

# PEOPLES DEMOCRACY



WHAT IT STANDS FOR,  
ITS ATTITUDES

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THIS PAMPHLET WAS COMPILED FROM EXISTING P.D. LITERATURE  
BY THE DUBLIN BRANCH OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY IN ORDER  
TO PROVIDE A REFERENCE TO OUR POLITICAL PROGRAMME, AIMS,  
ATTITUDES AND ACTIVITIES.  
IT IS HOPED THAT IT WILL SATISFY THE QUERIES BOTH OF  
THOSE WISHING TO INFORM THEMSELVES ON US, AND OF PROS-  
PECTIVE MEMBERS.

P.D. POLITICAL PROGRAMME

THIS POLITICAL PROGRAMME WAS ADOPTED AT A P.D. CONFERENCE ON SUNDAY 29 NOV '70

AIMS

The aim of the Peoples Democracy is the establishment of a socialist system of society in Ireland and throughout the world. The first step towards that objective is the establishment of a Workers' and Small Farmers' Republic in the 32 counties of Ireland. But, since complete socialism cannot be established in any one country, or so long as the great imperialist powers like the U.S.A. remain capitalist, the P.D. will readily co-operate with and render every assistance to socialists in all other countries.

Believing that both parts of Ireland to-day suffer from the twin evils of capitalism and imperialism the P.D. is firmly committed to the removal of British troops and Anglo-American economic control from Ireland, and to breaking the stranglehold of grasping native capitalists over the Irish people.

The Workers' Republic will be a Society in which all natural resources, major industries and financial institutions will be publicly owned and jointly controlled by those who work in them, or use their products. It will guarantee to each citizen a home, a livelihood and a job, plus an adequate medical and educational service. It will encourage the development of cultural activities and end the tyranny of commercialism over art and culture. Believing that progress can only come about through intellectual freedom and the right to question the established order, the Workers' Republic will also guarantee to all its citizens freedom of political and religious belief and freedom to disseminate political and religious views. It will not grant a special position or privileges to any religious group. The Workers' Republic will be based on a mutual respect for the different cultural tendencies in Ireland, and will work to create one unified community out of a 'synthesis of what is best in the different traditions in Ireland, rather than by the destruction of one tradition by another.

## METHODS OF ACHIEVEMENT

The P.D. believes that the Workers' Republic can only be achieved with the consent of the majority of the Irish people. The P.D. hopes to win that support by building a mass political organisation throughout Ireland committed to the establishment of the Workers' Republic and totally opposed to both Green and Orange Toryism, and to sham Labourism. This organisation will work for the immediate improvement of the conditions of the working class and small farmers, but will constantly attempt to show that only a socialist society can ultimately free working people from poverty and want and give them the opportunity to develop their personality to the fullest extent.

To secure its objectives the P.D. will use both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary means as appropriate. Recognising also that grasping employers and exploiting imperialist powers rarely give up their illgotten gains without a struggle and that the law, the police and the imperialist troops constantly defend the exploiters, the P.D. will not be intimidated by the threat of force and recognises that a certain degree of counter force may be necessary to carry out the wishes of the people.

While anxious to stimulate increased political awareness and political activity among working people, the P.D. recognises that haphazard and directionless activity will not overthrow the highly-organised forces of imperialism and capitalism. A well-organised political movement with a clear political strategy, whose members have a sound understanding of socialist theory, is the best weapon of the working class in the struggle for socialism.

## IMMEDIATE DEMANDS

The P.D. believes that the following measures are necessary both immediately to improve the living conditions of the working class and to lay the foundations of the Workers' Republic by wresting control of the economy from the profiteers and exploiters. Some of these measures could be taken by a capitalist government, but some could only be taken by a socialist administration.

The P.D. will campaign for the implementation of this programme both by harrassing the existing government and by winning the public support necessary for socialism to come to power. These measures could be applied in the 26 Counties as in the 6 counties:

