



**THE
SOCIALIST FUTURE**

**Programme of
the Socialist Party of Ireland**

Workers of all countries, unite!

THE SOCIALIST FUTURE

PROGRAMME OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

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Introduction

The age in which we live is one of an immense struggle. The forces of human progress are fighting to overthrow the last exploiting system, capitalism, and replace it with socialism – a system which abolishes exploitation of man by man, ends poverty and deprivation, and ensures that the entire wealth of the community is used for the benefit of all.

The working class, the most exploited section of the old society, leads the struggle for the new. In this struggle, three main historical stages are defined: firstly, the overthrow of the rule of the exploiters and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat (that is, political rule by the working class); secondly, the construction of a socialist society; and thirdly, the building of full communism, the classless society of true justice and equality.

Today, fourteen countries have completed the first stage. The USSR, which was the first country to embark on the road to socialism, has completed the second, and has entered the stage of building full communism. The USSR, the socialist countries of eastern Europe and Asia, with Cuba, form the world socialist system, the great achievement of the working class of the twentieth century. The existence of the socialist countries greatly facilitates the struggle of working people in the capitalist countries, including Ireland. Socialist economic, political and cultural progress has an increasing influence on the minds of the exploited peoples, inspiring them in the fight against capitalism. The victories of the socialist world are also our victories.

It is the task of Irish workers to establish the new society in our own country. The way to do this is indicated in the programme of the Socialist Party of Ireland, presented here. Developed by collective thinking, firmly based on Marxism-Leninism, and approved by the national congress of our party, this programme sets out our views on the need for socialism in Ireland and the ways and means of making it a reality.

1

Capitalism and imperialism

Capitalism, the economic and political system operating in Ireland at present, is based on the fact that most natural resources, factories and other means of production, the major portion of the wealth of the country, are owned by a small wealthy class – the capitalists.

Capitalism did not always exist. It arose in western Europe over the 16th to 18th centuries as a result of the development of machine production in factories, which led to a rapid development of industry, technology and the sciences. The small workshops of craftsmen and the guilds were replaced with factories, mills and mines. The owners of these new means of production became the dominant class in society, and through a number of revolutions in European countries overthrew the previously ruling feudal kings and landlords. Having established their own state system, the capitalists brought about an economic progress greater than anything seen in all previous history. But capitalism did not end exploitation. In fact, exploitation was extended to more millions of people in the form of wage slavery.

In capitalist society, the worker is deprived of the basic means of production (factories, machines, raw materials); he owns only his labour power. A more subtle form of exploitation replaces the crude force of slave and feudal society. Economic coercion becomes the dominant form. The capitalist does not personally force the worker to work for him, but in order to live and provide for his family, the worker must sell his labour power to the capitalist. The alternative is starvation.

The capitalists do not create wealth. All wealth is created by working people. Profit is unpaid wages, and capital is accumulated profit. Capitalists use the workers' labour power to produce material wealth. But the worker does not get the full value of his production in the wages he receives for selling his labour. The capitalist pays only for part of the values produced by the workers, and appropriates the remainder. Lab-

our power produces wealth much greater in value than the wages paid to its seller. This is the essence of capitalist exploitation. This 'surplus value' is the source of all capitalist profit and enrichment. In order to grab more surplus value, and thus more profit, the capitalist prolongs the working day, speeds up work and brings in new machinery. Herein lies the main contradiction of capitalist society. Capitalism brings millions of workers together in the production process, but the results of their labour are appropriated by a small minority of rich people. The workers, refusing to be reconciled to this situation, engage in conflict with their exploiters. Class struggle ensues, ever-increasing in intensity and extent, culminating in the socialist revolution.

The culmination of the class struggle coincides with the final phase of capitalism – imperialism. Imperialism results from the concentration of massive amounts of wealth in the hands of a few capitalist cliques, so-called 'free competition' having ruined thousands of small capitalists and brought into existence the monopoly groups which dominate the capitalist world today. As the monopolies concentrate ownership of production in fewer hands, they also extend their domination of the machinery of the bourgeois state. The representatives of big business gain leading positions in governments, and government leaders often become company directors after leaving office.

