

1975

Ard Fheis - 1975 -76, Peace, Work & Class Politics : Clár

Sinn Féin

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Sinn Féin Árd Fheis 1975-76



**PEACE,
WORK
& CLASS POLITICS**

Clár

FINANCE CAPITAL; _____

1. This Ard Fheis of Sinn Fein recognises that:

- 1) Capital is the stolen and stored surplus of human labouring power, past and present expressed as money.
- 2) Capital in Ireland is owned and managed by a cartel of American, British and Irish Banks and Finance Companies for the profit of Irish, British and American shareholders.
- 3) Capital in Ireland since 1958 has been transforming itself under the supervision of monopoly capital based on the Common Market and the American Corporations who invest in Europe. The merger of Industrial and Bank Capital is now almost complete.
- 4) Finance Capital is the result of merging Industrial and Bank capital. At the end of last year the total valuation of all firms on the Stock Exchange (Dublin Branch) was £260 million. The total lending by Merchant and North American Banks in the 26 Counties at the end of last year, was £283 million. Finance Capital guided by Anglo-American Banking outstrips in value, the Irish Stock Exchange.
- 5) Finance Capital is therefore the highest development of International Capital in Ireland. Simply stated the Banks have taken over industry and through the co-operatives, agriculture. This is done with the support of American Capital in particular. The last take-over attempt is that of the Government's attack of the public service and state companies.
- 6) Finance Capital is the modern army of occupation which the Irish working class must overcome in the construction of socialism in Ireland.

These six vital points allow us to plan strategy based on two further propositions North and South:-

- a) Full employment now or in the future, is not compatible with the existence of Finance Capital, which is devoted to profits for shareholders and not jobs for workers.
- b) Freedom of economic development is not possible while Finance Capital exists to rob labouring power and keep it in private hands.

Therefore the destruction of Finance Capital must be a primary concern of our party both in the short and long term. The stages and tactics of this struggle will be various and different as the working class gains strength and experience.

This Ard Fheis proposes that two immediate campaigns must be fought as a matter of urgency in order to defend the working class from the most recent Government attacks.

Finance Capital and the Public Sector:

At the end of last year the Coalition, at the instigation of Finance Capital launched a savage attack on a quarter of a million workers in the state companies, local authorities and civil service. They were described on October 13th last by the Minister for Finance as being "carried" by the private sector. That attack has been viciously prosecuted since against

CIE workers, ESB workers and the Irish Sugar Co. Apart from the fact that the so-called "passengers" in Bord na Mona made £1,220,000 in surplus for the State, it is worth noting that this surplus was cut by 90% down to £118,000 because of interest payments to the banks.

This symbolises the entire parasitic relationship between the Banks and the State Companies, who, as distinct from Government borrowing, saw the money to be repaid in sterling, dollars and deutschmarks, jump from £82 million in 1971 to £197 million sterling in 1975.

The fear of the State Companies expanding into productive rather than service work is now a dominant feature of Finance Capital's approach to the present crisis in the economy. The role of the State Companies is critical to the construction of socialism in Ireland. 'Defend the State Companies against Finance Capital' is the slogan under which the struggles of the coming year in the public sector must be conducted.

Finance Capital and Natural Resources;

At the end of last year the predictions made in our book, 'The Great Oil and Gas Robbery' were well on the way to being confirmed in every respect. First as we predicted, the State Companies were being excluded from leading the productive development of oil and gas. The contracts for the laying of the pipeline from the Kinsale Head went, not to the ESB, but to the British Gas Corporation. Meanwhile CIE was still being kept out of servicing the gas discoveries while its workers were suffering cutbacks.

Therefore Sinn Fein calls for:-

- 1) The defence, consolidation and expansion of State Companies, Local Authorities and the Civil Service as essential to the laying down of a firm foundation on which to create an industrial revolution and full employment.
- 2) The nationalisation of the Banks and Financial Institutions as a step towards establishing an independent currency and in order to provide the necessary State Finance Capital for the development of our natural resources.

Ará Comhairle.

EMPLOYMENT

2. The present crisis of imperialism is one of the major factors in the current international wave of inflation and unemployment. Apart from the inherent instability of capitalism, the present crisis is due to the fact that the major imperial powers have lost political control of Asia and Africa and therefore, no longer have free access to cheap raw materials for their industries and cheap food for their workers. Those former colonies which have gained independence and taken control of their natural resources are now demanding an economic price for their agricultural produce, mineral wealth and raw materials.

Ireland's situation is worst of all. By remaining closely tied to the imperialist camp within the EEC and remaining politically subjected to Anglo American domination, we have suffered all the worst effects of inflation and recession. By failing to take sovereign control of our economy and of our natural resources, we have none of the advantages of other former colonies. In our present situation we have no remedy but to go out and beg internationally. This is how we are living at present.

To tackle inflation and unemployment we must therefore seek radical changes in our present situation. This Ard Fheis therefore calls for maximum unity of all progressive organisations of workers and small farmers behind a co-ordinated plan of action throughout 1976. Such a programme should be designed to get the broad agreement of the left. This Ard Fheis suggests the following points as the basis for such a programme of action against inflation and unemployment:-

1) Defensive;

a) Opposition to wage restrictions;

b) Freeze and control prices and profits;

c) Protection of pay related and other benefits;

d) Minimum wage levels and national pensions plan related to current wage levels.

e) Legal restriction to wholesale redundancy in grant aided and public industry

2. Immediate Crash Programme for Employment:

a) Public expenditure on housing, road and urban transport to stimulate the building industry;

b) The building of an oil refinery in Dublin and a state smelter at a suitable site.

c) Immediate use of suitable land under state control to develop agricultural based industry providing industrial employment in our major profit-making industry.

3. Planned Economic Development:

a) Nationalisation of all the banks and financial institutions.

b) The expansion of the role of the state and semi-state enterprises in all areas of economic activity particularly -

i. A state oil and gas production and manufacturing complex based on ESP Bord na Mona, Aer Lingus and Nitrogen Eireann.

3
Eric J.
3
ii. A state construction company that will galvanise the construction industry by taking over massive construction projects, in schools, hospitals and housing, financed by mineral and oil wealth.

iii. A state food technology board to produce, process and distribute food projects based on the Irish Sugar Co.

- c) Full use of our natural resources to provide a new base for unlimited industrialisation from primary products to consumer products.
- d) Planned development of the major ports, such as the Shannon estuary to provide a major growth of port related industries making maximum use of our natural advantages to develop modern industries.
- e) Conclusion of international trade agreements with newly emerging states and East European Countries to co-operate on development technology and to combat the destructive influences of multi-national capitalist enterprise.

Ard Comhairle.

3. In view of the facts, that in November 1975 the registered number of unemployed is over 105,000 and the projected number for March 1976 is 130,000 and by the end of 1976 the number is expected to be in the region of 150,000, also, in view of the facts that the Motor Assembly business, the Shoe and Leather industries and the textile industries are being wiped out by imports of foreign and cheap products, and particularly recognising that in many instances the imported goods are manufactured from Irish raw and natural materials earlier exported.

Recognising and accepting these facts, the Republican Movement should call on the Government to implement direct control over the importation of such goods and to prevent the flooding of the home markets by these cheap products. In default of such measures being provided the Movement should call upon the Trade Union Movement to organise solidarity within their members to withstand this attack on their ever diminishing job opportunities. In all these demands the Republican Movement should work to expose the anomalies of the present importation conditions and in doing so, should promote the united stand of workers in various fields of employment to protect their own livelihoods.

Cumann Sean Ruiseil, Dublin Nth. Central.

4. In the heightening economic crisis, the Ard Fheis recognises that the necessity of supporting the official trade-union movement as represented by the ICTU and the TUC at a time when the solidarity of the working class is under attack from reactionary and sectarian forces.

As widespread factory closures and consequent job loss continues throughout Ireland, it is imperative that the Movement mount a major agitation

calling for more jobs. To this end, Club members should be involved in local economic surveys to evaluate the industrial potential in their own areas, thus providing the basis for propaganda and planning in a campaign for employment.

Ard Fheis calls on all its members to rigidly oppose and expose the practice of locating industrial development on a sectarian basis. At a time of spiralling cost of living, the Ard Fheis calls on its members in the North to oppose the £6 wage freeze, and maintain the right to demand a living wage.

Ard Fheis having noted the unemployment high-point throughout Ireland, proposes that in line with the Movement's general policy of organising workers that stronger efforts should be made in organising the unemployed in defence of their rights and in demand of employment. Such an organisation could have an important role in building the campaign against sectarianism in the North.

South Antrim Comhairle Ceanntair.

