

## THE PROMISE - THE POOL - THE FIRE OR THE 'FIDDLER ON THE ROOF' STORY

IT WAS a bit of a joke from the start. The scene: Mayoman, John Jennings, after dinner, surrounded by refreshments and in mellow mood, promising us a 'swimming pool of Olympic standards', to 'be built at the latest, in three years.' The date: April 3, 1970. The occasion: the presentation of prizes (sponsored by Jennings himself) at the 'Sports Stars' dinner.

A front page report of the event appeared on the 'Limerick Chronicle', under the headline 'Huge Indoor Pool for City'. It stated: 'Limerick will have a heated swimming pool--£125,000 and of Olympic standards--by 1972, it was revealed last night.' His new-found prestige obviously had an intoxicating effect, and Jennings waxed expansively to the 'Chronicle' reporter: '...not only would swimming be catered for but many other sports as well and it would be known as the Limerick Sports Centre ... A site had been offered by the Corporation ... It would be a non-profit making body for the time being.'

The 'Chronicle' man had, of course, heard it all before and, in uncharacteristic manner, pressed Jennings for a more definite commitment. 'We had many promises of pools and these had not been fulfilled', he asserted.

Jennings rose to the bait and hastened to say 'that this time there would be no breakdown and ... by 1973, at the latest, Limerick would have one of the most modern sports centre in Ireland.'

'When John Jennings says he will do something, he does it.'

He said that he himself had been elected chairman of the new committee, which consisted of the cream of Limerick's capitalists and professional

people. The line-up was: Gordon Holmes, State Solicitor; James Sexton, solicitor; Charles J. Quinn, architect; William Murray, insurance broker; Felix O'Neill, businessman, Brendan Doran, building contractor, and Dick Quin, businessman. An appeal was made for public support to 'contribute to the enormous cost' involved.

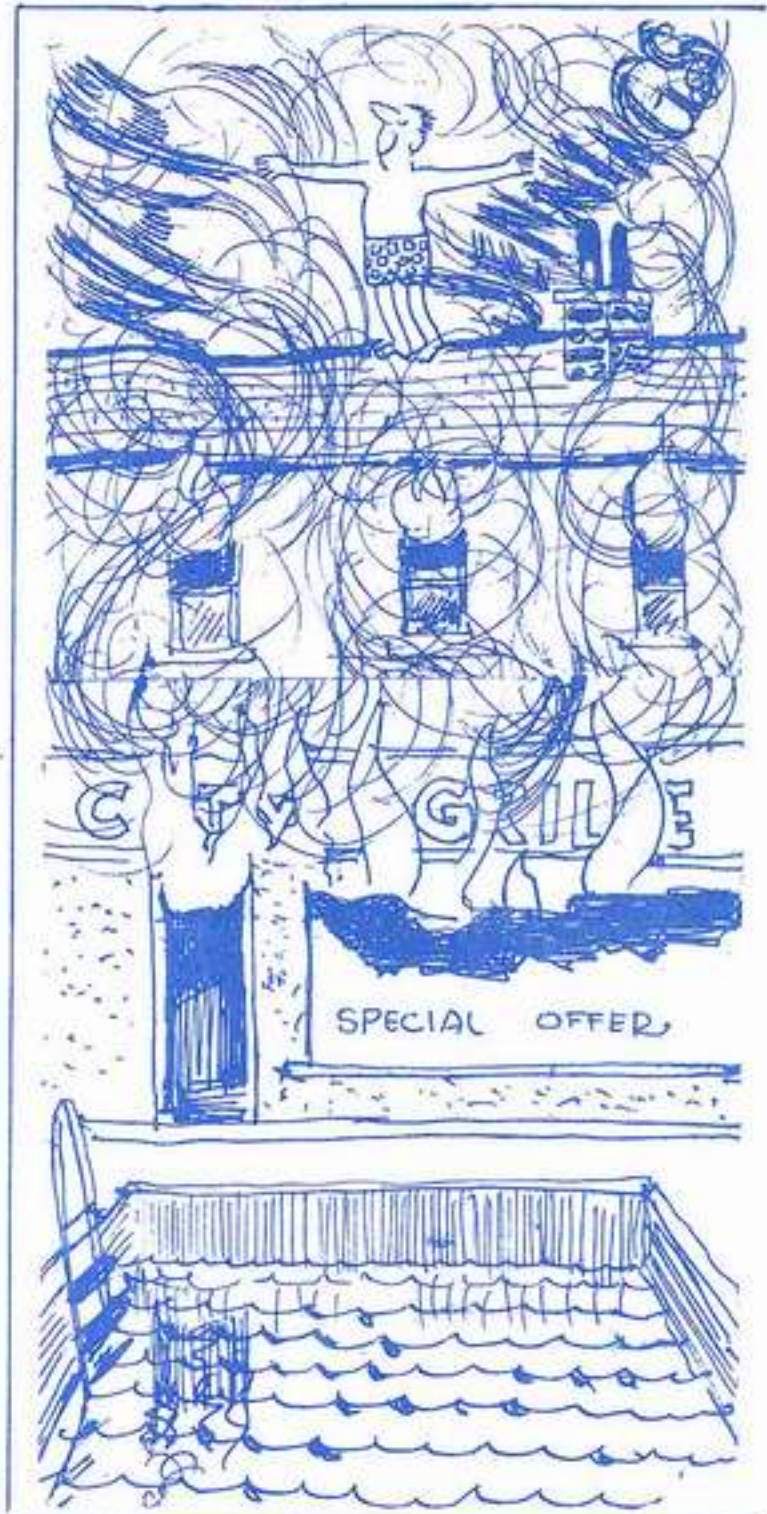
1972 dawned, as 1982 will also dawn, without the promised swimming pool even reaching the drawing-board stage. What has happened to Jennings, his committee and the whole swimming pool fund?

