

# The Future of Ireland

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Resolution

The 24th Triennial Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 14-25 July 1989 in Sydney, Australia:

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom regards Northern Ireland as one of Britain's last remaining possessions, which it must ultimately relinquish sovereignty. The United Nations recognise the people's right to self-determination in its Charter (article 1, Para. 2) and subsequent General Assembly resolutions and declarations.

Ireland was administered as an integral political unit before 1920 and during many centuries of British rule. The establishment of a separate political division in the North was contrary to the wishes of the great majority of Irish people, as expressed in the last all-Ireland election of 1918. The border was an arbitrary creation that suited British convenience at the time, which allowed the imposition of one-party rule in the North. It resulted in denying members of the minority community in Northern Ireland their fundamental human rights.

The British Government has signally failed to protect the minority community in Northern Ireland under its jurisdiction from discrimination at all levels. It has significantly failed over the past twenty years to protect the whole population of Northern Ireland from violence and bloodshed. WILPF believes that the only way in which the people of Northern Ireland can achieve a stable, just and peaceful resolution to their urgent problems is for the British government to announce its intention within the lifetime of one government (7 years) to withdraw from Northern Ireland and to create the conditions under which the people of Northern Ireland can decide how they wish to be governed in future. An all-Ireland constitutional conference would be called, which would include consideration of the present Constitution in the South. The civil liberties of the whole population would be protected under stringent guarantees. Arms held by extremist groups would be confiscated insofar as possible.

WILPF believes that under these circumstances, with a program of gradually diminishing subsidies from the British government, the island's economic base could be preserved and strengthened under whatever new constitutional arrangements emerged.

WILPF wishes in 1989 to re-affirm its support as promised in the 1926 International WILPF

### ***The Future of Ireland Group London, May 1989***

"The Future of Ireland Group" was formed by the British Section of WILPF in 1987 to study and monitor events in Ireland in depth to keep WILPF members informed. It includes others as well as WILPF members. They meet from time to time to hear speakers on Ireland; in March 1988, they visited Dublin and Belfast, meeting as many different groups and individuals as possible; in July 1988, they arranged a presentation on Ireland at the WILPF meeting in Paris; a conference about the Irish Sea took place in Wales, September 1988; and now the Group have drafted this statement for discussion.