Eric To Speak

5. The Ard Fheis recognising that the destruction of the State sector forms the central strategy of the Irish exploiting class and their monopoly masters calls on all its members and sections to rally to a programme of defence, consolidation and expansion of the State Sector along the following lines:

First, to educate all who work in State bodies to the need for an ideology of public service, that will allow these companies who must compete with private enterprise to fight and destroy the parasitic private sector companies who batten on the State Companies.

Second, to educate those who work in Local Authority and Civil Service bodies to the truth that their work is as productive and socially useful than the property speculators, race-horse breeders and playboys who make up the private sector.

Third, to organise on that basis across the State Corporations and the Public Service a systematic campaign to blunt the Coalition's attempt to reduce and weaken the State sector.

Cumann, Waterford City.

6. The Ard Fheis, recognising that the Irish gombeen class is unable to carry on the functions of a national bourgeoisie and cannot generate further employment, that the efforts to industrialise on the basis of foreign investment has been a temporary stop-gap whose greatest contribution has been to strengthen and increase the absolute size of the Irish working class makes the following demand:

That any policy of Full Employment must be based on a manufacturing and industrial revolution on the basis of State ownership of oil, gas and mines and the development of the downstream industries, from them.

The Ard Fheis recognises that the robbery of jobs and not the robbery of wealth is the correct slogan with which to conduct this campaign.

Cumann, Waterford City.

7. Due to the vast and ever increasing problem of unemployment in this country, this Ard Fheis demands that the Republican Movement give top priority to organising a campaign for the basic right to work.

Jemmy Hope Cumann, Dublin.

- Eric to Speak*
8. As unemployment in the Building Industry is the single largest contributor to unemployment, and as responsibility for this position rests with the private builders who control 75% of the Industry - this Ard Fheis calls for the nationalisation of the Construction Industry and its expansion into natural resources servicing and large capital projects with the help of expertise in the E.S.B. and C.I.F.

Joe O'Connor Cumann, Dublin.

9. That this Ard Fheis demands that the awarding of contracts to build Gas Production Rigs, lay Natural Gas pipelines or other construction projects be given to Cork County Council or the appropriate local authority to be built by direct labour, subject to the setting up of a State Construction Company.

Joe O'Connor Cumann, Dublin.

10. The Ard Fheis fully supports the Campaign by ESB Engineers and C.I.E. workers to allow these State Companies to fight redundancies, recruitment freezes and wage cut-backs, by expanding these Companies into Oil, Gas and mineral services and manufacturing.

Joe O'Connor Cumann, Dublin.

- Proposed speak.*
11. The Ard Fheis fully supports the Irish Sugar Company's decision to grow its own potatoes following the breaking of contracts by the Irish Farmers' Association.

The Ard Fheis calls for the further expansion of the Sugar Company into the growing, processing, distribution and retailing of all food products necessary to feed an expanding urban population.

Ned Stapleton Cumann, Dublin.

12. The Ard Fheis condemns a system which took the flm profit of Bord na Mona workers and handed it to a parasitic Banking System.

Ned Stapleton Cumann, Dublin.

13. That this Ard Fheis pledges full support for the Resources Protection Campaign and its Trade Union Support Group. The Ard Fheis calls upon Sinn Fein members to intensify their work in bringing the importance of manufacturing industry, based on Natural Resources and developed by State Companies, before the Trade Union and working class movement.
Ned Stapleton Cumann, Dublin.
14. That the relevant departments in Sinn Fein make a special effort to ensure that all members of Sinn Fein are aware of our policy on the need for State ownership of our Natural Resources as a key element in building a socialist alternative to the present system in Ireland.
Galway City Cumann.
15. This Ard Fheis recognises that those most severely affected by the present economic crisis in the western world are the working class and demand the right to work for all regardless of sex, or marital status.
Cumann P.Pearse.Rathmines/Ranelagh.
16. That Sinn Fein demands a non discriminatory National minimum hourly rate.
Cumann P.Pearse. Rathmines/Ranelagh.
17. That this Ard Fheis condemns the present exploitation of child labour.
Cumann Con Colbert, Carrickmacross.
18. That the Ard Comhairle be immediately directed to draw up a policy document explaining the need for the 32 County Development unit, and how it is to be implemented: that Clubs/Cumainn North and South be directed to launch a campaign in support of this policy immediately it is drawn up.

19. Despite the enormous sums of money being spent annually in both the 6 and the 26 Counties on roads, railways and waterways as well as on public transport and subsidies to private transport, there is no transport plan in operation in either state. All expenditure is piecemeal and in response to the demands of a chaotic and unplanned transport system.

This Ard Fheis therefore calls on the incoming Ard Comhairle to draw up a comprehensive National Transport Plan, organised on a 32 County basis and press for its implementation through the public authorities North and South. Such a National Transport Plan should take account of both social and economic factors, recognising transport as an essential national service, particularly in the peripheral areas, and incorporating the following guidelines:

- a) The integration of Rail, Road, Air and Water Transport to provide maximum efficiency with full use of our limited resources. The expansion of rail services with diversion of heavy goods from road to rail with a consequent reduction of expenditure on roads.
- b) A halt to the planned denationalisation of CIE, as has already been done with the UTA in the North, has steadily been eroding the role of Ireland's largest employer of labour in favour of private operators.
- c) An expansion of public transport in shipping, road haulage, off-shore servicing and development of inland waterways and urban rail systems.
- d) Rationalisation of CIE, B. & I. Irish Shipping and Aer Rianta/Aer Lingus to avoid duplication and expand their employment potential by increasing their share of the Irish transport market.
- e) Development of co-operation agreements with British Rail, Ulster Transport Authorities and other public agencies to provide cheap efficient transport in all parts of Ireland.
- f) Full use of facilities at Harland and Wolfe, Verolme Dockyard, Liffey Dockyard and Bord Iascaigh Mhara boatyards to provide new vessels and transport equipment.

In drawing up such a plan due regard should be given to existing surveys and reports carried out on railways, waterways and urban transport, which have never been implemented.

Ard Comhairle.

20. That this Ard Fheis demands that greater transport facilities be made available for the people of rural Ireland and strongly condemns those short-sighted persons responsible for lifting the railways.

Monaghan Comhairle Ceanntar.

21. The struggle for womens' rights in Ireland operates on a number of levels. There are those who see the struggle as primarily one of civil discrimination, with regard to legal status, and the lack of contraception and divorce facilities, there is the T.U. struggle for equal opportunity which is predominant in the area of education. There is also the Trade Union struggle for equal pay, and against job discrimination on the basis of sex.

As a socialist organisation we must differentiate between these relative areas of activity, and whilst operating at each level, we must be aware of their tactical value and ultimately their function as weapons of class struggle.

We as a party of the working class are to the front in all struggles for civil liberties. But we do not regard the emancipation of woman as a Citizen as constituting the primary issue. It is with Woman the Worker that our party is first concerned. This means two simple demands: the right of all women who want to work to make their productive labour available to society. Under Capitalism this means selling that labour on the open market, which leads logically to our second demand, that women be paid equally with men, for work of equal value.

There is nothing in the claims of women as citizens that cannot be granted by the capitalist system, without any cost to itself. We will continue to struggle for civil rights until the system, as it soon must, grant full civil equality. But there is no way the capitalist system can grant the two simple demands of Woman as Worker, without having to dig deeply into its pockets. Consider what the capitalist system will be forced to do. First our "Right to Work" demand is designed to add half a million new workers to the ranks of the working class - to swell the numbers of enemies which faces the capitalist system. Second, our Equal Pay demand means that not only will the system be required to add to the number of its grave-diggers, but will be required to pay them the full rate for the job.

In place then of the confused and vague demands of social democracy and the bourgeois women's liberation groups, Sinn Fein calls on all women to rally to two clear-cut demands:

1. The right of all Irish women to work.
2. The right of all working women to Equal Pay.

Dublin Comhairle Ceanntar.

22. That this Ard Fheis demand that all Comhairle Ceanntar areas take action for the implementation of anti-discrimination legislation, e.g. The Sex-Discrimination Bill and the Equal Pay Act in the North, and the Anti-Discrimination Bill in the South. The Comhairle Ceanntar should see as its responsibility to mount a propaganda campaign on -

- (a) The Equal Pay Act - how individuals can claim under it, its main loopholes - how they can be overcome.

23. (b) The Sex Discrimination Bill must be made law in Northern Ireland. The pressure for this must be strengthened.

(c) The proposed delay in the South's Anti-discrimination Bill must be rejected by all Comhairle Ceanntair and immediate action taken for its immediate implementation. Furthermore, where this Bill falls short of the N. Ireland Equal Pay Act, i.e. a person entitled to equal pay only in the same work place, as opposed to the North's provision for equal pay if employed by the same firm, in different locations, but under similar conditions - steps should be taken to ensure amendments to rectify this.

Belfast Comhairle Ceanntar.

24. Recognising that under monopoly capitalism women suffer even more acutely than men, particularly in the fields of Employment:

21.

