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Don't Let Meehan Die!

A WELL-ATTENDED march and rally, organised by Sinn Féin, was held on Wednesday evening in West Belfast to highlight the protest being waged by Ardoyne Republican Martin Meehan, who had just completed fifty-two days on hunger strike in H8-block, Long Kesh.

Martin Meehan is protesting his innocence, and is on hunger strike to draw attention to his frame-up, in a non-jury Diplock court, by the British army. According to friends he will only come off the hunger strike if some 'impartial body' or prominent, but 'neutral', public figures undertake to examine his case.

Martin Meehan, and several other North Belfast men were arrested one year ago and charged with conspiring to kidnap seventeen-year-old Stephen McWilliams, a burglar who worked as a tout for the British army. In court in April McWilliams contradicted himself on

several occasions and was caught lying in crucial evidence.

He had been shown, and admitted having been shown by the British army and RUC, a photograph of Meehan several times since becoming a spy in January 1979, yet the farce of McWilliams picking out Meehan at an identity parade was used as some sort of startling star-quality evidence to convict him.

McWilliams also said he saw a red Cortina car with three black stripes down its boot escort himself and his kidnappers into Ardoyne — and it was this car that

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ABOVE: Martin Meehan, speaking in front of a mock H-block cell at a social function, last year in Belfast, calling for support for the blanket men.



Wednesday's Belfast rally in support of Martin Meehan.

No paper

THERE will be no edition of *An Phoblacht/Republican News* published next week because of holidays for technical production staff. The next issue of the paper will be dated July 26th.

Meehan

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Meehan was supposed to have driven.

But during the trial a taxi-driver, Peter Heatley, stated categorically that on the day referred to (July 13th 1979) he had driven the car described by McWilliams and that it was a hired vehicle.

The hirer of the Cortina also came to court to verify this account.

The British army refused to hand over their log book — based on intelligence reports — which would have shown Meehan's movements and where his car was that day. July 13th is a public holiday in the North and that day Martin Meehan was with his wife Brieghe and children at the folk museum at Cultra, several miles away.

REMARKABLE

In his summing up the trial judge, Gibson, made the following remarkable statements.

He described McWilliams, a paid informer and a thief, as 'honest and truthful'. About Heatley, a taxi-driver with no criminal record, he said: "I had to scrutinize Heatley's evidence and Heatley personally because if by his evidence he raised any doubt in my mind that is the end of the case against Meehan... I had the opportunity also, which is not afforded to everyone who is concerned in this case, of watching him (Heatley) when he was not in the box, and not perhaps knowingly under direct scrutiny. I have no doubt from where he sat and the way in which he conducted himself that he was very much a partisan witness."!!!

SENTENCE

Martin Meehan received a twelve year prison sentence, as did two others, Christopher Doherty (Ardayne) and Patrick Burnside (New Lodge), who contested the case. All three initially went 'on the blanket', but on May 19th Martin Meehan came off the blanket in order to go on hunger strike, hoping to hasten the appeal.

But the current appeal hearings finished at the end of June and he now seeks for his case to be looked into by an independent body.

What is also remarkable about the trial is the savage sentences which followed on a charge of conspiracy to kidnap. In sharp contrast, a fortnight ago, a number of RUC men who had kidnapped a Catholic priest and threatened to shoot him, were given suspended sentences and Alexander McCaughey, a man on whose farm the priest was held received a one year suspended sentence!

Though a fairly robust man when he went into jail Martin Meehan's condition has drastically deteriorated.

So far he has lost over three-and-a-half stone in weight, he has stomach and chest pains, and finds it difficult to walk.

In North Belfast the Martin Meehan Defence Committee has been carrying out road-blocking activities on the fringes of Ardoyne and New Lodge, but Wednesday's Falls Road demonstration was the first mobilisation behind Martin Meehan and the defence committee.

On Wednesday the Sinn Féin Ard Cornhairle also issued a call for popular support for Martin Meehan stating that "his struggle for justice must surely call for the attention of all concerned people."



Brieghe Meehan, Martin's wife — speaking at Wednesday's Belfast rally



Marching in support of Martin Meehan, on Wednesday in Belfast

IRA deny Roscommon bank raid and gardai shooting

SHORTLY after Monday afternoon's £35,000 bank robbery in Ballaghaderreen, County Roscommon, and the subsequent shooting dead of two gardai in the nearby village of Loughglinn, the IRA, in a statement issued through the Irish Republican Publicity Bureau in Dublin, emphatically denied any involvement in the raid or the shooting.

The full text of the statement, signed by P. O'Neill, is: "Irish Republican Army personnel were not involved in the bank robbery in County Roscommon today, nor in the shooting of two members of the Garda Síochána. We believe at the time of issuing this statement that the Free State government is already well aware of the fact."

Free State politicians, media and gardai have lost no time in using the deaths of the gardai to launch a

massive witch-hunt against all those whom they consider opponents of the state.

There have been calls to add to the already oppressive burden of legislation and it is being suggested that Fianna Fáil will attempt to use the excuse to bring in legislation to end the right to remain silent and the right to bail, for which the gardai, preferring confessions to detection, have been lobbying for some time.

A transparent attempt to link the Republican Movement to the shooting in Roscommon was made in a blatant 'smear exercise' on Sinn Féin's president, Ruairí Ó Bradaigh, who was arrested and held for four hours on Monday evening.

Ó Bradaigh was travelling from his home in Roscommon towards Dublin in his car, along with two hitch-hikers to whom he had given a lift. He had been identified and checked through three check-points before he was tailed by a Special Branch car as he approached Mullingar.

At a check-point there, the Special Branch men instructed the uniformed gardai to arrest him

under the Offences against the State Act and take him to Mullingar garda barracks. An indication of the nature of the exercise is the fact that the Sinn Féin president and his two passengers were driven to the garda barracks by one uniformed garda. The two hitch-hikers were released within a short time, and Ruairí Ó Bradaigh was released four hours later. At no time whilst he was in custody was he asked any questions at all.

The propaganda exercise was faithfully taken up by RTE and the Dublin press who included the Ó Bradaigh arrest in the middle of their coverage of the Roscommon killings.

Tyrone barracks bombed

A massive bomb attack was launched by an IRA active service unit against Plumbridge barracks, County Tyrone, in the early morning of Thursday 3rd July. The building was reduced to a shattered shell when a 500 lb. van bomb exploded in what was the first ever IRA attack on that barracks.

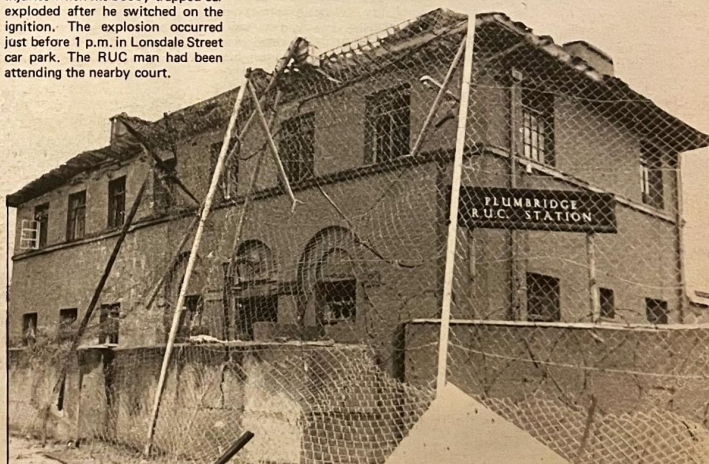
The force of the explosion sent the roof caving in, blew out the windows, and ripped up floor boards; and it left a three-foot-deep crater at the side of the road, and cracked apart the blast wall around the barracks.

No civilians were injured by the blast which was preceded by two telephone calls made about forty minutes beforehand. The IRA active service unit returned safely to base.

Armagh RUC man blown up

At lunch-time on Thursday 3rd July a full-time RUC Reservist was the target for an IRA attack in Armagh City. The RUC man suffered a broken leg and some minor

injuries when his booby-trapped car exploded after he switched on the ignition. The explosion occurred just before 1 p.m. in Lonsdale Street car park. The RUC man had been attending the nearby court.



The shattered shell of Plumbridge RUC station, devastated by a 500 lb IRA bomb.



IRA volunteers fire a final salute over the coffin of their murdered comrade, Vol. Terence O'Neill, in Ballymurphy last Friday.

Mercilessly shot dead

BY PETER HAYES

CONTRARY to RUC claims, IRA Volunteer Teddy O'Neill was shot dead by them in Belfast on Tuesday 1st July without warning. And a named eye-witness claims that Teddy O'Neill was shot dead when lying seriously wounded on the ground.

Twenty-three-year-old Teddy O'Neill was married with one child and lived in Glenalina Road, Ballymurphy. He was shot dead near the Ballymurphy Tenants Association, on the Whitecroft Road, minutes after carrying out a punishment shooting.

His pistol was concealed, and the IRA Volunteer with him was unarmed, when the pair, wearing hoods, were spotted by a passing RUC land-rover patrol. Several heavily-armed RUC men jumped from their vehicle and immediately opened fire, without warning, on the two Volunteers.

WITNESS

Local man Danny McCormick witnessed the killing:

"I saw several RUC men firing from behind a land-rover in the direction of two men who were running away from them. One of the men fell wounded, although he was still alive. I saw him moving.