1. Nationalisation or handing over to co-operatives of all mines, inland fisheries, forests and other natural resources including large estates.
2. Nationalisation of all Banks, Insurance Companies and Financial Institutions.
3. Nationalisation, or handing over to co-operatives, of all firms and farms employing over 25 people.
4. All nationalised resources or industries to be handed over to co-operatives or to be managed by workers' councils.
5. A ban on the export of profit from any part of Ireland.
6. All remaining privately-owned firms to publish annually a full statement of accounts including the salaries of all involved in the firms.
7. A minimum wage of £25 per week for all full-time workers and guaranteed work or full maintenance for all. An upper wage-limit for all workers.
8. An upper limit on all privately-owned farms. Encouragement of the growth of co-operatives among small producers (privately owned firms and farmers) by a re-structuring of grants and subsidies and by a programme of education in the value of co-operation.
9. Massive state and municipal investment in new industry, taking account of people's social and enviromental needs as well as economic requirements.
10. The abolition of all ground rent and absentee landlordism.
11. No-one to own more than one dwelling house. Local housing authorities to be given first option on buying all vacant housing and housing authorities to have the power to order the sub-division or re-allocation of unusually large houses.
12. The provision of a universal free health service i.e. the abolition of or prescription charges etc. and full maintenance for the sick. No preferential treatment for anyone under the Health Service.

13. Schools to be organised on a comprehensive and co-educational basis, and to be religiously integrated. New schools to be provided by the state and all schools controlled by management committees, representative of parents, students, teachers and local authorities.
14. The provision of nursery school places for all children, and adequate provision of parks, swimming pools and playgrounds. Widespread provision of community centres and greatly increased grants for cultural activities. Commercial advertisements to be excluded from television and radio services.
15. Repeal of the Special Powers Act (N.I.) and Offences Against the State Act (26 Counties), Criminal Justice Act (N.I.), Public Order Act (N.I.), Forcible Entry Bill (26 counties), and all other repressive legislation. Rigid outlawing of all discrimination on the basis of religion, colour, or sex in all spheres of activity, public or private.
16. Guarantees of freedom and equality of religious and political belief and repeal of all laws and ordinances which give a special position to any religious or political belief e.g. the section of the 26 County constitution which gives a special position to the Catholic church and the law in N.Ireland prescribing an oath of allegiance for most public employment. No legal enforcement of the moral code of any particular sect, e.g. an end to the ban on contraception and divorce in the 26 Counties and to restrictive laws on Sunday observance in N. Ireland.
17. The establishment of a national (32 county-wide) Council of Delegates from shop stewards' groups, tenants' associations and co-operative and small farmers' associations. The Council would foster solidarity among the exploited sections of the community and organise widespread support during strikes and agitations. The Council should seek to extend its control over all sections of the economy.
18. The convening of an Assembly of elected representatives from both the Northern and Southern areas as soon as a majority agrees to this, and the new Assembly to replace the present partitioned ones at Stormont and Leinster House. The function of this new Assembly is to co-ordinate, not control, the work of the democratic workers' councils.

19. The repudiation of the Government of Ireland Acts and the breaking of the links between N.Ireland and Britain.
20. The immediate withdrawal of all British troops from N.Ireland.
21. The disbandment of the R.U.C. U.D.R. and Garda Siochana. The organisation of a Civic Defence Force under the control of locally elected representatives and delegates from workers' organisations. All officers of the R.U.C. and Garda Siochana, all members of R.U.C. and Garda Special Branches, and all members of the R.U.C. Special Patrol Group (riot squad) to be barred from membership of the Civic Defence Force.
22. No membership of the E.F.C., and no participation in any existing military alliance.

## REVOLUTIONARY OPPOSITION

A SERIES OF THREE ARTICLES ON THE REVOLUTIONARY OPPOSITION TO IMPERIALISM IN IRELAND TO-DAY WHICH APPEARED IN EDITIONS OF "UNFREE CITIZEN" OF 10TH DEC, 17TH DEC AND 7TH JAN. THE ARTICLES WILL DEAL WITH THE PROVISIONAL AND OFFICIAL REPUBLICANS AND THE PEOPLES DEMOCRACY. THEY SHOULD BE READ AS A SERIES.

## THE PROVISIONALS

The Provisional IRA is doing most of the fighting against British Imperialism in the North to-day. Who are the Provisionals? What should socialists think of them?

The Provisionals are the product of August 1969. Traditionally the IRA in Belfast was as much a defence force for the Catholic ghettos as an anti-imperialist guerilla army. But then the crunch came in August 1969 and the ghettos were attacked. The Belfast IRA had been disarmed and was powerless to resist. The result was a revolt in the ranks which coincided with a revolt in the South by traditionalists who opposed the new leftist direction of the Republican movement and the tactics of those who controlled the movement. The Provisionals were born - a loose alliance of Northern ghetto fighters and the Southern traditionalists.