Imperialism extended capitalist rule over most of the world's territory and reduced many countries to colonial slavery, and precipitated two world wars. But the imperialist stage magnifies all the contradictions of capitalism: between capital and labour, between the imperialist countries and the colonies, and between the imperialist countries themselves. The system begins to break down because of these contradictions, because it can no longer provide scope for human progress. It cannot make proper use of modern science and technology and apply it adequately to production and to man's struggle for mastery over nature.

Capitalism is now in a profound state of crisis, a crisis which began with the success of the first socialist revolution, in Russia, in 1917. The subsequent victories of socialism in other countries, and the spread of the national liberation movements, are as milestones marking the decline of capitalism and the advance of the new society. No mergers, monopolies, 'free trade' or common markets can save capitalism from its eventual replacement by socialism.

Political and ideological power

The economic power of the capitalists is reflected in their control of the state, their possession of political power. The state is the machinery or organisation by means of which one class holds one or more other classes in subjection, the ruling class exercising what we describe as its 'dictatorship', that is, enforcing its will through special coercive organs – police, military, 'special' forces, etc. Bourgeois sociologists and historians attempt to portray their state, falsely, as an organisation 'above' classes, existing only to promote the general welfare of all the people in the state's territory. Marxists point out that every state, throughout history, has existed in the interests of a particular ruling class, and the purpose of every state is to keep oppressed classes in subjection. The capitalist state endeavours to consolidate the economic status quo. It supports the power of the ruling class with Acts of parliament and legal coercion. When direct force is required, it calls in police and military. It attempts to restrict, undermine and abolish the democratic rights which workers have won through political struggle over the years. The capitalist state also engages in large-scale propaganda in defence of capitalism.

The capitalists use their economic and state power to spread their ideology of the 'divine rights' of private property, consumerism, and class collaboration. Capitalist ideology fosters the illusion that everyone has the opportunity to become rich and that those who fail to do so are either unintelligent or lazy. The notion is encouraged that the bosses and the workers are 'equal', 'social partners' in the production process – a 'partnership' in which, in the 26 Counties, 5% of the population own 75% of the wealth!

In order to defend its interests against the economic and political power of the exploiters, the working class makes use of its most important weapon – organisation.

2 Trade unions and workers' parties

Two forms of organisation have been developed by the working class – trade unions and political parties. The unions were the first and most direct method of checking the power of the bosses. Workers banded together in the workplace or in a particular trade, and by withdrawing their labour were able to win wage increases and improvements in conditions. Some early trade unionists thought that they could, by union action alone, organise the whole working class into 'one big union', and by general strike overthrow the capitalists. This idea – called 'syndicalism' – was popular in the early part of this century with such organisations as the Industrial Workers of the World (the 'Wobblies') in the USA, and was brought to Ireland by James Connolly and James Larkin (who later abandoned this theory, seeing the need for a workers' party). But the first successful workers' revolution was led by a political party of a new type – Lenin's Bolshevik party in Russia. Lenin spent many years organising this workers' party, gaining a wealth of experience which has proved invaluable to the working class ever since. Following Lenin's path, the politically conscious workers can see that the correct way forward lies in organising their class in an independent revolutionary party.

This task involves consideration of the rôle of the 'Labour' and social-democratic parties which command widespread influence among the workers of some advanced capitalist countries. These parties, which have often won parliamentary majorities in elections, draw their support and rank-and-file membership from the working class, but their leaders are more often influenced by capitalist economists and ideologists. Reformism, which has illusions about gradually changing capitalism into socialism by parliamentary means, has gained a strong position in the social-democratic parties. Where this is the case, the leaders usually pursue an anti-communist policy and split the working class to the benefit of capitalism. This is the pattern which exists in Britain and West Germany, for instance.