The fund is now empty; the committee is no longer active; and Jennings himself is preoccupied with his business interests, particularly with his controversial insurance claim, arising out of the fire at his City Centre Grill, in December, 1967. It can be said, with some accuracy, that Jennings has now jumped from the swimming pool into the fire.

The activities of the committee were ill-fated from the start. The first full-time organiser appointed, at a salary of between £20 and £30 a week, the inappropriately-named 'Lucky' Coady, was anything but lucky, or successful, and retired from his post after a few months. A second organiser was hired and fared no better, the income from public contributions, etc. being hardly enough to pay his wages.

The committee enlisted the aid of Mick Crowe, occasional publican, politician, publicist, and postal bingo pools promoter. Crowe helped to organise a lottery involving special

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## THE GREAT CIE TRAIN TURNABOUT

'MORE JOBS here if McKinsey is implemented. Increased employment is forecast by Ald. Steve Coughlan, T.D., who has made an in-depth survey of the McKinsey Report on CIE and its possible effect on Limerick.' ('Limerick Leader' 27 November, 1971).

'Don't implement McKinsey Report. To implement all the recommendations ...

would mean a drastic reduction in employment ... I strongly urge you to recommend the Government not to implement the suggestions ... which would only lead to untold human suffering and the breaking up of homes ...' (Ald. S. Coughlan, T.D., letter to Brian Lenihan, 'Limerick Leader', 22 January, 1972).

The hallmark of the political opportunist is the manner in which he twists and turns to suit the whims of 'popular' opinion. A good example of this was recently given by the Labour T.D. for East Limerick, Ald. S. Coughlan, who attempted the full political somersault, in a frenzied

effort to extricate himself from an untenable position on the McKinsey Report.

In October, 1970, the Minister for Transport and Power set up a committee 'to investigate CIE's financial position, with a view to identifying possible corrective measures.' The committee contracted the American firm of management consultants, McKinsey and Company, Inc., 'to help them to analyse the problem and to propose the action that should be taken.' The result of the investigation was published in July 1971 and became known as the McKinsey Report. The

continued overleaf

part two:

by jerry burke

## the nationalist myth

WHEN nationalism had its last fling against Britain in 1916, it eventually created native government--native capitalist exploitation--the myth was still as potent as ever, because the native government and state machines were but the outward trappings of the nationalist myth and, in essence, it was the vehicle by which the British Bank Capital would operate. We had now excelled ourselves in illogicality--we accepted the British Bank Capitalism, wrapped in the Green, White and Orange, which we rejected, with incredible hardship to our people, for 800 years, because it was wrapped in the Union Jack. We were now in the situation where we were ruled and controlled by British Imperialism.

We were now subject to its chill economic winds, which blew across the Irish Sea, to an even more vulnerable degree than were the workers of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. We got none of the crumbs which this Imperialism gave to the workers of the above countries because we insisted that the Green, White and Orange must fly over the Vice-Regal Lodge.

So for 50 years, we lagged behind the workers of these countries in all the essentials of civilised living. We endured 50 years of backward industry, farming and fisheries. Recent EEC negotiations and concessions highlight this fact. We endured the most backward educational system, hospital, medical and dental services in Europe--if not the civilised world. We ruthlessly and brutally hounded over one million of our people out of the country on to the emigrant ship. Our housing situation is savage in its cruelty. We have the highest incidence of mental illness and alcoholism in Europe.

Sean O Faolain says we have no culture. Sir Thomas Beecham said we've got no music worth mentioning. A leading adjudicator at the Welsh Eisteddfod says we've got no national dress. A leading Dublin architect says we've got no architecture. Unlike Northern Ireland, or any of the other Home countries, we haven't built a single university in 50 years.

Indeed, Ireland as a nationalist entity, has still to build its first university. We have no visual arts worth mentioning. All those things, which have come to all other European and Home countries as a natural development of capitalism, have by-passed us.

Why? Because under the hypocritical stimulus of fanatical nationalist mythology, we grabbed a pitch-fork and indulged in a national King Canutism--for 800 years. We chased the mythical shadows and ignored the national substance. But all bad things, as well as good, must come to an end, and now

in 1972, eight centuries later, we have a chance to get some of those material things which we rejected with de facto British Imperialism. We will have them at the behest of Continental International Imperialism. We are going in ... caught up in the flood of International Monopoly Bank Capitalism. What price we will, and, indeed, have agreed to pay for things for which we endured unnecessarily Hell upon Earth--or rather one should say the workers endured Hell upon Earth--for 800 years.

## TRAIN TURNABOUT

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investigation cost the Irish people £62,000 and copies of the Report are priced at £3 each.

Little was heard in Limerick about the possible effects of the Report until Coughlan issued a memorandum to the 'Limerick Leader', on November 27, last year, acclaiming and welcoming it. An incredible 'in-depth' survey of the Report, allegedly prepared by Coughlan himself, appeared under the banner headline of 'More Jobs if McKinsey is Implemented.'

It is now clear that Coughlan could hardly have opened the report before his 'in-depth' survey was published. The 'survey' was obviously concocted by some 'ghost-writer'--and, judging by the amount of fantasy contained in it, 'ghost' is the operative word in this context.

At this stage, it is hardly necessary to say that the statement about more jobs does not appear anywhere in the Report and is a complete figment of Coughlan's, or his 'ghost's' imagination. Even a cursory reading of the McKinsey Report is enough to show that it pinpoints the railway as being responsible for CIE's financial losses and recommends an immediate reduction in the number of workers employed. 'The changes proposed ... will undoubtedly mean that fewer jobs will be available on the railway in the future' (page 47) ... 'The proposed changes should allow major reductions in rail employment, with about 900 fewer men being required than are now needed.' (page 50).

