

NO
34

FREE CITIZEN

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PEOPLES DEMOCRACY

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BLACKSPOT OF THE WEEK
MALE
UNEMPLOYMENT
27%
KILKEEL

ELECTION CIRCUS!

LIKE a whiff from the grave news of the election has wafted into every sewer and rat-hole in N. Ireland; and now all sorts of vile creatures - many of them pres med dead - creep into the light to claim their share. "Parties" like the National Democrats, who have played no part in recent political events now appear and declare their readiness to fight elections; "candidates" like Erskine Holmes, look around eagerly for an uncontested constituency, preferably one where their party has had no impact previously; and of course - with the smell of the sawdust twinging his nostrils - the grand old-ringmaster Conn McCluskey puts his Unity Circus on the road again.

FARCE

In a situation like this, the only thing P.D. can do is to declare the election a comple farce and have nothing to do with. That is not to say that Peoples Democracy is doctrinally opposed to standing in elections. Far from it. We put up candidates in the last Stormont election. But we consider that standing for Parliament is only one way of advancing our viewpoint, and having M.P.'s at Westminster is far less important than involving the mass of the people in a struggle against British imperialism.

STRUGGLE

Instead of carrying on such a struggle, the various "Opposition" candidates are involved in a cut-throat struggle to get into Westminster. They put forward the idea that the important issue is to defeat the Unionists and get a majority "of anti-Unionists" in Westminster. But what use would even twelve "anti-Unionists" be? For a start, even twelve "anti-Unionists" from N. Ireland would be a mere drop in the ocean in Westminster. Parnell's party was a failure - and Parnell was a far more dynamic politician than any standing in N. Ireland now - which shows us that Ireland's



THE MAIDEN MARRIAGE
SEE FULL DETAILS INSIDE.....

problem can not be solved in Westminster; and Parnell had nearly a hundred M.P.'s in his Irish Party.

The problem of Ireland, and the creation of an Irish Workers Republic, can only be done by creating in Ireland, North and South, a movement devoted to building the Workers Republic. There is no shortcut to this via Westminster.

None of the "Parties" and mushroom "Independent" alliances who appear at election time will do anything to bring the Workers Republic any nearer.

THE GOOD NEWS

Good news for all London bigots and buffoons. The Rev. Brian Green, close friend of Rev. I. K. Paisley and well known fanatic is to stand in the general election on the National Front ticket in Islington North. Only trouble is that the National Front (the amalgamation of various fascist and racist groups led by A. K. Chesterton) has R.C.'s amongst its committee members - fascism knows no religious barriers. Political commentators are awaiting I. K. P.'s denunciation of his old mate Green for appeasement and associating with Romanists, for, after all, although Paisley is a fascist, at least he's a Protestant fascist - or will the fact the Green's opponent is Labour green tory, Michael O'Halloran (an R.C.) save Green from the wrath of the Fuehrer?

MEETINGS

BELFAST P.D. MEETING
EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT 8pm

34, BERRY STREET
(off Royal Avenue)

ARMAGH P.D. MEETING
EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT
Pipers' Club (Ogle St.)

NEWRY P.D. MEETING
EVERY THURSDAY 8.30pm

in this issue....

- INDUSTRIAL NEWS
CYRIL TOMAN.
- McCANN IN DERRY
MIKE FARRELL
- REPORT ON P.D.
CONFERENCE
JOE QUIGLEY.

HOECHST- POTCH

On Wednesday last, Hoechst, the gigantic German chemical firm, opened a new yarn-factory in Limavady. The next day Roy Bradford, the Minister of Commerce held a gigantic press-conference in the great hall at Stormont. 60 journalists from France and Germany were flown in and fêted at the taxpayers' expense and listened to Bradford explaining (in German) what a great place N. Ireland was to invest in. Well he might speak in German, for Bradford had just pulled off one of his greatest confidence tricks ever!

The new Hoechst factory cost £12½ million, most of which has been paid for by 'grants' from the N. Ireland taxpayer. It is the first branch of Hoechst in the U.K., and with it they hope to capture 20% of the U.K. market in this kind of synthetic fibre. But here's the rub: although the factory cost £12½ million (most of it paid out of public funds) it will employ only 500 men. However, £12½ million worth of plant will make up to £10 million a year in profits for the German industrialists.



BY
**CYRIL
TOMAN**

Hoechst can hope to make £15,000 or £20,000 a year profit on each worker employed - and this super-exploitation will be paid for by the N.I. taxpayer. No wonder that Hoechst can afford to pay their German shareholders a dividend of 20% per annum - one of the highest dividends paid by any firm on the German stock-exchange. If public money is to be invested in industry, it should be invested to provide employment for Irish workers.

