

JAMES CONNOLLY was an Internationalist, Socialist and Irish Republican. His daughter Nora, assisted by Eibhlín Ní Sheidhir, compiled this booklet of quotations from his writings in 1978. In her Introduction Nora Connolly O'Brien says that her father's twin ideal was national freedom and social justice.

During the 1916 Rising Connolly commanded the Irish Citizen Army and Dublin Division operations, from headquarters in the General Post Office. He was wounded in the fighting. This did not stop the English military authorities from strapping him into a chair and executing him in Kilmainham Gaol on 12 May, 1916.

The Irish Republic, proclaimed by Connolly, Pearse and their comrades on Easter Monday 1916, has not yet been achieved. We have not got an All-Ireland Parliament, 'representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women' (1916 Proclamation).

The Revolution of 1916 and the First All-Ireland Dáil Éireann (1919), was effectively overthrown when partition rule was imposed on Ireland in 1922. In recent years English rule in the Six Counties has been copperfastened through the 1998 Stormont Agreement and international capitalism has been given free rein, North and South, producing an ever-widening gap between rich and poor.

In the circumstances of 2009 it is revealing and enlightening to study once more the views of a great Irish humanitarian – James Connolly.

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JAMES CONNOLLY



Wrote for Today ...

Introduction

I have long maintained that if anyone wished to learn and value the writings of my father, James Connolly, they would have to take note of the fact that most of his writings were weekly contributions to 'Forward' in Scotland and 'Justice' and 'New Age' in England, as well as the 'Workers' Republic' and 'Irish Worker' which he edited in Dublin. In each of these his articles were on events that were happening in the European socialist world, and his comments upon them.

James Connolly's socialist ideals were known internationally. He had contacts in France, Holland, Belgium, Germany and Poland—also in Australia, the United States and Canada, so was kept informed of socialist thought in all these places. He wrote his comments upon happenings he thought would be of interest to Irish, Scottish and English socialists.

He was particularly interested in countries held as colonies by Britain, and had much intercourse with a number of them—I cannot remember which. As late as the 1950s I met a number of people from these colonies who had studied his works, and who told me that, while working towards independence, they had accepted James Connolly's twin ideal of national freedom and social justice.

Since no Irish writer who called himself a disciple of James Connolly has published or given any sign of having studied them to show their relevance to our present problems, I attempt to do it myself. Due to my damaged eye-sight, I could not do this alone. I was lucky to meet Eibhlín Ní Sheidhir who agreed to prepare the material for me for such a pamphlet as the one we are bringing out now. In this one we are concerned mainly with showing the relevance of Connolly's writings to the present situation in Ireland—and partition in particular. She must be regarded as the main worker in putting this pamphlet together. I could remember things my father had written, and where he had written them, but could make no use of that knowledge without such a helper as she turned out to be. She must be acknowledged as co-author of this pamphlet.

We have quotations from when he began to write in 1897 until his last written statement which was the reply he gave to the court martial that sentenced him to death and which he smuggled out to me. This I have given to the National Library. I would like to quote the first part of this statement at the beginning to show why I consider the present fight in the North of Ireland the continuation of the battle for which he died.

We decided on a pamphlet within the range of everyone's pocket—even those on the dole—and hope it will be so successful that we can publish a further one.

NORA CONNOLLY O'BRIEN
January 1978

James Connolly (1868-1916)

THE PATRIOT

Believing that the British Government has no right in Ireland, never had any right in Ireland, and never can have any right in Ireland, the presence, in any one generation of Irishmen, of even a respectable minority, ready to die to affirm that truth, makes that Government for ever a usurpation and a crime against human progress.

from *Speech to Court Martial, May 9, 1916.*

THE SOCIALIST

Ireland without her people is nothing to me, and the man who is bubbling over with love and enthusiasm for 'Ireland' and can yet pass unmoved through our streets and witness all the wrong and suffering, the shame and degradation wrought upon the people of Ireland, aye, wrought by Irishmen upon Irish men and women, without burning to end it, is in my opinion, a fraud and liar in his heart, no matter how he loves that combination of chemical elements which he is pleased to call Ireland.