In Ireland, the position is quite different. The Irish Labour Party and the Northern Ireland Labour Party are relatively small and loosely organised parties not comparable with the other social-democratic parties in Europe. Their support in no way reflects the size of the working class in Ireland, the majority of whom continue to vote for one or the other openly capitalist parties.

THE LABOUR PARTY

The Irish Labour Party was formed in 1914 by the Irish Trades Union Congress, under the influence of James Connolly and other outstanding leaders of the working-class movement of the time. Connolly believed that significant advances could be made by a political party linked organisationally with the trade union movement, and indeed this could have been the case, had the leadership of the unions and the Labour Party not fallen into the hands of unscrupulous opportunists. But at the same time, the politically advanced workers realise that however successful it might be, a party organically connected to the unions cannot be a workers' party in the true sense of the term. The struggle for socialism involves battles on many fronts: not only that of the unions, but also in the spheres of politics, philosophy, education, art, science, international relations, and others. The unions rightly regard these affairs as outside their scope – but a revolutionary party aiming at the complete transformation of society must lead in all these struggles.

This is not to say that the Labour Party should be ignored, or put into the same category as the parties of the bosses – far from it. There are many activities, and many campaigns on behalf of the working people, in which socialists and rank-and-file members of the Labour Party can co-operate; and, because of the influence which the unions can exercise over the Labour Party (especially in the supply of funds) a progressive move on the part of the unions, under pressure from the rank and file, would have to be reflected to some extent in the policies of the Labour Party.

On the other hand, there can be no doubt that those who advocate struggling for socialism through membership of the Labour Party are closing their eyes to reality. The Labour Party first compromised with the employer class many years ago, and since then has proved itself on countless occasions to be without a shred of principle. Insofar as the Labour Party reflects the attitude of the unions, limited support may be given to it in certain circumstances (a 'Labour' government, for example, would certainly be preferable to an outright employer-landlord government) but to successfully complete its historic mission – the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of socialism – the working class must have a political organisation of its own, with a revolu-

tionary philosophy, and a revolutionary programme for the winning of political power by the working class.

THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY

The Social-Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) is not a genuine Labour party but is a successor to the catholic-sectarian Nationalist Party in the North, and its support is confined to the catholic population.

THE 'COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRELAND'

The work of the Socialist Party is made somewhat more difficult by the existence of a party which, although called the Communist Party of Ireland, in fact has few if any of the characteristics that have come to be associated with organisations of that name: dependence on the working class, loyalty to the philosophy of scientific socialism, defence of the socialist world, firmness in the face of hostile propaganda, and internal discipline and unity of action. The CPI has either lost, or never had, these necessary requirements for a successful workers' party, and is hardly likely to acquire them now.

3

Today's struggle — the rôle of the Socialist Party

The main struggle in Ireland today is between the wage workers and the monopolies which control the economy. As a result of monopoly rule and its unrestrained greed, the mass of the population have the lowest standard of living of all the western European countries. The government in the republic has admitted that more than 600,000 citizens live in poverty. Seventy thousand people are unemployed, living on the miserable state benefit. A scandalous housing shortage has produced thousands of homeless families. Financial speculation runs wild. The stock exchange speculators grabbed £200 million of untaxed profits in 1972. In contrast, the heaviest tax burdens fall on the wage earners and their families.

With the majority of the population oppressed by capitalism, the potential exists in Ireland for developing a mass movement against the monopolies and their allies. This movement, led by the working class, would defend the people's democratic rights and work for improvements in their standard of living. Trade unions, tenants' associations and other people's democratic organisations would take part in forming a new political front which would be the basis of a future revolutionary government. Representation of this movement in parliament would open the way for a peaceful transition to socialism, providing the bourgeoisie do not attempt to reduce the level of democracy or obstruct the democratic will of the people by force.

Objective of the Socialist Party

The Socialist Party does not confine itself to the struggle for reforms alone.— our objective is the complete abolition of capitalism, and the establishment of a socialist form of society in Ireland. We will work towards building a mass workers' movement in all parts of the country, and will prepare for the possibility of winning power in the republic of Ireland and northern Ireland, separately or simultaneously, depending on circumstances. The policies followed by the party will conform to the needs of the different stages of revolution as described in the introduction.