- a) In an economic crisis the first industries to flounder are those which employ a high percentage of women - textiles, footwear, light industry generally;
- b) Between March '74 and March '75, while male unemployment rose by 44%, female unemployment rose by 65%;
- c) Because of their poor Trade Union organisation, women are less able to fight redundancies;
- d) Because of lack of vocational training, women are less able to compete on the labour market;
- e) Lack of child-care facilities means that the right to work is for many women merely the right to engage in slave labour;
- f) Women are badly paid and thus help depress wage levels generally.

That the Movement should, in its campaign in this area, emphasise their particular relevance to women, and accordingly, make a greater effort to involve women in these campaigns.

Comhairle Ceanntar Galway.

*Must be recognised
that certain civil rights are essential.*

25. Affirming that Sinn Fein recognises that equality of treatment for women workers is essential to their participation in the labour force, we call on this Ard Fheis to demand the immediate implementation of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Bill 1975 and the Anti Discrimination (Employment) Bill - but recognising that both these Bills are narrow and limited in their scope we demand that both Bills be amended to cater for the particular problems of women created by their present role of mothers and workers.

Cumann P. Pearse, Rathmines/Panelagh.

26 As a result of Social Attitudes and economic factors in our society, many women are prevented from carrying out political activity within the Movement due to marital commitment. We therefore instruct the incoming Ard Comhairle to initiate a system whereby such women, until they attain an equal status within marriage, be provided with the means to be politically active within the Movement. An example being that married women would do specific work for the Movement - agreed with the local Cumann - and in return would enjoy the status of a full member of the Movement with voting rights etc.

Ard Comhairle.

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Comhairle Ceanntar, Co. Lúi.

28 That this Ard Fheis instructs the incoming Ard Comhairle to set up an investigating committee into the problem of non-involvement of women in the Movement because of their marital status. By this we mean that there is a high proportion of women unable to be active members of the Movement because of marital commitments. some structure should be decided upon whereby they may become politically active. e.g. Associate Members.

Belfast Comhairle Ceanntar.

29 That lectures on the women's question become an integral part of all education programmes at national and local level and be drawn up in conjunction with the National Women's Committee and Education Dept.

Ard Comhairle.

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Comhairle Ceanntar, Co. Lúi.

31 That this Ard Fheis demands that the issues concerning Women's Rights be fully incorporated into the National Education Programme.

Belfast Comhairle Ceanntar.

Eme to speak

32 That members of the Movement should be encouraged to participate in broad-based women's Committees where those exist in their area and to initiate them where they do not and to avail of such Committees to further the policies of the Movement as enunciated at the 1972 and 1974 Ard Fheiseanna subject to the approval of the National Women's Committee.

Ard Comhairle

33 That members of the Movement should be encouraged to participate in broad-based women's committees where those exist in their area and to initiate them where they do not and to avail of such committees to further the policies of the movement.

Comhairle Ceanntar, Co. Lú.

34 That Comhairle Ceanntair, in areas where there are no women's Sub-Committees, be instructed to survey the position of women within their areas i.e. employment, wage levels, nursery schools, education, family planning, etc., as a basis for activity on the women's question.

Ard Comhairle

35 That Comhairli Ceanntair, in areas where there are no women's Sub-Committees, be instructed to survey the position of women within their areas, i.e. employment, wage levels, nursery schools, education, family planning etc., as a basis for activity on the women's question.

Comhairle Ceanntar, Co. Lú.

36 That this Ard Fheis, while recognising that the initial conscious-raising on women's rights must be done by women, urges that the present policy of the Movement concerning Comhairle Ceanntair sub-Committees for Women's Rights be changed. We demand that the 'ban' on men be lifted to allow for all interested members of the Movement to be involved in the Women's Rights Committees. This would ensure a more rational and balanced approach on the subject and go a long way towards eliminating the suspicion and alienation felt by the majority of members.

Belfast Comhairle Ceanntar.

37 As the question of Women's Rights is of concern to all members of the Movement of whatever sex, who seek liberation from the political, economic and social influences of capitalism, this Ard Fheis opposes the present chauvinistic and misguided rule which limits participation on the women's rights committees to females only.

South Antrim, Comhairle Ceanntar.

38 That Comhairle Ceanntar womens' rights sub-committees be open to all members of the Movement.

Wolfe Tone Rep. Club. Sth. Antrim.

39 That all members of the Movement should be able to attend Womens' rights meetings.

Connolly Rep. Club. Newlodge Rd. Belfast.

40 That this Ard Fheis seeks full equality for all women.

Cumann Con Colbert. Carrickmacross.

41. The international situation demands that Ireland should draft a national Fishery policy. The world demand for protein is continuing its upward trend, and the major fishing powers in Europe are finding it difficult to meet their own requirements with their own fleets. Britain and Germany, two of Europe's biggest catchers, are also heavy importers of fish.

This Ard Fheis of Sinn Fein supports the heroic struggle by Iceland to preserve its very existence by protecting its fishing waters. The Icelanders have found that it is necessary to get control of the entire Icelandic shelf so that they can carefully manage the stock, particularly of cod. Britain refuses to recognise that Iceland needs this, and refuses to recognise that Iceland has any right to a 200 mile limit. However about one third of Britain's fishermen are on the side of Iceland. These are the in-shore men and those who fish larger craft in the North Sea. Most of them are Scots and they want Britain to adopt wider limits also, because their grounds are being harassed by the Dutch, French and Scandinavians. Irish fishermen are now calling for wider limits to keep foreign fleets away from our shores.

The most serious weakness in the whole of Irish fishery development is lack of training. We must have a high degree of training to enable our young fishermen to be able to compete, given the right equipment, with the foreign craft who fish off Ireland. The training of fishermen at present in the hands of the Fisheries Division of the Department of Agriculture, should be transferred to An Bord Iascaigh Mhara, as this body has the responsibility for making loans and grants to the fishermen yet has no say in their qualifications. At the moment the standard applied at the National Fishery Training School at Greencastle is far too low, and no successful fisherman, retired or otherwise is on the staff. There is no headmaster and the school has not got its own vessel to train at practical levels.

The efficient development of a fishing industry requires safe harbours. Some of Europe's finest fishing grounds off the North Mayo coast cannot be adequately developed because of lack of safe harbours. Proper back-up facilities must also be provided, particularly:-

- a) Abundant supplies of fresh water.
- b) Three phase electric power.
- c) Sites for industrial development.
- d) Good roads.
- e) Houses for fishermen and other workers.

Part of the formation of a national fishery policy must comprise on accurate assessment of the stocks available in Irish waters. Research must be directed towards the development of increased fishing by finding new under-fished stocks within reach of our vessels. To do this proper research vessels are required and proper crews to manage them.

The fishing industry needs much more than just training facilities for fishermen. There are numerous trades involved in fishing, apart from those of the fisherman, and people must be trained in these fields to allow every facet to grow. Not the least of these is marketing which, in the fish

42 business is a complicated and skilful operation by reason of seasonal supply positions which exist in different countries at different times.

Ireland is in a good geographical position to make good use of the European demand for fish, if it braces up its industry equal to the scale of opportunity Ireland is in a good position to benefit from this in terms of employment in isolated areas and in terms of its position in the world as a surplus food producer. There is no reason why our agricultural produce and our fishery products should not complement each other so as to lay the foundation for a thriving food industry.

43 This Ard Fheis of Sinn Fein therefore calls for:-

1. The extension of the fishing limit to 200 miles and the provision of adequate protection.
2. The development of Bord Iascaigh Mhara into a state fisheries company involved in all aspects of sea fisheries.
3. The provision of adequate training facilities for young fishermen.
4. The proper development of our harbours with the provision of full back-up facilities.
5. The development of sea-fish farming.

The recent development of our fisheries is a direct result of the limited state involvement allowed to Bord Iascaigh Mhara. The future development will be distorted and restricted unless BIM is allowed to become directly involved in production, processing, and marketing of fish in competition with private enterprise.

Ard Comhairle

Amendment - abolish BIM & set up Co-operatives

44 That action be taken to force the government to set up a 200 mile fishing limit around Ireland.

Edentubber Martyrs Cumann, Dundalk.

45 That this Ard Fheis calls on the 26 County Government to follow the example of the Icelandic Government and extend our Fishery limits to 200 miles.

Cumann, Ballina.

46 That this Ard Fheis calls on the 26 County Government to implement immediately the recommendations of the Fishery Commission.

Cumann, Ballina.

