

The Plough

-E-mail newsletter of the Irish Republican Socialist Party

Number- 8

Date 3rd October 2003

1. **A Proposal For Left Electoral Unity**
 2. **Loyalist watch**
 3. **IRSP Reiterate Support for Polisario**
 4. **Poverty In The North Of Ireland**
 5. **Irish Anti War Movement News**
 6. **What's On**
-

A PROPOSAL FOR LEFT ELECTORAL UNITY.

The following proposal came from a meeting held in Belfast on Wednesday 1st October 2003 involving a number of left wing groups and individuals.

1.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

A1. We stand for a radically different approach to politics, putting the interests of the working class first. For at least four generations, politics in Ireland, North and South, has been dominated by nationalism and unionism, which have always demanded that 'Labour must wait' until the question of the border is decided once and for all. All that is on offer at present are two states, equally dominated by the interest of capitalism, both of which are relentlessly imposing the agenda of corporate globalisation. We are opposed to the sectarian head-count mentality that suggests that a change in the status of the border depends on 50 per cent plus one of the populations of either religion. We stand for a break from this pattern. We will bring working class issues to the fore in the sure belief that this will create the best conditions in which to resolve all other questions on the basis

of trust, solidarity and co-operation. We believe only the full participation of the working class can achieve this change.

A2. If elected, all our candidates will declare themselves 'others' for the purposes of votes in the Assembly. We stand for the common interests of working people. We are for the fullest respect for and freedom of religious and cultural expression. However, we reject entirely the notion that religious belief and political outlook are, or should be, one and the same. This is the heart of sectarianism. Sectarianism creates an artificial division in the working class. We campaign for working class unity.

A3. The mass popular opposition to continued violence, demonstrated on countless occasions in the last 10 years, has decisively demanded an end to the Troubles. It is a betrayal of the desire for peace that leading politicians in Northern Ireland have clung to the old sources of dissension.

A4. Beyond the disputes between the main nationalist and unionist parties, lies a shared commitment to advancing a neo-liberal economic agenda in Northern Ireland. All of the main planks of what has become known as 'corporate globalisation' - cuts and privatisation of the public sector, reducing corporate tax rates to attract multinational companies, and so on, are the dominant feature of the Programme for Government agreed by the four parties that make up the Executive in the Northern Ireland Assembly. This is the agenda, which lies behind the introduction of the Private Finance Initiative to schools, hospitals, universities and other public sector workplaces, and the introduction of water charges. We stand for resistance to this agenda, by trade unions and working class communities.

2/

A5. We take as our reference point the international movements that are opposing corporate globalisation and war. We stand for trade union rights, more funding and greater democratic control over public services, a society driven by human need not private greed. We believe that there is an alternative to the global, unregulated free market and that wealth should be used in society to meet people's needs. We aim to galvanise mass opposition to the injustice, inequality and environmental damage which the market causes and to replace it with a popular socialist system, based on democratic common ownership and democratic control of the key sectors of the economy, a system based on social justice and ecological sustainability.

A6: Our intention is to build a broad organisation, through the (title of organisation), based on accepted principles and open to all individuals and organisations who support these and who agree to join in working together in non-sectarian, co-operative and positive ways.

A7: Our overall aim is actively to help create a socially just and ecologically sustainable society. This is one in which social justice is defined as incorporating:

- the political organisation of society in the most open, democratic, participative and accountable manner practicable;
- maximum freedom of the individual commensurate with the freedom of others;
- fight against and ultimate abolition of sectarianism, sexism, racism, homophobia, discrimination against people with disabilities and on grounds of age;

- the ultimate abolition of all forms of economic exploitation and social oppression, in such ways as to secure for the people the full return of all wealth generated by industries and services of society, by means of common ownership and democratic control;
- the promotion of peace, nationally and internationally, and of a system of justice which gives defence from tyranny, prejudice and the abuse of power;
- the promotion of only those social, economic and cultural structures which may be sustained indefinitely without causing any form of irreversible damage to the global ecosystem;
- guaranteeing and, where necessary, restoring such biological diversity as is essential to the viability of both global and local ecosystems.

A8: The () at all levels should aim to be representative of the gender, ethnic, age and religious background in the population. We also recognise the desirability of balance and inclusiveness for political trends within the () at all levels of the organisation. All local () as well as individual members attending conferences are encouraged to take this into account in electing officers, steering committees and selecting candidates.