In pursuing its objective, the Socialist Party has set itself the following main tasks:

- Leading the working class to an awareness of its real political position, introducing socialist consciousness and scientific socialist theory, and explaining the need for workers to have state power in order to replace capitalism.
- Participating in the day-to-day economic and political struggles of the working people — leading and co-ordinating the battles on wages, prices, housing and rents, and democratic rights.
- Establishing the strong revolutionary organisation necessary for winning state power and building socialism.
- Developing and strengthening the alliance between the working class and the mass of small farmers and other sections of the people oppressed by capitalism.
- Encouraging solidarity between the Irish working class and the working class of other countries.

Trade union democracy and labour rights

The Socialist Party will carry out a policy of militant action in the trade unions with the following main aims:

- To secure the removal of all legal restrictions on the rights of workers to organise trade unions
- To defend the right of workers to withdraw labour against the attacks of employers and union bureaucracy
- To secure the right to a job as a legally guaranteed right

- Abolition of the Labour Court
- Abolition of the exclusive 'prerogatives of management'
- Establishment of the legal right of trade unions to examine the accounts and business documents of all enterprises.

Civil rights and freedoms

The Socialist Party opposes the undermining of democratic freedoms which is taking place in Ireland, and supports the demands of the people's organisations for the abolition of repressive legislation. Ireland has long been pointed out as a country with an inordinate amount of repressive legislation, such as the Offences Against the State Acts 1939-40 in the South, and the Special Powers Act in the North. In recent years, more anti-democratic legislation has been introduced in the South with the Forcible Entry Act, which gives a free hand to landlord terror; the Special Criminal Court, which abolishes trial by jury; and the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Act, which gives unprecedented weight to police evidence in the Special Criminal Court, enabling the judges to convict a defendant on the word of a police superintendent. All this legislation has been used against individual workers and workers' organisations. In the North, 'Special Powers' have been replaced with 'Emergency Provisions', just as repressive.

Struggle against restrictions on democracy is an important activity in preparing the way for socialism, raising the class and political consciousness of broad masses of the people and exposing the myth of bourgeois parliamentary 'democracy'. The Socialist Party will play a leading part in ensuring that the democratic rights of the people are not eroded by the monopoly interests and their parliamentary puppets.

Social evils under capitalism

Capitalist Ireland is beset by a number of social evils deriving directly from the exploiting system. While realising that these evils will only be completely eliminated under socialism, we will not forego any improvements in the conditions and standard of living that can be achieved within the system. It must be said that a substantial improvement would result merely from bringing conditions to the level of the other bourgeois states of the EEC.

Immediate demands can be made for improvements in the following areas:

● **HOUSING** The system of private speculation in building land and house property must be ended. The state sector must increase its output in order to provide adequately for the demand for new housing which has arisen in our cities and towns. The state can take over as much land as required and provide the extra finance needed under existing legislation.

● **EDUCATION** An end to sex segregation and religious sectarianism is long overdue in Ireland's educational system. State schools, provided with up-to-date equipment and properly qualified staff, must replace the present church-dominated schools. Parents must be brought into the school management system with legally recognised authority.

● **WOMEN'S RIGHTS** Discrimination against women in employment, education and social security is a continuing scandal which contradicts the alleged rights provided for them in the constitution. The battle for equal pay must be followed by action in other fields where women suffer discrimination. The Socialist Party welcomes and encourages women into political struggles where they can stand side by side with men against the force which oppresses all working people - capitalism. We recognise that women can only achieve full social rights and equality by involvement in social production. Consequently we encourage the provision of facilities which would enable women with children to participate in economic life.

● **FAMILY LAW** In the South, family planning must be made available as part of the health and social services. The restrictive attitude of the Roman Catholic church which holds that contraception is 'against nature', and its hypocrisy in recommending fertility drugs to increase families, and baptisms, must not prevent the state from providing proper family planning services.

