

JAMES CONNOLLY (1868-1916) is a revolutionary hero, known for his role in the struggle for Irish independence from British imperialism, and for his revolutionary syndicalist politics – he was part of a long tradition of anarchist and syndicalist anti-imperialism worldwide. The texts in this pamphlet outline Connolly's life and ideas, as relevant to anarchists, syndicalists and anti-imperialists today as at his death.

Connolly promoted a radical vision of decolonisation: a “workers republic,” under worker-peasant self-management, free of both British imperial and native Irish elites, and part of a larger socialist world community and struggle. He was active in the syndicalist-influenced Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU) -- which built its own militia (armed forces), the Irish Citizens Army, in 1913.

Connolly and the Irish Citizens Army joined with Irish republicans in the armed 1916 Irish Easter Rising against British imperialism. Severely wounded during the fighting that followed, he was arrested and shot by a British firing squad. The Irish war of independence that followed the Easter Rising was a major defeat for British power, but ended in a capitalist Ireland far short of Connolly's “workers republic.”

It is essential to reclaim alternative anarchist and syndicalist visions of anti-imperialism, like Connolly's, which show a better way.

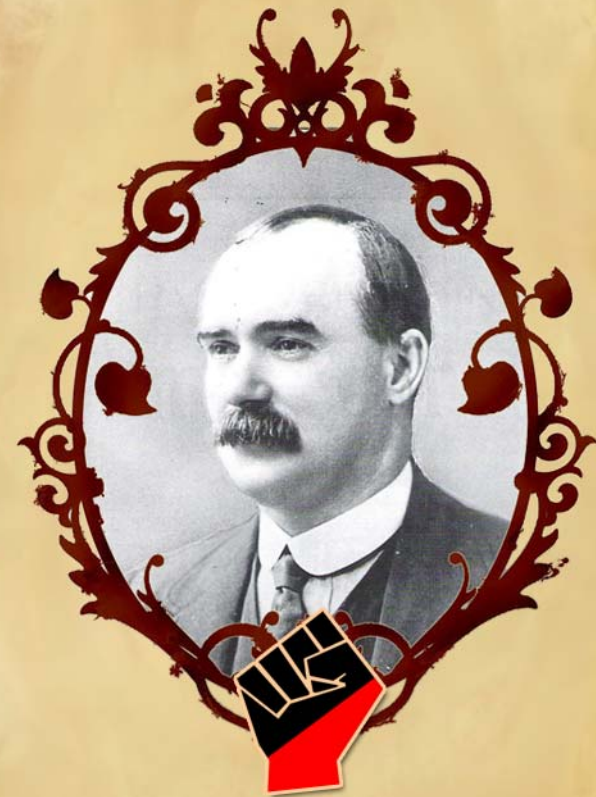


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JAMES CONNOLLY



**SYNDICALISM AND THE STRUGGLE
FOR IRISH INDEPENDENCE:**

NATIONAL LIBERATION THROUGH CLASS STRUGGLE!

James Connolly, Irish Syndicalist

No author given

Source: *Anarchy Magazine*, no. 6. London, pp., 1971

<http://irishanarchisthistory.wordpress.com/tag/peoples-democracy/>

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Industrial Unionism and Constructive Socialism

by James Connolly

Source: *Socialism Made Easy*, 1908

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***OBITUARY: On the death of James Connolly and
Francis Sheehy-Skeffington***

by Padraic Colum

Source: From the anarchist journal *Mother Earth* (New York, published by Emma Goldman), volume 11, number 4, pp. 505-507, June 1916

James Connolly,

Syndicalism and the Struggle
for Irish Independence:

*National Liberation through
Class Struggle!*

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courage and his enlightenment made him a guide for the people, they took him on his way to his home where his wife and child were, and shot him in a barrack-yard without even the form of court-martial. The matter will be inquired into, says Premier Asquith!

But Skeffington is dead now, and the spiritual life of Ireland has been depleted by as much of the highest courage, the highest sincerity, the highest devotion as a single man could embody.



James Connolly, Irish Syndicalist

No author given

An Irishman's opinion of James Connolly depends a great deal upon which political party he supports. Connolly has been hailed variously as a republican, a communist, a nationalist and a christian-socialist. All of the left-wing parties in Ireland have swooped like vultures upon his corpse and even the church, which he bitterly opposed during his lifetime, has shown some signs recently of joining in the chorus of lip-service paid to his name.

