

# LIMERICK SOCIALIST

DECEMBER, 1975.

8p

VOL. 4. NO. 12.

**THE  
VOICE  
OF THE  
WORKER**

*That which is good for the working class I esteem patriotic . . . James Connolly*

## THE LABOUR PARTY



## The transformation of Thady



## SOUTHILL



Southill House. The one time residence of Peter Tait.

## Days of the "Bottom Dog"

## THE "FACTIONIST"

The Smallest Paper in the World.

PRICE ONE HALF-PENNY.

No. 18

THURSDAY, 31st MAY, 1917.

Vol. I

# THE TRANSFORMATION OF THADY

by DERMOT McEVOY

MOST OF you will remember Lewis Carroll's saying in *The Walrus and the Carpenter*: The rule is, jam tomorrow and jam yesterday — but never jam today. The 'jam tomorrow' has for decades been the stock-in-trade of our politicians. Not any more; not certainly after Brendan Corish's keynote address at the Irish Labour Party's annual conference at Dun Laoghaire: he promised no jam tomorrow, a tougher Budget than ever in the New Year! In the hands of Richie Ryan, the ranchers' man, we know from bitter experience what this will mean — higher taxes on the wage and salary earner, soaring food prices to slaughter the housewife and the cost of heating a home rising into the great blue yonder.

At the same time the well-heeled sections of the community will live as merrily as ever: the shopkeeper will jack up his prices without as much as a by-your-leave, the £10,000 to £20,000-a-year doctor will do the same with his fees. The vets, of course, are in a class of their own — they've been making millions out of brucellosis-testing though this is a job that's done in Northern Ireland by men and women for a basic wage of £35 a week and less than five bob per beast. Not even RTE's exposure made the slightest change in the animal-doctors' attitude of 'only a vet can do this job properly'. Really? But a vet does no more than take a sample of blood and send it off for testing in a laboratory *maintained by the taxpayer*. Good grief, a nurse is allowed and considered qualified, to take a sample of *human* blood. What's special about a bullock that we have to pay veterinary vampires £30,000-a-year-plus for sticking a syringe into its rump?

That's the system in Ireland today. The better-off get better off and the poor are allowed to get poorer. Corish and Coughlan not only endorse this free-for-all by the so-called professional classes, but they promise to bleed the poor more in 1976. As for the chemist, he does not even have to read the doctor's *fiat mistura* any more, he just counts pills — indeed there's a handy machine to do it for him — and charges pounds. "I'll have this ready for you in half-an-hour, ma'am", he says to make it sound important. Meanwhile, all these leeches — doctors, chemists, vets, grocers, butchers and rabbitmen — dip into the till for their Advocaats-and-white-lemonade, Camparis-and-sodas, and what-have-you. *And you are paying for it* because the comparatively badly-paid Cigire Canach is never told about these lucky dips; even if he did get a wrinkle, there are crooked accountants and solicitors all over Ireland ready at the rustle of a £50 note to present him with a set of accounts that'll quieten him. Integrity in those professions — if they are professions, so is burglary — has gone with the wind.

By the way, that solicitor who *admitted* the fraudulent conversion of £340,000, the one I told you got a suspensory sentence months ago, has not yet been struck off the roll of solicitors; he is helping another solicitor handle property deals as a backroom boy. *Fiat justitia et ruant coeli*: Let justice be done though the heavens fall. Of course, that doesn't apply in Ireland.

\*\*\*\*\*

IN ALL this, I hope you are alert to the Transformation of Thady. You will have been apprised already of the distasteful way he tried to make personal political capital out of the unfortunate Dr. Herrema, but you may not be aware of the behind-the-scenes moves at the Labour Party Conference to try to ensure that the mantle of Speechless Steve descends on Trivial Thady in time for the next General Election. A strong force of country delegates was well tutored (and nourished) to back Thady for the Vice-Chairmanship of the party; at the last minute more devious counsels prevailed and his candidature was withdrawn; he was elected instead by the *claque* (the crowd that's paid to applaud in the French theatre) to the

Administrative Council of the party — a position that Jim Kemmy held for years until he realised it was all a great waste of time, indeed, of breath. But Thady's candidature for the vice-chair was withdrawn on information from on high that there would be no General Election next year, that Thady would be handed the post on a platter the following year when an election has to be fought. The phoney prestige of the Vice-Chairmanship of the party is just one of many desperate gambits to ensure the Coughlan father-to-son succession.

Thady, of course, will have another kind of backing-his-employer's. His indulgent employer is in the near-millionaire class and I am credibly informed that he sees nothing but good in having a mouthpiece in the Dail, especially a toe-rag who'll do what he's told when it may be a question of taxing the haves and perhaps giving a breather to the have-nots of which Limerick has more than its share. Watch it, brothers, white-collar and blue, the enemy is *within* the Walls of Limerick.

\*\*\*\*\*

RECENTLY, R.P.C. Hanson, Professor of Theology at the University of Manchester, referred to the obituaries of Eamon de Valera and said that all of them omitted one interesting fact, i.e. that when he had abandoned armed resistance to the elected government of the Irish Free State:

He found that there were on his left wing members of the I.R.A., who offered armed resistance to his government. He passed special laws to deal with them, set up special courts to try them and went to the length of executing some of them by firing squad.

