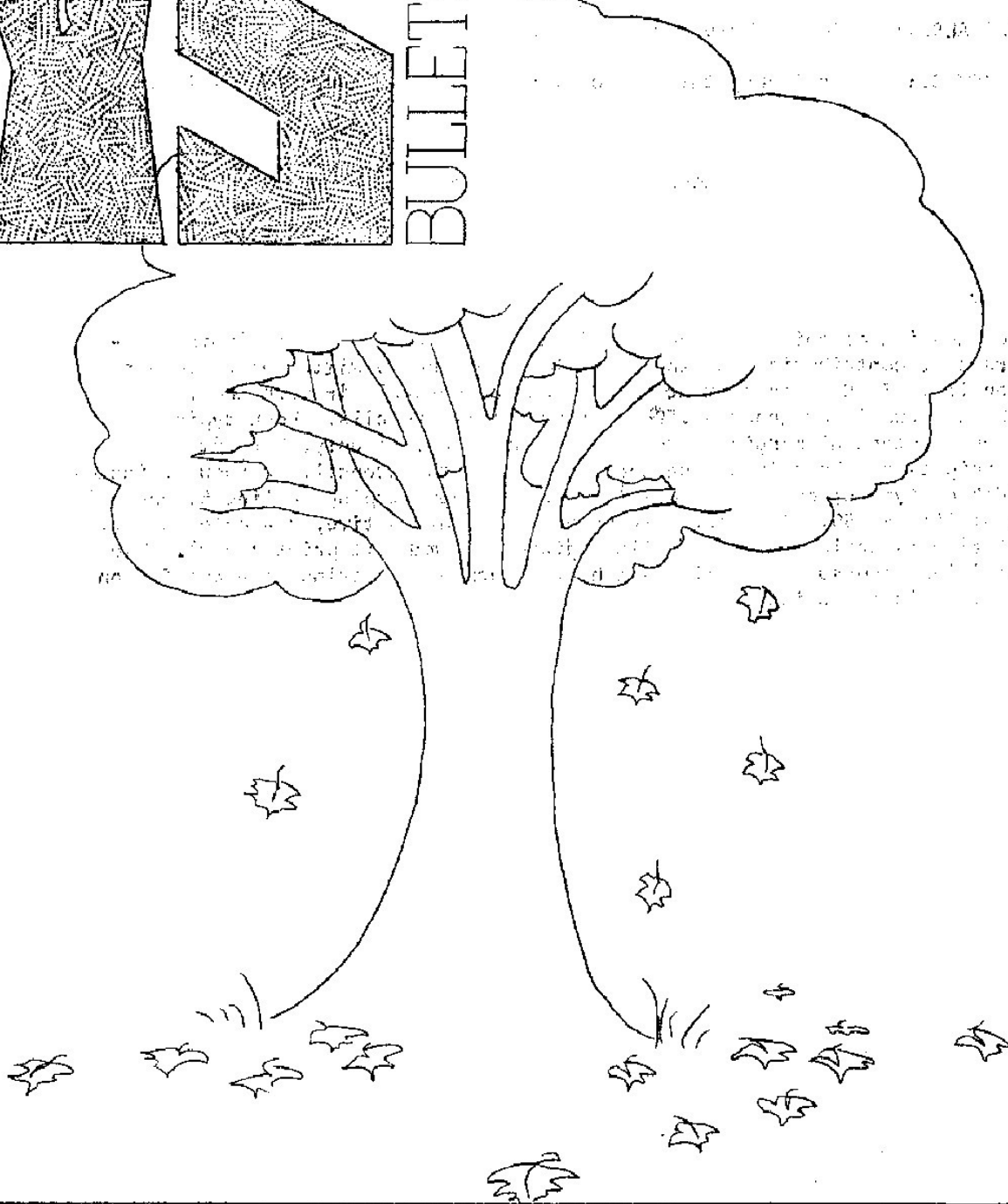


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EDITOR'S NOTES

The occasion of this thin BULLETIN is a convenient one for reminding members that contributions to the BULLETIN should be submitted on Gestetner stencils. If Gestetner stencils are not purchaseable in your area, the N.O. can supply at about \$3.50 per quire of 24 stencils. When typing, leave substantial margins - the best margins are, roughly, 8 (left) and 80 (right) on the "elite" scale at the top of the stencil, or about 6 inches width of typing; put page number on line 3, begin typing on line 6, and quit about line 58-59. This not only makes a more attractive, readable stencil, but also is easier to run off (less jiggery to make it print right). Use sufficient pressure in typing - a heavy touch or a setting of about 5-7 on an electric typewriter.