Forward, 7 July, 1900.

.... the two currents of revolutionary thought in Ireland, the socialist and the national, are not antagonistic but complementary.

1896

I rather like that intense desire to conserve the honour or freedom of a particular country, to which men have given the name 'patriotism'. I am also a believer in the brotherhood of all men in the international solidarity of labour, and in the identity of interests which everywhere link together the oppressed of the earth. As a Socialist I hate all governments which reign by force against the wills of their subjects, and therefore, I am in Irish politics a patriot when confronted with the grim fact of an unpopular ruling power, governing in defiance of, and against the interests of, the vast majority of the people—a power which could not last a day save by the force which lies behind its bayonets.

As a patriot I hate the class which thrives upon the exploitation of its fellow-countrymen and women, which seizes upon the means of life and withholds them from the poor until their hunger compels them to sell their pittance. I hate this class more than the foreigner. Therefore I am a Socialist—anxious to purge our national household of its social dishonour.

Workers' Republic, July 28, 1900.

In the long run the Freedom of a nation is measured by the Freedom of its lowest class; every upward step of that class to the possibility of possessing higher things raises the standard of the nation in the scale of civilisation; every time that class is beaten back into the mire the whole moral tone of the nation suffers.

To increase the intelligence of the slave, to sow broadcast the seeds of that intelligence that they may take root and ripen into revolt, to be the interpreter of that revolt, and finally help in guiding it to victory, is the mission we set before ourselves in the columns of the 'Workers' Republic'.

Workers' Republic, 1915.

Economic Freedom and Social Justice

Connolly believed that a nominal political independence would be insufficient. Here, while trying to show the Nationalists of his day the need for social change, he makes some profound prophecies of the shortcomings of the modern 26-County state.

English rule is found to be the most suitable form of government by which the spoliation can be protected, and an English army the most pliant tool with which to execute judicial murder when the propertied classes demand it.

The Socialist who would destroy root and branch the whole brutally materialistic system of civilisation, which, like the English language, we have adopted as our own, is, I hold, a far more deadly foe to English rule and tutelage than the superficial thinker who imagines it possible to reconcile Irish freedom with these insidious but disastrous forms of economic subjection—landlord tyranny, capitalist fraud and unclean usury.

If you remove the English army tomorrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle unless you set about the organisation of the Socialist Republic your efforts would be in vain.

England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through her financiers, through the whole array of commercial and individualist institutions she has planted in this country and watered with the tears of our mothers and the blood of our martyrs.

England would still rule you to your ruin, even while your lips offered hypocritical homage at the shrine of that Freedom whose cause you had betrayed.

Nationalism without Socialism — without a re-organisation of society on the basis of a broader and more developed form of that common property which underlay the social structure of Ancient Erin—is only national recreancy.

Shan Van Vocht, January, 1897.

After Ireland is free, says the patriot who won't touch Socialism, we will protect all classes, and if you won't pay your rent you will be evicted the same as now. But the evicting party will wear green uniforms and the Harp without the Crown, and the warrant turning you

out on the roadside will be stamped with the arms of the Irish Republic. Now isn't that worth fighting for?

And when you cannot find employment, and, giving up the struggle for life in despair, you enter the poorhouse, the band of the nearest regiment of the Irish army will escort you to the poorhouse door to the tune of 'St Patrick's Day'. Oh! it will be nice to live in those days.

'With the Green Flag floating o'er us' and an ever-increasing army of unemployed workers walking about under the Green Flag, wishing they had something to eat. Same as now! Whoop it up for liberty!

Therefore, I say, let us organise to meet our masters and destroy their mastership; organise to drive them from their hold upon public life through their political power; organise to wrench from their robber clutch the land and workshops on and in which they enslave us; organise to cleanse our social life from the stain of social cannibalism, from the preying of man upon his fellow man.

Workers' Republic, 1899.

We mean to be free, and in every enemy of tyranny we recognise a brother, wherever be his birthplace; in every enemy of freedom we also recognise our enemy, though he were as Irish as our hills. The whole of Ireland for the people of Ireland—their public property, to be owned and operated as a national heritage, by the labour of free men in a free country.