Well, obviously, the professor has not read 'Lest We Forget' in the *Limerick Socialist*. I am sending him a copy showing that your journal anticipated his point. And, by the way, what's the fuss about the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Bill? No one is going to be shot, North or South, when it becomes law. What beef has Fianna Fail? Weren't they in government when they activated the firing squads? Or is it wrong to remind them?

Professor Hanson has other interesting things to say: that at a time when political murder is enjoying a carnival in the North of Ireland statistics show that Ireland is by far the most religious country in Europe, that a far greater percentage of Catholics attend Mass in Ireland than in any country in Europe, perhaps the world; that, even among Protestants, church-going, and the financial support of the churches is, in proportion to their total numbers, hugely greater than in England. Prof. Hanson poses the question: What are Christians to make of this, and goes on to say that Irish Christians: "tend to want to take credit for their religious observance and to disown responsibility for the murders. But, in fact, this is an irresponsible attitude to take. Christian traditions of all hues (with the honourable exception of the Unitarians) have been in the past and still are deeply involved in the disastrous conflict within society in Northern Ireland, and Christians in the Republic cannot completely disavow responsibility either".

Just two points, Professor, I have time and again in this column insisted that I do not subscribe to the new Creed, that I stick to the "I believe" of the Nicene Creed, that I refuse to commit myself to the "We believe" on the ground that I cannot be guarantor for the beliefs of the Fianna Fail wallah a pew or two in front of me; he may very well believe in "killing no murder". Else why would he oppose the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Bill? Secondly, I'm glad the Professor has a good

word for the Unitarians. They're the only sect discriminated against in Dev's 1937 Constitution the preamble to which begins "In the Name of The Most Holy Trinity ..". You see, Unitarians, as the title implies, believe in one God, not Three-in-One. I remember at the time raising the point with the late Rev. E. Savill Hicks, of the Unitarian Church, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin. He just said it did not make him any less Christian in outlook and behaviour — and he poured me another Guinness in his home that overlooked Killiney Bay until Fianna Fail Trinitarians blocked the Bay-of-Naples-vista with concrete homes encumbered with ground rents. The Irish are Christians? Unitarians apart, you've got to be joking. I would'nt trust our Christians with a lion.

\* \* \* \* \*

BY THE time you are reading this, churches and shops will be full of "Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men" messages surrounded with tinsel stars and angels. But this is NOT the

Christmas message; you are under no obligation whatever to show goodwill to all the sundry. It is a mistranslation of the original *'Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis'* which, correctly, says: "And peace on earth to *men of goodwill*".

'Men of goodwill' is a horse of another colour; the phrase does not include the kidnappers of Dr. Herrema, the Limerick Councillors who rejected a motion of sympathy with the victims of the Birmingham publichouse bombs on the specious ground that it was "political", the moneylenders of Limerick who are harassing the poor of Tralee, the political place-hunters, nor yet the shopkeeper of Roches Street who profits out of the agony of gin-trapped rabbits.

None of this means to say that there are not men of goodwill in Ireland, in Limerick too. The pity is they're thin on the ground, but to them, few as they are (but growing in awareness) I warmly say, "A Peaceful Christmas". Sorry, I can't join you in anything stronger than lemonade (and what a steal that is!) but I've had my 1975 fling! See you in the bleak New Year.

# THE LABOUR PARTY

BY JOHN CASEY

Amongst the intelligentsia (gin and tonic in suburbia) it is fashionable to laugh at the Dan Springs, the Michael Pat Murphys, the Stevie Coughlans. What they forget is that the German intellectuals laughed at Hitler until they were marched to the gates of Auschwitz.

It is not that I'm comparing Stevie Coughlan to the Fuhrer. Hitler was a megalomaniac; Stevie is a pub politician. I'm just making the point that Stevie and Thady are like the medicine men in the cowboy films: they have poisoned the people of this country with false potions.

Stevie will jump on any bandwagon. He supported the Springboks because he believed that this would win him support with Limerick's big rugby fraternity. He joined the anti-E.E.C. bandwagon for a meeting in the hope that he would corner a republican vote. He gave his blessing to the anti-Maoist shotgun brigade in order to entrench himself with the hierarchy. His attitude towards the Provisionals was equivocal until he saw the popular current: then he turned against them. Then one hears young Thady talking about the Coughlans; service to Limerick. That's a joke. Like the Keatings and Cluskeys and the would-be Dail deputies — Quinns, Horgans and Higgins. Make no mistake, they're all from the same henhouse: the more sophisticated may have learned to clean their feathers but they are all one.

The Labour Party was brought to mind by the recent conference when you had the delegates mindlessly applauding Corish, who was proposing wage cuts, tough budgets and hard times. They even applauded Jimmy Tully, the clean; he told them that he had no intention of building better houses. Jimmy, who could'nt even lie straight in bed, made great capital out of the Crinnion/Molloy jig and almost asked delegates to put their fingers into the place of the wounds.

