
**LABOUR
PARTY**

BULLETIN

TALLAGHT BRANCH

TALLAGHT LABOUR NEWS.

NOV/DEC. 1969.

No. 1.

For some time now the Tallaght Branch of the Labour Party has had under consideration the publication of a news bulletin. We propose to publish this bulletin monthly. We do not intend to compete with any other Publication but we are attempting to keep the people of Tallaght abreast with Labour Party activity and policy.

There is a great deal of confusion to-day concerning the Social Policy of the Labour Party, and we hope by these bulletins to explain the principles by which we stand.

GROUND RENTS.

Most people feel that the system of ground rent is unjust and that it is an alien form of taxation. It is a carry over from feudal times and from the plantations when lands were handed out to faithful servants of the crown. That it should exist to day in the interests of a few is a reflection of how little progress has been made towards social justice. The legislation which was enacted recently enabling people to buy out their grounds has done little to solve the problem. The conditions fixed for buying out ground rents $13\frac{1}{2}$ times the annual amount of the rent are so unfavourable and the legal fees involved are so high that few have considered the proposition economic. Another deplorable feature is the fact that it did not prohibit the creation of further ground rents. Surely the price of land is high enough and the profit sufficient for speculators without it being necessary, in addition, to fix a ground rent.

It would be foolish to pretend that the problem of discontinuing existing ground rents does not present difficulties. There are some small investors who have invested their savings or maybe their retirement lump sum in ground rents. These people deserve special recognition in any scheme aimed at abolishing the system. One way of phasing out ground rents while at the same time recognising the position of the small investor would be to introduce a graduated system of taxation which would have a rate of taxation increasing on a sliding scale, as the amount of income derived from ground rent increased. In addition a special higher rate of taxation could be applied to the earnings of absentee Landlords. This system could be used to abolish the ground rents eventually by stepping up the rate of taxation to make ground rents unattractive and uneconomic. It would also forewarn the small investor. The least we can expect now is that the Government would introduce legislation to prohibit the introduction of

further rents.

The Labour Party is committed to the abolition of ground rents. We would welcome your views on this subject.

HOUSING PROBLEM TALLAGHT.

Those of us who have comfortable homes find it impossible or at least difficult to visualise the hardships associated with bad housing conditions. Some of the unhoused people in Tallaght are living in huts, caravans and sheds and one can only try to imagine the problems which a mother has rearing a family in these conditions. All of us should be concerned about this.

The Labour Party in South County Dublin has been aware of the failure of the Dublin County Council to keep up with the demand for more houses and has through its Councillors made representations that steps be immediately taken to speed up the building of houses. The huge housing expansions at present being undertaken in Tallaght while welcome to ease the general housing position in Dublin City will not in any way reduce the local need.

In reply to a recent question at the Housing Committee of the Dublin County Council Labour Councillor Sean Fitzpatrick was told that between 1960 and 1969 there were 155 local authority houses built in the Tallaght area and notwithstanding this there are still at the moment 211 families on the Waiting List in the Tallaght area alone.

This problem is not only a local one but is also National. We believe that under the present Social System housing needs can never be adequately catered for until Housing has been removed from the realm of Private Profiteering and Land Speculation and put in the hands of the National Building Agency.

As a first step in the easing of the housing problem all building land in the urban areas should be brought under Public control. This measure will end land speculation, reduce site costs, and knock at least £500 off the price of the average home.

LOCAL COUNTY COUNCIL NEWS.

In reply to a question at the Housing Committee Meeting held in October, Councillor Fitzpatrick was informed as follows:-

"Purchase schemes for houses built since 1967 will be prepared as soon as possible. It is expected that they will be in operation next year." This will be of special interest to the people in the new houses in St. Maelruan's Park.

The following reply was given to Councillor Fitzpatrick regarding the provision of drainage to Council Cottages at Oldcourt:-

"A survey for the preparation of plans has been made, and the design of suitable disposal works is at present in hands".

Councillor Connolly was informed that the Housing Scheme (38 houses at Bunting Road, Walkinstown) will be completed by 28th November, 1969.

Councillor Fitzpatrick was informed that the footpath at Killinney Cottages will be included in the 1970 estimates.

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU.

The Labour Party Branches in the constituency last April pioneered the establishment of a Community Advice Service in the Templeogue area to provide on a permanent basis expert advice on such matters as personal problems, information regarding health and welfare services, pensions, etc. The service is free, confidential, and not confined to members of the Labour Party. Among the panel operating the service are a ~~DOCTOR~~ ^{DOCTOR, A LAWYER, A SOCIOLOGIST}, this is Labour's policy of first hand involvement in community affairs - - this is socialism in action. As from Monday November 17th this service has been extended to Tallaght Branch. Phone or call to Sean O'Broin, 28A Main Road, Tallaght, Co. Dublin. Phone 505927, any evening after 8. 00 p.m.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME.

New Members invited to contact either the Branch Chairman, Sean O'Broin, 28A Main Road, Tallaght, Phone No. 505927, or the Branch Secretary, John O'Donoghue, 57 Bancroft Avenue, Tallaght, Phone No. 505056.

ISSUED BY:

TALLAGHT BRANCH LABOUR PARTY.

Title: Labour Party Bulletin, No. 1

Organisation: Labour

Date: 1969

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