Nor can we even be sure that Hoechst will stay in N. Ireland. The day after Bradford's jamboree, another textile firm - Courtaulds of Carrickfergus - closed down a branch of their factory throwing over 300 men out of work. This firm had also received massive grants from the government to set up here, but as soon as it ceased to be profitable, the branch was closed, and the taxpayers investment was written off.

laid off

Altogether, then, a successful week for Bradford: 350 workers laid off in the textile industry and 500 new workers taken on - a total of 150 new jobs at the mere cost of providing £12½ million worth of equipment for one of Germany's largest capitalists. It's clear whose side you're on Roy.

POOL OF LABOUR!

The bankruptcy of the N.I.L.P. and I.L.P. can be no longer denied when one examines their activities recently in Newry. When the appointment of a Baths Superintendent came up before the Council, members of both Labour Parties combined in an unholy alliance to deny the qualified man the job. Instead of the recommended candidate the post was given to a former chairman of Newry C.R.A. who can not swim, has no managerial experience and is not a member of the Institute of Baths Management (a necessary qualification in the original advertisement). The vote was nine to seven. H. Golding, chairman of the I.L.P., voted with loud-mouthed Marley (who wept tears for the poor oppressed N.I. people at the N.I.L.P. conference) in denying the job to the only suitable candidate.

Neither party has publically condemned their action, though both pay lip service to Civil Rights.

Perhaps they forgot the "jobs on merit" demand of the mass movement. Convenient memories! The silence of the C.R.A. on this issue is also remarkable. Perhaps they are only interested in exposing Unionist discrimination.

Once again the green Tories stand exposed. Socialists can have no dealings with such hypocritical parties.

critics

Among the other pieces of abuse being slung at us by "Voice of the North" this week is that "Free Citizen" is ill-produced and badly printed. True. But then we are not getting £400-a-week from Neill Blaney or any other green Tory hack across the border.

Our paper is produced almost entirely by voluntary labour, but at least we are free to print criticism of goings-on in the Free State without worrying about having our "subsidies" stopped.

TOOME PROTEST

Last Saturday night in Toome about 200 people attended a Peoples Democracy meeting to protest about the seizure of a lorry and 3 tons of eels by the Fisheries Conservancy Board. The driver of the lorry, John Quinn, told of how the thugs of the Conservancy Board hijacked the lorry and took it from him, he also congratulated the fishermen on their attempt to recover the lorry but stressed that the fishermen in general were not as militant as they possibly could be.

allies

P.D. speakers explained the relationship between the Fisheries Conservancy Board, the Toome Eel Company and the police force. The Conservancy Board is a government instituted body which in theory is supposed to look after the interests of the fish in Lough Neagh ie to ensure that fish are encouraged to breed and stay in our inland waters and to prevent people from disrupting the way of life of these creatures. In practise however, the Conservancy Board is the ally of the Toome Eel Company, the Company which owns the eel fishing rights of Lough Neagh. Both these bodies have their own bailiffs and fast boats on Lough Neagh and both persecute the fishermen who try to earn a living from the lough. This alliance comes about because of the nature of our society. The system in this country is geared to the interests of landlords, capitalists and speculators and not in the interests of the vast number of people who are kept in subjection to this small clique of exploiters by a police force that is used for suppression of people rather than helping people lead a fuller life.

The P.D. speakers called on the fishermen to be more united in the fight against the Conservancy Board and the Company and that if something is done quickly by the government more militant action will be taken. The P.D. would also like to see the Fishermans Association give more active support to the fishermen who have been arrested both last week and in the past. This body which claims to represent the fishermen should stop lurking in the background and take a leading role in the expropriation of Lough Neagh and its return to a fishermen's co-operative.

action

After the meeting police reported that several windows were broken in the offices of the Toome Eel Company. This action can only be viewed as a natural reaction of people who are subjected to the tyranny of this Company. This action is surely only a minor piece of militancy compared to what should really happen to those foreign capitalists who bleed this country.

It's about time that the parasites were literally booted out of this country and a system of government set up to work for the benefit of all the people.

During the coming months the P.D. intends to step up its campaign for the return of Lough Neagh to its rightful owners. We intend to picket any court cases in which fishermen are involved as well as holding other kinds of demonstrations including fish-ins and boat-cades. So watch out Robber Barons and your thuggish bailiffs you're in for a hot summer.