SUGGESTED ELECTION PLATFORM

1. That if elected we register as “Others” to advance a class-based political orientation as opposed to the communal basis of politics in Northern Ireland.
2. We will oppose all forms of privatisation.
3. We will oppose all cuts and closures within the NHS and the public sector generally.
4. We will oppose militarism and para-militarism.
5. We will oppose closures and job cuts within manufacturing industry.
6. We will campaign for a minimum wage of £7 per hour with no exceptions.
7. We will campaign for integrated, comprehensive education and a proper system of modern apprenticeships.
8. We will campaign for the extension of the 1967 abortion act.
9. We will support the anti-war and anti-capitalist movements.
10. We will campaign for the legalisation of cannabis.
11. We are in favour of lowering the voting age to 16.
12. We will campaign for an increase in investment for public housing, and an increase in housing benefits.
13. We are in favour of recycling and opposed to waste management policies that include incineration.
14. We will campaign for the abolition of tuition fees and the reintroduction of student grants.
15. We are opposed to racism, sexism and homophobia. We will campaign against the criminalisation of asylum seekers, for equal pay and for equal rights for gays and lesbians.
16. We will campaign for greatly improved benefits including the abolition of the social fund and the restoration of a system of direct grants.
17. We will campaign for the abolition of all anti-union laws.
18. We will campaign for high quality state-funded care for children, elderly and disabled people

A follow up meeting will be held in the Unemployed Workers Centre, Donegall Street Belfast on Thursday 9th October at 7.00pm.

Joke of the week has to be the Sunday World's Hugh Jordan 'exclusive ' on "INLA targets David Blaine". This pathetic story alleged that a maverick section of the INLA was planning to murder some fruitcake who is in a see through plastic box over the River Thames. Articles from the likes of Jordan should be treated for what they are –cartoon stories.

Sectarian Watch.

Friday 26th Sept. A number of pupils of the Girls Model School had to be taken to hospital after their bus was stoned by nationalist youths on the Crumlin road.

Friday 26th Sept Loyalist paramilitaries attacked four cleaning workers removing sectarian graffiti from an apartment block on Sandy Road/Donegall Road junction. The workmen's van had its windows smashed and was then set on fire.

Sunday 28th Sept. Nine petrol bombs were thrown at houses and property in the Protestant Fountain area of Derry City.

Monday 29th Sept. Six cars were burned out and others damaged when loyalist youths petrol bombed teachers cars in Our Lady of Mercy secondary school in the Ballysillan area of North Belfast.

Tuesday 30th Sept., Norman Boyd of the Northern Ireland Unionist Party said 'It was a scandal that the nationalist community could take over the Carnmoney cemetery on Cemetery Sunday and intimidate Protestants.'

Note the way that "nationalist" is used to label what is purely a Catholic religious service. Thus do politicians use labels to whip up sectarian tension.

Tuesday 30th Sept., An attempt was made to burn down the predominantly Protestant Ligoneil Primary School in North Belfast.

Thursday 2nd October. Loyalist gunmen opened fire at three adults in a house in Coleraine forcing the family to leave their home. It was the second attack on the house in three days. On Tuesday loyalists pulled down the Tyrone flag the family had hung out to celebrate that county's All Ireland victory and wrapped it around a brick and through it through the window.

IRSP Reiterate Support for Polisario

The Irish Republican Socialist Party welcomes the UN Security Council unanimously having passed resolution 1495, at the end of July, as the deadline for rolling over their UN's peacekeeping operation in Western Sahara arrived. The resolution affirmed a commitment to facilitate self-determination for the Sahrawi people and helped to restrain Moroccan efforts to enable their colonists in the region to participate in determining the

territory's future. The IRSP recognises that, as is true of the Zionist settlements in Palestine, the Moroccan settlers in Western Sahara are in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the transfer of civilians onto territories seized by military force, rendering these settlements illegal.

In the fall of 1975, the International Court of Justice rejected Moroccan claims to Western Sahara and ruled that the Sahrawis were entitled to self-determination. Morocco invaded the territory that same year, when the region was scheduled to gain independence from Spain. The Moroccan invasion forced most of the indigenous Sahrawi population was forced across the border, into refugee camps in Algeria and a guerrilla war has continued since that time, led by the guerrillas of Polisario (the Western Saharan People's Front).