However, we do not subscribe to the view that the availability of contraception will 'liberate' the female population. Large families do not cause poverty. Capitalism does. Large families do not cause unemployment. Capitalism does. In socialist society in Ireland, large families will be encouraged initially, in harmony with increased facilities in housing and welfare, and the socialist state will provide for the welfare of all children as a priority. Therefore, the Socialist Party advocates family planning as a civil right not superior to or more urgently required than the right to work, adequate housing or proper medical services.

Humane divorce laws providing for the ending of marriages based on mutual consent and taking into account the welfare of children should be introduced following consultations with the people's democratic organisations.

Following from its humanist outlook and its respect for life, the socialist state would not allow abortion to be considered as a method of birth control, and will not make abortion freely available on request. In certain circumstances, however, where serious medical or social considerations demand, abortion will be permissible under strict supervision.

4

Programme for action in a democratic anti-monopoly government

A national democratic alliance of workers' and progressive parties and people's organisations could form the basis of a new government in either part of Ireland which could break the power of monopoly capitalism, and open the road to socialism.

The following minimum measures would be necessary for success:

- Withdrawal from full membership of the EEC with the substitution of a trade agreement with that group
- Ending the export of capital
- Retention and extension of tariff protection as necessary to protect home industry
- State control of the mining industry and the use of its profits for capital investment in new state industries in every sector of the economy
- Diversification of trade by negotiating trade agreements with every country willing to reciprocate (except fascist states) and particularly with the socialist countries of eastern Europe and Asia
- Use of the taxation powers of the state to effect a redistribution of wealth in favour of working people
- State control of credit, ending the powers of the monopoly banks and finance institutions.

These measures would stabilise the economy, end inflation, and reduce the dependence on export-type industry. State investment would be directed towards increasing production and providing more employment.

The national question

The Socialist Party stands for the achievement and retention of full national independence by the republic of Ireland, as a pre-requisite for the successful struggle of the working class to overthrow capitalism. We also demand the withdrawal of all British troops from northern Ireland and the establishment there of a democratic political system based on self-determination.

The organisations calling for a 'national liberation movement' in the South are ignoring the fact that the national independence revolution has already taken place, and cannot be repeated. Despite the fact that the Irish capitalist class insist on giving away their economic independence, they still have, and use, political power.

The justification for the 'national liberation' policy on the part of those organisations which advocate it, is the absurd belief that Ireland belongs to the under-developed or 'third world' — that is, is neither a capitalist nor a socialist country, but is at an earlier stage of social development. Apart from the wishful thinking of the Sinn Féin nationalists and their allies who need an excuse for avoiding the issue of class struggle, there is no substance whatever in this argument. The majority class in Ireland is now the proletariat — the wage-workers in industry and services — something which is impossible in the developing countries. As a full member of the imperialist EEC bloc, Ireland takes part collectively, on however small a scale, as an exploiter of the developing countries.

The reality is that Ireland is a capitalist country, and that the liberation of the Irish people from exploitation lies on the path of class struggle, led by the workers, against the national and international monopoly bourgeoisie.

The territory of Ireland was divided by the British imperialists in 1921 into two separate states, with differing degrees of dependence on British imperialism, as a consequence of the demand for national independence. This partition served the interests of imperialism by dividing the working class, and the people of Ireland as a whole, and also by maintaining direct control of a portion of Irish territory. This was achieved and maintained largely through officially-encouraged religious sectarianism, institutionalised in the Orange Order.

Although the Orange Order and its political mouthpiece, the Unionist Party, are split and divided, orangeism, with its ignorance, bigotry, discrimination, its anti-intellectual and anti-progressive outlook, re-

mains the dominant philosophy among a majority of the population in northern Ireland, and is a major obstacle to the spread of socialist ideas in that area.

