John MacLean M.A.
The Irish Tragedy: Scotland's Disgrace
To all whom it may concern.

The WORKERS OF IRELAND have decided to Celebrate

LABOUR DAY

(THURSDAY, MAY 1st),

as a General Holiday

All work will be suspended for that day to demonstrate that the Irish working-class joins with the

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MOVEMENT in demanding a

DEMOCRATIC LEAGUE OF FREE NATIONS as the necessary condition of permanent peace based upon the

SELF-DETERMINATION of all peoples including the

PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

For the National Executive of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress.

WM. O’BRIEN, Secretary.
John MacLean M.A.
The Irish Tragedy: Scotland's Disgrace

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Introduction by Harry McShane

It seldom happens that a pamphlet dealing with political events merits re-publication fifty years later on the grounds of its appropriateness. This is that kind of pamphlet. It was written by John MacLean at a time when the British Government, exasperated by the stubborn resistance of the Irish people, forestalled the Nazis by making use of every possible weapon of murder and terror in order to retain possession of the land across the Irish Sea. The pamphlet appeared just before Lloyd George persuaded three war-weary Irish leaders to agree that Ireland be divided and ruled over by two separate governments, and that one of them be tied up with Ireland's centuries old oppressors.

This pamphlet should be read by those who consider the ruling class of Britain to be more humane than other oppressors. A glance at the list of atrocities contained in its pages should go a long way towards dispelling that illusion. Even those of us who lived through that period are unable to avoid a sense of shock when re-reading the facts. We grasp something of the background to the uprising of Irish discontent. It was the knowledge of what was going on in Ireland together with the failure of the Scottish people to protest, even when Scottish troops were used against the Irish people, that caused John MacLean to write this pamphlet.

A word or two may be of assistance to any reader who may be puzzled by the reference to a possible war with America. It should be recalled that, in 1920, both Russia and Germany were treated as circuit breakers. Russia was weak as a result of war, revolution, foreign intervention and famine. Germany was down and out because of military defeat. The British Empire, still intact, was in competition with America for markets, and for bases. John MacLean was not alone in recognizing the danger of war arising from this fight for supremacy. The retention of Britain's hold on Ireland seemed to be of greater importance than ever before, and, consequently, the resistance of the Irish people was intolerable in the eyes of Lloyd George and the Government.

The refusal of the Irish people to accept defeat compelled Lloyd George to work out a plan that would enable Britain to have a base in Ireland. The plan was never accepted in Ireland, but it produced the Stormont Government which, since its very inception, has depended on religious bigotry, and electoral trickery for its continued existence. Half a century after the Lloyd George brainwave, the people of Ireland are as strong as ever in their determination to have their freedom.

A new generation of Irish men and women are carrying the flag of freedom forward, while their Orange/Unionist opponents use the Union Jack as a symbol of tyranny.

John MacLean toured the whole of Scotland in an effort to win support for the Irish struggle. No less than 20,000 copies of this pamphlet were sold. Everywhere he went, he asked, "Shall Scottish soldiers shoot down Irish workers?". That question is far from being out of date. The desire for freedom is world-wide, and our support should go to all who try to win it.

John MacLean died three years after this pamphlet was written. He was 44 years old. This is one of several publications written by John MacLean and put out by the John MacLean Society. It gives some indication of the kind of man he was.
Let me address myself to Scots people particularly at this critical juncture in the world's history—just as critical as in August, 1914—to save Ireland from a tragedy that is bound to come if a stop is not put to the bloody career of the present Coalition gang of unmitigated scoundrels.

My plea is that Britain has no right to dominate Ireland with constabulary armed with bombs, and with an army and navy considered foreign by the Irish. We Scots have been taught to revere the names of Sir William Wallace and Robert Bruce because these dauntless men of old are reckoned as champions of the cause of freedom when Edward I and Edward II tried to absorb Scotland as part of English territory. All Scots must therefore appreciate the plight of Ireland, which for over seven centuries has chafed under the same English yoke, and now ought to stand by Ireland in her last great effort for freedom; the last because triumph is bound to be hers very soon.