When local CIE workers read these recommendations, they were, naturally, quick to realise that many of them would lose their jobs, if this shake-up was brought about. Therefore, when Coughlan came out strongly in support of the Report, many of the rail workers were not slow to tell him what they thought of him and his 'in-depth' survey. A few, in fact, insisted on wishing him a pungent soldier's farewell, as he left Limerick station, on his trips to Dail meetings.

Coughlan's 'survey' was also raised

at a meeting of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, by a CIE delegate. Even that other arch-opportunist, Ald. P. Kennedy, himself no mean hand at political somersaults, could not resist the temptation to have a swipe at Coughlan's position, during a recent City Council debate. Coughlan got the message: he could not play about with the livelihood of CIE workers and get away with it. He would have to do yet another double-shuffle . . . but how was he to go about it? Maybe his long-time bosom, and sometimes boozing friend, Brian Lenihan, the Minister for Transport and Power, could be persuaded to do a rescue job? Last month (January) he wrote a public letter to Lenihan and asked him to forget about McKinsey. But by then Coughlan had skidded so far off the political rails, that not even McKinsey himself could have retrieved his position.

There was no socialist voice to tell the Irish worker that since there was no possible chance of his ever changing the capitalist system--there was no socialist movement in Ireland--common logic would have advised that, if we must live under capitalism, he should hitch his star to the more advanced capitalist system available to him--which was then British capitalism. This capitalism was the most efficient of its type in the world and, in the words of Karl Marx, was, up to 1917, the most liberal type of imperialism in Europe. Britain was up to this the one country in Western Europe that could have given birth to a people's revolution. Even James Connolly, our one great Marxist, didn't fully consider this fact. (To be continued).

An interesting footnote to the 'McKinsey Affair' was provided by the 'Confrontation' series in the 'Limerick Leader'. In the first part of a discussion between local politicians, Coughlan said '... if the McKinsey Report is adopted by CIE, we are going to have more redundancies and more displacements.' (5 February, 1972). Herbert, the Fianna Fail T.D. was not having any of this and taunted Coughlan on his about-face.

Coughlan was caught but decided to brazen it out with bare-faced bluff. 'What I did say on the McKinsey Report in my first statement was exactly as McKinsey had translated it. I did not agree or disagree ... I just threw it out for discussion around the people of Limerick ... and I have already made representations to the Minister for Transport and Power--I have a letter from him, saying that nothing will be done, and that, as far as he is concerned, he is going to give my views careful and favourable consideration.'

What else could the poor old creature have been expected to say at this stage?

# SEAN BOURKE'S LIMERICK

by jim kemmy

'A DUMP,' that is what I called Limerick in my book ... 'The people lack charity, they will always knock you.' Thus Sean Bourke described Limerick and its people in a recent press interview. Having rejected his native city, he now lives in a cottage, in Kilfinane and claims that he has no intention of returning to Limerick.

Bourke's bitterness is even more forcibly detailed in his book 'The Springing of George Blake.' In relating many of the influences that shaped his life, he writes: 'It began in Limerick, with playing truant at the age of ten, because I hated the Christian Brothers, whose responsibility it was to educate me. In the early stages I and the other boys in the gang would be quickly rounded up by the school policeman and taken back to face our beatings, from the head brother. But the more I was beaten, the greater grew my hatred.' '... Love was so easily stifled in youth. The poverty and degradation of those days provided a soil far too barren for the survival of anything more than a somewhat tenuous family loyalty. Who or what are you supposed to love as you walk to school barefooted, through the snow on a breakfast of tea and bread and margarine? In sermons we were told that it was God's divine will and that far from complaining, which was sinful anyway, we should actually give thanks to God for our poverty. 'Blessed are the poor,' they reminded us, 'for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.' But the man up in the pulpit was well fed, wore a good pair of shoes, and lived in a big house next to the church. He was fed and clothed by the poor of the parish, who were bound under Precepts of the Church, to support their pastors. But, of course, it was not priests who made us poor. Their fault lay in telling us that poverty was a virtue, a blessing from God, a means to sanctifying grace ...'

At the age of thirteen, Bourke, one of a large and poor family, was convicted of stealing and sentenced to three years in Daingean Reformatory. His education in Daingean included 'numerous floggings on his bared back-side, after having other offences punished by head-shaving, kneeling in the Refectory, ... for a week of mealtimes beside a chunk of hard bread and a mug of cold water.' ('This Week', February, 19, 1971).

In the same article Bourke tells us: 'Oliver Twist had a better time than the average Daingean boy when I was there. I never met a Daingean boy, in my time, who would ask for more. The only thing I learned in Daingean was hate, with no feeling for forgiveness. And I knew I deserved to be sent there. I have a certain amount of affection for the screws in the Scrubs but I can feel nothing but hatred for the Oblates at Daingean.'

His experiences between the ages of 13 and 16 years, in this Reformatory, greatly affected the formation of his character. He claims that a class consciousness was implanted there-- 'that we were the scum of the earth and being lucky to be looked after.' His first job--a £1 a week kitchen-boy, in a Lisdoonvarna hotel--was arranged by the Oblates. After a short stay in the hotel, he took the boat to England. His experiences in borstal and Wormwood Scrubs, culminating in the escape of Blake, are outlined in his books (the second 'The Scrubbers', is just completed).

Following his return to Ireland from Russia, on October 22nd, 1968, he was arrested but successfully prevented an extradition order being executed against him. A further example of Bourke's bitterness about his childhood was given during his evidence in the High Court extradition case:

'Asked by Mr. McCarthy if he (Bourke) believed in God, Bourke said: 'I believe in him but I do not like him very much.' ... 'Mr. Justice O'Keefe: I don't follow what you mean by saying you believe in God but you don't like Him very much?'

'Bourke: 'I believe in God, but as I said, I do not like him very much. I think he is a cruel and selfish God; a God, my Lord, who is more on the side of the rich and the powerful than on the side of the poor and weak. God was on the side of the Nazis in Europe and the Black and Tans in Ireland. He was on the side of the British in Africa and He is now on the side of the Americans in Vietnam, as the American Catholic bishops are telling us.'

