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Denis O'Connor's article in the first issue of The Democratic Socialist contains one mistaken quotation in respect of Resolution E2 (which both of us supported at the February 1983 DSP Conference), and several misconceptions regarding the content and purpose of DSP Policy Statement E3 on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (against which he spoke at that Conference).

As regards resolution E2, DSP proposal (f) as adopted by the Conference, actually reads as follows:-

"The return to the Arabs of territories occupied after the 1967 war, thereby providing the land on which the Palestinian people are entitled to establish a state of their own".

As regards the DSP Policy Statement, Denis O'Connor sums up his criticism of it as follows:-

"In summary the presentation of the subject in E3 is essentially pro-Zionist and anti-Arab."

Since the charge of being "pro-Zionist and anti-Arab" has been used by both the trendy New Left and the pro-Soviet Old Left for the purpose of inducing a very definite reflex reaction among socialists, one might be tempted to defend the DSP Policy Statement by indignantly and immediately denying any such charge - lock, stock and barrel. In order to highlight the complexities of the issues raised however, I will limit my immediate response to a quite emphatic denial that the policy can in any respect be regarded as anti-Arab. The charge of being "pro-Zionist" is in effect a more meaningless one, rather akin to the charge that the DSP Policy on Northern Ireland is "pro-British" or even "West British". It is, however, worth looking at some of the wide variety of possible meanings of the "pro-Zionist" charge before deciding on whether or not such a description has any actual application to the DSP Policy Statement.

WHAT DOES "PRO-ZIONIST" MEAN?

"Pro-Zionist" has now become one of those stock left-wing curse words that is more often than not designed to silence an opponent rather than encourage an un-biased examination of what political developments are required for a just solution to a very complex

national conflict. One of the corresponding right-wing curse-words which leaves me equally unmoved is "terrorist". My objection to the P.L.O. is not that it employs "terrorist" methods of struggle, but that the ultimate objective of that struggle is the liquidation of the State of Israel. If the P.L.O. was genuinely prepared to limit its objectives to the establishment of a West Bank State guaranteeing both peace and security to the neighbouring State of Israel, the P.L.O.'s use of "terrorist" methods of struggle against the Israeli occupation would not in the least deter me from supporting them in their pursuit of such a revised objective. Unfortunately, however, the P.L.O. has set its face more firmly than ever against any such revision.

What does it mean to say that the D.S.P. Policy Statement is "pro-Zionist"? If "Zionism" is taken to mean the continued Israeli occupation and settlement of the West Bank, well then the D.S.P. would have to be described as decidedly "anti-Zionist". What if the term Zionism is more realistically widened to embrace the policies of the Opposition Labour Party? That Party calls for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank but also speaks of the resulting Arab sovereignty over the regained West Bank territories as constituting part of a Jordanian-Palestinian State which must embrace the East Bank as well. Accordingly, it would still be a total misrepresentation of the D.S.P. Policy Statement to describe it as "pro-Zionist", since our Party is quite explicit about its support for the principle of an independent Palestinian State on the West Bank. But Zionism cannot be given even that limiting definition. Zionism per se is nothing more or less than the belief in an independent Israeli State. It is an Israeli's attitude to the corresponding issue of an independent Palestinian State which then defines what kind of Zionist he/she is. For example, the Programme of the democratic socialist Shelli Party for Peace and Equality, which was confirmed at its Congress in May of this year, states the following set of principles:-

"Zionism is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people. It expresses the will of Jews to concentrate in their homeland and to live and to prosper as a part of the family of nations. It expresses the wish to have

self-sovereignty in the State of Israel ... The Shelli Party sees itself as a full partner to the Zionist aims ... Shelli thinks that the Palestinian people have an equal right, as do the Jews, for self-determination ... The Jewish members of Shelli are Zionists. Their immediate aim is to rescue Zionism from the chauvinistic right wing that drowns it in an ocean of settlements in the conquered areas, and in annexations ... The Arab members of Shelli are Israeli citizens by their status and Palestinian by their nationality. They identify themselves with their people's wish for self-determination alongside Israel ..."

" ... Shelli sees the conflict in the Middle East and in particular the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a disagreement between two national movements that have the same country as their territorial base. Shelli thinks that this dispute can only be solved by partition of the country ... The political solution shall be based on the mutual recognition of the national rights of both peoples. Shelli desires peace on the following lines:- An Israeli recognition of the Palestinian right for self-determination and its right for a state of its own side by side with Israel; ... As part of the peace agreement Israel will hand back to the Palestinians the territories which were conquered during the Six Day War in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, so they will have the possibility to build their own state there ..."

Now perhaps a case could be made for describing D.S.P. policy as "pro-Zionist" in the Shelli sense, since both democratic socialist parties believe in a similar peaceful solution which would result in a Palestinian West Bank State alongside the State of Israel. But an equally strong case could be made for describing D.S.P. policy as "pro-Palestinian nationalist" in line with the thinking of the former P.L.O. leader Issam Sartawi, who was murdered earlier this year. In reality, while concerned with finding a just solution that will recognise the rights of both peoples, the D.S.P. policy is not bound up emotionally with the national sentiments and aspirations of either side. I would still maintain that our policy remains "non-Zionist", even in the Shelli sense.

A POLICY STATEMENT FOR AN IRISH AUDIENCE

The fact that the tone of the D.S.P. policy statement avoids the use of language which could be used to generate an emotional involvement on either side of the conflict is perhaps another factor which leads Denis O'Connor to some misconceptions concerning the character of that policy. He objects that the quotations which it contains take no account of "the grievances suffered". That is not true. There is explicit reference to the grievances currently being suffered by the Palestinian inhabitants of the occupied West Bank, when we denounce the Israeli government for pursuing "a policy of increased repression of its overwhelmingly Arab majority alongside a plan for more and more Jewish settlements, having as its ultimate objective the formal annexation of these Palestinian Arab territories".

It is true that the Policy Statement does not contain a recitation of those Palestinian grievances suffered forty years ago, but neither does it contain any mention of that unique crime of forty years ago, the Holocaust inflicted on the Jewish people. Our policy statement was for the purpose of influencing Irish public opinion on the requirements for Middle East peace, and it took the strength of grievance on both the Jewish and Arab sides as given. Had we been directing our policy statement at a primarily Jewish audience we should certainly have highlighted Zionist injustices to the Palestinian Arabs in previous decades, including the 1948 massacre of Deir Yassin villagers carried out by Begin's forces. Had we been addressing an Arab audience, there would have been an even greater need to draw out the full implications of the Holocaust, including the support given by the leader of the Palestinian Arabs, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, to Hitler's "Final Solution of the Jewish Question".

Since the D.S.P. was in fact addressing an Irish audience, we took account of the fact that Irish public opinion is already very much in tune with the Palestinian sense of grievance as well as of the fact that the Workers' Party and most other Irish left-wing groups are not only uncritical supporters of the P.L.O. but are also hostile to the

very existence of any Israeli state. Moreover, ever since the pro-P.L.O. statement made in Bahrein by Brian Lenihan in his capacity as the Fianna Fail Government's Foreign Minister, both Ireland and Greece have constituted the European Community's two member states that are most supportive of the Palestinian cause and most responsive to the Arab lobby. Irish Government policy continues to unequivocally advocate the right of the Palestinians to have their own sovereign state. As the Coalition Government's Foreign Minister Peter Barry stated in the Dail on July 3 of this year:-

"Our diplomatic efforts, through European Political Co-operation and at the U.N., have in recent times of necessity focussed upon the urgent question of the rights of the Palestinian people ... We accept the right of that people to self-determination with all that that implies. The creation of a Palestinian homeland, a state - the precise model is a matter for negotiations and for the Palestinians themselves - is an essential element of a solution that would be just and lasting ... Israel's rights do not extend to the implantation of settler colonies in the West Bank and Gaza".

In fact the Irish Foreign Minister professed a very definite emotional entanglement when he also proclaimed that outside of Europe and North America "no part of the world is closer to us in terms of geography or of political and trading links than those countries which together make up the Arab nation". He argued that "the links between the Arab world and Europe are older and deeper than any forged by a twentieth century oil crisis".

Would it have helped matters if the D.S.P. Policy Statement had also worn our emotions on its sleeve? To be fair, if we had provided ample quotes on "the grievances suffered" we would have to had done so for both sides. If that were so, Denis O'Connor's own references to "the awful flight of European Jews" and to "the Jews escaping oppression in their own countries" could hardly be taken as adequate recognition of both the enormity and unique character of the Holocaust. The scientifically planned and methodically executed "Final Solution" of six million Jews a mere

forty years ago was a crime of genocide without parallel. As a result of the Jewish people's struggle to guarantee their future survival in a state of their own, Palestinian rights were indeed violated by Zionists. But to present . . . those violations, or even the emergence in 1948 of a half million Palestinian refugees during the course of the first Arab-Israeli War, as an injustice that was unique for those years, would be quite misleading. It was in fact the expansion of the Socialist States for purposes of both territorial aggrandisement and security that created the overwhelming bulk of the refugee problem that followed from World War II. Far more violations of human and national rights have been perpetrated in the name of Socialism than Zionism can even be charged with. The Socialist label is perhaps one requiring an even more detailed response from a Democratic Socialist Party as to how it reconciles its socialist principles with respect for democratic rights.