In the North the Catholic minority's hopes were dashed by the reforms which never came. They grew bitter and frustrated. Rioting intensified and Westminster moved more and more firmly behind the Stormont Unionists using its thuggish army to keep them in power by bashing the Catholics. Support for the Provos grew at first as a defence against Orange attack, then for defence and retaliation against the British Army. But the Provos did not start the war. The Sunday Times Insight team neatly and concisely chronicled the way in which the British, by their double dealing, bullying and attacks on Catholic areas at the whim of Unionist politicians, ultimately forced the Provisionals into launching a military campaign. The British with imperialist pig headness responded to that campaign with more and more vicious repression, with the murder of civilians and finally with internment. To-day the Northern minority is fighting for its political life. What started out as a non-violent civil rights struggle has met with Unionist intransigence backed by British guns. This battle is a vital one, for defeat would mean the life of Uncle Tom, the obedient slave, for another fifty years. But by the

same token - since the Stormont regime has proved itself incapable of reform and Britain has thrown her weight fully behind the defence of Stormont - victory, even partial victory must mean not only democratic rights for Catholics, but the death knell of Unionism and a body blow to British Imperialism in Ireland. The Provos have moved involuntarily from defending the Catholics to fighting one half of an anti-imperialist war. The other half is the mass Civil Resistance Movement which is equally important. Socialists must of course support the struggle against British Imperialism and for rights for Catholics and co-operate with the Provisionals who are doing most of the fighting.

But that support and co-operation must be critical. The Provisionals began as an alliance between Northern militants and Southern traditionalists and the Northerners are still prepared to leave their politics largely to the people in the South. Since the immediate reason for the split in the Republican Movement was the dropping of abstentionism and the growing influence of the Communist Party in the movement, the Kevin Street Sinn Fein is today distinguished by rigid abstentionism, mystical nationalism, and virulent anti-communism. Moreover reactionary anti-socialist elements on both sides of the border, anxious to exploit the Republican split, have been busily wooing the Provisionals though without evident success and the Northerners' deep roots in the ghetto have made it very difficult for the Provos to understand the attitudes of the Protestant workers and to cross the sectarian divide. All this makes a dangerous mixture. Despite the Provisionals claim to be socialist (everyone's a socialist nowadays, even Harold Wilson and Conor Cruise O'Brien) their social and economic policy Comhar na gComharsan is really more of a rescue plan to ailing small businesses threatened by international monopolies than a revolutionary blue print for the overthrow of capitalism and its replacement by workers control. Coupled with traditional nationalism and anti-communism it is not exactly a vehicle for social revolution and could even conceivably be manipulated into action against the left by unscrupulous capitalist politicians of the Blaney-Boland type.

The Provisional's anti-communism is particularly dangerous. Irritation at the dishonesty, hypocrisy and anti-revolutionary policies of the Communist Party of Ireland is entirely understandable but not so the hysterical....."we reject the atheistic Marxism propagated by the Goulding - McGiolla clique and we are supremely confident that the overwhelming majority of the Irish people will reject this alien philosophy" which appeared in the October An Phoblacht. If Marxism is an "alien" and "atheistic" philosophy so too is Republicanism which was inspired by the alien French revolutionaries of 1789 and propagated in Ireland by the atheist Wolfe Tone. In fact, while there are many varieties of Marxism today the basic ideas of Karl Marx on the long struggle of the working class to control the world, on imperialism and colonialism, and on the state as an armed conspiracy of the ruling class are central to genuine revolutionary socialists.

#### CONNOLLY & MARX

Connolly believed this and however much the name of Marx may have been prostituted since 1916 it is still true today.

But the bulk of Provisional volunteers are not reactionary anti-communist fanatics. They are young, brave and dedicated - ready to sacrifice their lives in the war against imperialism. Most of them want to see Ireland ruled by her people, not by the bosses but they are remarkably naive about politics many believing that is something reserved for gangsters and con men and that the imperialists will be defeated by the gun alone. They are wrong and their error could have tragic consequences. Politics and the gun must go hand in hand and politics direct the gun. Otherwise physical force will fail as it did in the 1950s - with out the active support of masses of the population. Or even if it succeeds and forces the British to their knees, the professional politicians will step in and make their deals as they did in 1921 and as De Valera did a few years later. What is needed today if the Workers Republic is to become a reality is a new generation of guerillas with

a clear political outlook who will sweep the con-men out of the arena and negotiate their own settlement with the imperialists.