'I went to school my Lord. I was born and went to school in Limerick city, in this country. I went to school barefooted in the summer and winter because my parents could not afford to buy me any shoes.'

'If I was one minute late through the school gate, the Christian Brothers would beat me black and blue, in the name of Christianity.'

'At Mass on Sunday morning, the well-shod, and well-fed priest, would solemnly mount the pulpit, and tell me and others like me that, far from complaining, we should give thanks to God for our poverty. Poverty, he told us, is a gift from God, a virtue, and therefore a means to sanctifying Grace.'

How have Bourke's experiences and his claim to being class-conscious influenced him to the labour/capital conflict? Despite his working class background and his 'education' and 'correction', at the hands of capitalism, he shies away from taking up a political position in his writings. During his stay in Moscow, he showed no interest in furthering his political education and appears to have spent most of his time in trying to outwit

Blake and the KGB (the Russian Secret Police), cavorting with his Russian girl-friend and writing his book.

Cushioned by wealth, from royalties, from the sale of his book and film rights, Bourke now describes himself as a 'latent capitalist'. It is clear that the contradictions of his position are influencing his attitudes to Limerick, its people and to life in general. He still remains opposed to many aspects of the capitalist system, especially its legal and penal system. Last year, he wrote three letters to the press on these subjects. One letter criticised the use of a 'certain piece of furniture' in the local Courthouse, where people awaiting trial were exhibited, like criminals in the stocks of old. His second letter objected to the stream of abuse, directed by Justice Hedley McCay, at people appearing before him. The third letter took exception to his being designated as 'Bourke' in the press report of a court case, where he was the innocent party.

He fails, however, in any of his writings to point out or even understand that the legal and penal systems merely serve as a means of ensuring that capitalism is allowed to operate without interference. He has yet to state the root cause of the main form of indictable crime, i.e. crimes against property, is the inconsistency between the ownership by a small minority of all the means of production, property and wealth at the expense of the majority, mainly the working class, who produce the wealth in society. In criticising injustices, Bourke attacks the manifestations, rather than their root cause--capitalism. He fails to reach the only position from which effective opposition to the present legal system and all other inequalities can be based--socialism. But his efforts in telling people about the operation of the present system deserve acknowledgement and encouragement.

He has not received due recognition, as a writer in Limerick and in Ireland generally. His origin, record and his uninhibited attitudes have not endeared him to the middle class and the literary critics.

Limerick has not produced a working class writer to compare with Dublin's Sean O'Casey or Belfast's Brian Moore; or even with Frank O'Connor and Sean O Faolain of Cork. Although no socialist, Sean Bourke, undoubtedly the finest writer to come from the Limerick working class in this century, shows signs of filling this void.

## come and join us

RISE, for the day is passing, and you lie dreaming on; the others have buckled their armour, and forth to the fight have gone.

# unemployment

by joe kemmy

DURING 1971, 8,556 workers became redundant in the 26-Counties, as compared with 3,896 in 1970, an increase of 120%. Unemployment is now running at almost 80,000—the highest for 13 years. Even this figure does not give an accurate picture as school leavers, between the ages of 14 and 19, are classified as 'not yet at work' and they often number about 20,000.

In Limerick city alone, there are now almost 2,500 out of work, with the number growing weekly. Workers have been laid off in Shannon factories including Irish University Press, Rippen and Progress. Intex has closed altogether, leaving over a hundred more unemployed. It is the same story in Limerick, with redundancies in the Limerick Shoe factory and the Thomond Cabinet factory, etc. It is also expected that many workers in the clothing and meat processing factories will soon lose their jobs.

As a result of this, the growing number of unemployed is being used by employers as a threat against those who are still at work. The FUE Bulletin published by the largest employers' organisation in Ireland, the Federated Union of Employers, stated in its current issue that the rise in the number of unemployed was a matter of grave national concern. 'It has been suggested that trade unions in the present situation, might consider imposing a ban on overtime and participation in productivity schemes. Such measures would be short-sighted and harmful. What is needed at the present time is greater co-operation between management and labour and the realisation that existing jobs can only be made secure by raising productivity levels.'

The message is quite clear. Work harder 'co-operate' fully (by not demanding any further wage increases). Otherwise you may find yourself out of a job. As usual, of course, no mention was made about rising profits. But we cannot blame the FUE for that; they are just looking after their own interests. If the workers acted with the same sense of interest as a class that binds employers together, then they could charter their own destiny and the rule of profit would not prevail.

Further on we read: 'Government policy in relation to prices and company profits in recent years has not been conducive to building up the confidence of investors'. This is a crude attempt by the employers to give the impression that the Government is in some way hampering investors in their unceasing quest for profit. They say this very often in the hope that workers will be convinced that Fianna Fail are actually concerned about their welfare. But workers are now becoming

aware that Fianna Fail is controlled by the employers so that they can continue to exploit Irish workers. Jack Lynch has certainly made his position clear. 'I have admitted that while Government action would ease unemployment, it would not in itself be sufficient to solve unemployment problems. I still hold to that view, no democratic government can guarantee by its own actions full employment.' (Jack Lynch, Irish Press, 16/1/1972).

What Lynch really means is that his Government cannot afford full employment, because by having a large number of unemployed Lynch and the employers hope to increase production while keeping wages down, thus ensuring higher profits. For without unemployment there is no competition amongst workers for the available jobs and the workers tend to demand higher wages.

What the bosses really need is a reserve army of unemployed. This

increases competition for jobs and has the effect of decreasing wages. In a capitalist society labour is a commodity just like raw materials, machinery etc. Like all other commodities on the market its price goes down when there is a plentiful supply and goes up when it is scarce. It is not surprising therefore that it is in the interest of employers to maintain a high level of unemployment.