However, they're are still some sincere people in the Party. Dave Nelligan increased his vote when opposed by Roddy Connolly, which is not bad. Roddy lives off his father's name, and as one old socialist put it to me once: "Roddy has lost his integrity". What more can you say? Halligan's circus was managed better than usual this year in that no one got an opportunity to speak (insofar as possible) unless they supported the Coalition line.

Labour is now in real trouble. The party has become so much identified with Fine Gael that it is attracting more than its usual quota of chancers and gombeen men. A recent survey carried out among Dublin branches showed that only a tiny percentage of the active membership were in their twenties.

But this situation offers a real challenge to socialists outside the Labour Party and the republican movement. The time is

ripe for a positive advance in working class consciousness. The Labour Party is in disgrace, the Official Sinn Fein movement is in Bonnie and Clyde land and the Communist Party is firmly anchored in Omsk. In other words, they're all going nowhere and the way is being left clear for realistic socialists to fill the void. The next general election will bring before the people of East Limerick the essential issues of the modern world and not the ramblings of bygone days. The election will also expose the difference between a sincere socialist candidate and the political opportunists of the Labour Party.

It is no use looking for an alternative in the Official Sinn Fein Movement. Never were things worse — attacked by the I.R.S.P. and the Provos, splits, internal doctrinaire feuds — they're in utter disarray. It is time that they turned their back on republicanism (whatever that means) and became a totally socialist party. One appreciates their dilemma: they're the prisoners of the past, pondering to republican slogans which are meaningless today. After all, the founder of Irish Republicanism lived almost 200 years ago and his political views are as dated as John Mitchel on slavery. But they still feel that their clandestine army, their backroom conspiracies and discredited formula is the way forward.

The recent shoot-out between Provos and Officials must for many be the straw that will break the republican myth. Old, sincere, intelligent socialists like George Gilmore have turned off the republican movement and the recent spate of O.K. Corralism will send many intelligent people fleeing from men whose political brains are in their gun barrels.

But to return to the Labour Party: A young Corkman wrote to the papers recently stating that as far as he was concerned Noel Browne was the leader of the Labour Party. Certainly the heart of Labour is in its weak left-wing. However, their future seems grim: a number of them will go forward as candidates in the next election. Most of them, however, will be blocked at constituency level: paper branches and delegates will miraculously appear and paper men will be selected. Even if some left-wingers get over the first hurdle, head office can and will refuse to ratify them. Another possibility is a purge on some contrived issue. One way or another, the party hierarchy will destroy them because they won't allow anyone to break up their love affair with Fine Gael.

Browne will probably stand as an independent socialist and, if elected, his voice would be again welcome in the Dail. A few independent socialists would be a tonic, and Limerick will be given a chance to close the door on political circus performers like Coughlan and the other capitalist puppets, O'Malley, O'Donnell and Herbert, and elect a real representative of the people.

**PART  
TWELVE**

**BY  
P. J. KEAN**

### THE TAKE-OVER

Following the acceptance of the Treaty, the British garrisons started to evacuate the city. The first to leave were the Black and Tans; they changed into civilian dress and left for Dublin. The month of March saw the last of the Royal Irish Constabulary; they handed in their rifles and military stores to the military in the new barracks and about four hundred of them left by train. They were unarmed but still in uniform.

In May the Castle Barrack was taken over from the Royal Welsh Fusiliers by Michael Brennan of Meelock, Co. Clare, acting on the authority of the Provisional Government of the Irish Free State. Brennan had about sixty men with him and was joined by Lieut. Collopy and sixty men from the city. Brennan and these latter men later went on to Renmore Barracks, Galway, where they merged with the Western Division under General Sean McKeown. Following the acceptance of the Castle Barrack by Brennan, the other three barracks were evacuated by the British.

On the departure of the British, the latter three barracks lay silent and deserted; they were a challenge to curiosity. The first to enter the new barracks were children, whose natural curiosity led them on a voyage of discovery. They were followed by their anxious parents who were concerned lest their children should come to harm. The parents concern was turned to righteous indignation on seeing the many objects of interest which were not nailed down but left unguarded; they felt that many such objects should be taken to their homes and held in protective custody until lawful authority demanded their return. Acting on this laudable impulse, the parents and others removed blankets, bedding, tables and other barrack room furniture as well as cooking utensils and other implements in various parts of the barrack. Later in the day, several companies of men representing the Republican interest entered all three barracks and put a stop to all spontaneous altruistic labour.

When, in the most casual fashion, the Diehards took over the New, the Ordinance and the Strand barracks, their total strength amounted to over five hundred men. Within a week, their numbers had swollen to over a thousand men all of whom were armed with British Lee Enfield rifles. As day followed day, their numbers increased and the position of General Brennan became more precarious.

From his homestead in the Clare hills, Brennan had watched the Castle Barrack since his childhood and knew its every weakness. Now in military command of the Castle, he knew that he could not hold it.

A report was circulated in the city that Brennan was evacuating the barrack and leaving for Dublin on the ten a.m. train, on Friday 12th May, from the railway station in Parnell Street. On learning of this report and believing in its accuracy, four hundred Diehards were concealed in the railway station and around Parnell Street. They lay in ambush with the intention of disarming Brennan and his men and taking them prisoner.

