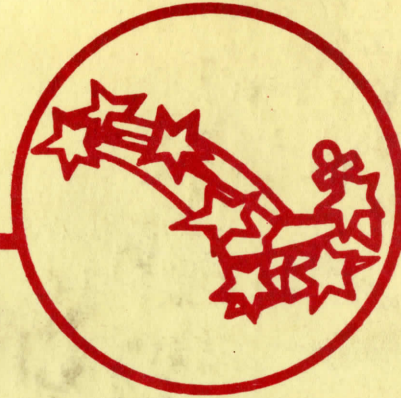


**Outline policies of  
Sinn Féin 30 Gardiner Place Dublin 1**



**Towards  
The  
Socialist  
Republic**

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## TOWARDS THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

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These notes are intended to provide a brief and general outline of Sinn Fein policies on issues which confront the people of this island.

They are produced in the hope that they will rouse the reader's interest sufficiently to encourage him to seek and study the detailed Sinn Fein policies which are available in booklet form, a list of which are printed inside.

For example reference is made in these notes to the importance of our natural resources but for the full facts and arguments a reading of the 100 page booklet 'THE GREAT OIL AND GAS ROBBERY' and other similar publications is necessary. In speaking about the North the question of a Police Service is referred to but for details of how this service should be constructed and controlled recourse will have to be taken to the booklet 'THE POLICE AND YOU'.

And for our detailed analysis and proposals on questions like the nationalisation of financial institutions, women's rights, international affairs, the public sector, etc. it would be necessary to acquire and study booklets published by us dealing with these topics.

We would welcome readers' comments on the contents of these notes and will be more than pleased to supply any further information that is required.

### **What is Sinn Fein?**

Sinn Fein is a registered political party having branches in each of the 32 Counties — branches in the 6 Counties are known as Republican Clubs.

### **What is the aim of Sinn Fein?**

The establishment of a 32 County Secular Socialist Republic in which the wealth and resources would be owned by the Irish people and be exploited and developed for the common good.

### **How will this be achieved?**

By educating, convincing and organising the people North and South to recognise that while they are divided they are being exploited by native and international capitalism and unite them towards the goal of achieving ownership and control of Ireland. The United Ireland envisaged by Sinn Fein is one in which there will be a United People, our priority is to remove that which divides and replace it with a uniting force.

### **What is the greatest single obstacle to uniting the people?**

Sectarianism, the result of which in the North hardly needs to be spelled out here. But the sectarianism of the South is sometimes overlooked. The South has a sectarian constitution, there is sectarian control of the schools and the education system and it is religious influence which has killed attempts to introduce progressive health policies, marriage law reforms, family planning laws etc.

Northern Protestants as well as being deluded into believing that sectarianism guarantees them 'privilege' in the North correctly point out that the moral code of 'Home rule' in the South has been 'Rome rule' and fear that in a United Ireland 'Rome rule' would be extended to cover the 32 Counties.

### **How has Sinn Fein attempted to combat sectarianism?**

Through helping to initiate, and supporting, the Civil Rights Movement. The struggle for Civil Rights was, and is, a struggle for equality of citizenship — entitlement to the vote, to a job, to a house to be guaranteed by law and not by one's religion.

The united struggle for Civil Rights led to the granting of 'one man, one vote', the introduction of the Proportional Representation system of elections, the introduction of a points system for housing, the disbandment of the B-Specials, the disarming of the RUC. The Civil Rights struggle would have led to the removal of repressive legislation and the enactment of a Bill of Rights and would have been followed by a united struggle by all the people of the North for full employment and proper housing.

### **Does Sinn Fein believe in a military solution to the Northern problem?**

Most certainly not. In 1969 we pointed out that what was required was not the abolition of Stormont or the initiation of a military campaign but the necessity of maintaining unity in the campaign for democracy and full Civil Rights. That would have meant that, irrespective of who was in office at Stormont, everyone would have the right, by law, to organise and propagate political policies.

Militarism, Sinn Fein pointed out, would halt the Civil Rights campaign, split the people into sectarian camps and consolidate the hold of Imperialism on Ireland. What has occurred since 1969 has proved us correct. The militarists have driven the Civil Rights campaign off the streets, brought sectarianism to an unprecedented peak, caused the deaths of more Irish people than occurred in the Black and Tan and Civil War, led to the establish-

ment and expansion of the UDR (worthy successors of the disbanded B Specials) rearmed the RUC, caused the introduction of more repressive laws in the North and in the South, bombed thousands of jobs out of existence.

The one 'victory' claimed by the militarists has been the abolition of the Stormont Parliament — some 'victory' when one considers the Direct Rule from Westminster which has replaced it.

Sinn Fein believes that it is through the political and industrial activities of the working class and their allies that the defeat of capitalism will come and not through the destruction of buildings or the death of some political figure.