What can the working class do in the present situation? First of all those who are at present unemployed must organise and put forward what is their basic right—the right to work. To enforce this right it will be necessary to organise politically and defeat the capitalists as a class. As Connolly put it: 'The moment the worker no longer believes in the all-conquering strength of his employer is the moment when the way opens out to emancipation of our class.' This is the only way forward.

## THE WORKERS' ASSOCIATION

EVERY worker knows that the central issue in the conflict in the North of Ireland is Partition. This issue is whether the Protestant community has the right to remain in the United Kingdom State, or whether it should be forced, against its clearly and oft-expressed will, into a state, under the control of Southern Nationalists.

This is the political division between the Catholic and Protestant communities, and this is the political division between Catholic and Protestant workers. It intrudes into every aspect of social life. It worms its way into every working class home, every factory, every trade union and every political party.

A century of frustrated attempts to build a united working class movement, capable of overthrowing capitalism in Ireland, has demonstrated beyond question, that until there is general agreement on the rights and wrongs of this question, no real challenge to capitalism can be made.

Such an agreement can only be based upon a scientific understanding of the Partition conflict. Myths are no use to the working class. For far too long has the working class movement, in Ireland, been satisfied with nationalist mythology. It is time to end that situation, and remove once and for all the only obstacle to working class unity.

The Workers' Association has been formed for this very purpose. Its objective is to promote understanding of the national conflict within the working class movement, to mobilise workers for the democratic settlement of the national conflict and to break

the influence of nationalism in the working class. The Workers' Association bases its policy on the fact that two nations exist in Ireland. It totally rejects the myth, created and propagated by the Southern ruling class that Ireland is a single nation.

While rejecting the demand of the Catholic ruling class in the South to exercise its rule over the Ulster Protestant community, the Workers' Association stands opposed also to Protestant nationalists who seek a way out of the national conflict through oppression of the Catholic minority in the North. Such policies can only intensify, not eliminate, the national conflict. And by intensifying the conflict they drive even further apart Catholic and Protestant workers. The Workers' Association has but one demand:

Full recognition of the right of the Ulster Protestant nation to remain a part of the state of its own choosing  
Full recognition of the democratic rights of the Catholic national minority in Northern Ireland/UK state and of the Protestant minority in Southern Ireland.

On November 28th, last year, a meeting was held in Limerick to form a branch of the Workers' Association. The outcome of the meeting was that a group of local workers, trade unionists and socialists came together and formed the new branch. It is the branch's intention to agitate as widely as possible in Limerick, for support for the Workers' Association.

The formation of this branch is an important step forward in Limerick working class politics.

# EEC: alternative for socialists

IN STUDYING the campaign against Ireland's entry to the EEC, one is forcibly struck by the recurring pleas from so-called socialists and petty capitalist elements to defend our sovereignty, our democratic structure, and our neutrality. It is important for the working class that we examine these questions from a socialist viewpoint.

The anti-EEC campaigners constantly tell us that Ireland's sovereignty will be endangered. In their pamphlet 'The Common Market and You', the 'Common Market Defence Campaign' state that 'People are concerned about the loss of our neutrality and possible involvement in future wars.'

It is not too long ago since republicans and 'socialists' alike were in complete agreement that Ireland was totally dependent on the British economy and that we were also politically subservient to the British system. Nothing has occurred in the intervening period for socialists to change their original analysis. As for changing their position, it is best described as opportunist.

When socialists look at the question of democracy, they are aware that the so-called 'democratic' system we enjoy is there not to serve the working class but to serve our exploiters and their well-paid hacks. By contrast Mr Anthony Coughlan, the liberal anti-EEC campaigner said recently in Cork that 'It was (our choice) between opting for membership of a system where control of our economy and ultimately our political life would pass largely into the hands of others, or ... seeking to maintain and use the powers of an Irish state in the interests of the Irish

by tony crowley

people' ... Mr Coughlan thus implies that we are presently in the control of 'our' country and that this control serves the interests of the Irish people. As Irish workers know to their cost, the only interest served by the present system is that of the ruling class. Therefore, to suggest that we would lose what we do not have is absurd. And to ask Irish workers to defend this sham democracy is an insult to the intelligence of the Irish working class.

One of the major points made by Coughlan and his supporters is the question of Irish neutrality. This neutrality is a myth and even the present Fianna Fail government has openly admitted this. In our foreign affairs policy, we have constantly followed the British and American policy without question. The government has made it abundantly clear, of late, that we would have no other choice but to take the side of what they describe as western christian 'civilisation' (capitalism) if confronted with a socialist alternative. So much for the anti-EEC brigades version of neutrality.

In examining the employment situation under free trade conditions, as compared to the situation that prevailed during De Valera's protectionist policy of nearly thirty years, many interesting facts come to light.

Without the safety valve of massive emigration, which the Fianna Fail government made full use of in the 'fifties', unemployment now stands at

just under 80,000 people. By contrast in the late 'fifties', emigration alone ran to 60,000 and unemployment was close to 95,000. So we see that under the protectionist policies of the 'fifties' Irish workers, numbering more than 150,000, were denied the right to work.

The lesson to be learned from this is clear. Protectionism, as expounded by the anti-EEC contingent, could only lead to a worsening of conditions for the workers. Marxists are fully aware that the centralisation of both the capitalists and the working class is a progressive development.

The capitalists stand to gain very little regarding organisation within the EEC, as they are already co-ordinated militarily due to the NATO force in Europe. Despite the fact that Southern Ireland is not a member of NATO, workers should have no illusions about this force in the event of a socialist revolution. They would be used to crush the workers, whether or not we had formal membership of this organisation.

The working class is not as well organised internationally, as is the capitalist class. Working class organisation on an international level would be stimulated by the co-ordination resulting from the international co-operation which is bound to develop in EEC conditions.