While the Diehards impatiently waited in ambush, Brennan and his men left the Castle and marched a mile to the Long Pavement railway station on the Clare bank of the Shannon. They were now on the Ennis railway line and entrained for Athlone where they joined General Sean McKeown and eventually reached Dublin with the First Western Division of the National Army.

Limerick city was now in the undisputed possession of the Republicans, who even in that early stage of conflict were called Diehard Republicans or simply Diehards, as few people would concede their pretensions ever to have done anything to gain a Republic.

# The Fourth Siege of Limerick

Coincident with these events, all Southern Irish regiments in the British army were disbanded. The Colours of the various regiments were escorted into the Throne Room of Windsor castle by Sergeant Merriner of the Royal Munster Fusiliers and of Mary St. Limerick. The Colours were presented to His Imperial Majesty George V of Great Britain, Emperor of India, Canada, Australia and Dominions beyond the seas.

This was Britain's hour of glory. She could dictate the terms of a Naval Treaty to the United States of America. She could dictate terms to any country in the world. She dictated the terms of the Treaty which created the Irish Free State.

### THE BANK OF IRELAND ROBBERY

On a bright May morning long ago when the sun shone down O'Connell Street, two Ford cars pulled up at Number Ninety-five. Five men left the cars and three of them entered the Bank of Ireland. Two men armed with Thompson sub-machine guns remained on guard by the cars — the well dressed Patriot always wore a Thompson gun. They were the Guardian Angels of the infant republic. The three men who entered the bank wagged their revolvers with joyous carefree abandon; they had nothing to fear as the Tans and R.I.C. had left the country. They held up the members of the bank staff and opened the large safe. They removed bundles of notes and bags of coins which they dumped into two potato sacks. One of the sacks burst with the weight of coins, and notes and coins were scattered around the floor. The manager, who had a precise and orderly mind, protested against the scattering of what he called "litter" around the premises. The leader of the raiders agreed that there would have been no mess if notes only were removed but he wanted some small change to pay his patriotic men who were so eager to defend the Republic now that the British were gone. He ordered his men to empty the two sacks into the back of the car and return for more, saying: "There's more where that came from".

The manager had many years of training in the sternfaced refusal of credit extensions and had hardened his heart against the most piteous appeals for clemency by bankrupt traders and poor farmers. Day by day, he had rejected the appeals of presentable looking bums, wasters and chancers for a little overdraft. The effort would have exhausted any ordinary man, but bank directors select only extraordinary men for the post of manager. The many years of rugged financial warfare had given the manager an extensive vocabulary, a Thesaurus of inventive expression. When the men returned for more money he called them into a conference and made a strong and practical appeal to their commonsense.

The manager gave the men a two-minute lecture on the virtue of thrift saying: "The true patriot is a thrifty skinflint who would sacrifice Ireland and all of Europe in order to increase his bank account". "Is it necessary", he asked them, "is it necessary to remove that money from the bank?" Could they not "return the money and open their own little savings account?", which in time with added interest would make a nice little nest egg for their declining years — if they lived long enough to have declining years, as it takes such a long time to grow old".

"Consider", he said, "consider the danger of having that money in your possession. In the hours of daylight some evilly

disposed men or some bandits might dispossess you of that money or while you sleep, some thieving scoundrel might steal your treasure; even your guardian angels with their Tommy guns might be tempted to place your names on the roll of the patriots who died for Ireland, and decamp with the swag".

The word "swag" broke the spell of the manager's eloquence; the raiders brushed him aside and having refilled the sacks moved out to the cars. Here the manager showed his sterling worth; he followed the men out and demanded and received a receipt for the money taken from the bank. As the cars moved up the street, banknotes of all sizes and colours went floating on the breeze and were collected by industrious citizens. The manager returned to the bank, his heart bowed down with weight of woe, but memory recalled that he had a receipt for the money taken from his bank on Saturday 6th. of May 1922.

On the same day and date, many other branches of the Bank of Ireland from Ballinasloe in Galway, to Patrick Street in Cork, were held up and raided, the total sum taken being over £75,000.

It may appear strange that so many banks throughout the country had such a large amount of floating cash or liquid assets on hand. The explanation for this state of affairs is a simple one. Because of the unsettled state of the country, all industrious traders took their daily takings to the bank, leaving

themselves only some petty cash for the next day's trading. Farmers and others took the family sock full of notes from under the mattress and the gold sovereigns from under the thatch and deposited them in the nearest bank; the result of this prudent forethought was that farmers and others if "held up" in their homes, could truthfully and happily state that "there wasn't the price of a bag of spuds in the house".

All the jewellers in the city were as fond of music as any other citizen. They were always to be seen attending concerts and musical recitals in the People's Park and elsewhere. Two of them gave lessons on the pianoforte and harmonium for a fee of five shillings per week. When the Civil War started, the city jewellers played the "Gold and Silver Waltz" (Lehar). All gold and silver watches, all diamond studded jewellery, and all pearl encrusted pendants, were waltzed away to places of safety, concealed from the gleaming eye of avarice. Only Sheffield plate, cheap jewellery and five-shilling watches shone in their windows; at closing time in the evening, heavy wooden shutters protected their windows and heavier steel bars reinforced their doors. During the weeks of combat, those protective shutters remained in position permanently. The half-dozen pawnbrokers around the Irishtown district remained open and played it cool; they did not accept in pledge any articles which they knew to be 'hot' or stolen property.