THE POLISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM

I am totally opposed to the Zionist occupation of the town of Hebron on the Palestinian West Bank, even though there had been a continuous Jewish presence there until a pogromist massacre by Arabs first obliterated that presence fifty-odd years ago. But in 1945 parts of Germany that had been nothing but German for over a thousand years, as well as other areas that were predominantly German, were "emptied" of their indigenous populations and planted by Slav settlers. Three million Sudeten Germans (as well as 700,000 Hungarians) were uprooted from their ancestral homelands by the Czechoslovak Government. A further ten million Germans were driven out of territories annexed by the Soviet Union and Poland. The historic German city of Konigsberg, famous as the birthplace of the philosopher Immanuel Kant, was "emptied" of its 300,000 men, women and children so that it could be transformed into the Soviet city of Kaliningrad. The German city of Breslau became the Polish city of Wroclaw, Danzig became Gdansk, etc. On May 20, 1945 the Communist Party leader Wladyslaw Gomulka summed up the policy of the new Socialist Poland as follows:-

"Resettlement:- Polonization is important, because the acquisition of the western territories is one of the

arguments we are using in seeking the support of society. If there is no Polish population there, the administration will be in the hands of the Red Army. We must expel all the Germans because countries are built on national lines and not on multi-national ones ... During the current year the entire German population must be removed ... We must settle there three and a half million Poles ..."

Other Polish communists were anxious to go rather further, but Gomulka demurred:-

"Another area where sectarian errors have developed is Security ... Comrade Korczynski in Gdansk is preparing crematoria for Germans. This is Gestapo tactics ..."

[This was but a mild rebuke from Gomulka to one of his closest comrade-in-arms, whom he was always at pains to protect. Korczynski had commanded a partisan group of Polish communists during the Nazi occupation. But not just against the Germans. It was only in the late 1940s, after Gomulka had been ousted from the Party leadership, that a Jewish communist in the Polish diplomatic service felt secure enough to reveal another feature of Korczynski's approach to the "national question". A Jewish partisan group, that had also been engaged in guerilla warfare against the Nazis near the city of Lublin, sought assistance from Korczynski's larger Polish group. His response was to order the slaughter of all forty Jewish guerrillas. The future diplomat alone had survived by pretending to be dead. As a result of these revelations Korczynski was tried in camera and imprisoned - but only for a few years. In 1956 Gomulka returned to power and ordered his immediate release. Afterwards he was rapidly promoted and reached the position of Deputy Minister of Defence. In December 1970 General Korczynski repaid the debt by carrying out a job that this time Gomulka himself had particularly commissioned for Gdansk. When a wave of strikes broke out all over Poland in protest against massive price rises, Gomulka entrusted Korczynski with directing the repressive measures to be taken against the workers. Hundreds of Polish workers were massacred as a result.]

Gomulka felt that Korczynski's proposals for the mass extermination of German civilians would not be necessary in either Gdansk or any other annexed German territory. He argued that it would be quite possible and sufficient to

forcibly uproot eight million men, women and children from their ancestral homeland in Eastern Germany and drive them westwards beyond the Oder and Neisse rivers of Central Germany. As he summed up on May 21, 1945, upon the conclusion of that Party debate:-

"The Western Territories:- A guard must be put on the frontier, the Germans must be expelled and those who stay must get the kind of treatment that will not encourage them to stay ... We should simply clear out the Germans and build a national state".

As for other minorities in Socialist Poland, Gomulka also went on to warn in the very next breath of that same speech, delivered in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust:-

"The work of the Personnel Department must be improved and the party purged ... The director of the Personnel Department in Krakow took in two thousand people, all obviously Jews by their appearance and speaking Polish with a poor accent. This was a cheap trick, but it is difficult to say to what extent it was sectarianism and to what extent sabotage ..."

Yiddish had indeed been the native language of the Polish Jewish community which numbered three and a half million people in 1939. But that community had been rooted in Poland for many hundreds of years. Three million of them perished in the Holocaust. In 1968 Gomulka, ably assisted by Korczynski, mounted a vicious anti-semitic campaign under the guise of "anti-Zionism". The thirty thousand surviving Jews who had remained on in Poland and who were overwhelmingly Communist in their loyalties, were finally expelled by their Socialist homeland.

HELSINKI SOLUTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

Perhaps a more favourable comparison for the Palestinians might be dispossessed Finns rather than dispossessed Germans. For over a century Finland had been an oppressed nation within the Russian Empire. In 1917 it took advantage of the revolutionary turmoil in Russia in order to regain its independence. In 1939, however, the Soviet Union sought to enhance the security of Leningrad by demanding the annexation of the nearby Finnish province of Karelia, even though there was no ethnic basis for any such claim. When the Finnish Government refused to yield up its native territory,

the Soviet Union bombed Helsinki and invaded Finland. At a U.N. Conference on Refugees in 1958, the Finnish delegate explained what finally happened the natives of Karelia:-

"In 1944 the 3,300,000 people who lived within the present boundaries of Finland had to receive in a couple of weeks' time around 440,000 displaced persons, all Finnish citizens who had left their homesteads after the new frontier line had cut off some 13 per cent of our territory from the rest of Finland".

European Socialism - while it might quietly acknowledge that millions of Germans and Finnish civilians had indeed suffered such grievances and injustices - has nonetheless set its face against any agitation to restore the rights of the dispossessed. Any claims for a return of such annexed territories to their original inhabitants have been denounced as revanchist warmongering. Finland's Social-Democratic leader Kekkonen was long ago placed on a Peace Movement pedestal for steadfastly refusing to harp on any Finnish version of the "oppressed nation" tune and for concluding instead the 1948 Soviet-Finnish Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Co-operation. West Germany's Social-Democratic Chancellor Willy Brandt was similarly hailed as peacemaker when he journeyed to Warsaw in 1970 in order to sign a Treaty with Gomulka which confirmed German acceptance of the territorial integrity of the new Poland whose western frontiers extended to the Oder-Neisse rivers. The 1975 Helsinki Agreement on European Security took absolutely no account of the past grievances of either "bad" Germans or "good" Finns when the States of Europe agreed to recognise and freeze all existing national frontiers, including the territorial integrity of Poland and the Soviet Union which was based on massive annexations a mere thirty years previously. A few years ago, when Socialists Against Nationalism was established as a precursor of the Democratic Socialist Party, Denis O'Connor was among those most insistent that SAN should invoke the principles of the Helsinki Agreement as a key argument for freezing the Irish border as well.

I do not believe in one set of standards for Europe and another for the Middle East. I think it would be inexcusably patronising for democratic socialists to refrain from condemning the P.L.O. Covenant's objective of completely liquidating the State of Israel, on account of the fact that the Palestinians

are an oppressed nation. Denis O'Connor argues that we should not "tar the oppressed with the same brush as the oppressor". If our approach to politics had been imprisoned by that over-riding concern neither Socialists Against Nationalism nor the Democratic Socialist Party itself would ever have been founded. After all, certainly since 1798, Protestant Ulster was never an oppressed nation whereas Catholic Ireland was. Protestant Ulster has never once experienced oppression at the hands of Catholic Ireland, it has "merely" been threatened with such oppression. And for fifty years it could be said that the Catholics of Derry were denied full democratic rights by those very Ulster Protestants whose right to self-determination both SAN and the DSP have been most insistent on being recognised by all Catholics, whether past victims of discrimination or not. We adopted that approach precisely because we were not the patronising left, but on the contrary a socialist movement which was prepared to honestly confront the fact that even though the Republic's annexationist claims to Northern Ireland in Articles 2 and 3 were unlikely to be actively pursued by any Irish Government and would in any case be impossible to enforce, their retention in our Constitution was a major cause of the Northern conflict.

THE DEAD-END OF "REVOLUTIONARY" RHETORIC

Does an uncritical attitude towards the claims of oppressed nations help or hinder them in achieving reasonable national objectives, such as the return of the West Bank to Arab sovereignty? During the 1967 War no left-wing group had been more vehemently anti-Zionist than the British and Irish Communist Organisation, which even denounced the whole tradition of the Israeli Labour Movement as "social-Fascist". When B & ICO publications began to come to terms with reality rather than rhetoric on such matters, there was an indignant reader's letter published in Communist Comment on November 21, 1970. The reader protested:-

"I was extremely disappointed with the article by John Harkin on Palestine in the September 19, Communist Comment. It would seem to me that with regard to an anti-imperialist struggle ... the first task is solidarity with that struggle ... The 1947 U.N. Partition resolution (unfortunately supported by the Soviet Union) setting up the State of Israel, violated the right to self-determination of the Palestinians by

giving it to a people who were not entitled to it ... The fact is that the State of Israel must be destroyed for the Palestinians to return home and exercise their right to self-determination. The struggle at the moment is for the right of self-determination for the oppressed nation - the Palestinian Arabs. It is only in the context of support for this struggle that one can then raise the question of self-determination for the oppressor nation. Support for the former struggle must not be conditional on acceptance of the latter position".