All of this may be regarded as a measure of the high esteem in which Connolly is held by the Irish people but it serves to effectively obscure the political philosophy of James Connolly.

He was executed as one of the leaders of the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916 [against British imperialism - editor] but he was not a republican [Irish nationalist - editor]. Before the rising he had told the members of his Citizen Army: "Being the lesser party we join in this fight with our comrades of the Irish Volunteers. But hold your arms. If we succeed, those who are our comrades today, we may be compelled to fight tomorrow."

What then, persuaded Connolly to join in a fight with those whom he regarded as potential political enemies?

In order to answer this question it is necessary to review briefly the evolution of his ideas, particularly those concerning the post-revolutionary form of

society, which differ from those held by other political parties in Ireland and are thoroughly anarcho-syndicalist. He was born on the 5th of June, 1870, in the small market-town of Clones in County Monaghan of working-class parents. Very little is known of his early life but we may safely assume that he and the members of his family were not strangers to hardship and unemployment and that these factors prompted them to emigrate to Edinburgh, the Scottish capital, in an attempt to improve their lot.

Young James at this time was under the legal age for work but nevertheless he got a job as a printer's devil with the local *Evening News* until he was spotted by a factory inspector and the firm was forced to dismiss him. He next worked in a bakehouse and in a tile factory and then left for Glasgow where he settled for a spell before moving to Perth where at the age of twenty-one he was married to Miss Lillie Reynolds. His father, meanwhile, had been disabled in Edinburgh and when the news reached Connolly he returned home and began work as a dustman with Edinburgh corporation.

During this period he became interested in politics and began to attend meetings of the Social Democratic Federation [SDF, a socialist group leaning to Marxism - editor]. The SDF eventually nominated him as their candidate for St. Giles Ward and since he had been obliged to give up his employment in order to secure the nomination his subsequent defeat at the polls forced him to take up other work and we next hear of him working as a shoemaker but when Shane Leslie of the SDF suggested that he return to Dublin in order to help develop the socialist movement in Ireland, Connolly agreed. So in 1896 he returned to Dublin and yet another change of occupation.

This time he worked as a navy and a proof-reader, his previous experience with the *Evening News* probably proving helpful to him in the latter occupation.

On August 13, 1898, the first issue of the paper with which his name was to become forever associated - *The Worker's Republic* appeared. It was published by the Socialist-Republican Party and its publication was due mainly to the generosity of Keir Hardie [anti-imperialist British socialist, a former mineworker - editor] who made a personal loan of £50. Since it was operated by voluntary labour it fell foul of the printers' union and Connolly appeared before them on a charge of blacklegging. Connolly asked the union leaders if the use of private razors meant blacklegging on barbers?

The Worker's Republic continued in publication and he spent most of his time writing for it and on the first chapters of his book, *Labour in Irish History* before setting out on a journey to New York that brought him in contact with a man who was to play an important part in shaping Connolly's political thinking.

Then after the capitalists and the government authorities made a frontal attack upon the Union in 1913 [with a massive lockout], James Connolly with another, a man of military experience [Captain Jack White], founded a defensive force for the Union- the Irish Citizen Army. In March last, when Irish nationalist journals were being suppressed and their type was being broken up by the authorities, the rifles of the Irish Citizen Army turned back the force that was sent to obliterate Connolly's paper "*The Worker's Republic*."

In James Connolly's household, between husband and wife, and father and children there was a wonderful comradeship. He had eight children, most of them girls, and all of them young. I knew one of his children - Nora - for a longer time than I knew Connolly himself. This child had been wisely and finely trained. She has the spirit of the Spartan with the mind of the Gael. She knows as much of song and story as the most fortunate peasant child; she knows what forces are in the way of freedom for her country and her people; she has all the spirit of class and national solidarity. With her bravery and her training she was well reared to enter the combat.

