

**DOCUMENT
ON
IRISH LIBERATION**



**Submitted to
World Congress
of Peace Forces**

— MOSCOW 1973 —

A REPSOL SPECIAL

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INTRODUCTION

The largest World Congress of Peace Forces was held in Moscow from 25th - 31st November 1973. Over three thousand delegates from 144 Nations attended, including representatives from most of the National Liberation Movements.

Sinn Fein were part of the Irish Delegation and were represented by the President Tomas Mac Giolla, Director of Education Des O'Hagan and Director of Organisation Sean Garland.

Apart from attending the plenary sessions which were formal meetings addressed by speakers from United Nations organisations, the Sinn Fein delegates concentrated on the Commission on National Liberation against Colonialism and Racism. The Commission was addressed by Tomas Mac Giolla who urged the delegates to support the short and long term Republican demands which called for the withdrawal of British Troops and an end to all repression in Ireland. His speech was warmly received by all the delegates who interrupted with loud applause at references to Irish solidarity with the people of the Socialist world and the people struggling for National Liberation, peace and socialism.

The National Liberation document which is now being published as a Repsol Special was submitted to the Commission by the Sinn Fein Representatives. Through the good offices of the Soviet Representatives, printing facilities were provided and all delegates to the Commission received a copy. The submission of the National Liberation document by the Sinn Fein Representatives ensured that the position of Ireland as a dominated and exploited country received mention in the final report of the World Congress of Peace Forces, which called upon all other countries and Liberation Movements to support the struggle of the Irish People.



A REPSOL PAMPHLET

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THE NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE

Ireland is a small country on the fringe of the European continent, and at the periphery of the great capitalist centres of the world. The long history of the domination of Ireland and the Irish people by an alien power intent upon extracting the maximum amount of profit out of the people of our island, no matter what the cost in human or cultural terms, has naturally left deep marks. We are enmeshed in the aftermath of our colonial situation. Indeed in the North this direct colonialism is evident every day as British troops arrogantly assert the 'right' of Britain's imperialist rulers to lord it over Ireland.

The primary characteristic of the National Liberation Struggle in Ireland is the struggle by imperialism to control and dominate the Irish people in order to exploit their resources and rob them of their wealth. On the other hand the struggle by the Irish people to throw off this control and domination and reconquer their wealth and resources. This has been the prime characteristic of the struggle for centuries. It remains so today.

The main features of imperialism in Ireland are:

1. Occupation of the Six Counties directly by British troops, and also by U.S. troops as a result of membership of NATO, and political integration with the UK.
2. Economic domination of both the Six and Twenty Six Counties by foreign monopolies – mainly English, but increasingly also U.S. and European – resulting in capital outflow, high unemployment and emigration, take-overs and closures.
3. Lack of democracy in the Six Counties and the use of political and religious discrimination to divide the working people.
4. The exploitation of Twenty Six County agriculture by the artificial rigging of the UK and EEC markets.
5. Use of the financial system to channel Irish savings abroad.
6. Political subservience by the Dublin Government in foreign policy and trade.
7. Cultural domination by the English language, literature, ways of thinking and in all fields of life.

The influence of English imperialism is in relative decline, due to neo-colonial rivalry from the US and Europe. Areas once dominated by English capital, such as Canada, are passing under US influence. English reaction to this decline has been to strengthen her hold over

what she has got, Ireland being the oldest, closest and most important overseas colony. Ireland, for the English ruling class, is a source of cheap food, cheap labour and a market for exports. The smashing of Irish nationality, long an objective, has proceeded no less rapidly under the partition structure than under the Act of Union. Bourgeois quasi-independence in the 26 Counties has been unable to take control of the economy, prevent the outward flow of people, or reverse the cultural erosion.

NORTHERN IRELAND (The Six Counties):

The most impoverished part of the United Kingdom is the Six Counties: it has the highest unemployment rate. Its impoverishment has been attributed, in a series of British government reports, to its remoteness from the market with which it is integrated, coupled with lack of control over its own economy.

The Six Counties then are the key to English influence in Ireland. By means of division of the nation and occupation of part, England has introduced such disunity and complexity into the Irish question so as to defy the best efforts of two generations of Irish revolutionary thought and action.

