

for all internees for wages and other consequential losses.

- 24 The Labour Party deplores the increasing policy of repression exercised by the British Tory Government and demands its immediate cessation as a prelude to any discussions.
- 25 The Labour Party recognises that a major step towards the settlement of the present division in the North Eastern part of Ireland would be the enactment of a Bill of Rights by the Westminster Parliament which would guarantee full civil and religious rights to the minority.

Conference passed the following resolution in relation to the Northern Ireland Policy Statement;

The Labour Party accepts that this Northern Policy Statement deals mainly with long-term objectives, and pledges the AC, through its Political Sub-Committee, to prepare a further document containing a statement of the immediate objectives of the Labour Party for the guidance of all members. This new statement will be submitted to a joint meeting of the AC and the Parliamentary Party and will be circulated to all branches.

The Labour Party

*Peter Moorey
John Conway Brand
Derek Cantrell*



Northern Policy Statement

Seán MacDofan

STATEMENT OF NORTHERN POLICY

Adopted by
ANNUAL CONFERENCE

26th. February 1972.

Labour's Objectives;

- 1 The establishment of an all-Ireland Socialist Republic is the fundamental objective of the Labour Party. National Unity is, therefore, a basic objective of the party, As stated in the Party Constitution, the Labour Party affirms that the national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its islands and territorial seas; and it accepts as part of its immediate programme the work of securing social justice and equal opportunities for all citizens in accordance with the declaration of Democratic Principles embodied in the Proclamation of Easter 1916.
- 2 Whereas other political parties in the Republic aim solely at territorial unity, the Labour Party goes further and aims at the creation of a socialist society in Ireland and the uniting of the Irish people as complementary objectives.

Labour's Principles:

- 3 The Labour Party seeks the voluntary reunion of all Irish people and territory. The achievement of the voluntary unity of all the people of Ireland clearly implies that the real and profound differences that exist at present must be removed by persuasion, dialogue and communication, and not by the bomb and the bullet.
- 4 The Labour Party is convinced that peace and

better understanding between the communities is a necessary precondition for the achievement of both socialism and of eventual unity. It therefore repudiates unequivocally any attempt to achieve a United Ireland, 'socialist' or otherwise, by force of arms.

- 5 The Labour Party differs from the other forces and national parties engaged in the struggle for national independence in that it is a democratic as well as a socialist party, totally committed to democratic methods. For that reason it rejects any attempts at usurping by violence the democratic parliamentary processes which are based on the authority of the Irish people.
- 6 The Labour Party is committed to the principle of Connolly and Larkin, that it is in the unity of the working class, of all denominations, that the future unity of our country lies. Consequently, the Labour Party pledges itself to the support and strengthening of the trade union movement in the North and South, and the promotion of political solidarity among all Irish workers.
- 7 The attainment of socialism in the Twenty Six Counties would be a step of vast importance towards the goal of an All Ireland Socialist Republic. In working for socialism in accordance with its policies and programmes, the Labour Party is also working for national unity. Similarly, the attainment of socialism in the Six Counties would be a long step towards a socialist united Ireland.
- 8 In accordance with its philosophy as a socialist party, the Labour Party pledges itself to the elimination of all sectarian laws, constit-

utional provisions and practices, both in the North and South, which are a major factor in dividing the working class, and deploras all appeals to sectarian passions and violence.

- 9 Reliance on peaceful means and the rejection of force in bringing about unity are not to be taken as acquiescence by the Labour Party either in the continuation of the treatment meted out to the Northern minority, or to the political division of the island. On the contrary, the Labour Party is unconditionally opposed to the built-in official violence practised by the Unionist Government and to the denial of the civil, legal and political rights of the minority, and repudiates any attempt to maintain a divided Ireland by internment, military, military brutality and murder and the wrecking of homes and recognises that people have a right to physically resist the maintenance of Partition by these methods.
- 10 The Labour Party wishes to emphasise that it has participated in and continues to support the current civil disobedience campaign in the North, through its branch organisation in South Down, because it accepts that the purpose of the campaign is to demonstrate to the British Government that the present Stormont system is inoperable and that it must be replaced immediately. It does so in the knowledge that Northern Ireland, which was never intended as a final political solution, was established by a British Government and has been maintained by successive British Governments involving all parties, Tory, Liberal and Labour, and that these Governments cannot escape responsibility for the current situation there.