Orangeism, the most reactionary philosophy in Ireland, must be isolated and destroyed. And what can destroy it is the superior philosophy of scientific socialism. The existence of this reactionary philosophy, and the anti-democratic outlook and activity of its adherents, will have to be tackled, not as a national problem, but as a social and psychological problem, and primarily as a class problem, and defeated through confrontation between the interests of the working class, represented by socialism, and the interests of imperialism.

On the other hand, the objective result of the existence of Sinn Féin (both varieties) is to frighten away the northern working class from taking part in any political activity other than 'defending' what they imagine to be their 'country', and thereby playing into the hands of the Tory-unionists and British imperialism. The very existence of Sinn Féin is an expression of the moribund nationalism of the southern ruling class. No such organisation, by any means, could bring socialist ideas to the working class, either north or south.

The policy of the Socialist Party on the national question, stated simply, is: to organise the working class in both Irish states; to lead the struggle by the working class to win political power in both states; at the same time to work with all democratic and anti-monopoly forces to win and retain democratic freedoms and to fight for maximum unity against nationalism and sectarianism; and finally to resolve the national question, after the winning of power by the working class in both parts of Ireland, on the basis of mutual agreement and full equality.

The existence of two separate administrations means that in many cases different tactics and differences of emphasis will be called for, because of the different degrees of control by British imperialism, and the different levels of development of the working-class movement.

There is no doubt that the ultimate settlement of the national question will involve the coming together of the two areas into a single workers' state, established by agreement by the organised and united working class.

5

Socialist revolution

Already, within capitalism, the material conditions have been created which provide the basis for the socialist revolution. The contradictions between capital and labour which we have described arise inevitably from capitalist production relations. As capitalism develops, these contradictions become more acute, and the resistance to exploitation becomes more intense.

Struggle by the revolutionary class, the proletariat, is the only way in which the tasks of social change can be resolved. The socialisation of production which occurs under capitalism leads to the historical necessity for abolishing private property which has become a fetter on the further development of the productive forces. The working class can only emancipate itself by destroying capitalist production relations and substituting public ownership throughout the economy. In carrying out this task, the working class also emancipates everyone else from the exploitation system – the petty-bourgeois small business people and the rural smallholders. It is in the interests of these sections to ally themselves with the revolutionary workers, and the workers' party takes account of the importance of offering them leadership and a chance to throw their weight behind the forces of progress.

Marxists recognise the leading rôle of the working class in the class struggle and its outcome, the socialist revolution, not because of some miraculous attributes of this class but because of an objective assessment of the real situation. The working class is directly connected to the most advanced form of production, which is large-scale industry. This objective position gives it a natural leading rôle, makes it the only class capable of a consistent, determined struggle for social change. It has no interest in preserving the private property system.

The main issue in the class struggle is the question of state power. Because the capitalists will inevitably resist the change to the new society, because their interests are irreconcilable with those of the working class, it is necessary for the workers to have state power in order to abolish the exploiting system. Depending on the concrete conditions

of the period when the conflict between the classes has matured and come to a head, the workers may advance to state power by peaceful means (through extra-parliamentary agitation in addition to struggle in parliament) or by physical force (that is, using sheer weight of numbers and mass disciplined organisation to seize power from the bourgeoisie).

The transition from capitalism to socialism

The creation of the socialist system of society is based on a number of objective laws which operate in all countries which have taken the socialist path. These laws have been confirmed by the communist and workers' parties of all countries, based on their experience both in the construction of the socialist system in those countries where it has been established, and also in the struggles of the workers in the capitalist countries.

These laws are:

- Leadership of the mass of the people by the working class through their own independent political party, and the establishment in one form or another of workers' rule, the dictatorship of the proletariat
- Alliance of the working class with the small farmers and all other sections of the people oppressed by capitalism
- Abolition of capitalist private property and the establishment of public ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange
- Step-by-step introduction of socialist organisation of agriculture
- Centralised planning of the national economy with the aim of firmly establishing the socialist form and providing continuous improvements in the standard of living of the working people
- Ending of all forms of national oppression, and the establishment of full equality and close fraternal relations among the peoples
- Defence of the gains of socialism against all enemies, internal and external
- Solidarity of the working class of each country with the working class in all other countries and with the revolutionary forces throughout the world.

