite has a refrain glorifying the counter-revolutionary terror of 1798,

"Oh, the South Down militia is the terror of the land."

What must be realised is that when, at election time, the bands parade playing these airs, every Protestant man, woman and child who has been in contact with the Orange order, automatically hears the sectarian words, and is given "a dose of the orange and blue."

The function of diverting the working class from their own interests is well known to the Unionists. During a recent rents campaign, Unionist speakers were hard pressed by their normally loyal constituents. One of them is known to have extricated himself with the words, "Ach, to hell with the rents—give us the Sash" —one of the less offensive Orange songs.

Extracts from these and other ditties will be found scrawled on public buildings though as public education proceeds they seem to be retreating to less edifying places. Against them there are no comparable Catholic slogans. While Protestant organisations exist with the avowed aim of opposing Catholicism, for example, Mr. Ian Paisley's fortunately small "Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster," there are no comparable Catholic bodies devoted to the extinction of Protestantism.

THE counter-slogans of the Catholics are political, such as "Remember 1916," and "Up the I.R.A." The very conception of Catholics priding themselves on being "the terror of the land" is ludicrous.

Like anti-semitism, anti-Catholicism does not necessarily take a personal form. "Some of my best friends are Catholics" would not come inappropriately from the lips of Lord Brookeborough himself. Yet that gentleman boasted, "I have not one of them about my place." The purpose of anti-Catholic propaganda is to justify social discrimination. But of course it would be wrong to believe that a majority of Protestants would wish to justify discrimination. That is left to those who have the power to carry it out.

Lord Brookeborough justified his own discrimination by saying that Catholics were disloyal, in other words that discrimination was not religious but political. This is logically on a par with Hitler's asertion that the Jews were Marxists. And why, one might ask, is it true that nearly all Catholics are nationalists? The answer of course disposes of Lord Brookeborough's argument. They are nationalists because they have suffered discrimination throughout the centuries, and continue to suffer it today. There is nothing in the Catholic faith which makes its members more responsive to democratic or national ideas than people of other beliefs. But there is something in the actual situation of Catholics in Northern Ireland today which compels them to play the part of rebels. That something is discrimination. The Protestant community, on the other hand, though largely Unionist in tendency, produces opponents of partition, people uninterested in politics, and occasionally that curious political deformity, the "socialist" uninterested in his own nation. Protestants do not suffer religious discrimination and thus politically have one more degree of freedom. To Catholics the attainment of equality of rights and opportunities is the *sine qua non* of all further development.

IT is of course quite obvious that religious antagonism can have no effect where there is no power to discriminate. The **Government of Ireland Act,** seeking to allay fears that Home Rule might be the signal for a religious war, forbade either government in Ireland to pass legislation which **directly or indirectly** promoted religious discrimination. But religious discrimination takes place, not only as a consequence of legislation, but also and much more, through the operation of administrative measures. The result is to give Catholics[4] a smaller share of employment and housing than their proportion in the population would entitle them to.

Government discrimination in civil service appointments is both political and religious. First it exacts an oath of allegiance not merely to the Queen, but to the constitution of Northern Ireland and its Government. The constitution of Northern Ireland is an Act of the Westminster Parliament. What happens if it is repealed? This extraordinary oath asserts allegiance to a political instrument and a Government, the first of which may destroy the second. It binds an opposition to support the very thing to which it is an opposition.

Yet all civil servants, schoolteachers and

[3]Cromwellian settlement of Ireland.]

employees of local authorities, down to the rank of labourer, must swear this oath, to a total number estimated at 34,000 persons. The object of the oath is to create a political basis for discrimination against Catholics in appointment to public offices.

IN their "Study of group relations" Messrs. Barritt and Carters say—

"Since about three-quarters of the grammar school and university population of the province is Protestant, it would be reasonable to expect at least this proportion of Protestants among holders of higher Civil Service posts. Nor is the difference between 75 per cent and 94 per cent necessarily evidence of discrimination. Since a large proportion of Catholics are politically opposed to the existence of Northern Ireland as a separate state, it would not be a matter for surprise if they failed to apply to join its service. In certain departments any application might well be suspect on reasonable grounds of security. Thus it is not surprising that the Ministry of Home Affairs (which is responsible for internal security) appear to have employed in 1959 no Catholics in the rank of Principal or higher, though it is perhaps more curious that the same is true of the Ministry of Labour."

Curious is the word. And curious is the argument, studded with false antitheses and non sequiturs. The authors have inadvertently accepted the inherent bias of Unionist thinking. Why should Protestants have **at least** their proportion? Why not **about**? That Catholics, who should receive one post in four, instead get only one in twenty is no doubt not necessarily **proof** of discrimination, but can it be seriously argued that it is not admissable as **evidence**? The Catholics object that they do not get their fair share of appointments. The students of group relations then offer an explanation. It is that far from the Government excluding them for political reasons the Catholics themselves refrain from applying for political reasons, presumably so as to save the Government the trouble of turning them down. Then the political reasons which would justify discrimination in one Ministry are adduced, after which it is announced that they are excluded in another one as well.

Messrs. Barritt and Carter give the impression of loose thinking, with inadequate attention to the meaning of the words they use. One sentence says that applications "*might well be suspect on reasonable grounds*"—that is to say that the exclusion of Catholics is not curious but reasonable. The next one says it is "*perhaps more curious*" that they are kept out of the Ministry of Labour. More curious than what? Than not curious at all? This imprecise mode of expression recalls the advertisers who announce that "Fish fills you fuller" or "Tickle-brush shaves quicker smoother and cleaner."

Again, Messrs Barritt and Carter have concluded that Catholics do not want work under a government they disapprove of, and that their disapproval is of the **existence** of Northern Ireland as a separate state. They are thus represented as political nihilists trying to do away with things without putting anything better in their place. The position is that Catholics and other Nationalists regard the six counties as a part of Ireland and themselves as Irish, entitled to equal rights with all other Irishmen in their own country or any part of it They are not interested in doing away with the Northern Ireland state by complete assimilation to Westminster or fusion with any other foreign power or set of powers. They want Ireland united, and one good government for the whole country, which would employ Protestants and Catholics all over Ireland in accordance with their abilities.

Messrs. Barritt and Carter give away their case on the next page when they admit there is no complaint that the Imperial Civil Service discriminates. Now this is the Cicil Service which Nationalists *do* want to abolish, though not of course by dismissing its employees. Yet it is stated to be the sole haven for Catholics since there is no oath and no discrimination. But we are told that the British Post Office may be "reluctant" to transfer a Catholic from Britain to a job in Northern Ireland where his religion might count against him not in the Post Office, but "*in the public contacts required by his work.*" The reality of discrimination is so well established that the British Post Office is compelled to reckon with it officially.

LOCAL government discrimination is equally widespread. In Co. Fermanagh[6] where there is a small Nationalist majority of 700 electors, the County secretary, accountant, and assistant accountant, are all Protestants, as are also the solicitor and all her clerks and the County Surveyor and all his staff. All clerks in the County Council office are Protestant with one exception appointed prior to the Local Government Act of 1922. In the Health and Welfare Committee's offices, the secretary is a Protestant, as are his office staff with one exception who is a telephonist. The chief medical officer, his two assistants, the chief dental officer, the welfare officer and his assistants, the public analyst, the chief taxation officer, the chief education officer and all his assistants, the architect and his assistant are all Protestants. Only one assistant dental officer and one assistant architect are Catholics, and these were the sole applicants for the posts in question. All the drivers of the school vans save two part-time workers are Protestants, and of the twelve rate collectors one only is a Catholic. Of 17 members of the County Welfare Committee only five are Catholics, of 21 members of the County Health Committee only six, and of 27 members of the Education Committee likewise only six. Yet the number of children in Catholic primary schools exceeds that of all others combined.

An analysis of local government appointments in Derry City was made by Councillor Friel, who showed that only in one category, that of labourer, was there parity of employment, the numbers of Protestants and Catholics being respectively 86 and 85[7], though on the local government voters' rolls (which exclude non-householders) there are 13,185 Catholics and 9,117 Protestants. Among 113 tradesmen in Derry City there are 75 Protestants and 28 Catholics, among lorry drivers 21 Protestants and four Catholics, among 91 clerical employees 20 Catholics, while of the 69 officials in administrative grades 61 are Protestant and only eight Catholics. In the offices of the town clerk, city accountant, rate collector, city solicitor, Welfare Department and Electricity Department there is not one Catholic higher official. When a delegation of enquiry from British Labour organisations visited Derry to confirm these facts in 1962, the Mayor declined to meet them. He had no answer.

ACCORDING to Messrs. Barritt and Carter, in Newry where over 80 per cent of the population is Catholic, all the Urban Council's clerical staff were said to be Catholic in 1958. These writers are mistaken in describing the council as "Nationalist" without qualification; the party in office is the Irish Labour Party. Unlike the Mayor of Derry, its officials have willingly met and answered enquiries including those of the present author. They explain that there is an examination system, the paper being set alternately by local Protestant and Catholic colleges, and that candidates are offered appointments in strict order of merit.

Messrs. Barritt and Carter contrive to throw doubt on this explanation without actually calling the Newry officials liars. They find it odd that Mr. Frank Gallagher, who took such great pains to expose discrimination elsewhere, should not have extended the same "zealous research" to an area like Newry. They claim to have been told that "the Catholic proportion among the unemployed is so high that there is an almost irresitible pressure to give labouring jobs to Catholics."

But they did not state what the proportion is, though the facts have been made public. In a letter to **Tribune** published on May 18th, 1962, Mr. T. Markey stated that of 600 applicants on the books of Newry Council there was not a single Protestant. The "pressure" was indeed "irresistible"—it was obsolute. He also stated that of 4,000 unemployed 98 per

[4]There is a certain hesitancy on the Nationalist side in using the plain words Protestant and Catholic. Mr. Gallagher prefers "Unionist" and "Nationalist." This is because of the favourite Unionist dodge of representing protests against sectarianism as "raising sectarian issues." But there are Protestant Nationalists and they should be recognised by keeping political and religious terms separate.]

[5]Op. cit. page 96.]

[6]Memorandum supplied to Mr. Marcus Lipton M.P. by Mr. Cahir Healy M.P., September 1962.]

[7]"Irish Democrat," April 1962.]

cent were Catholics. His assertions were never contradicted. But immediately after throwing gratuitous doubt on the genuineness of the Newry claim to reject discrimination in making appointments, the students of group relations, with very little convincing evidence, present the conclusion they have been preparing for:

"The fact is," they say, "that both sides discriminate, and that the pattern of discrimination against Catholics exists because most councils are in Protestant hands."[8]

Here again the bias of Unionist thinking has intruded itself. Discrimination is taken entirely for granted, and there is no whisper of condemnation of a state in which things are so ordered that this should be so. These authors write as if discrimination requires no explanation, being indeed the most natural thing in the world, and that Catholics object to it only because they come off worst. This outlook is likewise revealed in some reformers who wish to confine democratisation to the electoral system under the belief that it will be satisfactory to the Nationalists if they are handed control of Fermanagh, Tyrone and Derry City, where they can remove discrimination against themselves. It can still continue where the Unionists remain in power, including the jurisdiction as a whole.

There is only one democratic demand possible in face of allegations of discrimination, and that is that it should be made an offence. In this connection it should be noted that Mr. Fenner-Brockway's Bill as at present drafted applies to Northern Ireland without reservation.

APART from public discrimination there is also private. As the United Nations Memorandum[9] on the subject explains, this is not always easy to prove. But occasionally it is gloried in. In the Belfast City Council elections of May 1961 three unofficial Unionist candidates justified their breakaway by alleging of the official party an undue tolerance of Catholics, and distributed handbills boasting that they had never employed one of them in their lives. They challenged the official candidates to say the same. There has never come from the Catholic side any comparable demand for the non-employment of Protestants. Unionist spokesmen have on the other hand frequently argued that only Protestants should be employed.

The present Prime Minister, Lord Brookeborough, when as Sir Basil Brooke he was Minister of Agriculture, said:—

"I would appeal to loyalists, therefore, wherever possible to employ good Protestant lads and lassies."

When challenged he explained that:—

"the vast majority of Roman Catholics in Ireland are disloyal."

Disloyal to what? His rhetoric had unwittingly carried him across the border into a different jurisdiction and incidentally admitted the unity of the country. His motive became clearer when he told his supporters: **"Unless you act properly, before we know where we are, we shall find ourselves in the minority instead of in the majority."**

This was an implied reference to the higher Catholic birthrate, and it is interesting to note that Messrs. Barritt and Carter, after studying discrimination with no hypercritical eye, remark that **"emigration is just about sufficient to drain off the excess births in the Catholic community and keep the proportions of Protestants and Catholics almost alike."**

In 1949, Mr. Geoffrey Bing, K.C., M.P.[10] reproduced a Ministry of Labour "green card" on which the "reason for non-employment" was recorded with unusual frankness. It was "Religion." But such blatancy is unnecessary. It is not even necessary to ask an applicant his religion. Segregation in education, reluctantly[11] agreed to by the Catholics in the days of intense Protestant proselytising, results in all sects being tagged for life. Segregation of residence operates in the same sense.

Despite the clear evidence both of motive and action that the Unionists actively promote religious discrimination for political reasons, Messrs. Barritt and Carter in common with other writers represent the position as showing an unfortunate phenomenon of nature for which nobody is responsible. Ignoring official incitement and the public discrimination of Government and local authorities they say:—

"Protestant dominance in the business, executive and professional life of the province goes much beyond what would be indicated by the proportion of the population belonging to that community; so if Protestant and Catholic employers on average discriminate to the same extent, the job opportunities for Catholics will be below average and those for Protestants above average."

This is really an attempt to assert the tautology that Protestant dominance is Protestant dominance. How did it arise? By discrimination. How is it maintained? By discrimination. The Catholics once defeated were deprived of the power to retaliate. But for all the gobbledegook in which it is couched, this statement drops an accusation in the right place. It places the guilt of operating Government policy on the class responsible, the class of landlords and capitalists. That class is indeed the remnant of the old ascendancy, mindful that while the head of the Catholic Church may be the Pope of Rome, that of the Anglican is (or was until disestablishment) the King of England.

To suggest that Catholics try as hard as the Protestants to discriminate, but lack the means from their class position, is merely to parallel the famous "refutation" of socialism which runs "if you were a capitalist you'd be an exploiter yourself." The trouble is that the refuter does not tell him how to become one.

DISCRIMINATION in housing follows a similar pattern which need not be traced so fully. The main offenders are the Unionist councils. The Irish Labour Party Council at Newry allocates strictly according to need in open council.[12] In this connection it should be noted that since the Catholics are admittedly most numerous among the poorer people, Catholic need is invariably greater than Protestant need.

There are whole areas whose population has been restricted to Catholics as a part of electoral manipulation, where families have been living in condemned houses for decades. In Enniskillen there are families living in single-room tenements with gaping holes in their roofs, sharing one or two communal privies inconveniently placed.

That local councils have failed in their duties is generally acknowledged. For example, from 1920 to 1940 the rural district councils of Enniskillen, Lisnaskea and Irvinestown built no houses at all. An unnamed "prominent Unionist" told the students of group relations that Catholic housing needs are great because **"the Catholic Church encourages people to have families larger than they can rear."**

Here evidently is a case where God proposes and man disposes. On March 24th, 1937, Mr. Cahir Healy, M.P., read in Stormont a resolution which had come into his possession. It was passed by the West Tyrone Unionist Association, and contained the sentence:—

"We would like to point out that a great number of applicants for cottages in Co. Tyrone are either Free State Roman Catholic labourers, or the families of such labourers, and are definitely hostile to the Unionist Party and to the Northern Government."