"Then one of the RUC men ran over to where the man was lying. He stood over and fired two shots from his rifle into the man on the ground."

Taxi-driver Jim Murphy recalls that then:

"Two RUC men carrying rifles ran towards the man lying in the middle of the street. They each grabbed one of his arms and ran trailing him behind them a distance of about thirty yards. They then lifted the body and tossed it into the back of the jeep as if it was a bit of meat."

In a follow-up operation, after the killing, Brits and RUC saturated Ballymurphy and began raiding houses. A large crowd gathered and rioting lasted for over an hour, greatly hampering the Brit search for the Volunteer who had earlier escaped the RUC's bullets.

BURIAL

The burial of Volunteer O'Neill took place last Friday afternoon. The tri-colour draped coffin was flanked by a guard of honour comprising IRA Volunteers, Na Fianna, and Na Cailini on its way to Milltown cemetery — pausing awhile for a three-man IRA firing party to fire a volley of shots.

The graveside proceedings were chaired by Tom Hartley, chairman of Belfast Sinn Féin and Ard Comhairle member; Alfie Hannaway of the National Graves Association recited a decade of the rosary in gaelic; wreaths were laid on behalf of the bereaved family,

friends, and the IRA; the Last Post was played; and the oration was delivered by Richard McAuley of Sinn Féin's Ulster Executive.

ORATION

The oration was in part:

"We stand today at the graveside of Terence O'Neill, Irish Republican Army Volunteer, who was brutally done to death by repressive and sectarian force — the hated RUC.

"For Teddy British rule had to be relentlessly fought. Revolutionary armed struggle, as waged by the Republican Movement, was for him — as it had been for his close friend and comrade Volunteer Dee Delaney, who was killed on active service only a few months ago — the only practical and possible way forward.

"In 1971, when only fourteen years old, he joined Na Fianna Éireann. Then he lived in a area battered by both British and loyalist gunmen — the lower Ormeau Road. A short time after he moved to Turf Lodge he joined the IRA.

"Since then he has lived, as hundreds of Republicans do, a life on the run, and his wife Mary, and child Sinead, bore the hardship which flows from having a husband, a father, in the IRA. Despite constant Brit harassment Teddy's commitment to the Republican struggle never wavered.

ACTION

"It is worth dwelling for just a moment on the action which led to Teddy's death. Firstly it is important to stress that for the IRA punishment shootings are not the remedy for dealing with those anti-social elements within our community who consciously prey upon the weak and defenceless; but are forced upon them by the situation which exists inside the ghettos of the war zone.

"The intensity of the war has forced the Brits and RUC out of our areas. A small but forceful group of people are presently taking advantage of this situation and are engaged in petty crime. Their actions lead to demoralisation among the nationalist people from where the IRA draws its support and encouragement to wage war. This they can not nor will not tolerate.

"The Brits and their press have described Volunteer Teddy O'Neill as a gunman, a mindless terrorist intent upon intimidating the people. But we know the truth. He was a Republican who gave his life for those Republican principles which we here today share with him.

"To his wife Mary and their young child Sinead, on behalf of the Republican Movement, I extend my heartfelt sympathies on their irreplaceable loss."

BRIT RAPISTS

LATE on Friday night two British soldiers — who had absconded from Lisnakea barracks, County Fermanagh, during the evening — viciously assaulted, and attempted to rape, an eighteen-year-old girl from the town, as she and her boyfriend returned home from a dance in the Orlene Hotel on the outskirts of the town. At a secluded spot on a country lane the two Brits — members of the Grenadier Guards — pounced on the couple, and dragged them into a field. One sat on top of the youth while the other attempted to rape the girl, punching her in the face and ribs, and choking her, leaving her bruised and shocked. The attack was reported by the girl (who naturally wishes to remain anonymous) to the RUC and to Westminster MP Frank Maguire — who issued a public statement condemning it — and the two soldiers were later captured, but, at the time of writing, have not been charged.

Checks increase

HARASSMENT by British troops in the North, through the use of road checkpoints, has been stepped up, according to figures released by British army headquarters at Lisburn. The figures show that the number of vehicles stopped during the last four months was the same period last year, and in the month of May sixty-nine thousand vehicles were stopped, compared with sixty-one thousand in May of last year.

Terrorising antics

THE NATIONALIST POPULATION of Strabane continue to suffer a high level of Brit harassment — from members of the Queen's Own Scottish Highlanders. Only a few days after the jailing — on frame-up or holding charges — of four Strabane men, including two Sinn Féin activists from the much-persecuted Molloy/Devlin cumann, troops invaded the green in Innisfree Gardens in order to disrupt a children's football game. The Brits taunted the children — inciting them to throw stones and making obscene remarks about their parents — and chased one girl, fourteen-year-old Linda Finlay, into a community centre where they started to question and verbally abuse her, before women intervened forcing them to desist from their child-terrorising antics.

Another Brit dies

YET ANOTHER British soldier has died in a motor vehicle accident on Northern roads. Corporal Raymond Jackson from Belfast, based at Aldergrove barracks with the British Army Air Corps was killed in the early hours of Saturday morning, July 5th, when the car he was driving hit a tree at Ballynacormwell on the main Killybegh to Camber road in County Down. No other vehicle was involved.

Further concessions

FURTHER CONCESSIONS by the British government to loyalist demands for the sealing of the border have been made, with the blocking by the British army of six roads in County Fermanagh recently. And the RUC, who apparently advised the Brits which roads to close, are expected to select other roads for closure in the near future. But the Brits/RUC, already suffering red faces after the re-opening by local people of the last publicised road blocking at Leckey Bridge in Fermanagh, are cautious about the success of this attempt to partially seal the border — an exercise which affects only local people in their daily lives, and is thus just a sop to loyalists raving about the 'terrorist haven' in the South. Admitting its futility, the RUC say: "There has been an incidence of local people using heavy equipment to by-pass a barrier."

Seizure demanded

LOYALIST DESPERATION at continuing republican resistance in the North to British and Orange rule after more than ten years of war — plus the desire of Orange Order and Official Unionist leaders to outstrip the ravings of their arch-rival, Paisley — led to an outrageous demand last weekend by the ridiculously-titled Imperial Grand Master, Martin Smyth, for the British army to invade the South and seize the counties of Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan. Speaking at Newbuildings in County Derry, Smyth declared that Britain "faced with mounting border incidents, may now have to face the challenge of re-annexing some of the territory ceded to Eire." The military would have a shorter frontier to protect, he said, if the three Ulster counties in the Free State were taken over by Britain. Getting slightly confused between England and Ireland, he raved on: "Political purists would see the historic English province Ulster reunited and Ulster Unionists would be delighted to be one with their fellows who have been isolated and wronged for so long."

But Paisley, well aware that if the loyalists could control the nine counties of Ulster rather than six, then they would have had them sixty years ago, and uneasy at any talk of constitutional change, denounced Smyth's demand as 'dangerous lunacy'.

Unionist disorder

FURTHER evidence of disorder and dissension within unionist ranks, especially Official Unionists', was provided last week when at a secret meeting the Lord Mayor of Belfast, John Carson, and a fellow councillor, Cecil Walker, were expelled from the Official Unionist grouping at Belfast city hall because they had refused to support a party nomination for Councillor William Bell for a second term of office as Lord Mayor. The expulsion from the grouping is for the duration of the life of the city council. The North Belfast Official Unionist constituency association will now decide whether or not Carson will be expelled from the Official Unionist Party.

Another blunder

THE IDIOT Northern direct-ruler Humphrey Atkins has blundered once again, and this time he has confirmed the anti-Catholic sectarianism of the British state. When Atkins met a delegation of leading members of the Orange Order, including Scottish Grand Master Thomas Orr, last month at Stormont, he is said by Orr to have given them an assurance that the Westminster legislation which bars English Prince Charles from marrying a Catholic and remaining heir to the Brit throne, will not be repealed. The legislation in question is the 1701 Act of Settlement — passed in the reign of 'King Billy', William of Orange — under which Catholics and those who marry a Catholic are barred from inheriting the Crown. A right royal row has been brewing recently over this highly sectarian legislation as Prince Charles has for some time been in hot pursuit of, amongst others, Princess Marie Astrid of Luxembourg, a Catholic.

Red-faced Northern Ireland Official spokesmen have frantically refuted — with little credibility — Orr's claim that Atkins told the Orangemen that he had authority to say there would be no change in the Act of Settlement. Previous public displays of political stupidity by Atkins have been a source of much embarrassment both to Stormont civil servants and to his boss, Brit premier Thatcher, who on Tuesday was forced to confirm at Westminster that the Tory government have no plans to change the law.



Vol. Teddy O'Neill, pictured with his wife Mary and daughter Sinead.

Haughey climb down on Donlon?

REPORTS that Free State premier Charles Haughey was to remove his ambassador from Washington as part of the reconciliation with Euro-MP Neil Blaney caused a storm in America and in Dublin before the rumour was belatedly discounted.

The rumour that Sean Donlon, a confidante of Lynch and reputedly architect of Lynch's line on the North, was to be shifted to the — just as prestigious — post of permanent representative at the United Nations in New York, began last week-end.