In response to the invasion by Morocco, the UN Security Council passed resolutions 379 and 380, which called for Morocco to withdraw from Western Sahara. Since then, however, the United States and the French have ensured that the Security Council remain unable to enforce these resolutions. In addition to thwarting the UN from acting, the US and France have supplied major military aid, including training and equipment for counter-insurgency efforts to Morocco for use against Polisario. In addition, the two nations assisted Morocco in constructing a wall, to keep the Sahrawi populace out of the territory, much like the 'apartheid wall' being built in Palestine today by the Zionists.

A cease-fire between Morocco and Polisario was concluded in 1990, which was to have been followed by a UN supervised referendum on the status of the territory. The referendum identified eligible voters on the basis of the 1974 Spanish census of the territory, but Morocco sought to include Moroccan settlers who could trace their ancestry to tribal groups from the region in the distant past. Polisario appropriately rejected these demands, but the US and France stepped in to keep the UN from compelling Morocco to comply with the original agreement, leaving the situation in a stalemate.

In an effective, but unusual, shift of tactics, Polisario aligned itself with the recent US resolution before the UN, which forced the Moroccan government to oppose the US on the issue, thereby causing a rift, which deprived Morocco of one of its staunchest allies. Ahmed Boukhari, the Polisario representative to the UN said of this tactical play:

"We are in the weakest position, so of course, they always want us to compromise, regardless of the law."

Recognising their precarious position, the guerrilla movement opted for a pragmatic approach and the gamble appears to have been effective.

Polisario has widespread diplomatic support, with their government-in-exile of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic having been recognized by over seventy countries around the world. In addition, the Sahrawi republic holds full member status in the Organization of African Unity. Polisario has created effectively functioning democratic institutions in the self-governing refugee camps in Algeria over the years and maintained its struggle to regain their homeland.

Whether the United States will remain at odds with Morocco is far from certain, however, as the imperialist power has long seen the Moroccan monarchy as an important regional ally, first during the Cold War and now in their campaign against militant Islamicists.

Many suspect that if Morocco were to lose the referendum on Western Sahara, the result would be serious instability for the regime. Beyond this, the primary reason for Moroccan and western imperialist interest in the Saharan territory stems from its considerable mineral wealth, much of it still unexploited and, recently, the Moroccan government awarded an oil exploration contract to the US corporation Kerr McGee, which is one of the corporations with strong ties to the oil-related interests within the Bush administration. These contracts have, however, prompted the Security Council to ask for a legal opinion from the UN Under Secretary General for Legal Affairs. In response, Under Secretary Hans Corell issued a devastating report, from the Moroccan perspective, though it ultimately upheld the legality of the contracts. The report also reminded the Security Council that the Moroccans occupation was being maintained in defiance of rulings by both the International Court of Justice and the Security Council itself.

France, the primary imperialist ally of Morocco even attempted to proclaim a new diplomatic principle in response to the report, claiming that the Security Council cannot impose its decisions on parties if the parties disagree with those decisions. It is dubious that the French will succeed in having this newly minted 'principle' accepted, but as an Irish diplomat on the Security Council, who had miraculously retained enough clarity on attempts by imperialists to disregard the will of the indigenous populace, said:

“The original draft was utterly one-sided in its approach: it was in violation of international legal principles, and had already been rejected by one party to the dispute. It was also clear that the movers could not muster more than six or seven votes in the Council, so they could not get a majority for it.”

Accordingly, the US returned with the revised proposal, passed at the close of July. This version provides for a degree of autonomy for the five-year interim stage to a much greater extent than did the earlier draft and includes stronger international guarantees against Moroccan interference. The resolution, as passed, ensures that only Sahrawis could vote for the interim authority, though it leaves open the question of the Moroccan colonists voting in the final referendum.

We in the IRSP believe that Morocco has been allowed to disregard the agreements previously concluded with Polisario for far too long and denounce the actions of the United States, France, and Morocco to shore up the occupation and deny self-determination to the Saharawi people. We applaud the Algerian government and the government of Libya for the consistent assistance they have provided to the Saharawis and Polisario, and especially the Algerians having permitted the Saharawis refugees to maintain a system of self-government in their refugee camps, rather than attempting to impose Algerian law on these embattled people.