It suggested that the regulations should be altered so that these applications need not be entertained. The Unionists were ready for their duty. If they could not stop the births they would make the rearing as difficult as possible.

Here, in another sphere, is the familiar justification of religious discrimination on political grounds, without even a thought of winning Catholic support by catering for their social needs. The reluctance of local authorities to build houses at all, and especially to let them to Catholics, became a public scandal and compelled the Government to establish the Housing Trust which has pursued a liberal policy without doing more than scratch the surface of the housing problem.

Housing policy, like employment policy,

[8] After the Unionist M.P. for Derry, Mr. Joseph Burns, had made allegations of religious discrimination in Newry, the Newry town council passed a *unanimous* resolution of protest on 10th April 1961. Two Unionist councillors spoke of the "good harmony" in Newry and accused Mr. Burns of "stirring up the cauldron."]

[9] Secretary General, "Main Types and causes of discrimination," Dec. 1949]

[10] "John Bull's other Ireland," Tribune Publications.]

[11] It is generally held in Britain that segregation in education is essentially a Catholic policy. In Liverpool, where unsegregated teaching was customary over a century ago, segregation was introduced at the instance of the Protestant clergy to prevent the contamination of their flocks by the arriving victims of famine and eviction.]

must have played a part in the efflux of Catholics from Northern Ireland.

THERE are other forms of discrimination which are less widespread, for example restrictions on the right to rent commercial property. A Nationalist councillor in Enniskillen was the only applicant for shop premises identical in most respects with those he held already. The owner was the town council. He was turned down. Some months later the premises were let to a Protestant at a third of the rent the councillor was paying.

There is also discrimination against the Catholic Mater hospital, which is given a status inferior to that awarded comparable institutions in Britain. Then there are actions which border on the childish, such as the refusal of Lisnaskea Council to erect a street lamp outside the Catholic church although there is one provided for the main Protestant church.

It is therefore impossible to escape the conclusion that religious discrimination runs through the social life of Northern Ireland, and that what is wanted is not a study of "group relations" but a change of Government policy. The Government is evading the express provisions of the **Government of Ireland Act** with the connivance of the Tories at Westminster. The conflict is not between two sets of discriminators, but between those who want to divide the people and those who want to unite them.

On the one hand we have Lord Craigavon's statement as Prime Minister:—

"This is a Protestant Parliament and I am an Orangeman."

On the other we have that of Mr. Cahir Healy, M.P.[13]

"The Nationalist position is that we want no discrimination in making clerical or other appointments. There ought to be a fair field and no privilege or preference for all the children of the province, not to mention the nation."

The philosophies which prompt the respective positions are equally clear.

On the one hand we have

"The South Down militia are the terror of the land."

On the other we have "Remember 1916" when Pearse and Connolly published their proclamation and undertook to establish **"equal rights and equal opportunities"** and to **"cherish all the children of the nation equally."**

Can any democrat doubt which is the side of progress?

AS a result of their policy of discrimination, the Unionists are enabled to make an economy of capital investment in building and the provision of employment. Discrimination against Catholics has a depressing effect on Protestant standards, and so those of all are brought down. Politically the result is to divide the common people and to divert them from the path of struggle against their real enemy, British imperialism. The Unionists pose as the champions of the Protestants, protecting them from the scarlet woman of Rome, when in reality they merely fix them to the treadmill of cross-channel capitalism.

A word should be said on the result of discrimination on the "privileged" Protestant community. Its workers earn less than corresponding grades in Britain. Their "privilege" is nothing positive. It consists of freedom from special disabilities imposed on the others. But this brings with it a less obvious tyranny from within. A rich Protestant can, of course, please himself and can follow his class interests. But the small man with a family must take care. Lack of enthusiasm for the sectarian cause has cost many a Protestant his employment in hard times. It is best to keep in with the side if "wee Willie" is to get a start in his profession.

The mechanism of keeping Catholics out becomes a means of compelling obedience in Protestants. In the 1962 election when Labour increased its vote among the Protestants of Belfast, many of the electors were chary of driving to the poll in Labour cars, even though the Northern Ireland Labour Party had fallen over backwards in its recoil from the dread imputation of nationalism. The reason is that sectarian prejudice is backed by sanctions which depend on the existence of discrimination, and only the end of discrimination against Catholics can free the Protestants to act according to their consciences.

THAT religious discrimination is a form of **national** oppression is felt most vividly in the border areas. Almost hanging over Newry are the mountains of the Cooley peninsula, famous in song and saga two thousand years old. This is in the Republic. The country shows no marked change of character at the dividing line. There is the same system of dispersed cottages grouped into townlands, though in the north there are fewer electricity posts. The towns and villages look the same. The people are indistinguishable in appearance and similar in speech. The people of Newry want to share their destiny with their countrymen across the border, where there is no religious discrimination. There Catholics and Protestants live together in amity and discrimination is condemned.

In the one solitary instance of private anti-Protestant discrimination since the second world war, the Fethard dispute, the Republican Premier, Mr. De Valera, intervened in person. Although non-Catholics form less than 6 per cent of the population they compose 10 per cent of the membership of the Senate, 4.5 per cent of the Corporation of Dublin, and 3.5 per cent of the membership of Dail Eireann.

One of the Ministers in the Government, Mr. Erskine Childers, is a Protestant. There is no constituency with a Protestant majority. The Protestants must therefore be returned by Catholic voters. Official policy is shown in the fact that the Senate, with its partly-appointed membership, contains the highest proportion of Protestants.

Contrast this position with that of the Catholic in the North. No Catholic is ever returned in a constituency with a Protestant majority, except Queen's University, where there is proportional representation. No member of the Government is Catholic, though Catholics comprise a third of the population.

The people of Newry can therefore look sadly across the boundary which insults by its blatant artificiality and injures by placing people who know they form part of the majority of the Irish people under the heel of a minority prepared to go to all lengths to oppress them. Though part of the majority they are refused rights comparable even with those of the minority across the border. It is against this background that the periodical recrudescence of violence must be seen.

[12]The Council minutes for January 1960 record at the request of Unionist Councillor John Taylor his satisfaction with the allotment of 82 houses among 530 applicants.]

[13]Memo already cited.]

CHAPTER FIVE
ONE VOTE EQUALS TWO

GERRYMANDERING is a system of manipulating electoral boundaries so that the result depends not on the numbers of the votes but upon how they are arranged.

The Government of Ireland Act performed the master-gerrymander from which all others are derived.[1] It is ironical that in the last years of the Union, Ireland received its most democratic electoral system under British rule. Realising that its supporters were now in a minority, the British authorities introduced a system where every vote would count, namely the form of proportional representation marked by the single transferable vote. This system applied to both Parliamentary and local government elections. The result was that the will of the Irish people was known in 1918 with a certainty beyond all question. Four-fifths of the nation desired an independent Republic.

On the basis of democracy this should have been sufficient. But the Government of Ireland Act divided Ireland into two polling areas. In the larger, composed of 26 counties, the nationalists[2] held 100 per cent of the seats unopposed (Trinity College alone excepted). In the smaller, the Unionists won 40 out of 52 seats. The elections were held on separate days and in the North under conditions of terror, accompanied by pogroms and intimidation. The National proportion of the population is near to one-third. By removing the 100 per cent Nationalist twenty-six county area, the Unionist vote had been kept intact for service in the six

counties, selected to form Northern Ireland. It represented only 20 per cent of the electorate of Ireland, but it was adequate to submerge a Nationalist vote representing about 10 per cent of them.

There was now no prospect of establishing an Irish Republic by popular vote. It was not sufficient to hold the 70 per cent incorporated in the twenty-six counties. It was necessary to win more than half the remaining 30 per cent as well, and the process might for that matter be repeated, for if a majority of these should become converted to Republicanism, the demand could go up for a further partition in which a majority must be won in the remaining 15 per cent. An ancient Pictish Kingdom of Dalriada might then be resuscitated and the world be told that Dalriada must not be coerced by the majority of "Ulster." The principle of partition means in effect that it does not suffice a nation to demand independence by a majority; unanimity is needed.

THE position would thus be difficult enough in a clear field. But the Nationalists were not left a clear field. First came pogroms organised for the purpose of driving as many of them as possible across the border. The disturbances of 1920 are described in the annual report of the Irish Trades Union Congress.[3]

"At a meeting of the men of Workman and Clark's shipyard on July 23rd last, to which were imported people from Bangor and other places, an appeal was made to the basest passions to stir up religious bigotry and to drive Sinn Feiners out of Ulster and not to allow "rotten Prods" in loyal Ulster. A "rotten Prod" is a man with the same amount of toleration as ourselves—to give the right to all workers to think and act on civil and religious affairs as one may see fit. . . . In 1849 seven thousand Roman Catholic families were cleared out of Armagh to make room for Protestants. That policy is still being pursued today. . . . On July 21st, men armed with sledge-hammers and other weapons swooped down on the Catholic workers in the shipyards, and did not even give them a chance for their lives. There was no aggression towards them, no provocation, no "rebel cries." The gates were smashed open with sledges, and vests and shirts of those at work were torn open to see were the men wearing any Catholic emblems, and then woe betide the man who was. One man was set upon, thrown into the dock, had to swim the Musgrave channel, and having been pelted with rivets had to swim two or three miles, to emerge in streams of blood and rush to the police office in a nude state."

Belfast delegates explained that "Sinn Fein, the Republican element, is breaking the old political prejudices and barriers; and that the Labour movement equally is broadening the Orangeman's mind so quickly that it would only be a matter of time when the Boyne would be bridged and then that ascendancy gang would lose their power."

A "rotten Prod" (and proud of it), Mr. Hanna told the Congress that he "had to put three thousand miles between Belfast and himself to open up his small mind and rid himself of ideas imbued into him."

What clearly emerges from the T.U.C. report is that the pogroms were organised from without the shipyard, and that the number of workers who resisted the forcible breaking up of the unity of their class was sufficiently great to necessitate a campaign against the "rotten Prods"—of which 400 in all were expelled from the yard. These expelled Protestants were, indeed, the cream of the Belfast working class, the shop representatives and leaders of the unions in every economic struggle.

BUT victory went to reaction. The pogroms were an essential part of the preparation for establishing Northern Ireland. Similar pogroms occurred in 1921 and 1922. Between June 21st, 1920 and June 18th, 1922, there were 428 Catholics killed and 1,766 wounded, 8,750 driven from their work, and 23,000 driven or as it was usually put "burnt out" from their homes. A thousand refugees fled to Glasgow where they added to an already difficult unemployment problem.

In its blood days, the Unionist Party scarcely troubled to separate its electoral activity from the violence and intimidation it had made general. Polling stations were sited either in Unionist areas, or in such a position that Nationalists voters must run the gantelope of their political opponents, frequently armed and as often ready to fire.

The siting of polling stations in inconvenient if not now dangerous positions is a recognised method of discouraging the opposition in rural areas even today. In the Westminster House of Commons in March 1948, Members gave examples of Nationalist voters living west of Omagh, who must walk through the town and three miles east before they reached the station where it had been decided that they could cast their votes. Those living south-west must go five miles south-east beyond the town. In Co. Down there was an instance of electors having to cross a mountain and go five miles further on to cast their votes.

Another feature of Northern Ireland elections is the prevalence of impersonation. While of course this is a game that two can play at, that it is tolerated suggests that on the balance it assists the party in power, which has the best organisation available. Every candidate is entitled to have an impersonation agent at each polling station in order to challenge the identity of voters suspected of casting votes not belonging to them. In the 1959 imperial election, the Republicans complained of interference with their impersonation agents, one of whom was actually arrested shortly before the election. In the debate on the Electoral Law Bill at Stormont early in 1962, Nationalists complained that the Government was taking such malpractices too lightly, as being on the whole advantageous to themselves.

Such irritants indicate the course of policy without shaping its result.

THE first unmistakeable indication that The Northern Ireland Government was unwilling to maintain normal electoral standards was when the Local Government Act of 1922 came into operation. On September 16th that year, two orders were issued, the first demanding a £25 deposit from each local government candidate, the second requiring from him an oath of allegiance to the King of England and his heirs and successors for ever plus allegiance to the Constitution of Northern Ireland, an Act of the British Parliament.

The obligatory oath struck a weak spot in the political equipment of the Nationalists of those days. Many of them had been influenced by the abstentionist policy or Arthur Griffith, which had won notable successes in the period just prior to 1921. The oath of allegiance had figured largely in the negotiations between the representatives of Dail Eireann and Lloyd George, and in the civil war. It was highly repugnant and the Nationalists could not bring themselves to sign it. There is of course a vast difference between a sovereign state swearing away its sovereignty and a man forced to swear allegiance in order to claim his civil rights.

An oath exacted under such duress is considered binding nowhere, and it is unfortunate that Nationalists and Republicans ever bothered their heads over this empty formality which has been used as a weapon of Unionist blackmail ever since. The effect of the Government demand in 1922 was to cause divisions in the Nationalist camp which must have weakened the struggle against the gerrymander which was now imposed.

Throughout the preceding period, careful preparations had been made, for an event which now took the Nationalists by surprise. According to Mr. Cahir Healy, M.P.[4]

"The late Mr. W. T. Miller, M.P. for Tyrone and agent for the Duke of Abercorn, at a demonstration in Fintona boasted that he had rendered more vital service to the Unionist Party than any other man in the north west. His claim was in effect that he had spent two years, night and day, arranging and rearranging the rural areas and townlands in Co. Tyrone in order to convert a strong Nationalist county into a Unionist one at the council boards. He seemed to think he had not got recognition for the laborious gerrymandering of local government constituencies."

From the Unionist point of view it was important to secure Tyrone, Fermanagh and Derry City in order to forestall a very damaging argument. These areas with the Nationalist majorities are contiguous with Ulster Counties included in the twenty-six county area. Fermanagh borders Monaghan, Cavan and Donegal as well as Leitrim in Connaught. Tyrone lies between Monaghan and Donegal, and Derry City is geographically-speaking in

[1]Gerrymandering was of course not unknown during the Union.]
[2]Sinn Fein.]
[3]Report of 26th Annual Meeting, Cork City, 1920, p.100 *et seq.*]
[4]Memorandum already cited.]

Donegal since it occupies a four-mile bridge-head on the west side of the River Foyle.

Why should these areas come under Belfast? If the dissident opinions of a local majority in six counties necessitated separating them from the other twenty-six in order to attach them to Britain, why did the dissident opinions of a local majority in two not necessitate their detachment from the other four when they could be joined immediately to contiguous areas where electors belonged to the same majority? The Unionists have never been able to answer this question. They went a stage further than the chess-player who upsets the board when he sees his opponent's queen hovering for checkmate; they invented their own rules. These rules enabled them to convert a majority of electors into a minority of representation.

ON October 19th, 1922, the Local Government (Local Authorities Electors and Constituencies) Act was passed at Stormont. The first section abolished proportional representation; in addition the local elections were postponed until May 1924. During the winter that followed a Mr. Leech, appointed with the powers of a judge, visited areas in which proposals and objections relative to the numbers and boundaries of electoral districts might be expected. Electors were given about fourteen days' notice to forward representations, together with relevant maps and statistics. It usually turned out that the local Unionists had their plans cut and dried. The Nationalists were however taken by surprise. It was beyond their resources to provide documented objections at such short notice and in practically every instance the scheme proposed by the Tories went through. Thus was established the system of gerrymandering which exists today.