Ireland's subjection is undemocratic

Right through the war the British Government justified its prosecution of the war on the ground that it was a war of 'democracy' against Prussianism, and that the war would guarantee the rights of small nations if the Allies won.

The Allies have won—or at any rate, America has won. Has democracy been recognized? Have small nations had their rights? The pitiful plight of Ireland gives the lie direct to those profound prevaricators called the Coalition Government. The Allies saw to it that a naked plebiscite was carried through in Alsace-Lorraine and Silesia to take away parts of the German Empire, and that all the small nations round the Russian territory obtained their independence as a first step to bribery and use against Russia herself.

But to let Ireland have independence is a different story. Despite Ireland's wonderful unity and solidarity on the issue of separation from Britain, the Coalition Government violently persists in keeping it held on Erin. Nothing but boasting and bluster must animate any right-thinking person when he or she recalls the contemptuously repeated cry that Britain must release German democracy from the clutches of Kaiserism and Junkerism and Prussianism, and recollects the lying boast that the Bolsheviks, in deposing Kerensky, had overthrown the principle of democracy, and that, though a minority, they held the reins of power in rude Russia. As a matter of simple fact, the alleged 'dictatorship by terrorists' was the stock argument used all last year by Winston Churchill and his press puppets to justify the spending of close on two hundred million pounds in the direct and indirect attempt to overthrow the vast Russian Communist Republic. Even yet Britain is chary about trading with Russia because of Russia's alleged repudiation of the principle of democracy.

To any right-thinking person Britain's retention of Ireland is the world's most startling instance of a 'dictatorship by terrorists', as Britain rules Ireland against Irish wishes with policemen armed with bombs and a huge army equipped with over 40 tanks and as many aeroplanes, machine guns galore, and all the other beautiful manifestations of Christian brotherhood, love, and charity.

Democracy in Britain means rule by a clear majority vote, although in some cases Trade Unions insist on a two-to-one majority. How did Ireland vote at the General Election in 1918?

Sinn Feiners and Redmondites polled 1,211,516 votes or 79.3 per cent of the total votes; the Unionists polled
271,435 or 17.8 per cent; and the Independents and Labourists polled 45,939 or 2.9 per cent. Obviously, the vote shows that by 4 to 1 the people in Ireland wish to look after their own affairs. That overwhelming vote satisfies the most stringent demands of democracy inside: Trade Union and Co-operative circles.

This Irish decision was reaffirmed in January, 1920, at the Municipal Elections, when 95 per cent of the townships outside Ulster fell into the hands of the Republicans under a system of Proportional Representation. Even Limerick and Limerick in Ulster were taken from the Unionists, and in Lisburn, Donegal, and Coleraine the Catholics have only a bare majority.

The complete statistics of Municipal Elections show that in Leinster 36 out of 38 towns were won by Republicans and Nationals, in Connaught 9 out of 10, in Munster 32 out of 32, and in Ulster 21 out of 47.

That is not all. The Republicans are now controlling and policing 21 Counties, and news has just arrived that in Ulster the Sinn Finns and Nationalists combined have captured County Tyrone with 11 against 9, and County Fermanagh also with 11 against 9. Great gains have also been registered in the other four of the special Ulster counties, although the final results are not out at the moment of writing.

If all these decisions do not clearly indicate the mind of the majority in Ireland, then elections will never establish any definite verdict.