Such "revolutionary solidarity" did sweet damn all to help the Palestinians achieve the only objective that was realisable - a Palestinian State on the West Bank prepared to abandon all further territorial claims on the State of Israel. I was the author of the particular piece of New Left gobbledegook that is quoted above, at a time when my primary political involvement was in assisting Palestinians with denunciations of Israel's very existence at various meetings on the American East Coast. It took me quite some time to break free from the legacy of that type of sentimental solidarity, which was utterly counterproductive for the people in whom false hopes were thereby perpetuated. Indeed it was only with the greatest reluctance that I came around to ultimately agree with the policy statement on the Jewish-Arab conflict which the B & ICO formulated in December 1973, in an attempt to persuade left-wing opinion to recognise a two states solution to the conflict as the only attainable objective.

Where has all the uncritical "solidarity" with P.L.O. objectives left the Palestinians except in a greater predicament than ever before? When they were being either bombed or massacred in Beirut, Syria and the rest of their most rhetorical Arab supporters stood idly by. Could the P.L.O. absorb any lessons from this experience? There was one P.L.O. leader who attempted to do so. Issam Sartawi is believed to have been among those who planned the "Black September" massacre of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972. Four years later, however, he proved to be the only Palestinian leader willing to engage in meaningful dialogue with an Israeli group that unequivocally champions a Palestinian West Bank State alongside Israel - the Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace. When the P.L.O.'s Parliament, the Palestinian National Council, met in Algiers in February of this year, Sartawi planned to deliver a

speech which would call for the expansion of a dialogue with Israelis and which would declare support for a compromise peace whereby both Israel and the P.L.O. should each recognise the other side's right to independent statehood. Through a parliamentary manoeuvre, however, Sartawi was denied his right to speak before the Council. Resigning from the P.N.C. in protest, Sartawi declared:- "It was outrageous that all of the secretaries-general of the different P.L.O. organisations painted a picture of Lebanon as a glowing victory. Lebanon was a disaster. I bow my head to the courage of the people who fought there. But if Beirut was such a great victory, then all we need is a series of such victories and we will be holding our next national council meeting in Fiji". In April of this year Sartawi was murdered by a Syrian-based Palestinian faction who proudly acknowledged their "achievement". Unable to confront even this reality, Yasser Arafat attributed Sartawi's murder to "Zionist agents" rather than blame Syria. Two months later Syria took over the P.L.O. units in Syrian-occupied Lebanon and roundly trounced Arafat's men.

THE D.S.P. AND THE PEACE STRUGGLE

The purpose of the D.S.P. Policy Statement on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is to pinpoint the two-states solution as the only just and democratic outcome possible; to assess the intransigent dogmas on both the Jewish and Arab sides which stand as an obstacle to such a solution; and to recognise those forces that are contributing towards movement in the direction of that just solution. Until another Sartawi emerges on the Palestinian side, it is regrettable that there will be no Arab equivalent of Israel's "Peace Now" movement. Denis O'Connor is quite wrong to suggest that Begin's concept of West Bank "autonomy" is compatible with the "Peace Now" programme. On the contrary, that programme requires a complete surrender of Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank territories which should be returned to Arab sovereignty following re-partition. The broad-based "Peace Now" movement has made the maximum possible contribution towards mass mobilisation for a just solution. It is, of course, necessary for its individual political components to push the issues still further. (As a supporter of "Peace Now", the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace continues its own independent, radical campaign for a West Bank Palestinian State). The principal party behind "Peace Now" is the United

Workers' Party - Mapam (with six Jewish M.P.s and one Arab M.P. in the Israeli Parliament). The Mapam Party's own "Peace Platform" as confirmed in February of this year states:-

"Mapam will strive for a solution based upon two independent, sovereign countries; one, the State of Israel and the other a Jordanian-Palestinian state. The majority of the population of Jordan is made up of Palestinians. They and their brothers and sisters in the West Bank share the same language and tradition and their family ties are many and extended. The expanse of such a Jordanian-Palestinian state would make it possible for the Palestinian people to realise its right to self-determination, to preserve its unity, to absorb its refugees and to observe the right of Israel to secure and recognised borders through security agreements and a demilitarised zone. This would not be possible if a third state were established between Israel and Jordan. With the accomplishment of peace, Israel will not determine the political life of the Jordanians and Palestinians and she will respect their democratic decisions in everything pertaining to their independence and sovereignty within their borders ..."

Now this platform contains many contradictions. While in the first part it views a separate West Bank State as illogical, in the second part it implicitly recognises that such a separate state might indeed emerge subsequent to Israeli withdrawal. A separate West Bank State is illogical only if it is assumed that the Palestinians have either the will or the way to also achieve majority rule on the East Bank of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. But the P.L.O. is not a revolutionary organisation. If a Palestinian leadership would settle for self-determination on the West Bank alone, and would be content to leave the East Bank's Palestinian majority under King Hussein's minority rule, its wishes would have to be respected. The Mapam platform is inadequate but it is at least subject to extremely vigorous criticism and a political struggle to radicalise it still further, not least in Mapam's own publications.

A final note on where the D.S.P. Policy Statement and Resolutions have gone in that context. While primarily aimed at an Irish audience, they have also been communicated to contacts among the left-

wing of Palestinian nationalism on the occupied West Bank, as well as to the Mapam and Shelli Parties, "Peace Now" and the Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace in Israel. D.S.P. Resolutions E1 and E2, calling for a Palestinian State on the West Bank, have been reproduced in full in New York's Jewish Socialist newspaper, the Morning Freiheit. The D.S.P.'s two state arguments have also been presented in Ya'ad, an English publication of Young Poale Zion (youth wing of the Labour Zionist Movement). More significant has been the request by a Mapam publication, Israel Horizons, for an exposition of the D.S.P. approach. In the final paragraph of my article for Israel Horizons, I sum up:-

It goes without saying that while the D.S.P. gives full recognition to the broad progressive character of "Peace Now", our own support for the establishment of a Palestinian State on the West Bank, living in peace side-by-side with Israel, would lead us to adopt a more critical attitude concerning the inadequacies of the main parties of the Israeli left in that respect. This criticism would apply to Mapam as well as to the Israeli Labour Party. If Palestinian politics can develop to the point of recognising and guaranteeing peace to the State of Israel, it will be no business of democratic socialist politics in Israel to suggest that the West Bank and Gaza should constitute part of a Jordanian-Palestinian State rather than exist as a quite separate Palestinian State. We would fully support the call by Meir Pa'il in the March-April 1983 issue of Israel Horizons - that in the event of any Palestinian leadership being willing to negotiate with Israel, there should be a declaration that "the State of Israel views with favour the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip". Hopefully such a viewpoint will gather further strength among Israeli socialists so that a more forceful struggle can be waged for partition as the only valid democratic solution which will guarantee the right to self-determination of both Israelis and Palestinian Arabs".

D.S.P. Policy on the Middle East has been established for less than a year, but in my view it has enabled us to make a more serious contribution to the political struggle for recognition of the Palestinians right to independent statehood than has the decade and a half of uncritical support for the P.L.O. which most of the Irish left has given in line with its traditional fondness for counterproductive rhetoric.

REPARTITION

Repartition in Ireland is inevitable. It is no longer a question of whether: it is a question of when and how. Ideally, all the Nationalists would be brought in a peaceful and orderly manner under the authority of the Irish Government, while all the Unionists remained citizens of the U.K. Politicians in Britain and Ireland should aim to approach this ideal solution as closely as possible.

The Unionists cannot be forced into a United Ireland. The Nationalists cannot for very much longer be forced into the United Kingdom. Only a settlement which guarantees each community its national freedom can be just or effective. An attempted settlement on any other basis will only make matters worse.

The two communities have incompatible notions of freedom. Any political system where they are forced to co-exist will give liberty without security to 60% and leave 40% oppressed - as is the case at present - or vice versa. Liberty for one is bondage for the other. Unless they are free of each other the Nationalists and the Unionists cannot both be free.

No system to which both communities belong can truthfully be called democratic. In reality it will be a system of apartheid where the state either openly promotes, or tacitly sanctions, the subordination of one separately developing community to the other. Such an apartheid system exists today in Northern Ireland, despite the fact that there is a well-developed Unionist democratic process. Such an apartheid system would exist in a United Ireland if that political unit could be constructed.

In recent times at least, the state has not favoured apartheid in Northern Ireland, but is powerless against the popular demand for it. Both communities are busily creating facts. It is by no mere habit that Unionists and Nationalists go to school, work, worship, socialise, play games, organise politically, reside and marry apart. During the past fifteen years they have applied themselves with enthusiasm to destroying the patches of common ground that previously existed. What has happened in mixed residential areas is well known. A less obvious example is the fate of the NILP. Socialist Unionists and Socialist Nationalists no longer find it possible to share a flag of convenience, as they did previously.

