1975

Finance Plan : Dublin Comhairle Ceanntar

Sinn Fein

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Some weeks ago at a meeting of Cumann treasurers in Dublin, it was decided to establish a committee to investigate the whole question of Finance in Sinn Feil in the Dublin area. This committee was also authorised to draw up an improved plan for the future financing of Sinn Feil, if possible. The committee and its terms of reference were subsequently ratified at a Comhairle Ceanntar meeting. The following is a copy of its report.

The general finance problems facing the organisation in Dublin may be stated briefly to be as follows:
(a) Lack of funds for Emergency or Elections;
(b) Lack of money for day to day expenses of Cumann;
(c) Devotion of too much time to collections etc. instead of hard work;
(d) Failure to contribute a realistic sum of money for the upkeep of the Ard Comhairle and its secretariat;
(e) Failure of the movement to implement the Constitutional requirement that all members contribute to the upkeep of the organisation.

Before explaining how these problems can be tackled, a number of basic points should be made clear. Firstly, the implementation of any plan designed to right our financial problems, must be based on a high level of enthusiasm and practical work, among our members. Members must see the need for movement funds before they will contribute. Secondly, contributions should remain on the basis of a fixed weekly sum and not as a % of income. Thirdly, a major priority must be the establishment of an emergency election fund. This will enable us to avoid the type of situation which occurred this year, when all the fund raising carried out for the Local Government Elections was done at the last minute, taking from valuable canvassing time. Elections must be prepared for in advance, financially and otherwise. What better way than to have a sound fund behind us.
Fourthly, the Comhairle Ceanntar should be able to conduct its day to day affairs on a reduced budget, if such an emergency fund is to be set up. Lastly, Cumanns themselves are in need of more money to finance local agitations and other activities.

ANALYSIS OF PRESENT FINANCIAL POSITION

1. Ard Comhairle
   (a) Affiliation £10.00 per year £200.00
   (b) Registration £1.00 per year £180.00
   (c) National Collection
   (d) Specialist collections going to Ard Comhairle sub committees
2. Comhairle Ceannatar Financial Sources
   (a) Dues £24.00 per year £480.00
   (b) Levies in emergencies
   (c) Specific collections e.g. Local Government Elections
   (d) and (c) require a huge effort to realise, and could be replaced
   with an emergency fund in part.

3. Cumann Financial Sources
   (a) Paper sales
   (b) Subscriptions
   (c) Collections
   (d) Socials
   (a) will remain; (b) will remain; (c) and (d) should become much less
   important due to the time and energy involved in organising in these
   fields.

This then is basically an analysis of the sources of funds for each level
of Sinn Fein in Dublin. We hope to increase the amounts available to all
three levels. To do this we must have both a financial plan and a system
through which we can implement it.

CENTRALISED SYSTEM
A fully centralised fund raising system would entail a flow towards the
Comhairle Ceannatar of all funds passing through a Cumann. The Comhairle
Ceannatar finance section would re-direct this money into areas where it
is required, and generally enforce all fund raising techniques. This type
of system requires a tight, disciplined, centralised organisation. This
is something we do not have here at the moment. Therefore the implementation
of such a plan would at the moment, be impractical in the extreme.

ALTERNATIVE
This would be a simple and direct system of raising funds, and organising
their distribution to solve our immediate problems. Such a system will
now be described in outline. This system is being presented for full
discussion by all members of Sinn Fein in Dublin, before discussion at
Treasurer and Comhairle Ceannatar level. Following this detailed discussion
it is hoped that this plan will be accepted in a democratic manner for
prompt implementation. In addition, discussions are to be held with
Donacha McRaghnaill and Nick Ryan, the joint treasurers of Sinn Fein, to
determine their views on our problems and plans.

PLAN
This plan is simple in structure, will be easy to implement, and will raise
and control our finances properly.