In its present form it is best illustrated by the example of the City of Derry. First it is necessary to distinguish three electoral registers, demanding different qualifications. The imperial register over which the Northern Ireland Government has no control is used exclusively for Westminster elections. It provides for adult universal suffrage without property qualification for all British subjects and citizens of the Republic. It is not the subject of widespread complaint though it should be noted that Northern Ireland is seriously under-represented at Westminster, the average electorate per member being 73,000 as against 56,000 in Great Britain.

The Stormont register differs from the Imperial in excluding natives of the Twenty-Six Counties who lack seven years' residence in Northern Ireland. The Safeguarding of Employment Act reduces the number of such persons to a minimum, but they are fairly numerous in certain border areas, particularly in centres of communications like Derry, Strabane, Enniskillen and Newry. This register records a business vote for occupiers of premises of a minimum valuation of £10 per annum, and their spouses without residence qualification. A Derry businessman might thus help to decide the complexion of the six-county Government though himself resident in the Co. Donegal.

Every night he might drive his car over the border to a sea girt villa where he could live like a gentleman. Every polling day he could drive his wife the other way to cast her vote with him. A person born in Co. Donegal on the other hand could live and labour in Derry City for seven years without the opportunity to challenge at the polls what the businessman was doing for him. According to Mr. Bings there were in 1947, before the business vote was abolished in British elections, 1,072 Stormont business votes, and only 35 valid for Westminster. In other words Stormont allowed thirty times as many business votes as Westminster. The result of substituting the Stormont for the Westminster register is to increase the number of votes in favour of Unionism, and decrease that of its opponents.

A similar effect was no doubt intended to result from giving the graduates of Queens University, no less than four Members of Parliament.

The local government register takes the process a stage further. It continues the disfranchisement of citizens of the Republic, and provides for a modified business vote (without the spouse but sometimes with the partner) under the title of a "general occupier's qualification." "Limited companies are entitled to appoint one nominee for every £10 of the valuation of their premises up to a maximum of six nominees."[6] This fantastic proliferation of votes benefits almost exclusively the Unionist Party, injuring in the west the Nationalists, in the East Labour. All other voters must possess a "resident occupier's qualification" which requires that a person must on the qualifying date occupy a dwelling-house either as owner or tenant. A lodger does not qualify. It is estimated that under this provision something like a third of the adult citizens are disfranchised. Once more the policy of housing discrimination reveals its purpose. Catholics who fail to get houses through local government laxity cannot express their discontent at the polls. In the east the provision penalises the various Labour and Socialist parties.

THE result shows in Derry City that whereas there are on the Imperial register 18,818 Nationalists and 10,260 Unionists, on the local government register the Nationalist figure has been reduced by 5,633 to 13,185, whereas the Unionists have lost only 1,143 and their poll now stands at 9,117. The gap has been substantially narrowed, but still the Nationalists have a majority of 4,000. How then does Derry get a Tory Council?

This is achieved by the method of division of the city into wards. There are only three wards, two returning eight councillors apiece, and one returning four. It is obvious of course that in a system with one councillor per ward, the areas represented would be so small that the result would be bound to reflect the wishes of the people. A single ward for the whole city plus proportional representation would have a similar effect.

But the present system is so devised that of the 13,185 Nationalist votes no less than 9,340 are packed into South Ward, whose boundaries have been specially drawn so as to include them, and since this ward absorbs only 1,409 Unionist votes, the remainder (8,708) are more than enough to provide a majority in the North and Waterside wards, for which there are now only 3,895 Nationalist votes left. It is easy to distribute them so that the Unionist majority in North ward is 2,132 and that in Waterside is 1,731. North and South return eight councillors each, Waterside four—the Unionists have a majority of four on the city council.

Apart from depriving the majority of its right to rule, the drawing of electoral boundaries in such a way as to make the result inevitable results in the stultification of political life. There has been no electoral contest in Derry since 1947. There is no point in putting up opposition candidates. Hence candidates need offer no programmes. Derry is never called on to think or choose. Political stimulus is non-existent. The position which gives rise to sectarianism is perpetuated by the sectarianism it gives rise to. An important municipal training ground for young politicians is deprived of vitality and the paralysis then spreads throughout the land. The hide-bound, the unadventurous, the parochial is everywhere at a premium. Toryism breeds Toryism and the constitution is preserved.

WHILE Derry City is the classical example, it is of course by no means the only gerrymandered area. Gerrymanders have been operated in every area with a small or moderate Nationalist majority including Armagh City, Enniskillen Town, and Omagh. Only in Newry is the Nationalist majority so overwhelming that the Unionists must accept defeat.

Each gerrymander is adopted to local circumstances. In some cases the object seems to be to eliminate all opposition. Portadown with a Unionist majority has only one ward. The Unionists can therefore gain 100 per cent representation if they offer enough candidates. At present they tolerate a Labour opposition of two. In Omagh as a consequence of gerrymandering there was no contest from 1922 up to 1959 when an Irish Labour candidate forced a contest. Some of the people had to be taught how to vote. There was moreover some ill-feeling directed against the disturbers of the status quo.

Each side felt they were splitting the vote. In Omagh there is a tacit bargain between the parties which the Nationalists confess "humiliating but unavoidable." The Unionists refuse to permit re-housing to alter the electoral framework. Catholics are housed in the Nationalist wards, Protestants in the Unionist. As a crowning act of grace, the Unionists permit the Nationalist councillors to allocate "Catholic houses" among their community. Thus discrimination breeds the possibility of

[5Op. cit. page 18.]
[6Ulster Yearbook, 1962, page 39.]

nepotism and ensnares even the bitterest opponents of the regime into the distribution of its perquisites.

The result of gerrymandering has been to create Unionist councils throughout the predominantly Nationalist belt west of the Bann and south of a line drawn from its source to Dundrum bay. Even the City of Belfast did not escape. Before partition it returned 37 Tories, 10 Nationalists, 12 Labour and one Independent. In 1946 it returned 51 Tories, one Nationalist, eight Labour and no Independent. Naturally it is in Belfast that the number of voteless lodgers and of "company votes will be greatest. It is probable that many of the younger Protestants who would hesitate to vote Labour at Imperial or Stormont elections would do so at municipal elections if it were only in the hope of securing a house. The abolition of the property qualification plus the restoration of proportional representation might therefore have the effect of putting the Unionists in a minority in the city.

BRITISH democrats who appreciate the enormous progressive significance of such an event should note that the disfranchisement of the lodgers in the six counties is the result of a decision of the British Parliament. The Representation of the People Act of 1945 established universal adult suffrage in municipal elections in the United Kingdom. But it contained a lengthy section excluding the local electors of Northern Ireland from its benefits. It was only because the Westminster Parliament explicitly withheld universal suffrage from the six counties, that the Unionists were enabled to continue their old undemocratic system. It should also be noted in passing that the fact that the British Parliament was under the necessity of stating whether its Act applied to Northern Ireland or not makes nonsense of the favourite Unionist claim that Westminster does not legislate upon the internal affairs of the Six Counties.

How do the Unionists justify the present position? Messrs. Barritt and Carter, whose researches have already been referred to say that the "Unionist answer is that local authority ward boundaries must by law have regard to something more than the counting of heads, namely to the valuation of property in the area." The law they cite is the **Towns Improvement Act (Ireland), 1854.** This reveals the Unionists as very forward-looking politicians. The "alleged requirements" of the Act do not seem "very clear," and it would of course be quite open to the Six County Government to alter its supposed requirements (or at least to clarify them) by legislation.

It would also be in accordance with the much vaunted principle of "parity" to follow Britain and introduce universal suffrage. Yet Messrs. Barritt and Carter, recording the curious involution of Unionist thinking, take it for granted that where Unionism cannot win by weight of numbers it should wish to dominate by power of wealth. They then ascribe this policy to the adoption of a "British pattern of local government law" when in fact the **Towns Improvement Act (Ireland)** did not apply to Britain, but was a measure enforced on Ireland by Westminster. The British pattern of local government law if adopted in Northern Ireland would mean universal suffrage. The much-maligned Republic introduced universal suffrage in 1935.

There is no justification for gerrymandering, and the Unionists cannot offer one. But it fits into the general pattern, a pattern in which about 10,000 electors of Queens University return four members to Stormont. Speaking at the Orange Hall in Enniskillen in October, 1949, Mr. E. C. Ferguson, M.P., said:

> **"The Nationalist majority in the county, notwithstanding a reduction of 386 in the year, stands at 3,684. We must ultimately liquidate that majority. Of this county I think it can be said it is a Unionist county. The atmosphere is Unionist. The boards and properties are nearly all controlled by Unionists. And yet still there is this millstone around our necks."**[7]

The millstone has grown lighter. The present majority is only 700. Discrimination has played its part. Pending the happy day of liquidation however some form of gerrymandering will still be required.

One of the most distressing things for the visitor to Northern Ireland is to find people who consider themselves democrats tolerating by their indifference and inaction the denial of civil rights to a religious and political minority. The institution of gerrymandering discriminates less finely than some other measures. Consequently there may be a greater prospect of action being taken to end it. What is needed is the re-assertion of the principle of one man one vote, the abolition of the property qualification, and the restoration of proportional representation both in local government and in Stormont.

[7Mr. Cahir Healy, M.P., Memorandum already cited.]

CHAPTER SIX
GOVERNMENT WITHOUT CONSENT

DESPITE propagandist attempts to make it seem so, Northern Ireland was not constituted by discovering the wishes of the inhabitants of various parts of Ireland, and assembling in separate jurisdictions contiguous areas containing a majority of electors of similar views. This itself would have been objectionable enough as disregarding and defeating the wishes of the overall majority.

The British people would hardly tolerate the same process if dictated, say, from Brussels. What was done was even more objectionable. Northern Ireland was constituted so as to comprise not only the areas of Ireland the majority of whose electors were Unionist (but not necessarily partitionist) but in addition an equal area whose majority was Nationalist.

During the negotiations with the representatives of Dail Eireann, the British Government indicated its willingness to establish a boundary commission with a view to removing this objection. It was hinted that in the result the territory of Northern Ireland would be so far reduced as to make it unviable.

The boundary commission met. Its British representatives rejected all existing electoral units as areas for testing the wishes of the inhabitants. The units in county option were too big for them. On this basis Northern Ireland would have lost Fermanagh and Tyrone at one blow. Option by Poor Law Unions was even worse. Northern Ireland would have lost half the six-county area, namely Fermanagh, Tyrone, South Down, South Armagh, Derry City, and much of Derry County.

Did option by parishes suit them? Under that arrangement Belfast would have been divided into zones like Berlin. Neither that nor any other arrangement was acceptable. The upshot was that Northern Ireland continued to hold half its area, plus a third of Belfast, without the consent of the local population.

THE constituent Act transferred responsibility for police and local government to Belfast, but denied it the power to raise or maintain armed forces.[1] This prohibition created a problem. How was the boundary to be defended, or the non-Unionist areas prevented from seceding? The use of British armed forces presented difficulties, political since the Irish question would be brought back into British politics, and practical from their lack of knowledge of the country and its people.

The solution was found in Carson's "Ulster's Volunteers." This paramilitary body had defied the British Parliament in the struggle over the third Home Rule Bill in 1912-14.[2] In 1920 as part of the preparation for partition it was recognised, reorganised and re-equipped. Its service rifles and revolvers were delivered in Belfast before the British public was allowed to know of the Cabinet decision.

In November 1920 former members of the Ulster Volunteers were called to meetings where they were offered enrolment as Special Constables, the status simul-

[1Section 4 (3).]

[2The origin of the Ulster Volunteers in the armed blacklegs of the 1907 transport strike, when sections of the police supported the workers, is admitted in the "Times" History of the War, Vol. 8, page 399, which records that "Manufacturers and merchants in Belfast, finding it impossible in the absence of police protection, to get their goods conveyed to and from the docks, armed themselves and their servants . . . and saw their goods safe on board. This was the beginning of the arming of Ulster."]

taneously enjoyed by the Black-and-Tans. Two classes were established, a small full-time class 'A' based on barracks and a large part-time class 'B', based on their own homes, but armed with rifle, bayonet and side-arms and possessing all the rights of servants of the Crown. They were described by the "Manchester Guardian" as "the instruments of a religious tyranny" beating down the opposition to the Government of Ireland Act.

A year later, when the Act was in force, the police authorities by secret circular called for the establishment of a third force, class 'C', of which it was said, "The force is intended as a military one only," and must be "constituted from a reliable section of the population."

The establishment of this force was explicitly (as that of the others was implicitly) *ultra vires*. But far from raising objections the British Government footed the bill. By December 1925, when Mr. Winston Churchill announced the impending disbandment of the Special Constabulary, no less than £6,750,000 out of the total cost of £7,426,000 had been met from the Imperial Exchequer, a figure which amounted to half the Imperial Contribution for the years 1922-25. The number then under arms was about 40,000.

The day after Mr. Churchill's announcement, the Northern Ireland Government qualified it by providing for the retention of Class 'B' in a modified form as part of the framework of repression the Six-County Government found itself compelled to maintain. The 'B' Specials remain to this day, numbering one in 48 of the total population, about one in 12 of the adult males.

The doubtful legality of their retention at all, is matched by another provision, namely their sectarian character. No Catholic can become a 'B' Special. In country districts where large farms of Protestant settlers occupy the valleys, their sons are usually B-men. Not so those of the small Catholic farmers in the hills. These people are neighbours and cannot but have business one with the other. The stratification of Protestants and Catholics means in effect that the landlord and capitalist are armed against the tenant and the worker.

THE excesses of this sectarian force are notorious. Their task is not merely to police, but to intimidate. Gratuitous searches of premises, unnecessary challenges in the highway, arrests on suspicion, invasion of social functions and invigilation of political activities are commonplace. These men are the Orange stormtroops, the paramilitary élite, backed by a government that asks no questions.

In March, 1955, Arthur Leonard, a 19-year-old boy whose family had no political affiliations, was driving across the border to his home in Co. Monaghan when 'B' Specials showed red lanterns and ordered him to stop. Mistaking the signals for traffic warnings, he drove on, his main attention centred on the two girls he was bringing home from the dance. The 'B' Specials then fired and shot him dead. At the inquest Mr. Curran, solicitor representing the relatives, demanded a verdict of murder. The coroner declined to return it, saying, "The law which Mr. Curran quoted applies only to England. The law in Northern Ireland is in a peculiar state . . ." Such incidents are inseparable from the attempt to hold an area in defiance of the wishes of its inhabitants.

The adoption of the former Ulster Volunteers as part of the new machinery of state had decisive political results. The gerrymandering from 1922 onwards had served notice that constitutional action would be made as difficult as possible. The discrimination now in full swing showed the Catholics that their daily lives were to be made as uncomfortable as possible. The establishment of the Carsonites as B-men was a declaration that the principle of government by consent had been rejected.

It is therefore somewhat ironical to find those who once preached the armed defiance of Parliament, and turned their rebel army into an official police force, expressing shocked surprise when sections of the Nationalist youth, goaded beyond endurance, seek to give the Six-County Tories a hair of the dog that bit them. If, as its actions indicated, the Government proposed to found its rule on blatant coercion, then it was inviting the conclusion that coercion was a possible means of overthrowing it.