(To be continued).

# SOUTHILL

SOME HISTORICAL NOTES

PART ONE

Up to the recent times, the district of Southill was hardly known to most Limerick people. This suburb, is, as its name denotes, situated on high ground on the south side of the city. Today, the area is well known to everybody, if not for its large housing estate, surely for the partiality of some wandering horses for the succulent lawn grasses planted so hopefully by an optimistic local authority.

Seventy years ago, this area was even better known for its horseflesh, though of quite a different variety. At that time William Wellington Bailey set up his famous stud-farm at nearby Rathbane. The progeny of this famous stallion "Bachelor's Double" won fame for their owners on both sides of the Atlantic. A stone commemorating the horse's achievements and his financial winnings was set into the wall of the stud farm after his death, but it was removed about two years ago.

Bailey made a fortune as a rubber planter in Malay, and returned to this country a relatively young millionaire. Besides Rathbane stud, he also purchased Plassey House, perhaps the most beautifully situated of all the Shannon-side houses built by the Anglo-Irish ascendancy classes during the eighteenth century. This spacious mansion had been rebuilt in a grand style in 1863.

Plassey, in Baileys time, was an idyllic fairyland, with its beautiful trees in full maturity, and the crystal millrace flowing the whole length of the estate through luxuriant greenery.

Bailey was parted forever from his horses and his Plassey paradise around 1912. His widow, Blanche, remained on at Plassey until 1930, when she left for an estate in Clifden, accompanied by her companion, Annie Churchill. Blanche Bailey died in the early sixties.

Going back to the eighteen sixties, we find Southill again in the news. This was not because of its famous racehorses, or the

unavailing pleas of the horse-ridden residents, but because of the human frailty of a simple Limerick girl and the connivance of her paramour.

Ellen Hinchey had been employed as nursery maid at Southill House, by the family of Peter Tait, the Shetland Islander who proved himself one of Limerick's most enterprising entrepreneurs. The palatial home of this "rags-to-riches" businessman turned out to be the launching pad for the notorious Southill scandal of the 1860's. According to a contemporary account, "Hinchey became rather intimate with Tait's brother, which led to the birth of a child".

Working class girls such as Ellen Hinchey who became pregnant outside of marriage in those days usually ended up in the Union Workhouse, doing penance in worse than sackcloth and ashes under the gimlet eyes of the "good" Sisters. But this was not the case on this occasion. All possible steps were taken to shield the Tait household from disgrace by sending the mother and child as far as possible away from Southill House. But the Tait's and their Catholic accomplices did not reckon with the bold and determined Ellen Hinchey.

The affair obviously became a *cause celebre* in local political circles and was exploited by Peter Tait's political opponents to bring down the maximum amount of public embarrassment on his head. But Tait had two influential supporters in his corner. Michael Hogan, the Bard of Thomond, showed his gratitude for Tait's previous patronage by contrasting the publicity given to the Ellen Hinchey case with the silence about the relationship between the Mayor, Thomas Joyce, and two well-known Limerick prostitutes, Kate Dundon and Nancy Keefe. Joyce became Mayor in 1869 following Peter Tait's three-year term in the Mayoral office, and in the same year, Michael Hogan, in his third

Continued on Page 7.

# DAYS OF THE BOTTOM DOG

## INTRODUCTION

To-night, it is fitting that we are meeting in the Mechanics' Institute. It was from the Institute that many of the battles in the long history of Limerick trade unionism were fought. It was, and continues to be, a focal point in the struggle.

To-night, we will talk about a number of papers which were published in the city over 58 years ago. We will deal with "The Bottom Dog", the most famous of them all, Sinn Fein's "The Factionist", the Trades Council's "The Worker", and the most notorious of them all, "The Soldier Hunter".

Beginning in February 1917 we hope to trace the events leading up to the General Strike of April 1919 and will also tell the story of a 17 year-old girl, Sarah McGowan, who was dismissed from her job for refusing to leave the Transport Union. So what was Limerick like 58 years ago? It was a city on the brink of change. The Great War raged in Europe and many young Irishmen had gone to the trenches believing that they were making a contribution to the cause of Irish Freedom.

The city was one of contrasts. Slum tenements in Arthur's Quay and bad housing in Watergate seethed behind the city's fashionable streets. The assistants in the elegant stores were only paid seven shillings per week — A Dock labourer had 15/= a week to keep a wife and family.

This contrast was also evident in the Capital/Labour conflict. Within a year there was to be a series of important strikes. The Tannery workers came out; the bakers fought for an increase; the newspaper compositors went on strike and the Dock labourers demanded a living wage.

There were mixed feelings about the national struggle. Easter Week 1916 was a fading memory for some .. others saw in it a new reason to continue the old fight against the traditional enemy, England. The police were keeping a careful eye on all activists so much so that the Limerick Trades and Labour Council meeting in the Mechanics' Institute, had to pass a vote of sympathy with the relatives of "a Mr. Connolly, who was killed in Dublin".