The Labour Party's Immediate Objectives:

- 11 As a first priority, the Labour Party demands

that the sectarian Unionist regime in the North must be brought to an end and that the sectarian manipulation of power upon which that regime is based must cease.

- 12 The Labour Party demands as immediate objectives the ending of internment without trial, and the creation of conditions - through structural reforms and otherwise - which will guarantee to the minority their right to participate in government at all levels, and ensuring for the minority full equality of rights and equal treatment, both in the public and private sectors.
- 13 The Labour Party aims at the withdrawal of the British Troops as soon as a political solution permits. Pending their withdrawal, the Labour Party demands that the British Army be removed from the sectarian control of Stormont. The Labour Party condemns the British Government for its reliance on a military solution through the use of oppressive force in support of the sectarian Unionist regime, calls for the immediate cessation of this use of force, and calls for immediate negotiations with representatives of the Irish people to achieve a lasting political solution.
- 14 Believing that military force will provide no solution, the Labour Party, after the ending of internment, will co-operate in all genuine attempts at the setting up of talks between all the representatives of the people concerned designed to bring peace to the North on the basis of justice to all sections of the community.

Labour's Programme of Activity:

- 15 The Labour Party, recognising that the reason for the present divisions in the North includ-

es the deliberate worsening of relations between Catholics and Protestants by land-owners and capitalists, by the British Tory Party and by the Unionist Government since Partition, pledges itself to establishing among all sections of the working class a recognition that such divisions benefit only the ruling class and not the working class.

- 16 The Labour Party also recognises that the economic situation in the whole island has contributed to the present disastrous crisis. The depressed economic and social conditions of the Republic have been among the reasons maintaining support for the Unionist Party in the North. At the same time the depressed state of certain regions in Northern Ireland - and in particular, extremely high chronic unemployment rates in certain areas - has created a sense of frustration among many of the young which has resulted in support for various forms of violence. Consequently, the attainment of the Labour Party's economic and social objectives, particularly of full employment, is of the greatest importance, not only in itself, but also within the framework of a sound approach to the Northern question. The Labour Party, therefore, will work for full employment, North and South, as a means of eliminating social evil and of forwarding unity.
- 17 The Labour Party will combat sectarianism by bridging sectarian divisions through such bodies as the Council of Labour and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, both of which are 32 County Bodies.
- 18 The Labour Party pledges itself to the support and strengthening of the Trade Union Movement in the North and South, the promotion of

solidarity of workers for industrial, social, economic and all other agreed objectives and will continue to support similar activity by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

- 19 The Labour Party pledges itself to promote and support activities aimed at the elimination of all sectarian and repressive constitutional provisions, laws and practices, both in the North and South.
- 20 Within the North the Labour Party will work, through its own branches, through the Council of Labour and through its associations with its fraternal parties, the Social Democratic and Labour Party and the Northern Ireland Labour Party, and will continue in its determination to bring about as soon as practicable, a united socialist party for the 32 counties.
- 21 The Labour Party will continue to support and participate in the civil disobedience campaign in the North, through its branch organisation in South Down.
- 22 The Labour Party will, through its sister parties in the world wide socialist International, continue to seek to have international pressures, particularly at government level, brought to bear on the British Government in an effort to have them abandon their present repressive and divisive policies in the North.
- 23 The Labour Party will seek the support of the British Labour Party and Trade Union Movement for its programme and particularly for the ending of internment, the transfer of responsibility for security from Stormont, for a full scale effective investigation of the charges of British Army brutality and torture, for ensuring the cessation of all such activities and for demanding support for compensation

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