Ireland is not the only country where this consequence was thought out. Here was Irish soil, held by unashamed dictatorship, against the wishes of people persecuted and denied political expression. To expect there would not be young men prepared to meet force with force would be to expect a miracle. More mature political minds might hesitate and caution, but at every setback in the constitutional field, the seemingly speedier alternative would come to the fore again. It is likely to go on doing so until there is a convincing constitutional policy with strong prospects of early success.

That after 42 years there is still an organised movement of men prepared to take the risks entailed in disposing of the Government by revolutionary means, is itself an indictment of the partition settlement.

IN 1924, the six-county Government first introduced its Special Powers Acts. Again these were merely a continuation of the coercion Acts by means of which Britain had ruled Ireland for so long. The "emergency" for which they were introduced continues today, and the Statute Book carries a quota of legislation which, with all the improvements added over the years, must be unique in Europe. Under the Special Powers Acts, the police and authorities are empowered to:—

(1) Arrest without warrant;
(2) Imprison without charge or trial and deny recourse to Habeas Corpus[3A] or a court of law;
(3) Enter and search homes without warrant, and with force, at any hour of day or night;
(4) Declare a curfew and prohibit meetings, assemblies (including fairs and markets) and processions;
(5) Permit punishment by flogging;
(6) Deny claim to a trial by jury;
(7) Arrest persons it is desired to examine as witnesses, forcibly detain them and compel them to answer questions, under penalties, even if answers may incriminate them. Such a person is guilty of an offence if he refuses to be sworn or answer a question;
(8) Do any act act involving interference with the rights of private property;
(9) Prevent access of relatives or legal advisers to a person imprisoned without trial;
(10) Prohibit the holding of an inquest after a prisoner's death;
(11) Arrest a person "who by word of mouth" spreads false reports or makes false statements;
(12) Prohibit the circulation of any newspaper;
(13) Prohibit the possession of any film or gramophone record;
(14) Arrest a person who does anything "calculated to be prejudicial to the preservation of peace or maintenance of order in Northern Ireland and not specifically provided for in the Regualtions."

That such powers are exercised by a special sectarian police force, recruited through the Orange lodges is the negation of democracy. In the shadow of such powers normal life is impossible in the Nationalist areas, and their effect is constantly felt throughout the whole social structure. The division of the population into first and second-class citizens becomes complete with a corresponding effect on the Protestants.

Like the Germans who lived under Hitler, who heard of concentration camps and massacres, they must learn to dehumanise themselves, to make one part of their minds wooden and unresponsive. And yet one would think if they were silent "the very stones of the earth" would cry out.

BETWEEN 1957 and 1961 there were up to 170 men (and one woman) interned without charge or trial in Belfast prison. On St. Patrick's Day, 1958, many of them said they were savagely beaten up by commandos of the Royal Ulster Constabulary to make a "Belfast holiday." They had been caught trying to dig an escape tunnel No evidence had been offered of any overt action by any of them, indeed not even of dangerous thoughts.

They were held until the volume of protest (including that of many British Members of Parliament and trade unions) could no longer be ignored. In the meantime, if they tried to dig them-

[3A protection against arbitrary arrest according to which a detained person's friends may demand the production of his body in court, where the detention must be justified.]

selves out they were hardly to be blamed. Such enterprises are warmly applauded when they take place in certain more distant places.

Following demands that the authorities either try these men or let them go, it was announced that a Special Tribunal had been set up to which they could appeal. The public was curious to know its composition, but this was strenuously with-held. Some who appealed to it were released. Others were released only after considerable delay and much questioning.

One man, arrested while sheltering from a shower in a shop doorway and unbeknownst sharing his refuge with a man in possession of an illegal newspaper, is said to have been released only after signing a renunciation of the I.R.A. and all its works and pomps, though he had never been a member.

The majority of the internees declined to appear before the tribunal, holding rightly or wrongly, that the release of a man of known Republican views would be given only on condition that he was prepared to turn informer. In view of the Government's refusal to publish the composition of the tribunal, this suspicion was understandable.

Under the Special Powers Acts the circulation of the "United Irishman" is prohibited in Northern Ireland, and the "Irish Democrat"[4] was similarly banned for several years. Visitors arriving from Dublin are watched and on occasion detained and even serched. In April 1960 the sum of £150 was taken from Mrs. McGlade, member of a Republican family, as she stepped off the Dublin train and, despite protests and threats of legal action (which could have been taken under Section 6 of the **Government of Ireland Act**), it was never returned. It is of interest that the Northern Ireland Bill of 1962 tried to plug up this loophole for democracy by drastically restricting the right of appeal to the House of Lords.

PROTECTED by the Special Powers, acts of petty discrimination flourish. On occasion the playing of games on Sundays is forbidden to Catholics, in deference to the prejudices of sabbatarian Protestants. Athletic functions have likewise been banned. Cycle racing has been interfered with by preventing competitors passing through certain towns or along certain routes on Sundays. The traditional St. Patrick's Day parade has been prevented in Nationalist Derry City, though Orange parades have been foisted on Nationalist towns without compunction.

The **Flags and Emblems Act forbids** the display of the Irish tricolour in public places (a similar ban has been enforced by the authorities in Scotland but never in England and Wales). Canon Thomas Maguire, parish priest of Newtownbutler, Co. Fermanagh, was hosed with water by the R.U.C. when standing beside his house from whose windows his housekeeper had had the temerity to display the flag.

Unionist dislike of the tricolour is of course understandable. By setting Orange and Green, the colours of the two religious communities, on either side of the Jacobin white, it symbolises the unification of the Irish people through liberty, equality and fraternity. The list of petty restrictions and irritations is endless. Not only do they serve to maintain the divisions among the people; they parochialise the minds of many Nationalists by keeping them concentrated on pinpricks, and spread a sense of frustration in the Catholic community.

Since the establishment in 1959 of the Northern Ireland Council for Civil Liberties, a non-sectarian body with members from both communities and trade union affiliations, and the increasing attention paid to Northern Ireland by British Labour M.P.s, more circumspection is becoming apparent. But mitigation is not remission. The cessation of disturbances on the border in February 1962 removed the last vestige of an excuse for the Special Powers. Yet they remain. If Northern Ireland cannot be governed without Special Powers, then its constitution should be seriously scrutinised. That constitution is the **Government of Ireland Act.**

* * *

THE Northern Ireland administration has sought to maintain a spurious loyalty among Protestants by making Catholics second-class citizens. The trade union movement, with its traditions of working-class solidarity, has of course set its face against policies which create division. The firm action of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers in London, in forbidding their Belfast members to take part in the anti-Catholic pogroms, was warmly applauded at the 1920 annual meeting of the Irish T.U.C.

At the same time it was regretted that other British trade unions had not taken similar action, when the Tory inspiration of the outrages would have been made clear.

The Unionists have striven constantly over the years to spread the poison of sectarianism into the working class and even now the aftermath of their early successes still remains. In the shipyard certain trades are still in practice reserved to Protestants. It is possible to hear of certain unions which have "Protestant branches" and "Catholic branches." It is generally accepted, however, that working-class sectarianism is on the decline, especially among the younger generation.

Complaints are heard that in some working-class districts nobody under forty will attend the Orange Lodge. The builders of houses in Protestant districts (usually employers or their associates) provided each dwelling with an iron socket into which it was expected they would insert a Union flag on the 12th of July. During the Covenant jubilee celebrations in September 1962 the sockets more often hung naked than beflagged, and "kick the Pope" slogans were exceptionally scarce.

The great moral strength of the trade union movement is its all-Ireland character. This has been maintained despite partition under conditions of great difficulty and complexity by the exercise of "give and take." For a period unity was broken. During the war the Dublin Government permitted class bias to override patriotism by introducing a Trade Union Bill designed to favour unions with headquarters in Ireland.

But for the special circumstances of war-time it is possible that the Northern Ireland Government would then have achieved its cherished aim of bringing about a trade union partition, with Six and Twenty-Six County Congresses. Fortunately the Act was challenged as unconstitutional and had to be repealed. At the suspected instigation of the Dublin Government, however, a split did eventually take place, but though a number of unions with headquarters in Ireland banded themselves together in a separate Congress, there were still Northern Ireland workers among their number, and the original T.U.C. to which the majority in Northern Ireland adhered, still retained a substantial proportion of members in the Republic.

The Northern Ireland Government objective was therefore not achieved, for the division was based not on territory but on policy. Indeed, hardly had the split occurred when feelers were exchanged with a view to reunion, and negotiations were begun which dragged over some years.

Re-amalgamation took place in 1960 on the basis of recognising the underlying unity of Ireland, the inevitability of Irish trade unionists acquiring an increasing autonomy as their country developed, and at the same time the existence of strong historical links with parent bodies in Britain.

This agreement was a blow to the Unionists because of its implicit rejection not so much of partition but of the principle of sectarianism in the working class. For the Irish T.U.C. always recognised the practical need to deal with whatever authorities were charged with regulating working-class conditions, irrespective of their legal status, and had set up a sub-committee to deal with specialised Northern Ireland affairs. This sub-committee was continued after the reunification of 1960 and holds an annual conference.

The Northern Ireland Government refuses to recognise this committee, on the pretext that its headquarters are outside the United Kingdom, or alternatively that it does not "recognise" the Northern Ireland Government. Recognition is given by the simple process of requesting joint discussion of issues confronting the people. As for the Dublin headquarters, these do not disqualify the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church, the Freemasons and eight of the eleven Irish banks which operate in the Six Counties.

Two factors influence this refusal. First is the class bias of the Unionists. By refusing to consult with the accredited trade union centre in the Six Counties on such matters as unemployment, apprenticeship schemes, productivity etc., they deprive themselves of the type of experience which can only come from the working-class side. But they also

[4 Then "Irish Freedom."]

refuse to recognise the validity of political aspirations in the working class.

The growth of working class consciousness proceeds despite this ostrich-like policy. The working class do not require the Unionist imprimatur for the independent expression of their opinions. The fact of anti-working class bias is illustrated by the existence on the Northern Ireland Statute Book of some of the provisions of the 1927 Trades Dispute Act, repealed by the Labour Government after the second world war.

A second Unionist calculation is probably the most fundamental.

To recognise the representation of the Northern Ireland working class is to recognise a power beyond sectarianism. That the trade union movement would have no hand or part in government actions which involved sectarianism goes without saying. With the passage of time the Unionists might thus find themselves restricted in the operation of their policy of divide and rule.

By recognising the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions they fear they might bring closer the day of the combination against them of all "small men," the alliance of Labour and Nationalist which could topple them down. Entertaining such fears they must continue their Government without consent.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SHORT SHRIFT FOR REPUBLICANS

AS explained in the first chapter, the question of allegiance to London or Dublin, Britain or Ireland is the great dividing line of Northern Ireland politics. The Government is completely aware of this, whence the multiplicity of oaths for civil purposes. Nationalists, accepting the Dublin allegiance, cannot but regard the six-county administration as a usurpation and their territory as occupied. That granted, they adapt their course of action to what they consider the requirements of the situation. The blocking up of ordinary constitutional channels has convinced some of their younger people that the only way to free the six counties is through a "resistance movement."

This trend of thought derives its tradition from the Irish Volunteers set up in 1913 as a patriotic rejoinder to Carson's armed bands. In the Rising of Easter 1916 they were joined by James Connolly's Citizen Army and became known as the Irish Republican Army. During the ensuing period they conducted guerilla warfare against the British forces. It was they who compelled Lloyd George to confine the **Government of Ireland Act** to six counties. The conception of a "resistance movement" is therefore not new in Irish history.

As well as those actually engaged in "resistance" when this is considered practicable, there are a large number of Nationalists who offer moral support, to such an extent indeed that in 1955 political Republicanism (Sinn Fein) won two seats in the Imperial General Election. The members were declared disqualified by a Northern Ireland court on the grounds that they were serving prison sentences for political offences. While it is probable that the Republican movement draws its most active forces from the small farmer class, it seems that those who have some experience of industry as well are most attracted to it. It has substantial support among certain sections of the Nationalist workers in Belfast.

REPUBLICANISM is by no means synonymous with the cult of the gun, as Unionist spokesmen are anxious to convince the world. Its theoretical ancestry has never been fully traced but shows close on two centuries of native Irish growth influenced from without by American secessionism, French Jacobinism, physical force English Chartism, Blanquism, and the International Workingmen's Association. There is nothing exceptional or unexpected about its existence in Ireland, since it remains part of the direct tradition of European revolutionism. Perhaps it has learned more from the nineteenth than the twentieth century, but the national struggles of the nineteenth century created some of the leading states in the modern world.

To talk merely of "terrorism" is therefore to miss the point. Messrs. Barritt and Carter[1] who employ this term admit that the Republicans are "careful to oppose religious bigotry," and "careful not to provoke the civilian population." It is a pity the Government does not exercise similar care. The difference is due to a difference of aim. The Republicans have taken to physical violence when they felt there was nothing else for it. But it is in the cause of the unity and independence of their country. It is necessary to understand this, and not to imagine that they are interested in nothing but fighting.

ONE of the strongest centres of Republicanism is the Coalisland area of the County Tyrone. This is an area occupied by small Catholic farmers on the shores of Lough Neagh. Three miles west is the gerrymandered town of Dungannon. The district is remarkable for the presence of a number of rural industries originally established to exploit the local deposits of coal and clay. It is said that in April 1916 the Lough Neagh fishermen stood by with their fleet of dinghies in which they were to ferry the Volunteers over to Glenavy for a rear assault on Belfast.

A NUMBER of incidents took place in this district during 1957, one of which was the blowing up of a railway signal box on June 12th. Special detachments of police and military were drafted into the area to make searches for hidden arms and explosives. On August 17th an exhaustive search was made of the townlands of Roan and Brackaville in which mine-detectors were employed. But that night just before 11 p.m. a telephone call from Edendork (three miles away) was received at Coalisland police barracks, with the result that a party of police and soldiers set out to search an unoccupied house in Cattle Lane, Brackaville. During the search there was an explosion, said by the police to be caused by a booby trap, and Sergeant Ovens was killed.

This event was the signal for a general round-up of Republicans in the district but seemingly no charges were preferred and most of them were released. Early on November 20th, a further search resulted in the discovery of a cache of arms in the adjoining townland of Lisnastrane. Ten men were arrested for questioning[2] and among those detained were Kevin Mallon, Francis Talbot, Daniel Devlin, J. Herron and James O'Donnell. It was six months before most of them were brought to trial at Belfast.

There was every reason for concern over their fate while in prison. Unpleasant rumours of police behaviour were abroad. Mr. J. Connellan, Nationalist M.P. for South Down, had already on November 12th raised in Stormont the complaint of Mr. Seamus O'Hare, aged 22, of Magherareagh, Kilkeel, who had been subjected to questioning at Newcastle police barracks. He had been kept continually in a standing position for a long period, and finally lost all mental control. When he was allowed to return to Kilkeel, his doctor had him removed to hospital where the police evidence to connect him with either with him. He was then transferred to a Belfast hospital to escape their attentions. There were reports of the use by the R.U.C. of a technique in which relays of policemen kept up a volley of identical questions until the victim was utterly exhausted.