We believe that it is essential that the Saharawis and the Saharawis alone be enabled to make known their wishes regarding self-determination and once a plebiscite has taken place, we call upon the Security Council and especially all of its permanent member states to ensure that Morocco immediately honour the expressed will of the Saharawi people.

As with Palestine and Puerto Rico, imperialist machinations have too long impeded the will of the international community and the indigenous people of Western Sahara. We salute the heroic campaign of Polisario against a formidable alliance of the reactionary

Moroccan monarchy and its imperialist allies and express our solidarity with Polisario's struggle for national liberation and social justice.

ENDS

IRSP

392 Falls Road

Belfast, BT12 6DH

Ireland

Tel. 028 90 321024

Fax 028 90 330786

POVERTY IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND

55% families living in low income households are Catholic while 45% are Protestants. 37% of all children live in low income house-holds. Children in single parent families without full time work have the highest risk of being in low income households at 88%. There are 55% of low income households which have at least one adult with a disability or long term illness. (Figures from the OFMDFM)
The minimum wage is now £4.50 an hour.

Irish Anti War Movement News

Saturday's demonstration showed that the anti-war movement has not gone away with 2,500 people demonstrating in Dublin. Many turned out in disgust at the possibility of Irish troops being sent to Iraq to bolster the US occupation. At the AGM on Sunday we agreed to continue to organise demonstrations against the government's support for war & occupation and to campaign against the use of Irish facilities by belligerent powers. We also agreed to support a demonstration organised by the Tralee Anti--War Group at the Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis in Killarney on Saturday October 11th. Full AGM details will follow later. Details of the bus to Killarney are posted below.

Aoife Ní Fhearghail
Outgoing Secretary

KILLARNEY DEMO

11 October - Demonstration at the Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis in Killarney
Demands

- a.. US Military out of Shannon
- b.. No Irish troops for the occupation of Iraq
- c.. Drop all charges of civil disobedience

This is our chance to bring it home to FF party members that we hold Bertie Ahern, Brian Cowan and the government accountable for the Irish participation in the US war effort in

Iraq. We reject the escalation proposed by Ahern that Irish troops are sent to reinforce the brutal US/UK occupation of Iraq. We demand **instead that the** Irish government drops all charges against those activists who committed acts of civil disobedience and/or non-violently disarmed a US warplane at Shannon.

Time and date 2 pm, Saturday, 11 October 2003

Location National Events Centre

Gleneagles Hotel

Muckross Road

Killarney

Co. Kerry

Directions When reaching Killarney follow signs for Kenmare N71. The Gleneagles Hotel is approx. 1.6 km (1 mile) from the town centre on the left hand side.

<http://www.inec.ie/location.cfm#>

Bus from Dublin will leave the city centre at 8am. **YOU MUST BOOK A SEAT IN ADVANCE.** The bus will return to Dublin by approx. 11 pm

Return bus fare •20 (waged) or •15 (unwaged)

Places in bus must be booked and confirmed to

Colm at 087 294 7100 by 12 noon, Wednesday, 08 October

The Annual Seamus Costello Anniversary Commemoration will take place on Sunday 5th of October, Assembly Point Old Town Hall Little Bray. March and Rally with Band and Colour Party. Main Speaker will be Ex Political Prisoner and Blanket man, IRSP Ard Comhairle Member, Paul Little.

Seamus Costello Remembered

26th Anniversary Commemoration

Organized By the IRSP Commemoration Committee. Contact and Transport Details, Contact Daithi on 0877570109 or Dublinirsp@hotmail.com. All Welcome.

"I Owe My allegiance to the Working Class" Seamus Costello

GEORGE MONBIOT

George Monbiot, a regular feature writer in *The Guardian*, is the author of *Captive State* and *The Age of Consent*. The One World Centre, The New Ireland Group and The de Borda Institute have organised the following events:

1 GEORGE MONBIOT The 2nd One World Centre annual lecture, 12 noon to 2 p.m., Thursday 9th October, Room G07, Peter Frogatt Building, Queen's University. Everyone welcome.

Further information available from The One World Centre, 4 Lower Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NR, Tel 90241879, e-mail stephen@owcni.org.uk

2 GEORGE MONBIOT "Unionism, Nationalism or Globalisation?" 7.30 for 7.45 p.m. on Thursday 9th October, in The Elmwood Hall, Belfast Tickets £5 (concessions £2.50), includes a free glass of organic wine from the Belfast Food Co-op.