Britain has obviously no excuse for the flooding of Ireland with troops, and it must be Britain’s Labour’s bounden duty to see that these soldiers, mainly boys of 18, be withdrawn and let the Irish settle their own affairs. If the minority cannot stand up for themselves, let them emigrate. That is what Lord French and the Coalitionists wish, 200,000 young Irishmen to do. They are trying to starve these youths out of their native land. That is why Clyde capitalists gladly engage the Irish. The Government tells them to do so, as Irishmen in Scotland are less dangerous than in Ireland; whereas Scotsmen will submit to unemployment and starvation and even commit suicide rather than annoy the Government or the bosses. Instead of blaming Irishmen for stealing their jobs, Scotsmen should blame the Government and the capitalists, who are responsible for the influx of Irishmen to the Clyde, and the west coast of England. If Ulstermen cannot tolerate an Irish Republic, let them take a taste of emigration.

The Protestant camouflage

The Government defends its persistent policy of retaining Ireland by alleging that it is its sacred duty to protect the Orange Protestants, who would have a rough time of it if the Irish Catholics held full sway in an Irish Republic. This line of argument was good bluff in 1914, but cannot hold water today with clear-headed people, who are nimble-witted enough to put two and two together.

Just remember Britain’s excuse for entry into the war? Was it not to defend poor little Belgium against Germany? Even Lloyd George tried on that wheeze on ‘Xmas, 1915, in St. Andrew’s Hall, Glasgow, when he came to persuade the Clyde workers to accept dilution of labour. But everyone ought to know that the Belgians are Catholics and the Protestants.

Does anyone really believe that Britain fought the greatest world war to protect Catholics against Protestants on the Continent, and now is preparing to turn the Emerald Isle red with Catholic blood to protect Protestants?

Sir Henry Wilson, Field Marshall, in the middle of May, 1920, blew the gaff on the Belgian bluff at the Union Jack Club when he blurted out in indiscreet military fashion that Britain entered the war to save her own skin.

For saying the same, in other words of course, I was sentenced to three years and then to five years’ penal servitude. Sir Henry obviously ought to be sent to Peterhead quarry for the rest of his natural life.

Sir Henry is perfectly right in saying that Britain entered the war for selfish ends—the preservation of British capitalist predominance in the world. May not the same reason explain the stubborn insistence that Ireland shall not get independence?

I think it does. Britain murdered men to steal Egypt because of the Suez Canal, and is going to keep Egypt, although no Ulster exists there. What is the motive behind the retention of Ireland? I think the real reason is not the Ulstermen, when the Government loves as ardently as the citizens of that Indian city called Amritsar, where General Dyer (or Killer) wiped out over 500 to prove to the poor people of India the abounding love of Britain towards the poor heathen.

Britain’s real motive

What then is Britain’s real motive for its bull-dog grip of Erin’s Isle? Ireland stands between Britain and the Atlantic Ocean, on which British ships must freely sail, in case of war, to preserve the people’s food supplies. If Ireland were an independent republic and formed an alliance with America, which Balfour in John Bull now calls ‘Britain’s Next Enemy’, then in the event of a war (which is coming, on much faster than the late war with Germany) Irish ports would be the base of operations of the American fleet and Irish soil would be the base of operations of the American army. Britain might thus be bottled up by America and Ireland combined, as Britain bottled up Germany and starved her into surrender.

That this war with America is approaching fast I prove in another pamphlet written last year (1919) and entitled The Coming War with America.

Lord Leverhulme has bought up some of the Isles off the west coast of Scotland. Lewis and Harris particularly, not only to catch fish but to make harbours, roads, houses, stores, railways, etc., for the British navy in case of war with America. For the same reason Stranraer is being made a big fishing centre, so also, are necessary precautions being taken in the Bristol Channel, south of Ireland.

Last year I calculated that this war was bound to come in five or six years’ time; but recent events show that the fight may burst out at any moment. The five big bull-beef trusts of Chicago, helped by the bankers, are trying to corner the world’s food supplies, so also is Britain. The Standard Oil Trust of America, backed by all the big interests of America, is making desperate efforts to corner the oil supply of the world; so also is Britain. Both sides are assuring the other of greedily trying to monopolize the world’s oil resources. America is in process of stealing Mexico to use Mexican oil in her navy in case of eventualities; Britain has stolen Egypt outright now, and is in process of stealing Mesopotamia and Persia to secure the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, which dominates the oil and mineral resources of those countries and in which the British Government has millions of pounds.