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## A Couple Notes on the Irish Question

Greg Alden  
N.Y. Branch, I.S.

The I.S. currently supports - as we should - the unconditional defense of the Irish Republican Army against British imperialist atrocities. We support and defend the military actions taken in defense of the Irish Catholic working class minority in Northern Ireland by IRA militants. We also support immediate freedom for all political prisoners and the unification of the 26 counties in the South with the 6 counties in the North on the basis of workers control and an Irish Workers Republic. Wine and good - as far as it goes.

The position we take - concretely - on uniting the Protestant and Catholic working class is also good, though I believe (methodologically-speaking) too limited. We are for a transitional program encompassing jobs, housing, no wage controls; we also try to build united fronts of Catholic and Protestant workers on strike against bosses of both/either religious affiliation(s).

However, the major thing preventing Protestants from coming over to our banner - the banner of the Irish revolutionary struggle - is that Protestants are afraid of being integrated into an all-Irish 32 county republic in a way that will submerge them, that will leave them open to being exploited and oppressed as the Catholic minority in the North is now oppressed by the Protestants. Groups like the Ulster Vanguard or UDA exploit these fears to the hilt, and have already developed the beginnings of a Protestant paramilitary movement by doing this. How, then, to undercut this fear? And also, how to open the Protestant workers up to unifying with the Catholic workers without the Protestant workers feeling they're being "blitzed" or that the unity we seek is like the externally-contrived and bureaucratically-imposed unity of pro-Lynchites or of Whitelaw?

The only way is to guarantee to the Protestant workers that they will have the right - in a 32-county workers republic - to secede and form their own national territory if they so choose, and that we, the Irish revolutionary socialist workers republic, will defend their right to do so with arms in hand, if necessary. The basis on which they would form this territory would not be on the present basis - oppression of the Catholic minority - but we'd tie no strings to their forming their own state (the Protestant workers). We as the socialist republic do not advocate that they do so, and do not aid in setting up such a separate state. But we fight for the right of the Protestant workers to do so. Meanwhile, we tell them that, though we'd defend their right to do so in such a case, we still don't think they should do this, because they'd be better off in a socialist republic with the workers on top of the bosses - but no workers on top of any other workers, religion, race and ethnicity notwithstanding - than they are now in the North, or than they ever could be even with the relatively privileged position they enjoy vis a vis the Catholic workers. This we explain because the society in which they oppress the Catholics is still one in which they, as workers, have much more in common with the Catholic workers and unemployed one rung below them than they ever could have with the bosses up

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at the top of the ladder.

The transitional program we use to unite them and the Catholics will concretize this theory for them and make it real. That is, after all, the purpose of the transitional program.

All this, of course, must be seen in the context of the eventual development of a revolutionary socialist workers movement in Southern Ireland. Without a real movement of socialist workers against the Catholic Lynch government in the South, all our words about defending the right of self-determination in the North for the Protestants, as well as coming out against their exercising that right and instead in favor of their uniting with Catholic workers against Stormont and British imperialism will seem to the Protestant workers as just that - words. At the same time, till that Southern socialist workers movement does develop, and grow, it becomes all the more necessary for revolutionary socialists in the North to emphasize to Protestant workers that we do favor them having the right of self-determination. This, in the concrete situation, will be counterposed to the mouthings of the moderate and pro-Lynch "unity" forces - the forces who want "unity" but on a capitalist basis and under the control of the Southern capitalist and pro-Catholic theocracy.

Socialists show that we are just as much opposed to the Lynch government as to Stormont in the North. By the same token, a blow against the Southern government by a revolutionary workers movement would be a blow against Protestant bigotry, a blow for unity of Protestant and Catholic workers, and a blow against the possibility of Protestant workers opting in favor of exercising their right of self-determination. Any serious revolutionary workers movement in the South would enhance the position of the revolutionary socialist movement in the North a hundred, even a thousand fold.