Tickets and further information available from either The New Ireland Group, 7 Slievedarragh Park, Belfast BT14 8J sec.newirelandgroup@ntlworld.com or The de Borda Institute, 36 Ballysillan Road, Belfast BT14 7QQ pemerson@deborda.org

Subject: Talk on Guyana

GUYANA: COMMENTS ON A DIVIDED SOCIETY

Speaker: Michael Mahadeo

Venue: One World Centre (4 Lower Crescent, Belfast - off Botanic Avenue)

Date: Wednesday, 8 October 2003

Time: 7.30pm

Everyone Welcome

.....Stephen McCloskey

Co-ordinator

One World Centre for Northern Ireland

4 Lower Crescent

Belfast

BT7 1NR 028 9024 1879

www.owcni.org.uk <<http://www.owcni.org.uk>>

Anti Racist Network, from Davy Carlin

The second meeting of the Anti Racist Network is to be moved to Oct 15th and is to be held at the Chinese Welfare Association at 7pm. The change has been suggested by a number of persons due to George Monbiot speaking in Belfast and persons had asked would it be possible not to clash with this. A proposal will be put forward for a visual representative action to be held in the near future. Such as various parties, organisations, trade unions etc with their banners outside city hall showing a collective stand against Racism where the media can be invited along.

Amnesty International Annual Lecture 2003

**Xanana Gusmão,
President of East Timor**

Peace, justice and reconciliation

Queen's University Belfast, G06
Thursday 16th October, 7pm

All welcome
Admission free but by ticket only

Supported by QUB Human Rights Centre

To book tickets, tel 028 9064 3000 / email: nireland@amnesty.org.uk

James Byrne Commemoration Committee >

1st November 2003-09-11 Monument Unveiling & 90th Anniversary Commemoration

Assemble 2pm Main Entrance Deansgrange Cemetery, Deansgrange, Co. Dublin, Ireland. The newly-commissioned monument over the grave of Trade Union >Martyr, James Byrne, District Organiser, ITG&WU, who died on **1st November** 1913 following a hunger & thirst strike during the Great >Lock-Out 1913 will be unveiled by Des Geraghty, President, SIPTU. All trade unionists, political activists and members of the Public >welcome!

[No Party Political Banners, please!]

The James Byrne Commemoration Committee has organised the erection of a fitting memorial over the grave in Deansgrange Cemetery [Co. >Dublin, Ireland] of James Byrne, a trade union martyr who died on >1st November 1913 as a result of the effects of a hunger and thirst >strike during imprisonment for his role in the Great Lock-Out of that year. James was District Organiser of the Irish Transport & >General Workers Union and held leadership roles in both Bray and >Kingstown [Dún Laoghaire] Trades Councils.

In the course of James Byrne's funeral oration James Connolly said:

"James Byrne truly died a martyr as any man who ever died for Ireland"

The Committee believes that the monument is a fitting tribute to >James Byrne and hopes that his grave may become a place of >pilgrimage and source of inspiration for trade unionists and >socialists in the future. We are particularly pleased that the descendents of James Byrne are fully supportive of the work of the >Committee.

Jason Mc Lean. PRO- James Byrne Commemoration Committee.

European Social Forum Paris, St Denis 12-15 November

Please feel free to comment on the contents of the Plough. We welcome political comments and criticisms.

If you know of anybody who might wish to receive the Plough please send his or her e-mail address to johnmartinps@eircom.net

If you wish to receive back copies of the "The Plough" Please e-mail" to

johnmartinps@eircom.net stating which numbers you wish.

To unsubscribe to the Plough please send e-mail entitled "unsubscribe" to

johnmartinps@eircom.net

It is the policy of the Plough to acknowledge information and articles from other sources.

Subscribe to the bi-monthly

"The Starry Plough/An Camchéachta"

P.O. Box 1981, Derry, BT48 8GX, Ireland.

THE VOICE OF REPUBLICAN SOCIALISM!

Email: starry_plough@hotmail.com

Website: <http://irsm.org/irsp/starryplough>

Fighting Fund/Donations

To: The Starry Plough

First Trust Bank, Derry, BT48 6BU

Account No. 14986015 Sort Code No. 93-86-10

<http://irsm.org/> (Pairtí Poblachtach Sóisialach na h-Éireann)

<http://www.wageslave.org/jcs/> (James Connolly Society)

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/connolly/> (James Connolly Archive)