The Unionists and Nationalists do not share a political experience. It is not possible to describe Northern Ireland in a way that significant sections of both communities will recognise as valid. For example, is Northern Ireland a colony? Protestant Northern Ireland most certainly is not a colony: it is an integral part of the United Kingdom. Catholic Northern Ireland most certainly is a colony: it is occupied Ireland. Again, how should one describe the British Army? In Woodvale and Larne it is the national defence force. In Ballymurphy and Creggan it is a foreign army of occupation.

There is no political force in Britain or Ireland which can exert sufficient attractive power on both Northern Communities to offset their mutual repulsion. A few years ago, when it was not clear what would emerge from the social ferment in Britain, it was possible to think that the British Labour Party might become such a force. The idea that it is now such a force, even in its pitiful aimless condition, is the illusion of a liberal Unionist fringe. It is an illusion that the vast majority of Unionists, whether liberal or not, do not share. Many of them take some interest in the campaign for Labour Party organisation in Northern Ireland, but only because it can spoil a forum for Nationalist propaganda in Britain.

In case there is any ambiguity in the way I have presented the problem up to now, I will spell it out again. Northern Ireland is ripped apart, and made nonsensical not only as a political unit but even as a province of any single political unit, by a conflict of national allegiance.

Between 900,000 and a million Unionists wish to remain part of the United Kingdom and will not accept a United Ireland. Between half a million and 600,000 Nationalists wish to be part of a United Ireland and will not accept the United Kingdom. Catholics are Nationalists and Protestants are Unionists. Politically the few exceptions do not count.

Northern Ireland is the territory where the British and Irish nations are intertwined. Although I follow the common practice of calling the communities Nationalists and Unionists, in fact both the communities are nationalist, though

they give their commitments to different nationals. The Nationalists are Irish nationalists; the Unionists are British nationalists. Throughout modern history the national identity has always been cherished in each community as prior and superior to class interest, common Christianity, common Irishness or whatever. One may safely expect that this will not change in the near future.

It is futile to question either community, whether seriously or ironically, about what composes its national identity. The national political system of one community cannot be shaped in such a way as to placate or to smother the national aspirations of the other. Nationality is not something that can be summed up in one or two social and cultural features. (A fallacy on which the New Ireland Forum is based). It courses through all channels of life in Northern Ireland, replenishing the hostility of each nation for the other.

The national conflict tends to intensify as time goes on. It is not abated by the process of secularisation, which takes place separately in each community without forging any alliances across the divide. For example, the elected representatives of the Northern Nationalists expressed themselves as follows on the recent anti-abortion amendment: Sinn Fein, against; SDLP 50/50 for and against. It is plain that these parties have been influenced by secularist thinking without being softened in their attitudes to Unionism.

There are Unionists who claim that large numbers of Catholics are content with the Union. The DSP Policy Statement repeats this claim, which is entirely bogus. If there were large numbers of Catholics who were content with the Union, as a matter of course they would vote for the Alliance Party which was set up precisely so that Catholics who were content with the Union need no longer be disenfranchised. And if for some reason they chose not to vote for the Alliance Party (but why?) they would, of course, abstain.

In this year's Westminster election the SDLP got 20%; Sinn Fein 13%; the Workers' Party (still identified by both communities, correctly in my view, as nationalist), about 3%. That does not leave a great deal of the Catholic vote that could have gone to the Alliance Party (plus Gerry Fitt, for whom Alliance stood down). 3% - 4% of the total vote, perhaps; at most one tenth of the Catholic vote.

Perhaps one tenth of the Catholics are content, then, with the Union. Was there ever a colony where one tenth of the natives did not prefer to make the best of the colonial regime, rather than to suffer the hardship and disruption that attends revolution? Far more than a tenth of the Irish Catholics were content with the Union in 1918. When one considers the uniquely vulnerable position of the Northern Catholics as a colonised people in the midst of a free majority, the portion of them seeming content with the Union is amazingly small.

It is sometimes argued, glibly, that Nationalist votes have no meaning; Nationalist violence alone counts, because violence alone has any prospect of achieving Nationalist aims. The considerable decrease in violence since 1973 is then taken as evidence of a corresponding waning of Nationalist feeling among the Catholics. It is not evidence of any such thing.

The rhythm of the Provo war necessarily changed when it became evident that no early success was to be expected. They could not expect to sustain a 20-year blitz. In the early '70s, on the other hand, Northern Catholics generally thought that with an intense effort they could win their United Ireland very quickly. Taking into account their disillusion on discovering that it wasn't so easy - a product of this disillusion being the Peace Movement - and the acute dangers they face from armed Unionists, I think that the combination of military and political activity which the Northern Catholics have sustained is impressive testimony of their unbroken Nationalist will.

There are two effective choices in Northern Ireland. It is possible to continue the status quo, namely the construction of an apartheid system with British democracy as its incongruous outer coating. Something could be said in favour of this course of action if apartheid could proceed, as now, without more than sporadic and containable violence. But, as Harold McCusker (Fortnight, Jan '83) has pointed out, this will not be possible indefinitely. The two communities on the ground will continue creating facts, but they are not so positioned that there can be automatic agreement on just which facts are to be created. It can only be a matter of time before some local conflict sets off a chain reaction.

Alternatively, it is possible for the British and Irish governments to plan, negotiate, win their Northern co-nationals to accept, and oversee, a thoroughgoing repartition, involving the orderly transfer of minority communities of Unionists and Nationalists to those areas where they have majorities. The outstanding problem is West Belfast, and I believe that the only disposal of West Belfast which could be just and democratic, and would offer hope of peace and stability, is essentially what is advocated by Arthur Clery in his article written in 1905 and reprinted in this journal.

The idea that there must be one single political system which both Unionists (or "ex-Unionists") and Nationalists (or "Catholics") can fit into dies hard. Along with the daunting practical difficulties this is the reason why repartition is not yet discussed in public, though it is extensively discussed in private. But all the time the communities in Northern Ireland carry on creating facts.

Only a thoroughgoing repartition will work, and it is tempting to conclude that a thoroughgoing repartition cannot be achieved without appalling violence. In fact, it has a better chance of avoiding appalling violence than any other political arrangement. If approached by the two sovereign governments in the spirit of giving each community justice it could bring out a constructive spirit and goodwill towards settlement in each community. And unlike those futile "solutions" which require what is dearest to one or other community to be trampled on, it would give each community the essential substance of its historic demand. It would mean Bits Out of Ballymurphy, and it would mean No Surrender in Ballymena.

The DSP has contributed a good deal to public awareness in the Republic that the Nationalist solution cannot be imposed on the Unionists. Unfortunately, DSP policy entirely lacks the other necessary insight, that the Unionist solution cannot be imposed on the Nationalists. If that insight also is incorporated into its policy, the DSP. could bring some badly needed clarity into discussion of Northern Ireland - including, perhaps, in the Forum.

COMMITMENT OF THE MILLIONS

It took no more than a century, not a long period historically, for an originally distant objective to become the reality. This refers to Marx's vision of a free association of associated producers, which in the form of socialist self-management, originated in Yugoslavia in the 1950's.

Marking the centenary of Marx's death. Yugoslav communists may justly say without false modesty or self-content, that they had historically spearheaded the materialization of Marx's idea of self-management.

"The contribution of our revolution to the Marxist theory and socialist practice stretches far beyond the mere reaffirmation of the 'factory to the workers' slogan. We were the first to begin to build up a socialist society in which self-management spread from the factories to cover the entire organisation of the society", said, among other things, President of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) Mitja Ribicic on the occasion of marking the centenary of Marx's death.

In recalling that self-management in Yugoslavia, in spite of all hardships, has a greater strength than that of an experiment, that it has its intrinsic logic and reasonable institutional structure and that it gives many, although not all answers to the questions of future development, Mitja Ribicic added that "in world proportions" self-management is the "factor that cannot be ignored, no matter that it has not yet become the dominant idea of the world today, because other ideas also have their impact and power".

FROM DENIAL TO APPROVAL

What Ribicic said certainly is supported by the fact that concerning the development and perspective of contemporary socialism hardly any other idea than that of self-management has been the subject of virtually countless discussions and debates within the communist and workers' movement. The idea had been denied in the beginning some thirty years ago when its practical application began in Yugoslavia (explanations such as "do not nurture delusions," or "do not be carried away by outdated concepts" were heard). Today, however, this is the idea that has grown into the commitment

of the millions, above all because of the awareness that there is no socialism without democracy, neither democracy without the full participation of the working men in the making of all essential decisions of importance for a society's development..

Self-management trends, still rather restricted in volume, are becoming increasingly present all over the world. Many of the communist and workers' parties which had in the beginning denied self-management, in recent years have been trying to alter such an attitude as is seen in a large number of meetings and studies dedicated to self-management. Moreover, certain communist parties in the West refer to self-management as an orientation even stated in their documents. In the like manner, some countries with communist parties in power also show mounting interest in self-management and demonstrate firmer and firmer trends towards the expansion of direct democracy forms. For the developing countries, too, according to debates at the many meetings on this subject, self-management accounts for a vigorous process in which they find encouragement for their overall social emancipation.