During his twenty-one months in America Donlon has travelled throughout the States attacking Irish organisations, particularly Irish Northern Aid, but also the non-republican Caucus who collect funds for themselves and work through lobbying congressmen to put pressure on Britain for a change of its policy on Ireland.

Last December, when Haughey was elected leader of Fianna Fail, the Caucus urged him to dismiss Donlon, and Blaney — who was then being hosted in New York by Caucus leader Fr. Sean McManus — supported this call. However, when the rumour became public last Tuesday the Caucus hailed the presumptive dismissal with great satisfaction.

This alerted the New York media; the 'Big Four' Irish-American politicians, Tip O'Neill, Hugh Casey, Daniel Moynihan and Edward Kennedy, and the Free State Labour Party. They all expressed dismay and anger.

Haughey's supposed motivation for Donlon's transfer was an attempt to ingratiate himself and effect a political reconciliation with Neil Blaney, whose formidable political machine in the west of Ireland, Haughey would like to harness before he faces an election, sometime before 1982.

Whilst approving of the 'transfer', Blaney denied that any deal was on, and by Wednesday Haughey may well have climbed down under the pressure since it was announced that Donlon was to remain in his post and another senior official Noel Dorr would be sent to the United Nations.

Wood Quay builders strike

EIGHTY building workers have been on unofficial strike since last Friday at the Wood Quay site in Dublin as a result of management interference with standard trade union practices. Excavation workers, employed by Dublin Museum in archaeological work at the site, and other sub-contractors' employees are refusing to pass the pickets.

The strikers, all members of the ITGWU's No. 5 branch, are employed by the John Paul building contractors who are building the new Dublin Corporation offices. Wood Quay has been much in the news in recent years because it is claimed that these offices are being built on a valuable archaeological site of Viking remains.

The strike revolves around the employment of a specialist mechanical worker by John Paul's who was brought from England to perform a specific job. This man was told by trade unionists that as the site was unionised (and Dublin Corporation contracts do not allow the use of non-union labour) he could choose a union to join. He agreed to join the ITGWU for a three month period.

He was later asked to abide by an on-site union ruling not to work more than a forty hour week.

At this, plant manager Brian Cronnan intervened, claiming that the specialist worker was not in the union and had changed his mind about joining. Management later refused to meet an ITGWU official to discuss the issue.

Workers at the site say that this is just another example of John Paul's virulently anti-union approach and that Cronnan in particular has always resented union strength on the site.

They also claim that site agent Tom MacWilliams on one occasion deducted pay from a union branch committee member because he had been checking union cards during working hours. MacWilliams may also be remembered for his harassment and intimidation of 'Save Wood Quay' protesters who occupied the site last year.

Collaboration consolidated

BY KEVIN BURKE

HAUGHEY'S DETERMINED collaboration with Britain was emphasised beyond any doubt this week when three Monaghan men were brought to the Dublin Special Criminal Court, charged with the killing of a former UDR man in County Armagh last March.

This is the first time that the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act — which allows charges in the South for actions in the North — has been used since it was passed by the Free State coalition government in 1976. The three men charged are Aidan McGurk, Laurence McNally and local Sinn Féin councillor James Lynagh.

The Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act arose out of the Sunningdale Agreement of December 1973, in which the British and Free State governments, along with various Northern politicians, agreed to the setting up of the 'power-sharing' Executive and a 'Council of Ireland'.

They also initiated a 'Law Enforcement Commission' of British and Free State judges to attempt to get round the difficulties of extradition for political offences. By the time the report of the commission was published at the end of May 1974, the other institutions of Sunningdale had already collapsed in the face of the loyalist strike.

BILL

However, in November 1974, the Coalition government introduced a bill based on the commission's report and shortly afterwards a reciprocal bill was introduced in the British House of Commons.

The British bill became law in March 1975 and the Free State's Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act was finally signed in May 1976 after it had been referred to the Supreme Court for a test of 'constitutionality' by the then Free State president Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh.

ACT

The main purpose of the Act is to circumvent extradition refusals and try political offences committed in the six counties in Free State courts — prison

sentences then being served in Free State jails.

To make convictions even easier than usual the Act provides for prosecution evidence to be taken by Free State judges, barristers and court officials inside the six-counties; and the statements taken from RUC and British Army personnel there, to be used in the Free State court without the physical presence of those witnesses. If the accused person wishes to be present and question such witnesses he must agree to be handed into RUC custody for the duration of the evidence-taking!

The Act also provides that prosecution witnesses giving evidence either in person or by statement can do so in secret and anonymously. And the Act took the opportunity to increase sentences on a variety of charges such as possession of firearms and explosives, and robbery — the maximum sentence for the latter was increased to life.

INDICTMENT

The use of this Act for the first time is a major indictment of Fianna Fail's attitude to the North. The Act was passed in the face of the appalling record of the partiality and sectarianism of the RUC, ignoring the notoriety of their torture of interrogation victims, their framing of Republicans, and their unpunished acts of murder against the nationalist population.

Even as the Act was being put through Leinster House, the Free



Haughey's continuing blatant collaboration has further consolidated the link-up between the corrupt police forces and judicial systems of North and South.

State government were hypocritically pursuing the case in the European Court in which they accused the British government of torture, carried out by the very RUC men who are now allowed as secret, anonymous, and absent witnesses in Free State courts.

RUC

Of course all these arguments were also put against the Act by Fianna Fail, when, in their usual opportunist and hypocritical fashion, they opposed the

Coalition's bill in Leinster House.

This hypocrisy is underlined by this first prosecution, for an action in Armagh, which will be using evidence from colleagues of RUC men from the same county, who only the previous week were found guilty of murder, kidnapping, shooting and pub-bombings directed against members of the nationalist population.

The link-up of the two corrupt police forces and judicial systems North and South has been further consolidated.

Tallaght Danger

BY CATHAL MCCORMACK

A DUTCH company, Dumetco, which was refused permission to build a lead factory in Holland, has been given planning permission by Dublin County Council to set up a similar plant in the Tallaght area of Dublin.

Last Tuesday night, the Tallaght Community Council, which has lodged an appeal against the County Council's decision, held a public meeting to which local councillors and Leinster House members were invited. The Community Council wanted to know why there had been no news of the application until after planning permission had been given.

The only county councillor to attend, Chris Flood, said that he had not heard about it in time either, but he told the meeting that the Chief Medical Officer had not objected to this Industrial Develop-

ment Authority (IDA) backed scheme.

PETITION

Local people, twenty thousand of whom have signed a protest petition, fear that the plant, in such a densely populated area, will pose a major danger to health. Research into lead pollution caused by car exhaust fumes conducted by a Birmingham University research department, in England, underlines these fears.

Their report says that there is no acceptable safe level between the normal lead content of the body and the level which causes



Members of Tallaght Community Council at a meeting last Monday, expressing their concern at the siting of a lead factory in the area.

poisoning. Damage caused by lead poisoning to the central nervous system can be extensive and children are particularly vulnerable to such damage which can cause mental retardation.

SAFETY

The Birmingham University report also states that statistics are understated because mental and nervous disorders caused by lead pollution are not always correctly attributed. It says that the onus of proof of safety should be placed on those who pollute the atmos-

phere rather than, as now, on those who wish to stop it.

The IDA have brought 'dirty' industries to the Free State before with the excuse that they provide much needed employment. This plant, which will smelt scrap lead into ingots, has a target employment level of twenty people. In this instance it cannot even be claimed that the economic benefits for Tallaght outweigh the social disadvantages.

Dublin County Council should be forced to immediately reverse its decision.

Child killed, man's skull fractured by Brit-RUC drivers

BY PETER HAYES

A THREE-YEAR-OLD CHILD was knocked down and killed instantly last week by a speeding Brit saracen in West Belfast. And the very next day, only a few hundred yards away, in a subsequent riot, a man was deliberately run down by an RUC land-rover and is now lying seriously ill in hospital suffering from a fractured skull.

The first tragic accident happened at about half-past-two on Thursday afternoon, when the rear gates of Springfield Road barracks in Violet Street were thrown open and a saracen accelerated out at high speed.

Three-year-old Gavin Monaghan, who was crossing at the junction of Violet Street and Cavendish Street, was crushed to death beneath the wheels of the Brit vehicle.

Angry women immediately blocked the barracks' exit with a human chain and later that evening staged another protest outside the barracks.

As Sinn Féin pointed out, reckless driving by the Brits in the narrow streets of the densely populated 'Colin' area constantly endangers pedestrians and particularly children who, with no play-ground facilities, have nowhere but the streets to play in.

AGGRESSIVE

The very next evening a squad of aggressive and abusive British soldiers entered nearby McGuinness' bar at the corner of Clonard Street and Falls Road. A row developed and one of the Brits said, 'we

couldn't run enough of you over', a callous reference to the death of Gavin Monaghan.

Hand-to-hand fighting broke out in the bar. One RUC man, with the Brits, was knocked out and the Brits withdrew from the bar onto the street under a hail of bottles, boots and fists.

One Brit opened fire with a plastic bullet hitting a man in the stomach — he was taken to hospital.

Within minutes scores of people flooded onto the Falls Road and anything they could lay their hands on was thrown at the Brit patrol who scurried off towards Springfield Road barracks. Crate loads of empty bottles, handed out of the bars, were stacked at the street corners awaiting the arrival of Brit reinforcements. (Coincidentally it was the tenth anniversary of the lower Falls curfew).

