

The Fenian



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Guth Na Poblachta

Nollaig 1996

Sinn Féin Launch Anti Drug Document 'Empowering Communities'



Sinn Féin's drugs policy document **Empowering Communities - A Sinn Féin response to the drugs epidemic** was launched by Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams and shared by local representative Seán Crowe. The document calls for a partnership between communities and the various state bodies including the Gardai in tackling the problem.

The press conference heard that while official figures cite between 5,000 and 7,000 addicts in the Dublin area the real figure could be nearer to 20,000.

Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams said, "20 years of neglect by successive Governments has led to the drugs epidemic. The state and its agencies failed those communities and in many instances vilified community activists who were seeking to rid these areas of

this scourge of drugs. In response to a deteriorating situation communities are mobilising again. And they should be encouraged and applauded for their courage in taking up this challenge. This time local people and local knowledge must be fully involved as part of the necessary strategy to tackle the drug problem."

The document calls for an integrated strategy built on a partnership between communities, the state agencies, including the Gardai, voluntary groups and political representatives. This partnership it says must include education education for parents and children about the scale of the problem, as well as the dangers. "It must also involve prioritising proper and effective treatment for drug addicts. This has to comprise of counselling, rehabilitation, training and employment. The individual elements of a treatment programme, detox,

methadone maintenance, residential stabilisation and rehabilitation need to be integrated."

Sean Crowe said, "It is criminal that there are only 30 detox beds in the whole of the 26 counties. The mistakes of the 1980's, cannot be repeated." He called for a "unity of purpose between all those who oppose drug dealing," stating that "there is a need to combine their efforts in targeting the criminal bosses who are making vast amounts of money out of this deadly trade."

This he went on to say, "may well be the best hope that beleaguered communities and frightened parents can have in tackling the problem."

The document **'Empowering Communities'** is available from **Sinn Féin Ard Oifig 44 Cearnog Pharnell Baile Atha Cliath 8726100/8726932**

Peace Process Bruton's Choice

John Bruton has a choice. He can follow the calls from the UVF and the UDA for repression of Republicans - with the implicit threat that if he doesn't they will return to murdering innocent Catholics - or he can make a genuine contribution to finding a solution.

While he is making up his mind, Bruton should think back on the events of the last few years. He should remember that we've been here before. Prior to 1994 there were calls for the IRA to declare a ceasefire. There would be a generous and imaginative response from the British. Well, the IRA declared a ceasefire - a truly difficult and historic step which created the space for this conflict to be resolved (and not, as many foolishly believed, that an IRA ceasefire means the conflict is resolved and nothing more need be done).

The space created by the ceasefire had to be filled by others, particularly by the British and the unionists. All it required was genuine talks without pre-conditions or a pre-determined outcome. That is the basis of conflict resolution the world over.

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Shock Arrest of Prominent Tallaght Anti-Drugs Activists. - see back page

Seán Crowe Dublin South West

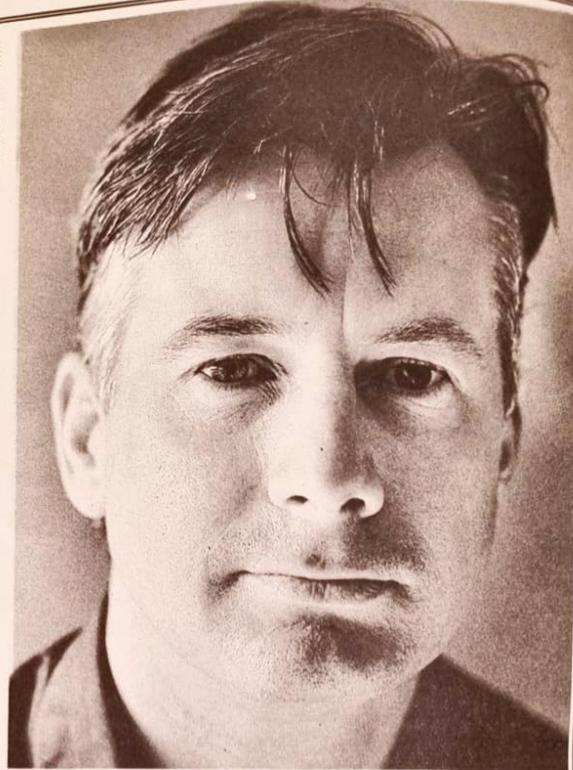


Seán Crowe is the Sinn Féin representative for the Dublin South West Constituency.

Living in Raheen Tallaght, Seán has been active in his local resident and environmental groups. He is co-ordinator of the Anti Water Rates campaign and is vehemently opposed to this form of double taxation.

He is the architect of Sinn Féin's recent response to Dublin's drugs crisis and believes that a partnership approach involving communities and various state bodies including the Gardai is needed to combat the present crisis.