THE trial of James O'Donnell took place on April 18th, 1958. There was no police evidence to conect him with either explosion or the arms cache which was found near his house. But the prosecution were able to produce a confession signed by O'Donnell himself, in which he described his part in the signal box explosion and admitted his connection with illegal organisations. He was described as an unemployed steel erector. He had worked in Manchester. Indeed while there he was an active member of the Constructional Engineering Union and walked in the Trades Council's May Day processions each year.

There was a sensation when O'Donnell repudiated the confession. "It was not a voluntary statement," he objected, and explained that he had signed it on November 21st after having been "tortured and beaten about the face and stomach," and threatened with being "handed over to the

[1Op. cit.]

[2The arrests were spread over a day or two.]

B-Specials." Other alleged threats were that members of his family would be interned without charge or trial. Herron in his turn stated that the R.U.C. had threatened to charge him with the murder of Ovens if he failed to confess.

O'Donnell declined to go into the witness box since identification with court procedure is held by most Republicans to amount to "recognising" the Northern Ireland constitution. Those who doubt the validity of the argument must respect the courage of the action. He was then found guilty of the two charges of causing an explosion and possessing the cache of arms and ammunition found near his house in Lisnastrane, together with a charge of membership of an illegal organisation. The sole evidence offered was a confession which was dated November 21st. Why had the authorities been sitting on it for six months?

After the verdict Sergeant J. Hermon of Coalisland gave the judge the benefit of his local knowledge. O'Donnell came of a "very Republican family," which held very strong views and opinions. Another brother had been in Monaghan since 1955. "There is nothing I can say from a political point of view in his favour," the sergeant continued. "He is an intelligent type, an organiser and a leader, and he has no respect for the constitution at all." "In other words," commented the judge, "he is really sour." After this public airing of O'Donnell's political character and associations, the court sentenced him to ten years' imprisonment.

FOUR days later two other young men, Kevin Mallon and Francis Talbot were charged with the murder of Sergeant Ovens. The same morning British newspapers announced the discovery of an "infernal machine" in Whitehall, believed to be something planted by the I.R.A. It turned out to be a doctor's stethoscope.

The prosecution alleged not that Mallon and Talbot had planted the booby trap, but that they had made the telephone call which lured Ovens to his death. Once again the sole police evidence of the slightest moment was a pair of confessions. These were again repudiated, but since it is Republican practice to waive the non-recognition principle in the case of capital charges, this time the case was defended. The death of a juror resulted in its being postponed for three months. But it finally opened on July 28th when Mr. Elwyn Jones, Q.C., M.P., Recorder of Cardiff and a prosecutor at the Nuremburg War Crimes trials, appeared for the defence.

It took twenty-five minutes for the jurors to be sworn, according to Mr. Hostettler who attended the trial as a legal observer on behalf of the Connolly Association.[3] The defence challenged 18 of the jurors and the Crown told another 17 to "stand by." The defence tried to prevent the confessions being put in as evidence on two grounds, first that they were secured while the accused were in illegal custody, and second that they were induced by "undue terror and menaces."

Defence counsel was able to show that the confessions of the two men were mutually contradictory. "They are inconsistent on fundamental matters," said Mr. Elwyn Jones. Later he was able to call witnesses who said they saw Mallon and Talbot elsewhere when the telephone call was allegedly being made.

Mallon's evidence was that at the time the phone call was made he was not in Edendork but in Coalisland, having played records on the juke-box in Mamie Herron's shop till 10.30 and then gone to St. Patrick's Hall where he remained till 11.30. He heard an explosion, but did not know where it was or what had caused it. He had no connection with it.

"I did not make the 'phone call from Edendork nor was I with Talbot or anyone else who may have made such a call," he said. "I had no connection with the explosion or the death of Sergeant Ovens."

The police witnesses denied beating the two accused. Mallon's evidence, as reported in great detail in both Unionist and Nationalist newspapers, however, took the following lines:

On November 19th he was taken by the police to Coalisland barracks, and then removed to Dungannon where the police said to him, "We'll fix you this time, Mallon. It will be a while before you get out."

"They then started to beat me up," he went on. "They made a whole lot of remarks. 'Confess, confess you were there, you did it and you led a lot of other lads astray.' I was beaten alternatively by two policemen, and between the beatings and the interrogation it lasted from 6.30 or 7 p.m. to midnight."

Mallon said that after the interrogation he was handcuffed and put into a car. A head constable and another policeman were in the car. He did not know where he was going, but when they were a short distance out of Dungannon the car was stopped and the head constable had a conversation with the men who stopped them. They said, "We have brought the b——— out to you," and then said "we'll fix him." He was then taken out of the car and two men prodded him round the body with rifles. He was put back in the car and they drove on.

Between Lurgan and Lisburn the car turned up a road to the left and ——— asked him if he was ready to confess to the murder of Sergeant Ovens and "lots of other things." He replied that he did not know anything and was then taken out of the car. The other policeman, who was accompanying them, threw him across the back of the car. The head constable started to choke him, saying, "Confess, confess, you are a murderer."

Mallon alleged that the head-constable hit him in the stomach with his fist and when he passed into semi-consciousness he was returned to the car, ——— said, "We will have more time to deal with this boy in Belfast."

When they arrived in Belfast about 2 a.m., the handcuffs were removed and he was taken into a cell on the top floor of the police office, used as an office. He was questioned by Head Constable ——— about the death of Sergeant Ovens for half-an-hour or thereabouts. His shirt was torn and covered with blood from his nose and mouth. The questioning stopped at about 3 a.m. He was next questioned at 3 p.m. on the same day by a "strange police officer."

During this period of questioning, which continued till 5 or 5.30 p.m. he was struck every time he said "No." At 6 p.m. a further period of questioning started lasting until 11p.m. One of the interrogators brought him a mirror, held it up in front of him and said, "Take a look at yourself. You know you are in bad shape. If you don't confess now we will keep this up until you do confess. We will keep it up for weeks if necessary."

Mallon then described how a "small strange man" arrived who was left alone with him and started to speak about religion. After about an hour he asked if Mallon had anything to confess. When he replied that he had not, the man jumped up and pulled out a gun, pushed it into his stomach and said, "I am going to let you have it." When Mallon still did not respond he was struck over the head with the revolver and fell to the ground.

Two policemen then ran in and said, "We don't want any blood in here." They dragged him into another room where a handkerchief was put round his neck and twisted and a lighted cigarette put to his lips.

"My condition was then very bad," Mallon continued in his evidence. "They stood me up against a wall and said 'Take off your clothes.' I took off all my clothes with the exception of my trousers, which were removed by the small man. I was then naked.

"One of the policemen got a window pole and pushed it into my stomach. Another one trod on my toes. They kept this up for some time. They threw me on the floor and one of them said 'I am Ovens. You blew me up, didn't you. I'll haunt you for the rest of your life.'

"They kept asking me to confess and one of them started to behave like a maniac. He crawled all over me and clawed at me. He said 'I am Ovens' and he was laughing and shouting all the time."

After further pressure had been used, Mallon said he was taken to a cell which was also occupied by Daniel Devlin. Later he heard sounds which suggested that the police were busy on Talbot. It was then, he said, he decided to concoct the confession. At his request he was taken to Talbot who was then lying in bed, and said "I made that telephone call." A police sergeant protested that his voice was not deep enough. He then said, in Talbot's hearing, "No it was Talbot." A District Inspector then came to the door, and while the sergeant was speaking to him, Mallon

[3]Mr. Hostettler wrote an account of the trial in his pamphlet, "Torture Trial," now scarce. The National Council for Civil Liberties had an observer at the postponed April trial.]

told Talbot the main threads of the story it was proposed to invent to save them both from further ill-treatment. Mallon produced a grey shirt which was torn down the front. He alleged it had been torn in Dungannon by a District Inspector.

As has been indicated above, the police officials concerned denied the allegations made in Mallon's evidence.

AFTER Talbot had given similar evidence Mallon's sister gave evidence of seeing him in prison two weeks after the arrest and being greatly shocked at the change in his appearance. The defence then called witnesses, two internees and one prisoner who most courageously testified on Mallon's behalf. Devlin said he had seen Mallon with his face covered with blood and hardly fit to stand on his feet. Others corroborated Mallon's account of his movements.

Mr. Elwyn Jones in his final speech said:—

"Normally you would have thought that if the prosecution and the authorities were satisfied here was an adequate basis for a charge of murder, there would have been a charge of murder then and there. But the weeks went by before public knowledge was gained that these two young men were going to be charged with murder. It was not till January that they were charged. There cannot have been much confidence that there was good evidence. It was not until January that it was known to the lawyers defending these men that there was need to seek evidence."

Submitting that there was not a shred of evidence to corroborate the statements alleged to have been made by the accused, Mr. Elwyn Jones said he would have expected evidence of fingerprints in the telephone kiosk at Edendork. Although all the apparatus of the police had been rightly put in action with efficiency and force to try and find the perpetrators of the crime, nothing had been produced connecting the two accused in any way with the explosion at all.

After the judge's summing up, the jury retired for two-and-a-quarter hours. Every one of them was a Protestant, and there was no woman among them. But they returned a verdict of "Not guilty," which was greeted with applause in the court and some cries of "Thank God!" Out in Coalisland a silent crowd waited in the diamond and dispersed with relief when the good news came through.

MR. HOSTETTLER wrote after the trial, "As an Englishman I have never visited Ireland before. . . . Apart from the trial my visits to Belfast have also opened my eyes to the very grim picture of government and police repression in the Six Counties. . . . No democrat can remain indifferent to these things."

It might have been thought that Mallon and Talbot would have been allowed home at once to recover from their nine-month ordeal. According to the "Belfast Telegraph":—

"Immediately after they had been found not guilty . . . and ordered to be released from the dock, the two young Coalisland men, Kevin Mallon and Francis Talbot were taken into police custody. They were then held for three or four hours in a police waiting room while senior police officers conferred and were then smuggled out of the courthouse through a back exit and driven to the police office to await the issue of a detention order by the Ministry of Home Affairs."

The Minister readily complied and two days later Mallon and Talbot appeared once more in court, this time charged among other things with unlawful possession of that very cache of arms and explosives for which James O'Donnell was already serving ten years. And once again out came the confessions of last November. This time Mallon and Talbot were not represented by counsel and refused to give evidence while once again repudiating the confessions. They were found guilty and sentenced to fourteen and eight years respectively. This time Sergeant Hermann testified that Mallon came from a respectable hard-working family and had lived at home. In February 1963 organisations of the British and Irish Labour and National movements were still trying to secure their release.[4]

THE first impression of these trials is of a police force grown careless from the possession of too comprehensive powers. Messrs. Barritt and Carter say: "It seems to us that on occasion the police will use rough treatment against those who are, after all, trying to murder them." After all trying to murder them? How do Messrs. Barritt and Carter know that arrested persons are trying to do this? Is this not something for a jury to decide? It is striking that to many people in Northern Ireland the picture of the police acting as judge, jury and executioner arouses no surprise. They are used to it.

The second impression is that Republicans are allowing themselves to be blackmailed by their refusal to give the courts *de facto* recognition. If the second Mallon and Talbot case had been pressed through to a conclusion with capable counsel, the Six County-Government would have suffered one of the greatest set-backs in its history. It is even doubtful whether, if they had known beforehand that the case would be defended, they would have dared to stage the second trial.

The origin of this "purism" is historical. Refusal to recognise the court was a way of drawing attention to packed juries. During the dual power from 1919 to 1921, Republicans naturally made a point of honour to take their disputes to the Dail Eireann Courts and to boycott the British. James Connolly on the other hand when arrested in 1913 contented himself with saying he did not recognise the court (*de jure*) but then accepted it *de facto* and defended himself. When sentenced however he went on hunger strike, by such tactics combining what was best in two approaches. The tactics of Republicans though of material interest to other people, can be decided only by themselves, but the valiant struggle for their rights by Mallon and Talbot deserves to be long remembered by all democrats.

The importance of the Mallon and Talbot trial was not only in the wide publicity it received in Ireland, and the seriousness of the issues raised. It gave rise to widespread demands for a public enquiry into the administration of justice in Northern Ireland, with a view to finding what were the circumstances that made the various allegations possible. The Northern Ireland Government and the British Home Office have so far successfully resisted this demand. It is not however, too late to hold such an enquiry.

THE cessation of military operations has been followed by a revival of political activity. A committee is functioning with the object of securing the release of the remaining prisoners. It is becoming realised that as well as a timeserving slavish type of constitutionalism there exists a vigorous, fearless and principled use of constitutional opportunity which can break through the artificial barriers constructed by the Unionists, find common ground with Protestant democrats and undermine the whole sectarian basis of Unionism. The fact that the Northern Ireland Trade Union movement is prepared to link itself with such organisations as the Civil Liberties Council is a clear indication of the possibility of progress along these lines.

The Republican movement has received scant attention and scanter praise in Britain. It is therefore necessary to state for the information of the British worker that even those who disapprove of its tactics recognise the high standard of political principle and personal integrity of its members. Their emphatic rejection of religious sectarianism makes them accessible to Protestant democrats who sometimes give way to a suspicion that Nationalists dream of retaliation. The internationalism of the Republican tradition brings points of contact with Socialism. It may be that in the coming period the Republicans may have to draw fresh inspiration from their founder. The six counties of Northern Ireland have some resemblances with Ireland as a whole in 1782-1800 both administratively and politically. The agitation of Wolfe Tone for Catholic emancipation, democratisation of the franchise and the unity of all Irishmen irrespective of creed under the banner of democracy almost exactly fits the requirements of today. It may yet happen that Tone's grand strategy may be carried out on the ground where he had the greatest hopes of it. Success depends on the complex process of securing a junction between the Nationalist movement and the working-class movement.

The fact that such possibilities are inherent in their position accounts for the Unionist determination to give short shrift to Republicans far more than the fact that they are the alleged repositories of the doctrine of physical force.

[4On March 6th, 1963, three men were released several years before the completion of their sentences. This encouraging development is a virtual admission that the others should be detained no longer.]

CHAPTER EIGHT
BRINGING THE TRUTH OUT

THAT all is not well in Northern Ireland ample evidence has been adduced. That the British Government is responsible for the position there is beyond serious question. The British people are therefore involved but are unfortunately successfully kept ignorant thanks to what Patrick Pearse called the "paper wall" between the two countries. How can the curtain be pulled aside?

It would be wrong to think that Irish nationalists have not tried to approach the British public. Immediately after the last war the Mansion House Committee, representing all parties in the Republic, raised a considerable sum of money for propaganda in Britain. They were encouraged by the lofty principles ostentatiously proclaimed in the Atlantic Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and by the presence in Britain of a Labour government.

But a series of unforeseen misfortunes befell the campaign. Tactical misjudgments were made. From the passing of the ill-starred Ireland Act of 1949 for close on a decade practically nothing was heard about Ireland in the British Parliament. The Irish question was out of British politics and many believed it would never come back.

The Mansion House campaign confronted difficulties which were not immediately apparent. There was perhaps too easy a faith in the willingness of the Labour Government, with bipartisan foreign policy, to relinquish what Lord Morrison called the "jolly old Empire." The campaign was "non-political", which meant that some of its supporters were advocating the very course of foreign policy which from the imperialist standpoint demanded the retention of the six counties.

It drew its inspiration from outside the country and was increasingly involved in restrictive protocol which prevented its doing the only thing likely to be effective, namely to appeal to the good sense and solidarity of the British workers over the heads of the leaders of public opinion.