Now that heavy, earnest man, that brave and clear- minded fighter has been shot to death, it is hard to think that the loss to Ireland is not irreparable. I find it difficult to believe that we will see in our time a man who will give the Irish workers such brave and disinterested service- who will give, as Connolly gave them, his mind, his heart, his life. He made a discovery in Irish history, and the workers of Ireland will be more and more influenced by what he wrote when he said

"that the conquest of Ireland had meant the social and political servitude of the Irish masses, and therefore the re-conquest of Ireland must mean the social, as well as the political, independence from servitude of every man, woman and child in Ireland. In other words, the common ownership of all Ireland by all the Irish."

I shall remember Francis Sheehy-Skeffington as the happiest spirit I ever knew. He fought for enlightenment with a sort of angelic courage; austere, gay, uncompromising. Since he wrote his student pamphlet on Woman's Suffrage he was in the front of every liberalizing movement in Ireland. He was not a bearer of arms in the insurrection- he was a pacifist. But because they knew that his

comrades, the semi-skilled workmen of Ireland. It was to show their position in the past and the present that he wrote his fine study in economics, *"Labor in Irish History."* It was to help their cause that he returned from America. He put all his will and all his fine and trained intelligence into an effort to make a social order in which the Irish worker would have food and house-room, knowledge and fine thought, with some ease of mind for his wife and a happy growth for his children.

When an outsider called at the office of *"The Irish Worker,"* while James Connolly was in charge, he found there a heavy, earnest man who regarded him with deep set eyes that had in them the shrewdness of the North-of-Ireland man. When this earnest heavy man stood up to speak to a crowd of impoverished Dublin workpeople, his deepset eyes had flashes in them. The man was a fighter. All his blows were as shrewd as mother-wit and an intellectual training could make them. He spoke as one who had made all preparations, who had the resolution to go on, and who knew what terms would mean victory for his people. He spoke, as I always thought, like the Chief of a General Army Staff. I was not astonished when I saw that he had the command of the little Army of the Irish Republic.

He knew history and he knew economics, but he knew, too, that the militant force that was necessary in the Irish cities could not be built around abstractions. "This Union," he said, speaking of the Irish Transport [and General] Workers' Union, "has from its inception fought shy of all theorizing or philosophizing about history or tradition, but, addressing itself directly to the work nearest its hand, has fought to raise the standard of labor conditions in Dublin to at least an approximation to decent human conditions. To do this it has used as its inspiring battle-cry, as the watchword of its members, as the key-word of its message, the affirmation that 'An injury to one is the concern of all.'"

The problem of the Irish workers had been shamefully neglected by the politicians. James Larkin and James Connolly created an organization that gave the workers solidarity – a thing difficult to do in Dublin, where there are few specialized industries and where general or unskilled labor bears a greater proportion to the whole body of workers than elsewhere, where the workers are often engaged in totally dissimilar industries. But the Irish Transport [and General] Workers' Union was created– a memorable thing in the history of Ireland.

On arrival in America Connolly joined the Socialist Labour Party [SLP - editor] and was soon elected to the executive of the party which was headed by the famous American syndicalist Daniel de Leon. It may be appropriate to note at this point that on the issue of political activities there is a marked difference in viewpoint between syndicalist practice in Latin countries as compared with Anglo-Saxon countries.

In the USA or Britain syndicalists may regard political parties as a necessary evil and may be prepared to use them as a means to an end but this is not the case with, for instance, the French syndicalists. The early French syndicalists rejected all forms of political activity [i.e. elections, not struggles around political *issues* - editor] regarding it as a waste of time and asserting that those who became involved in it would inevitably become part of the system. The trade union, they felt, ought to carry out the political education of its own members with the sole aim of overthrowing the state by means of the general strike. After the revolution parliament and representation by geographical areas would be abolished so why waste time in training politicians? The administration of the factories would be undertaken by the workers themselves and syndicates of teachers could run the educational system, syndicates of doctors the health service and so on.

De Leon, however, believed in the organisation of a political party [as well as the revolutionary role of unions - editor] and Connolly gained much valuable experience with the SLP and learned a great deal about trade union administration as an organiser for the [syndicalist - editor] Industrial Workers of the World [which was split between pro- and anti-SLP/ De Leonist wings, from 1908 - editor].

He returned to Ireland in 1910 and in 1911 he went to Belfast as secretary and district organiser of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. Around this time he published his manifesto of the Socialist Party of Ireland which ought to make interesting reading to some Irish politicians who claim to be inspired by his ideas.

