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## Election News, Local Elections, June 1974

Sinn Fein

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# ELECTION NEWS

LOCAL ELECTIONS

JUNE, 1974

## LOCAL GOVT. PLAN

Local government ought to be a system of running local affairs to meet local demands, **your** demands. In housing, planning, education, health, transport and the development of resources.

Local Government ought to be the means of meeting **your** needs, whether you live in a city or town or in the country area, whether you are an industrial worker, a small farmer or self-employed.

Local Government ought to reflect the conditions of your area — its resources in mineral wealth and manpower; its social and economic needs, educational requirements and potential; the needs of its people — and always the emphasis must be on people.

Sinn Fein wants the structure of Local Government used to give the people of an area the greatest possible control over their own affairs in all areas. This is the basis of Sinn Fein's programme in these local elections.

Uachtaran Sinn Fein Tomas MacGiolla says in a

message to the electorate: "As in the General Election, and in the Local and Assembly elections in the North, we are the only party, organized on a national basis, inspired by long tradition deeply rooted in the Irish people who are putting forward a programme of radical change.

"We have a philosophy which was Tone's philosophy, which was Lalor's, Mitchell's and Connolly's philosophy, of people before profit, liberty not domination socialist republicanism instead of foreign control and native opportunism.

"We say: Look at the issues, study the programmes presented by the parties, consider your interests and the interests of your children and neighbours and decide for yourself what kind of society you want.

"We offer you a society based on your needs and the needs of your area. We challenge those who represent interests that are directly opposed to yours to go before you and justify their stance."

## PEOPLE COME FIRST



# Here are some of the issues Sinn Fein candidates will fight on . . .

## EDUCATION

In the interests of the people as a whole, it would be cheaper to provide free education to the most advanced level for everyone than to continue the present system of elitism and privilege.

Restricting education because of inability to pay for it not only robs the potential student of chances which are presented to his better off contemporaries, it robs the Irish people of the chance to benefit from the student's potential to the full.

Talk of manpower resources means nothing if the educational system prevents a majority of young people from receiving a training which would make them capable of improving their own conditions and adding to the wealth and prosperity of the community.

Education is regarded by the big conservative parties as a gift, to be handed to children because their parents can pay for it or, in a minority of cases, because they prove through an old-fashioned examination process that their abilities cannot be ignored.

But the abilities of the majority of children are ignored. So are their rights — even though this deprives the Irish people of the benefit of the skills and arts that their children possess.

Sinn Fein, recognising this, maintains that all vocational schools should become comprehensive, that

there should be new comprehensive schools to give full secondary education to Leaving Certificate standard.

Sinn Fein opposes the closure of small schools where they are an essential part of local communities. If schools have to be closed, we say, reopen them as adult training centres for co-ops and the study of agricultural science.

Sinn Fein asserts that communities that are now being destroyed can be revitalised. That the Vocational Education Committees have the power to do this. Sinn Fein councillors on the committees will demand that the power be used, for the benefit of the people.

School buildings, in country, city and town, must be made available to all local organisations at night. The buildings can be used as adult education centres and community centres. This must be done. Sinn Fein councillors will fight to have it done.

Education must be concerned with local history and traditions. Sinn Fein recognises the need for courses that will enable people to enjoy more fully the areas in which they live. Sinn Fein councillors will campaign for courses in local history and for adult classes in the Irish language.

Education should help people to earn more and to live better. That is what Sinn Fein wants it to do.

## RATES

A vote for Sinn Fein is a vote against the iniquitous rating system of taxation, which places a burden on people whether they can afford to pay or not.

Sinn Fein advocates the abolition of the rates and valuation system. It should be replaced by a system in which payment would be demanded on the basis of income, with everyone guaranteed a fair minimum tax-free income.

Because the party recognize that the present system will not be changed by the big conservative parties, Sinn Fein will press for the provision of a rates deficiency grant by the Exchequer.

This would mean that all councils could strike a rate at the national average figure and areas where the national average would not bring in sufficient revenue to meet expenditure would be assisted by the Exchequer to reach the appropriate level.



## HOUSING

Speculation in housing and building land is a national scandal. No-one denies it. Even Charlie Haughey pretends to see it as one of the ugliest warts on the unacceptable face of capitalism.

But it continues — and will continue — because the system permits it, is designed to facilitate it. Sinn Fein alone among the parties fighting this election offers a radical alternative to the system.

### SINN FEIN ADVOCATES :

The provision of finance for housing must be taken out of the hands of commercial interests; the high cost of money (interest rates) is one of the primary causes of the high cost of housing.

The building societies must be nationalized. Their function, as they see it, is to profit from the needs of people. Their rates are criminally high because they want to achieve and maintain those profits.

Sinn Fein says: Nationalize the Building Societies and establish a national housing fund to finance housing. Keep interest rates to a minimum by recognizing the social aim of a housing programme not its poten-

tial for profit. To provide for the fund, the banks and financial institutions must be nationalized and the export of capital must be stopped.

The Kenny Report on land speculation for building purposes recommends means of curbing the worst recesses of the speculators. Sinn Fein demands the immediate implementation of the report.

Sinn Fein also demands that a ceiling be established in the price of building land and that local authorities should be given and should use without fear or favour powers to acquire compulsorily whatever land they need for building or the establishment of industry.

Sinn Fein advocates greater variety in design, layout and provision of amenities surrounding new housing developments. There must be, in consequence, full and effective consultation with tenants' associations and residents' associations when development is planned.

Sinn Fein rejects as nonsense the official attitude that the people who live in them are the least competent judges of the design, siting and structure of houses. The people, given the education of choice, are the best judges and have the right to be consulted and served.