An intense and spontaneous riot developed, involving significantly few teenagers, and the Brits fired about twenty plastic bullets injuring several people. But injuries were not confined to the nationalist side: four RUC men were slightly injured when somebody



Three-year-old Gavin Monaghan (centre) — who was killed by a Brit saracen last Thursday — pictured here with his sister Karen and brother Martin.

skilfully hurled a metal beer keg under an RUC land-rover, overturning it in the middle of the Falls Road.

DELIBERATELY

However, in Seavastopol Street, another RUC land-rover deliberately mounted the footpath to run down from behind thirty-five-year-old father-of-four Edward McKee from Rosnareen Avenue, Andersons-

town. The land-rover knocked him flying and then tried, unsuccessfully, to run down a group of rioters further down the road.

Edward McKee was rushed to hospital where he underwent a three-hour operation to relieve a bone pressing on his brain and, according to his wife Elizabeth, doctors warn that he will suffer temporary brain damage and paralysis of an arm.

LOYALIST BOMBERS ON THE PROWL

Parish Hall Blasted but other targets escape damage

LOYALIST BOMBERS, presumably members of the recently reorganised UDA under the command of boss-man Andy Tyrrie, struck four times in one day in Belfast last week.

Their targets were a Catholic parish hall, a working men's club, and the offices of Sinn Féin and of the IRSP. The parish hall was structurally damaged but the other three targets escaped unscathed — the bombs being defused in each case. All the attacks — none of which were preceded by warnings — took place on Friday 4th July.

The first attack was on Belfast Sinn Féin's new offices at 51/53 Falls Road, just after midnight. (The offices also house the Republican Press Centre and the H-Block Information Centre.)

A man attached a blast incendiary bomb to the wire grille outside the offices, before

escaping in a black taxi which drove off in the direction of the Shankill. Fortunately a passer-by saw what happened, defused the bomb, and threw it into the road. (This is just one more in a recent spate of loyalist attacks on Sinn Féin offices and personnel in the lower Falls.)

SERIOUS

The most serious attack last Friday occurred at 6.30 a.m. at Ligoniel in North Belfast. A bomb was placed at the front door of the Parochial Hall of the St. Vincent de Paul church. The explosion awakened parish priest Father Finbar Galvin. He recalls: 'I heard a loud bang and jumped out of bed thinking it was the church. The windows at the side of the presbytery were broken, and when I looked out I saw that the parish hall had been attacked.'

The blast caused structural damage to the front of the Parochial Hall and windows were blown out in the adjoining church and presbytery.

A working men's club, near the church, was the target for another — unsuccessful — attack. A gas cylinder bomb was discovered there shortly after the explosion at St. Vincent de Paul's and it was successfully defused.

FINAL

The final bomb attack of the day occurred at 9.30 p.m. that evening when a blast incendiary bomb — similar to that placed earlier at the Sinn Féin offices — was hung on the protective grille at the Falls Road offices of the IRSP at St. James'. This bomb was also successfully defused.

This spate of bomb attacks is further evidence, following the recent assassinations of nationalist John Turnly and republican socialist Miriam Daly, that loyalist paramilitants are on the prowl in a serious effort to intimidate the nationalist people from their democratic aspiration of achieving a united Ireland rid of British rule and Orange privilege.

Derry

A DELEGATION of Derry city councillors are to meet one of the direct-rulers, Michael Allison, to discuss the H-Blocks. At its monthly meeting in May the council agreed that a meeting of representatives of each of the political parties of the council should take place to discuss the presentation of the council's concern over the H-Blocks to the British government. This meeting has now taken place and an agreed delegation is to meet Allison at direct-ruler Atkins' invitation.

Dublin

IN CONTRAST to local councils around the country, a motion condemning conditions in H-Block and Armagh was heavily defeated at this week's meeting of Dublin Corporation. The motion was proposed by inner-city independent councillor Tony Gregory. Even a Fianna Fáil amendment watering down the motion to an expression of concern and a hope for a humanitarian solution was defeated.

It is significant that Dublin's councillors are more in tune with, and more controlled by, their party leadership than their counterparts in other areas of the twenty-six counties. Among those who voted against the motion, and was most vocal in urging his fellow councillors to reject it, was Sticky president Tomas MacGiolla.

Port Lairge

AG CRUINNÍÚ a bhí ag Cumann Sinn Féin, Rinn O'Guanach le déanaí glacadh d'aon ghuth leis an rún seo a leanas:

"Go gceannann an Cumann go láidir Rialtas Shasana an duine agus a thabhairt acu ar phríosúnaigh ins na H-Blocks sa Chis Fhada. Iarrmáid ar gach duine agus go h-áirithe ar rialtas na 26 Chontae tacú le h-éileamh na bpríosúnaigh — sé sin stad na polaiciúil do phríosúnaigh polaiciúla.

"Éilimid go dtabharfaid áird ar chearta deontu duine agus go stadfaid láithreach an cásach atá ar siúl in aghaidh na bpríosúnaigh."

Ringsend



ALMOST two hundred people took part in a local H-Block march last Saturday in Dublin, organised by the Jackie Griffith Cumann, Sinn Féin. The march, led by a colour party of Na Fianna Éireann and a thirty-strong fife and drum band from New Lodge in Belfast, started at Westland Row and made its way to Ringsend where a public meeting was held.

The speakers were former blanket-man Seamus Delaney, Sinn Féin Ard Comhairle member Charlie McGlade, Sinn Féin's national youth spokesman Jack Crowe, and Declan Hayes of the Jackie Griffith Cumann. The meeting was chaired by Brendan Golden of the Sinn Féin POW department.

Waterford/ Mayo

AS PART of the campaign by the National H-Block Committee to set up local H-Block Action Groups, two former blanket men, Ned Brown and Seamus Delaney, visited Dungarvan in Co. Waterford on Friday 27th June and Castlebar in County Mayo on Tuesday 27th July.

In Dungarvan they addressed a large crowd in the town's Court House.

In Castlebar more than one hundred people from around the county, packed the Welcome Inn Hotel for a meeting chaired by Fr. Gillespie. Five action groups were formed around the county, including one for Castlebar.

THE British government's decision that next spring, for the first time in eleven years, one of the four Irish regiments of the British army will do a four month 'tour of duty' in the North has — not surprisingly — been welcomed in loyalist circles.

Paisley's side-kick, Peter Robinson, said his party welcomes any decision which allows 'local security forces' to tackle the IRA. "The decision," he said "falls full square with our policies." The loyalist 'News Letter' said that the move is 'not before time'.

The Fifth Royal Inniskilling

Inniskillings coming

Dragoon Guards is a cavalry regiment — using tanks and armoured cars — rather than an infantry regiment, so they will avoid 'front-line' postings in nationalist West Belfast, Derry city, or

South Armagh. Cavalry regiments are normally only used in rural postings — except South Armagh — owing to the threat posed to mobile patrols by the IRA.

The Inniskillings have one

battalion of about four hundred and fifty men, about one-third Irish. But, in the last decade, the number of recruits from among the nationalist people in the North, and from the South, has dramatically declined, leaving the regiment with a strong Orange element.

Its posting to the North from Osnabruck in West Germany can be seen as one more step by the British towards strengthening loyalist rule in the North. The regiment's presence will undoubtedly increase both the anti-Catholic sectarianism of the British army on the ground and the flow of British army intelligence to loyalist paramilitants.

ARMAGH JAIL V

From a lively picture of health to a shocking state of emaciation

BY TERESA O'DWYER



Pauline McLaughlin — pictured before her imprisonment in 1976.

THE plight of twenty-three-year-old Pauline McLaughlin of Creggan, Derry, is a shocking indictment of the inhumanity of the British prison regime in the North, and, in particular, of Armagh jail.

Despite the fact that this woman prisoner recently came off the protest for political status in order to seek urgent medical treatment, none has been forthcoming, and her alarming and dangerous weight loss is continuing without respite. Pauline now weighs less than six stone and painful and distressing side-effects of her physical deterioration to her present frail condition are now continually felt by her.

Today Pauline is vastly changed from the lively nineteen-year-old who entered Armagh jail in October 1976, when, at five foot three inches height, she weighed a sturdy nine-and-a-half stone, and was a picture of health, with curly black hair and irrepressible energy. Today, a pale shadow of her former self, she is in an advanced state of emaciation, having lost more than one third of her body weight.

A recent visitor to her reports she is just a heap of bones, her arms are like chicken legs, her skin is drawn tightly over the sharp bones of her face, her fingers are bony spindles, her once-black hair is now heavily streaked with grey and her teeth are decaying.

She is suffering from dizzy spells and black-outs, and her bones, which protrude from her fragile body, ache if she sits in any one position for any length of time. The prison regime currently refuse to reveal to her, her precise weight.

WEIGHT LOSS

The obvious reason for Pauline's dramatic weight loss is her inability to keep food in her stomach — she is always sick after eating. However her condition has not been diagnosed, although she is thought not to be suffering from anorexia nervosa.

She always did have a 'nervous stomach', even before her incarceration in jail, but was able to keep enough food down to maintain her normal weight. Indeed her appetite is excellent

and while on the protest she complained of the grossly inadequate quantities of food allowed the protesting prisoners.