Revolutionary socialists in the North should be deeply involved in the struggle against Stormont and Westminster and should co-operate fully with the Provisionals while remaining free to criticise individual actions and overall aspects of the campaign such as the apparent disregard for the lives of innocent Protestant - or indeed Catholic - civilians. Such criticisms however will only be listened to from those who are engaged in the struggle.

### COURAGE

Already many Provisionals, especially in the North, are seeing the need for deeper involvement in politics and are even examining Marxist solutions to the problems. With their courage, natural militancy and working class roots many are natural revolutionaries. Instead of screaming abuse at these men forced into fighting a war against imperialists, socialists should be trying to involve them in political action and constantly urging that the only worthwhile republic is a Workers' Republic.

This is happening already through the Northern Resistance Movement. The ideological battle to win the Provisional volunteers to the side of revolutionary socialism should continue until we make this into a peoples revolution not a politicians one.

## THE OFFICIALS

The Official Republicans claim that since the split they have got rid of all the dross and the deadwood that was holding their movement back. So they should have moved sharply to the left since then. Have they?

The left-ward swing in Sinn Fein was the result of rethinking after the 1950's Border campaign. The more thoughtful Republicans realised that they had failed through lack of popular support and popular involvement in the struggle and that even if they had succeeded in "freeing" the North the whole country would still have been run by Sean Lemass and controlled by big business. This led to attempts to build up mass popular support by agitation on social and economic issues and on the civil rights issue in the North.

### PATTERN

All this was happening by 1969. But there was a remarkable pattern to Sinn Fein activities. Their greatest energy was put into campaigns against ground rent, restricted fishing rights - for anglers not working fishermen - foreign ownerships of farms or mineral rights. These issues were admirable in themselves but they did not affect the basic capitalist structure of the economy - a progressive, radical capitalist could have cheerfully supported Sinn Fein's activities. And in fact the Provisionals have taken up all these issues since the split.

But there has been no dramatic development since then. The Freedom Manifesto published by the Officials as their policy in early 1970 envisages working through "Chambers of Commerce and professional groups" and undertakes "to defend the interests of small businessmen". It sets as their objective the achievement of "an independent All-Ireland Republic". While at the January 1971 Ard Fheis Seamus Costello spoke of the need to co-operate with "capitalists

and gombeenmen" against the E.E.C. In fact the Officials have made opposition to the E.E.C. the key point of their policy and are opposing it, not as a natural development of the capitalist system which will enslave the workers even more, but because of the loss of sovereignty involved. At their recent Ard Fheis a motion stating that a Socialist Republic is the only real alternative to the E.E.C. was heavily defeated.

In the North there has been a similar lack of development. By early 1968 the Civil Rights movement had succeeded in mobilising mass support for radical reform in N. Ireland. After August the people themselves went further; they wanted the ousting of the Unionist government and the destruction of Stormont. Yet the Officials who seized total control of NICRA by early 1970 tried to hold them back and channel their energies into the blind alley of a Bill Rights to reform Stormont. While at the same time bitterly opposing any use of NICRA to pressurise the Southern government to reform sectarian legislation in the South. To-day when the entire anti-Unionist population of the North is in open revolt and it should be possible to establish virtual soviets in the minority areas the Officials are trying to keep control in the hands of the moribund NICRA which is still calling for a Bill of Rights. And NICRA is in closer and closer alliance with the treacherous politicians of the SDLP.

#### LEFT

Instead of moving to the left after the split and adopting clearly working class policies the development of the Officials seems to have stopped dead. This can be explained by the influence of the Communist Party on their movement. At the time of the original new departure in Republican thinking several ex-members of the C.P. joined Sinn Fein and rapidly moved to the top. Since then the C.P. and the Officials have moved closer together until to-day they jointly control NICRA in the North and anti-E.E.C. committees and other front organisations in the South. All over the world to-day the orthodox Communist parties are noted for their craving for respectability and their

dedication to the Parliamentary road to socialism. Their basic strategy is to form alliances with "progressive" sections of the middle class to achieve democratic reforms and they are ruthless and unscrupulous in their attitude to "ultra-left" elements who try to raise class issues instead. This attitude was seen at its clearest in France in 1969 when the C.P. viciously attacked the student revolutionaries and the workers who supported them. In Ireland they seem to have successfully drawn the teeth of the Official Republicans.