Elections on a territorial basis would cease under a socialist form of society he said and "the administration of affairs will be in the hands of representatives of the various industries of the nation: the workers in the shops and factories will organise themselves into unions, each union comprising all the workers at a given industry... the representatives elected from the various departments of industry will meet and form the industrial administration of a national government of the country... socialism will be administered by a committee of experts elected from the industries and professions of the land."

During his time in Belfast the mill-owners decided on a speed-up within the mills and working conditions were made very harsh with a number of petty restrictions being introduced. The workers protested and the owners replied with the threat of a lock-out. The trade union leaders were prepared to sell out the millworkers and the workers finally turned to Connolly for help, ignoring their own union leaders. Connolly soon discovered that he had a large-size problem on his hands. The strike funds were inadequate and to call a strike would have meant hardship for the workers so he called a meeting in St. Mary's Hall and advised them to return to work but to ignore any unreasonable rules.

His advice was simple. "If a girl is checked for singing, let the whole room start singing at once; if you are checked for laughing let the whole room laugh at once; and if anyone is dismissed, all put on your shawls and come out in a body."

His advice worked and as a result the petty restrictions in the spinning-rooms were lifted, but he found it difficult to make headway in Belfast where, then as now, the textile-barons and factory owners used religious bigotry [the deep division between Protestants and Catholics - editor] 'to divide the working-class'.

In 1912 he left Belfast for Wexford where he was involved in trade union activities [notably in the syndicalist-led Irish Transport and General Workers Union, ITGWU - editor] before finally going to Dublin. Before reviewing his activities in Dublin and the events leading up to Easter Week, 1916 it may be worthwhile to pause and examine briefly his political views as outlined in his various works. The syndicalist will find his views very familiar and though he enlarged on the views presented here, lack of space prevents giving them in greater detail. His works are freely available and well worth studying.

"The first duty of trade unionists is to help one another. There must be no division of the forces of labour and the large industrial union embracing all workers in each industry must replace the multiplicity of unions which now hamper and restrict our operations, multiply our expenses and divide our forces in face of the mutual enemy. Add to this the concept of one Big Union embracing all and you have not only the outline of the most effective form of combination for industrial warfare today but also for Social- Administration of the Co-operative Commonwealth of the future."

The Reconquest of Ireland



OBITUARY: On the death of James Connolly and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington

by Padraic Colum

WHEN they took Francis Sheehy-Skeffington from the street, shot him to death in a barrack-yard and buried him as gunmen bury their victim – when they took James Connolly out of his bed, and, propping him against a wall did the like by him, the British militarists in Ireland knew well what they were doing – they were killing the two men who were the coolest, the most intelligent, and the most resolute enemies of oppression alive in Ireland.

And when they shot Connolly to death, it seemed as if they had shot the heart and brain out of the Irish proletariat.

James Connolly and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington had in the highest degree the quality of devotion-of heroic devotion. Skeffington had devoted himself to the idea of liberty –he was for the oppressed nationality, the oppressed class, the oppressed sex, the oppressed man. No Irishman fought the battle for liberty at so many points as did this eager, buoyant man.

James Connolly was more exclusive in his devotion. He gave himself to the cause of the workers of the Irish cities. With a will and an intelligence that would have brought him to the easy chair and the good bank account, he refused to leave his

resisting power of the worker against present encroachments of the capitalist class, it familiarises him with the idea that the union he is helping to build up is destined to supplant that class in the control of the industry in which he is employed.

► The Union Can Build Freedom

The power of this idea to transform the dry detail work of trade union organisation into the constructive work of revolutionary Socialism, and thus make of the unimaginative trade unionist a potent factor in the launching of a new system of society, cannot be over-estimated. It invests the sordid details of the daily incidents of the class struggle with a new and beautiful meaning, and presents them in their true light as skirmishes between the two opposing armies of light and darkness.

In the light of this principle of industrial unionism every fresh shop or factory organised under its banner is a fort wrenched from the control of the capitalist class and manned with the soldiers of the revolution to be held by them for the workers.

On the day that the political and economic forces of Labour finally break with capitalist society and proclaim the Workers' Republic, these shops and factories so manned by industrial unionists will be taken charge of by the workers there employed, and force and effectiveness be thus given to that proclamation. Then and thus the new society will spring into existence, ready equipped to perform all the useful functions of its predecessor.