Workers' Republic, August 5, 1899.

Trade Unions: The Way to the New Society

James Connolly saw the organisation of an inclusive trade union for each industry rather than separate ones for each craft, as the way not merely to a better deal for employees, but to create the living, working democracy which would in time become the new society itself. While in America from 1906-1910 he developed his ideas on trade unions while organising for the Industrial Workers of the World.

INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

The Industrial Workers of the World—the first Labour organisation to organise itself with the definite idea of taking over and holding the economic machinery of society. The means proposed to that end was the enrolment of the working class in unions built upon the lines of the great industries. It was the idea of the promoters of the new organisation that craft interests and technical requirements should be met by the creation of branches, that all such branches should be represented in a common executive, that all united should be members of an industrial union which should embrace all branches and be

co-extensive with the industry, that all industrial unions should be linked as members of one great union, and that one membership card should cover the whole working class organisation. Thus was to be built up a working class administration which should be capable of the revolutionary act of taking over society, and whose organisers and officers should, in the preliminary stages of organising and fighting, constantly remember, and, remembering, teach, that no new order can replace the old until it is capable of performing the work of the old, and performing it more efficiently for human needs.

The enrolment of workers in unions patterned closely after the structure of modern industries, and following the organic lines of industrial development, is par excellence the swiftest, safest and most peaceful form of constructive work the Socialist can engage in. It prepares within the framework of capitalist society the working forms of the Socialist Republic, and thus, while increasing the resisting power of the worker against present encroachments of the capitalist class, it familiarises him with the idea that the union he is helping to build up is destined to supplant that class in the control of the industry in which he is employed.

The power of this idea to transform the dry detail work of trade union organisation into the constructive work of revolutionary socialism and thus make the unimaginative trade unionist a potent factor in the launching of a new system of society, cannot be overestimated.

Socialism Made Easy. (Chicago) 1908.

We acknowledge no right in another individual or class to withhold anything which is ours by right of labour. We are out for justice and we have assailed or contested no just liberty. We know our duties as we know our rights and we shall stand by one another through thick and thin, prepared, if necessary, to arm and achieve by force our place in the world, and also maintain it by force. These be the ends of our fight—and, should the heavens fall, we shall achieve them.

Irish Worker, October 25, 1913.

Other classes serve England for the sake of dividends, profits, official positions and sinecures—a thousand strings drawing them to England for the one patriotic tie that binds them to Ireland. The Irish working class as a class can only hope to rise with Ireland.

Irish Worker, October 31, 1914.

There has proceeded a freezing up of the fraternal spirit of 1911, there is now, despite the amalgamations, less solidarity in the ranks of Labour than was exhibited in that year of conflict and victory.

If I could venture an analysis of the reason for this falling off in solidarity, I would point out that the amalgamations and federations are being carried out in the main by officials absolutely destitute of revolutionary spirit, and that as a consequence, the methods of what should be militant organisations having the broad working-class

outlook are conceived and enforced in the temper and spirit of the sectionalism those organisations were meant to destroy.

Into the new bottles of industrial organisation is being poured the old, cold wine of Craft Unionism,

The New Age, April 30, 1914.

Out of all this turmoil and fighting the Union has evolved, is evolving, among its members a higher conception of mutual life, a realisation of their duties to each other and to society at large, and are thus building for the future in a way that ought to gladden the hearts of all lovers of the race. In contrast to the narrow, restricted outlook of the capitalist class, and even certain old-fashioned tradeunionism, with their perpetual insistence upon "rights", this union insists, almost fiercely, that there are no rights without duties, and the first duty is to help one another. This is indeed revolutionary and disturbing, but not half as much as would be a practical following out of the moral precepts of Christianity.

The Irish Review, October 1913.

What Kind of New Society?

Connolly's Socialist society was essentially democratic and humanitarian. He opposed totalitarianism of all kinds.

