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At 6pm, after the conference session on Saturday, there will be a youth commission meeting and an NUT fraction meeting.

RESOLUTION ON THE MINORITY QUESTION IN IRELAND

Carolan and Kinnell

1. The Protestant community in Northern Ireland is a distinct community with its own history, culture and psychology. If it existed in its own distinct territory, it would have all the features Marxists recognise as making up a nation.

It does not have a distinct territory - there is a major Catholic community ^{even} within the Protestant heartlands. Therefore it is not a nation.

In any case, because the Protestant and Catholic communities in the North of Ireland are so intertwined, there can be no question of full 'Protestant self-determination'.

Our slogan for Ireland is: self-determination for the people of Ireland as a whole. But within that we need a democratic policy for the minority question.

2. There can be no socialist revolution in Ireland without the unity of large sections of the Catholic and Protestant workers. There can be no democratic solution in Ireland - that is, no solution offering the best, clearest conditions for the free development of the class struggle - without democratic relations between the majority (Catholic) and minority (Protestant) community.

3. We therefore support the maximum democratic rights for the Protestant minority within a united Ireland compatible with the rights of the majority.

4. As a general principle Marxists favour regional or provincial autonomy for markedly distinct areas within a state, together with the most decentralised possible local government.

"In so far as national peace is in any way possible in a capitalist society based on exploitation, profit-making and strife, it is attainable only under a consistently and thoroughly democratic republican system of government... the constitution of which contains a fundamental law that prohibits any privileges whatsoever to any one nation and any encroachment whatsoever upon the rights of a national minority.

"This particularly calls for wide regional autonomy and fully democratic local government, with the boundaries of the self-governing and autonomous regions determined by the local inhabitants themselves on the basis of their economic and social conditions, national make-up of the population, etc." (1913 Resolution of the Bolshevik Party Central Committee).

5. This principle applies to the mainly-Protestant areas within a united Ireland.

Within Ireland our slogan for the Protestant community is maximum autonomy and local self-government of that community's own affairs compatible with the democratic rights of the majority of the Irish people.

6. Such a proposal for a united, independent Ireland, with within it a measure of self-government for regions, and within those regions maximum local autonomy for towns, districts, etc., can offer both majority and minority the maximum of democratic guarantees possible without infringing on the rights of the other community.

The Catholic majority of Ireland would have the rights of a majority within all-Ireland politics. Catholic minorities in mainly Protestant regions would have the protection of local government (town/district) autonomy, plus the constitutional guarantees (courts, bills of rights, appeal procedures,