The Officials' attitude to violence is highly ambiguous and not a little hypocritical. Only the Unionist party have been more vehement in their condemnation of the Provisional campaign and indeed Brian Faulkner has quoted Cathal Goulding with approval more than once. The denunciations have been verging on hysterical and there has been no acknowledgement that the campaign has been provoked. Alive they have called the Provisionals sectarian murderers, yet when they die acknowledged them as Republican heroes. When the Provisionals blow up business premises it is sectarian, when the Officials kill a Unionist Senator it is not.

### IRA TRADITION

The glaring inconsistency springs from the Officials' whole position. They claim to be a revolutionary socialist organisation but they also claim to be the real Republicans, the true inheritors of the IRA tradition. But the IRA were never revolutionary socialists, they were revolutionary nationalists, some left wing, some right wing. Whoever inherits their tradition inherits militarism as well as radicalism. They inherit Sean Russel, the bombing campaign in England and the 50's Border campaign. And so the Official IRA attacks on the Provisional campaign are signed with the name of J.J. McGarrity, the man who originated the disastrous bombing campaign in England, and the Officials commemorate each year the men who died in the 50's campaign which was much less justified than the present one. There is no way out of their

dilemma short of dropping the claim to be the true IRA and becoming the Citizen Army or the Peoples Army, who can honour what is good in the Republican tradition without being identified with all its facets. But that might lose potential recruits and alienate some of the middle class allies so beloved of the C.P. In the meantime the Official IRA can only distinguish itself from the Provisional IRA by vituperative abuse of its rivals.

Revolutionary socialists outside the Officials can only welcome the discarding of outmoded shibboleths like Abstentionism and non-recognition of the Courts, and the new emphasis on social and economic issues. We must be prepared to co-operate with them in these activities. We must acknowledge that the bulk of Official volunteers have joined because they believe their organisation to be socialist. But we mustn't be stampeded by their hysterical attacks on the 'fascist Provisionals' who were their comrades in arms up until two years ago. We must see the pernicious and counter-revolutionary influence of the C.P.I. at work in their ranks and expose and attack it. And we must constantly propose more radical, more socialist courses to the Officials in the hope that either they will agree, or if their leadership refuses, the rank and file will begin to realise the way in which they are being muzzled and restrained.

## THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

The People's Democracy began in October 1968 as a loose student protest movement. It was liberal well-meaning and enthusiastic. Hundreds attended meetings in Queen's University and a couple of thousand came on marches. But since there was no formal membership it was hard to tell the committed from the spectators. Events took care of that. As things got worse, nastier and more brutal in the North the thousands and then the hundreds fell away. Meanwhile the P.D. changed. It had always had a political hard core of young Socialists. As the situation developed only they could explain what was happening and give direction to the organisation. And the committed members realised that liberal civil rights demands - or a capitalist united Ireland - would solve nothing. So P.D. became a revolutionary socialist group, and it also changed its structure to have individual members, a central committee and monthly conferences.

The P.D. was smaller, much smaller, but its members were dedicated and knew where they were going. And a small group of determined revolutionaries can do far more than thousands of confused and bewildered people, ever prone to manipulation by professional politicians like the S.D.L.P. When the revolutionary group can communicate its knowledge and understanding to the thousands, then they are invincible.

Of course the P.D. made mistakes: some immediate and practical, like the failure to support the Enniskillen march of November 1970, some tactical, and some theoretical. It took P.D. a long time to work out its relations with non-socialist groups which oppose discrimination or repression - like the NICRA. Socialist sectarianism of the Eamonn McCann variety urged no co-operation at all with such bodies but today P.D. is actively involved in NICRA and the broader-based Northern Resistance Movement. The P.D. also under emphasised the national question and Irish unity in an unsuccessful attempt to allay the fears of the loyalists, but the intervention of British

troops changed that. But no active socialist party can avoid all mistakes. The important thing is to learn from them and the P.D. has learned much. Despite its size, despite mistakes, the P.D. has achieved much over three years. The Burntollet march which revived a flagging C.R. campaign, exposed the R.U.C. and B. Specials for good and revealed to the world the fascism under the skin of Ulster Unionism. Winning some 25,000 votes in the 1969 election and destroying the myth of O'Neill's liberal Unionism - and severely shaking a few Nationalist M.P.s into the bargain. Running 'Radio Free Belfast' in August and September 1969 and doing much to radicalise the Catholic population. Establishing and running the Free Citizen which for over two years has been a perpetual thorn in the flesh to the Unionists and the British and has spread Socialist and revolutionary ideas throughout the population. Encouraging Southern Socialists to break with the degenerate Irish Labour Party and setting up the Socialist Labour Alliance to unite Northern and Southern Socialists in a single movement. Helping to set up the Northern Resistance Movement to revitalise the Civil Disobedience Campaign and combat the sell-out policies of the S.D.L.P.