Edentubber

Inland Fisheries

Youth Organisation: _____

47 Recognising that the need exists in Ireland for a political youth movement, and recognising that none of the youth organisations that exist at present can fulfill this need, this Ard Fheis of Sinn Fein instructs the incoming Ard Comhairle to take steps to establish a political youth movement that would be:-

- 1) Committed through its constitution to supporting and advancing among young people the policies and objectives of Sinn Fein, subject to the overall control and direction of the Sinn Fein Ard Comhairle.
- 2) Aimed at recruiting young workers and students in the 14-20 age group with a view to giving them an understanding of the basic principles of Republican Socialism, and involving them in the building of the revolutionary movement in this country.
- 3) Committed to fulfilling the need that exists for a young people's organisation that will provide a revolutionary approach to the many social and economic problems facing young workers and students.
- 4) Committed to working with other progressive youth movements to highlight and alleviate these problems.

The Ard Fheis further instructs the Ard Comhairle to appoint a committee, representative of young people from throughout the Movement, to draft a constitution and manifesto and to make the other necessary arrangements for the public launching of a political youth movement, within a period of four months.

The Ard Fheis believes that Fianna should continue as a scouting organisation aimed primarily at those under 14.

Ard Comhairle.

48 Ard Fheis resolves that steps be now taken to establish a revolutionary youth movement to organise Irish youth to take a fuller part in the political and social struggle for Socialism in Ireland. Where possible, this should utilise the experience and talents of the Fianna in attempting to set up an efficient organisation.

The revolutionary youth movement should be prepared to work with all other progressive organisations both in Ireland and internationally in organising and educating the youth of Ireland towards Socialism. Further, this youth movement should be seen as an integral part of the overall Republican Movement and not as a separate entity.

South Antrim Comhairle Ceanntar.

49 That this Ard Fheis directs all areas to commence on the formation of a Youth Movement in accordance with proposals put forward by the National Youth Committee.

Oliver Craven Rep.Club. Newry.

50 That the Ard Fheis instruct all areas to organise a Youth Movement immediately according to the recommendations of the National Youth Committee.

Sth.Down/Sth.Armagh Comhairle Ceanntar.

51 That a Revolutionary Socialist Youth Movement be formed under the guidance of Sinn Fein. That contacts be formed with similar organisations on an international basis.

Comhairle Ceanntar, Belfast.

52 That the Ard Comhairle establish a revolutionary Youth Movement as an integral part of Sinn Fein and that the age limit be 18, whereupon members should become Club or Cumann members. Further, that the Youth Movement should work closely with the senior Movement in each area.

Wolfe Tone Rep.Club. Sth. Antrim.

amend 47.

53 That Sinn Fein see as a priority the establishment of a Political Youth Movement, catering for 16 year olds upwards, owing its allegiance to Sinn Fein and acting on youth issues.

That Fianna be developed to cater for scout-
ing activities and basic political education for the 6 to 16 year old
age group.

Martin O'Leary Cumann, Dublin.

54 The Ard Fheis calls on the Ard Comhairle to take steps to set up a youth section of the Republican Movement. We suggest that the following criteria be taken into consideration:

- (a) The members should be aged between 15 and 30 years of age.
- (b) The youth movement should be affiliated to the Ard Comhairle.
- (c) The Ard Comhairle should have representation on the governing body of the youth movement.
- (d) This youth movement should be affiliated to the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY).

In the formation of such a youth movement full consultation should be held with the members and leadership of Fianna particularly the Northern Fianna, and cognisance of their views.

Jackie Griffith Cumann (Coolock/Artane.Dublin.

55 Recognising the need for greater emphasis by this party on the youth question in Ireland, this Ard Fheis instructs the incoming Ard-Comhairle to establish a sub-committee on youth which would be responsible for producing a policy on this question for next year's Ard Fheis.

U.C.G. Rep. Club. Galway.

amend 47.

56 That this Ard Fheis authorise the setting up of a sub-committee so that the Movement can develop a comprehensive policy on youth.

Letterkenny Cumann.

TRADE UNION AFFAIRS

57 In view of recent events, that this Ard Fheis support the demand that industrial disputes be removed from the jurisdiction of court injunctions where at the preliminary hearing a judge rules on the validity and merits of a strike.

William Thompson Cumann, Dublin.

58 Over the past years the Labour Court has proved, through its recommendations and rulings, to consistently decide in favour of the employer. Therefore, this Ard Fheis demands that a Tribunal be established in place of the Labour court comprising of agreed Union and Employer representatives, outside the jurisdiction of the Department of Labour, to mediate in industrial disputes.

William Thompson Cumann. Dublin.

59 That having completed the probationary period all members must, where this is available, be members of a Trade Union.

Wolfe Tone Rep. Club. Sth Antrim.

60 That all employed members play an active role in the Trade Union Movement; that all who refuse to comply have membership of Sinn Fein withdrawn from them.

Sth.Down/Sth.Armagh Comhairle Ceanntar.

61 That Sinn Fein call on its members in the Trade Union movement to opt out of the political fund.

Connolly Cumann (Tralee)Nth. Kerry.

Health: _____

62 That this Ard Fheis adopts certain fundamental principles as a basis for the development and elaboration of socialist policies on health care. First among these principles must be that health services should be provided free of charge and that there be no state support for private medical practice. Secondly, we assert that the services be socially directed taking into account only the real needs of the people and all workers within the health service and not mainly, as at present, the needs of such elite groups as the medical profession and the drug industry. Sinn Fein recognises that the principle of orientation in health matters should be the preservation of the good health of the community as a whole. At present our health services are geared to healing the sick with a greatly reduced emphasis on social, preventative and occupational medicine.

In order to create a policy based on these points, a Health Committee should be established by Sinn Fein, of workers within the health service North and South; the committee to meet within six weeks of the Ard Fheis to initiate this work.

Until there is a fully comprehensive policy documents produced, Sinn Fein should work for the following demands:

- 1) The immediate implementation of a free hospital scheme.
- 2) The immediate extension of the General Medical Service to all citizens.
- 3) The replacing of the 'fee per item of service' system of payment of doctors and pharmacists with a direct salary system.
- 4) That all hospitals and medical centres be put immediately under state control, and the practice of allocating private beds be ended.
- 5) That the state set up a free comprehensive Family Planning Service in all parts of the country.
- 6) That a National Pharmaceutical Board with statutory powers to control the manufacture and release of drugs into the national health service, be set up.
- 7) That a compulsory drugs formulary be instituted for drugs prescribed in the health service.
- 8) That the organisation of nursing and medical training be reviewed with a view to providing trained staff in line with the requirements of a state health service.

In the North, the Republican Clubs must work for the implementation of points 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 (above) and demand the immediate phasing out of private hospital beds within the Northern Health Service. Ard Comhairle.

63 That this Ard Fheis call on the Government to abandon the Fitzgerald recommendation and to upgrade all County Hospitals.
Cumann Sean Misteil, Carrickmacross, Monaghan.

EDUCATION

64 That this Ard Fheis strongly condemns any cut-backs on capital expenditure in Education or any reduction in ongoing educational costs which would lead to deterioration in an already grave situation such as is manifest in the appallingly high staff-pupil ratio in primary schools.

The Ard Fheis calls for:

- 1) The creation of a nation wide nursery school system;
- 2) The designation of Educational Priority Areas and a comprehensive programme to meet the needs of these areas;
- 3) The radical change in the grant system for higher education in order to end the existing discrimination against working class students;
- 4) The restructuring of the primary and secondary school curricula so as to enable the indepth study of our national cultural, historical and economic experience on a comparative basis with other peoples.
- 5) The integration of the three Belfast Colleges of Education on a single campus as a first step to ending segregated education in the North;
- 6) The development of non-denominational community schools in a truly comprehensive manner under the management of teachers, state, students and parents.

The Ard Fheis welcomes the initiative of ASTI and TUI in seeking unity and urges the many other teaching unions to seek out ways of building a single teachers' union which would be effectively the main force in controlling and developing our educational system in a manner fitting to our changing industrial, social and cultural needs.

Ard Comhairle.

- 65 (a) Education should be provided by the State as a basic human right. Education should be provided from nursery to adult level on the basis of the individuals aptitudes, his ability to benefit from education and his capacity to contribute in a meaningful way to society. Education must be public and accessible to all. It must be subject to popular and democratic control. It must be comprehensive and responsive to the needs of the working class.
- (b) Education must strive to develop the capacity of the individual in the context of an increasingly industrial society. The well-being of the citizens depends on full employment and efficient industrial development. The education system therefore has the responsibility to equip citizens with the skills and knowledge to participate actively and democratically at all levels of society.
- (c) Nursery Education: There is an urgent need for the development of nursery and pre-school education. As well as the educational benefits for the child there is the further advantage of enabling mothers to work if they so wish.