All this, naturally, presents evidence about the huge diversity: in the practical materialisation of the idea of self-management as well as in the theoretical approach to what is a class question in the world today. But, regardless of what is being discussed: self-management as the 'social relation' now applied in Yugoslavia alone, or the varied forms of participation, today already self-management is not a 'futurist' idea, for, it is in the different places that the different-intensity demands for self-management are being made. Such demands originate from the different theoretical sources and rely upon the heterogeneous social foundations.

INNUMERABLE STUDIES AND PAPERS
ON SELF-MANAGEMENT

Yugoslavia's historical decision to embark on the road of self-management, irrespective of all denials, certainly did not leave indifferent anybody within the communist and workers' movement. The movement's majority readily took the downright adverse and denying stand, but there were also others who understood the "Yugoslav experiment" as an incentive to reconsider what had been "an almost forgotten idea." No longer than three

years after self-management induction, representatives of some major workers' parties from the West began to arrive "to study what is going on in Yugoslavia".

As the communist and workers' movement was changing its relations, and as the socialist self-management was achieving results, the interest in Yugoslavia's experience was mounting to wide proportions. Statistics reveal that in the thirty odd years since the introduction of self-management in Yugoslavia, more than 250 studies and about 180 scientific papers have been published in over 75 countries in nearly every major language area across the world. More than 20 scientists defended their doctoral theses on the participation of Yugoslav workers in decision-making. Countless seminars were held, while several thousand pages were published in the newspapers and periodicals about Yugoslavia's experience in self-management development.

From among the many books dealing with the range of Yugoslavia's socialist self-management, a study by the French author Yves Durier may be singled out. By entitling his book: "Tito's Heritage as the Necessity of Self-Management", he announced his basic thesis that self-management is the natural path of Yugoslavia's development, stemming from the entire work of Tito's. Having discussed the plurality of self-management interests integrated within the socialist political system, the author concludes that the different interests at times display themselves also as crises, that at times even 'short circuits' or misunderstandings occur, but all this only serves him as evidence that self-management does solve the actual problems of the society and its members. It proves that it is not just a 'model'.

The large mosaic of texts about Yugoslavia's experience in self-management development naturally pictures the encountered difficulties, too. "Yugoslavia has not overcome all problems, but it grapples with them openly and fearlessly. Contradictions and internal weaknesses do exist. Nonetheless the successes and dynamics of Yugoslavia's road to socialism show that decentralisation and development are not incompatible. Moreover, Yugoslavia proves that decentralisation can be the vehicle of development," wrote the influential Mexican paper "Novedades".

Yugoslavia has never regarded its self-management as a 'model' for other countries. "All of us are satiated with long-lasting aspirations to offer 'ideal models'," it was said a few years ago at the Cavtat Round-Table Discussions on Self-Management. "It showed up that a small country can create its own road to socialism without simultaneously shutting itself in, but on the contrary... to be able democratically to solve its inner contradictions and to interpret the profoundly contradicting and complex present time."

Through its own practice of self-management, and in spite of all hardships in the relevant development, Yugoslavia refuted a theory on "short-lived self-management." Hence, too, the vast interest among the world general public in Yugoslavia's experience and practice of self-management. This, naturally makes Yugoslavia particularly responsible before its own working class and before the whole world to carry on finding fresh answers to self-management development as its own road to socialism, being a community with the historical mission to take apart the alienated centres of economic and political might.

The class-humanist tenor of this "historical process" was in a simple way defined by Kardelj in his notable study "The Directions of Development of the Political System of Socialist Self-Management," when he said:

"Neither the State, nor a system, nor a political party can bring one happiness. Happiness can be created only by oneself... This is self-management."

In the turbulent world of ours everybody is entitled to their own path towards happiness. Yugoslavia chooses -- self-management. This is the self-management as was defined by Tito in his noted address to the National Assembly of Yugoslavia when the Law on the introduction of Workers' Self-Management was enacted on 27 June 1950. "Today we are building socialism in our country ourselves, without employing any patterns, but being guided by Marxist science and following our road, taking into account the specific conditions existent in our country..."

Self-Management socialism has demonstrated the untenability of the image of a uniform model. Its vitality and reputation depend predominantly on the ability of the

Yugoslav working class to expand its range and to reassert its strength - through the system that has brought about the emancipation of labour and man. Here, the objectives in mind are: the future development of socialism in Yugoslavia, and the development of socialism as a world-wide process.

FIELD DAY

Field Day, a group of poets and playwrights based in Northern Ireland, has recently issued three pamphlets written by Seamus Heaney, (An Open Letter), Seamus Deane (Civilians and Barbarians) and Tom Paulin (A New Look at the Language Question). The common theme is discontent with the cultural relationship of Britain and Ireland.

These authors are very vulnerable to ridicule. One could easily say that Tom Paulin is uneasy with the English language, Seamus Deane doesn't like Irish jokes, Seamus Heaney can't stand being called a Brit, and there are also a few million people in Ireland whose troubles are not imaginary. Such a comment is not adequate, however,

Seamus Heaney has been included in the Penguin Book of Contemporary British verse, and he protests in 26 verses that they've given him the wrong label. He is on terms of familiarity with the people he reproaches. His last line reads, "Yours, Seamus". One feels that the real injury is this: when they labelled him they weren't trying to get under his skin, they were matter-of-factly describing a well-known part of the British literary scene.

His 26 verses do not really make it clear why he may not justly be called a British poet. In calling him British there need be no question, any more than when the same description is applied to MacNeice, of denying the importance of being Irish. But then MacNeice was a Unionist, and the recognition of Irishness which is sufficient for a Unionist is not sufficient for Heaney as a Nationalist. Literature which elucidates why this is so can be interesting, but Heaney is really only at the stage of stating the fact. He did, after all, develop as a writer during the '60s, when Ireland was awash with illusions. This poem of his, bad and all as it is, is a step in the direction of solid ground.

Heaney writes in one of Robert Burns' favourite verse-forms - with envy no doubt. Burns was a big hit in London but he didn't lose his composure there. If a publisher had described him in print as a British poet it would hardly have bothered him; but most of what he wrote had such an emphatic national stamp that to call him anything but "a Scottish poet" would not be natural. He never developed a crisis of personal identity: he was as likely to develop a monastic vocation.

Of course, the political question was sorted out for Burns. He could indulge his heart and glorify Bruce and Wallace and even Bonnie Prince Charlie; and far from rubbing salt in old wounds, everything he wrote in this manner helped to cure them. Scotland had already forged her unique and stimulating relationship with England. But the relationship of Ireland, or at least that part of Ireland to which Heaney belongs, with England, is intolerable; and aside from some natural genius, that is the difference between Heaney and Burns.

Seamus Deane's essay is, thankfully, not so personal. He argues that for four centuries the British have seen themselves as the bearers of civilisation, embodied in the rule of their particular law. By contrast they have seen the Irish as barbarians to the extent that the rule of British law does not encompass them. Illustrating the points, he quotes from Sir John Davies, Edmund Spenser, Coleridge, Hazlitt, Horace Walpole and Southey.

In nineteenth century Ireland, "the various state-run enterprises --- in health, --- education, --- cartography through the Ordnance Survey; in policing, --- in law, --- had a highly Spenserian aim in view - the civilisation of the wild natives. All of these schemes were, in effect, pieces of preventive legislation. A whole range of conditions - like the condition of being drunk, or illiterate, or from somewhere unheard of or unknown, or vagrant, or disaffected - was now realised as being beyond (not exactly against) the law".

The rise of the modern state system "(dating from the early nineteenth century) has enormously increased the ideological rift between the competing discourses of the civilian and the barbarian. For the romantic nationalism which was born in that utilitarian century gave to certain aspects of "barbarism" a privileged status. In literature, for instance, "barbarism" became "primitivism" and represented a vigour lost to the sophisticated art of the civilised world. On the other hand, the same nationalism insisted on the high degree of civilisation it had attained socially, although in some of the temperance debates both O'Connell and Davis give us a version of Irish life which seems to have been modelled on some of the more saccharine passages in Dickens. The essential issues have, however, been "displaced" into literature in such a manner that their reality has been further attenuated --- The audience (of this

literature) --- has learned to be submissive to --- the modern political machine (which engages in) --- concentrated manipulation of the --- audience's reaction to --- the criminal type and, above all, the politically criminal type, your friendly neighbourhood terrorist.

This stereotype has all the classic faults of the barbarian as seen from the view of the English civilian ---".

In Deane's view, the H-Block campaign exhibited this stereotype in its extreme form, and brought it to the point of exhaustion. It remains, though, to be overcome. "Of all the blighting distinctions which govern our responses and limit our imaginations at the moment, none is more potent than this four hundred year old distinction between civilians and barbarians. We may well ask, with Bishop Berkeley in The Querist, whether the natural phlegm of this island needs any additional stupefier?"

Unfortunately, Deane has confused the question he is dealing with. It is a vast question, and here I will only mention the most basic deficiencies of Deane's pamphlet.