The Ireland Act shattered it. The Irish had asked for consideration of their complaint. The door was slammed in their faces. The very people the Tories had nurtured, protected and established over the six counties, who admitted that their continued supremacy depended on forcing the entire natural increase of their opponents into emigration, were to arbitrate between Britain and her own victims.

It was little wonder that it was hard to see a legal way forward, and that disturbances began once more on the border. All the separate strands of which the Irish national movement is braided seemed to fall apart. Each had ready his own recipe, but the pot never boiled.

OF late years prospects have improved. Two factors in Britain are mainly responsible, apart of course from the natural resilience of popular movements, which draw strength from a soil that can never be cropped barren. First there was the growth of anti-imperialist sentiment, and second the organisation of the Irish in Britain into the Labour and trade union movement.

Both of these factors contributed to the revival of the Connolly Association. In the six counties the same period saw a considerable revival of the activity of the Nationalist Party and its entry into spheres of economic and social policy from which it had formerly tended to hold aloof.

While there has never been a period of British history when the imperialist adventures of the ruling class commanded the full support of the British people, chauvinism had a fairly free run from the South African War to the Suez débacle. The demonstration that Britain would never again dictate to colonial powers as she had done, may have set imperialist thinking on the path which beckoned to the Common Market.

It certainly awakened large sections of the Labour and Socialist youth to Britain's need to seek a new greatness on a non-imperial basis. The rapid growth of the Nuclear Disarmament Campaign, the Anti-Apartheid movement, and the Movement for Colonial Freedom, illustrates the birth of a new age. The result has been a degree of sympathy with Irish national demands unknown for many years.

WHEN the **Government of Ireland Act** was being prepared the westward flow of Irish emigration was taken for granted. Actually it had ceased with the war. During the 'twenties the eastward drift to Britain began. Held back temporarily by the slump, it was resumed on a scale which expanded throughout the 'forties and 'fifties. The cause of the emigration was, as has been indicated, the break-up of small agricultural production under conditions of the restriction of industrial development by neo-imperialism, that is to say the complex of economic effects connected with British financial domination. The reason why Britain was ready to receive this influx lay in the boom conditions of war and reconstruction.

The result has been the establishment of an Irish community over a million strong and concentrated in the principal developing industrial districts of the Midlands and South. The Mansion House campaign struck strongest roots in the old Irish centres of Liverpool and the West Riding. The Irish of the Midlands and South have followed the Connolly Association and the Republican movement. Only in Manchester do all appear to co-exist.

This situation was never foreseen in 1920, and could be of decisive importance if the Irish in Britain were to realise their full strength. It is one thing for British imperialism to face the indignation of Irish-Americans across three thousand miles of ocean, but another to have a million Irish workers breathing sedition in their own imperial centre. The failure of the one or two Anti-Partition League efforts to emulate T. P. O'Connor and contest elections against Labour in Liverpool, shows clearly that the Irish in Britain, because they are not exclusively interested in Irish affairs (which as emigrants they cannot be) cannot be an independent force. What they can do, however, is by identifying themselves with the British Labour movement, to break through the "paper wall" and speak directly to the only possible alternative to Toryism.

It would ironic if the Tory desire to transport the Irish question out of British politics by delegated legislation were to be foiled by its direct result, the arrival in Britain of one million Irish missionaries, missionaries having far more in common with the ordinary British people than the Tories themselves.

THE effect of forty years without the Irish question has not been completely negative in its effect on the British people. They have now accepted the idea of Irish independence, spurious as it is in the case of the six counties. They no longer regard "Paddy" as an inferior as they did in the 19th century.

That is not to say anti-Irish propaganda has no effect. But the worst effect now is usually a joke with bad teeth. Irish participation in the trade union movement depends entirely on the degree of organisation available to entrants to the various trades. The new status of equality makes more acceptable the message the immigrant brings.

The Irish in Britain have thus become an unexpected nicker in the imperial woodpile. Through their agency, provided they become fully conscious of it, and link themselves adequately with those within it who are pressing in the direction, the Labour movement may reoccupy at a more advanced level the proud position of British radicalism in the days of Parnell. That this is not lost on some reactionaries is shown in certain nostalgic yearnings for the good old days of the transatlantic passage.

There can be no doubt that the solidarity actions already undertaken by sections of the British working-class movement have had an encouraging effect in Ireland. The Irish Sunday Press talks of the revival of the old Labour tradition of support for Ireland. Demonstrations at the time of the Mallon and Talbot trial were favourably noted in the six counties. The campaign in Britain for the release of the internees won the support of over 100 British

[This British Government signed this on behalf of the United Kingdom. Twenty out of its thirty provisions are openly flouted in Northern Ireland.]

Labour M.P.s and one Liberal. The number of questions in the House of Commons on Irish questions shows a distinct increase. The actions of the Movement for Colonial Freedom and the National Council for Civil Liberties are reported in the Nationalist press and strengthen the forces of democracy in Northern Ireland in their difficult struggle against Unionism. Each side strengthens the other.

Encouraged by the successes of the Northern Ireland Council for Civil Liberties, the British National Council for Civil Liberties is pressing for the disarming of the R.U.C., the repeal of the Special Powers and an investigation into allegations of discrimination. The large and influential class of liberal-minded intellectuals which exists in Britain is slowly awakening to the Irish case and making its voice heard. The bridge between the movements of the two countries is the Connolly Association, centred in Britain, but composed of friends of Ireland.

The focal point to which the British side of this bi-national alliance must be canalised is the **Government of Ireland Act,** which has manifestly failed in what it was professedly intended to do. It is time to ask whether this Act can be allowed to remain the basis of Anglo-Irish relations. It was supposed to lead towards a united Ireland (Section 3). Where is the United Ireland?

It guaranteed freedom from religious discrimination (Section 5). Where is that freedom for a Catholic population who are harassed till they escape by emigration?

It laid down that the Northern Ireland Government should have no control over army, navy, air force "or any other military force" (Section 4). Why then do B-men stalk round with rifles and submachine-guns at night?

A public enquiry into the operation of this Act over the past 42 years is long overdue, and is well within the powers of any government that wished to have it.

The Government of Ireland Act is invoked every year to restrict and cheesepare finance and industry. Now perhaps when the devil's sickness is becoming apparent could we not make him turn over a new leaf? There should be an end to the practice of excluding Northern Ireland from progressive legislation at Westminster. Labour could quite easily have repealed the Trades Disputes Act in Northern Ireland as well as in England. It came from England anyway.

The lodger vote could have been given in the same way. It is expressly stated in Section Six that the Westminster Parliament has power to legislate on transferred matters and that where there is a conflict of laws the Westminster law holds good, the Northern Ireland Parliament is not allowed to tinker with it, and if it does its tinkering is null and void. As has been stated, Mr. Fenner Brockway's Bill outlawing discrimination applies to Northern Ireland unless an express restriction is embodied in it.

NATIONALISTS feel no hesitation in accepting the aid of the British Parliament if it should be forthcoming. They have for years urged an enquiry into the way the six counties are ruled. Republicans have an unerring nose for chauvinism and the sight of a British Parliament weakening its own creation would cause no alarm. The same is true of the Civil Liberties movement and much of the working-class movement.

But a howl of protest could be expected from Unionist and crypto-Unionist quarters, and the catchcry would be "Interference." It is getting time this particular bluff was called once and for all. The Unionists succeeded with it in 1914 and again in 1920-22. They succeeded because the Tory Party played the game of ball with them. They must be told that any complaint which they may make that solidarity with the Nationalist movement is "interference" is destroyed by their rejection of Nationalism.

Can anybody conceive of a democrat in Britain offering the people of Northern Ireland freedom to secede from the United Kingdom but allowing a puppet administration to deny them the civil rights and universal suffrage that would enable them to say they wanted to? If the Unionists claimed the right to establish an independent Republic of their own, parallel with and separate from the existing one, that might be folly indeed, but could quite legitimately form a basis for objecting to Britain legislating for the area.

That is not their claim. They make the opposite claim. They claim the right to frustrate the desires of those who want secession. It is not, on their submission, interference to control 90 per cent of their taxation, but only to demand that there shall be equality of political rights. They claim the right not only to remain within the United Kingdom, but to bring in with them others handcuffed and bound. They then claim the right to be free from British interference while they maltreat the prisoners they are holding under Britain's writ. Yet these wish to see the end of all British interference.

It is useless for those whose total claim is to be the agents of defying Irish democracy on the plea that they form an integral part of the United Kingdom to express indignation when British demorcacy heeds the complaints of those who suffer from the integration. They have no right to fly the flag of Britain and refuse to be accountable to the British people.

It needs to be said that national rights are rights of separation. There is no such thing as a unilateral right of Union. That requires the consent of at least two, and when Union takes place it does so thanks to the right to be separate. It is therefore quite open to the British people to place conditions on Northern Ireland's inclusion in the United Kingdom. Those who said they did not want South Africa in the Commonwealth can say they do not want Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom at all, but that while they are in it they must conform to the principles of democracy. Only those who say "Britain get out" have the right to say "Britain keep out."

INSISTENCE on action at Westminster to satisfy the demands of the National movement in the Six Counties, political or economic, is the way to call another bluff—the Conservative bluff. As has been explained, Westminster decides policy and divides it into two spheres. One sphere it operates itself at once. That is the sphere of issues important to imperialism. In the other sphere it excludes Northern Ireland from its legislation, but then indicates to the Stormont Government whether it has decided for them what they should do, or is prepared to leave the matter to them

Within the second sphere Stormont is allowed an initiative which is not in fact followed without full consultation at every point with Westminster. The cry "do not interfere in Northern Ireland" is therefore merely a demand that this convenient little farce should not be disturbed. And it leads to the absurdity of people demanding the right not to be interfered with in not ruling themselves.

The Labour movement should therefore demand that while the six counties are part of the United Kingdom, no local Government set up by the Tories shall have the right to deprive their inhabitants of equal economic, civil and political rights with the people of Britain. They should not hesitate to use legislation to bring this about, selecting time and tactics in consultation with those affected.

"Non-intervention" is Conservative policy. In March 1962 the Nationalists handed Mr. R. A. Butler (then on a visit to Northern Ireland) a memorandum setting out the grievances they wanted redressed. Mr. Butler could have acted through Parliament and had them redressed. He could have told the Northern Ireland Government to redress them or else. He could have ordered an enquiry.

Instead he told the Unionist Party leaders, "Your border is our border" and after a little decent delay sent on the Nationalist memorandum to Lord Brookeborough **without comment.** By this means he stood the real position exactly on its head. It was Mr. Butler's border, not Lord Brookeborough's. But Brookeborough defended it. It was Mr. Butler's coercion. But Mr. Faulkner carried it out. The complaints made to the owner about his manager were sent to the manager for his decision.

Exactly the same thing happened to the memorandum on unemployment sent to the British Government by the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions in November 1962. It contained proposals which could have been initiated from Westminster, some indeed which required initiation from Westminster. After a short delay the memorandum was sent on to the

Northern Ireland Government. This is the reality of non-intervention, and it is not the policy of democracy but Toryism.

THE policy of democracy is solidarity Toryism has deprived the Nationalists[2] of the six counties of their rights in the Republic. Its six-county agents now try to justify depriving them of their rights in the United Kingdom. Pending the restoration of their rights in the Republic, let us make sure they receive the other rights they are entitled to at once.

The result of solidarity action is to bring the realities of the situation befor an ever-widening public. It will become ever plainer that the Tory Party can never solve the Irish question. No more can the six-county Unionists. Its final solution demands a non-imperialist policy by Britain, and solidarity action represents this as it were in embryo. The fundamental principle is that the British working class and the Irish national movement, in its broadest sense, must move in harmony. Some further suggestions on this subject will be found in the last chapter.

[2Of course, not only the Nationalist, but the whole population of the six counties have been deprived of these rights. But it is the Nationalists who are most aware of it.]

CHAPTER NINE
RECONSIDERING IRELAND

EVERY turning point in British affairs involves a re-assessment of policy towards Ireland. This has been explained already on the basis of its proximity and overriding strategic importance. The Act of Union was a reaction to the fear that French Jacobinism would become established in Ireland. The Government of Ireland Act which ended the legislative Union was a response to the Russian revolution.

Suez revealed that Britain was no longer a world power. But she has world imperial interests and wishes to hold them. The move towards Europe was aimed at using the consortium of weakened imperialisms on the Continent for mutual aid purposes. Its key-note is neo-imperialism, the conception of a brick wall of industrial powers without a chink in it, facing the underdeveloped agrarian world with take it or leave it terms. Has this new trend in Britain given rise to any new thinking on the Irish Question?

The establishment of the Lemass Government was the signal for a spate of newspaper articles in Britain. Since the only important Governmental change was the retirement of Mr. De Valera, it would seem that the writers were improving the shining moment. At the same time there were rumours of a struggle over the succession in which the old guard Nationalists Messrs. Aiken and Traynor were worsted. Mr. Lemass's Government was described in London as affording for the first time in forty years people Britain could do business with. But it may have been the first time in forty years that Britain was looking for business.

In the clouds of speculation which filled the political sky, certain outlines were visible. Simultaneously with the softening of British attitudes "integrationist" propaganda poured forth in the press. Lord Longford (then Lord Pakenham) chairman of the National Bank, wrote an article in a Sunday newspaper suggesting that now was the time for the Republic to rejoin the Commonwealth and ease away from her policy of neutrality. But what about partition? Lord Pakenham considered that a kiss and a promise would be enough. His kite-flying evoked little enthusiasm in Ireland but there was little indignation. The argument was presented as a kind of fatality, that Ireland was too small to stand alone and must "integrate" in order to survive. The argument was of course a consequence of the financial integration that had already taken place and was taking the chain stores, mobile shops and hire-purchase companies to every corner of the Republic.

IN August 1961 Britain applied to join the Common Market. The surrounding circumstances were illustrated in a debate in the House of Lords when Lord Windlesham, an Irish peer, told what might possibly be for sale:—

"One has only to look at the map," he said, "to see that the situation of Ireland, to the extreme west of the whole organisation, gives it a special position. Cobh has probably the finest inland anchorage in the world . . . had it been available for the use of our destroyers in the last war, the sinkings in the Atlantic convoy routes would have been incomparably less than they were . . . the old naval base at Haulbowline in Cobh harbour still exists and is in excellent order. At the moment it is the property of an oil company, but there would be no difficulty in putting it back into its previous condition.

"Then there is the great airfield at Shannon, the furthest west of any airfield or airport in Europe. Its potentiality for expansion is enormous, unlimited, and incomparably greater than anything which exists in Northern Ireland. The little civilian airport at Nutt's Corner is small and not good, and Aldegrove is little better. But Shannon is capable of indefinite expansion. Moreover, it is a very long way from any agglomeration of population, wheras the others are very near to Belfast. Then there is the projected Shannon deep-sea port, which if developed will take tankers of 100,000 tons and more into the Shannon, which in times of war might be of enormous importance and value, and again would be situated to the extreme west of the whole N.A.T.O. set-up."

Were their lordships smacking their lips over the prospective military pickings? Or was there the note of concern lest Ireland's integration should not take full account of Britain's interests. Mr. Lemass's enthusiasm for entering E.E.C. was well known. His application preceded Britain's by one day. If things moved to their logical conclusion, Ireland's bases might become available to N.A.T.O.

But what then of Britain's special position? Would a commanding economic position be sufficient to maintain it if one of the European partners felt a foothold in Ireland would be a convenient means of squeezing their dear friends the British?