- (d) Primary Education: This Ard Fheis condemns under investment by the state which has made the introduction of the new primary school curriculum extremely difficult. We further condemn the refusal by the Dept. of Education to improve teacher-pupil ratios which has meant that only one third of those graduating as teachers can find employment.
- (e) Secondary Education: This ARd Fheis supports the concept of one system of comprehensive/community schools. This system must be integrated and learner orientated. We condemn the divisions, based on religion and sex, in the present system. We also condemn the divisive system of streaming which is based on academic ability and which places a heavy emphasis on exams.
- (f) Third Level Education: Higher education should be an integrated system offering guaranteed opportunity of access to all. There should be total mobility from apprentice to degree level, and horizontal mobility from one course or institution to another if practical.
- (g) Structure: The system should be democratically structured to involve staff and students in decision-making. Representatives of Trade Unions and other popular organisations should be involved to ensure its continuing responsiveness to the needs of society.
- There should be integrated planning and award structures to ensure parity of esteem and to bring an end to the snob value of academic education as opposed to vocational educational or practical work. Educational and economic planning should be co-ordinated to ensure that jobs are available for everyone coming out of school.
- (h) Adult Education: Adults should have the right to return to education on a full or part time basis, without material or financial loss. The implementation of a national programme of adult/continuing education should be a normal part of the school's activities. This would ensure that they would become community schools in the full sense and that resources would be fully used, e.g. at nights and during vacations.
- (i) This Ard Fheis condemns the bankrupt policy of the coalition government for attempting to offload the economic crisis on the backs of the working class and the disadvantaged sections of the community making cuts in public expenditure. We declare our support for all those groups who are fighting against restraints or cuts in government spending on education and support those campaigning for an adequately financed, universally accessible and democratically controlled system of education.

Martin O'Leary Cumann. Dublin.

66 That we totally reject the educational cut-backs by the Labour Government in the Six Counties and demand -

- (a) A full programme of public spending on education in areas of high social needs.
- (b) That all levels of education be totally integrated and all segregation on basis of sex, religion, status or type of school be rejected.
- (c) That nurseries and nursery schools be available for all.
- (d) That the '11+' selection test be immediately abolished and secondary education be available for all within a truly comprehensive system.
- (e) That the number of places available for university be increased and that these establishments provide more facilities for part-time students.
- (f) That St. Mary's, St. Joseph's and Stranmillis colleges of education be amalgamated to form one single integrated college of Education.
- (g) That elected parent and teacher representatives have a voting right on their school committees.
- (h) That the Movement set up internal bodies both in the North and South to co-ordinate our educational demands and activities.

Wolfe Tone Rep. Club. Sth. Antrim.

67 That Sinn Fein restore loud and clear their support for rural communities who are fighting to preserve their amenities and condemn those people and officials (clerical and lay) who are frustrating their efforts. A school should not be closed against the democratic wishes of the local parents.

Cumann Sean Misteil, Carrickmacross, Monaghan.

68 That Sinn Fein, at every opportunity, expose the false propaganda regarding the control (central) of schools, that is being forced on the people.

Cumann Sean Misteil, Carrickmacross, Monaghan.

69 That this Ard Fheis demands that all Comhairle Ceannair areas initiate a campaign for the provision of pre-school facilities in all areas, especially deprived areas, and that these be government financed.

Belfast Comhairle Ceannair.

70 That:

- a) all national schools should be secular and coeducational and run by representatives of parents, teachers and state;
- b) that there should be a fully comprehensive secondary school system run on similar lines.

Cumann P. Pearse, Rathmines/Ranelagh.

71 That this Ard Fheis ask the Ard Comhairle to implement resolution 59 which was passed by the 1974 Ard Fheis to "That a group or committee be established by the incoming Ard Comhairle consisting of teachers, school and university students;

- (a) to draft a comprehensive and realistic policy on education for presentation to the next Ard Fheis and
- (b) To concinuously review the State's policy on education.

Cumann Sean Ruiseil, Atha Cliath.

72 That the Ard Comhairle implement a resolution passed at last year's Ard Fheis calling for the setting up of a committee of people with an interest in education to prepare a comprehensive education programme for next year's Ard Fheis.

Martin O'Leary Cumann, Dublin .

73 That the Ard Fheis instruct every Comhairle Ceanntar to establish a Committee to investigate and discuss State Education. The committee should be made up of teachers, parents and pupils, its responsibilities being to campaign for the implementation of the Movement's policies on State Education.

Within the Six Counties it is seen to be expedient for the ending of sectarianism and inequality that a policy of developing co-educational non-streamed and non-denominational schools should be put into effect as soon as possible. The policy should be developed at all levels of education with particular attention being paid to the establishment of pre-school facilities which, although especially vital to the proper development of children from large families and deprived backgrounds, have been noticeably lacking in the past.

Belfast Comhairle Ceanntar.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

- 74** That Sinn Fein take whatever steps are necessary to expose the growing practice of contracting and sub-contracting in Local Authorities housing developments. This is a serious intrusion of the capitalist system into a sector of the economy which was, until recently publicly owned and controlled.

The large building contractors are in the business of making profits, not houses, and this results in the use of the cheapest and shoddiest materials coupled with non-union lump labour of the lowest standard.

The end product of this new system can be seen all over the country where tens of thousands of families are forced to live in damp, 3rd rate houses with no facilities for the young, the aged, the handicapped nor the overburdened housewife.

It is imperative that Local Authorities establish or re-establish house building departments using direct labour and remove the speculators from all Local Authority schemes. We instruct the incoming Ard Comhairle and all our Local Authority Councillors to take action on this issue at once.

In addition, we fully support and endorse the campaign being conducted by N.A.T.O. throughout the state, to have all such houses brought up to an acceptable standard.

Col. Leonard Cumann, Drogheda.

- 75** This Ard Fheis calls on Dublin Corporation to return to the highly successful schemes of building by Direct Labour which operated in former years. Such direct labour schemes which eliminate 'lumpers' and insecurity should be implemented by Local Authorities who are carrying out large-scale projects.

Joe O'Connor Cumann, Dublin.

- 76** That this Ard Fheis instructs the incoming Ard Comhairle to immediately re-activate the meetings of our elected representatives on a regular basis.

Cumann, Waterford City.

- 77** That this Ard Fheis instructs the incoming Ard Comhairle to define the role of public representatives.

Letterkenny Cumann.

78 That the 6 County Ex. Republican Clubs be instructed to draw up its 1977 Local Government Candidates list before Easter 1976.

McCracken Rep. Club. Belfast.

79 That this Ard Fheis gives recognition to the importance of community associations and tenants' groups as organisations of the common people. We believe these groups should be encouraged to develop their potential in working class politics and to combat sectarianism. This Ard Fheis instructs the incoming Ard Comhairle to examine the role of these groups and produce a discussion document (or a similar nature to "The Police and you") to be distributed as soon as possible after this Ard Fheis.

Mid Armagh Republican Clubs.

80 That the Republican Movement support the idea of a Community Convention proposed by Sammy Smyth etc ; but that the organisation of such a conference be put in the hands of CONI as the only broadly based representative community grouping within the Six Counties.

McCracken Rep. Club. Belfast.

81 That this ARD Fheis recommends that the Ard Comhairle consider giving support to the Community Convention.

Comhairle Ceanntar, Belfast.

82 Sectarian divisions in the working class have reinforced privilege and social inequality in the North and remain one of the major defences of imperialism in Ireland today.

The concept of voluntary coalition as put forward by Craig's Vanguard Party is an attempt by rich Unionists to re-establish their positions of power and privilege under a new deal with British Monopoly Capitalism.

This new deal is being forged at the expense of the working class people, Catholic and Protestant alike, and is being founded on working class lives lost, on working class homes destroyed, on the complete denial of all civil rights and liberties. Continued unemployment, redundancies and deteriorating living conditions are the social fabric on which it is written.

In the face of Craig's coalition Sinn Fein supports and will work for an alternative Worker Alliance based on a Democratic Manifesto which will establish democratic rights for all and will demand the implementation of a programme of economic proposals which will guarantee the right of work and the right to a house.

Such a Democratic Manifesto should include:-

1. An end to all sectarian assassinations, bombings and military campaigns with a declaration that these are not in the defence of or in the interest of any section of the working class. The political rejection of all groups who continue with such activities.
2. An end to harassment and intimidation of all working class people by British troops and the latter's return to barracks pending their complete withdrawal.
3. Repeal of the Emergency Provisions Act and the creation of a new locally administered, civilian controlled unarmed police service.
4. The introduction of an agreed Bill of Rights (by the British Government) for all the people of Northern Ireland.
5. A declaration by the British Government to its intention - (a) to repeal all legislation under which the Westminster Parliament asserts its claim to be the supreme authority in Northern Ireland.

The establishment of democratic rights in N. Ireland is a major step in the de-escalation of violence and lays the foundations for the creation of the conditions for all to experience normal political activity in N. Ireland.