IMPERIALISM:

Modern imperialism is basically capitalism at its monopoly stage. It is a world system and adversely affects the peoples of underdeveloped countries as well as the working class of the imperialist powers. It has three main aspects, all of which are inter-related:

- (a) the economic; (b) the political; (c) the socio-cultural.

By far the most fundamental aspect is the economic. From the economic requirements of monopoly capital flow the political and socio-cultural aspects. The main reason for political domination of Ireland by imperialism and its pursuit of the federal solution is its need to provide secure and unhindered penetration of the Irish economy by British capital. The political and military intervention is necessary as the pre-condition for the establishment and perpetuation of efficient economic exploitation. The destruction of our native culture, communities and infrastructure is a consequence of this political and economic intervention. Ultimately, when the collapse of native culture is complete a vacuum is created which imperialism fills with its own dominant culture. This in turn further facilitates exploitation.

RESISTANCE:

We can see that imperialism has many aspects and that it operates on several different levels. We can also see that an adequate response to it must be more comprehensive and complex than reliance on a simple military strategy, or on an economist approach (such as reliance on purely union mobilisation), or through a purely parliamentary orientated strategy.

Unless all of these areas of struggle can be organised and integrated by the active involvement of the working class and under the leadership of its revolutionary organisations, defeat is certain. The same applies to the fight for cultural self-determination and the fight against religious sectarianism (or racism). It is against this background knowledge and armed with these facts that we must consider the national struggle today.

It is clear from this that if the working class and its revolutionary organisations are in the vanguard of the fight against imperialism, then such a fight is indivisible from the fight for Socialism.

BRITISH STRATEGY IN IRELAND:

The British, like all imperialists wherever they have been in occupation have created many problems aside from the main one of exploitation. They have succeeded in setting brother against brother, one religion against another all to ensure the continuation of their own political and economic interests. The Irish Republican Movement seeks solidarity with the British working class and their support against our common enemy, the imperialist exploiters.

We have in Ireland a complicated struggle with no experience of the like having happened anywhere else upon which we can draw, though some elements of our problem can be found in different countries. The National Liberation struggle in Ireland faces a major problem in the division of the working class on religious sectarian lines. It was deliberately organised and kept alive by Britain for over 200 years by a system of privileges for one group and discrimination against another.

Sectarian division has led to separate educational facilities, ghetto housing and to continued mutual distrust and hatred. It has led to murder, assassination, riots and pogroms. We are convinced that if we are to win this struggle to establish a democratic socialist republic, then we in Ireland must win the fight against sectarianism, as

others elsewhere must win the fight against racism. This can only be done by uniting the workers of whatever creed or colour on a class basis in the struggle for ownership and control of all wealth and resources of their country.

Since the beginning of 1973 Ireland has joined the so-called European Economic Community thus adding to the domination and exploitation of our people by this new modern imperialist bloc. This is the same bloc which has taken over in Africa and other continents, the place, formerly filled by the individual imperialisms of Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and Italy. We are determined to oppose and fight the whole EEC concept in Ireland and in Europe, and we urge all socialist states to oppose it as they would any imperialist power.

THE IRISH REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT STRATEGY:

It was not until the 1960's, after many years of despair and defeat that through a deep examination and analysis of the causes for defeat we were enabled to return to the true path of revolution. We have realised that armed struggle on its own, or as an end in itself, is doomed to failure. Armed struggle must always be related to the needs of the people.

The most consistent element in the Irish Republican tradition is armed resistance to British imperialism. It was only out of this armed resistance that our revolutionary vision of the Ireland of tomorrow came. But it was borne upon us by our history, - by our defeats and finally by the few times that we have managed to have a partial victory that the fight for freedom is bound up with the fight for the land, for jobs, for our children's education, for women's rights, for the elimination, in fact, of all the many injustice and abuses that the workers suffer in a capitalist state.

It is essential that all who are involved in the National Struggle for Liberation realise that the national struggle is a people's struggle - a class struggle.

We have attempted to develop the political consciousness and revolutionary potential of the Irish people, North and South, over the past number of years. We have done so by leading them in agitations and extra parliamentary political action on issues such as housing, redundancies, unemployment benefits, trade union rights and civil rights issues which affected them in their daily lives. Issues

of social, economic or political oppression which have existed for many years but for which there was no redress within the British imposed economic and political structures. Our purpose was and still is, to create a mass movement against oppression and exploitation – a movement of workers and small farmers to overthrow the twin forces of oppression and exploitation in Ireland – British imperialism and capitalism. The Irish offspring of these forces are the Orange/Unionist clique – oligarchy of the North, and the bourgeois Fianna Fail – Fine Gael regime in the South.