The civilians/barbarians distinction is not four centuries old. It is eight centuries old. "A rude and untaught people," Pope Adrian IV called us in the mid-12th century, and in the famous Laudabiliter he praised the intentions of Henry II "to enter the island of Ireland to subject that people to laws." Another Pope, Alexander III, wrote three letters to Henry in 1172 on the subject of Ireland. His main concern was to get his fair share of the loot, but he thought that the civilising of the Irish could not begin too soon: the Irish "marry their stepmothers and are not ashamed to have children by them; a man will live with his brother's wife while the brother is still alive; one man will live in concubinage with two sisters; and many of them, putting aside the mother, will marry the daughters. And all from time to time eat meat in Lent ---".

Against this distinction of civilians and barbarians, the Irish forged their distinction of natives and usurpers (or, those who are here by ancient right and those who lately came here by force and with no right at all). The condition of Ireland was most eloquently expounded in these terms by Donald O'Neill, King of Ulster, in a letter to Pope John XXII in 1317. In the course of a wide-ranging and

complex argument O'Neill adverted to the civilians/barbarians view of things and tried to prove that it had no validity (See Irish Historical Documents, ed. Curtis and McDowell).

This powerful distinction of natives and usurpers, also, survives to govern responses and limit imaginations. Although complicated a great deal by what happened in the 18th and 19th centuries, it was available still in the 20th century for the Irish-Ireland movement (the school of thought which developed around D.P. Moran's journal, The Leader) to recharge it with meaning. Desmond Fennell is the most considerable present-day exponent of this thinking. But it is no longer typical thinking, and this raises an important question.

When, and in what way, did a shift occur in Irish psychology making the civilians/barbarians distinction meaningful to the Irish? Up to a point, it may have been meaningful for Hugh O'Neill, the great Earl of Tyrone. O'Faolain argues that he recognised the fatal weakness of Gaelic Ireland, its lack of any principle of development (The Great O'Neill). Nevertheless, the man who had been educated at the court of Elizabeth, England's most glorious monarch, could return to lead Gaelic Ireland against here in war. There is no reason to think that, whatever else it lacked, Gaelic society then had a high self-esteem which was proof against English stereotypes.

Only at a much later date did the Irish assent to the values of modern civilisation in its contiguous (English) form. They asserted with resolution and finality, but also - as it seems afterwards - with reservations so deep that almost a century elapsed before they could ever be voiced. They became possessed with a special discontent, a profound and mysterious resentment which seeps through all the Field Day pamphlets.

It seems reasonable to take the adoption of the English language as the crisis of the development. Language was the passport to the English way of life in practical matters, but at the same time as they adopted the language the Irish rebelled violently against England in philosophy. These newcomers to the world of Industrial Revolution did not merit much dignity according to any school of thought indigenous to that world; on the other hand, the Catholic religion conferred dignity on them unconditionally, once they belonged

to the True Faith. Among many reasons for the plunge into Catholic enthusiasm, this is an important one.

Subject, then, to the proviso that the next world took precedence over this one and the primary distinction lay between the True Church and the heretics, one can say that the Irish asserted during the 19th century to the civilian/barbarian stereotype of the English. That they assented in peculiar ways, perverse and irrational ways to English thinking, is not the point. That, to English thinking, the more civilised they became in the sense of acquiring modern habits, the more they seemed to regress in the sense of resenting the English form of government, is also not the point. They did assent, hastily and unreflectingly and finally. During the 19th century the Irish were most unreflective; only the Anglo-Irish reflected. Then, at the beginning of the 20th century, the Irish-Ireland movement reformulated that old distinction of natives and usurpers, and they looked back towards the world of Donald O'Neill with a desolate feeling, a puzzled resentful sense of infinite loss.

Much remains to be written about the frightful century after the Flight of the Earls; Sean O'Faolain's biography of O'Connell (King of the Beggars) is the best account available now. That century, the 18th, is the century of the great fracture. Between Celtic Ireland and modern Ireland runs a great fracture that sends tremors of pain down into the present and will be felt a long way off in the future.

Dean's view that the 19th century developments "enormously increased the ideological rift between the competing discourses of the civilian and the barbarian", is the exact opposite of the truth. On the contrary, the rift disappeared. One discourse intermeshed with the other. They continued to be distinct, but for the first time they communicated. Civility and barbarism now become, rather than two uncommunicating discourses, two moments of the same discourse, two aspects of the Irish mind. And even in English thinking, the Irish henceforward had two aspects: our neighbours who are becoming civilised/the Irish at their worst. This transformation and "splitting" of the Irish personality is observed in Deane's account, but it is precisely what makes the cultural relationship of England and Ireland an emotional minefield.

The W.P. in perspective

THE FOLLOWING IS A SPEECH GIVEN BY PHILIP O'CONNOR TO A PUBLIC MEETING IN TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, ORGANISED BY THE DUBLIN UNIVERSITY DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST SOCIETY, ON THE SUBJECT OF "THE WORKERS PARTY AND DEMOCRACY" ON NOVEMBER 9th LAST.

I was asked to come along and introduce a discussion on the extent to which the Workers Party is democratic or not. As a democratic Socialist, this issue of democracy is of course central to my politics, and in the old socialist debates between Social Democrats and Communists, I side totally and unequivocally with the arguments of the Social Democrats.

While this is an issue which of course does not only concern those in socialist politics, I would still consider it an "internal" issue of what is still a small force in Irish politics - the socialist movement. I would like to make this point clear from the start. While I might have strong criticisms and reservations about the WP, I have an even stronger affinity with many elements of that party. I have more in common with the socialist wing of the WP than I have with, say, any section of Fianna Fail and with most of Fine Gael.

OUR PROBLEMS

My view is that a crisis in Irish politics developed throughout the 1970s. One can look back on Irish history with dismay at the collapse of promising labour politics in the late 1920s, and the failure of an Irish socialism or social democracy to develop since. This collapse, and the failures of this movement throughout this century, are our own problems, problems of the socialist movement. The same can be said of the broader secular and liberal traditions which also collapsed in this period. It is no good blaming the Church or anyone else for this situation.

PRESENT CRISIS

But what occurred in the 1970s was a collapse of the old, self-confident and thoroughly successful philosophy of the main body of politics in the country - Fianna Fail and Fine Gael.

However much one might have opposed them at the time, or sought to create a different approach to the country's problems, it cannot be denied that these parties fashioned the new nation in their image and likeness and, of course, vice versa. When de Valera said that he had only to look into his heart to see what the rest of us were thinking, he was only speaking the truth.

By the 1970s, the state which these parties had set up with such zeal had been established, and their goals (with the exception of the First National Aim) had been achieved. The

parties went to seed. At bottom level they were no longer the "forums of the people" they previously claimed confidently to be. People were no longer flocking to them in self-sacrificing idealism and the 'cream of the nation', as someone like Desmond Fennel might put it, were exercising their talents elsewhere - usually not in politics at all. These parties became a hindrance to the development of the country in many ways. People in literature and the arts, a growing liberal tradition, a more rational labour movement, these were all ahead of the parties, and could only find backward expression through them. What had been the vanguard of the nation - the Dail now became its rearguard. The basic values of the nation had fundamentally altered, but the parties had not caught up.

Such a crisis could of course only be of a temporary nature. The 1970s saw these parties trying to accommodate to the new realities. Lynch's pseudo-Social Democracy of the late 70s and Fine Gael's Social Justice society were the straws grasped at.

While this crisis continues essentially, its high point was the period from mid-1981 to the end of 1982, from the H-Blocks to the Referendum. And it was in this period that a real alternative presented itself on the stage, with a number of socialists being elected to the Dail: the democratic socialist Jim Kemmy, the republican socialist Tony Gregory and the half-way house between the two of them

of the Workers Party TDs. I am convinced that the failure of these deputies to form a cohesive grouping in the Dail set this development way back. This has given time for FG to regroup and to reappear with a dynamic image and growing credibility as the "new party of urban Ireland", and for Dick Spring to bring the decline of the apparat Labour Party to a halt.

MISSED OPPORTUNITY

There is no doubt in my mind that Jim Kemmy was head and shoulders above the others in ability and maturity of outlook. Even in Dublin at the time, his name became better known in some working-class areas than that of Garret Fitzgerald. His proposal to form an alliance of all five deputies caused a sensation and could have been a turning point in the emergence of a truly relevant and vigorous socialist movement in the country. It was the cohesion it would have given that would have been decisive. Gregory was willing, but the WP was not, and in the WP's rejection of the idea was its entire accumulated history and outlook, which I will now look at.

SINN FEIN COMMUNISM

The original Sinn Fein movement which eventually gave birth to the WP was one with which few socialists could have had much in common. It was stridently nationalist and even at times pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic in its past. It was ardently Catholic too - Sean South, one of Fr Fahy's militants, is still a hero in some quarters of the party. In the late 1960s, some British Communist Party intellectuals saw the emerging national conflict in Northern Ireland as a great opportunity to launch a social nationalist movement and to dream of a Vietnam-style development for the quaint island. The "social wing" of the movement grew in strength, especially after Official Sinn Fein called off its war effort in 1973. More and more, socialists joined the party as the best vehicle available for socialist advancement in Ireland. Throughout the 1970s, the basic conflict in the party was between the nationalist wing and the new socialist wing. The nationalists were still organised along conspiratorial lines, backed up by the ominous Army Council. In taking on this old structure, the

socialists also organised along similarly secretive and conspiratorial lines - backed up by the so-called "Industrial Section" organised by Eoin Harris and Eamon Smullen. The name-change to Sinn Fein - The Workers Party in 1977 was the first major breakthrough for the "new liners" as they were then known. The growing strength of the new wing, especially as the party's growing electoral successes were obviously a result of its new politics, saw the final change to THE WORKERS PARTY in 1982.