- A. In order to protect jobs and extend employment in vital industries a comprehensive scheme of full public ownership under local control should be extended to:
 - (i) Shipbuilding, docks and transport industries.
 - (ii) The man-made fibre industry.
 - (iii) The building industry.
- B. The establishment of an Economic Development Commission charged with:
 - (i) Establishing new state-owned enterprises in N. Ireland in petrochemical, plastic and agricultural based industries.
 - (ii) The establishment of an Irish Economic Development Board to develop an integrated system of publicly owned industries based on the mineral, oil and gas and agricultural resources of the Irish people.

(iii) To carry out full integrated exploration of the rich mineral and oil and gas resources now clearly established within Irish territory by a joint all-Ireland exploration corporation under public control.

- C. Any future administration in N. Ireland should have full economic, fiscal and trading powers to develop the economy in the interests of all our people particularly in the field of local control over the import and export of capital and manufactured products.

Such economic powers should include the creation of new tax structures particularly suited to N. Ireland which would shift the burden of taxation from the working class, small farmers and small business-men to the wealthy

An economic recovery based on state investment, raising real wages and extending trade with stable expansionist socialist economies.

- D. Nationalisation of all development land and the supply sources to the house building industry as part of an emergency housing programme to build 300,000 dwellings in the next 15 years.

Such a Democratic Manifesto can form the basis for a coalition involving Trade Unions, Tenants and Community Groups, cultural and youth organisations and all political parties truly representative of the working class laying the ground for common demand, common action and common purpose for the Northern working class.

Belfast Comhairle Ceanntar.

- 83** This Ard Fheis recognises that the main obstacle to progress by the democratic and socialist forces in the Six Counties is sectarianism. It also recognises that some groups deliberately foster sectarian violence in order to justify their own existence, and that many public representatives of the major political parties in the North, condone by their silence, or verbally support such activities.

This Ard Fheis now calls upon all public representatives to join the campaign against sectarianism initiated by the Ard Comhairle of Sinn Fein and led by the elected representatives of Republican Clubs in the Six Counties. Only by an intensive political and educational programme at local level can the sectarian thugs who terrorise all of the working class areas, be isolated and the struggle for civil rights and maximum economic and political sovereignty in the Six Counties be advanced.

Cumann Sean Ruiseil, Dublin Nth. Central.

- 84** Ard Fheis resolves that as well as the publicity and propaganda campaign carried out by the Republican Clubs in the North, particular attention be paid to building anti-sectarian alliances with other groups genuinely opposed to sectarian division among the working-class. We suggest that such alliances work on specific issues influenced by sectarian feelings, such as housing, employment, policing or education and expose the reality of sectarian viciousness in these key social areas, in building support to change the situation.

South Antrim Comhairle Ceanntair.

POLICE AND JUDICIARY

85 That Sinn Fein, recognising the present system of Judicial appointments in the North to be totally permeated by Political, Sectarian and Class Patronage, demands, the election of the Magistracy from within the organisations of the people; i.e. Trades Unions, Tenants' Organisations, Community Associations, etc. That they should be subject to immediate recall by the bodies electing them. And that the Ard Comhairle consider the best method of applying this system throughout the whole Judiciary on the long term basis necessary to make it a practical proposal.

• Prime consideration to be given to the problem of training the Working Class in enough "Law" to enable them to occupy the higher echelons of the Judiciary.

Martin McAlinden Rep. Club Newry.

86 That Sinn Fein draw up a document on the present judicial system in the North and launch a campaign for the reforming of the present judicial system.

Strabane Republican Club.

87 That this Ard Fheis reiterates its position on the unacceptability of the R.U.C. and challenges all political parties to state clearly their position on this issue.

Strabane Republican Club.

Civil Liberties: _____

88 This Ard Fheis notes that the 26 County State, since its establishment, has been of a repressive character. Adopting the moral standards of the Roman Catholic Church and incorporating them into its laws it has pursued a policy of prohibition of contraception and divorce and censorship of books, plays and films of artistic merit. Civil and legal rights are denied to women, the poor and to all prisoners. Itinerants are pursued with the full rigour of the law whilst being denied the human necessities of adequate shelter, education for their children and employment opportunities.

The Northern State has been stringently oppressive politically but has always had a more liberal character on social and cultural matters.

This Ard Fheis therefore resolves that Sinn Fein play an active role in all struggles for the defence of human and democratic rights. In particular the Ard Fheis instructs the incoming Ard Comhairle to produce and actively propagate a Charter or Bill of Rights which could provide a rallying point for all progressives and democrats in the country. Such a document would seek to -

- 1) Abolish all repressive legislation in the State, particularly the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill.
- 2) Establish an independent complaints procedure against the police.
- 3) Guarantee equality before the law by introducing a comprehensive system of Free Legal Aid.
- 4) Outlaw all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex, religion, race, political beliefs, marital status and birth.
- 5) Demand a public enquiry into conditions in all prisons.

Ard Comhairle.

89 This Ard Fheis recognises that the political ascendancy of the Roman Catholic Church in the 26 County State has impeded social and political progress, denied citizens basic civil liberties and contributed to the sectarian divisions in the 6 County working class.

The Ard Fheis therefore instructs the incoming Ard Comhairle to take the initiative in forming a broad based organisation to campaign for the secularisation of southern society, and in particular to campaign for:-

- (1) The creation of a state owned, non-denominational and co-educational system of education;
- (2) Legal provision for divorce;
- (3) The establishment of a comprehensive state run health service;
- (4) Free availability of contraceptives and information on methods of family planning.

Wolfe Tone Cumann, Ballymun/Santray.

90 That Sinn Fein initiate a broad based campaign on divorce and the reform of family law.

Cumann James Connolly, Bray.

91 Sinn Fein recognises that Imperialism will only be uprooted from our country when the National Liberation struggle is led by the working-class.

The Party further recognises that the major obstacle to this development is the maintenance of divisions within the ranks of the working-class through the division of the country. It is also maintained within the North by the refusal of British imperialism to dismantle the sectarian legacy of 50 years of Orange Unionism.

However, the Party also recognises that an additional contribution to the maintenance of divisions within the working-class has been made by groups and individuals calling themselves "Socialist" or "Republican". The activities of these groups has brought popular revulsion and strengthened the hand of reaction North and South.

Acts of terrorism can never advance the cause of Socialist Democracy because no individual can ever replace an organised and politically conscious working-class as an agent of revolutionary change.

Therefore this Ard Fheis pledges anew that the Party will continually oppose sectarianism in any shape or form and will continue to seek ways of uniting the working-class, irrespective of religion.

Ard Comhairle.

92 Ard Fheis recognises the hardening of reactionary and right-wing attitudes in both the political and economic fields and is aware that this trend will heighten in 1976.

Further this Ard Fheis recognises that the adventurist militarism of various groups masquerading as anti-Imperialist forces has merely permitted the Imperialist regime to heighten repressive measures against democratic forces in the political and economic fields both in Ireland and Britain. At this crucial stage we reiterate the correctness of our involvement in the Civil Rights struggle, based on the mass participation of the people. We call now for a re-injection of energy into the Civil Rights struggle in a clearly determined effort to continue this proven tactic for building support for democratic reform.

Again, now that all detainees have been released, it is vital that the Civil Rights movement utilise all momentum generated in the anti-internment campaign and turn it to push for the repeal of all repressive legislation, rather than let the British Government claim a propaganda victory for releasing the detainees. Particular attention should be given to the manifest intention of the administration of replacing internment with draconian sentences before courts where due process of law has been replaced by revised procedures designed simply to ensure maximum convictions.

South Antrim Comhairle Ceanntair.

93 This Ard Fheis, recognising that the Socialist Republican political philosophy is an international one, pledges solidarity with the struggling peoples of the world fighting for independence, freedom and peace.

In particular we salute the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos who have defeated imperialism and set about the reconstruction of their countries.

On the African continent we salute the liberation movements of Mozambique, Guine Bissau and the Cape Verde islands, and Angola, who after waging a bitter and protracted armed struggle against Imperialism, have now won their independence.

In Europe the peoples of Portugal and Greece are, despite difficulties, freeing themselves from the remnants of fascism, while in Spain the death knell of fascism already sounds. In the Americas, the Republic of Cuba continues to stand as a beacon light of progress to the peoples of that continent.

Carried
But our solidarity also goes out to the peoples all over the world still engaged in struggle. In Africa our continuing support goes to the peoples of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), Anzania (South Africa), Namibia and in particular to the people of Angola who under the leadership of the MPLA are fighting against imperialist manoeuvres designed to bring their country back into bondage. On the Asian continent we support the efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the people of South Korea who seek the withdrawal of United States' troops and the unification and independence of their country.

On the American continent we support the struggles of the Chilean people to free themselves from the fascist Pinochet regime and the Puerto Rican people in their struggle for independence from the United States. In the Middle East we support the just demands of the Palestinian people for self determination and the creation of a secular state where Arab and Jew can live together in harmony and independence in Palestine.