1. Cumann Level
   Each member to pay a weekly contribution, whether he attends meetings or
   not. The cumann treasurer will be responsible for collecting this.
Rates

Employed 40 P
Students 20 P
Unemployed 10 P

Half goes to Comhairle Ceanntar
Half remains in Cumann funds

Collections: Apart from Easter Lilies and National Collections (Cabhair at) those should be phased out.

Paper Money: To continue as before

Comhairle Ceanntar Dues: To be halved for each cumann to £12.00 per annum, or £1.00 per month.

Affiliation and Registration: As before but must be carried out by the end of MARCH each year.

eg. Distribution of Cumann Money (10 man cumann):

- to Ard Comhairle £10.00 affiliation
  £10.00 registration (10 people)
- to Comhairle Ceanntar £12.00 dues
  £100.00 50% subs.
- to Cumann £68.00 50% subs. less dues and affiliation
  paper profit
  33% Lilies etc.

2. Comhairle Ceanntar Level

Day to day running: From £12.00 per cumann dues a total of £240.00 should be collected.

Distribution of Members subs. :

20 P per member X 150 = £300.00 per week
X 50 weeks = £1500.00 per year

to Emergency Fund £800.00

to Ard Comhairle £700.00 = £1500.00

(The purpose of the Emergency Fund is Elections, important areas or work, cumanns in difficulties etc.)

3. Ard Comhairle

- Receives from Comhairle Ceanntar £700.00
- Receives from Affiliations £200.00
- Receives from Registrations £150.00

Incomes Under This Plan

Cumann: Guaranteed £68.00 (in a 10 man cumann) per year after organisational obligations.

Comhairle Ceanntar: Income increase from £480.00 (approximate) to £1040.00

Ard Comhairle: Income increase from £350.00 to £1040.00 per annum.

Savings: Comhairle Ceanntar dues halved to £1.00 per month.
Time wasting collections and socials eliminated.
Such a plan for full and rigorous implementation requires a proper system.

**Cumann Level**

**Member:** The members card will become his receipt book. All collections are to be carried out by the cumann treasurer and filled into the membership card by him. Outstanding amounts are to be paid at the end of each month.

**Proposed Card:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MONTH</td>
<td>WEEK NUMBERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>40P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Treasurer:** Will have a master card into which he will write amounts received from each member AFTER they have paid. He will have 24 marker cards, one for each month which he keeps, and one for each month to be sent to the Conhaire Ceanntar, with returns at the end of each month. Thus he will have a financial record of all members for the full year. These 24 cards will be contained in a book, the inside cover of which will carry full instructions.

**Treasurers Cumann Card:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CUMANN</th>
<th>MONTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>WEEK NUMBER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Smith</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.</td>
<td>40P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conhaire Ceanntar Level**

A master card will be kept for each cumann. At one glance this card, like the others, will have all the relevant details regarding finances at all levels. A copy of this card will be sent to the Ard Conhaire at the end of each financial year (December).
Following discussions with Tony Ebbs of Cló Na Sáintiúta, it has been established that all cards can be printed at 'reasonable charges'. The plates for membership cards could with the sanction of the Ard Conhaíre, be modified for Dublin.

**CONCLUSION**

(a) The success or failure of any streamlined financial system will depend on the ability and calibre of our Treasurers. Throughout the past year Treasurers in Dublin have been encouraged to adopt a more important role. This process must continue.

(b) More important, our future financial plans depend on the recognition by every single party member, that

i. To survive and develop, the party needs funds;

ii. It is the duty of every member to contribute DIRECTLY to party funds.

Until this situation exists, we will continually be chasing loose pennies with empty cans.

(c) This plan is not an underhanded attempt to fool Cumann into supplying the Ard Conhaíre and the Conhaíre Cumannar with more money. We are stating openly, that to operate effectively, the central bodies of our organisation need a large increase in the amount of money at their disposal.

(d) The foregoing document is the direct result of the past years work of the financial section of the Conhaíre Cumannar officer board. We would urge all members to study it carefully, bearing in mind that there is only one direction in which our party can move, and that is **FORWARD**.

Signed: Jim Sherry Finance Officer
Dermot Nolan Treas rer