#### **What is Sinn Fein doing in the North now?**

Campaigning, although against much greater odds, for the same things which it was demanding before 1969 — the uniting of Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter in combatting sectarianism, demanding full Civil Rights, jobs, housing, peace. Our consistency has been rewarded insofar as the anti-sectarian campaign being waged up to the end of 1975 by the Republican Clubs alone has now been taken up by the Trade Union Movement.

#### **Does Sinn Fein believe in majority rule?**

Of course it does. The majority in this country, as in every country, is that vast body of working men and women — we want to see this majority in power, North and South. What divides the majority in the North is Sectarianism — what will heal the divisions is not the creation of fragile and unnatural structures based on sectarianism — but the guarantee that irrespective of who governs equality of rights is guaranteed to all by law.

We believe that the introduction of a Bill of Rights with its concomitant guarantee of freedom of political action will very quickly lead to the emergence of a political organisation truly representative of the majority.

#### **Have the people of the South a role to play in the solution of Northern problems and vice versa?**

The answer to this can be had by looking at the problems which confront the people North and South. They are common problems. Unemployment, inflation, lack of proper housing, lack of recreational facilities, affect every town and city in both the North and the South.

Just as the small farmer in the South is being driven by EEC dictated economic repression from his land so also is his counterpart in the North.

Just as the natural resources discovered in the South have been robbed by the multinationals so also will the resources, now considered certain to exist in South Armagh, South Down and Tyrone be plundered by the same multinationals.

Just as the people of the North have been plagued by politicians representative of rancher and big business so also have the people of the South been plagued by a similar type of 'gombeenism'.

Just as the people of the South have had moral codes dictated to them by the Maynooth educated offspring of propertied Catholic Freemasonry so have the moral codes of the North been dictated by an Orange freemasonry — the moral code in the North which prevents children from using public swings on a Sunday is as distasteful and insufferable as the moral code in the South which limits one's choice of entertainment on the bookshelves, in the cinema or the television screens.

Sinn Fein sees the problems of Ireland as 32 County ones. Their solution must be sought by the people of Ireland on a 32 County basis irrespective of whether there are 1, 2, or 10 parliaments. Those who exploit and oppress us see no border, they also operate on a 32 County basis.

#### **How does Sinn Fein see Peace being achieved?**

There cannot be progress without peace. To

achieve peace it is not sufficient that a majority should desire it, the majority must combine to work actively for it and in working for it remove the root causes of division and unrest — injustice and deprivation.

The achievement of Peace and the removal of Sectarianism must go hand in hand and it is through a campaign by a working class coalition involving the Trade Unions, Tenant and Community Groups, Cultural and Youth organisations and political parties truly representative of the working class that these tasks can be accomplished.

The Republican Clubs in the North are working actively to establish such a coalition which would be truly representative of the real majority and, in the name of that majority, demand an end to all sectarian assassinations, bombings and military campaigns and reject all groups which continue with such activities; demand their return to barracks pending their complete withdrawal; seek the repeal of the Emergency Provisions Act, the introduction of an agreed Bill of Rights and the creation of a civilian controlled unarmed police service. At the same time this Coalition should be campaigning for the removal of two of the greatest sources of permanent unrest — unemployment and lack of housing.

#### **What solution does Sinn Fein propose for the unemployment crisis?**

Unemployment is a 32 County problem. It is a problem which has always been with us although it has rarely been as bad as it is now. The main cause of the present situation is the crisis of imperialism caused by the major imperial powers, America, Britain, France and Germany losing political control of Asia and Africa with the result that they no longer have free access to cheap raw materials for their industries.

It is the American, British, French and German industrialists and financiers who control our economy — we have absolutely no control over it and are therefore unable to do anything except going out to beg international loans. We have been unable even to slow down the rate of imports to protect jobs in vulnerable industries such as motor assembly, footwear and textiles.

There will be no longterm solution to unemployment and inflation until we take firm control over our own economy. There will be no solution until the people, through the State, take our national resources out of the hands of international profiteers. There will be no solution until the Banks and Financial institutions are controlled by the people, through the State.

Unfortunately when the word 'economy' is mentioned very many working people feel that it is something which does not concern them, something which is 'above their heads' and the concern of the university professors and Cabinet Ministers who speak gobbledegook about it on our television screens.

But it is these gobbledegook merchants who are responsible for your jobs, your wages, your taxes, your future and your family's future. They are given the power by you to do their gobbledegooking with the economy. Holding that power they are in a position to (1) serve your interests, (2) serve their own interests, (3) serve the interests of the international and native profiteers. There is a direct conflict between (1) and (3) — they cannot serve your interests and the interests of the profiteers at the same time, so the politicians opt to forget (1) and serve (2) and (3). They will continue to do so as long as you allow them.