Meanwhile we have been involved in countless marches, meetings, protests and demonstrations all over Ireland and almost all our members have been jailed, interned or harassed by the police and military at some time over the last two years.

But what is the P.D.s role today? The most immediate and urgent problem in Ireland is the struggle against military terror in the North. All socialists should be fully involved in that struggle. Should the P.D. not join the I.R.A. en bloc? But our aim is not just an Irish Republic with the tricolour flying from the centre to the sea. Our aim is a Socialist Republic with the workers in control and the Starry Plough - the flag of Irish Socialism flying. That will not be won overnight or just by defeating the Unionists in the North. It will mean a long struggle a struggle against the ruling class in the South and some of our respectable allies who nominally support the Northern opposition as well. And much of the struggle will be on a different basis. It will be a

class struggle, working class against the ruling class.

And the class struggle cannot wait until the war in the North is over. It must go on in the South now. It must go on in the North wherever possible. And it must be clearly linked to the struggle against the imperialists. But neither wing of the Republican movement is waging that struggle. The Provisionals are concentrating too exclusively on the North, the Officials are too dominated by the C.P.I. strategy of winning over sections of the middle classes. Moreover politics is complex. Countless times in Ireland and in other countries brave but simple fighting men have given their lives only so that scheming politicians could reap the benefits. Or the fighting men have come to power only to find themselves trapped and dictated to by big business and monopoly capitalism. That is why we must talk of Marxism and 'scientific socialism'. Only a knowledge of history of economics and above all a study of other revolutions and how they worked out in practice can enable the Irish revolutionaries to avoid all these pitfalls.

So to achieve a Socialist Republic we need a separate socialist party which while participating fully in the Northern struggle is also actively involved in the class struggle in the South and in the North as far as possible. The party should also be constantly exposing the rottenness and corruption of the capitalist society and explaining what socialism really means. And within the organisations there must be continuous argument, discussion and education so, that every member is fully grounded in socialist theory - tested in practice - and fully understands the groups politics and is able to carry on the fight if all the others are removed.

That is what the P.D. aims at. We have built the nucleus of such a group in the North. In the South socialist groups tend to be dogmatic armchair revolutionaries more concerned with attacks upon each other than the overthrow of the state but a P.D. branch has been set up in Dublin and P.D. has joined with Southern socialists to form the SOCIALIST LABOUR ALLIANCE. However we have a long way still to go in the South.

As long as the Northern crisis fills the centre of the state inevitably a

revolutionary socialist group like the P.D. will be smaller and have less support than the militant left wing nationalist organisations like the Officials and the Provisionals. But the Northern crisis will be only one stage of a long struggle and when it is temporarily resolved and emphasis shifts to the struggle against the ruling class, North and South, then more and more people will turn to the socialists for advice and leadership. Meanwhile P.D. of course should co-operate with the Republicans, knowing that the vast majority of their volunteers want to go the full road to the Workers Republic.

Our current path though isolated, is in honourable tradition. Despite the numbers of 'James Connolly' Republican clubs, Connolly was never a member of Sinn Fein. In fact he was bitterly opposed to the policies of the Sinn Fein of those days whose leader, Arthur Griffith, attacked strikes and strikers and backed the employers. Connolly set up a series of small socialist parties in Dublin. Nor was he ever a member of the Irish Volunteers. Instead he was head of the Citizen Army, a working class force, often described as the first Red Army in Europe. The Citizen Army co-operated fully with Pearse and the militant section of the Volunteers but they remained a separate force right up to the day of the 1916 Rising. Indeed shortly before the Rising Connolly told them "In the event of victory hold on to your rifles, as those with whom we are fighting may stop before our goal is reached. We are out for economic as well as political liberty". The socialist position could not be put better.

After Connolly's death his son Roddy and his closest associates tried to keep up the tradition by reviving the Citizen Army and a separate socialist party which became the first Communist Party of Ireland in 1921 - before the degeneration of the Russian Revolution. Their efforts failed amid the blood bath of the Civil War where they took the Republican side. It is time the tradition was revived of a real revolutionary socialist party in Ireland and ultimately of a Citizen Army to join in the final struggle against British Imperialism and native Irish capitalism. This should be our aim.

THE PREVIOUS PAGES GIVE AN OUTLINE OF OUR AIMS AND POLICIES

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