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Ireland

Vote for the United Left Alliance

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The situation in Ireland highlights the effects of the crisis. Bankers and financial institutions are discredited. Even more discredited is the government of Fianna Fail leader Brian Cowen. After a disastrous by-election loss in Donegal, normally a strong Fianna Fail base, he called early elections. He has now been forced to step down as leader, and the elections brought forward to 25th February

Fianna Fail, historically the party of the lukewarmly nationalist rural population, has been at its lowest level ever in the opinion polls. Sinn Féin, the long time political wing of the IRA, which has up to now only gained very low scores in the Republic, won the Donegal seat and now its leader, Belfast-based Gerry Adams, is resigning his seat in the Westminster parliament to stand in the South.

The Greens have chosen to ally with the governmental party. Fine Gael, the main opposition and usually classified as centre-right, seems well-placed but some of its members are arguing for a fusion with Fianna Fail to "save the nation".

In this situation, the United Left Alliance including the "People before profit" alliance, and other radical left groups is standing on an action programme against the crisis. This is a significant event it is hoped can give an expression to social anger and fightback.

The following is a statement by Socialist Democracy. P.D.

Vote for the United Left Alliance

We have been lied to, we have been cheated and we have been treated as fools. We have had our salaries cut, our pension money stolen, our taxes increased and social welfare cut. Our young people are emigrating and hundreds of thousands are unemployed. Social welfare is being slashed and our health and education services are being decimated.

And we are only into the first year of a four year plan to make all these things even worse!

We are being told that we must pay for the economic crisis even though we had nothing to do with creating it. In fact salt is being rubbed into our wounds because all the sacrifices we are being ordered to make are to save those really responsible for the crisis. The money that is taken off us is being handed over to the bankers and developers who created this mess in the first place. The bankers continue to pay themselves bonuses and NAMA hands our money over to property developers to finish their projects.

Why?

It is not only the bankers who created this mess. The Government encouraged the speculation and wants us to pay

to save the banks. The Department of Finance and the Regulator failed to prevent the speculation. Every part of the establishment and the Irish State failed the ordinary people of Ireland.

Those who are supposed to defend us failed us. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions was in partnership with this Government every year Fianna Fail was in power. David Begg, the leader of ICTU, sat on the Board of the Central Bank when it failed to regulate the banks and failed to do anything to prevent the disaster.

The whole elite and their economic system have failed us. Their entire political system is rotten and corrupt and now we are told we must do the bidding of unelected bureaucrats from the European Union and IMF. We don't just need a change of Government. We need an entirely new State and an entirely new social and economic system.

We need a new Republic, a second Republic, a WORKERS REPUBLIC! We need to return to the promise of James Connolly and the fight for our independence in 1916. It promised that the ownership of Ireland would belong to the people of Ireland and that all the children of Ireland would be cherished equally.

This promise has been betrayed. The economic crisis has torn away the veil of lies from all the main parties who want the ordinary people to pay for this crisis. From Fianna Fail to the leadership of ICTU they differ only over how long they want the cuts to be implemented and what precise cuts we will have to endure.

The alternative

There is only one group of candidates who oppose all cuts. One group that opposes us paying for the banks mistakes and who oppose sacrificing our futures and that of our children for the EU and IMF. Only the candidates of the United Left Alliance offer this. As supporters of the ULA:

* We are opposed to all cuts. All the main parties say that there is no money but this is not the real problem. All these parties supported borrowing billions to bail out the banks. We never heard any talk of a lack of money then. If they wanted to raise money to defend working people they could propose taxing the rich, the big corporations and use the wealth from the Corrib gas field. Instead they want to protect the big corporations and save the richest in our society such as the bankers and property developers.

* We stand for total repudiation of the debt. We cannot pay it and we will not pay it! We did not borrow this money; the bankers did and Fianna Fail did. At this election we will show what we think of both of them. After the election we should not meekly pay their bills.

The next step in the EU/IMF deal is to restructure the banks but these rotten institutions should not be saved with workers' money. We need a new bank that not only is funded by working people but is owned and run by them; a workers co-operative designed not to fund property speculation but to fund real economic and social development.

* We stand for complete rejection of the EU and IMF deal. The EU and IMF are ordering the Irish people to bail out British and German bankers who stupidly lent to the Irish banks.

In every country workers are asked to undercut each other's wages, services and welfare in a race to the bottom from which only the rich can win. We should not compete with other workers. We should unite with them. Our solidarity should be with those facing the same situation as us - not Irish bankers. For this we need a new Europe. A Europe of the workers not a Europe of the bankers.

Vote for the United Left Alliance

We have waited a long time for this election. We all want to punish those who have threatened our future but we will be no further forward if we vote for parties which want to continue the same policies as Fianna Fail. These parties have conspired with Fianna Fail to force the Finance Bill through the Dail and impose crippling cuts. After the election they will soon tell you that the Fianna Fail way is the only way.

This is your chance to vote for an alternative. But your vote will not be enough. Just as we cannot rely on the Dail parties during the election we will have to rely on ourselves after it. We must organise in our unions and our communities to defend our livelihoods and give our children a future.

Only ONE group stands opposed to ALL cuts, to paying the debts of the BANKERS and opposing the bullying of the EU and IMF. Vote for and sign up to the United Left Alliance!

This leaflet has been produced by supporters of the United Left Alliance who are members and supporters of Socialist Democracy. You can contact us at [Socialist Democracy](#) and contact the [United Left Alliance](#).

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