Two examples will serve to illustrate this. It is acknowledged that an enormous wealth of oil and gas lies off our coast. It is there in such quantities that it could revolutionise life for ourselves and the

future generations if we had control over it. These resources are ours — they belong to the Irish people. But the Government which acts in our name is going to pay an American Multinational £700 million for the right to utilise some of this gas and will have to pay many times that figure to utilise some of the oil.

Because a previous Government 'sold' the rights for £500 — less than half your tax free allowance for one year. Was that Government (1) serving your interests or (2) serving the interests of the profiteers? The gobbledegook used to explain away this amount to claiming that we would not have the 'expertise' to exploit our resources.

The fact is that the experts can be hired by us just as they are hired by the multi-nationals. (Read the Sinn Fein publication "THE GREAT OIL AND GAS ROBBERY.")

At Navan, Co. Meath exists the largest deposit of lead and zinc in Europe — it is estimated to be worth well in excess of £2,000 million pounds. Ownership and control of this has been handed over to private (multinational) concerns who intend exporting it in its unrefined state and who may sell some of it to us for refinement in the proposed smelter to be established here.

The government does not even intend controlling the smelter — IDA grants are being offered to 'attract' private enterprise involvement and exports will be tax free! The Minister for Industry and Commerce, Mr. Keating, in the same week when he announced that the £50 million investment in the smelter would be 'too much' for the State boasted to a German audience that the State in the past few years had spent between £500 million and £600 million on 'security'.

£50 million could not be found to serve your interests while more than £500 million was found to keep the State 'secure' for foreign investors.

The largest lead and zinc deposit in Europe

could be the basis for an industrial boom, lead to the expansion of existing engineering industry North and South and create thousands of new jobs in new 'down stream' industries. Will it? Not unless you ignore the gobbledegook and insist on public ownership and development.

Of even greater potential is the oil off our coast for the expansion of the manmade fibre industry in the North and the creation of a whole new industrial base established on oil derivatives — plastics, fertilisers, etc. etc. But ownership must be retained by the State on behalf of the people and development and exploitation must be carefully planned to reap the greatest benefits for the people who rightfully own the wealth.

Sinn Fein sees the choice as simple. Give control of our natural resources to the international profiteers or retain control over them and develop them for the benefit of the whole nation.

#### **Does the provision of housing have high priority in the Sinn Fein programme?**

After food, shelter is the most basic human necessity. There has been and is a critical housing shortage. It will become even more critical because of our expanding population. Yet the provision of housing is left to private enterprise which views housing as just another commodity to be bought and sold for profit. It follows that houses are built at the lowest possible cost and are sold at the highest market price.

Housing is a human necessity which private enterprise has been unable and unwilling to serve. From the banks and the buildings who supply the building land, to the private developer who provides 'middle class' housing estates to the contractor who builds 'public' housing there is only one motivating factor — profit.

Sinn Fein is campaigning for every facet of this industry to be taken into public control so that a

comprehensive programme of providing adequate shelter and a living environment for all the people be provided as an urgent necessity.

Until sufficient housing is provided landlords will have tremendous scope to exploit those seeking rented accommodation. (In Dublin alone 100,000 are forced to live in rented flats.)

To protect flatdwellers immediate legislation is needed. This should provide for a Neutral Tribunal empowered to grant or refuse permission to landlords to evict tenants or to lower or raise rents on application by tenants or landlords; enforce statutory rent control — rents being fixed on the basis of a points system depending on the area of the flat and facilities in it; the establishment of statutory minimum standards and conditions of maintenance for all private rented accommodation; statutory registration of all rented accommodation and the provision of rent books, and, the prohibition of discrimination against tenants on grounds of marital status, sex, occupation, nationality or religion.

**Brief outlines of Sinn Fein policies on other matters follow. EDUCATION:**

Sinn Fein believes that education should be provided by the State as a basic human right, from nursery to adult level. The education system, every part of it, must be under secular control, be democratically structured to involve staff and students and other popular organisations to ensure its responsiveness to the needs of society.

#### **WOMEN**

In order to give women an opportunity of playing their full role in society Sinn Fein believes that the following provisions are immediately necessary: industrial training facilities; creche facilities for pre school infants; paid maternity leave from employment; free family planning and advice;

equal pay and an end to specific male and female jobs.

#### **JUSTICE:**

Sinn Fein's longterm aim is the introduction of a Socialist system in this country. The laws of the country will reflect the system and place emphasis on social responsibility, the common good and human rights.

Under the present capitalist system the emphasis of the laws are on property and the rights of private property.

Immediate demands of Sinn Fein are: the provision of a fully comprehensive free legal aid service; an end to political patronage in the appointment of the judiciary in the South and a complete restructuring of the entire judicial system in the North; the appointment of an ombudsman; a complete overhaul of the legal system; the rehabilitation rather than punishment of offenders; an end to the system of imposing sentences in lieu of fines which practice discriminates against the poor; the setting up of proper medical, surgical and psychiatric health services in prisons; the raising from 7 to 14 of the age of criminal responsibility; the immediate repeal of all repressive legislation and the pardoning and compensating of all those who have been convicted under such legislation.

