

NATIONAL LIBERATION AND SOCIALISM



**Aims & Policies of
the Irish Republican
Socialist Movement**

THE PROBLEM STATED

Ireland, North and South, is in a crisis of growing proportions. Despite various British-inspired 'solutions', the nationalist people of the six counties still suffer the results of sectarianism, unemployment and repression in their daily lives. In the South, a massive army of unemployed youth, spiralling prices, increasing redundancies and political corruption show how the domination by multi-national corporations and big capital has sucked the country dry and left massive problems in its wake.

Wolfe Tone, Connolly and Larkin

The roots of the domination of Ireland by Britain date back 700 years. As British capitalism developed in the 18th and 19th centuries, Ireland was used as a source of food, cheap labour and soldiery. The father of Irish Republicanism, Wolfe Tone, realised in 1798 that the central political task was to 'break the connection with England, the never-failing source of all our political evils.'

Successive anti-imperialist movements were quashed in blood, as Britain refused to grant the Irish people the right of self-determination and sovereignty. Years later, the fledgling trade union movement was brutally repressed in the period of the 1913 lock-out. The most prominent working-class leaders of the time - James Connolly and James Larkin - recognised that the questions of national independence and socialism were inseparable. As Connolly said, "The cause of Ireland is the cause of labour, the cause of labour is the cause of Ireland."

A Northern Colony and a Southern Dependency

The independence struggle of 1919-22 was sold out by the implanted Irish bourgeoisie and crushed by a British-backed counter-revolution. During the Irish Civil War, British-supplied Free State troops suppressed the Republican forces and the Ulster loyalists used their sectarian police force - the 'B' Specials - to set up the artificial Northern state by force of arms.

Connolly had predicated that 'if you remove the English army tomorrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, England would still rule you, she would rule you through her financiers, banks and whole array of financial institutions she has planted in this country.' These words came true with the emergence of the 26-County Free State.

In the late 1950's, following the inevitable failure of 'home-grown' capitalism in Ireland, the native capitalist class under the political leadership of Sean Lemass, opened up the country to investment by multi-national corporations and international banks. As in other third world countries, investments by multi-nationals has bled Ireland of its natural resources and labour power. It has left a legacy of depressed

wages, rampant inflation, severe unemployment and political corruption. The trade union movement is weaker than ever. The inner cities and rural farms are crumbling.

The undemocratic *Northern* state was created to maintain Britain's political, economic and strategic control in Ireland. By continuing to support that state, Britain encourages the sectarian loyalist ideology, which prohibits working-class unity and reinforces discrimination against the Catholic working class. The campaign for civil rights which began in 1968 unleashed a dynamic resistance that Britain and its loyalist allies have been unable to crush - a resistance that grows in strength as it progresses.

The Way Forward

We must struggle against imperialism on all fronts. The imperialist powers have imposed a political, economic and strategic control over Ireland. The most immediate aspect of this domination is the existence of an undemocratic and sectarian Northern state, which Britain holds against the wishes of the Irish people.

National Liberation and Socialism

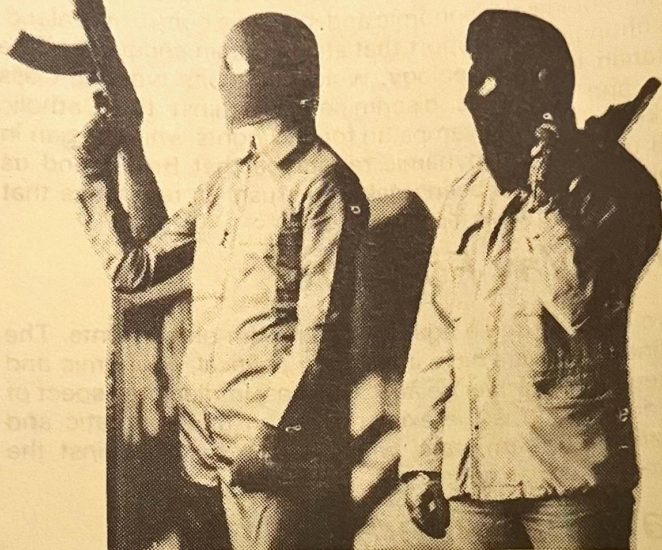
Through its presence in Ireland, Britain not only encourages sectarianism and unemployment in the northern state. It also distorts and controls the political life of the entire 32 counties. Faced with the unresolved question of national independence and sovereignty, the working class must develop both the political consciousness to achieve national unity and the class consciousness to achieve a Socialist Republic. The Irish Republican Socialist Movement is committed to these twin tasks of national liberation and socialism.

Broad Front

The H-Block Campaign showed that a broad mass of the people, properly organised around a limited political demand, could seriously threaten imperialist control in Ireland. The level of political awareness and mobilisation that the campaign created enabled resistance on all fronts to be raised to a higher level.