These laws must be applied by each workers' party in a creative manner, taking into account, but not exaggerating, the national peculiarities of their respective situations.

6

Socialist democracy

In the socialist revolution, the party of the working class will take state power on behalf of the workers, and will immediately proceed to re-organise society on the basis of public ownership of the means of production. The workers' party will become, even more than before the revolution, the voice and the leading centre of its class, and the main driving force of society. The great majority of the politically active working people will exercise their political power through the workers' party, whose interests are and will continue to be inseparable from those of the working class as a whole.

Depending on the situation existing at the time of the winning of power by the working class, parties representing classes other than the workers might remain in existence for some time. The experience of a number of socialist countries in Europe indicates that other parties — representing, for example, small farmers and handicraftsmen, and possibly parties of the workers which do not subscribe to the Marxist philosophy of the advanced workers' party — can participate in the construction of socialism, on the understanding that they would not cherish any illusions about restoring capitalism, or having a share in state power equal to or greater than that of the socialist workers.

As the working class increases in size, both in absolute numbers and as a proportion of the population, the limited need for non-working-class parties would gradually disappear.

ELECTIONS AND GOVERNMENT

Learning from the countries of established socialism, the working class will organise an electoral system suited to the new form of society.

No parties supporting capitalism, and no candidates advocating a return to capitalism, will be allowed. General election candidates will be selected by mass meetings of working people, convened by electoral commissions. The electoral commissions in each area will be made up of representatives of the democratic organisations of the people: the workers' party, trade unions, and cultural, scientific and sporting org-

anisations, and prospective candidates will be nominated by these organisations.

In factories, housing estates and rural areas, the electoral commissions will convene meetings of all adult citizens, who will choose from among their neighbours and fellow-workers the most suitable candidates. The general election vote — a formality — will ratify the democratic decisions of the people.

The representatives elected by the people will come together as the State Assembly, which will be the supreme law-making and governing body of the state. The State Assembly will elect the Council of Ministers to undertake the practical tasks of governing the country, and the Council of State, a collective head of state which will act for the State Assembly when it is not in session.

Socialist nationalisation and economic planning

The basis of the socialist economy will be the dominant sector of state-owned industry formed from the nationalisation of large-scale monopoly enterprises. Industries to be nationalised outright will include construction, mining, engineering, brewing and distilling, food processing, chemical and oil refining, power generation and transport (rail, shipping and airlines), and wholesale distribution. All banks and financial institutions will be nationalised. The remaining sectors will consist of medium-sized enterprises still owned by capitalists, co-operative enterprises (in transition to state property) and agricultural smallholdings. All large-scale farms will be nationalised and form part of the state sector.

The overall direction and development of the economy will be planned from the Central Planning Authority acting on behalf of the people as a whole. In the initial period following the revolution, the objective of planning will be to phase out the multi-sector structure and introduce social ownership in all the principal means of production. Small-scale private property may be eliminated by expropriation or buying out, depending on circumstances. This category would include family enterprises not employing outside labour, small one-owner manufacturing units, public houses and shops. Those bought out would be of the type where the original capital came from the earnings of the individual owner. Inherited wealth would not count in this case. Small-scale one-owner elements will be gradually socialised through co-operation between the state and the individuals concerned.

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

Democratic control of the economy will be established through publicly-appointed management and workers' production committees in the state sector and joint committees of management in the co-operative and small capitalist enterprises. Any capitalist enterprise which refuses to implement the regulations establishing workers' participation in the transitional stage will be expropriated. In addition to single-enterprise production committees, democratic bodies representing workers in whole industries will be set up to advise and supervise the management boards of the state sectors. Similar bodies will be established for the other sectors.

The general interests of the workers will be the main concern of the trade unions which will operate in all sectors under constitutionally guaranteed rights.