“The hired assassin armies of the capitalist class will be impotent for evil when the railroad men refuse to transport them, the miners to furnish coal for their ships of war, the dock-labourers to load or coal these ships, the clothing workers to make uniforms, the sailors to provision them, the telegraphists to serve them or the farmers to feed them.”

Labour, Nationality and Religion

“When the workers elect their foremen and superintendents and retain them only during effective supervision and handling of their allotted duties, when industries elect their representatives in the National Congress and the Congress obeys the demand emanating from the public, for whom it exists, corruption and favouritism will be organically impossible.”

Labour, Nationality and Religion

The principles of trade unionism outlined here by Connolly are familiar to every syndicalist. Solidarity is stressed with one big union based on the industry concerned being the aim [as with the ITGWU - editor], not the division of the union into many small craft unions each with its own staff of petty-bureaucrats. The growth of a trade-union bureaucracy is to be impeded by making all representatives subject to immediate recall. The main function of the union is to prepare its members for industrial warfare [and self-management through union workplace occupations - editor] and the general strike is the weapon to be used.

In almost every respect the large syndicalist CNT [National Confederation of Labour, a massive anarcho-syndicalist union federation - editor] which flourished in Spain prior to and during the Civil War [and Revolution, of 1936-1939 - editor] probably bears the closest resemblance to Connolly's dream of the ideal trade union. It is worth noting that the bitterest opponents of the CNT in Spain were the communists who set up a union and eventually engaged in open warfare against the syndicalists.

The claim of the Irish communists [to stand in Connolly's tradition - editor] is a very hollow one even though it is accepted by many people in Ireland. Connolly was certainly a Marxist but syndicalism has always been a mixture of anarchism, Marxism and trade unionism [Note: some syndicalists were influenced by Marxism, but syndicalism comes from anarchism - editor]

and on some issues his views were opposed to most of those who describe themselves as Marxist.

Some people consider his views to be ambiguous for anyone professing to be a Marxist.

He respected the “earnest teacher of Christian morals”, yet throughout his life he continued a scathing attack on the church exposing many of its doctrines and institutions. Yet the views of Karl Marx concerning religion were more humane than he is generally given credit for. “Religion,” said Marx, “is the sigh of the lost creature, it is the heart of a heartless world, it is the opium of the people.” Marx, too, accepted that not all clergymen were instruments of the bourgeoisie and his position is widely different from that of those who are merely anti-clerical.

In his analysis of Irish history Connolly used a Marxist [class struggle - editor] approach. The class-struggle was always emphasised and many of the sham-patriots exposed and he was never simply a nationalist such as Padraic Pearse who considered all the ills of Ireland to have been caused by foreign intervention. Connolly’s definition of patriotism sets him apart from the republicans. Arthur Griffith, one of the leaders of Sinn Fein (it is interesting to note that the first issues of the paper *Sinn Fein* carried a serialisation of [the anarchist - editor] Kropotkin’s *Fields, Factories and Workshops*), who would have undoubtedly considered himself to be a patriot was totally opposed to any form of class war, but Connolly’s patriotism was not the sham-patriotism of the Irish bourgeoisie who merely wanted to expel the foreigners in order to obtain for themselves a richer share of the pickings.

He equated the Irish nation with the Irish working-class. “That which is good for the working-class I deem patriotic, but that party or movement is the most perfect embodiment of patriotism which most successfully works for the conquest by the working-class of the control of the destinies of the land wherein they labour. To me therefore, the socialist of another country is a fellow-patriot, as the capitalist of my own country is a natural enemy.”

These words of Connolly’s would not find a responsive echo today in the hearts of those who have draped either the green [Irish nationalist - editor] or the red [socialist - editor] flag around themselves in their quest for political power. Since it is necessary for them to enlist mass support in pursuit of their aims they are all socialists nowadays even the most extreme national-chauvinists who pay lip-service to Connolly (e.g. the provisionals [the Irish Republic Army, active in Northern Ireland into the 1990s – editor]).

expert supervision, something unthinkable of any society built upon the political State.

To focus the idea properly in your mind you have but to realize how industry today transcends all limitations of territory and leaps across rivers, mountains and continents; then you can understand how impossible it would be to apply to such far-reaching intricate enterprises the principle of democratic control by the workers through the medium of political territorial divisions.