That such fears were understandable is illustrated by the fact that in December 1962 it was officially denied in Dublin that the Shannon deep-sea port was to be developed by the Americans for military purposes. Here was the type of situation which called for Royal visits to Ireland. Kites were flown in that part of the sky too. There might be on the cards the integration of Britain and Ireland in Europe. But that did not mean an end to all gradations of consanguinity. There was a need for a smaller integration first. Britain would prefer to take into Europe a United British Isles, rather than an Ireland which still bitterly cherished the grievances of 1920, and was now in a position to offer to N.A.T.O. bases better than those available to Britain.

IN other words the entry of Ireland into Europe could strengthen or weaken Britain's position depending on how it was done. The chickens were indeed coming home to roost. One noble lord deplored the folly of 1920 which had broken up the unity of the British Isles. For in the way of integrating Ireland with Britain before entering Europe, stood the obstacle of partition.

Was it possible to secure a reunification of Ireland which would still leave Britain the arbiter of its destinies? Would it be possible to lead this unity into Europe and thus leave no open flank? Could this be done without a clash with the die-hards of Northern Ireland? Dare Britain regard the six-county administration as expendable and disregard the protests of its dismissed gauleiters? These thoughts were diplomatically sorted over in newspaper articles.

Mr. Lemass's decision to apply for membership was taken for reasons completely different from those which prompted Mr. Macmillan. Macmillan's were political. Lemass's were economic, though two political reasons are urged alternatively according to time and place. They were first that it was necessary to take part in the fight against Communism, and second that the result of the integration of all Europe would be the disappearance of the border. But the determining economic reason was given by Professor Joseph Johnston with brutal

frankness in his book, "Why Ireland needs the Common Market."[1]

His case was that agricultural production in the Republic was underprivileged in comparison with that in Britain and the Six Counties, and operated at a relatively low cost. The disparity arose from the policy of agricultural price supports maintained in Britain over the past decade (and by other methods in other advanced countries). The result, he said, has been to increase British agricultural production to 70 per cent above its pre-war level, and depress prices for outside suppliers. The prospect of the dismantling of this edifice was all-compelling.

"The real need in the forthcoming negotiations is to scale down British agriculture to its appropriate economic size . . . if that were done now low-cost producers would get the chance they have long awaited to produce for an expanding export market."

The alternative he feared was the prospect of a 15 per cent tariff being clapped on Irish agricultural exports to Brtiain, which would mean the loss of the market altogether and not merely unfavourable terms. Consequently, while admitting that "some of the arguments for joining the Common Market are reminiscent of the more respectable considerations presumably urged in 1800 in favour of joining the Common Market of the Union," he thought the Republic had in effect no choice. "What will she do if she doesn't?" he asked, and concluded that "provided only Britain can secure admission, we have much to gain and little to lose by following her."

This sense of absolute dependence on the British market for agricultural products shows how much still remains of the 19th-century relation between the two countries. To safeguard that market the Government of the Republic was prepared to risk the extinction of every native industry set up these forty years.

General Costello, of the Irish Sugar Company, told a meeting of "Tuairim" in London that provided Irish farmers had the British market secure, under the new conditions accumulation of capital in their hands would speedily overflow into the industrial market and that new industries would arise, on a sounder basis, to replace those lost. A questioner put his finger on the weak spot.

How, he asked, can we be sure that the capital accumulated by farmers in the future will not be invested as in the past, via the banks in the British (or E.E.C.) Empire? Here he touched on a weakness which might vitiate all the optimistic forecasts of the experts. The Republic does not possess complete economic independence; entering E.E.C. she must progressively scale down her political independence; the same forces which "scale down British agriculture to size" and fill the Irish farmers' pockets, are geared to the extraction of capital for neo-imperialist purposes. Without national independence economic policy is impossible.

IT was at this point that the political arguments were introduced. Inordinate concern for the welfare of big farmers is a consequence of the partition settlement. It was their exports that paid for the imports of metal products which made industrialisation possible. Thousands of Ireland's best acres were thereby kept down to grass, and the big farmers' lobby came down every time in favour of the last links with England. The workers are familiar with the Government's tenderness to the ranchers and wonder whether their employment is to be sacrificed to their interests. The small business people watch the shops closing down as it is, and wonder about the foreign chain stores. Then comes the reply: "But Communism would take **all** your property away" and into the bargain "the border will be eliminated."[2]

The question then arises, will Ireland abandon her neutrality? The glittering prize across the channel dazzled the politicians; sometimes she would, sometimes she would not. Just as Britain refused to "come clean" on partition, so the Republic would not commit herself on neutrality. Big meetings in favour of non-commitment took place in various parts of the Republic, press controversy raged uninterruptedly, and Dublin streets, anticipating the result, were whitewashed with "Lemass sells out."

The prospect of ending partition through joining the Common Market had of course something of the character of a pronouncement that we are all equal in death. If there were no boundaries and all Europe were "one big country," then of course there would be no partition of Ireland. But would there be an Ireland to partition? Serious discussion did not go so far as this. The argument was that dismantling the British agricultural price supports would remove a reason why the six-county farmer should prefer the British to the Dublin connection. Second, the removal of tariffs (perhaps naturally enough E.E.C. supporters in the Republic expected a few exceptions in favour of themselves) would end the economic division of the country and make the political frontier "seem ridiculous."

On that argument, of course, the division between Ireland and Britain would also look ridiculous. There would only remain, according to Mr. Lemass, the "spiritual cleavage" in the Irish people, which would fall away in time, possibly by the operation of the laws of population. Hence E.E.C. became at once the gateway to a united Ireland, an excuse for doing nothing about the border, and a means of putting pressure on London.

SPECULATION was set afoot in the summer of 1962 when Sir George Clarke, chief of the Orange Order, consented to meet Senator Lennon of the Ancient Order of Hibernians to discuss sectarianism in the six counties. During the discussions, full details of which have not been published, the press had a field-day.

One suggestion was that in return for lightening the disabilities imposed on Catholics, Mr. Lemass should recognise the Northern Ireland Government, that is to say forgo his claim to the six counties, and then after the re-entry of the Republic into the Commonwealth, Britain would agree to a progressive development of all-Ireland functions. In December 1962 it was announced that further discussions would be held and Sir George Clarke suggested as the first item on the agenda the "recognition" of the six-county Government by Northern Ireland nationalists.

Within Northern Ireland there was a strong current of opposition to Britain's joining E.E.C. Northern Ireland would of course join automatically with Britain. The result would be the extinction of agricultural subsidies stated by Mr. H. B. Newe to amount in 1960-61 to 31 per cent of output, while those in Britain amounted to only 17 per cent of output. Only 4 per cent of the British working class is engaged in agriculture. The proportion in Northern Ireland is 14 per cent. There is a big difference between 17 per cent of 4 per cent (less than a hundredth part) and 31 per cent of 14 per cent (about 5 per cent).

Answering Mr. Cahir Healy, M.P., on 29th January, 1963, the Northern Ireland Minister of Agriculture said that the total amount paid to Northern Ireland in the year 1961-62 in respect of guarantees, subsidies and other grants was approximately £37,300,000. The loss of this enormous sum would obviously wreck Northern Ireland's economy. At the same time the effect of remoteness from markets would be sharply accentuated.

THAT there was almost universal relief in Northern Ireland at the breakdown of the Brussels negotiations was natural enough. But the result would seem to leave no room for complacency. What Mr. Healy called the "crazy financial structure" was revealed without the Unionists showing much sign of taking warning. If, for example, the British Government should strive to qualify itself for a fresh application to join the E.E.C.[3] by adjusting her agricultural policy so as to bring it into close line with Continental practice, what is to become of an industrial area so financially dependent on British agricultural policy?

What still remains alive of the issues brought into the open by the Common Market negotations? There is no reason to think the forces which urged Britain to membership are now spent, though they must inevitably change their form and possibly their direction. Possibilities of big changes in international alignments

[1Mercier Press Ltd., Cork, 1962.]

[2Mr. Douglas Jay, M.P., speaking in Newry in March 1963, declared that if the Republic joined E.F.T.A. the "economic unity of Ireland" would be achieved. Unfortunately the economic unity without the political unity means merely a free run for British finance capital to exploit the whole country by neo-imperialist techniques. At the same time the development of E.F.T.A. presents possible economic dangers to the Republic which may well be used in an attempt to force the Republic back into the Commonwealth.]

certainly exist, but have not yet crystallised. Neither has a clear alternative policy to E.E.C. membership. Any conclusion drawn must therefore be provisional.

First, however, it is clear that the imperialist world still eyes Irish harbours with envy. A consciousness that this is all that the twenty-six counties has left to sell, pervades much Fine Gael thinking within the twenty-six counties. British policy must still aim at preserving a special privileged position within any new military arrangement involving Ireland. And this fact must still constitute an obstacle to the Republic entering it. Rapid changes are therefore not to be expected now that E.E.C. pressure is relieved, and both imperialism and its opponents enjoy a breathing-space.

The danger is that British imperialism will use that breathing-space to bring about a further subordination of the Republic to British political influence.

Second, the vulnerability of the six-county economy remains and is likely to worsen. As the disparity between world prices for industrial and agricultural products widens (as is the tendency built in to imperialism) the tendency will be for these to rise, and the British Government is certainly likely to examine ways and means of limiting the growth of what is already an enormous sum.

Whether it could be reduced without either destroying British agriculture (with consequent mass emigration from the six counties) or risking a social upheaval resulting from a sharp increase in food prices, remains to be seen. That something needs to be done in the six counties to guard against such contingencies is already widely appreciated, if not by the Unionist Party.

Finally, the Republic is now confronted by the threat to its British market represented by the coming into force of the E.F.T.A. arrangements. The proposition of entering E.E.C. without Britain has of course been dropped. It was economically-unworkable. There have been proposals for return to the Commonwealth, presumably aimed at clearing the E.F.T.A. fence. And finally there have been proposals to join E.F.T.A. Mr. Lemass's policy, like Mr. Macmillan's, still remains uncertain, and perhaps a General Election will be required in both countries before things are clarified.

The breakdown of the Brussels talks removed the most serious threat to Ireland's development as an independent nation which has confronted it for many years. But there are still strong currents in the Republic tending to increase dependence on British imperialism. The hands of the reactionaries are tied by a tangle of their own weaving. Any decisive change, therefore, demands the participation of the "people of both parts of Ireland and of the British Labour movement. That means a democratic settlement. The principal obstacle to such a settlement is the same enforced partition which holds six counties and their people willy-nilly within the British imperial system, and drives the less nationally-interested classes in the Republic back towards imperialism out of a desire to cancel the economic disadvantages imposed by the border.

[3At the moment of writing it is this expectation which appears to be governing Twenty-Six County policy.]

CHAPTER TEN
FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOLUTION

THE tangle created in Irish affairs by the determination of British imperialism to perpetuate its domination cannot be unravelled at a blow. Where there is law, power is lacking; where power, the desire. Neither the Government of the Irish Republic nor its predecessors have thought the prospects of a military solution worth serious consideration. The Irish Republican Army has, it is true, taken military action from time to time, But three circumstances have combined to defeat it: first the absence of a mass following in the Protestant areas, second the opposition of the Government south of the border, and third the reluctance of the British Government to have its own forces engaged. The result has been to give the I.R.A. efforts the appearance of fomenting civil war, and one is enough for a generation. Ending partition by military means can, in all circumstances forseeable today, be completely ruled out.

The question then ceases to be "Can the British Government be forced to withdraw by military action within Ireland?" It becomes "Can the British Tory Party be defeated and replaced by a government prepared to abandon Britain's traditional policy?" or "Can the opposition to partition in Ireland both sides of the border, and in Britain, place the Tory Party in a position where there is no political alternative to a retreat?" Each of these perspectives calls for the same immediate action.

THE most important thing required in Britain is to put a question-mark over the **Government of Ireland Act** once more. Evidence has been advanced for the view that it may already have been subjected to scrutiny behind closed doors. But this is not satisfactory. If Britain's Irish policy is being reconsidered, the British people are entitled to know with what in view. The examination must be conducted in the full light of day. The only way to ensure this is an open public enquiry into the functioning of the **Government of Ireland Act** in all its aspects. To press for this is one of the first duties of those who want a democratic settlement of the Irish question.

The establishment in Britain of a government prepared to break with the imperialist past would of course mean the main obstacle was surmounted. Such a government could change the situation overnight by a simple declaration that from now on Britain had no interest in maintaining the border.

Such a declaration would indicate a completely new course of policy, in which the objective pursued would be a strong, prosperous, independent, united Ireland, providing for her own defence and entering agreements with Britain on the basis of equal rights and mutual interests. This has always been the only answer to the Irish question.

BUT more would inevitably follow. In order to stabilise this free and equal co-operation between independent nations, Britain would have to help to its feet the economy her policy had so often struck down. Loans for development, without political conditions, willingness to acept Irish produce on favourable terms at least for a transitional period, and possibly other forms of aid would be a small price for ending the era of hatred between two close neighbours.

For Britain with her great resources it would be a small one, a fraction of what is banged away fruitlessly in a single week. The benefit to future generations of British people would be immeasurable. There would never be a fear of some enemy establishing himself in Ireland for an attack on Britain. There would be an enormous expansion of a market which is already one of Britain's most profitable. These two advantages alone would justify persevering with the difficult task of changing from a course set over centuries, with all the ingrained habit and vested interest that is built up.

Failing a government which will do this of set purpose, the British Labour movement has everything to gain by pressing the existing Government in this direction, especially in the event of Irish policy coming up for reconsideration of a less drastic kind.

Much ingenuity has been exercised in seeking legal pathways to a united Ireland. These have always been blocked at one point—the British Government will not budge. It is nevertheless of use to examine them briefly. The **Government of Ireland Act** itself envisaged the creation of a Council of Ireland on which the reserved (but not the excepted) powers would ultimately devolve. Clearly all such transitional forms atrophied long ago. There is a way forward here no longer.

Attempts have been made in the twenty-six counties to work out a *modus vivendi* with the Northern Unionists so that a joint Irish front could be presented to Westminster. It is doubtful whether such efforts are founded on realism. On several occasions offers have been made, and presumably still stand, that the six counties would retain the degree of autonomy they now possess subject only

to the cessation of religious discrimination, provided Britain hands over the excepted and reserved powers to Dublin. In view of what that autonomy has been shown to amount to, it is not surprising that Dublin's overtures have been rejected.

BUT it is also doubtful whether such local autonomy would achieve anything more than to preserve the memory of dissensions and delay the normalisation of Irish politics. In a segregated six counties the political division between Unionists and Nationalists would become a division between Protestant and Catholic. There would be a jockeying for position in a parochial way.

A single Parliament for the 32 counties so that all issues were aired in one place would open up a national field for a united working class. Adding to the existing Dail *pro rata* would raise its membership to about 210. Of the present 144 only 19 can be described as Labour or radical. To these would be added a solid Labour vote from the industrial districts of the North possibly amounting to 35 T.D.s and possibly a further 15 radical nationalists or republicans.

The progressive wing of the united Parliament could be expected to number about 70 deputies at the outset, or one-third of the Parliament. Whether the Fianna Fail and Fine Gael parties would maintain their separate identity under those conditions, with the possiblity of a left-centre coalition, might be doubted. But even if they were to amalgamate there would still remain the possibility of an alternative progressive government of a type that has never existed in Ireland.