Our aim is to unite workers throughout Ireland behind the struggle for the reconquest of our country from British imperialism and capitalism and to lead them to a realisation that until power has passed to the hands of the common people in a Socialist Republic, bigotry, hatred and divisions on religious or ethnic lines would continue to be promoted. There will be no peace, no freedom, no justice, until workers unite in brotherhood to claim their inheritance.

IRISH UNITY ESSENTIAL:

In Britain there is total unity and clarity behind their objectives i.e. to devise a system which will give Britain total control of Irish political and economic life while leaving some appearances of control to the Irish, North and South. They have differences on tactical details, but their overall plan is clear.

In Ireland there is total confusion, disunity, frustration and bitterness. Those who have favoured union with Britain in the past are now in disarray because the union will no longer be on their terms but on Britain's terms. They are now disenchanted with the Union but still oppose the concept of a United Independent Republic for Ireland because they see it in terms of the 26 County State. Thus they are moving to the separate nationhood concept of an "Independent Ulster".

Those who have favoured a united independent Irish Republic are also in a state of confusion and disunity. They are clear in their opposition to continued British control of their lives and future destiny, but many are opposed to the 'Free State' concept of a Republic as exemplified by the Lynch Government and are also opposed to the sectarian concept of UDI as envisaged by Taylor and Craig. Their primary immediate concern is the ending of bombings, assassinations, sectarian conflict, jailings, tortures, British Army murders and harassment.

We believe that the only real and fundamental talks that can and must take place in Ireland are those between Irish people, Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter, and that Britain's presence is neither required nor wanted. National Unity and Independence to Republicans means unity of Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter in the struggle for the re-conquest of Ireland by her people. It does not mean simple territorial unity and it does not mean unity of two Tory establishments. It means the unity of workers, small farmers and men of no property.

Republicans oppose completely the concepts of Catholic rule or Protestant rule and re-state the republican principle of a secular society with guarantees of civil and religious liberty and to fight against all legal or constitutional enactments which are in conflict with these principles.

BRITAIN GET OUT:

There is only one issue on which practically everyone in Ireland is agreed. We do not want to be ruled by Britain. This fact must therefore be made clear and emphatic. All should unite on the demand "Britain get out". Any British plan must be judged on this yardstick: does it provide for Britain getting out of Irish affairs? If it does not then it will clearly not be acceptable to the mass of the Irish people no matter how it may be welcomed by opportunist politicians.

We believe there should be total concentration of emphasis on common demands to the exclusion of compromise solutions which may be made by any particular party or organisation. Such proposals, while they may be helpful to the British Government, only sow confusion and disunity in Ireland. In any case Britain will impose whatever solution suits her interests. Let us be clear what is in our interests.

The only long term solution which will be in the interests of the Irish working class is the establishment of a Democratic 32 County Socialist Republic. Any interim solution which arises out of the present crisis must guarantee the freedom of the Irish people to move towards this objective. Clearly, as with the British imposed arrangement of 1920, any solution which advocates the continuation of a Six or Nine County Ulster state, whether it has constitutional links with Britain, or not, must be rejected.

THE REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT DEMANDS:-

1. That the British Government, having clearly demonstrated that they are in conflict with the demands of all sections of the Irish people, publicly commit themselves to a total withdrawal of its military and political control from the Six County area on an early specified date and that they begin the necessary procedures now to implement their withdrawal from Ireland. Britain must publicly renounce all claims to sovereignty over any part of Irish territory and must pledge itself to make economic compensation so that the standard of living of working class people will not be adversely effected.
2. Having specified the date for her total withdrawal from Ireland, Britain must immediately:-
 - (a) Withdraw all troops from working class areas;
 - (b) Release all internees and all political prisoners;
 - (c) Grant a general amnesty for all offences arising from the resistance against British forces, or through involvement in the Civil Disobedience Campaign.