He has held various positions of leadership within Sinn Féin, is a former youth officer, director of Elections, Organiser and Chairperson of Dublin Sinn Féin. He is currently Vice Chair of the Organisation in the 26 Counties and is the Delegation Secretary to the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation. Seán has represented the party at many levels, from recently meeting Green European Members of Parliament on the need for inclusive dialogue, to being part of the Sinn Féin delegation which has met with government representatives to discuss rebuilding the Irish Peace Process.



Peace Process Bruton's Choice

Continued

That opportunity was spurned, and not by republicans, Mr. Bruton. Now we are right back to a position where people are saying what is needed to transform the situation is an IRA ceasefire. It isn't.

What is needed is a guaranteed genuine peace process. That is what would transform the situation. Everything else follows from that. The big argument against the first option is that it won't work. Republicans have been shot, imprisoned, tortured, harassed and driven into exile and it has not solved anything. This is not a security problem and no amount of repression will destroy the republican political ideal.

The big argument for the second option is that it is the only course of action that will work. The conflict must end with inclusive negotiations. Over to you, John.

Scandal of Hepatitis C Sufferers.

It takes the death of a mother of 12 children to move the politicians of this state. The death of Brigid Mc Cole has shown the true nature of our political masters who are more concerned with dumping responsibility than finding out how and why this tragedy occurred. The questions are mounting up and the announcement of another Tribunal has gone no way to allay the fears of many women that another cover up is on the way. Many questions still remain unanswered. Why was the plasma of donor X used (without her permission) when she was clearly suffering from jaundice.

The Anti D and other blood products were contaminated because the blood bank failed to follow its own most basic guidelines. The 1800 people infected are clearly angry. Those effected can

get cirrhosis of the liver which is a life threatening illness.

Even the drugs used to try and contain the illness have severe side effects and weaken the bodies resistance. All are facing a shortened lifespan because proper procedures were not carried through by people who should have known better.

Above all the question of how much money it would cost the state became more important than their health, one in five of those infected will develop cirrhosis of the liver. Women on Interferon (drug used to try and contain infection) cannot have any more children. Everyone effected will have a shortened lifespan, years of worry, pain and suffering. It has been claimed that "a deliberate and calculated cover up has been carried out." If this is the case all the establishment parties in this state must share the blame.

Wasters Only 8% of Waste Recycled

According to the EPA's new National Waste Data Base, 92% of Irish waste ends up in landfill sites while only 8% is recycled.

Each year we produce an additional 3.5% more waste, which brought us up to 42 million tonnes in 1995. This works out at roughly 12 tonnes per person!

Three quarters of all waste is produced by agriculture, mainly in form of animal slurries. 7.7 million tonnes are industrial waste and 1.4 million household wastes. Thus everyone in Ireland dumps an average of 0.38 tonnes of rubbish into their bins. Of this only 4.3% is recycled though this is up from only 1.4% in 1993.

Of 240,000 tonnes classified as 'industrial hazardous waste' 42% are recovered, 29% get treated, 19% incinerated, 8% exported overseas, and 2% are landfilled.

Even if the New Waste Management Act will bring us a few steps further, we are still miles away from sustainability.

Taxing Times

Somebody once said that the only thing in life that was inevitable was death and taxes. Taxes only seem inevitable to the PAYE sector, others can have one and a half billion of their tax debt wiped out with the stroke of a pen. All working people who are caught in the PAYE trap are entitled to ask politicians why is it that after all the huge tax marches of the early 80's, when over half a million PAYE workers took to the streets of Dublin to protest at the unfair distribution of the tax burden, the ordinary worker is still crippled by taxes that quickly rise to 48%. For the past 10 years we have had various yearly Programmes For National Recovery started up under different fancy names. These agreements between government, industry and the Trade Union Movement, we were told would generate economic growth and out of this growth we would have rapid easing of "the tax burden on the PAYE worker. In short the Trade Union Movement has accepted a wage freeze for the past 10 "years and we are still on 48% tax. We are now supposed to stick out our chests with pride, this ten year wage freeze and 48% tax has made this state "The Tiger Economy of Europe" with higher growth than any other country in the



E.U.. Behind the spin doctor hype and economic gobbly gook, this, in plain language means that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. For years we were told that we had to pay high taxes to pay off the national debt, but this Tiger Economy thing is harder to sell.