Under Socialism, States, territories, or provinces will exist only as geographical expressions, and have no existence as sources of governmental power, though they may be seats of administrative bodies.

Now, having grasped the idea that the administrative force of the Socialist republic of the future will function through unions industrially organised, that the principle of democratic control will operate through the workers correctly organised in such industrial unions, and that the political territorial State of capitalist society will have no place or function under Socialism, you will at once grasp the full truth embodied in the words of this member of the Socialist Party whom I have just quoted, that “only the industrial form of organisation offers us even a theoretical constructive Socialist programme.”

► The Political State and its Uses

To some minds constructive Socialism is embodied in the work of our representatives on the various public bodies to which they have been elected. The various measures against the evils of capitalist property brought forward by, or as a result of, the agitation of Socialist representatives on legislative bodies are figured as being of the nature of constructive Socialism.

As we have shown, the political State of capitalism has no place under Socialism; therefore, measures which aim to place industries in the hands of, or under the control of, such a political State are in no sense steps towards that ideal; they are but useful measures to restrict the greed of capitalism and to familiarize the workers with the conception of common ownership. This latter is, indeed, their chief function.

But the enrolment of the workers in unions patterned closely after the structure of modern industries, and following the organic lines of industrial development, is par excellence the swiftest, safest, and most peaceful form of constructive work the Socialist can engage in. It prepares within the framework of capitalist society the working forms of the Socialist republic, and thus, while increasing the

What the Socialist does realize is that under a social democratic form of society the administration of affairs will be in the hands of representatives of the various industries of the nation; that the workers in the shops and factories will organise themselves into unions, each union comprising all the workers at a given industry; that said union will democratically control the workshop life of its own industry, electing all foremen etc., and regulating the routine of labour in that industry in subordination to the needs of society in general, to the needs of its allied trades, and to the departments of industry to which it belongs; that representatives elected from these various departments of industry will meet and form the industrial administration or national government of the country.

► **Begin in the Workshop**

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

Social democracy will be administered by a committee of experts elected from the industries and professions of the land; capitalist society is governed by representatives elected from districts, and is based upon territorial division.

The local and national governing, or rather administrative, bodies of Socialists will approach every question with impartial minds, armed with the fullest expert knowledge born of experience; the governing bodies of capitalist society have to call in an expensive professional expert to instruct them on every technical question, and know that the impartiality of said expert varies with, and depends upon, the size of his fee.

► **No 'Servile State'**

It will be seen that this conception of Socialism destroys at one blow all the fears of a bureaucratic State, ruling and ordering the lives of every individual from above, and thus gives assurance that the social order of the future will be an extension of the freedom of the individual, and not the suppression of it. In short, it blends the fullest democratic control with the most absolute

There was an underground revolutionary atmosphere in Dublin following the outbreak of the first world war [1914-1918, in which imperial Britain led one side - editor]. The question of Home Rule [for Ireland - editor] had been shelved until the war was over and many Irishmen joined the British [imperial - editor] army believing that the re-unification of Ireland would be assured once hostilities ceased. But Sinn Feiners [the main nationalist party - editor] thought differently and concentrated on arming themselves and training in preparation for an armed rebellion. Connolly was opposed to the war on the grounds that it was an imperialist conflict and maintained a genuine socialist and internationalist position. He constantly attacked his trade-union colleagues in Great Britain for turning jingoist [i.e. pro-war, pro-British imperial victory - editor] and supporting the war, and began to prepare his own Citizen Army [a workers' militia born of the ITGWU during a big strike in 1913 - editor] for action. [He aimed at using the British Empire's weakness in the war to launch a struggle for an independent, syndicalist Ireland - editor].

It is related that on learning of his intentions two of the republican leaders, Padraic Pearse and Sean McDermott visited him and persuaded him to stay his hand as he would have plenty of help if he only waited. The question immediately arises as to why Connolly with his numerically small Citizen Army should even have contemplated armed rebellion. That the man who possessed such a high degree of skill in political analysis should consider engaging in such a futile enterprise seems incomprehensible but is easily explained when one remembers the strong anarchistic element in his thinking. He regarded all revolutions as being a leap in the dark and said, "The revolutionists of the past have ever been adventurous, else they would never have been revolutionists. The spirit of calculation which is the very essence of a good merchant is the destruction of a good revolutionist."