A Bill of Rights must be introduced and implemented immediately to guarantee civil and religious liberty and basic civil rights for all and the immediate repeal of all repressive legislation.
3. During this interim period also, the 26 County Government must publicly accept responsibility for the introduction and implementation of legislation which will guarantee civil and religious liberty for all and for the repeal of all discriminatory laws at present in existence. The 26 County Government must also introduce and implement laws to prevent the exploitation of Irish assets and resources by British or other imperial interests.
4. That a conference of Irish parties be convened by a neutral body such as the Irish Congress of Trade Unions for the purpose of drafting a secular constitution for the 32 Counties that would become operative on completion of the British withdrawal.
5. We call for joint action by the Irish and British Trade Union Movements to halt escalating sectarianism and prevent all out sectarian warfare by giving leadership to workers at street and factory level and by supporting the struggle for democracy at local level, both North and South.

SUMMARY:

The National Liberation struggle in Ireland will only be satisfactorily resolved by the defeat of British imperialism. This defeat can only be achieved by a revolutionary movement based on the Irish working class and led by the vanguard organisations of that class.

The Irish Republican Movement is dedicated to unifying the working class and making it capable of assuming its historic role in our nation's history. We see the struggle for social and national emancipation as indivisible. We put forward socialist demands in a constant everyday struggle to mobilise the working class in defence of its interests as well as demanding an end to repression and British occupation of Northern Ireland.

We oppose the collaborationist policy of the 26 County regime with imperialism on the economic and socio-cultural fronts as well as the political. We seek in doing these things to unite all sections of the nation opposed to and oppressed by British imperialism. We do this because the revolution will be made by the working class and its allies of both the oppressed and the oppressing nations.

BOOKS TO READ

Imperialism & the Irish Nation	20p	The Irish Republican Congress	
Republicanism Part 1.	25p	by George Gilmore.	20p
Republicanism Part 11.	25p	Glúaiseacht na Gaeilge	25p
Republicanism Part 111.		The Revolutionaries	35p
Republican Movement - Fianna Fáil - Provisional Alliance.	40p	Labour in Irish History	30p
Revolutionary Movements of the Past.	30p	The Reconquest of Ireland	18p
Culture and Revolution	30p	Erin's Hope and the New Evangel	12p
Workshop Talks	17½p	Labour Nationality & Religion	15p
Axe to the Root	25p	Connolly: on Partition	25p
Ground Rent is Robbery	20p	British Imperialism in Ireland	40p
Marx-Engels-Lenin on the Irish Revolution - Ralph Fox.	20p	Selected Writings of Connolly, ed.P.Berresford Ellis.	50p
The Great Oil & Gas Robbery	40p	Ireland Her Own by T.A.Jackson	£1.
Driftnetting of Salmon in Ireland	10p	Divided Ulster by L.de Paor	40p
Ard Fheis Report 1972	25p	Marx & Engels on Ireland	£1.50
Ard Fheis Report 1973	30p	Lenin on Ireland	10p
Massacre at Derry	25p	They Came in the Morning	30p
The Ardboe Martyrs	15p	Principles of Communism	15p
Life and Times of James Connolly by C.D.Greaves	£1.	The Republic of Ireland by D.R.O'Connor Lysaght	£1.05
Ireland - Background to What is happening today.	15p	Quotations from James Connolly - an Anthology in 3 parts. Parts 2 and 3 - each	30p

POSTERS

Wolfe Tone	15p	Fintan Lalor	15p
James Connolly	15p	Liam Mellows	15p
Martain O'Cadhain	20p	Jim Larkin	25p
Marx and Connolly	10p	Joe McCann	5p

All are available from - National Book Service,
30 Gardiner Place,
Dublin 1.

WHAT YOU CAN DO
TO ACHIEVE FULL ECONOMIC AND
POLITICAL FREEDOM FOR THE IRISH PEOPLE

Join the Republican Movement

We **STAND** for the **OVERTHROW** of British Imperial Rule in Ireland.

We **STAND** for an **INDEPENDENT IRISH SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**.

We **OPPOSE** all **FOREIGN** financiers, speculators, monopolists, landlords, and their native collaborators.

We **PLACE** the **RIGHTS** of the common man before the right of property.

We **CLAIM** the **OWNERSHIP** of the wealth of Ireland for the people of Ireland.

Unite to Fight

Call or write to: The Secretary,
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