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

Social democracy is the application to industry, or to the social life of the nation, of the fundamental principles of democracy. Such application will necessarily have to begin in the workshop, and proceed logically and consecutively upward through all the grades of industrial organisation until it reaches the culminating point of national executive power and direction. In other words, social democracy must proceed *from the bottom upward*, whereas capitalist political society is organised *from above downward*.

Social democracy will be administered by a committee of experts elected from the industries and professions of the land. The local and national governing, or rather administrative, bodies of Socialists will approach every question with impartial minds, armed with the fullest knowledge born of experience; the governing bodies of capitalist society have to call in an expensive professional expert . . . and know that the impartiality of said expert varies with, and depends upon, the size of his fee.

It will be seen that this conception of Socialism destroys at one blow all the fears of a bureaucratic state, ruling and ordering the lives of every individual from above, and thus gives assurance that the social order of the future will be an extension of the freedom of the individual, and not the suppression of it.

Socialism Made Easy, 1908.

THE SOCIALIST PROGRAMME

As in the family the true economy consists in utilising and conserving the heritage of all for the good of all, so, in like manner, the nation should act and be administered. Every man, woman and child of the nation must be considered as an heir of all the property of the nation, and the entire resources of the nation should stand behind all individuals guaranteeing them against want, and multiplying their individual powers with all the powers of the organised nation.

To attain that end we seek to organise every person who works for wages, that the workers themselves may determine the conditions of labour. We hold that the sympathetic strike is the affirmation of the Christian principle that we are all members of one another, whilst those who oppose the sympathetic strike and uphold sectionalism in trade union struggles are repeating the question of Cain who, when questioned about the brother he had murdered, asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?". We say "Yes, we are all the keepers of our brothers and sisters and responsible for them".

From the organisation of labour as such we propose to proceed to organise upon the co-operative principle that we may control the commodities we ourselves use and consume. Upon such a basis we can build a true demand for Irish made goods from which all elements of sweating have been removed.

Workers' Republic, January 19, 1916.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The worker is the slave of capitalist society, the female worker is the slave of that slave....

Of what use to such sufferers can be the re-establishment of any form of Irish State if it does not embody the emancipation of womanhood? As we have shown, the whole spirit and practice of modern Ireland, as it expresses itself through its pastors and masters, bears socially and politically hardly upon women. That spirit and that practice had their origins in the establishment in this country of a social and political order based upon the private ownership of property, as against the older order based upon the common ownership of a related community.

The Reconquest of Ireland, 1915.

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

The democracy of Ireland, amongst the first of the steps necessary to the regeneration of Ireland must address itself to the extension of its ownership and administration to the schools of Erin.

Whatever safeguards are necessary to ensure that the religious faith of the parents shall be respected in the children will surely be adequately looked after by the representatives of a people to whom religion is a vital thing. Such safeguards are quite compatible with the establishment of popular control of schools, with the building and equipment of schools that shall be a joy to the scholar and an inspiration to the teacher, and with such radical overhauling of the curriculum as shall

ensure that full recognition shall be given to the deeds and ideas of the men and women whose achievements mark the stages of the upward climb of the race, as their failures to achieve mark the equally important epochs of its martyrdom.

The Reconquest of Ireland, 1915.

Church and Religion

Socialism, according to Connolly, far from being anti-Christian was consistent with the real Christian ethic. He was horrified at the debasement of true religion in the interests of capitalism.

Is not this attitude symbolic of the attitude of the Church for hundreds of years? Ever counselling humility, but sitting in the seats of the mighty; ever patching up the diseased and broken wrecks of an unjust social system, but blessing the system which made the wrecks and spread the disease; ever running divine discontent and pity into the ground as the lightning rod runs and dissipates lightning, instead of gathering it and directing it for social righteousness as the electric battery generates and directs electricity for social use.

Labour, Nationality and Religion, 1910.

It is not Socialism but capitalism that is opposed to religion; capitalism is social cannibalism, the devouring of man by man, and under capitalism those who have the most of the pious attributes which are required for a truly deeply religious nature are the greatest failures and the heaviest sufferers.