Britain has determined to run her naval and merchant fleet with oil to get out of the clutches of the Miners’ Federation, particularly the revolutionary South Wales miners. Hence the need to control the oil resources of the world. Hence the present bitter fight with America to get a
controlling grip over these resources.

This delicate situation, admitted by Sir H. Wilson to be as critical as the one in July, 1914, explains why Britain allowed Comrade Krassin to come to London and see Lloyd George. Up till the present Britain has blockaded Russia, refused to see Russia's trade representatives, and refused to trade with that vast Communist country. Why has she so suddenly reversed her policy? The only feasible explanation is that she fears the American situation, and wishes to secure food and raw materials, particularly Russian oil, in case of a breakdown of good relationships with America. Do not be deceived into believing that Britain's new Russian policy is dictated by humanitarian motives. It is her selfish ends that dictate her policy all the time and every time.

**Brutal treatment of Ireland**

Her brutal treatment of Ireland, more blatant today than ever before, indicates that quite clearly. Immediately the Armistice was signed more troops poured into Ireland, not as a precaution against a possible rising but as an irritant. Meetings were deliberately suppressed with brutal arrogance, and football matches and other sports were stopped and the spectators and players scattered with violence. Concerts and entertainments were forbidden — even a concert run to provide money to establish a Labour College in Dublin; in fact, the social life of the people was calculatedly interfered with to create an open rising that would give Britain the chance of having an 'Armistice slaughter' in Ireland to settle the Irish for another generation at least.

Those of us who are conversant with the irritating methods adopted in prisons, at Socialist meetings, and in Ireland can readily realize that the people of Ulster were irritated by British army provocateurs and the jeering at General Dyer that afforded the excuse for the most cold-blooded butchery ever perpetrated by any conquering race. If the Irish had not been winked at and allowed to form many Orange men in the streets of Belfast, what a hellish howl the prostitute pressmen, politicians, and pulse-piers of Britain would have set up!

The Irish only escaped a 'blood bath' by calmly and meekly submitting to every calculated effort to arouse them to violence. Senator Walsh and others from America visited Ireland, got the drift of affairs, and then returned to America to place the plight of Ireland before America. America was only too pleased to find some excuse for blackening Britain, so Americans saw that the world learned all about Britain's brutalities in Ireland (and India, Egypt, and the West Indies, too, I daresay). British patriots cannot complain of America doing this, as Britain has similarly blackened the Turks for massacring Armenians, Germans for massacring women and children, and Russians for running the whole gamut of social crime.

Thereafter, De Valera went to America to get funds to help the Irish Parliament or Dail Eireann. Appeals for funds also appeared in the Irish press. Then followed suppressions right and left, as Britain was determined to stand no irish Parliament in Ireland —

- Sept. 20. The entire Republican press in Ireland was suppressed.
- Oct. 15. Sinn Fein and Republican organizations in Dublin suppressed.
- Nov. 21. Military and police raid headquarters of the Republican Government and arrest and imprison the staff.
- Nov. 27. Sinn Fein and Republican organizations suppressed throughout Ireland.
- Dec. 10. Sinn Fein and Republican headquarters ordered to be closed.
- Dec. 12. Sinn Fein leaders, including the Secretary of the Sinn Fein organization, arrested in Dublin and provinces and deported without trial. Republican headquarters again raided and literature confiscated.

During 1919 and the early months of 1920, 66 of the Irish M.P.s elected in 1918 were sent to prison after facing of a trial or without trial at all. Only 7 escaped prison by leaving Ireland shortly after their election in 1918.