We further support the struggles of the culturally and politically oppressed peoples of Western Europe for the fulfillment of their national aspirations.

Recognising its internationalist commitments, this Ard Fheis of Sinn Fein re-dedicates the party to active involvement in broad solidarity work for the progressive struggles throughout the world.

Ard Comhairle.

ANGOLA:

94 This Ard Fheis of Sinn Fein welcomes the proclamation of the People's Republic of Angola made on November 11th last, and pledges full support to the MPLA and the people of Angola in their struggle to establish freedom and democracy in their country. The Ard Fheis expresses deep concern over the present situation in Angola and recognises that the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) is the only liberation movement fighting for the genuine political and economic independence of Angola.

95 The Ard Fheis calls on the Dublin Government to:-

- 1) Immediately recognise the Peoples' Republic of Angola.
- 2) Condemn the invasion of Angola by South African and mercenary troops.
- 3) Raise the South African intervention at the United Nation and in particular their use of the U.N. territory of Namibia as a base.

Ard Comhairle.

96 Recognising that July 4th 1976 will be the two-hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America from England, the Ard Fheis congratulates the people of the United States of America on the occasion of the bicentenary of their Declaration of Independence, and urges that the Government of the United States commemorates the event by freeing all of their own colonies, and in this regard the Republican Movement points in particular to and fully supports the just demands of the people of Puerto Rico for independence from the United States of America.

Cumann Anne Devlin, Rathfarnham.

97 That this Ard Fheis expresses its support for the Democratic forces in Spain, in their demand for free election and for greater political and cultural freedom for the Basques, Catalonians and Gallicians.

Cumann Sean Ruiseil, Dublin Nth. Central.

98 In line with Movement policy which regards Ireland as a 3rd World country, this Ard Fheis calls upon the Ard Comhairle to place more emphasis on forging stronger links with all progressive liberation groups in 3rd World countries and progressive 3rd World governments i.e. Frelimo, M.P.L.A. and P.F.L.P. PLO

Jemmy Hope Cumann, Dublin.

99 Bearing in mind that in the *United Irishman* recently there has been a growing tendency to adopt a pro-Soviet line, that this Ard Fheis declares that Sinn Fein, while having more in common with Socialist countries than with others, will remain completely non-aligned in any further divide in the non-capitalist parts of the world, and that imperialism, from whatever source it comes, will be resisted.

Cumann James Connolly, East Cork.

- 100 That the centre pages of the *United Irishman* be used for a series of articles on basic Socialism in all its aspects.
Edentubber Martyrs Cumann, Dundalk.
- 101 In order to avoid confusion with other newspapers, we propose that the name of the official Republican Movement be prominently displayed on the front page of the "*United Irishman*".
Cumann James Connolly, Bray.
- 102 This Ard Fheis instructs Ard Comhairle to convene meetings in all regions to discuss the position of the *United Irishman* with a view to improving content, finance and influence of the paper.
Longford Cumann.
- 103 That the *United Irishman* should diversify and cover all sports and include ballads etc., to make it more attractive and saleable.
Connolly Cumann (Tralee) Nth. Kerry.
- 104 That in its "United World" series on foreign countries, the *United Irishman* try to explain more clearly and in greater detail the background, course and results of revolutions and events in other countries.
Cumann James Connolly, East Cork.
- 105 That this Ard Fheis recognise the need to continue with the *Irish People* as a weekly paper with emphasis on everyday affairs. That all Cumann make a special effort to sell this paper - 1. Door to door; 2. on Industrial estates; 3. At the unemployment offices.
Comhairle Ceanntar Galway.
- 106 That the incoming Ard Comhairle draw up and publish a basic programme, outlining our short and long-term policies, based on resolutions passed at recent Ard Fheiseanna.
John Mitchell Cumann, Ringsend, Dublin.
- 107 That the Sinn Fein Policy Document be completed for mass circulation before March 1976 incorporating and integrating all relevant resolutions passed at Ard Fheiseanna over the past five years and including the relevant material from "*Ireland Today*".
Cumann Liam Mellows, Greystones.

108 That Sinn Fein produce an abbreviated and easily understood statement of our policies in booklet form for distribution to the general public.

Longford Cumann.

109 That the Ard Comhairle produce a combined report covering the two Ard Fheiseanna 1974-76, be produced within 3 months of the next Ard Fheis.

Cumann Liam Mellowes, Greystones.

110 That a pamphlet be prepared for mass circulation detailing our attitudes to the various political parties, North and South.

Cumann James Connolly, Bray.

111 That a serious attempt be made after this Ard Fheis to produce a policy document outlining Sinn Fein policy on Resources, State Bodies, Health, Education, Justice, Agriculture, Fisheries, Northern Question etc. This, we feel, would be of great benefit to our members and the public.

Cumann Sean Sabhat, Limerick.

112 That this Ard Fheis instructs the incoming Ard Comhairle to immediately change our recruiting and advertising literature to a language more meaningful to today and to call for people to join and support Sinn Fein (the workers' party) and not the Republican Movement.

Cumann, Waterford City.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

- 113 That this Ard Fheis extends sympathy to the families and comrades of Republican Club members and supporters who have been killed or injured during the Provisional Alliance Pogrom of October/November 1975. Recognising the tremendous restraint and discipline shown by the Republican Movement in Belfast we call upon the incoming Ard Comhairle to continue to expose the anti-people activities and opportunist manoeuvres of the Provisionals since their formation with the help of Fianna Fail in December 1969.

Such activities can only further confuse the Northern working class and help the British government impose its will on the people of the Six Counties.

Cumann Sean Ruiseil, Dublin Nth. Central.

- 114 That this Ard Fheis condemns the murderous attack on members of the Republican Clubs in Belfast during the past year, by members of the IRSP and the Provisionals, and congratulates the members of the Clubs for their courageous response to this aggression.

The Ard Fheis further congratulates the International Affairs Dept. on their tremendous work in keeping our supporters and comrades abroad informed of the true nature of these attacks.

The Ard Fheis instructs the incoming Ard Comhairle to continue the work of educating people at home and abroad as to the true nature of the policies and origins of the Provisionals and the IRSP.

Cumann Anne Devlin, Pathfarnham.

- 115 That Sinn Fein mounts a massive ideological struggle against the Provisionals and their bourgeois nationalist backers and as part of this campaign prepare a pamphlet dealing with the rise, development and present position of the Provos for mass circulation. Although this pamphlet should take cognisance of the material given in "*Fianna Fail and the I.R.A.*" it should be an in-depth analysis accounting for the strength of the Provos despite their crimes against the people. In short what is required is a scientific socialist analysis emphasising the political, economic, ideological and social factors involved using all organs of the Movement from Ard Comhairle to cumann level on a continuous and active basis.

Wicklow Comhairle Ceanntar.

- 116 That this Ard Fheis condemns the actions of certain groups to divide the working class organisations. We call on all members to work for the democratisation and politicization of those mass movements which Sinn Fein already supports, i.e. Tenant and Trade Union Movements etc.

Cumann Martin O'Leary, Limerick.

- 117 That this Ard Fheis condemns the "pseudo-socialist Labour Party" for its recent decision to uphold the Criminal Jurisdiction Bill.

Oliver Craven Rep. Club. Newry.

ELECTIONS

118 This Ard Fheis, recognising the central importance of using the democratic electoral process to put our policies before the Irish working class calls on all members to intensify this activity along the following two guidelines:

First, by hard work and sound policies, to seek working class support in all elections to any institution - political, vocational and cultural, where any issue of importance to the Irish working class is debated or decided. The particular institutions of greatest significance are city and county corporations and councils, Harbour or Port Authorities and all Local Authority Boards and Committees.

Second, to move beyond small issue campaigns, such as housing or Ground Rents to a continuous offensive against the exploiting class based on the daily struggle of the wage worker. In particular, all policy statements, speeches and activity in this area should underline the Movement's short term programme for Full Employment based on nationalisation of the Banks, expansion of the State Companies and an industrial manufacturing revolution based on oil, gas and mines.

Cumann, Waterford City.

119 That in all future Parliamentary and Local Government Elections only Constituencies where Sinn Fein is actively involved and where suitable candidates are available be contested by Sinn Fein.

Oliver Craven Rep.Club, Newry.

120 That this Ard Fheis direct Ard Comhairle to be more selective in giving its approval to areas wishing to contest elections, so as to avoid running candidates in impossibly weak constituencies.

Thomas Clarke Rep.Club. Maghera.

121 That full time electoral committees be set up in constituencies where candidates will possibly stand in future elections.

Edentubber Martyrs Cumann, Dundalk.

122 That Sinn Fein support the List system of proportional representation for all elections.

Sth Down/Sth. Armagh Comh. Ceanntar.

123 In view of the likelihood of a General Election in 1976 that the Ard Comhairle should (perhaps via the Education Department) organise lectures on the mechanics of electioneering for selected constituencies.

