

The present situation presents a tremendous opportunity to build the organisation, improve its consciousness, and strengthen its link with the people.

The three main tasks are:

- 1/ raising financial support for defence of the people of the North: the Northern Defence Fund;
- 2/ putting pressure on Dublin to maintain the good political stand and to harden its position rather than to do any deal with the English;
- 3/ developing an all-Ireland consciousness among the people's organisations.

In order most effectively to carry out these tasks, it is important to *organise* effectively both the Movement itself *and* the voluntary support engendered by the situation.

The following steps are necessary:

- (a) all cumainn to meet at least weekly — preferably two or three times a week — briefly, in their own areas. At these meetings, allocate people to tasks in a disciplined manner, with instructions to carry them out and report back.
- (b) People should be allocated into two main channels: (i) direct collection for the Defence Fund; (ii) contacting and organising the extra voluntary assistance.
- (c) Extra voluntary assistance can be convened into a Solidarity Committee, meeting weekly, with some of the more experienced and political-minded cumann members to guide and educate it.
- (d) Split the efforts of the Solidarity Committee members into the following activities: (i) support for the direct Defence Fund collection, along with members of the Movement; (ii) members with an organisational basis to seek to get resolutions passed in support of hardening the Dublin government line; also to see that their organisation establish a *direct link* with its Northern counterpart for relief work, rather than working via the Red Cross, which works through the existing Six-County state machine; (iii) support for the Northern Relief Centre, 44 Parnell Square.
- (e) Recruit from the Solidarity Committees into the Movement only on the basis of proven worth. We do not want to snowball the organisation with uneducated and inexperienced people.
- (f) Develop the sales of the *UI* in a systematic and organised way within the cumann area.

Note that the pattern for building an all-Ireland organisational solidarity has been set by the Dublin Trades Council, which is channelling all funds collected under its auspices through the Belfast Trades Council, thereby strengthening the 32-county basis of the trade union movement and involving some elements of the Protestant working class in undoing the harm done to their Catholic neighbours by the B Specials.

The same all-Ireland solidarity can be built up within tenants' associations and credit unions, if the members demand it. This must be organised, and no-one will do so except the radical forces. Left to the themselves, these organisations might be inclined to vote money to the Red Cross, which deals only with the British state machine. Some bodies (e.g., the Countrywomen's Association and, alas, Conradh na Gaeilge) have already taken this step. Perhaps it can be reversed.

Finally, it is important to see that *no* Irish voice demands 'direct rule from Westminster'. At present the Labour Party is doing this. All local contacts with Labour Party people must be used to convey to that body that they must press for an *Irish* structure to replace the discredited

Stermont régime, or at least to demand that democracy be imposed on the Six-County state to an extent such as to enable an all-Ireland political solution to be at least talked about without the stigma of 'subversion'. But 'direct rule from Westminster': No!

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