Bringing national freedom from the twenty-six counties to the six would be the means of bringing forces of social freedom from the six to the twenty-six. To delay this possibility, or diminish its effectiveness by preserving the border in a modified form, would only assist the imperial monopolies to maintain their economic hold on the country.

Despite all attempts from Dublin to sugar the pill, the British Government has never even considered handing over the excepted powers to Ireland. Whether if the Republic re-entered the Commonwealth and thus invalidated the Ireland Act of 1949 this might be considered as part of a package deal, is a matter for speculation. There would be much criticism of any government in the Republic which re-entered the Commonwealth and permitted the continuation of partition in any form, and a British government prepared to meet the Republic half-way might well be persuaded to make the whole journey.

IT seems necessary therefore to work towards a new solution, in which the withdrawal of British troops and the handing over of sovereignty to the Irish people would be the purpose of a general settlement. The Irish aspects of such a settlement would have to be decided in Ireland. One of the most important tasks therefore becomes that of ensuring that the people of Northern Ireland are possessed of democratic facilities on a par with those in Britain and the Republic. The growth of the forces of progress in the area which would result from such a development would be an important factor in achieving the settlement.

The fight for democracy in the six counties is going on now, and help can be given immediately. The Government is acting unconstitutionally by promoting discrimination against Catholics,[2] and maintaining paramilitary forces. Some of its legislation may be invalid under Section 6 of the Ireland Act. The ending of gerrymandering and the disarming of the B-Specials would work a great purification in the social atmosphere. In addition the Special Powers Acts must be repealed and discrimination prohibited by law. These changes, far from injuring the Protestant community, would free the working class from an incubus which has been debilitating its movement for years.

The main source of Unionist strength is discrimination. People ask why the proud militant Protestant working class which still reproduces the rugged tenacity and fearlessness of Jamie Hope, Henry Joy McCracken and John Mitchel is seemingly so powerless in the face of Unionism that it cannot even compel recognition of its trade union centre. The reason is discrimination.

It is impossible for Protestant workers, however they hate and despise the landlord-rentier junta at Stormont, to sweep them aside while they are themselves even in the remotest way its unwitting accomplices in persecuting the Catholics. Permit oppression and you suffer it. That rule has been proved throughout the world.

To replace intolerence of Catholics with intolerance of inequality and discrimination, to inculcate the spirit of fraternity in the ranks of the Protestant workers is the great task of the advanced Labour movement in the six counties. That the shop-stewards of Messrs. Short & Harland should be able to tell a recent delegation shortly and simply, "There is no discrimination in this factory" proves that it can be eliminated provided the will is there and the work is done. This is part of the process of achieving the object of the greatest of all Irish democrats, the Protestant Theobald Wolfe Tone, who sought the emancipation of the Catholics in order

"to abolish the memory of past dissensions, and to substitute the common name of 'Irishman' in place of the denominations of Protestant, Catholic and dissenter."

THERE is evidence of the possibility of achieving this since Northern Ireland may be approaching a parting of the ways. The movement against unemployment, standing "normally" at 7 per cent and reaching 15 per cent during the severe winter of 1963, is likely to be accentuated by the British policy of reducing the size of the aircraft and other industries. The possibility of an alteration in the method of agricultural support and tariff reduction within E.F.T.A. have already been mentioned.

No permanent improvement seems likely. Is the Labour movement to think in long or in short terms? There are those who urge on the Protestant workers the short-sighted policy of keeping what can be kept in Protestant hands, with a hope that when things improve something can be spared for the Catholics.

Such a policy condemns the entire working class to permanent frustration and disunity. The more far-seeing policy would be to move away from the English-centred approach to Northern Ireland affairs and to take measures which lead in the direction of a united Ireland. This is the path of ending the divisions in the working-class ranks, the unification of the three Catholic and four Protestant Labour representatives in Stormont into a compact group of seven members, and an alliance with the nine Nationalists to form a united opposition of 16 members, which would be likely to grow at every election, even without the abolition of gerrymandering. This path leads towards an alternative government with all the possibilities that arise from ending the deadlock of forty years. The people would would be like a lion unchained.

Generally speaking, the English-centred approach always restricts developments in Northern Ireland. Looked at from the standpoint of a United Kingdom dominated by banks and oil trusts, with a Tory government anxious to remove even the nationalised coal industry out of their way, what is the importance of developing turf as an indigenous fuel in the six counties?

From the standpoint of a united Ireland the utilisation of home-produced raw materials in substantial supply is obvious. The know-how is there in Dublin. The research station is there in Newbridge. By 1962 a high proportion of electricity production in the Republic was from turf. Why not develop native turf instead of recriminating with the Coal Board? Northern Ireland has large unexploited bogs awaiting development.[3] The six counties can moreover become the turf-machinery manufacturing centre for all Ireland since new types of mechanisation may be required for the smaller bogs likely to come into service in the next few years.

British consent has been reluctantly given to the experimental sowing of 400 acres of beet. The product is to be processed at Tuam in the Republic. If the cultivation of beet proves the success it should, Northern Ireland adopting an Irish-centred approach could become self-sufficient in sugar production. The meat processing plants could be developed not merely as small concessions to soothe discontent, but as part of an established

[1]The present Nationalist Party are sometimes referred to as "Green Tories" but I am not convinced that their urge to reform would be exhausted by the achievement of their present program.]

[2]The growing movement has compelled Lord Brookeborough (Stormont, February 12th, 1963) to declare his Government opposed to religious discrimination We now await its positive action.]

economic policy.

Probably no industry has suffered more from the British connection than linen. If the six counties, by forming part of the Republic, had had at their disposal the consular services of a State which could not but regard this industry as vital to its development, international agreements could have been made which would have arrested and reversed its decline.

Flax cultivation in the Six Counties should never have ceased, and could be carried on south of the border also. There could be a well-endowed institute for research into all aspects of the flax and linen industries, seeking to reduce production costs by scientific cultivation and processing, and working on by-products, association of flax with other fibres, combination with plastics and other possibilities. Ireland could and should be in the van of the world development in this field.[4]

PROBABLY not until the border is ended will it be possible to solve the problem of agriculture, though a beginning can be made. Irish soil is among the richest in the northern hemisphere, and the underlying limestone which feeds it extends both sides of the border. An investment in agriculture similar to that made in Denmark could multiply production, keep all the young people at home, staff ancillary industries **while increasing** the number of people on the land. Where can such an investment come from? Only from external loans or the repatriation of foreign holdings.

Whatever the precise quantity and location of this capital, it seems probable that only a united Ireland would feel strong enough to control private investment. Northern Ireland agriculture may be said to be "pampered" now, but its security depends on the wind of Westminster policy. Even now that wind seems to veering a point to the North.

The great advantage of having an industrial centre like Belfast in a country like Ireland is that farm machinery can be made at home. The immense investment in agriculture that is required could thus employ thousands of Belfast workers, especially if the market so created could form the basis for the export of agricultural machinery to undeveloped countries.

Under such conditions the relations opened up with the non-European world might become so valuable that a 15 per cent tariff imposed by the E.E.C. could be overcome, even if Britain were a member, partly through high efficiency, and partly, if need be, through a subsidy. An Irish-centred policy thus tends to **increase** Ireland's trade with Britain.

Some commentators, for example Mr. Boyd, seem to take for granted that shipbuilding must decline, or at least suffer drastic rationalisation. What would be the result of an Irish-centred economic policy in this field? That an industrial area so dependent on exports should carry them in native bottoms would be taken for granted in a sovereign state. A suitable dry-dock for repairs would also be considered a necessity. Thirty-two contracts were lost to Belfast in 1962 because of its absence.

A united Ireland would have the strongest incentives to develop its mercantile marine. At present British ship-owners complain that for reasons of international policy, their Government refrains from giving them encouragements other governments hand out freely. Whether such encouragements are wise or unwise is not the question. They are only available to soverign states and therefore the six counties cannot even discuss them.

A similar argument applies to aircraft, where the ability of Belfast to supply freighters should fit in with the Dublin policy of developing air export trade by siting factories alongside airfields. In sum, an increase of Irish production is the basis for increasing Irish transport.

This propostion is also true of internal transport. Allow the nationalist areas to decay and you starve and destroy the railways. The railway system is indeed being dismantled. Could it be if Derry City, Strabane, Enniskillen, Omagh, Dungannon and Newry were thriving industrial towns? Or the barrier erected by the border were done away with as well?

The development of the hinterland is a necessity for a thriving internal transport industry. It might be added that the use of the large inland lakes, in conjunction with the development of such Atlantic ports as Ballyshannon, makes possible a system of inland water transport for bulk articles such as exists on the great rivers of the Continent.

THERE is no greater provider of employment than the satisfaction of the needs of the people. Is there not an absurdity in the existence side by side of chronic unemployment and a chronic shortage of housing? The provision of building materials, whether brick or cement blocks to supply the housing deficiency, could revitalise an industry which has suffered seriously from the restrictive practices of imperial monopoly. Ireland has plenty of clay and gypsum. The shortage of native timber can be overcome over a period by the planned combination of forestry and agriculture and in the short run there is pre-stressed concrete and the possible development of fibre-boards from linen and turf by-products.

In this connection research is of vital importance. Scientists are scarce and a government pursuing an Irish-centred policy would be begging the young graduates, Catholic as well as Protestant, not to go abroad, and educating the youth in modern technical schools in every town.

There are many other possibilities which would have to be examined. Each year tons of scrap-iron accumulate in the six counties. Can this not be melted down on the spot? Indeed, why not set up a steel plant at Newry where it could draw supplies of scrap from the contiguous parts of the Twenty-Six-area, or in Antrim where it might be possible to incorporate native ore too phosphate to use alone?

The establishment of a full-scale oil refinery and an increase of the rubber and plastics industry, the utilisation of Northern Ireland bauxite[4] and diatomaceous earth, and the reopening of the Carrickfergus salt-beds closed a few years ago by a British monopoly, could lay the basis for a chemical industry in which a big part could be played by the fixation of nitrogen for fertilisers.

A field as yet scarcely touched is that of by-products from turf, which include charcoal for the petroleum industry, waxes, oils, and resins, and there are even methods of producing plastics and coarse paper from it. The extension of the limit of territorial waters to twelve miles and the expansion of the fishing, canning and fish-meal industries are other possibilities which would receive attention.

THE difference between a British-centred and an Irish-centred policy is the difference between despair and hope in Northern Ireland. It is the difference between self-reliant advance and resigned stagnation. The development of tourism is a useful sideline, but to advance a policy such as that outlined in the Hall report, in which those who do not emigrate are to become servants waiting on tourists in ever more luxious hotels is to take the frill for the garment. At the same time the co-ordination of six-county tourist propaganda with the work of the Dublin Bord Failte could bring in some useful millions that would aid the investment programme.

Where there is no vision the people perish, and it is therefore greatly to be hoped that the leaders of the Northern Ireland Labour Party, whose suffrage can condemn or reprieve unionism, will see the need for an Irish-centred policy and enable the people to go forward to a new life. It would of course be foolish to imagine that such a policy immediately commends itself to workers reared in the soul-destroying frustration of Northern Ireland's diseased society. But insofar as the disease of discrimination is cured and the people unite, they will demand an optimistic policy of this type and follow those parties which are prepared to provide it.

Not only economically but in broader things an Irish-centred policy can be of enormous benefit to the people. In a divided Ireland the efforts of the people of the twenty-six counties to maintain their neutrality are hampered from the start. A united Ireland bound together by the sort of economic development

[3] About seven million tons of turf readily won by existing mechanical methods were reported in a survey conducted in 1952 and 1953. Some samples were of high wax content, and careful consideration would have to be given to their most advantageous use. In a united Ireland the bogs of Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim and Cavan would serve the northern industrial area.]

[4] The six-county linen industry, composed for the most part of small old-established producers, has suffered mainly through inability to adopt new processes which are in use in other countries, notably in Eastern Europe.]

which have been roughly sketched above would be strong enough to keep aloof from unwanted entanglements. It would no longer be necessary for the young people to make their periodic trek of protest to the Derry base.

In the absence of a government prepared to operate an Irish-centred policy it is necessary to force it piecemeal on the existing Government. In this field the demand for co-operation with the Dublin Government is particularly timely, since Mr. Lemass has announced important reductions in the tariffs on six-county manufactures.

THE campaign in Britain to secure a government prepared to treat Ireland as a friend and equal, on the one hand, and the campaign in the Six Counties to end discrimination, establish full democracy and institute a vigorous Irish-centred policy of economic expansion, are two prongs of a three-pronged attack.

The third is in the Republic. Here the British people are not so directly involved. Yet the British Government sent its Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Soames, over to Dublin to urge the Republic into E.E.C. and insists on trade relations which weaken the state and national sectors of the economy in their resistance to the inroads of British and other monopolists.[5]

The British people should uncover and oppose the concealed interference. The ability of the working class in the Republic to improve living standards and increase their security is of great importance in answering Unionist disparagements, and should be encouraged by all means available. But what is at issue, of course, is not the real or imagined higher standards enjoyed thanks to the British subsidy north of the border, but the prospect of the complete ending of the nightmare of unemployment and the raising of the general standard of the people of all Ireland to a level far above that obtaining in either part today.

The greatest asset of all, and that which in the last analysis will be decisive for the younger generation, is the enthusiasm that comes from building a new country. Partition and the British policy of dominating Ireland have robbed the Irish youth of that experience. Today it is becoming clearer that there will never be full employment in Belfast except in the work of building a new united Ireland.

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IN the course of this book an argument has been put which it would be as well to summarise. First it is established that Northern Ireland is ruled in accordance with the British **Government of Ireland Act** and is under constant supervision. The object of the Act is to maintain Britain's dominating position on both strategic and economic grounds. By means of this Act, British imperialism holds Ireland, but removes the Irish question out of British politics.

The six counties are ruled through the agency of local landowners, businessmen and rentiers, thanks first to a financial subsidy, and second to the splitting of the people by means of sectarianism caused by a policy of discrimination. Economically the result is the decay of local industries, chronic unemployment and emigration. Politically it is the maintenance of a weight of repression and intimidation upon one section which poisons and paralyses society as a whole.

The British people should in their own interests endeavour to end this situation. To do so it is necessary in the first place to attack the **Government of Ireland Act** and demand the complete democratisation of the six-county area. In Northern Ireland the struggle to end discrimination and unite the common people whether Labour or Nationalist in an Irish-centred policy for economic development is making headway and deserves every support.

At present it seems likely that the Tory Party is still concocting schemes for keeping up the domination of Ireland in conjunction with its modified "European" plans. This means that the voice of the British and Irish people must be raised together to demand a democratic solution.

The solution of the Irish question will not only enable the Irish people to realise the dream of centuries, it will be of inestimable value to the British people. It will protect their western flank in days when their world hegemony is no more. It will strike a severe blow at their arch-enemy the Tory Party, and remove a possible cause of disunity among themselves.

It will establish an important market for their industrial exports right on their doorstep. And finally it will replace the coolness and suspicion in the relations between peoples of these Islands with a new cordiality and co-operativeness based on the triumph of democracy.

[4Bauxite plus electricity equals aluminium. It may be that native coal which is of high carbon content though frequently ashy, would be found suitable for the preparation of the carbon anodes, and that part of Co. Antrim too barren for agriculture could be developed for additional water power.]

[5An exception is the recent sugar agreement.]

Printed by Ripley Printers Ltd., Ripley, Derby.