When her weight fell to six stone in mid-March of this year, Pauline, with great reluctance, came off the protest — which she had been on for two years — in a sincere attempt to get proper medical treatment. But, since that time, no specialist has been called in, nor has Pauline been sent to Craigavon Hospital (as is the normal practice with seriously ill Armagh prisoners), and the only treatment that has been forthcoming is vitamin tablets plus the usual collective 'mystery medicines' prescribed by the infamous prison doctor, Dr. Cole.

CONVEYOR BELT

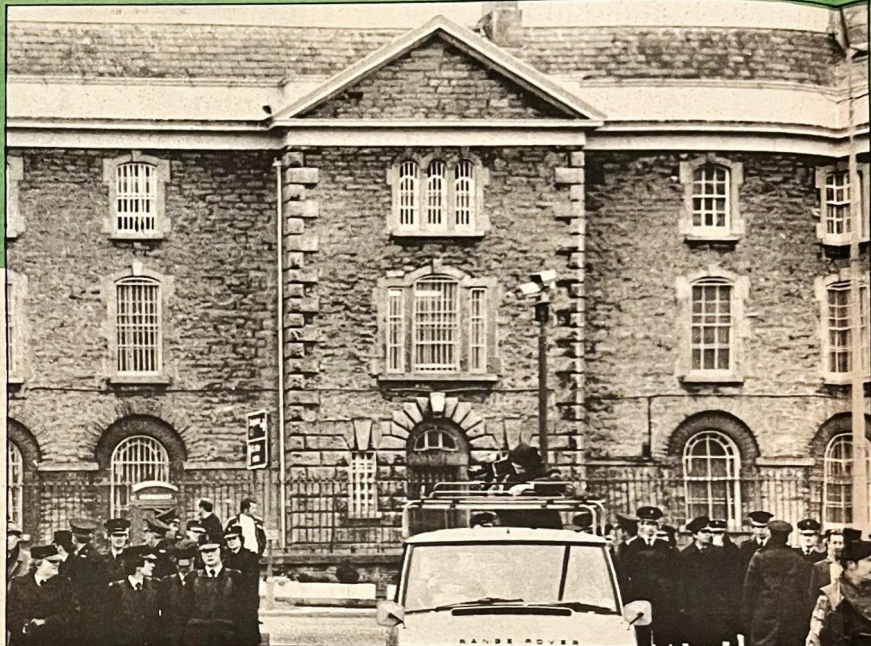
Pauline originally arrived in Armagh jail, after being arrested

'Today, a pale shadow of her former self, Pauline McLaughlin is in an advanced state of emaciation, having lost more than one-third of her body weight. A recent visitor to her reports that she is just a heap of bones.'

on October 20th, 1976, a typical victim of the judicial conveyor-belt. Although not physically brutalised in Derry's Strand Road barracks (locally as infamous as Castlereagh), her interrogation consisted of psychological intimidation and sleep deprivation deliberately designed to extract a signed self-incriminating statement.

Frequent exposure to horrific colour pictures of maimed and bloodied human bomb victims played a central role in her ill-treatment. (At her characteristically farcical Diplock non-jury trial an RUC man was forced to admit under defence counsel cross-examination that these photographs were unrelated to Pauline's charges. But naturally this made no difference to the judge.)

Pauline was heavily interrogated throughout two days prior to being charged and at several stages RUC men physically shook her to keep her awake. The interrogators played, with their harrowing pictures, on a fear, which she has carried with her from childhood, of ghosts, darkness



A heavy RUC presence outside Armagh jail for the 500-strong picket on International Women's Day, last March

1st 1976 — the cut-off date for political status.

For several weeks, in February and March 1978, Pauline was still formally 'under consideration' for political status by the Northern Ireland Office and so, during that time, as during her many months on remand, she received food parcels and other 'privileges'.

At the time she weighed eight stone thirteen pounds, but when she was told that she was not allowed political status she immediately joined the 'no work' protest in 'B' wing, and was subsequently denied her weekly food parcel and visit.

VINDICTIVE ACT

A cruel and all too typical vindictive act by the prison regime followed this denial of political status. Pauline's father was dying at the time of her trial and shortly after her conviction, while still under consideration for political status, she was permitted to visit him in hospital, under armed guard.

But when her father died, two days after she was denied status, she was refused compassionate parole to attend his funeral because she was on the protest.

MORE SEVERE

Pauline's mild stomach ailment quickly became more severe. Being refused all privileges, and being subject to the full rigours of the prison

'All the charges, except membership, related back to 1974 and so, like others before and since, Pauline was the victim of a device designed solely to deny her political status. She was charged with membership after March 1st 1976 — the cut-off date for political status.'

regime, she was denied all food parcels and forced to depend on prison food alone. This proved inadequate as anything Pauline ate her stomach refused to accept: she was sick after every meal. Soon her health was deteriorating and she began to lose large amounts of weight.

Ten-and-a-half months later, in early 1979, she weighed only seven stone three pounds.

At this stage, due to her obvious ill-health and poor condition, Dr. Cole declared her 'unfit for work', which meant

she was no longer subject to the punishment of loss of 'privileges', which meant that once more she could receive a weekly parcel.

VOMITING

As the weeks went by Pauline began to regain her weight although very slowly, as her vomiting did not cease. Eventually in July 1979 her weight reached eight stone three pounds and, employing a typical prison regime 'cat-and-mouse' tactic, Dr. Cole declared her fit for work, that is fit for punishment.

'Once more Pauline was allowed a weekly parcel. As the weeks went by she began to regain her weight, although very slowly. Eventually her weight reached eight stone three pounds, and, employing a typical prison regime 'cat-and-mouse' tactic, the prison doctor, Dr. Cole, declared her fit for work, that is fit for punishment, although her vomiting was as severe as ever. And so, once more, she was denied food parcels.'

VICTIM

th
tion



Pauline McLaughlin — in a photo smuggled out of Armagh jail earlier this year.

ment, even though her vomiting was as severe as ever.

Naturally enough, Pauline's health began to suffer, as once more she had to survive solely on prison food, without food parcels to supplement it. This failed to sustain her as the food did not remain in her stomach, and her weight began to rapidly drop. Her health deteriorated to the point that even climbing stairs became a major task for her, and she suffered frequent dizzy spells.

SUPPLEMENT

By September 1979 her weight had dropped to six stone two pounds and she was again declared 'unfit' and this time moved first to the prison's hospital wing, and then, briefly, to Craigavon hospital.

Although Pauline did not stop vomiting she was once again able to supplement the meagre and unpleasant prison food, her health marginally improved and her weight rose slightly to six stone nine pounds.

ON PROTEST

By February of this year she was back in 'B' wing on the protest, and in that month, as is now well known and well documented, more than forty male and female warders attacked the protesting prisoners and locked them in their cells without access to toilet facilities.

The protesting prisoners had no alternative but, like their H-Block comrades, to embark on a no-wash protest. When the protestors including Pauline, were then moved to 'A' wing, Pauline was forced to lie in her cell among her own vomit, as well as her other body waste and her weight began to drop drastically again.

By the middle of March, Pauline weighed little over six stone and her vomiting was as heavy as ever. On Sunday 16th March she passed out twice — the second time she had to be carried out of mass to her cell by her comrades.

The following day, Dr. Cole, presumably alarmed at the prospect of her dying in his 'care', told her that her condition was 'self-inflicted' — in obvious contradiction to her excellent appetite — and that

if she continued on the protest she would die. He concluded his arrogant little speech by stating that if she did die then there would be no grounds for him being sued as the conversation was being taped.

REPRESSIVE SCREW

Over the last three years Dr. Cole's attitude and attention to Pauline — as to all the other prisoners — have not been designed to help his patient, or to better her health. Instead this bigoted man has acted as a vitally important repressive screw in the system of institutionalised brutality and degradation directed against Pauline and the other protestors.

He has now washed his hands of her case — so he thinks — and he claims that there is nothing more that he can do for her. In fact there is very little that he has tried to do other than act as a cog in the British wheel of repression attempting to break the prisoners' protest, and the responsibility for Pauline's present plight rests very much with him.

FRAGILE HEALTH

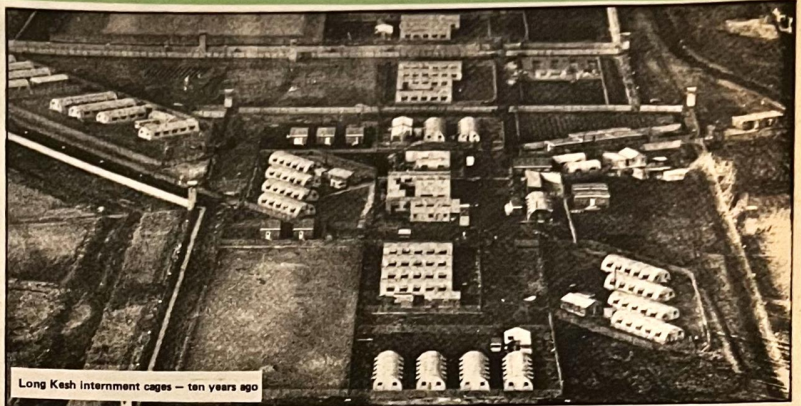
Two days after Cole's proclamation Pauline was convinced by her comrades to come off the protest and that evening she was moved to the prison's hospital wing. But the very next day Dr. Cole declared Pauline to be fit enough to be moved to 'B' wing amongst the conforming prisoners.