Jimmy McKeown

McCANN'S THE MAN?

— the N.I.L.P. say no



For many months we have been pointing to the unprincipled opportunism of the Northern Ireland Labour Party. The General Election has highlighted their complete dearth of policy and their readiness to jump, at the first scent of a few easy votes on any bandwagon. Consistency, much less principles, has never been their strong point. Nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than in the case of the Derry Labour Party, and Eamonn McCann.

The N.I.L.P. Executive last week refused to let Eamonn McCann stand as Labour candidate in Derry. McCann accepted the decision and said "he would support whoever the branch decided to put forward". The Derry Labour party promptly, and despite McCann's capitulation, reindorsed him as candidate.

When it turned down his nomination, the N.I.L.P. gave no reasons for their decision but candidates are only vetoed when they don't accept party policy. Since when did the N.I.L.P. become so strict about their policies?

BLEAKLEY

The NILP candidate in East Belfast is David Bleakley. For months now Bleakley has been courting the N.U.M. and recently he called for a Coalition Government, not answerable to Parliament and including "Captains of Industry". This was too much for even the N.I.L.P. At their Conference in Newry they condemned the Coalition idea and the N.U.M. But there was no objection to Bleakley's nomination.

In North Down the N.I.L.P. candidate is Ken Young who got headlines in the Newsletter for denouncing McCann's sit-in at Omagh Urban Council as "un-British". Young is running an openly Unionist campaign in the hope that the O'Neillites will support him instead of the official Unionist, Kilfedder who is counting the Paisleyites. Young had no difficulty getting endorsed.

HASSARD

In Fermanagh/S. Tyrone N.I.L.P. Councillor Jack Hassard is one of the candidates for the united Catholic "Unity" nomination. This is contrary to N.I.L.P. policy which forbids election agreements with other parties. No action has been taken against Hassard.

The pattern is clear. The new tough-line on party policy is only for the left. Any sort of unprincipled skulduggery on the right is perfectly acceptable. The reason for this is simple. The N.I.L.P. think they can win in East Belfast and possibly North Down as a moderate Unionist party picking up O'Neillite votes from the official Unionists. They are worried that if McCann

stands he might mention "socialism" or a "workers republic" or some other extreme and "un-British" notions that would frighten off the middle-class supporters of the N.U.M. and the Alliance party.

Faced with hypocrisy and treachery like this socialists in the Labour Party should expose the fakers who run the N.I.L.P. and fight it out with them for the support of the membership. To even contemplate capitulation as McCann did and promise to support any candidate the party selects - Bleakley for instance? - is to abandon the struggle for socialism and assist the N.I.L.P. leadership to trick the working class. It is time McCann and the Derry Labour Party put up a real fight against the right-wing leadership of the N.I.L.P. or get out to form a real socialist movement. They'd be wiser to get out now.

NORTHERN STAR

NOW ON SALE, ISSUE NO. 1 OF OUR NEW BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

- THE SPLIT IN SINN FEIN - MIKE FARRELL.
- IMPERIALISM - EAMONN O'KANE.
- THE POLICE STRIKE, 1967 - JOHN GRAY.
- THE UNIONS' ROLE - GERRY RUDDY.
- BOOK REVIEW - JOE QUIGLEY.

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wedding bells



Mr Hume!
MR. Mc ATREER!
So you two are going to make it together.

MARRIAGE GUIDANCE



And when is the happy day?

MARRIAGE GUIDANCE



A green wedding in June!
How roquish of you!

GUIDANCE



Wedding presents coming from Donegal?

GUIDANCE



I gather you are hoping for a long honeymoon on the benches of Westminster.

GUIDANCE

CONFERENCE REPORT

Last Sunday, the Peoples Democracy held its six-monthly conference. Delegates from all branches in the North attended. Elections for the central committee were held, and topics ranging from an alliance of the Left to Summer Activity were discussed.

The first section of the conference was concerned with procedural matters relating to the internal running

of the movement. The more important resolutions concerned the election of the committee. It was decided by a large majority that elections to the central committee will be held every three months in future. Those elected to serve in the present committee until the August Conference are Comrades Boyle, Farrell, Gray, Kelly, Maynes, McGuigan, McKeown, O'Hare and O'Kane.

The secretaries and treasurers reported were adopted subsequent to a discussion on future policy and activities and methods of fund-raising.

UNITY OF THE LEFT

A general discussion on this topic was held. Most speakers stressed the need for Unity among the Left though only on a principled basis without any compromises. The only way to win converts to our way of thinking is by engaging in militant activities, and forcing others to choose between our action and the inactivity of other so-called left groups.