Since the Municipal Elections in January, 1920, 35 councillors have been arrested, and attempts were made to arrest at least 36 other councillors.
On March 3 armed military raided the Women Workers' Club, the Irish Women Workers' Union, Liberty Hall, the Socialist Party of Ireland headquarters, the Grocers' Assistants' Union headquarters, and the Irish Drapers' Assistants' headquarters—all in Dublin. At the same time Alderman Wm. O'Brien, the leader of the Irish Labour movement, was snatched away and smuggled into England, where he was kept in prison without trial.

Immediately after that it was learned that on March 1, 1920, Mr. Alan Bell had commanded high bank officials to appear at the Police Court, Jams' Quay, Dublin, with all books and documents used in their banks, so that they might be examined by Government officials. The purpose was to trace all Sinn Fein moneys, and also to know all the business of prominent supporters of the Sinn Fein cause so as to crush them down to poverty.

Bell issued the summons as Resident Magistrate for the County of Dublin. He first appeared as an assistant to J. E. French, chief of the English Secret Service in Ireland. As a result of Wm. O'Brien's exposures in 1884 of Dublin Castle immorality, French was convicted of unnatural crime. Bell acted as his agent-procureur in the West of Ireland in the Land League times, one of his exploits being the arrest of Henry George, author of *Progress and Poverty*, during his visit to Ireland in the eighties. Bell was the secret agent of the London Times during the Pigott forgery case, in which Pigott confessed he had been bribed to forge the handwriting of Parnell so as to involve Parnell in high treason. But for the confession Parnell might have been shot. Since then Bell carried on his dirty work as an English spy in Ireland.

He is the scoundrel dragged in broad daylight from a Dublin car and shot. What self-respecting man or woman can blame the Irish for ridding the earth of such a foul stunk? Who ever was sorry for a Judas?

Irish 'crimes'

When even the first suppressions in September failed to draw the Irish into open revolt, the British Government had to do something to justify its base, brutal, and bloody occupation of plucky Ireland. My opinion is that it, through Dublin Castle, arranged the assassination of detectives and police and then blamed the Irish. The culmination came when it arranged the attack on Lord French near the spot where Grendelsh and Burke were killed in the eighties. French was in an armoured motor. Unfortunately for Britain, few sensible people pity the Flanders' failure; but doubtless many who lost sons under French would not have been at all sorry had he crossed the black stream. It is certain that the day the Irish will put his lights out, off he goes.

The Government seized the excuse to arm the police with bombs and convert police stations into barracks. Then the Irish began those attacks on the police system that have absolutely demoralized it, in fact have virtually broken it up altogether. The Government now seeks by faked statistics to show that the Irish have done this for ordinary criminal purposes.

As a matter of fact there is no crime the Government has not invited the police and the soldiers to perpetuate in this war to the knife with Ireland. Since May, 1916, till December, 1919, the Government in Ireland has been responsible for 59 murders, 2,084 deportations, 575 armed assaults on unarmed civilians, 14,155 raids on private houses, 5,041 arrests, 18,388 sentences, 390 proclamations and suppressions, 53 suppressions of papers, 506 courts-martial: a total of 25,378. Since January, 1920, matters have become worse. Let us take the week ending April 17: Raids, 1,135; arrests, 260; sentences, 12; proclamations and suppressions, 2; courts-martial, 2; armed assaults, 16; deportations, 92; murders, 4, a total of 1,513.

Mild raid described

The following letter was sent on March 9, 1920, by Maj. Erskine Childers, D.S.C., to the General Officer Commanding-in-chief, General Headquarters, Dublin. Childers is the son of a former Chancellor of the Exchequer. His famous novel, *The Riddle of the Sands*, warned England of the German menace. He has also written one of the volumes of the London Times' *History of the War*.