Lenin's view of the revolutionary socialist's defense of the right of self-determination was simply that it was the best way to prevent a minority from exercising that right. We, the revolutionary socialist vanguard, don't tell you what to do in this regard - that is, we do not tell you WITH ARMS. We tell you what we think you should do with propaganda - but WITH ARMS we defend your right to do what you choose. That is how we hope to bring you over to us. The capitalist class, the stalinists and their various social-democratic, liberal and stalinoid apologists have a different methodology; it's called "talk a good game, but keep the big stick handy".

In a situation as volatile as that of Ireland, the Leninist method is the only method - repeat, the only method - which has any possibility of building a united Catholic/Protestant workers movement. Any other method can only resolve itself - whether now or in the future - into the use of armed force by Northern Protestant workers against the Catholic minority (with possible genocide resulting) - this is the nearest possibility, barring unity of the North under hegemony of the Catholic South in the near future (another real possibility, by the way); or a civil war by the Protestants against the forced unity under capitalist hegemony and "unification" imposed externally from the outside by Britain and Lynch

with the South; here, the distinct possibility is that the Protestant workers will be massacred, but during the course of this massacre, they'll do some massacring of their own of the geographically available Northern Catholic minority. Either way, the possibility of building a united revolutionary socialist workers movement of Protestant and Catholic workers will be postponed for years and years, for it will take that long for inter-class religious hatreds and bitternesses - bad enough now - to subside at all. At the same time, the blow which a successful all-Ireland socialist revolution would strike for freedom throughout England, Europe and among Irish workers in America would be just as profound.

In a real sense, then, the questions of socialism or fascism - the Protestant paramilitary organizations - are becoming clearly posed in Northern Ireland.

Another comment: though Bob St. Cyr did not convince me that the Protestant minority constitute a "nation", there was nonetheless a kernel of truth in much of what he wrote. No one has yet answered any of his factual allegations about the history, cultural, linguistic and social background of the present Protestant majority in Northern Ireland. The only "answer" was a statement by Sy L. which this writer agreed with. But the question of the IR analysis - that the Protestants are "simply" a misled part of the Irish nation - and the factual basis of it was not gone into. For novices like myself who feel other comrades active in the Irish movement must educate the rest of us about such facts, all I can say is that we feel "uneducated".

I do not have Bob's little piece on Ireland in front of me. As I recall (possibly mistakenly), though, he mentioned something on the Protestants coming sort of "whole-hog" from Britain and having distinctly considered themselves British. If, indeed, this were true, the Protestants would not be a nation, but they might well be considered a "national minority" within all of Ireland. That does not negate the definition of North and South as "one nation," but it does negate the view of both official IR and many socialists involved in the Irish struggle that the Protestants are "simply" part of the Irish nation. At the same time, this view is different from Bob's in that it is not a "two-nations view"; a national minority is not a nation, though under certain circumstances can become a nation. This, in fact, is true for almost any cultural, ethnic, religious or "national" group.

The purpose of the Leninist method - defense of the right of self-determination - is to prevent in some circumstances the minority in question from exercising their right to constitute themselves as a nation by saying to them they can do so, but that socialists in this situation don't feel they should.

Finally: the transitional program and the Leninist view of self-determination in the Irish situation are entirely tied up with each other - though as opposing poles of a unity. You can say as much as you like to the Northern Protestants, "go ahead and constitute yourselves a nation. We don't feel you should now, but we'll defend your right to do so," and you can then say what you feel they should do: namely, "join with your working class Ca-

tholic sisters and brothers in fighting for a united workers republic, North and South." But if your main aim is to convince them of that part of the statement which you desire - the part that you don't feel they should constitute themselves as a nation - and you think they should fight for an Irish Workers Republic with Catholic workers - then the only way you're going to do this is through actualizing this in struggle. In other more simple words, the only way they're going to come over to the socialist banner is not only if they're convinced that you would defend their right to self-determination if they did want to exercise it; that's necessary but not sufficient. The other thing that's necessary is if they think it's more important to join the Irish socialist struggle and become a part of your workers republic than to become a separate nation, and they're only going to feel that way if they think they can join that struggle and republic on an equal basis, taking full part in running - with the Catholic workers in this situation - the factories, farms, mills, mines, offices, schools and institutions of housing. The crimes of the Provisional IR and the pro-Lynch forces complement each other. Both, from ostensibly different angles, approach the whole Irish question in similar ways. That is, the pro-Lynch forces are quite willing to have a "united" Ireland on a capitalist and Catholic theocratic basis. This leaves the Protestant and Catholic workers out in the cold. The Provisionals talk about nationalism and, in certain ways, they too are willing to have "a nation once again" on a capitalist basis. Their tactics - anti-civilian, anti-workingclass violence - are somewhat different than the tactics of the moderates, but their action (just as that of the moderates) is opposed to mass direct action. The Provos and moderates orient differently in this regard, the moderates orienting toward the government or "liberal Laborites," the Provos toward individual or small-group terrorism. But the common thing in both is the hostility to any tendency that really wants to organize and mobilize the working class at the point of production to take control over society in its own name. The "small group activity" of the moderates is an orientation toward the "small group" who already holds the power - the liberal wing of Britain's imperialist bourgeoisie and its local flunkies in Stormont and Dublin. The "small group activity" of the Provos, on the other hand, is the activity of themselves, and themselves only - minus the working class as a whole. Again, mass action versus elitism; socialism from below vs. socialism from above.