She is currently declared to be unfit for work and each working day is locked alone in her cell between 9.30 a.m. and noon, and between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

DETERIORATE

Pauline's fragile health continues to deteriorate, she continues to vomit after eating, and her weight continues to fall beneath six stone.

Nevertheless in reply to Dr. Cole's suggestions that she is in some way malingering, Pauline has clearly stated: "I have no wish to be released as a result of any illness, and the only way I will walk out of Armagh is when my time is served or when all of my comrades are released in a general amnesty."



Long Kesh internment cages — ten years ago

Internment shelved

BY PETER DOWLING

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT revealed on Tuesday that the legal provision for internment in the North — not used since December 1975, when Ardoyne republican (and current hunger-striker) Martin Meehan was the last internee to be released — is to be allowed to lapse when the Emergency Provisions Act comes up for renewal on July 24th.

This is primarily a cosmetic move designed to temper the international image of the occupied six-counties as being under British martial law, and to project 'normalisation'. It could also be a move by the British political establishment to under-cut repeated embarrassing demands from their military for the re-introduction of 'selective' internment. More importantly it is obviously an acknowledgement by the Brits that the legislation now in use, and current jailing procedures — such as the use of holding charges as a form of internment-by-remand — are sufficiently repressive for their present purposes.

DUAL

But the Brits' power of internment is not being completely dropped. Up to now the Northern direct-ruler could sign internment papers automatically, and without reference to anybody else; after July 24th he must sign an order which must receive parliamentary approval.

Characteristically the Brits thus managed to present their shelving of the power to intern in a dual fashion: one way for nationalist popular consumption, and the opposite way for loyalists!

The nationalist 'Irish News' boldly declared: 'Internment section of Emergency Provisions Act is revoked' and stated: "The British government intend dropping their power to detain without trial." Whereas the loyalist 'News Letter' was able to say: "The government is not scrapping Ulster's 'detention without trial' power."

CONFUSION

But this deliberately-caused confusion was not restricted to Belfast papers. Accepting the Brit move at face value, the Dublin 'Irish Press' stated, "Internment in Northern Ireland will be ended soon by the British government," whilst the 'Irish Times' described the move as "more significant for its symbolism than any practical effect."

The 'Irish Times', picking up on the line being fed to the loyalists, rather than that for international consumption, also stated: "The government's power to intern people without trial is not being abolished."

But, in practical terms, for the time being it is, and predictably the revelation caused a furore in the ranks of loyalist Westminster MPs. Not surprisingly Atkins' claim to them that internment was only being lapsed, that his power to intern was not being repealed, and that it would remain on the statute book, failed to satisfy them.

TIMING

However the loyalists need not have worried. The timing of the revelation appears to have been deliberately debated — on the eve of the Westminster debate on the Atkins' proposals for 'devolved government' in the North — to disguise British intentions to strengthen loyalist rule through those proposals.

Thus the timing was in fact intended to re-assure, and deceive, popular nationalist opinion about the British government's 'fair' intentions in order to ease the proposals' acceptance.

Dissension continues to surface

AGAINST a background of a growing right/left split within the British Labour Party, discussion within the ranks of the party about their bi-partisanship policy with the Tories, on the North, continues to come to the surface; but nevertheless prospects for a break in bi-partisanship appear slim in the near future, given the weight of reaction within the party.

And currently there are right-wing moves afoot to reverse the National Executive's recent resolution mounting an enquiry into the H-Blocks because of 'repression and torture'.

WEDNESDAY

Before Wednesday's debate in the British House of Commons on the Atkins' proposals for 'devolved government' in the North a thinly attended meeting of the Parliamentary Labour

Party was reported to have shown strong support for Irish unity and, not surprisingly, for the 'power-sharing' option in the Atkins' paper.

The — admittedly unrepresentative — meeting also showed strong backing for ending the party's bi-partisanship policy with the Tories.

BRYNOR JOHN

However, Brynор John, party spokesman on the North, warned that they must take account of the 'majority' view, that is, the loyalist view, and took up a theme which he had developed in an RTE interview last Sunday.

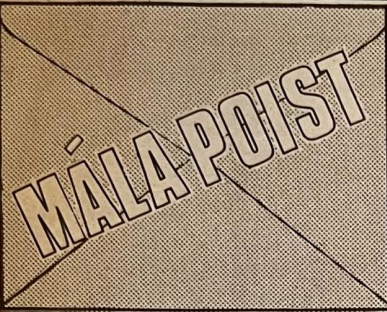
Brynор John, along with other British Labour leaders, believes that whilst it is alright to impose partition upon the majority of Irish people by force of British arms, it would be wrong to impose a united Ireland upon the loyalist minority even by force of verbal persuasion.

Whilst Brynор John agreed on

Sunday with the RTE interviewer that there is a reasonable segment of the Labour Party which favours a united Ireland, when asked if the British government should persuade the loyalists to join a united Ireland, he rejected such a suggestion, saying, "In my view that comes within the question of an enforced solution."

H-BLOCK

Meanwhile, a bid to get the party to reconsider its H-Block resolution failed on Monday night at a Westminster meeting of the party's Home Policy Committee, which is chaired by 'left' leader Tony Benn and which originally put the H-Block resolution to the National Executive. Trade union bureaucrat Douglas Hoyle, president of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs, put a resolution 'recommending the executive to reconsider their decision' but Tony Benn ruled from the chair that as that committee was not the body that passed the resolution it could not reconsider it.



All letters should be addressed to the Editor — An Phoblacht/Republican News, 51/53 Falls Road, Belfast or 44 Parnell Square, Dublin.

Troops Out Movement

Dear Editor,

Ciaran Dowd in 'Lessons from the American anti-war movement', An Phoblacht/Republican News, May 24th, argues that the protest movement against the war in Vietnam has 'valuable' lessons for those 'committed to building a troops out movement in Britain'.

A comparison of the relationship of the US to Vietnam and that of Britain to Ireland shows conclusions which are different than those drawn by Ciaran Dowd.

Vietnam was one of many liberation struggles that US imperialism faced in the post-war period. Washington's defeat in Vietnam was important but not critical for the survival of US imperialism.

It was precisely because withdrawal from Vietnam did not constitute a direct threat to US capitalism that the anti-war movement was able to attract support from all sections of society. Many Americans could remain good patriots and still argue for withdrawal simple because the continuation of the war was too high a price to pay.

For Britain, the domination of Ireland is central to its survival. Unlike Vietnam and the US, the

threatened 'law and order' in Britain and that it "could overflow into the cities of Britain, into the Liverpools and the Glasgows and Londons, the Birmingham and the Manchesters."

Because the maintenance of British imperialism is so intimately intertwined with its domination of Ireland, a troops out movement based on chauvinist sentiments cannot be built. Ciaran Dowd is wrong to suggest this possibility and to point to the anti-war movement in the US as a model. Every attempt to utilise liberal moralism and war weariness has failed to build an anti-war movement.

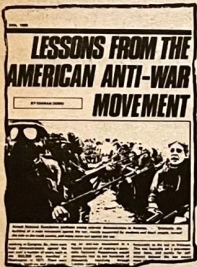
In Britain an anti-war movement can only be built from an anti-imperialist point of view. All too often liberal critics of British imperialism have served as its apologists — suggesting that Britain could play a different and more progressive role in Ireland. Only those who oppose their own state and their own ruling class can fight against British oppression of Ireland.

There is a lesson that Ciaran Dowd does not draw from the US experience. The chauvinist US anti-war movement did not threaten the ruling class, indeed it allowed imperialism to extricate itself from Vietnam. Today when Washington is more vulnerable, the old leadership of this movement is right behind Carter's denunciation of Vietnam.

Nor is it accidental that Joan Baez, one of the stars of this movement made common cause with the 'peace people' in the six-counties not so long ago. A chauvinist anti-war movement is a weapon that will be turned against the liberation struggle when imperialism is under fire.

Ciaran Dowd is right to suggest that there is considerable potential for building a troops out movement in the British working class — but only if this work is approached from an anti-imperialist point of view will this potential be realised.

Victory to the Irish people.
Andre Robinson,
on behalf of RCT,
BM RCT,
London WC1V 6XX.



AP/RN, May 24th 1980.

six-counties of Ireland are directly integrated into the British state. And the ruling class of the six-counties is the extension of that of Britain.

A defeat for Britain in Ireland would represent a direct blow to British imperialism. It would severely undermine social stability in Britain itself. That's why British imperialism has no choice but to continue its oppressive policies regardless of the costs.

Every major politician of the Labour, Tory and Liberal Party has instinctively understood that British imperialism could not afford to lose in Ireland. In December 1920, Churchill summed up succinctly when he said that Ireland was the "heart's centre of the British empire. Any disturbance or movement there produces vibrations, almost convulsions, throughout the whole of our system of society." This view has prevailed ever since.

At last year's Labour Party Conference, Stan Orme warned delegates that the Irish War

AN GÁ BÁS?

A chara,

Léigh mé tamall ó shin go ndúirt an European Court of Human Rights nach raibh na fir pluid ina gCimf Polaitiúla. Dúirt siad freisin gur chruithaigh na fir pluid an staid ina bhfuil siad ina gcónaí anois. Ní fheadar conas mar a tháinig siad ar an tuairim seo nuair nach raibh siad sna Bloccanna riamh!