Religion, I hope, is not bound up with a system founded on buying human labour in the cheapest market, and selling its product in the dearest; when the organised Socialist working class tramples upon the capitalist class it will not be trampling upon a pillar of God's Church but upon a blasphemous defiler of the Sanctuary, it will be rescuing the Faith from the impious vermin who made it noisome to the really religious men and women.

The Harp, January 1909.

Irish Language and Culture

Connolly was writing at the time of the Gaelic cultural and language revival, and he called on its supporters to recognise Socialists as "your natural allies".

Addressing the Gaelic Leaguers he said:

Help us to secure to all our fellow-countrymen, a free, full and happy life; secure in possession of a rational, human existence, neither brutalised by toil nor debilitated by hunger, and then all the noble characteristics of our race will have full opportunity to expand and develop. And when all that is good in literature, art and science is

recognised as the property of all — and not the heritage of the few— your ideals will receive the unquestioned adhesion of all true Irishmen.

Workers' Republic, October 1, 1898.

... those who drop Irish in favour of English are generally actuated by the meanest of motives, are lickspittles desirous of aping the gentry, whereas the rank and file of the Gaelic movement are for the most part thoroughly democratic in spirit.

Workers' Republic, March 1903.

No revolutionary movement is complete without its poetical expression. If such a movement has caught hold of the imagination of the masses, they will seek a vent in song for the aspirations, the fears and hopes, the loves and hatreds engendered by the struggle. Until the movement is marked by the joyous, defiant, singing of revolutionary songs, it lacks one of the most distinct marks of a popular revolutionary movement; it is a dogma of a few, and not the faith of the multitude.

from Introduction to Songs of Freedom, 1907.

Freedom and the State

During the First World War, under the guise of 'law and order', state emergency powers were considerable. Newspapers were censored, the 'Irish Worker' suppressed, and Conscription introduced.

Connolly's comment was:

Magistrates and soldiers and policemen and Coalition Cabinets must be made to understand that they all exist in theory for the sake of serving the civilian. If the contrary obtains, if, as seems to be the danger in Ireland, the civilian is subordinate to the soldier and the policeman and becomes a dog for all those we have named to kick and abuse, then it will become very difficult indeed to understand wherein lies the constitutional freedom we have lately heard so much about.

Workers' Republic, June 5, 1915.

Freedom of Speech

When attacked by a priest for leading striking dockers, Connolly let him speak, telling his daughter afterwards, "Nora, we demand free speech for ourselves. We must grant it to others even though their opinions are different from ours."

The liberty of the public meeting is also rapidly becoming a thing of the past in Ireland, as far as it is or may be used for the criticism of the

activities of the government or its functionaries; and yet it is this very right of the subject to criticise the governing bodies which is the very essence of freedom in a constitutionally governed country. Without the freedom of the press and the right of public meeting there is no citizenship; there are only the relations of subject and rulers, of slaves and slave-drivers. The question of whether the press is or is not wrong in its criticisms, or whether the public meeting does or does not advocate wise measures or use wise language has no bearing upon the matter. The press criticisms are subject to the judgement of the readers; the public meeting stands or falls with the justice of its cause. To allow either to be judged or punished by those against whom they are directed, is to abolish all constitutional guarantees and to establish the naked rule of force. Against that we protest with all our strength. It is idle to speak of great national emergencies requiring such suppression of liberties. Great national emergencies can only be met by calling upon the reserves of good in our national character, by invoking the aid of all that is best and ennobling.

Workers' Republic, June 5, 1915.

Internationalism

Seeing Ireland's fight for political and economic independence in an international context, he identified with those elsewhere involved in similar struggles, and was no less a patriot for so doing. However, he completely rejected the interference of English socialists in Irish concerns.

I make no war on patriotism; never have done. But against the patriotism of capitalism—the patriotism which makes the interest of the capitalist class the supreme test of duty and right—I place the patriotism of the working class, the patriotism which judges every public act by its effect upon the fortunes of those who toil. That which is good for the working class I esteem patriotic, but that party or movement is the most perfect embodiment of patriotism which most successfully works for the conquest by the working class of the control of the destinies of the land wherein they labour.