However, support for both the Labour and Nationalist campaigns was growing and our story opens against this background, when "The Factionist" was launched.

"The Factionist" a Sinn Fein newspaper, was launched in Limerick in early February 1917. Calling itself the "smallest paper in the world", the masthead declared: "As we are kept up by German gold we can afford to distribute our official journal free".

"The Factionist" reported attacks on Sinn Feiners and very early on its philosophy was set: it was to be Nationalistic and Catholic. For example, "We heartily congratulate his Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer on the golden Jubilee of his priesthood, which happy event takes place on Saturday, February 10th. Long life to our glorious Bishop".

The paper also contained a certain amount of satire and ridiculed local institutions. Like this: "Demand on space has prevented us publishing the proceedings of the Ladies Committee for the Protection of Butterflies".

The local press did not escape criticism.

"A highly placed source on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief states with no uncertain voice, that the best artillery and the most deadly gunners the Allies have are "The Munster News", the "Limerick Leader", and the "Cork Examiner", as they make heavy enemy casualties according to order. Our Intelligence Staff also report that these same papers will cause at a moments notice, food riots, famine, explosions, massacres and even make the inhabitants of enemy countries eat sawdust, etc., at the slightest hint from Dublin Castle.

"The Factionist", whatever about its political allegiances, was fearlessly on the side of the Catholic Church when it came to morality.

We publish below the text of a lecture given to the Limerick Branch of the Irish Labour History Society by Frank Hamilton on November 29th. "The Days of the Bottom Dog" is a study of a crucial period in the history of trade unionism in Limerick. It is the history of a small working class newspaper "The Bottom Dog", which did much to advance the cause of trade unionism in the city in the years 1917 and 1918. It also tells the story of Sarah McGowan, who was dismissed from her job for refusing to leave the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, when that union was struggling to establish itself in Limerick.

*We were passing up Mulgrave Street on last Saturday night, time 10.30 and to our grief and shame we saw young girls (a good many with their hair hanging) with soldiers, in hall doors, laneways, and around the barrack gates and their conduct and behaviour was simply disgusting. Parents do your duty, and protect your children. Employers of domestic servants, are you doing your duty? Is this Catholic city of ours to be a breeding ground of prostitution and disease? God forbid. We ask the members of the different Confraternities, Temperance Societies, etc. have they lost their pluck that they tolerate this scandal?*

Even the St. Vincent de Paul Society did not escape. "The Factionist" heard of one gentleman who when he came across a nicely kept clean house he refused to give the occupant any help while he instantly gave assistance to drunken viragoes in receipt of Separation Allowances.

The paper made no secret of its political aim: A Free Irish Republic, and every so often it published pieces like this, casting Ireland in the role of a mother: "Ah yes, She is calling on her children now as for a thousand years. She has called them to her standard and fight once more the battle".

"The Factionist" was also alive to the day to day struggle of the ordinary people and during March 1917 it exposed the case of retailers charged with selling adulterated milk. "Milk is supplied to the retailers at eleven pence per gallon, they sell for one shilling and four pence, and this leaves a five pence profit, which is enough, without adding water", said the paper.

There were also some words of advice for the Trades Council: "The Trades and Labour bodies should surely be able to find something more beneficial to do than shaking hands, making speeches and patting each others backs because one of their number has been "honoured" with a J. Payship by the British Government. If the acceptance of positions under the Government by so-called Nationalists and Labour men was of any national benefit we should be as Independent as America by now".

"The Factionist" also carried stories on local strikes and had this to say about the Compositors dispute: "The owners and editors of the Limerick papers were always strongly in favour of giving increased wages to working men when it did not affect themselves, but now when the compositors ask for an increase to meet the present prices, the owners are staggered by the idea".

Another example of the class consciousness of the paper was given during the Dock Labourers Strike.

*None of the local papers have a word in favour of the poor dock labourers. The rates of pay are seven shillings per day but the average work of the labourer is only two days which means about 15 shillings per week to support his family.*

The same edition of the paper added: *Our Bishop was buried in St. John's Cathedral after solemn Requiem Mass. The ceremony was attended by Bishops and priests from all parts of Ireland including Cardinal Logue who presided. The five Sinn Fein parliamentary representatives also attended*

to pay tribute on behalf of their constituencies to this great and fearless Irishmen and Bishop. Mrs. Pearce, Mrs. and Miss Hueston, Countess Markievicz, Countess Plunkett, and Con Collins were among others present in the Church which was not nearly large enough for the immense crowd.

And with that requiem, "The Factionist" also passed away.

Only one month went by in Limerick without an "underground" paper. In early October, the "Bottom Dog" arrived. It was to serve the unskilled workers of Limerick and its message was to "organise every worker .. male and female".

However, Limerick was a conservative city.

(To be continued).

# SOUTHILL

Continued from Page 5.

Shawn-a-Scoob pamphlet wrote:

*Your Mayor is half a booby and a brute,  
A drawling sot that never told the truth;  
To maiden-virtue a determined thief,  
Witness Kate Dundon and Nancy Keefe;  
Why is not this, like Ellen Hinchey's case,  
Paraded up before the public face?  
Ah, no — he is a clerical tool — and then,  
And therefore he is privileged to sin.*

The "Limerick Chronicle", then an anti-nationalist and Protestant paper, took a sympathetic view of Peter Tait's conduct in dealing with Ellen Hinchey and placed all the blame for the scandal at the maid's door.