#### **AGRICULTURE:**

The land of Ireland is the property of all the people of the nation and the State, on behalf of the people must have absolute control over the purchase, sale and leasing of land.

Among Sinn Fein's policies for the development of this very important national resource are (1) the creation of a State Land Bank built up by taking into public ownership land becoming vacant through the retirement of elderly farmers,



reclamation of bog and marginal land. (2) Use this Land Bank for the establishment of State farms to pilot new methods, new crops and more efficient production in farming; (3) State incentives to encourage group farming; (4) the taking into public ownership of the feedstuff, fertiliser and farm machinery industries, to be developed for the benefit of the farming community and the people as a whole.

#### **FISHERIES:**

The immediate extension of the fishing limits to 200 miles, the provision of adequate research, training, marketing and protection services, the drawing up of a National Fishery Policy designed to develop the industry through the provision of proper harbour facilities, equipment, services and processing industry.

#### **HEALTH:**

Sinn Fein demands (1) the immediate implementation of a free hospital scheme, (2) the extension of the General Medical Service to all citizens, (3) that all hospitals and medical centres be put under State control and the practice of allocating private beds be ended, (4) the establishment of a free comprehensive Family Planning Service in all parts of the country, (5) the replacing of the "fee per item of service" system on payment to doctors and pharmacists by a direct salary system, (6) the review of nursing and medical training with a view to providing trained staff in line with the requirements of a state health service, (7) the provision of a rationalised scheme of dental services throughout the whole country.

#### **TRANSPORT**

Provide a National Transport Plan which will take cognisance of social and economic factors, recognise transport as an essential national ser-

vice; co-ordinate rail, road, air and water transport; halt the planned denationalisation of CIE and expand the rail services to divert heavy goods from road to rail and thereby reduce expenditure on roads; expand public ownership in shipping, road haulage, off-shore servicing; develop co-operation agreements with British Rail, Ulster Transport and other public agencies to provide cheap, efficient transport in all parts of Ireland; utilise existing facilities at Harland & Wolff (Belfast), Verolme Dockyard (Cork) and Bord Iascaigh Mhara boatyards to provide new vessels and transport equipment.

Despite the enormous sums of money being spent on roads, railways, waterways, public transport and subsidies to private transport in the 6 and 26 Counties no transport plan is in operation in either state.

#### **INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS:**

Sinn Fein recognises that the Socialist Republican political philosophy is an international one and pledges solidarity with the struggling people of the world who are striving for independence, freedom and peace.

#### **GAEILGE:**

Creideann Sinn Fein gur ar phobal na Gaeltachta is coir Athbheochan na Gaeilge a bhunu. Is cuspoir Sinn Fein Udaras Daoilathach Aitiuil a soloathar don Gaeltacht agus gur sa Ghaeltacht a bhead ceanncheathru na hEagraiochtaí Gaeilge ar fad. Ba choir go rachaidh athbheochan na Gaeilge ceim are cheim le Athghabhail na hEireann ar chuile bhealach.



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## FURTHER READING

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Republicanism Part 1.

Republicanism Part 2.

Republicanism Part 3.

Axe to the Root. James Connolly.

Revolutionary Movements of the Past.

The Great Irish Oil and Gas Robbery.

The Public Sector and the Profit Makers.

The Republican Tradition.

The Rights of Women in Ireland.

Workshop Talks. James Connolly.

The Banks.

Labour in Irish History. James Connolly.

The Republican Congress.

Book Catalogue Available On Request.  
Send orders to United Irishman Office.

30 Gardiner Place. Dublin 1.

For further information write to:

Sinn Fein Headquarters.  
30 Gardiner Place. Dublin 1.

Wicklow: D. Tobin.  
77 O'Byrne Road. Bray.

Louth: c/o Forester's Hall. Drogheda.  
Kilkenny/Waterford: Sean Walsh.  
Giles Quay, Slieverua. Waterford.

Cork: Thomas Ashe Hall.  
Fr. Matthew Quay.

Kerry: Breandan Mac Gearailt.  
Ballyferriter. Co. Kerry.

Limerick: F. Reynolds.  
c/o 19 New Road. Kileely.

Galway: 5 New Docks.

Mayo: P. Kilcullen. Kilmore.  
Bothar na Sup. Ballina.

Derry: 28 Great James's Street.

Belfast: Republican Clubs.  
40 Cyprus Street.

Newry: 1 Trevor Hill.

Armagh: 31 Ogle Street.

**Title:** Towards the Socialist Republic

**Organisation:** Sinn Féin [Official]

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