It is through a broad anti-imperialist front, which becomes involved in a series of campaigns, that a more effective opposition to imperialism can be built. The Republican Socialist Movement is committed to building an anti-imperialist broad front through campaigns, co-operation with other organisations and tactical electoral intervention. While agreeing to work with elements of the bourgeois parties on progressive issues, we are opposed to any fundamental dissolution of Republican Socialist principles merely for the sake of spurious unity. While the participants in a broad front cannot be required to support the armed struggle, they must recognise the right of constituent bodies within the broad front to do so.

Armed Struggle



There is a tradition in Ireland of support for armed resistance against British occupation. Similar traditions have been established by repressed peoples throughout the world - the Cubans, Nicaraguans, African peoples, Palestinians, and so on. For the four following reasons, the Irish Republican Socialist Movement insists that it is necessary to carry on this tradition of armed resistance:

1. The inherently undemocratic and sectarian nature of the Northern state;
2. Armed terror against the people by the British Army, R.U.C., U.D.R., and Loyalist death squads;
3. The failure of attempts at bourgeois reform in the North over the past twelve years;
4. And, therefore, the raised consciousness of the Irish people - particularly in the occupied North - concerning the necessity of armed struggle.

As a movement, we see political and military activity as one and the same.

To quote the Guatemalan guerilla leader, Turcios Lima, "Military training without political understanding is as useless as a gun with damp ammunition. With it, even a machete is enough."

Revolutionary Party

In order to provide the most coherent analysis of imperialism in Ireland, to centralise and direct revolutionary experience and provide clear political leadership, a revolutionary party is necessary. The party is not a constitutional party, nor a discussion club. It is committed to agitation and mobilisation of the people. The I.R.S.P. seeks to built that party.

On A United Ireland

WE SAY - immediate withdrawal of British troops; disbandment of the R.U.C., U.D.R. and all repressive legislation; and

a constitutional congress to discuss a 32-County Republic with a socialist, secular constitution. We demand the complete separation of church and state.

On Loyalism

WE SAY - loyalism is a reactionary ideology which subverts the interests of the working class. In no way is it progressive. We oppose any talks or proposals involving devolved government or an independent Ulster. We see the loyalist paramilitaries as neo-fascist death squads, whose purpose is to smash any progressive force and to terrorise the nationalist people.

On Federalism

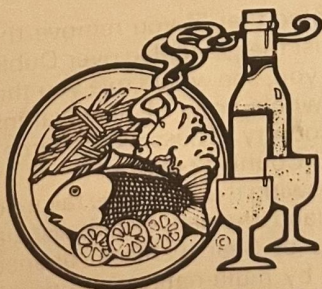
WE SAY - a 'federal solution' - be it a 6/26 county variety or a 9-county Ulster one - will serve only to prolong and confuse the struggle and to allow the imperialist powers a fall-back position. It will leave a section of the country open to sectarianism and discrimination.

On Unemployment

WE SAY - domination of the economy by the multinationals has created a situation where profits, not employment and the common good, is the goal. Human labour is wasted, profits are not re-invested in Ireland to create jobs, and little high-skill jobs and training are forthcoming. We call for a shorter work week in the short term, and, in the long term, nationalisation of our financial and natural resources and large industries, for the purpose of full employment. Profits created by Irish workers must be re-invested in Ireland.

On Inflation

WE SAY - the 'ripping off' of excessive profits by big business, the lavish life styles of the rich, and the starvation of the internal consumer market mean that working people must foot the bill with higher prices. This is coupled with an unfair tax structure which favours large corporations and leans heavily on the industrial worker. We call for immediate price controls in all necessities (foodstuffs, rent, etc.). We are also committed to a more equal distribution of wealth and incomes.



On Neutrality

WE SAY - Ireland's traditional position of neutrality between superpowers is being threatened by involvement with NATO and the EEC, and through the so-called 'Anglo-Irish talks.' Under pressure from U.S. war-mongers, Britain is committed to drawing Ireland into the nuclear madness. If possible, the western superpowers hope to place military nuclear facilities such as nuclear missiles here. We totally oppose this and support Ireland's traditional neutrality.

On Economic Growth

WE SAY - Ireland must take control of its own economic destiny. Extend the public sector to include banks, insurance and large retail outlets; all natural resources including oil; and large manufacturing companies. Democratic industry boards must be set up to distribute profits between re-investment and improvements in the standard of living. Develop an economic plan to provide a framework for investment and growth programmes, with strict sanctions for non-compliance. The few remaining multi-nationals must be subject to profit taxes, minimum purchase requirements of Irish inputs, requirements to contribute to education and research and development in Ireland.

On Women's Rights

WE SAY - women are doubly oppressed as workers and as women. We demand total equality for women in all spheres of economic, political and social life. We recognise a woman's right to control her own body and to choose contraception and abortion if she wishes.

JOIN THE IRSP.

Name

Address

Send to: 392, Falls Road, Belfast - or -
34, Upper Gardiner Street, Dublin.

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The Irish Republican Socialist Movement is comprised of the Irish National Liberation Army, the Irish Republican Socialist Party, and the INLA prisoners in all jails in Ireland and Britain.