Just as free trade in the last ten years in Southern Ireland has resulted in an increase in the numerical strength of the working class, so would an even greater strength develop under the larger European free trade area.

## THE GREAT DOLE SALE

HURRY ... the unemployed workers of Limerick ... all 2,500 ... charge from the Labour Exchange, down O'Connell Street, to the premises of William Todd and Co., where you can purchase a sitting room suite for the ridiculously low price of £350, in the sale.

What does it matter if you cannot afford to pay the rent of your Corporation house, because of inadequate social welfare benefits?

If the 'cheap' suite fails to grab your fancy, for a mere £57.50 you can have a dining room table.

What does it matter if your children have to drink out of handleless cups?

Yes indeed, there are many bargains going in city shops. What does it matter if you are on the Dole and can't find work ... that's not the worry of the capitalist store owners ... is it?

## capitalism at work

THE PRESENT system of so-called 'private' enterprise has also been variously described as free-for-all, jungle-warfare, survival of the fittest etc. An essential part of the system is that workers selling their labour on the economic market must compete against their fellow workers for the right to work and live. This results in some workers having two or three jobs and in other workers being unable to get any job at all.

In Limerick, at present, the unemployment figure stands at 2,500, and yet local businessmen insist on giving part-time employment to those who already enjoy a permanent, full-time, and often well-paid job. If an unemployed person presents himself for one of these part-time jobs, he will find that preference will be given to those with 'pull', who already have

permanent jobs, and that he will be shunned as if he had the plague.

There still prevails in Limerick the false philosophy that if a person has to join the ever-increasing queue at the Labour Exchange, that that person 'would not work to keep himself warm'. If business people in Limerick have part-time jobs available, surely it is their duty to try and obtain the services of these people most of whom are unemployed through no fault of their own.

If all the part-time work which is being done in Limerick—at night, week-ends and 'days-off'—was shared amongst the unemployed of Limerick, it could certainly yield a few hundred extra jobs in the area.

But then, when has capitalism provided workers with a fair distribution of jobs and money?

# THE NIGHT I BECAME A COUNCILLOR

We are the City Councillors,  
We fight with pull and blow;  
To keep our image is our aim,  
And preserve the status quo.

These poetic lines, discovered by an unemployed bank manager, on a wall of the William Street public convenience before it was demolished, truly echo the dedication with which the members of the City Council apply themselves to their task. Being in public life is a cross one must bear, and depending on the number of Corporation houses allocated and medical cards supplied to voters, the position the Councillor will hold in Heaven will be determined.

Latest figures available show that it requires 320 medical cards; 160 houses; 108 house-swaps; 14 traffic lights; 3 swimming pools and one modern bridge, before a Councillor is eligible to arrogate to himself the right to speak for the people, regardless of position, wealth or social standing. Having successfully complied with these rules, then and only then, is he entitled to be treated with respect.

I decided that I wanted to be a hypocrite and who could teach me better I thought, than those who have come to the top. Those whose names and photographs are in the newspapers and on TV. Those who are invited to dinner

dances and weddings and those whose views journalists seek when ever a crucial decision faces the city.

The most famous and widely quoted Councillor of them all, none other than Ald. Grieve Mocklan, T.D., greeted me at the door of his imposing mansion, at 2 Smellington Terrace.

'What is most important is a stance,' he said 'you have to assert yourself. You have to talk in a loud voice and shout the other fellow down if he is getting the better of you. You have to use a few tough phrases like: 'I want it made clear' and 'I will not take no for an answer', only that way will they be afraid of you,' said Grieve.

With that valuable advice I headed for the advice of Ald. Kat Remyedy, N.T who stressed that one should seek publicity. 'Never mind what they say as long as they spell the name right,' he said. 'You have to appear to be working for the people. Get well-in with the reporters and call them by their christian names. Hop on every bandwagon and make yourself a source of news. The editors will remember you,' said Kat.

I was learning so fast that I began to think even I, really could be a Councillor, so I decided to make just one more call to a sweet-shop, where I met Councillor Daddy Smiley.

'Ha ... ha,' he slurped, 'that would be telling.' That was what he said in reply to my question. I had asked him what helped him most in public life, but after I purchased four pounds of bulls' eyes he softened up, and the three pounds of jelly babies melted him.

'You have to hate the tinkers,' he snapped 'and say that the people will take the law into their own hands. It never fails,' he said.

Confidence welled inside me. I felt sure I attained heights never before reached by our City Councillors. I submitted my request to address the meeting.

On the night I entered the chamber. The officials were seated. I studied the programme. Two deputations were to be received. One from Jennet's Lane, protesting about the water main, and the other from Hogan's Jump, protesting about the dump.

Eight members were in the chamber. My three advisors and Ald. Kick Flipper, Sen. Fed Mussell, Councillors Plank Beddin, Back Lurke and Gory Bidy.

The debate began. I had the floor and eloquent words poured from me. Dealing with the deputations. I turned to the Mayor, Councillor Bus O'Riskoll, and said: 'The rain in Jennet's Lane, stays on the main, and the hump at Hogan's Jump is on the dump.' Applause poured from the public gallery. Enthusiastic well-wishers shook my hand and offered congratulations. I had become a hypocrite. I had made it. Then I woke up. My nightmare was over.

THE KILLING of 13 Catholics in Londonderry, on January 30, by the official military forces of the British ruling class, and the killing of 3 Unionist policemen during the preceding week by the unofficial military forces of the southern Irish ruling class, have had entirely predictable responses. The population which is influenced by Catholic Nationalism has mourned the Catholic dead. The population which is influenced by Protestant Nationalism has mourned the Protestant dead. Catholic Nationalist politicians have used the Catholic dead for the purpose of stirring up feelings for what is increasingly being thought of as the final offensive for a Catholic conquest of the North. Protestant Nationalists have used the Protestant dead for the purpose of stirring up feelings against any concessions whatever towards the idea of a United Ireland, and in support of a tougher line against Republicans.