To me, therefore, the Socialist of another country is a fellow patriot, as the capitalist of my own country is a natural enemy. I regard each nation as the possessor of a definite contribution to the common stock of civilisation, and I regard the capitalist class of each nation as being the logical and natural enemy of the national culture which constitutes that definite contribution.

Therefore, the stronger I am in my affection for the natural tradition, literature, language and sympathies, the more firmly rooted I am in my opposition to that capitalist class which in its soulless lust for power and gold would bray the nations as in a mortar.

Forward, August 15, 1914.

ALLIANCE WITH OTHER SOCIALISTS

We desire to preserve with the English people the same political relations as with the people of France, or Germany, or of any other country; the greatest possible friendship but also the strictest independence. Brothers, but not bedfellows. Thus, inspired by another ideal, conducted by reason not by tradition, following a different course, the Socialist Republican Party of Ireland arrives at the same conclusion as the most irreconcilable Nationalist. The governmental power of England over us must be destroyed, the bonds which bind us to her must be broken. Having learnt from history that all bourgeois movements end in compromise, that the bourgeois revolutionists of today become the conservatives of tomorrow, the Irish Socialists refuse to deny or to lose their identity with those who only half understand the problem of liberty. They seek only the alliance and friendship of those hearts who, loving liberty for its own sake, are not afraid to follow its banner when it is uplifted by the hands of the working class who have most need of it. Their friends are those who would not hesitate to follow the standard of liberty, to consecrate their lives in its service even should it lead to the terrible arbitration of the sword.

L'Irlande Libre, Paris 1897.

TO ENGLISH SOCIALISTS

Connolly answered criticism from these that the cause of Irish independence was 'mere national chauvinism'.

Under a Socialist system every nation will be the supreme arbiter of its own destinies, national and international; will be forced into no alliance against its will, but will have its independence guaranteed and its freedom respected by the enlightened self-interest of the social democracy of the world.

The statement that our ideals (Irish national independence) cannot be realised except by the path of violent revolution is not so much an argument against our propaganda as an indictment of the invincible ignorance and unconquerable national egotism of the British electorate, and as such concerns English Socialists more than Irish ones.

Labour Leader, 1898.

I have written in vain if I have not helped the reader to realise that the historical backgrounds of the movement in England and Ireland are so essentially different that the Irish Socialist movement can only be truly served by a party indigenous to the soil, and explained by a literature having the same source: that the phrases and watchwords which might serve to express the soul of the movement in one country may possibly stifle its soul and suffocate its expression in the other.

One great need of the movement in Ireland is a literature of its very

own. When that is written people will begin to understand why it is that the Irish Catholic worker is a good democrat and a revolutionist, though he knows nothing of the finespun theories of democracy or revolution; and how and why it is that the doctrine that because the workers of Belfast live under the same industrial conditions as do those of Great Britain they are therefore subject to the same passions and to be influenced by the same methods of propaganda, is a doctrine almost screamingly funny in its absurdity.

Forward, August 2, 1913.

CONDEMNATION OF BIG POWER BLOCS

The internationalism of the future will be based upon the free federation of free peoples and cannot be realised through the subjugation of the smaller by the larger political unit.

Forward, May-June, 1911.

Use of Force

While totally opposing imperialist wars in which the ordinary person was used as a pawn, Connolly felt that a war of liberation may be forced on a subject people— but even then should not be entered into lightly.

We will fight for our cause with words when words are useful, and with arms when arms are needed”, *he said.*

.... there is no such thing as humane or civilised war. War may be forced upon a subject race or subject class to put an end to subjection of race, class or sex. When so waged it must be waged thoroughly and relentlessly, but with no delusion as to its elevating nature, or civilising methods.

The Worker, January 30, 1915.

If the time should arrive when the party of progress finds its way to freedom barred by the stubborn greed of a possessing class entrenched behind the barriers of law and order; if the party of progress has indoctrinated the people at large with the new revolutionary conception of society and is therefore representative of the will of a majority of the nation; if it has exhausted all the peaceful means at its disposal for the purpose of demonstrating to the people and their enemies that the new revolutionary ideas do possess the suffrage of the majority; then, but not till then, the party which represents the revolutionary idea is justified in taking steps to assume the powers of government.

