

# NOTE

## THE MAKING OF THE IRISH WORKING CLASS

*Francis Devine writes:* The Irish Labour History Society, in association with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, is promoting a major international conference on the theme of *The Making of the Irish Working Class*, to be held at St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin from 26-28 September, 1980.

The Conference, which is open to all individuals or those nominated by trade unions, trades councils, political groups or adult/worker education organisations, is divided between main papers and workshop analysis of broad themes. Those themes and main speakers are as follows:

Early Labour Organisation: Trade Union Organisation in Dublin, 1800-70 with Fergus D'Arcy and John Foster.

Industrialisation and Class Structure: Industry and Class, Belfast, 1870-1914 with Tony Hepburn and Francois Bederida.

Labour, Nationalism and Religion: Fianna Fail and the Irish Working Class, 1927-57 with Gearoid O'Tuathaigh and Conor Cruise O'Brien.

The Nature of the Irish Working Class with Joe Lee and Eric Hobsbawm.

Among the well-known workshop contributors are Mel Doyle, Dorothy Thompson, Maurice Goldring, J W Boyle,

John A Murphy, Michael Farrell, Henry Patterson and Arthur Mitchell. Speakers are coming from England, Scotland, Wales, France, Germany, USA, Canada and Australia, as well as all parts of Ireland.

In addition there will be a veterans' session with well-known labour movement activists describing their political formation through their experience of and participation in a major event in Irish political history.

The Saturday evening conference social will be led by Ewan McColl and Peggy Seeger, together with Irish artists and conference participants. In addition the Workers' Music Co-operative have organised a public concert in Dublin on Sunday, 28 September for McColl and Seeger.

The full, residential cost of the weekend is £34. This includes a single room accommodation for Saturday and Sunday nights; breakfast on Saturday and Sunday; evening meal Friday and Saturday; lunch on Saturday and Sunday; morning and evening coffee every day; creche facilities (for which there may be a small additional charge); McColl and Seeger evening; conference package of paper, pen, identification badge, all paper and workshop abstracts.

There is a non-residential fee of £25. It is hoped that most people will be residential, however, and the nominations so far indicate that this is the trend.

Further information is available from the Conference Organiser, Paul Cullen or myself (work Dublin 973361/home Dublin 390322).

## TOWN HALL DEMOCRACY

*Joe Noble writes:* The return of a Tory government last year with its attacks on the trade union movement and cuts in public services has increased the militancy of the working class and the Left has played its part in this process. But it is important for the Left not to forget that militancy on its own is not enough to defeat the Tories *and* secure the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies. It must also pay attention to theory if it wishes to construct a strategy that will be successful.

The national local government advisory of the Communist Party decided earlier this year to publish a pamphlet — *Town Hall Democracy* — which would be launched at Nalگو's national conference in June. It is based on two articles already published in *Marxism Today* which are concerned with two key aspects of the advisory's work. Firstly, the question of the local state in an article by Paul Corrigan and secondly the history, nature and future perspectives for one of the key public service unions, Nalگو, written by Richard Maybin.

Copies available from Central Books, cost 20p plus postage.