According to the newspaper, Peter Tait, then Mayor of Limerick, only became aware of the situation some eight months after the child was born. The "Chronicle" published the report of an investigation held at the Limerick Lunatic Asylum on the 4th February 1868:

*The Mayor provided her with money and had the child sent to a convent to be brought up in the Roman Catholic Faith. He gave the later an allowance of a £1 a week, at the same time placing her in a position in London, to enable her to have access to the child whenever she desired. But possessed of an ungovernable passion, she gave so much annoyance to the Rev. Mother Superior, at the convent of St. Vincent de Paul, where the child was placed, that the lady would not have the woman annoying her in the outrageous manner she did, and gave back the child to those from whom she received it.*

The "Chronicle" article continued:

*Next she was sent to New York to her brother, through an arrangement with Dr. Butler, and the sum of £30 remitted to the Roman Catholic Bishop there. But the woman's conduct*

*became so scandalously outrageous that the Arch-Bishop in New York gave her up the money to get rid of her. The next thing was heard of the woman was her return to Limerick, and the giving annoyance to the Mayor and his family, making him miserable and compelling him to have persons on the look-out for her, so as to guard against her wiles. Let it be remembered that the child had to be taken from the woman to prevent her from murdering it, which she attempted to do in London, as was proved at the investigation. What greater kindness could be done to any unfortunate female than was exhibited by the Mayor, who, throughout, sought to save her character before the world, and to veil her shame. In some unaccountable way the Mayor secured the enmity of some parties who had endeavoured to rob him of his peace of mind, and if possible to destroy his moral character and drive him from the city. Has anything so disgraceful occurred in the annals of Limerick as the hunting to death of the Mayor, to gratify a shockingly revengeful feeling? If the Mayor had taken the child from this and sent it adrift in the world, or placed the child in some Protestant institution to be brought up in the Established Church, there might be some excuse for the proceedings that had taken place; but he did the contrary. He did all he could to shield the wretched woman from the shame such conduct as hers naturally brings on the guilty members of her sex. While she had no claim whatsoever on him, his generosity appears to have been outstanding, when one looks into the expenditure of hundreds of pounds on a woman, who, in his charity he must have considered insane. How could a person in her right senses act as she had done to a benefactor? It is with pleasure that we find that the Mayor has come out of his ordeal with his honour untarnished, and that the governors of the Lunatic Asylum have stood by him so determinedly, and we hope that those who have carried their enmity against the Mayor to the uttermost will meet that punishment they deserve. As regards the public, the general feeling of sympathy is for the Mayor, and disapproval at the conduct of this calumnious campaign.*

The article also records the "certification" of Ellen Hinchey by doctors Gelston and Fitzgerald. And so Ellen Hinchey was taken out of circulation without the condemnation of judge or jury, while her paramour, the leading actor in the piece, could breathe a sigh of relief, and emerge from behind the protective facade of his famous brother.

All through the report of the investigation her "sin" is aggravated with all the power of eloquence, while no mention whatsoever is made of Tait's brother except the fleeting reference at the outset. If the girl's state of mind was such as to warrant locking her up in the Lunatic Asylum the responsibility of the father of her child for her mental condition was not mentioned.

The certificate was signed by doctors Gelston and Fitzgerald. Fourteen years were to elapse before Dr. Gelston was to certify the death of the young Clare man, Fransie Hynes after he had dangled at the end of the hangman's rope in the County Gaol for the prescribed hour.

Though it is not easy to make a judgement on the affair without a complete study of all the facts, it could perhaps be said that Peter Tait treated Miss Hinchey as well as could be expected, given the social and class attitudes of the day.

(To be continued).

## MAKE SURE OF YOUR COPY OF THE "LIMERICK SOCIALIST" AND HELP OUR PUBLICATION FUND

A one pound fifty pence (£1.50p) subscription will ensure that you will receive twelve months delivery of the "Limerick Socialist" post free.

To the Limerick Socialist Organisation,  
33 Greenhills Road,  
Garryowen,  
Limerick.

I enclose a Postal Order/Cheque for £1.50, my subscription for one year.

Name .....

Address .....

# THE CATHOLIC CHURCH & NAZI GERMANY

## PART TWO

Many examples can be furnished to show that the intervention by the Catholic Church in Germany on Hitler's behalf in relation to the Saar territory was not an isolated incident. Towards the end of 1937, Hitler felt strong enough to start his programme of outright expansion, with the annexation of Austria as an immediate objective. In the early hours of March 12th 1938, Hitler's army crossed the Austrian frontier and, on the next day, Austria was declared a province of the German Reich. In Vienna alone more than 70,000 people were arrested and the Jews of the city were subjected to orgies of humiliation and sadism. So, as the independence of Austria came to an end, six million more people were brought under the dubious blessing of life in the Third Reich.

