



IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST PARTY

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PRESS RELEASE

A HISTORIC STEP FORWARD --

IRSP adopts the teachings of Marx, Engels & Lenin

On the week-end Sept. 8/9th, the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP), at its annual Ard Feis (Conference), took a historic step forward when it adopted the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin as providing the basis for its socialist principles. In taking such a step the IRSP do not see these teachings as a collection of immutable, fossilised principles to be accepted as a faith or dogma. Studied in the light of the historical experience of the working class and related to the concrete conditions existing in Ireland to-day, they become a powerful weapon in the hands of the party, providing the necessary method, viewpoint and science, to define the correct strategy and tactics to defeat Imperialism and build Socialism.

This momentous decision by the IRSP was arrived at after a considerable period of internal discussion relating to :

- (1) the experience of the internal organisation of the party since its formation,
- (2) the party's contribution or lack of contribution to the struggle for national liberation and socialism,
- (3) our failure to adequately define our understanding of revolutionary socialism,
- (4) an analysis of the Irish revolutionary tradition, and
- (5) the historical experience of the world revolutionary movement under the influence of the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

THE MOST ADVANCED THOUGHT OF OUR AGE

In our deliberations we were greatly influenced by James Connolly's advice to, "emulate our fathers and like the true men of '98, place ourselves in line with the most advanced thought of our age, drawing inspiration and hope from the spectacle presented by the world wide revolt of the workers." In his time, James Connolly, credited Karl Marx as representing such advanced thought, when he said of him that he was, "the ablest exponent of socialism the world has seen, and the founder of that school of thought which embraces all the militant socialist parties of the world." Like Connolly, the IRSP accepts the valued contribution to revolutionary thought made by Marx and Engels, the great architects of scientific socialism. But in placing

ourselves " in line with the most advanced thought of our age", the age of Imperialism; the highest stage of capitalism, we were inexorably led beyond Marx and Engels, to Lenin. Leninism we consider to be Marxism in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. His contribution was so vast that it comprised an entire phase of the development of socialist ideas. His analysis of imperialism; his work on national liberation and democratic movements opposed to imperialism; his development of the Marxist theory of proletarian dictatorship; and not least his creation of the new type revolutionary party, enriched Marxism.

REVOLUTIONARY TRADITION: Republicanism and Socialism.

In embracing the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin, we are placing ourselves in line with the most advanced thought of our age and as a consequence are in line with the revolutionary tradition passed on by James Connolly. Likewise we stand in the revolutionary tradition of the United Irishmen of '98, because they in their time stood for the most advanced thought of the age -- Bourgeois Democracy. At that time bourgeois democracy represented a revolutionary phenomenon directly applicable to a progressive solution to Irish ills; and as a consequence, Irish Republicanism could be defined as Revolutionary Bourgeois Democracy, tailored to complement specific needs and conditions in Ireland. However, by Connolly's time, conditions in Ireland and elsewhere had changed and the needs and demands of the people were different than they had been in '98. Bourgeois Democracy had ceased to be revolutionary, it had been superseded by Socialist Democracy which to this day dominates the stage of all human endeavour for freedom. Lenin said of this period, " It is evident that the peoples who, between 1789 and 1871, were usually the foremost fighters for freedom, have become, after 1876, under highly-developed and " over-ripe " capitalism, the oppressors and subjugators of the majority of the populations and nations of the globe".

Irish Republicanism has its roots set in bourgeois democracy. It is illogical in this day and age to contend that Irish revolutionaries must struggle to realise a Republic with the same political and economic content as that envisioned by our predecessors of 1798. To propose such a thing is to suggest the world has stood still for nearly 200 years; that the economic and political conditions, along with peoples appreciations of them, have remained constant; and that the needs of the people have continued unchanged. Yet the failure of Irish separatist parties and movements to move to a stage beyond republicanism (bourgeois democracy) to REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM, means in objective terms, the acceptance of such an illogical proposition. Attempts to coat this position with a veneer of left-wing rhetoric, does little to improve the situation, rather, it has the effect of sowing confusion among potential revolutionaries. In essence, left-republicanism and the various forms of Hibernianised socialism, at the end of the day, equate with bourgeois democracy. We demand revolutionary change to our economic and political conditions, not reform. Only revolutionary socialism with its principles based on the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin, enriched in the Irish situation by James Connolly, offer the solution to the problems besetting Ireland to-day.

There are several parties and organisations in Ireland to-day, who would claim to be in the tradition of the United Irishmen and James Connolly. They like the IRSP would claim to be basing their principles on the most advanced thought of our age. But it must be borne in mind, that not alone were the United Irishmen advancing the most revolutionary ideas for a new society, they also used revolutionary means in attempting to implement them. Apart from how the IRSP may differ from such parties and organisations of the "left" on the end product, only the IRSP is committed to revolutionary means to achieve the end. On this count such parties and organisations fail to achieve the necessary criteria demanded of revolutionaries.

The IRSP not alone rejects the peaceful transition to socialism through parliamentary means, but alone among the parties advocating revolutionary socialism, we support the Armed struggle against British Imperialism, unequivocally. We do so because we believe the resolution of the National Question to be a necessary prerequisite to socialism in Ireland. Armed now as we are with the powerful weapon of ~~Marxism-Leninism~~ and committed as we are to the greater ideological schooling of our members and followers, we intend to dig roots so deep among the working-class that it will prove impossible to dislodge us. It was indeed a momentous decision, a historic step forward, when the IRSP adopted the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

Jim Lane

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National Chairperson, IRSP.

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