It was decided that we should not attempt to make value judgements on those who purport to represent the working class, and so should invite the S.L.L., I.C.O. and I.C.P. An exception was made with regard to the W.S.P. who were dismissed as a joke. It was stressed however that the P.D. in all circumstances should retain its independence in order to win over the militant member of other organisations by a continuation of our programme of militant activity. Again and again it was made clear that the only alliance we were interested in was an alliance of the

workers, Catholic and Protestant, against the common exploiter.

As a result of this discussion the resolution, calling for the unity of working class groups in a Socialist Action Committee, was passed overwhelmingly, though it was underlined in the resolution that care should be taken to avoid the committee being used to boost candidates for Parliament.

A further resolution denounced the existing Labour Parties in Ireland as being bodies which effectively support the Capitalist system and rejected any unity which involved P.D. merging with any of them. It was recognised, however, that these parties contain many socialists who should break from their organisations and join with the P.D. in forming a revolutionary socialist movement.

The mention of summer activities led to an exchange of views on violence towards the military and orange parades. On the one hand it was felt that we could stand aside and do nothing, while on the other hand, it was stated that we could not avoid the contradiction that there were thousands of people, mainly working class, who were hostile to socialism. A physical attack on any demonstration, even if it was sectarian, was felt to be wrong, though it was agreed that any people have the right to self-defence. Again it was emphasised that the Protestant Working Class are an important element in the Irish struggle and that the Irish Revolutionary movement cannot succeed without them. Most delegates agreed that since marches cannot be banned all sectarian marches should be confined to sectarian ghettos.

The main resolution on summer activity called for the launching of a summer programme to include:

- a) A clear stand that those who advocate sectarian attacks by one section of the working class on another are traitors to the ideals of a socialist revolution.
- b) That we analyse the present situation, especially with regard to the British troops, the Orange Order and "Blaney" Republicanism.
- c) That we continue to agitate on working class issues.

An amendment calling on the P.D. to issue a leaflet for mass distribution condemning the Orange Order and the Hibernians on a class basis was carried unanimously.

The next editor of the "Northern Star" is to be Comrade McGuffin.

On the election front, two resolutions were passed overwhelmingly. The first stated that the P.D., while not committed as a point of principle never to fight elections, considers that the fielding of candidates would do nothing to further P.D.'s cause. The second resolution indicated that membership of P.D. is incompatible with participation in Unity Conventions.

PRINCIPLES FOR SALE



"I can buy opposition for £10,000" - so boasts an N.D.P. spokesman, in the Irish News. The truth is he offered far too high a price. Wall Street is crashing, the London Stock Exchange is crashing, and with a few Westminster seats in the offing the value of political principles in Ulster has hit rock bottom.

Principles were worth more last February. Then the Stormont seats were up for sale. Then there were some seats in which it paid opposition candidates to disagree, and so it was in Foyle. There, in bitter contest John Hume defeated Eddie McAteer, deriding him as the reactionary representative of a dying party. Thus John Hume "man of principle" was born.

He died soon enough, for it proved but a brief pause from the wind and piss of February to sweet whispers this May. Yes, when a Westminster election comes along those firmly held convictions are less convenient. John Hume forgot about politics and settled for security in Foyle, and in return helped Eddie McAteer out of a well deserved political grave to the Catholic Unity nomination in Derry.

Don't be shocked by all this; it was predictable enough. As long ago as February last year the P.D. attacked Hume as a Green Tory, a man climbing to power on the back of the Civil Rights movement, a man who was only interested in Civil Rights until the Catholic Middle classes

had got their rights; in short a perfect future recruit for the Nationalist Party. Eamonn McCann fought Foyle against Hume and McAteer last February saying precisely this. He was the only candidate who fought a campaign demanding rights for those who are exploited in Ireland, the working class protestant and catholic.

And as for the cattle sales in the rest of the country, it is with satisfaction that one can report they are going none too well. In Fermanagh and South Tyrone an extraordinary circus of bigots, political opportunists, and miscellaneous tricksters have been parading themselves around the countryside. Even the "Irish News" an enthusiastic sponsor of this sort of popular entertainment has had to admit that the populace are bored, very bored, and wisely so.

Far be it from me to describe the weird assortment of tuppenny candidates who spring up every five years as May fly, for the May fly is altogether a better class of creature but the two breeds have this in common, they live but a few hours. So wait until June 18th., let the thunderous flutter of their wings die away, and those of us who wish to see the ordinary people seize power, can get on with our work.

John Grey