## PLANNING

"Planning" is now simply an extension of graft. It ought to mean control, for the benefit of the community, over development. It means, in too many cases, the flaunting of regulations for the advantages of profit the comfort of the profiteers.

Everyone knows that. Ireland's Poulsons and T. Dan Smiths are many. They pay their subscriptions to the big conservative parties and get a good return for it. Even there they make a profit. Contracts come their way. And planning permission is hardly ever refused.

Planning at present means, not only graft, but maintaining anti-social trends in development. Sinn Fein opposes that.

The party vigorously resists that speculators — whether they are financiers, builders, architects or engineers, Tacateers or Fine Gael Clubmen. The Party resists the wanton destruction of amenities and of buildings of historical value, trends that reveal things that are nationally and socially unhealthy.

Sinn Fein councillors will see to it that speculation and ill-conceived planning do not interfere with the

right of the people to enjoy natural amenities, mountain, river, or sea or tree — or deny to the people the man-made amenities that any civilised society should enjoy.

Sinn Fein will fight at all times to preserve the right of access to and the use of existing natural amenities.

Sinn Fein is opposed to single-class, single-age-group ghetto suburbs. They produce class barriers and social problems, particularly for the old, who are left isolated in dead areas.

Sinn Fein insists upon the continuous renewal of city centre areas, to ensure that they are not allowed to die.

Sinn Fein councillors will fight for full amenities and services for all new development areas . . . Sinn Fein demands the immediate and effective implementation of the Kenny Report to take planning out of the hands of Ministers and their political stooges . . . Sinn Fein wants planning to mean what it ought to mean, control over development for the benefit of the community.

## GROUND RENT

Sinn Fein was the first party in Ireland to organise a campaign against ground rents, the socially baseless and morally indefensible system of payments to absentee landlords who give nothing in return.

Ground Landlords should not exist. Their pseudo-legal titles to property should be abolished. Without

compensation. The ownership of the ground they presume to hold should be vested in the local authorities.

The ground rent system is out-dated, unprincipled, unjust. It serves no purpose whatever, other than the profit-making of people who contribute nothing at all to Irish life. We say, Scrap the system. Now.

## ITINERANTS

Itinerants are entitled to equal rights with every other citizen. They should not be the objects of condescending charity.

While they remain travellers, they must have camp sites that are fully equipped with water supplies and

sanitary facilities. They should receive the same opportunities for education, employment and housing as everyone else.

Sinn Fein stands for full civil rights for all citizens.



## HEALTH

Sinn Fein holds that the people have a right to good, free comprehensive health service, removed from the control of private interests and responsible to the people through their organizations and the state. We recognize that until a more humane socialist society is created, a great many of the present day health problems will remain with us. Many illnesses have their cause and their cure, in social and economic factors and consequently all health services should be integrated with social and economic planning services.

### SINN FEIN DEMANDS :

- 1) The immediate implementation of the Free Hospital Service.
- 2) The extension of the general medical scheme to all insured persons and to all others who at present have limited liability.
- 3) That a date be set for the implementation of a totally free general medical scheme.
- 4) Immediate free health service for all children under 12 years.

### HOSPITAL SERVICE :

- 1) That the Fitzgerald Report, on closing down local hospitals, be dropped and that money and staff be made available to build and improve local hospital facilities.
- 2) That all hospitals be put under local staff and state control.

- 3) That Out-Patient facilities be extended to cut down on the waiting lists for appointments.
- 4) The provision of decent wages for nurses and other hospital workers.

### COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES :

- 1) That Directors of Community Care be appointed in all areas to integrate health and social services.
- 2) That social workers in health matters be appointed in all areas as a matter of urgency and that home helps and a more domiciliary nursing service be provided.
- 3) That development screening of children up to 2 years be extended to the whole country.
- 4) That adequate facilities for the care of the old in the community be provided.
- 5) That the health services be consulted on the planning of any new housing estate or towns.

### GENERAL MEDICAL SERVICES :

- 1) That the principle of free choice of doctors be maintained.
- 2) That the Health Boards organize night services where these are not being provided by the doctors themselves.
- 3) That the MacCormick Report on General Practice be implemented.
- 4) That any doctor who is suitably qualified be permitted to enter the service.

## RESOURCES

Sinn Fein has been in the forefront of the campaign to have the resources of Ireland brought under the control of the people of Ireland for once and for all.

Mines and minerals, land and waterways — these represent the wealth of Ireland. But unless they are controlled by the State for the benefit of the people of Ireland, they will be the assets of big business, native and foreign, sources, not of wealth, but of profit.

Local authorities should have a say in the control and development of resources in their areas. Because they represent the people as a whole and not sectional interests, they should be given the power to participate fully in the process of development.

Local authorities should be given possession of full information about resources existing in their areas. They should have a say in the type of development to be initiated and in the control of such development.

They should, recommend State take-over of development which is not proceeding in the interests of the people as a whole. And their voice should be heard.

Sinn Fein will continue to campaign for national and local control of the resources that are rightly ours.

## POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Sinn Fein says : Give power to the people through their elected representatives, not to officials whose only interest is to maintain and sustain a system that was designed for other days and operates to the advantage of the few and their political friends.

We want councillors with power, not watchdogs who can hardly bark. Sinn Fein councillors will press to have legislation passed to curb the dictatorial powers of managers.

Who decides for you in Local Government? On issues of transport, development, housing, amenities? On the spending of your money on services which ought to be to your benefit?

For the most part it is **not** the people you elect, whether councillors or commissioners, but the city and county managers who have more power and greater discretion than the men and women you choose on the basis of the policies they present.

**VOTE  
SINN FEIN**