"Sir— I received the honour of a visit last night from a tank belonging to your command at the somewhat inconvenient hour of 1 a.m. I do not demur to this. War is war.
But I suggest that it might be in the ultimate interest both of the visitors and the visited on these occasions if a code of etiquette or deportment were imposed upon the former. It would, perhaps, be unreasonable to complain of bravado being flashed in the eyes of my small boy in his coat, and of similar means of impressing the household generally with a proper awe of the forces under your command. But it is a matter of legitimate complaint that a young subaltern (of by no means attractive appearance, if you will forgive me) should on entering the house stroll into my drawing-room in my presence putting a cigarette, and should continue to refresh himself in this manner after I had invited him to desist. The trilling scene which ensued was ended by the intervention of another officer of no less polished breeding, who decried an ingenious compromise under which the cigarette was to be thrown unextinguished upon the carpet. "Upon the carpet," was the express injunction delivered with studied insolence by this young carpet-knight.

Thus I was to win my point about the consumption of the cigarette, and he was to save his dignity by burning a hole in my carpet.

The point may seem trivial, but is it so? When armies are eventually withdrawn from occupied territory — and may I, without the least offence, express the hope that yours will be eventually withdrawn from ours? — it is of the utmost importance that an army should leave behind it a record for civility and humanity in the performance

...even of its most onerous duties. Surely none can be more onerous and more easily provocative of exasperation than these midnight raids upon civilians' houses, about 19,000 of which have taken place, I understand, in the last two years, often, as in my case, on false information, and often resulting in indignities and hardships infinitely worse than anything I experienced.

Though I am no longer a member of the British Army, long service in it during the war, and the regard which I still retain for the best among its traditions, encourages me to address these remarks for your consideration.

I have the honour to remain, Faithfully yours,
ERSKINE CHILDERS, late Major, R.A.F.

That the attacks on the Irish are continuous, widespread, and numerous is proved by the statistics issued by the Sinn Feiners themselves. Here is a typical 1920 weeks' work by Dublin Castle, ending April 17:
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Raids, 1,135; arrests, 260; sentences, 2; proclamations, 2; courts-martial, 2; armed assaults, 16; deportations, 92; murders, 4. This information is carefully suppressed by the Government, so that ordinary people are forced to come to entirely wrong conclusions as to the real situation in Ireland.

ACTS OF AGGRESSION IN IRELAND
1919
April 6. Rebe. Byrne shot dead by police in Limerick Hospital.
April 26. M. Walsh shot dead by police at Dungarvan.
April 29. Two men shot by police at Longford.
June 5. Matthew Murphy, Dundalk, shot dead by soldiers at Dundalk.
June 16. Michael Rice (60 years) and his son, Martin, shot dead in his house by police.
Aug. 14. P. Murphy, Glan (15 years) shot dead by soldiers firing into his father's house at midnight.
Sept. 9. Fermoy sacked by soldiers.
Nov. 12. Cork partly sacked by soldiers.
Nov. 20. Motorists shot by police at Sligo for not hitting.
Nov. 24. Civilians shot at Tipperary by police.
Dec. 29. Laurence Kennedy murdered by police at Phoenix Park, Dublin.

1920
Jan. 6. Dr. Keane, Enniskerry, shot by police while on his medical rounds.
Jan. 20. M. Darcy, Cossarclare, drowned while police held off would-be rescuers.
Jan. 22. Thurles wrecked by police.
Feb. 4. Man and girl shot dead in Limerick by soldiers and police.

So I might continue itemizing the bloody butchery right down to the time of writing this pamphlet were I not sick of the whole murderous business.

Ireland's reply

To expect the Irish to accept crushing and blackening both is to stretch expectation and endurance beyond the limit. So the Irish have naturally replied by having low policemen and detectives. Policemen are now resigning by the
The Irish Citizen Army at Liberty Hall, Dublin

hundred. Police barracks have been blown up and policemen driven from whole stretches of the country. The Sinn Feiners are, however, establishing their own police and their own courts, which now control 21 of Ireland's 32 counties. Britain's police system is virtually destroyed in vast stretches of Ireland, never again to be re-established.