Workers' Republic, July 22, 1899.

But when he realised arms would be needed, he sought to prepare the Irish Citizen Army and Irish Volunteers for street fighting:

A mountainous country has always been held to be difficult for military operations owing to its passes or glens. A city is a huge mass of passes or glens formed by streets and lanes. Every difficulty that exists for the operation of regular troops in mountains is multiplied a hundredfold in a city . . . and is solved for *them* (the popular force) by the sympathies of the populace when they take to the streets.

*“Revolutionary Warfare”,
Workers' Republic, July 24, 1915.*

Partition and North East Ireland

Connolly had personal knowledge of the problems in Belfast at the time when partition was being discussed. In 1911 he moved there as Secretary and Ulster District Organiser of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. He successfully organised the dockers, and publicly supported the mill workers who came to form the Textile Section of the Union. Later generations saw his dire prophesies of the built-in injustices of the Six-County State fulfilled.

Say, ye British Socialists, have your leaders any conception of this problem, or do they imagine that an Irish branch of a British Socialist organisation can grapple with this problem, or do anything with it save make a mess of it?

Or that it can be grappled with in any manner save from within the Irish nation by the workers of Ireland uniting in a party of their own to throw off the incubus of social slavery and religious intolerance?

Forward, March 18, 1911.

If the North East corner of Ireland is, therefore, the home of a people whose minds are saturated with conceptions of political activity fit only for the atmosphere of the seventeenth century, if the sublime ideas of an all-embracing democracy equally as insistent upon its duties as upon its rights have as yet found poor lodgement here, the fault lies not with this generation of toilers, but with those pastors and masters who deceived it and enslaved it in the past—and deceived it in order that they might enslave it.

But as no good can come of blaming it, so also no good, but infinite evil, can come of truckling to it. Let the truth be told, however ugly. Here, the Orange working class are slaves in spirit because they have been reared up among a people whose conditions of servitude were more slavish than their own. In Catholic Ireland the working class are rebels in spirit and democratic in feeling because for hundreds of years they have found no class as lowly paid or as harshly treated as themselves.

Forward, August 2, 1913.

It is felt that the proposal to leave the Home Rule minority (in the North East) at the mercy of an ignorant majority with the evil record of the Orange party is a proposal that should never have been made, and that the establishment of such a scheme should be resisted with armed force if necessary.

Personally I entirely agree with those who think so; Belfast is bad enough as it is; what it would be under such rule the wildest imagination cannot conceive. Filled with the belief that they were defeating the Imperial Government and the Nationalists combined, the Orangemen would have scant regard for the rights of the minority left at their mercy.

Forward, March 21, 1914.

TO ULSTER PEOPLE

If any politician would dare take a plebiscite upon this question of exclusion or no exclusion, the democracy of Ulster would undoubtedly register a most emphatic refusal to accept this proposal. And yet, so-called Home Rule journals are telling the world that you are quite willing to be cut off from Ireland and placed under the heel of the intolerant gang of bigots and enemies of progress who for so long have terrorised Ulster.

Men and women, consider! If your lot is a difficult one now, subject as you are to the rule of a gang who keep up the fires of religious bigotry in order to divide the workers, and make united progress impossible; if your lot is a difficult one, even when supported by the progressive and tolerant forces of all Ireland, how difficult and intolerable it will be when you are cut off from Ireland, and yet are regarded as alien to Great Britain, and left at the tender mercies of a class who knows no mercy, of a mob poisoned by ignorant hatred of everything national and democratic.

Do not be misled by the promises of politicians. Remember that the whole history of Ireland is a record of betrayals by politicians and statesmen, and remembering this, spurn their lying promises and stand up for a United Ireland—an Ireland broad based upon the union of Labour and Nationality

Remember that when soldiers were ordered to shoot you down in the Belfast Dock Strike of 1907, no officer resigned then rather than shed blood in Ulster, and when some innocent members of our class were shot down in the Falls Road, Belfast, no Cabinet Ministers apologised to the relatives of the poor workers they had murdered.