His remarks contain a revealing exposure of the mentality of many of our "scientific-socialists" [i.e. Marxists - editor] who are imbued to such an extent with the spirit of calculation that they abandon any revolutionary zeal they may possess and begin to think in terms of making a profitable career out of socialism. When even the faint hope of successful revolution presented itself Connolly did not hesitate even though he was conscious that he would not survive it. Speaking to a friend he had met on the steps of Library Hall, Connolly assured him that the rebels were all going out to be slaughtered. The anarchist belief in propaganda by the deed was obviously well known to Connolly and he may possibly have had the words of the Russian anarchist Herzen in mind: "It is better to perish with the revolution than to seek refuge in the alms-house of reaction." [Note: Herzen was not an anarchist - editor].

The latter view would probably have been shared by the idealistic Padraic Pearse and there was probably a deeper bond of understanding between these two men than between any of the others even though they would not have been in entire agreement on political issues.

Since the events of Easter Week, 1916 in Dublin have been fully recorded elsewhere they may be studied in detail in any of the numerous volumes on that period of Irish history. Briefly the Citizen Army and the Irish volunteers [Republican nationalists - editor] occupied a number of key points in Dublin but owing to disputes within the republican leadership the event did not go off as planned. Orders to take part in the rising had been countermanded by one of the Volunteer leaders but even had all of the forces available taken part it could not possibly have succeeded.

Connolly, Pearse and the other leaders occupied the GPO building in Dublin, read the proclamation of the Irish Republic [i.e. the declaration of independence - editor] and held out for a week against the superior force of the British army. The GPO was bombarded by shellfire and set on fire and Pearse was forced to surrender the garrison in order to avoid further casualties. He and the other leaders were executed by a British firing squad, Connolly who had been wounded in the fighting and was unable to stand being seated in a chair to face the rifles of his executioners.

The rising seemed to have ended in failure. The bourgeois press condemned it as did the church leaders who must have secretly rejoiced at seeing so many opponents of the hierarchy so swiftly disposed of and the populace had been mainly apathetic. But after the executions the mood of the people swiftly changed and the feeling of revulsion helped to spark off the war of independence [1919-1921, leading to Irish independence - editor].

Unfortunately this proved to be a triumph for bourgeois nationalism and during the civil war [1921-1922, that followed - editor] the socialist elements in the republican movement were ruthlessly suppressed with militant socialist-republicans like Liam Mellows being executed by the Free Staters [the mainstream nationalists - editor].

The memory of James Connolly is still alive in Ireland today but his political ideals have either been forgotten or deliberately distorted. His writings are freely available but they are often accompanied by ignorant political commentaries describing him as being a super-patriot, a communist, a republican or almost anything except what he really was - a syndicalist.

Robert Lynd who wrote an appreciation of Connolly for *Labour in Irish History*

► Organising Constructively

In the present article I desire to show how they who are engaged in building up industrial organisations for the practical purpose of today are at the same time preparing the framework of the society of the future. It is the realization of that feat that indeed marks the emergence of Socialism as a revolutionary force from the critical to the positive stage. Time was when Socialists, if asked how society would be organised under Socialism, replied invariably, and airily, that such things would be left to the future to decide. The fact was that they had not considered the matter, but the development of the Trust and Organised Capital in general, making imperative the Industrial Organisations of Labour on similar lines, has provided us with an answer at once more complete to ourselves and more satisfying to our questioners.

Now to analyse briefly the logical consequences of the position embodied in the above quotation.

“Political institutions are not adapted to the administration of industry.”

Here is a statement that no Socialist with a clear knowledge of the essentials of his doctrine can dispute. The political institutions of today are simply the coercive forces of capitalist society they have grown up out of, and are based upon, territorial divisions of power in the hands of the ruling class in past ages, and were carried over into capitalist society to suit the needs of the capitalist class when that class overthrew the dominion of its predecessors.

► The Old Order and the New

The delegation of the function of government into the hands of representatives elected from certain districts, States or territories, represents no real natural division suited to the requirements of modern society, but is a survival from a time when territorial influences were more potent in the world than industrial influences, and for that reason is totally unsuited to the needs of the new social order, which must be based upon industry.