Agriculture

Socialism brings about a transition in agriculture equal to the changes in the industrial sector.

In Ireland, the changes would begin with the nationalisation of large or very large farms to form the state farms which will be the foundation of socialist agriculture. These farms would play a leading part in introducing modern methods of large-scale machine production into farming. They would also serve as the location for scientific research and development of new technological processes and methods of livestock rearing, management and organisation of farming.

The remainder of the land would be held in co-operative ownership of various types: supply and marketing, tillage and machinery and producer co-ops. The co-ops would be based on voluntary membership and joint ownership of the means of production. The agricultural plan would provide for the gradual development of the larger producer co-ops to the level of state farms.

The overall economic plan would provide the agricultural sector with a fair share of the investment resources of the community, and would ensure security and a long-term future for the people on the land which has never been achieved under capitalism.

FISHERIES

Under socialism there will be nationalisation of the processing and wholesale outlets within the fishing industry and the inland waterways. The establishment of co-operatives within the present fleet will be encouraged, and all further additions to the fleet will be state owned. A

deep-sea fleet will be established, and fishing limits will be extended subject to international convention. The maintenance and protection of fishing stock will be a national priority.

Civil liberties

The socialist state will guarantee the civil rights of the people in its constitution, including the following:

- The right to life, a job, and a share in the decision-making bodies of the state
- The right to vote by secret ballot
- The right to freedom of conscience and religious belief
- The right to express opinions freely in all existing means of communication, excluding ideas and opinions which support exploitation of man by man.

The socialist state will prevent discrimination between men and women, will provide extensive free health services and free education to all citizens.

Science and technology will be used to serve the interests of the people, improving production methods, and leading to a higher standard of living for all.

DEFENCE AND SECURITY

The socialist state will establish military and police forces for the purpose of defending the internal and external security of the state. The military and police personnel will retain their democratic rights as citizens, in relation to voting, political activity, etc, and the security forces will co-operate with the people's democratic organisations in carrying out their duties.

Communist morality

The Socialist Party of Ireland works actively to replace bourgeois morality – the ideology of the capitalists, which justifies war, hunger, misery, slavery, national and racial oppression – with the scientific humanism of communist morality, and seeks to have the following principles adopted not only by party members but by all working people: devotion to the cause of communism; respect and support for the countries of victorious socialism; conscientious labour for the good of society; collectivism and comradesly mutual assistance; respect for human life; humane relations and mutual respect between individuals; honesty, moral purity,

modesty and unpretentiousness in social and private life; mutual respect in the family, and concern for the upbringing of children; an uncompromising attitude to injustice, parasitism, dishonesty and careerism; friendship and brotherhood among all peoples; intolerance of national and racial hatred; and fraternal solidarity with the working people of all countries.

Conclusion

In placing this programme for socialism before the people, we have provided a basis of the most progressive ideas of humanity from which the people of Ireland can move forward to a future of assured prosperity and security.

Ireland's geographical position, small size and small population do not now prevent our country from embarking on this road.

Socialism opens up prospects for unprecedented and limitless development of humanity. Socialism transforms labour from a hardship for some into a necessity, a source of happiness and creative inspiration for all. Socialism establishes freedom for men and women as workers and as social beings, enables them to perfect their physical and mental abilities and satisfy their needs in friendly co-operation with each other. Socialism abolishes national and racial oppression and establishes true brotherhood among peoples.

For these reasons, socialism is winning the support of many more millions of people each year. All over the world, socialism has become the leading force in mass movements for progress. The socialist countries, the workers' parties in the capitalist countries, and the national liberation movements form a single stream of revolutionary forces which now determine the direction of humanity's future development.

Socialism is no longer just a theory. It is a living reality which extends over a large area of the globe. The existence of this system means that any country taking the road to socialism can rely on the strength of a community of nations bound by identity of interest and international solidarity, providing security, friendship and mutual assistance of a new type.

JOIN OUR PARTY AND HASTEN THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM IN IRELAND.

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