Ní fheadar siad na hionseála ar na fir ná an tair ina ndéantar cuardach scáthín. Níor bhias siad an bia, ní fóir chuala siad na báirdéirí ag baint ar na fir achan lá. Cad thuige nach drug siad cuairt chuig na Bloccanna a fheadaíl agus chun labhairt lena fir ar an agóid?

Mura bhfuil aon rud m'cheart sna Bloccanna, cad thuige gur dhúigáil an abhac (Atkins) cead do Chumann na Croise Deirge idir Náisiúnta cuairt a thabhairt ar Bhloccanna 3,4 agus 5? Mar thoradh ar na himeschafat sna Bloccanna, bhí ar na fir pluid a dhul ar an agóid chun áird an domhain a tharraing ar a bhfuil siad ag fulaingt lá i ndiaidh leis. Tá siad ag taispeáint don domhain

gur próisnáigh choighéid iad. I ndiaidh trí bliana tuiseann a lán daoine go bhfuil na fir ag agóid sna Bloccanna mar thoradh ar an gcogadh atá ar siúl sa tír seo. Tá a fhios ag na daoine seo freisin go bhfuil Rialtas Shasana ag iarraidh na fir ina a chait.

Anois ó thug an 'Court of Human Rights' a dtacaíocht dos na Sasanaigh beidh fórsa níos mó á úsáid i gcoinne na fir ag iarraidh iad a bhiaseadh. Caidé faoi na cimf anois, na fir sna Bloccanna agus na calífrí i bPárlamint Ard Mheasa? An gceithfidh siad bás a fháil sula ngéillfeir stades phróisnáigh polaitiúla dóibh?

Liam Ó Cearúilín,
Iar-threid pluid,
Daire.



Liam Ó Cearúilín ag fáigáil na Bloccanna H dó

number of the vehicle was made.

Even when off-duty these sectarian bigots appear to be a law unto themselves. On Sunday 29th June, one of them driving a private car knocked down and seriously injured a local child. With typical indifference he drove on. Local people are wondering why this RUC man also intoxicated.

It seems that to qualify for a post at Mountpotting barracks requirements such as reckless driving and a drink problem are high on the list, plus an ingrained hatred of the nationalist community.

PRO,
Martin J Tracey Sinn Féin
Cumann,
Belfast.



Roccola redundancies

A chara,

By November of this year, another industrial blow is about to lower the living standards of many Derry workers. Roccola, the manufacturing plant located in Bligh's Lane, is worried that falling orders for their products will force the management to make redundant a proportion of its work force.

Brandywell Amenities Committee at its formation never realised the disastrous unemployment situation in Derry would persuade the committee to devote so much energy in exposing the failure of the trade union leadership to put up a good fight to safeguard the interests of its membership.

Priorities of the committee in the early part of the struggle to achieve social justice was firmly fixed in improving the environmental surroundings of Derry workers. Unfortunately for the working class the situation changed to include the festering sore of unemployment.

No longer in clear conscience it is possible for voluntary social groups, such as the Brandywell Amenities Committee to turn a blind eye to the ever-growing threat of unemployment. Therefore, in complete solidarity with the workers of Roccola the committee call upon all trade union activists in Derry to arrange

a meeting of all workers on the Roccola pay-roll to discuss in depth what line of action the trade union leadership intend taking to save the jobs of workers employed by Roccola.

Brian McClelland,
PRO,
Brandywell Amenities
Committee, Derry.

Castlereagh

A chara,

Would readers like to know something about a man called Castlereagh? A detention centre bears his name. This is the opinion two famous English poets had of him.

Shelley wrote:
I met murder on the way,
He had a mask like Castlereagh
Very smooth he looked,
yet grim,
Seven bloodhounds followed him.

All were fat, and well they might,
Be in admirable plight,
For one by one and two by two,
He tossed them human hearts to chew,
Which from his wide cloak he drew.

And when news of Castlereagh's suicide reached Byron he wrote:

So he has cut his throat at last, Hel Hol
The man who cut his country's long ago,
So Castlereagh has cut his throat, the worst of this,
That his own was not the first.

Patricia O Sullivan,
Pembroke,
Passage West.

The grave of Wolfe Tone

Dear Sir,

I must say that whoever was responsible for the first verse of 'The Grave of Wolfe Tone' in your report of the Thomas Davis commemoration published in An Phoblacht/Republican News, Saturday 31st May, didn't seem to have the slightest knowledge of the poem. In fact there was neither head nor tail to it.

Thomas Davis would never have used the word wean in the context of that verse:

"In Bodinstown churchyard there lies a green grave, where

freely around it the winter winds rave."

"Small shelter I ween are the cold walls there, when the storms sweep down on the plains of Kildare."

I shudder to think what a hash might have been if the complete poem had been published.

And the last verse:
"In Bodinstown churchyard there lies a green grave, and freely around it let the winter winds rave."

"Far better they suit him the ruin and the gloom, till Ireland a nation shall build him a tomb."

Davis used the word 'ween' as he was wont to as a great poet because in his day, as now, the word wean was archaic and poetic, whereas the word 'wean' is still in common use, such as weaning a baby etc.

J. Fennelly,
Dagenham,
Essex, England.



THOMAS DAVIS

Federalism

A chara,

Recently within the columns of An Phoblacht/Republican News there has been a great deal of discussion concerning the issue of federalism, and it is clear from those views which have already been expressed that more debate on this crucial issue is needed. I would therefore like to add my comments to those already aired.

There are two basic reasons which have been generally given for supporting the federalist system of government.

Firstly, Sinn Féin wishes to decentralise power and give control of that power back to the people. It is argued that the federalist structures achieve that objective.

Secondly, within a nine-county Ulster, with its own provincial parliament, loyalists would still be in a majority and therefore, given the control of the provincial parliament, they need not fear domination and expulsion. "The Unionist-oriented people of Ulster would have a working majority within the

Province and would therefore have considerable control over their own affairs." (Eire Nua, page 56).

Both of these arguments lack substance. If one rationally examines them, however, to take each point in turn.

Firstly, federalism as a means of de-centralising power. If one looks at the system as proposed by Sinn Féin, with its federal government, provincial parliament, regional and district councils, one is bound to arrive at the conclusion that rather than having fewer civil servants we shall inevitably have more, and rather than less bureaucracy we are proposing a system which inherently contains even more red tape.

Recently a pro-federalist, while arguing in support of the federalist system, gave us two examples of federalism in action, the United States and West Germany. I doubt if there exist two more centralised and bureaucratic political systems in the world.

If we as Republicans desire real decentralisation and real power for the people then let's arrive at a political system which will achieve that and not simply create more civil service employment and greater layers of bureaucracy for the working class to wade through.

However, my greatest fear about federalism is that it is an attempt to compromise with Loyalism. This, for me, is where the greatest danger lies for us as Republicans, and for the Irish people.

Too many people now see federalism, whether it be of the nine-county or six-county variety, as a means of winning loyalists over to a United Ireland. (see earlier Sinn Féin quote).

What, in my opinion, they are failing to recognise is that the partition of Ireland and the deliberate bolstering of the loyalist philosophy was designed to make Brit control easier, by dividing the Irish working class.

If we now accept a compromise with that same loyalist philosophy, even if it be within a so-called United 'federal' Ireland, we are effectively maintaining this division.

If we are honestly interested, as I believe we are, in uniting the Irish working class and not merely in establishing a cosmetic United Ireland, then I believe we must reject any political structures which, like the partitionist Treaty of 1921, seek to institutionalise its division.

R.G. McAuley,
Belfast.

Brussels Radio

Dear Editor,

For several weeks now the Belgian section of Ireland Libre have had programmes on the Irish struggle broadcast in Brussels on a 'free' radio station. These broadcasts can be heard every Friday between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. on 101.7 megahertz, frequency modulated.

Ireland Libre,
Brussels, Belgium.

Flemish television

A chara,

Recently we got the surprise of the year because Flemish television (in Belgium) showed the 'Patriot Game'. Thousands of people must have seen it!

Also a Flemish MP brought the H-Block issue before the Belgian parliament, but the Foreign Affairs did not want to get involved and told the MP to take his complaints to Amnesty International.

Werk groep Ierland, Flanders.

The Brigadier blown up, Maurice the Mole sent home in disgrace, our new Stormont correspondent is the Incredible Hump.

THE INCREDIBLE HUMP

HELLO,

Humphrey here. Humphrey Atkins. It is a pleasure and a privilege to be able to come into your humble dwellings in such a civilised fashion. Normally we have to kick in the doors. Anyway, some cynical people have said that the only reason why I have condescended to write for this Republican rag is for sordid financial gain.

Others have claimed that I was always jealous of that rat Maurice and jumped at the chance to replace him now that he has been sent home to Bakewell in disgrace. But nothing could be further from the truth!

The reason why I have agreed to write a regular column for this organ is that, as a true British gentleman, inspired by our glorious leader, the blessed Margaret, I have for a long time felt that I should seize any opportunity that presented itself to explain the simple facts of British rule in Ireland.