To say that the greater part of each nationality is now 'indifferent', on the humanitarian level, to the casualties inflicted on people of the other nationality, would be to misrepresent the situation. It would be truer to say that what is

## forward

increasingly felt in each nationality is a profound 'satisfaction' at the fatalities suffered by the other; nationality. Humanitarian feelings have become highly selective.

Capitalist politics are leading to civil war. It is 'futile' to protest on the humanitarian level against the brutality of the IRA or the British army. Nationalism is leading to civil war, in which the last shred of humanitarianism will disappear.

The choice is simple. Each can go with his own ruling class, and submerge his socialist scruples in the increasing swell of Catholic and Protestant nationalism. He can rediscover security and identity back in the embraces of his own ruling class. Or he can intensify his efforts to build a 'class' unity of Catholic and Protestant workers, on the basis of a democratic recognition of the national rights of both communities. That is the only alternative to the rival brutalities of the IRA and the British Army.

'... ILLEGAL organisations had done more to hinder the reunification of the country over the past few years than any other single factor.' (Des O'Malley, Fianna Fail Ard-fheis, 20/2/72).

'That objective (reunification) is now within our grasp ...' (Des O'Malley, Fianna Fail Ard-fheis, 20/2/72).

These quotations illustrate the two-faced attitude of Des O'Malley to the armed conflict now taking place in the North. The root cause of that conflict is the undemocratic demand of O'Malley, Lynch and their like for the inclusion of the Ulster Protestant nation in an All-Ireland State. But, when organisations like the Provisional IRA attempt to put this policy into effect by armed force, O'Malley, Lynch and their like condemn them and weep crocodile tears for the dead and injured—and then proceed to take advantage of the situation created to advance their claims to an All-Ireland State.

The Provisional IRA would not exist without the politics of O'Malley and Lynch--The primary aim of workers should be to destroy the influence of those politics among the working class.

THE decision to leave the Labour Party was not taken lightly and was a conscious and serious step, made after long discussions and deep reflections. From close contact and study of the of the Labour Party, its structure, policies and political methods, we have reached the conclusion that the party is not a socialist party and that it will not lead the Irish working class to state power. To remain in the party, while being fully conscious of this fact, would not serve the workers' interests and could only confuse and mislead people.

As socialists, we believe that unity is important among workers, but honesty and socialist principles are more important. The unity we are concerned with is not the unprincipled and paper unity of capitalist party politics. We refuse to engage in a white-washing exercise to fool people into believing that the Labour Party is socialist.

It does not automatically follow that because the party has trade union and workers' support, it is thereby a working class party. In arriving at this conclusion, Irish workers can learn a good deal from the experience of the British working class. Despite the experience of six different Labour governments, with predominant workers' support, Britain is no nearer to socialism now. We see little point in repeating the mistakes of British socialists, whose work played such a major part in putting Labour governments into power.

In the event of the Irish Labour Party forming a government here, it is certain that it would not even be as liberal or as democratic as the British Labour governments in such areas as education, social welfare, health etc. Its policy would be to do its best within the present system. It would settle for the role of minor reforms, while basically accepting the status quo. Its aim would be to refine, improve, and operate the capitalist system, while attempting to cushion the more obvious and harsh effects of that system. Wilson's governments in Britain are a good example of how a so-called 'socialist' party can operate the capitalist system in an even more efficient way than the undisguised capitalists themselves.

The Irish Labour Party, like its British counterpart, is a capitalist party, disguised as a Labour party. There are no short cuts to socialism. Socialism will never be brought about by trying to beat and out-manoeuvre the capitalists at their own game. For far too long Irish socialists have followed too many illusions about the nature of the Labour party. We can learn something from the result of all the work of the countless well-intentioned socialists, who tried as best they knew how, to bring back Connolly's socialism to the party. The change in the coalition policy was based on naked political expediency and exposes the real capitalist nature of the party. The unprincipled manner in

## why we left

which this decision was made was Labour's way of helping to ensure that the '70s will certainly not be socialist.

The time has come for all socialists to examine their roles in the Labour Party. It should be obvious that these socialists are being used by the party to give it a radical socialist image. Their time and energy at elections and other occasions result in conservative and right-wing politicians being returned in the name of Labour. Must these socialists continue to engage in the futile exercise of trying to push the Labour leadership to the left and finding themselves pushed back time and time again? It is certain that the time and talents of these socialists would be far better employed in trying to develop an independent working class movement, no matter how difficult or daunting the task may be.

At a Limerick level, the nature of the Labour Party should be obvious to most people. The anti-democratic and anti-socialist campaigns, actions and speeches of the Labour deputy for East Limerick have made Limerick and the Labour Party a by-word for bigotry and witch-hunting. While the deputy himself is totally insignificant and will ultimately be relegated to a mere footnote in the history of the Limerick working class movement, he has faithfully and consistently served the interests of the enemies of the workers. To be forced to rely on feeding bigotry and prejudice to gain and retain political power is surely the greatest indictment of the type of politics prevalent in the public leadership of the Limerick Labour Party. It is understandable that opportunists and consensus men in the ranks of workers should resort to all sorts of tactics to enable them to continue to live like parasites off the backs of the workers. But where the national leadership of the Labour Party knowingly allows this situation to continue in the name of expediency, then the 'socialist' principles of the party can be clearly seen for what they are. But time, and the ever-growing political consciousness of workers, have a way of rewarding bigots and opportunists.

Finally, we wish to conclude this brief statement by pointing out that our membership of the Labour Party has not been in vain. The work and struggles within that party has given us a clear picture of the nature of party politics and of Irish society itself. In the absence of any type of political education courses or literature within the national and local Labour Party, to help raise the political consciousness of workers, our efforts have been of great educational value to us and even to other workers outside the Labour Party.