Comhairle Ceanntar, Co. Lú.

PRISONERS

124 That this Movement resist all attempts to remove special category status of Political prisoners.

Comhairle Ceanntar North-West.
Strabane/Derry.

28
20
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28
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99

125 Caineann an Ard Fheis seo diultiu an Mhinisteiri dli 's art, teipeanna agus teacsanna gaeilge a cheadu do phríosunai poblachtanacha i bPort Laoisé a chuirfeadh ar a gcumas an "chead teanga oifigiul" a fhoghlain.

Cumann Sean Ruiseil, Atha Cliath.

Carried

126 That Sinn Fein prepare for launching a massive publicity campaign aimed at securing the release of all Political Prisoners in Britain and Ireland.

Strabane Republican Club.

Carried

127 That each Comhairle Ceanntair should be encouraged to set up a sub-committee of Cabhair in its own area.

Comhairle Ceanntar, Chathair, Chorcai.

128 That each Comhairle Ceanntair area set up a sub-committee of Cabhair with a view to assisting the central Cabhair committee.

Cumann MacSwiney/MacCurtain, Cork City.N.E.

Carried

129 That this Ard Fheis condemns the use of working class people in prisons as a means of cheap and forced labour. That the Ard Fheis demand a system of humane treatment geared to assist prisoners on release, to cope with the conditions responsible for placing them in prison in the first instance.

Cumann Sean Ruiseil, Dublin Nth. Central.

130 This Ard Fheis welcomes the result of last year's referendum which quite clearly rejected the efforts of Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien to foist RRC 1 on the Irish people instead of a nationally produced and controlled second channel.

The Ard Fheis condemns absolutely the continued failure to use the existing skills, which are there in abundance in RTE to increase the percentage of home produced programmes and as a result phase out the canned American pap which dominates the station.

The Ard Fheis believes that exchequer financing of the Authority should be substantially increased so as to reduce the abject dependence of RTE on advertising revenue and to enable it to contribute in a significant way to national life.

The Ard Fheis further believes that RTE has the potential to improve significantly the quality of Irish life and we believe that this potential can best be realised by the introduction of wide participation of workers in the formulation of policy, control of programmes, and future development of the service. This must be accompanied by the removal of Ministerial control over programme content as exists under Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act, and as is projected under the new Broadcasting Bill.

Ard Comhairle.

A.
131 That this Ard Fheis demands an immediate public enquiry into the way public housing is financed in Northern Ireland. In the past four years £79,239,000 of taxpayers money has been paid on loan charges by the Housing Executive to the banks and financial institutions. The Housing Executive is expected to lose another £100 million pounds in the next five years if current housing finance policies are continued. We demand also that housing loans be provided by government at reasonably low interest rates. We deplore the Government's "economic rents" strategy in the public sector and the Porter Report proposals in the privately rented sector as they are both determined by the rates of interest and profits paid to these financiers and other parasites.

B.

A state sponsored building industry should be established to arrest the decline in housing production which has continued dramatically since 1971. It is only a state sponsored building industry which could achieve an annual output of 20,000 homes. It would be able to offer regular year round employment removing the uncertainty of employment, thus stopping the flow of men away from the construction industry. A state-owned construction industry would be able to concentrate scarce resources in those areas in which need rather than demand is greater; enabling work to proceed with the essential task of house building rather than other types of construction such as the Belfast Ring-road and downtown office building. It would also give priority to the neglected area of house repairs.

C.

The Ard Fheis continues to support the establishment of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive as one of the concrete gains of the people's struggle for civil rights. The existence of a strong central housing body is the only hope for the thousands of families living in deplorable housing conditions, for the homeless and for newly married couples seeking a decent place to live. We would oppose the dismantling or the regionalisation of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, as is being presently demanded by a dark alliance of sectarian councillors and property speculators.

D.

However, we recognise the inefficiency of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to date on housebuilding, refurbishing and repairs - the latter being in a totally chaotic state. Urgent priority will have to be given to these three areas. As a preliminary to the establishment of a state sponsored building industry we demand the immediate recruitment of a direct labour force by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive; the return of the local district office to Housing Executive estates; and the decentralisation of the maintenance department to the local district offices where local labour can be recruited. To these ends it is absolutely vital that there should be full participation by genuine tenants' representatives, at every level, in the decision making process of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

E.

The Ard Fheis condemns very strongly the actions of sectarian motivated politicians who have turned the Poleglass-Lagmore housing development into a political football. We pledge ourselves, in view of the emergency housing situation in West Belfast, to continue the fight, for one of the most basic of human rights. - Housing is a right, not a charity.

Belfast Comhairle Ceanntar.

- 132 Realising that in certain areas of the country there has been a high turnover in movement membership. Realising also that in many, if not most cases this has been due NOT to policy differences but due rather to the inability of many people to devote enough time to Sinn Fein (or Republican Club) activity.

We call on the Ard Comhairle to promote the expansion of the Associate Membership category so that as many people as possible, who are in agreement with movement policy but are unable to be fully active, can be brought within the umbrella of the movement. Jackie Griffith Cumann (Coolock/Artane) Dublin

- 133 That associate membership cards should be issued to each cumann or club. The purpose of these cards would be to enable members of the movement to associate themselves with people outside the movement.

Patrick Pearse Rep. Club. Greenlough. Co. Derry.

- 134 Associate membership should be available to people who are sympathetic to the Movement. Associate membership should be easily assessable, fully implemented and developed.
Comhairle Ceanntar Belfast
- 135 That a major organisational drive be embarked on throughout the country as soon as conditions are favourable.
Cumann James Connolly, Drimnagh/Walkinstown.
- 136 That this Ard Fheis commends the members responsible for the production of the film Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoire and recommends that further resources be provided to develop this area of activity.
Galway City Cumann.
- 137 That this Ard Fheis extends its congratulations to all those involved in the production of the film 'Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoire' and looks forward to even more successful and inspiring efforts in the future.
Comhairle Ceanntar, Chathair Chorcaí.
- 138 That this Ard Fheis directs the Ard Comhairle to immediately set up a working party to discuss and formulate a policy on the NLM Concept.
Sth.Down/Sth.Armagh Comh.Ceanntar.
- 139 That one main banner be carried at the annual commemoration at Bodenstown carrying an inscription on current political events, e.g. unemployment or resources.
William Thompson Cumann, Dublin.
- 140 That the National Education Committee set up a regular series of exchange visits between Cumann and Clubs and not solely on a North-South basis.
Wolfe Tone Rep. Club. Sth.Antrim.
- 141 That in future some members of the Ard Comhairle be appointed as spokesmen on different subjects, preferably corresponding with present government departments, e.g. Eamonn Smullen - Sinn Fein spokesman on Industry & Commerce. Des O'Hagan - Sinn Fein spokesman on Education.etc.
Cumann Joe McCann, Limerick.

142 That this Ard Fheis instructs the incoming Ard Comhairle to establish the following sub-committees:

- (a) International Affairs;
- (b) Industry, Resources;
- (c) Agriculture and Fishing;
- (d) Culture;
- (e) Education;
- (f) Youth;
- (g) Women;
- (h) Health & Social Welfare.

These sub-committees to be responsible in consultation with local organisations to formulate a comprehensive policy and programme of action in these areas.
Galway City Cumann.

143 That the incoming Ard Comhairle be instructed to set up machinery whereby all business referred to them by the Ard Fheis be fully discussed and decided on. We suggest that proposers of motions could submit their arguments in writing before proposals are discussed.

Cumann MacSwiney/MacCurtain, Cork City N.E.

144 Ba mhaith linn ar bpohasaithe i dtaobh ma Gaeilge i dtabbh na Gaeltachta agus cursai culturatha a geitinne a chuir i bhfeidhm. Fa cheart do gach Comhairle Ceanntar coiste a bhunu leis na fabhanna seo a phle agus ar bpolasai a chuir i bhfeidhm.

Is leir duinn nach dtuigeann go leor daoine fú amháin sa ghluaiseacht chomh tabhachtach is ata an chuid sin don troid in aghaidh impirusachais.

Bealfeirste, Comhairle Ceanntar.

145 That the Government call on the Central Bank to allow a large injection of Capital at nominal interest rates to be allocated to small farmers to modernise and keep them on the land of Ireland.

Cumann Sean Misteil, Carrickmacross, Monaghan.

146 That the struggle for national unity should not necessarily take precedence over the struggle for socialism.

Cumann P. Pearse, Rathmines/Ranelagh.

147 That the Ard Fheis should rotate on a provincial basis as this would be a stimulant to rural areas.

Connolly Cumann (Tralee) Nth. Kerry.

148 That the idea of holding the Ard Fheis outside of Dublin should be considered by the Ard Comhairle.

Cumann Sean Sabhat, Limerick.