The expression of the similarity of these two elitist wings of the "Irish movement" in programmatic and strategic terms is their total lack of a strategy for bringing workers to power and uniting Catholic and Protestant workers. The reason, simply speaking, is that they cannot do that; they cannot formulate such a strategy, in other words, given their respective politics. But that must be done. How? How to actualize this in struggle. There's only one way - a transitional program of demands ranging from the basic democratic demands linked up through jobs for all, housing for all, all the way to workers power and socialism. That's the only way. A fight for socialism, for the program of transitional demands, will bring to both Catholic and Protestant workers the realization that these demands and this program are opposed by both Catholic and Protestant bosses. That will blow the lid on both Pro-



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and Provo sectarianism

testant chauvinism, faster and better than anything else could. It is not a question here of the Protestant and Catholic workers "inevitably" coming over to socialism and the Irish movement. Rather, it's a question of the only road for the Irish movement if it wants to succeed in achieving both national self-determination and a nation free from fratricidal warfare and potential genocide.

The Official IR, though "officially" (no pun intended) favoring working class activity, have difficulty because they don't organize the class where it's already organized - at the factory or shop level. They may have trade union members, but Sean Kenny, one of their American spokesmen, at an IS forum in NYC July 21 said quite directly "We don't try to take over the trade unions .... When we go into the shop, we take off the IRA cap because it's easier to talk with workers if you're a worker." Fine, be a worker, but a worker with politics. Unfortunately, when Kenny and an ISer talk about it being "easier to talk to workers when you're a worker," they have (at least, it is hoped they have) different things in mind. The IS means you bring your politics into the shop or office where you work and talk about them - you're a "political" worker. The IR means you leave the politics outside and act like a "worker" inside. Leaving the politics outside means leaving the transitional program outside. Without the transitional program that's designed to unite Protestant and Catholic workers, you won't do what we said was needed to convince the Protestant minority not to constitute themselves a nation, but rather you'll just perpetuate the disunity between Catholic and Protestant and continue to leave the suspicions of both groups intact.

These factors also explain something that was perpetually misunderstood by Kenny at the abovementioned forum: when someone from the IS asked him if the official IR attempted forming rank and file groups within the union ranks, he answered by saying that of course the IR (officials) were involved in strike support work, and have trade union members. But, as we've said, there's "no attempt to take over the unions" - as though such an "attempt" need be bureaucratic in character (relying on organizational/technical methods - something quite familiar to the IRA who have in the past often relied on other "technical" means for effecting what were in essence "political" changes - the "technical" means of bombing varied targets) rather than the democratic and marxist method of winning the workers over to your program.

Yet, though it was made clear by the IS speaker at that forum that the IS defended and even, in certain cases, supported the use of military measures by the oppressed minority against the terrorism of the oppressor, such measures cannot substitute for politics. It is this message we are going to have to get across to left-wing members of the American Irish Republican Clubs (as well as to other sections of the American Irish movement generally), and to the Irish freedom struggle abroad if we wish to help them "break the weak link" that is the Irish ruling class.

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FEDERAL AND STATE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH LEGISLATION:  
A LEGAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH STRATEGY

by Andrew B.