The Socialist thinker, when he paints the structural form of the new social order, does not imagine an industrial system directed or ruled by a body of men or women elected from an indiscriminate mass of residents within given districts, said residents working at a heterogeneous collection of trades and industries. To give the ruling, controlling, and directing of industry into the hands of such a body would be too utterly foolish.



Industrial Unionism and Constructive Socialism

by James Connolly

There is not a Socialist in the world today who can indicate with any degree of clearness how we can bring about the co-operative commonwealth except along the lines suggested by industrial organisation of the workers.

Political institutions are not adapted to the administration of industry. Only industrial organisations are adapted to the administration of a co-operative commonwealth that we are working for. Only the industrial form of organisation offers us even a theoretical constructive Socialist programme. There is no constructive Socialism except in the industrial field.

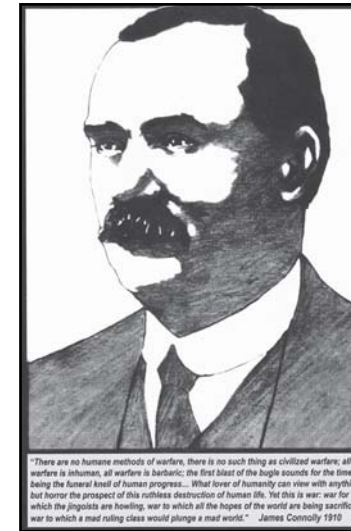
The above extracts from the speech of Delegate Stirton, editor of the *Wage Slave*, of Hancock, Michigan, so well embody my ideas upon this matter that I have thought well to take them as a text for an article in explanation of the structural form of Socialist society. In a previous chapter I have analysed the weakness of the craft or trade union form of organisation alike as a weapon of defence against the capitalist class in everyday conflict on the economic field, and as a generator of class consciousness on the political field, and pointed out the greater effectiveness for both purposes of an industrial form of organisation.

is one of the few to recognise that James Connolly was an anarcho-syndicalist but then Lynd was a poet and had no political axe to grind. It is a great pity that the Irish who are prone to quarrel with each other over political issues seldom make any real attempt to understand them. They are very easily led by a green or orange banner and inclined to think with their blood rather than with their brains and will always be easy meat for unscrupulous politicians who control the mass media. If Connolly's ideals are ever to be realised in Ireland it will most certainly be through the medium of the younger generation who are much better educated, politically and otherwise, than their predecessors. They provide the only ray of hope in the mists of Irish politics.

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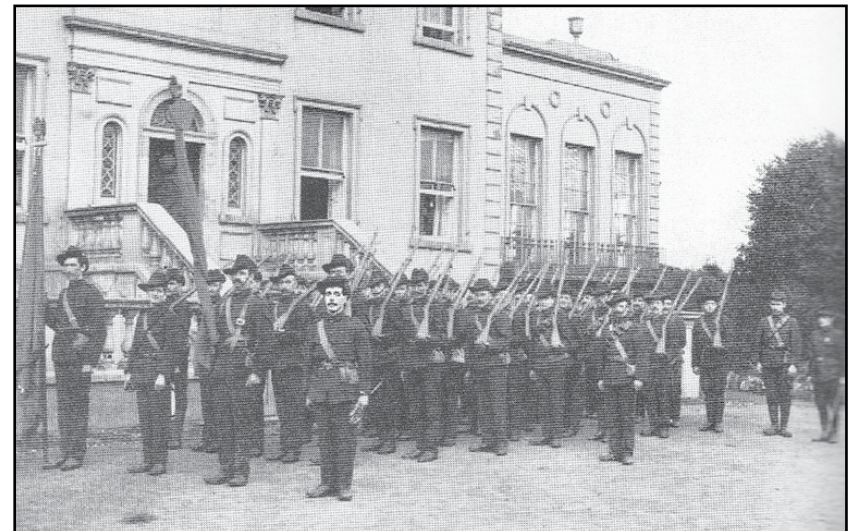
The Irish Citizen Army parading in front of Liberty Hall in 1915.



Postcard of James Connolly



Captain J.R. White, DSO, Chairman, Army Council, Irish Citizen Army, 1914



Irish Citizen Army on parade outside Croydon House, Croydon Park, Dublin, the ITGWU recreation centre.