Naturally, also, Irish dockers and railwaymen have followed the example of the London dockers, who took their cue from The Daily Herald and refused to load the Jolly George with ammunition for Poland. Irishmen now refuse to supply the Army of Occupation with the ammunition that may be used to kill themselves when off industrial duty. This is surely the most sensible thing Irishmen have ever done in their history of toil and trouble.

Irish Labour may call an Irish General Strike to force the withdrawal of troops from Ireland. Meanwhile, Irish railwaymen have asked the Executive Committee of the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) to take action to prevent ammunition being sent to Ireland. The NUR has put the responsibility on the shoulders of the Triple Alliance (Transport Workers, Miners, and NUR), and the Triple Alliance in turn is shifting the responsibility on to those genial old faggots who constitute the Trade Union Congress Committee. By the time these benevolent old gents make up their minds to depurate the Prime Minister, Ireland will have established a Republic, and have then passed on to a Socialist Republic herself.

Are the rank and file going to submit to the usual dilatoriness, or are they going to force the pace themselves by taking direct action themselves?

Britain is pouring more and more troops into Ireland, and now the navy is being called into play. A terrible tragedy may be perpetrated by Britain before Labour has realized the full gravity of the situation. It is therefore essential that drastic action be taken very soon.

The real centre of the Irish fight is Liberty Hall and the Transport Workers' Union, founded by the mighty Jim Larkin, now doing ten years in an American prison because he was an active member of the Communist Party, and carried on by the martyred Jim Conlon till Easter Week, 1916.

Should Ireland get a Republic the class war will then burst out and be fought out till Irish Labour wins and establishes Communism finally again in the 'Old Country'.

This new phase in Irish life ought to be the inciting influence to British Labour, for Labour everywhere must ally against the common enemy, Capitalism, and destroy it to make way for World Communism.

The victory of British and Irish Labour will pave the way for American Labour, the triumph of which will eliminate the possibility of the threatened war with America.

Ireland's victory is obviously the undoubted prelude to Labour's triumph throughout the world, when robbery shall give place to justice in the mighty Communist Commonwealth, and when, with the scrapping of armies and navies, mankind can live in peace to enjoy the fruits of their labour.

A General Strike, then, for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, and the demand of the release of Jim Larkin (America) and his brother, Peter Larkin (Australia).

P.S.—Since writing this pamphlet, the Glasgow Herald in a leader on Tuesday, June 8, 1920, entitled The Army in Ireland, glows over the fact that Scots regiments are pouring into Ireland and others are held in readiness. It seems the Scots are being used to crush the Irish. Let Labour effectively reply.
Postscript

Half a century ago in Glasgow on a cold December morning 30,000 workers marched slowly and solemnly to Eastwood Cemetery. They were following the funeral cortège of John MacLean, one of the most courageous and best-loved leaders that the working class movement of these islands has ever produced. Amongst the ranks of mourners were delegates from all sections of the Labour Movement, including, from Ireland, representatives of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, the Irish Citizen Army and the Irish Republican Movement.

Both MacLean’s parents, whilst still children, had been driven from their native Highlands, to make way for the more profitable sheep and game, ending up like so many others in the Clyde Industrial Belt. It was amidst the grinding poverty of this environment, with its background of hardship and struggle, that MacLean’s attitude towards the world in which he lived was formed. He launched himself on a life-long fight on behalf of the working classes and oppressed peoples of the world. The Scottish working class, especially, remembers the great struggles waged on Clydeside before, during, and after the First World War in which MacLean played a leading role. He was recognized and revered for his many remarkable qualities, his revolutionary zeal and fervour, his analysis and ideas, which he put forward with exceptional clarity, and his great energy and stamina. But above all, MacLean was a true ‘internationalist’, his attitude and views were totally free from the chauvinism and imperial chauvinism that have always been the cancer in the life-blood of the organized working class movement in Britain.