If we are doing so well, why are we still on a wage freeze and 48% tax. This is where the old tactic of 'divide and conquer' comes into play. We are now told that it is "either" "or". Either the tax comes off at the 48% end or it comes off at

the other end to benefit the lower paid workers and get people off the Dole. Note the dishonest nature of this argument. We, the put upon tax payer are being selfish, by looking for a lessening of the tax burden we are victimising the poorly paid and the unemployed. It is all our own fault. John Bruton in Japan recently said "that multi-national corporations should come to Ireland because Irish Company Tax is lower than anywhere else." There you have it in a nutshell. The multi nationals can make huge profits here and

pay very little tax while their workers have to pay 48% tax. A second factor our friend John omitted to mention was that multi nationals are diverting billions of pounds from their overseas operations through their Irish subsidiaries, because the tax is less here. Money laundering multinational style.

There are some straightforward things that can be done to ease the tax burden. Non the PAYE workers, help the poorer paid workers and create decent jobs that make it worthwhile for people to come off the dole. There should be a minimum wage, over two thirds of workers are paid less than the average industrial wage. There has been a minimum wage in the USA for years and it was one of the major issues discussed at the Labour Party conference in Britain. The threshold at which you start paying taxes should be raised. The 48% tax must be reduced. A tax on speculators profits and the massive £4 billion taken out of Ireland every year. When you create a climate of equity and fairness for the tax payer and the unemployed, then you can go after all those in the black economy whom the politicians and the media seem fixated on.



Fado Fado

Characteristics of the Irish people for which we are noted throughout the world is our hospitality. (although Gay Byrne's treatment of Gerry Adams in the recent past did nothing for this notion.) In ancient times there were at various points on the great roads of Ireland public houses called (Bruidheans) Breens. The man or woman of the house was held in the highest esteem and was at all times required to welcome everyone that called. Legend has it that the Bruidheans had to be always stocked with three boiled fishes and three living fishes. The three living fishes usually consisted of an ox, a ram and the poor old hog was always on standby for the

guests. There were over 400 hundred of these houses in Ireland .One of the most famous was built over the river Dodder. The exact spot is thought to have been in Glen na Smol. It was said to be burnt to the ground by invaders from the sea, "who wondered at the great light on the mountain" The local clans outraged as you can imagine (no beer and hog) and led by a local warrior named Conal pursued the invaders back to the shore They destroyed the fleet ,killing all before them including the invaders leader Ingsel the One Eyed (no relation to Sammy suil amhain) The Bruidhean was said to be rebuilt and many a hog was swallowed over the years.



Water Rates

The recent announcement by South Dublin County Council on easier ways to pay Water Rates has been described by Sinn Féin's representative Seán Crowe as 'another expensive stunt' "The pilot scheme initiated in past few weeks is designed to make payment easier (sic) and involves a card which can be paid at the post office. Crowe went on to say that these latest proposals "highlighted the success of the non payment campaign and the need for members to redouble their efforts in combating this unjust form of double taxation"

END DOUBLE TAXATION

Arrests of Prominent Tallaght Anti-Drugs Activists

Killinarden Chairperson Cecil Johnston and Committee members, Michael Warner and Dennis Brunt were arrested at dawn on Monday 4th november. No reasons were given for the arrests.

In the process of arresting Cecil Johnston he was injured and his house furnishings were

damaged and broken. Sean Crowe, Sinn Féin's representative in Tallaght has consistently argued for the Community to work with the Gardai to combat the drugs menace. "This becomes impossible" he said. "If the police's concept of co-operation consists of harassing and arresting anti-drug activists."

Crowe went on to say

that, "We have the absurd situation where Cecil Johnston, because of his high profile activities in the fight against drugs, has been invited by John Bruton to a major European conference on drugs in Dublin Castle while at the same time the police in Tallaght arrest him."

Fine Gael's Gay Mitchell is quoted in the newspa-

pers as saying "That the police have done next to nothing in targeting the drug pushers."

Crowe went on to express concern that the mistakes of the 1980's should not be repeated.

Then those who were trying to combat the problems of drug dealing and addiction were treated by the police, some politicians and some sections of the media as if they were the problem. To paraphrase Christy Moore in his song about the Concerned Parents at that time, "The dealers were left on the streets while those fighting them were put in jail."

The anti-drugs trio have been charged with causing grievous bodily harm in Tallaght. They have been denied bail and are remanded despite their obvious fears to Mountjoy jail. They are all strenuously denying the charges.

Sean Crowe has called for "An end to the continuing harassment of anti-drug activists and a clear unambiguous statement from the authorities that this harassment will stop."

Want to Know More about Sinn Féin?

Sinn Féin is a party that has a proud track record of standing up to the drug pushers, with PAYE workers struggling for a decent living, against the water rates, and in opposition to the British partition of Ireland which has hindered our country's political, social and economic development.

If you would like to become an active supporter of Sinn Féin or would just like to find out more about a vibrant and active political force, then contact us by dropping a line to:

Seán Crowe, Dublin South West Sinn Féin, C/o 44 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.
or contact your local seller of
An Phoblacht/Republican News, the republican weekly newspaper.



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