Irish Worker, April 4, 1914.

THE EFFECT ON THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The effect of such exclusion upon Labour in Ireland will be at least equally, and probably more, disastrous. All hopes of uniting the workers, irrespective of religion or old battle cries will be shattered, and through North and South the issue of Home Rule will still be used to cover the iniquities of the capitalist and landlord class. I am not

speaking without due knowledge of the sentiments of the organised Labour movement in Ireland when I say that we would much rather see the Home Rule Bill defeated than see it carried with Ulster or any part of Ulster left out.

Forward, April 11, 1914.

ROYALTY

As a Republican, James Connolly realised the anti-democratic effects of a monarchy on society.

We confess to having more respect and honour for the raggedest child of the poorest labourer in Ireland today than for any, even the most virtuous descendant of the long array of murderers, adulterers and madmen who have sat upon the throne of England.

1897.

To us, as Socialists, it is but of little moment who may for the time being wear the trappings of royalty; that we are compelled to acquiesce in his rule by the bayonets of his hireling soldiery and police is for us sufficient.

1902.

Believing as we do that there is nothing on earth more sacred than humanity, we deny all allegiance to this institution of royalty, and hence we can only regard the visit of the king as adding fresh fuel to the fire of hatred with which we regard the plundering institutions of which he is the representative. Let the capitalist and landlord class flock to exalt him; he is theirs; in him they see embodied the idea of caste and class; they glorify him and exalt his importance that they might familiarise the public mind with the conception of political inequality, knowing well that a people mentally poisoned by the adulation of royalty can never attain to that spirit of self reliant democracy for the attachment of social freedom.

1911.

Patriots of the Past

Connolly realised how the patriots of previous times had shown the way. In his "98 Readings" in 1898 he showed the unity of the United Irishmen to end oppression. But whether Connolly speaking of Tone or the later O'Donovan Rossa—or indeed we today recalling the words of Connolly—the importance is not in their adulation, but the practical realisation of the vision of Ireland for which they lived and died.

O'DONOVAN ROSSA

.... that there is no outside force capable of enforcing slavery upon a people really resolved to be free, and valuing freedom more than life. We in Ireland have often forgotten that truth, indeed it may even be asserted that only an insignificant minority of the nation ever learnt it. And yet, that truth once properly adopted as the creed of a nation would become the salvation of the nation.

For slavery is a thing of the soul, before it embodies itself in the material things of the world. I assert that before a nation can be reduced to slavery its soul must have been cowed, intimidated or corrupted, only then does the soul of a nation cease to urge forward its body to resist the imposition of the shackles of slavery; only when the soul so surrenders does any part of the body consent to make truce with the foe of its national existence.

.... the unconquered soul asserts itself, and declares its sanctity to be more important than the interests of the body; the conquered soul ever pleads first that the body may be saved even if the soul is damned.

For generations this conflict between the sanctity of the soul and the interests of the body has been waged in Ireland. The soul of Ireland preached revolution . . . that the rule of the conquerer would necessarily entail more bloodletting than revolt against the rule . . . Such men as O'Donovan Rossa becoming possessed of that idea became thenceforth the living embodiment of that gospel.

*Why the I.C.A. Honours Rossa,
July 1915.*

WOLFE TONE

....now he is idolised in death, and the men who push forward most arrogantly to burn incense at the altar of his fame are drawn from the very class who, were he alive today, would hasten to repudiate him as a dangerous malcontent.

Workers' Republic, August 13, 1898.

We are told to imitate Wolfe Tone, but the greatness of Wolfe Tone lay in the fact that he imitated nobody. The needs of his time called for a man able to shake from his mind the intellectual fetters of the past, and to unite in his own person the hopes of the new revolutionary faith and the ancient aspirations of an oppressed people Let Ireland seek help where Wolfe Tone found it—in the ranks of the democracy in revolt. Wherever the Socialist banner flies, there gather the true friends of freedom, there let us take our stand, and there let us prepare to raise the only worthy monument to the pioneers of freedom—the realisation of that freedom for which they fought.

Workers' Republic, August 5, 1899.