John MacLean clearly saw the British Empire as one of the biggest obstacles in the path of the march towards a better society, and he always supported the movements of the peoples of the colonies towards independence and self-determination. He, almost alone among the Labour leaders of that time, put the national struggle in Ireland from 1913 to 1921 at the forefront of his propaganda and agitation, continually urging the working class to make a stand against the use of British troops in Ireland and demanding that a general strike be called to secure their withdrawal. Fifty years before MacLean’s campaign, a century ago from today, Marx and Engels had made a similar stand, making an international call to the workers of the world to demand an ending to the domination of Ireland by Britain.

Now another round of the Irish struggle for freedom is taking place and it is a great tragedy that the events outlined in this pamphlet, written in 1920, should so clearly mirror the events taking place in the North of Ireland today. The focus has shifted from Dublin and Cork to Belfast and Derry, but the struggle remains exactly the same. Partition imposed on a weary Irish people in 1921 as the British solution to the ‘Irish Problem’ was doomed from the start because it runs counter to the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the Irish people. In fact, the truth is that there can be no British ‘solution’ to the problems that exist in Ireland, simply because there is no ‘Irish Problem’ in Britain. There is, however, a ‘British Problem’ in Ireland that can and will only be solved by the Irish people themselves.

Since 1945 the British Army have been involved in 36 actions or ‘Little Wars’. The overwhelming majority of these were attempts by the British ruling class, using the Army to suppress freedom movements of the peoples of British Colonies who wanted to secure the right to rule their country by themselves. Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus and Aden are just some that spring immediately to mind. In all these cases British tactics were the same: to carry out a policy of outright repression by the troops in the hope of smashing these freedom movements and doing so under a propaganda barrage of false information and downright lies by the press and mass media of this country, which managed to completely distort the British public’s view of such conflicts.

Ireland was the first British Colony, and the British ruling class have had armed men on Irish soil for the last 800 years. Now the present round of struggles has shown us, once again, that the Irish people will not rest until Ireland is united and free from British domination. The responsibility for securing the withdrawal of troops from Ireland rests on the shoulders of the British working class. The actions of the soldiers are carried out in our name and we must not tolerate a continuation of them. Already we have seen sections of the British working class taking steps to stop army recruitment in their areas, the town council of Merthyr Tydfill in Wales banned recruitment, the Trades Councils of Stirling in Scotland and of South Shields in northeast England have carried out anti-recruitment campaigns.

These examples have been made, now all sections of the working class must take up the demand for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and continue to raise this issue until the last soldier has left Irish soil. Ireland’s ‘British Problem’ will then be solved once and for all.
Troops Out Movement

Since 1945 the British Army has taken part in 35 "little wars": Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus and Aden are just a few. The overwhelming majority of these operations were struggles by the peoples of British colonies for the right to rule their countries by themselves. The British press and mass media were used to mislead the people of this country about the exact nature of the role of the Army during these actions, often portraying the troops as a kind of peace-keeping force. A look at the casualty figures for any of these operations makes nonsense of this conception. In Kenya during the "Emergency" the total white deaths, civilian and military, were less than 100, while more than 11,500 African "terrorists" were killed during operations by the British security forces.

The Troops Out Movement is an organisation of workers, students and ex-soldiers. We say that as the actions of the British Army are carried out in the name of the British people, it is time we took a stand against their presence in Ireland, following the example of sections of the labour movement like South Shields and Stirling trades councils. The Troops Out Movement is determined to secure the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

For information, activities and speakers contact: T.O.M., 28 LAMMAS PARK ROAD, EALING, LONDON, W.5.
IRELAND: TROOPS OUT NOW!

"Britain has obviously no excuse for the flooding of Ireland with troops, and it must be British labour's bounden duty to see that these soldiers, mainly boys of 18, be withdrawn and let the Irish settle their own affairs."

John MacLean, 1920