GENUINE CHANGE

The internal conflicts, debates and contradictions were not of course that straight-forward or simple. There were - and still are - a multiplicity of factions, groups and alliances in the party. And the rise of the New Socialism has infected the party thoroughly, and in the process various formerly contradictory outlooks have amalgamated and given their stamp to the new programme. People like Prionsias de Rossa and Tomas McGiolla have genuinely developed in their outlook and politics and cannot be looked at simply as nationalists in socialist clothing. Indeed, nothing could be farther from the truth of the situation.

The rise of socialism in the party has increasingly meant a particular kind of socialism, one that finds itself at home with many aspects of the more traditional politics of the party. The democratic socialists who played a prominent part in the transition of the seventies are now little in evidence. The party's socialism has become increasingly identified with many who were formerly the backbone of the nationalist rearguard. It was ironic that the re-organisation of the party which took place earlier this year, and which was heralded at the time as the "democratisation" of the party, has basically not only cemented the Leninism (or "democratic centralism") of it, but also seen a retrenchment of the "old liners" in power. The two committees established to organise and run the party are dominated by former old-line members. The socialism of the emerging WP is ever more that of a communist party. The party machine is one which 'educates' new members, expels "erring" ones and vilifies outsiders as neo-fascists or

"trotskyites". Many people might say, "well, so what?, it's about time that we had a well-organised and effective party of the left in Ireland".

THE PARTY IS ALL AND THE MOVEMENT
IS NOTHING!

Eduard Bernstein, one of the great social democratic theoreticians, once said that "the movement is all and the end is nothing". By this he meant concentration on the gradual improvement of society within a general outlook and perspective, and the future will take care of itself. The communist outlook is the exact opposite of this. The "movement" becomes a tool towards the glorious end of an ill-defined "socialism". For the movement to stay on the rails, a leninist would argue, it cannot be trusted to its own instincts and abilities, but is displaced by the "disciplined" PARTY as the exclusively legitimate "engine" of movement, and embodiment of progress

"WORKING-CLASS PARTY"

Thus, policies, outlook and political development are subordinated to the PARTY. The central leninist thesis is that what is good for the party is "objectively" good for the people. Even if something is obviously progressive in itself, but independent of the party, it will be fought (the "trotskyist" Anti-Amendment Campaign). The WP's hostility to the AAC was fundamental to its outlook, as was its warning to Dublin members not to get involved because of the type of "elements" associated with the campaign. Disregarding the political merits of holding an effective Dail balance of power, de Rossa was subsequently disarmingly honest when he outlined the reason for the WP rejecting an alliance: "We are not looking to get people to join Jim Kemmy's party or the IRSP". (Gralton interview, Oct/Nov 1983). Prionsias de Rossa is the party's most impressive public figure, and no doubt its future leader. He has on several occasions outlined the basic outlook of the WP, and should be taken special note of. He announces in the clearest fashion the belief that what is needed is for the Party to get into Power, and in the process the main aim of tax equity campaigns is not so much to achieve reforms of the system as to "raise class consciousness". The same attitude to the Dail was also a factor in

dismissing the idea of an effective alliance. But people in Ireland are more impressed by results, and this type of politics of discontent will find it has a very limited constituency in the long run. De Rossa describes the WP as a "revolutionary party", aiming at "transferring power from the capitalist class to the working class". The objective of this party, according to de Rossa, is to "establish a socialist democratic republic", something which "it's not possible to do.... through a social democratic party".

MARXISM

Many social democratic supporters of the WP see this type of talk as mere "rhetoric", claiming that in its practice the WP is essentially "labourist". The rhetoric should not be taken too seriously, they argue. There is no doubt however, that the increasing use of such rhetoric - and practice I would argue - has given new spirit and gusto to the theoreticians of the party. The publishing of Class Politics - a type of Irish Marxism Today - is a significant development in itself. In the editorial of the first issue, editor Des O'Hagen states that the magazine intends to rescue Marxism from "vulgar Marxism, ultra-leftism, dogmatism and cultism". But this task is not without its problems apparently;

"Rescuing the Irish revolutionary tradition from the bloody grip of fascist and ultraleftist interpretations is of particular urgency in the light of claims put forward by neo-fascists and trotskyists, to be within that tradition. Work of that nature has long since needed to be undertaken in truly Marxian fashion, having regard for the politico-historical context within which the Irish revolutionary tradition was forged. Here again one comes up against not only the bloody mindedness of terrorist mythology but also against the quagmire of British empiricism. Although it should be noted that empiricism has fuelled the fires of both right-wing nationalist and loyalist murder gangs; oddly enough there are those who would claim to be on the "hardleft" who also subscribe to this most anti-theoretical of all philosophical viewpoints".

He finishes with the non-sequitur that his magazine's restless honesty in pursuing this aim "is in

a corrupting influence on the planning process. Planning is still the most important function left to local government.

4. It is unjust that the wealth created by expanding communities, in the form of public investment in physical infrastructure such as roads and sewage, should accrue in landfall fashion to a tiny minority of fortunate landowners.

Housing is a basic right of all persons. It should therefore be made available to all at a price which does not include a margin of undue profitability.

5. Speculation in urban land is a principle cause of dereliction, a scandalous process of abuse and underuse of an extremely valuable and important resource.

B. Any steps which are taken to tackle these obvious social injustices must, accordingly, meet the following objectives.

a) The cost of building land to the community at large and to the individual housebuyer must be reduced.

b) The opportunity for speculation in building land must be removed. This means that the excessive differential between the price of building land and agricultural land must be reduced, as well as the equally excessive differential between the various categories of building land.

c) Where a local authority, or any other public body, invests in infrastructure, it is they who should recoup the benefit of the investment.

C. 1) The reasons given by the Kenny Committee for the rejection of most of the options considered by it are sound. Option B, however, on the nationalisation of all building land and payment of compensation, is dismissed too glibly.

It was not necessary, for example, for the Committee to assume that all building land would need to be nationalised, and compensation be paid for it, in an instant.

Furthermore, the problem of defining what is building land must also be faced if certain other options are chosen, including the option favoured in the majority report.

2) In essence, in any case, the option chosen by the majority Kenny Committee is not dissimilar to that of nationalisation.

2) The important feature in either option is that the State would hold the right to acquire possession of building land when and where required at a price that would reflect existing use value.

D. The DSP believes, therefore, that the Kenny Committee's majority recommendation would form the basis of an acceptable solution to the problem, provided that the following important modifications are made.

1. The task of defining building land should be a planning decision. Such a task is integral to the democratic planning process and is beyond the professional competence of the judiciary. This task of defining should not therefore be a judicial decision. For legal purposes, building land should be defined simply as all land which is zoned for the purpose in a Development Plan, including land which is already built on.

Such a definition would incorporate all land within a built-up area as well as land zoned for building purposes on the fringe. The problems created by an uncontrolled market in building land occur just as much in run-down urban districts where the process of land speculation can lead to widespread dereliction.

2. The principle of relating the price of property to its current use value is central to any attempt to bring about a rational market in building land.

The Kenny Committee's recommendation to compensate landowners for "use value plus 25%" needs, however, to be modified. The 25% differential need not be uniform. Any such differential should instead be determined on principles analogous to those obtaining to workers who are made redundant, i.e. length of tenure, replacement cost and availability of suitable alternative properties, are examples of the factors which should be taken into account in determining the differentials.

3. Any steps taken to increase the use-value of land about to be acquired - subsequent to a Notice to Treat - should be ignored in determining the level of compensation payable.

E. It has been suggested that measures to relate the price of building land to its use-value might be declared unconstitutional on the grounds that they would discriminate between the owners of building land and owners of other, mainly agricultural, land. It must be pointed out however, that the

price of agricultural land is in fact very closely related to its use-value, and that it rises and falls according as farm incomes rise and fall..

The effect of our proposals would merely be to extend the principle of use-value to all markets in land.

F. The Democratic Socialist

Party believes, therefore, that there are no impossible obstacles to the implementation of its proposals other, perhaps, than the lack of the political will necessary to their introduction. The Party calls, accordingly, for the Oireachtas Sub-Committee on Building Land to recommend the adoption of these proposals, and for the Government to implement them immediately.

-Dublin Urban Affairs

Committee, DSP

THIS ARTICLE IS A COPY OF THE FIRST DRAFT ONLY OF THE DSP SUBMISSION TO THE OIREACHTAS COMMITTEE. DUE TO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING THE KENNY REPORT, THE SUBMISSION HAS BEEN MODIFIED. THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST WILL CARRY DETAILS OF THE AMENDMENTS.

"FIELD DAY" REVIEW - Contd from p.15:

Politics brings rancour into all these arguments - into Deane's pamphlet too. Field Day comprises the main Northern writers who fall on the Nationalist side of the shake-out; hence it is inevitable that these pamphlets should have a nationalist leaning. If they simply decided that they want to clarify ideas for a nationalist audience, rather than a British Isles audience, they might shed more light.