The more glaring weaknesses of Public Law 91-596, the Williams-Steiger Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 were briefly discussed in "Nixon, the Business Community, and the 1970 Job Safety Law," Bulletin, no. 18 (February 25, 1972). See also Alice Watts, "Life and Limb," UP, no. 53 (March 17-30, 1972), pages 6-7. In addition, a pre-publication copy of Joseph Page (editor), Occupational Epidemic, is available for \$15.00 (note: must be prepaid) from the Center For the Study of Responsive Law, Post Office Box 19367, Washington, D.C. 20036. Finally, "The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and the Future of Safety and Health on the Job in Illinois," Chicago Regional Hospital Study Working Paper, Series IV, Number 17 (June 1972), may be obtained from: Health Information Division, Illinois Regional Medical Program, Inc., 122 South Michigan Avenue-Room 939, Chicago, Illinois 60603.

A branch's interest and involvement in occupational safety and health will probably center around the specific circumstances in which members are working. These circumstances vary from job to job and from one state to another. Thus, there are specific legal and medical questions which need to be researched and answered. The answers to these types of questions are not provided by our broad political perspective on the job safety scene, although this perspective certainly points to the more relevant questions.

This paper provides an introductory outline of three different (but overlapping) types of information resources and networks which are quite accessible and which will provide some of the concrete, practical answers to the day-to-day and long-term questions that should be asked in our effort to industrialize effectively.

First, there are two organizations on whose mailing lists one's name belongs. For \$2.00 a year, one can subscribe to the Occupational Health Project Report. Write to: Daniel Berman, Executive Director, Occupational Health Project, Medical Committee For Human Rights, 710 South Marshfield Street, Chicago, Illinois 60612. The Report is published about once every six weeks and has been in existence since late 1971. Its contents usually include a catalog of current publications; a brief description of current MCHR projects in various cities; reports on past occupational safety and health conferences; and announcements of forthcoming conferences. Despite MCHR's tendency to suppress political discussion, an occasional political perspective is published in the Report.

The American Public Health Association has an Occupational Health section, with which one can affiliate by joining the APHA. Membership applications can be ripped out (or xeroxed) from any recent number of the American Journal of Public Health. Or write to: American Public Health Association, 1015 Eighteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Minimum annual dues are \$5.00 a year. On the application, one should circle Section 15 (Occupational Health). Membership includes subscriptions to two monthly publications, namely, the American Journal of Public Health and The Nation's Health. Members' names are included in special mailing lists according to affiliation (in this case, occupational health). Thus, one may receive



publishers' notices of forthcoming books and monographs in the occupational safety and health field, as well as announcements of special activities for the Occupational Health section of the APHA.

Secondly, a number of standard reference works index published research on occupational disease. These include: (a) Index Medicus; (b) Medical Socioeconomic Research Sources; and (c) Hospital Literature Index.

Thirdly, several publications will direct one to different kinds of information about federal/state occupational safety and health laws, programs, standards, and enforcement activity. Standards promulgated under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration are published in the Federal Register. (See "Occupational Safety and Health Standards; National Consensus Standards and Established Federal Standards," Federal Register, XXXVI, number 105-Part II (May 29, 1971), pages 10465-10714, for the first listing of such standards. Revisions, deletions, and additions are to be found in subsequent numbers of the Federal Register.)

Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970: Law and Explanation is available (@\$4.50) from: Commerce Clearing House, Inc., 4025 West Peterson, Chicago, Illinois 60646. Occupational Safety and Health Act; What It Covers is available (free) from: AFL-CIO, 815 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. A Handy Reference Guide-The Williams-Steiger Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 is available (free) from: Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. 20210.

An overview of state regulations and the responsible state agencies in occupational safety and health is given in: Occupational Health and Safety Legislation (free) from National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20852. Too expensive to subscribe to, but available in a good law library, are the Occupational Safety and Health Reporter (weekly) and the Occupational Health and Safety Letter (bimonthly).

As a public service, many states have a legislative reference bureau which will provide copies of pending bills (free to taxpayers from that state) concerning job safety and health. The financial pages of local newspapers will provide clues as to how fast the Occupational Safety and Health Administration is relinquishing jurisdiction over occupational safety and health programs in any state. In this regard, one might also check the Business Periodicals Index, Funk & Scott's Index of Corporations, the Wall Street Journal Index, the Christian Science Monitor Index, and the New York Times Index.

Citywide and statewide labor publications (AFL-CIO and ALA) usually monitor proposed changes in job safety legislation and regulations. Local chambers of commerce often provide special publications to alert their members to forthcoming legal and administrative changes in job safety programs.

Finally, the Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications indexes published government research on all aspects of job safety and health--legal as well as medical.