We have been able to break through to see the real nature of the Labour

Party and its role in leading workers into political blind alleys. In this way, our time in the party will ultimately be useful in preventing other workers from taking the same road. These lessons were learned in the hard school of experience and will prove useful to us in the struggles ahead. Our efforts have already helped the political awareness of Limerick workers and we hope to build on this foundation in playing our part in building an uncompromising Irish working class party.

—Statement issued by members resigning from the Labour Party in Limerick, 23rd January, 1972.

## connolly's socialism and ours

'THE secret of the success of the party lies not in the personality of its leaders, nor in the ability of its propagandists; it lies in the fact that all the propaganda, and teaching of this party was from the start based upon class struggle—upon a recognition of the fact that the struggle between the 'HAVES' and the 'HAVE-NOTS' was the controlling factor in politics, and that this fight could only be ended by the working class seizing hold of political power and using this power to transfer the ownership of the means of life, viz. land and machinery of production, from the hands of private individuals to the community: from the individual to social or public ownership.'



NOW say after me: 'This is the happiest day of my life.'

# THE PROMISE — THE POOL — THE FIRE

continued from front page

bingo cards but this was not successful and was hastily abandoned. Next followed the most delightful but fool-hardy venture of all.

The committee sponsored two fashion shows, in co-operation with the 'Limerick Advertiser' newspaper. It lost over £200 on this whirl. The committee ploughed on. Jennings kept in the public eye and photographs of him appeared in the local press receiving donations for the pool building fund and 'inspecting' the site for the proposed pool, at the Cooperage, Canal Bank, with other members of the committee.

But meanwhile, Jennings' tussle with the Sun Alliance and London Insurance Group had sharpened. It was a curious case from the start. Jennings had repeatedly stated in letters to the local and national press that his premises at 127 and 128 O'Connell Street were insured for £70,000. After the fire, arbitration on his claim for compensation, from his insurance company awarded him £35,269, or just half his claim.

Since then, Jennings has fought a running battle against this award, culminating in a bizarre episode in Dublin, last year. In an aberrant fit, he travelled to the capital and with the aid of a heavy truck, succeeded in blocking the traffic in Nassau Street, for most of the day. He positioned himself at a vantage point on the truck, opposite the insurance company office. Like a Napoleon without his troops, he harangued the insurance staff, through a megaphone, and put on a non-stop performance for the entertainment of bemused passers-by. By far, the most ingenious part of the act was the use

of a brown cardboard box, marked 'explosives', which Jennings cleverly fiddled with and manipulated to maximum effect. His 'bawl-and-box' routine earned him a further appearance in an unscheduled court case, in which he was fined a comparatively modest sum for his part in the grand-slam 'Fiddler on the Roof' show.

'There's no one for endurance, like the man who sells insurance'. This well-known refrain has never more aptly applied than in the present context. For the last year or so, the staff of the Limerick branch of the Sun Alliance Insurance Company have been bombarded with phone calls, obscene and otherwise from anonymous phone callers, threatening to bomb-out, or burn down the local office. The head office has also experienced similar threats. Even the annual dinner of the Insurance Institute of Limerick, held earlier this month, at the Parkway Motor Inn, did not escape. During the proceedings, police squad cars were rushed to the scene, while the Conference Hall was being evacuated because of a bomb scare. If this trend increases, insurance workers will be seeking 'danger' money to buttress their hard-earned 'endurance'.

But the battle, like the swimming pool, is a lost cause. Insurance companies experienced in the making of profits, as well as the investigation of fires, still believe in the effectiveness of the old adage: 'Prevention is better than cure.' The penny—or, in this case, the £35,000, has not yet dropped for Jennings.

Washed-up as chairman of a non-existent swimming pool committee and beaten down by a massively-powerful insurance company, Jennings is now forced to fall back on his race-horses, his luxury home, his wealth and his varied business interests for consolation.

A few last questions:

(1) How did Jennings and his other successful capitalist friends make such a mess of the swimming pool project?

(2) How much public money was collected by the committee?

(3) How and where was this money spent? 'When John Jennings says he will do something ...'

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## poems

### THE SOCIALIST SPIRIT

I have seen the women  
in low cut gowns  
devour a whole table  
of prawn cocktail.

I have seen an old man  
search a smelling dustbin  
and eat what he saw fit  
behind Cruises Hotel.

I have watched a solicitor  
drink coffee over the 'Times'  
and be suitably shocked  
by working class 'crimes'.

I have watched the poor man  
beaten by red tape  
while the solicitor's colleague  
suppressed a case of rape.

I suffer in silence  
condemn so you will  
they never shall crush  
the spirit of Joe Hill.



## COUGHLAN'S 'TOLERANCE'

(1) 'Let us not be silent. Let us show that Limerick is absolutely Republican. I believe in a 32-County Ireland with fair play for all and tolerance prevailing at all times.'

(Ald. S. Coughlan, T.D., 'Limerick Chronicle', 3 February, 1972).

'Two members of Labour's 'Republican' wing voted against the First Reading (of Dr. N. Browne's Contraception Bill) --deputies Stephen Coughlan and Dan Spring.'

('Irish Times', 10 February, 1972).

(2) 'I am a great believer in compulsory army training for boys just leaving school.'

(Ald. S. Coughlan, T.D., 'Limerick Chronicle', 8 February, 1972).

'Coughlan wants all workers' sons conscripted into the army to fight the battles of capitalism. But, not only did Coughlan himself not join the Salvation Army or the Irish Army, during the 'Emergency'—his own sons are not even members of the boy scouts.'

(Comment by the 'Limerick Socialist') February, 1972.

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## connolly quote

'A MAN may be a sincere and ardent nationalist, may indeed be ready to die for nationalism, and yet be an unscrupulous and bitter enemy of social progress and enlightenment.' ('Forward', 25 February, 1911).