- JOHN MINAHANE -

POLITICS AND "RIGOROUS ANALYSIS"

Dear editor,

I would like, if I may, to make some brief comments on Dave Alvey's article 'Propaganda & Pluralism' in the second issue of THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST.

His article is a reply to criticism levelled at some articles (one of which, he wrote) which appeared recently in the local D.S.P. paper the DUN LAOGHAIRE TRIBUNE. Dave Alvey rejects the charge made by some Party members that the articles in question favoured respectively, the Workers Party and the Labour Party and that therefore they should n't have been published in an essentially propagandist Party periodical.

In his reply, Alvey states that as the D.S.P. has a reputation for printing "...articles which uninhibitedly discuss a given political situation", the Party's propaganda should "...tolerate and encourage propaganda which aspires to objective analysis" even when it reflects badly on the D.S.P..

I would have no qualms in agreeing with Dave Alvey if the Dun Laoghaire branch had, in addition to the 'TRIBUNE', a purely propagandist newsletter like the 'CORE' or 'FREE PRESS'. As the branch in question doesn't, then the 'TRIBUNE' is obliged to fulfill the limited but necessary role of solely publishing the Party and its policies.

Indeed, I would have thought the fact that the Dun Laoghaire constituency provided the D.S.P. with a creditable vote in the last general election would only underline the necessity, urgency and value of pushing the virtues of the Party at every possible occasion.

But perhaps we can best understand what is behind Dave Alvey's thinking when we read further on in his article, his contradictory comments on what he considers should be D.S.P. strategy.

While saying, on the one hand, that in ".... the areas where the D.S.P. has established a presence in electoral work...this should be continued and build on", nevertheless, since the Party has missed the bus, D.S.P. members should "...devote less energy to electoral work". The end result of such a policy would inevitably reduce the

D.S.P. (outside Limerick) to a political sect. I can't help thinking that Dave Alvey wouldn't think such a development altogether a bad thing.

If our Party is to grow (never mind get local and national public representatives elected other than Jim Kenny) then energetic electoral work is precisely what's needed. We can start by casting aside Alvey's fatalistic attitude to the Workers Party.

The D.S.P. may or may not succeed in cutting out an influential place in Irish Parliamentary politics - what is certain, if we opt to sit on the side lines droning-out broad-sides of "very rigorous analysis", the D.S.P. won't play any role in changing or contributing to Irish society.

Fraternally,

BILL MC CANLEY.....

SOME FACTS ON IRISH FARM INCOMES

Dear Editor,

I would like to comment on one aspect of John Mordy's article on Irish agriculture (Democratic Socialist No 1).

He has raised important points about poor productivity in the agricultural sector and the need for substantial reform. But his article contains an assertion which is simply wrong and which it is important to correct if we are to formulate a rational policy on agricultural.

He states that "farmers have enriched themselves by doing next to nothing". He also says that most of the EEC agriculture budget is devoted to "making sure farmers have a 'decent' income regardless of how hard they work and even if they do not work at all".

The Agricultural Institute's Farm Management Survey for 1981 has this to say on farm incomes in that year: "In all provinces except Munster the highest proportion of full time farms fell into the £2,000 - 3,000 category (Munster's being the IR£3,000 - 4,000 group) and when judged against income distribution for any other sector of the working population, this represents a very

low level of achievement. It points to a situation where for many farms, standards of living would be miserably low without income supports from outside farming".

The Institute also says that "The real value of the 1981 average family income per farm was still about 40% below the 1978 level" (Counting farm incomes only).

That is not enrichment. And it is nonsense to suggest that farmers are provided with a decent income "even if they do not work at all". A farmer who does not work at all will have no income at all unless he lives in one of those counties in which the farmer's dole is payable, and that is means-tested in the case of new applicants. The old system which abolished the means-test for farmers in certain counties is itself being abolished at present. And of course, the scheme only existed in a minority of counties.

As for the assertion that farmers have been doing "next to nothing", the Agricultural Institute has estimated that milk production has increased by nearly 50% in the past decade, although the amount of land devoted to it has declined slightly. And according to John Mordy's figures - Table 1 in his article - net agricultural output increased by 17% (31% gross) between 1970 and 1981.

That was during a period when we went through one recession and the start of another, when inflation soared and when interest rates went through the roof. Of course agriculture should have done a great deal better during the decade - but to accuse farmers of doing "next to nothing" is misleading.

Yours Sincerely,

Padraig O'Morain

SUBMISSIONS, COMMENTS ON ARTICLES AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ARE WELCOME AND SHOULD BE SENT TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

The Editor

THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST

P.O. Box 806

Dublin 8

A Perspective on Europe's Defence

DECISIVE WEAPONS

Between the last two world wars it was assumed that the new strategic weapon was the airplane. That assumption was wrong. It was the tank. A few military planners saw the value of the tank correctly, but with one exception were not taken seriously before June 1940, after the fall of France to the Nazis. "Boney" Fuller and Liddel Hart in Britain, de Gaulle in France and Heinz Guderian in Germany were the tank specialists in the 1930's. By a fluke, Guderian's plans for a massed armour invasion of France, through the Ardennes, came to Hitler's notice, and was approved. This strategy of concentrating tank armour was what led to the demolition of the French army in three weeks, and this despite the fact that the German High Command disliked the plan and kept trying to dilute it, and even Hitler wavered in its execution, at Dunkirk and later in Alsasse.

All of the decisive battles of World War 2 were tank battles. It isn't that the airplane wasn't important, but that the capacity to get beyond static warfare and allow scope for strategic flair was supplied by tanks. One of the more interesting aspects of this story is that both the military specialists and the disarmers got it wrong. The prevailing orthodoxy up to June 1940 was that armies would quickly bog down into trench warfare, and that the cities behind the lines would be absolutely destroyed with their populations by air raids. William Plummer summed up the politics of it in his poem "Between the Wars":

'The belief that we should disarm
and at the same time fight,
And that Moscow, of all places
was the sole source of light'.

WORLD WAR III

Very similar attitudes are prevalent today. The likely defeat of Western Europe's armies in a war with the USSR in Europe, and

and the horror of imagining the results of a nuclear exchange, have led the military strategists (although this isn't true of all of them) to a greater reliance on their nuclear armoury, and the peace campaign to a defeatist position. Both sides are agreed on the absolute strategic importance of the nuclear bomb, and the common scenario for World War III goes like this:

Step 1. Invasion of the North German Plain by massively superior tank divisions of the USSR.

Step 2. Before final defeat of Western conventional forces, threats or actual use of theatre or tactical nuclear weapons.

Step 3. Escalation to full nuclear exchange, or not depending on your side of the fence, and or climbdown by one of the belligerents

It must be said that the defeat of the West's armies envisaged in Step 2 is never officially admitted, but given the West's inferiority in material, its problems with reaction time and co-operation between different national armies, and the required American atomic jump, that defeat is more than likely. Many other variants can be introduced into this war game, including one or other side deciding early to get the jump on the other and deciding to skip a step in the game and go straight for the big guns. All of these are possible but beyond the realm of cogent thought.

Interestingly enough, General 's solution in his book the "Third World War" depends on a revolution in Eastern Europe to allow the West to win. Not something one would want to rely on!

US TRADITIONAL ROLE

The escalation to nuclear weapons, the maintaining of the right to 'first strike' are all dependent on the view that the West's conventional forces would be defeated.

To some extent this strategy had already become unbelievable in the early 1970's. After the US's defeat in Vietnam, Nixon's impeachment, and milkops like Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter in the White House, who could believe that the American President had the bottle to push the button.

Naturally enough, the military planners started to produce alternative strategies - this after all is what they are paid to do. Enter theatre and tactical nuclear weapons, and continued nuclear war scenarios.

The greatest defect in these strategies from a European standpoint is that they make it very difficult to seriously consider European defence without the US. But a Europe that was seriously interested in political unity would have to take responsibility for its own defence.

EUROPE'S ROLE

Without any doubt that defence must relate to the Soviet Union. And there is much to be defended in Western Europe; political democracy freedom of the individual and of the press, independent trade unions and political parties etc. All of these items were central planks in the socialist movement's platforms prior to 1914. They are just as important to us today.

The calls for disarmament which don't tackle the question of how we should defend ourselves can at best only be described as weak-minded and at worst as a Soviet inspired propaganda exercise. A state which wants to continue to exist must be prepared to fight for its own existence in a world of political conflict. The absence of this willingness to defend itself acts as an invitation to other states to mop it up, and could be far more disruptive of the peace than the armed deterrent. A Western Europe distanced from the US would have certain progressive effects and advantages. The European political tradition would be seen as quite different from and healthier than the US's, a more effective brake could be put on America's interference in 3rd World national liberation struggles and that sort of Europe could seriously act as 'honest broker' to the two superpowers.

These things could develop in a Europe independent of America, but only of course if we can defend ourselves.

WHICH WEAPONS ?

As said above, while our conventional forces are no match