On March 18th, Hitler announced that the German people would be asked to vote on the "Anschluss" in a plebiscite on April 10th in the new elections to the Reichstag. The Church's support was needed in these elections and the Catholic episcopate of Austria duly issued a widely publicised statement, in large drafted by the Nazis, praising the accomplishments of Hitler's regime and asking the faithful to approve of the union with Germany. Two letters from the Austrian bishops to the Nazis, ending with the fascist "Heil Hitler" salute, were also made public at this time.

The ballot paper read: "Do you pledge yourself to our Fuhrer Adolf Hitler and herewith to the unification of Austria with Germany".

According to the Nazis, the plebiscite was carried by a 99.08% majority. Czechoslovakia's turn came next. On May 30th 1938, Hitler informed the supreme command of his armed forces that he had decided to smash Czechoslovakia by military action as soon as the political preparations made this move possible. But at the Munich conference of September 29th, Hitler obtained most of his immediate demands without having to resort to war. On October 1st, 1938, German troops marched into Czechoslovakia and occupied the Sudetenland. The threat of war now seemed arrested and the head of the bishops' conference sent a telegram of appreciation to Hitler which stated: "The great deed of safeguarding international peace moves the Czechoslovakia episcopate, acting in the name of all the Catholics of all Czechoslovakian dioceses, respectfully to tender congratulations and thanks and to order a festive peal of bells on Saturday". This telegram was also extensively publicised and undoubtedly strengthened the plausibility of Hitler's claim that it was he who had saved the peace.

At the break of dawn on September 1st 1939, the German armies crossed the Polish frontier. Within a week, the German tanks were on the outskirts of Warsaw. On September 3rd, France and England declared war on Germany. A few days after the outbreak of the war, the German bishops issued a joint pastoral letter asking Catholic soldiers to do their duty: "In this decisive hour we encourage and admonish our Catholic soldiers, in obedience to the Fuhrer, to do their duty and to be ready to sacrifice their whole person. We appeal to the faithful to join in ardent prayers that God's providence may lead the way to blessed success and peace for fatherland and people". The diocesan paper, "Breslau", termed the conflict "a holy struggle, not for the mere reconquest and repossession of stolen territories, but for the highest on earth's life, in accordance with God's commands". Any Catholic doubting the justice of the German cause would indeed conclude that Hitler's aims, blessed by the bishops and their prayers, were noble and just.

On May 10th 1940, the German armies invaded Belgium, Holland, and Luxemburg. On the same day, Pope Pius XII sent telegrams of sympathy to the sovereign rulers of the three

countries whose neutrality had been so ruthlessly violated. Although aware of the Pope's telegrams, the German bishops' support for the war remained unchanged. The invasion and defeat of France drew new outbursts of patriotic zeal and pride from the bishops, who once again ordered church bells to be tolled at noon-time for a week.

Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, on June 22nd 1941, further solidified the episcopate's backing. Bishop Rackel of Eichstatt, in a pastoral letter issued in September, termed the campaign in the East "a crusade, a holy war for homeland and people, for faith and Church and His Most Holy Cross". So effectively were the bishops behind Hitler that the Nazis used passages from their pastoral letters in a campaign to enlist volunteers for the S.S. in Holland and other countries. Archbishop Jager even showed sympathy for the Nazi campaign of vilification against the Slavic "Untermenschen" (subhumans) and characterised Russia as a country whose people, because of their hostility to God, had almost degenerated into animals.

After England and France declared war on Germany, the English and French episcopate declared that they were defending a just war and fighting for truth and Christianity. The German bishops for their part were also convinced that they were fighting a just war. Of course, by definition, and even by the opinions of Catholic theologians, no war can be objectively just on both sides. If one side defends rights the other side necessarily violates rights. But Pius XII remained aloof from this distinction. He told all Catholics that they should fight with valour and charity on whatever side they found themselves. Meanwhile, the army bishops of each camp were praying to the same God, asking him to bless the armies of their country, and their country only, with victory. To whose prayer was God to listen?

When Germany lost the war, the Church could point to a number of protests against the regime and to the fact that some of its priests had been persecuted by the Nazi state. These persecutions, however, had nothing to do with the Church's attitude to Hitler's war, which it had wholeheartedly supported. According to researches by Gordon Zahn, of the seven Catholics who refused military service, six were executed and the other was only saved by being declared insane. The few German Catholics who opposed Hitler's policies were, in fact, rebels against their own bishops and hierarchy. The contrast between the support of the German bishops for Hitler's invasion of many countries and their condemnation of Russia's invasion of Finland also helps to point up the selective policy of the German Catholic Church.

Apart from the war casualties suffered in the fighting by the Allied Forces, thousands of German anti-Nazis were tortured to death in concentration camps, the members of the Polish intelligentsia were slaughtered, hundred of thousands of Russians died as a result of being treated as Slavic "Untermenschen" and when six million human beings were murdered for being classed as non-Aryan, the Catholic Church in Germany bolstered the Hitler regime in perpetrating these crimes. And the Pope in Rome, the spiritual head and supreme moral teacher of the Roman Catholic Church, kept discreetly quiet.

(Concluded)

### HELD OVER

We regret that owing to pressure of space the second part of "Dr. Herrema and Catholic Nationalism" and the next part of "The Abbey Fishermen" have been held over to our January edition.