PAISLEY

Everybody knows that my so called 'initiatives' and 'white papers' are a load of old cobbles, but they enable me to string along the quislings in the SDLP for a few months until we can install

Paisley as local gauleiter. I know and you know, that he's a loonle who belongs in the seventeenth century, but if he can save Ulster from sodomy (and Peter Robinson) he can surely save us from the IRA.

He's insisted that we support ULD or Ulster's Lame Duck, as the shipyard is known, but £42½ million is chickenfeed, especially when it's the stupid taxpayer who provides the cash. All we need now before handing over to the Orangemen is a few more tame tails.

BLEAKLEY

Fitt and Hume have already signed up and our latest acquisition is the very lovable toady, David Bleakley, whom we've appointed head of the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights. This was a smart move. Already he has stated that he sees his job as having nothing to do with



protesting about the odd bit of torture in Castlereagh. Rather, he is concerned with helping the mentally handicapped. Obviously, being retarded himself, he has a head start on this one.

DOYLE

This brings me to the point when I suppose I should tell you something about my busy social life. Last week, for instance, I was drinking with none other than the token tail himself, Judge Roy Doyle. We were joined by the Lord Chief Justice Bobby Lowry. After congratulating Bobby on his superb summing up before he let off the police bombers, and on the marriage of his daughter to one of the Castlereagh torturers who did over Bernard O'Connor, we got stuck in drinking part of Doyle's fifty grand.

I must say, it was most pleasant

drinking champagne at the expense of *The Economist*. Anyway, Roy confessed that the money had helped him get over the terrible shock that he'd had when he had seen himself described as the mealy mouthed little creep that he is.

We roared with laughter as he told us how he had recently acquitted two soldiers of rape on the same day as he had sent an old age pensioner to jail for failing to pay his TV licence. It quite restores one's faith in human venality to meet such an obsequious little thug amongst the minority.

Don't think that it's all a merry round of fun being a direct ruler, however. Next week I'll tell you of some of the more arduous social events that my lovely lady wife and I have to attend on your behalf.

Bye for now,
Hump.

ANYONE who had any remaining illusions about the 'Sticks' would have had their eyes opened for them by a series of three articles by Olivia O'Leary in the *Irish Times* towards the end of last month which assessed the current state of 'Sinn Fein the Workers' Party'.

The Sticks themselves appear to have abandoned any hopes they may have had in six-county politics with the disastrous showing in the Westminster and EEC elections in May and June last year when they achieved a vote of 0.8%. However they have not abandoned the policies that reaped the disaster and continue to support loyalist 'majority rule' in a devoted government.

As a logical extension of this policy they declare that 'the RUC is necessary to maintain peace'; they were diplomatically absent from Belfast council when the UDR were voted the freedom of the city; they welcomed the new Westminster seats for the North as 'a democratic step' in a document which also referred to 'Londonderry'; and are opposed to the campaign for political status in the H-blocks and Armagh despite the nineteen 'Official IRA' prisoners who continue to have status in the cages at Long Kesh.

OBSESSED

The *Irish Times* articles show that the party has become obsessed with winning just one seat in Leinster House which they believe will make them respectable and a force in Free State politics. They appear to have impressed Olivia O'Leary with their chances of pulling this off in one of their relative strongholds, but in fact the recent reorganisation of constituency boundaries have effectively destroyed their faint hopes.

Their policies are apparently concentrated on economic issues and cynically tailored for direction at industrialised centres. To this end the party has attempted to establish itself in the major cities and also industrialised country towns like Carlow, Tullamore, Longford, and Kilkenny which it has identified as likely areas for support. Judging by these articles small farmers would get short shrift indeed from the members of 'SFWP'.

The emphasis on economic policies is one which the Sticks' leadership is quite blatant about, and a Stalinist in its dismissal of such minor issues as civil liberties. Freedom of the

No more illusions

BY DAMIEN O'ROURKE



The three part series on 'SFWP' in last month's *Irish Times*

individual rates very low in the Sticks' list of priorities. Party president MacGiolla believes 'freedom to a job and a home comes before freedom of expression' which sounds very pat, but does not explain how one would express an opinion of the job or home provided, or how liberties denied in favour of economic advancement would later be restored.

BAN

In line with this approach the party supports Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act which bans Republicans from RTE, and Des O'Hagan, editor of the party's new magazine 'Workers Life', glibly asserts that "there cannot be a free press in a capitalist world when its survival depends on advertising".

A sentiment which he obviously accepts 'pragmatically' if the number of such 'capitalist adverts' in his magazine is anything to go on.

There are a number of questions that Olivia O'Leary poses but fails to answer. She has been unable or unwilling to identify the members who the Sticks claim to have infiltrated into

RTE, the Dublin newspapers and into the headquarters of the major trade unions. There are two secret industrial cummains, she says, the names of whose members are kept from the general party membership.

MYSTERY

She also fails to solve the mystery of where the Sticks get their finance from although it spends freely on full-time staff and in recent elections spent right up to the statutory limit per candidate - more per head than any other party. The Sticks advance the fanciful notion that all this money comes from 'profits' from the '*Irish People*' (their weekly news-sheet in the Free State) and 'national collections'.

Olivia O'Leary got no further in investigating the present links between 'SFWP' and the 'Official IRA' on which party leaders are very keen indeed. She does however connect these two unsolved mysteries by wondering are the guns now used in armed robberies?

Although the three articles are extremely revealing there is still a lot more to be written.

WHAT'S ON

H-BLOCK MARCH
2.30 p.m. Saturday 12th July
Crumlin Shopping Centre
DUBLIN

SOCIAL NIGHT
Saturday 12th July
No 5 Club
Blessington Street
DUBLIN
Adm. 50p
Proceeds to prisoners' children's outing.

DUBLIN COUNTY MEETING
SINN FEIN
11 a.m. Sunday 13th July
5, Blessington Street
DUBLIN
All Sinn Fein members are expected to attend.

COMHAIRLE CUIGE MUMHAN
SINN FEIN
Monthly meeting
2.30 p.m. Sunday 13th July
LIMERICK

ARMAGH PRISONERS MEETING
8 p.m. Tuesday 15th July
Maguire's Pub
Dorset Street
DUBLIN

H-BLOCK MEETING
8 p.m. Thursday 17th July
29, Mountjoy Square
DUBLIN
To organise publicity for an international H-Block petition in the Dublin area. All welcome.

PDF SPONSORED WALK
Saturday 19th July
Assemble 3 p.m. Pilots' Row
DERRY
Sponsorship forms available from any PDF committee member

CHILDREN'S OUTING TO SKERRIES
12 noon, Sunday 20th July
Coach leaves Municipal Art Gallery
Parrell Square
DUBLIN
All prisoners' wives and children welcome
Organised by
Prisoners' Welfare Action Group

ANNIVERSARY OF INTERNMENT COMMEMORATIVE MARCH
Sunday 10th August
Assemble 2 p.m. Bussey Bee
March to Sinn Fein HQ
BELFAST
Organised by Sinn Fein

CUMANN CABRACH DUBLIN June Draw results
£100: 342; £50: 291; £25: 308; £10: 82 and 12; £5: 212, 245, 44, 232, 214 and 203.

300 CLUB DRAW
Sinn Fein, Loch Garman
Please return outstanding tickets to Ned O'Connor, 21 St. Aidan's Villas, Enniscorthy for draw on 21st July. Results will be published.

THE NO. 5 CLUB
Blessington Street
DUBLIN
Open every Saturday and Sunday
Doors close at 10 p.m. sharp
Proceeds to An Cumann Cabrach

JOIN SINN FEIN

Anyone interested in joining Sinn Fein should contact their local cumann; head office at 44, Parrell Square, Dublin; 51/53 Falls Road, Belfast; or 15 Cable Street, Derry.

I am interested in becoming a member of Sinn Fein

NAME

ADDRESS

Donegal call

A MOTION, proposed by Sinn Féin councillor Eddie Fullerton, calling on the British government to get out of the six counties, was passed at the latest meeting of Donegal County Council.

Much of the opposition to the motion was cloaked in criticism of the fact that a Sinn Féin councillor was proposing it, but the motion was carried with ten votes for; only three votes were recorded against it. Fine Gael councillors mainly abstaining.

There was a similar voting pattern on another motion from Eddie Fullerton calling on the Free State government to remove section 31 of the Broadcasting Act which bans Sinn Féin from RTE. At the same meeting several councillors condemned the recent brutality of the Garda task force against republican sympathisers in the county.

Clones tribute

AT a meeting of Clones Urban District Council, at which a new chairman was elected, tributes were paid to the outgoing chairman, local Sinn Féin councillor, Frank McCaughy who said that he did not wish to go forward for another term. Several councillors, from all parties, complimented him on his impartiality and his skill in conducting meetings particularly when they became heated. One councillor summed up the spirit of the meeting with the enigmatic remark 'he gave everyone their Tullamore duel'.

Veteran greeted



EIGHTY-YEAR-OLD Patrick Coleman, from Ardooie, County Tyrone, was greeted by Sinn Féin President Ruairi O'Braigh, when he attended this year's Bodensown commemoration. Patrick Coleman is a veteran Republican who fought during the Tan War. Despite his age he still frequently attends Republican commemorations and hopes to be fit enough to continue to do so for a long time yet.

Martin McKenna inquest



AN open verdict was returned at an inquest in Banbridge on Tuesday of last week, into the death of Belfast Republican and former blanket man, Martin McKenna, who died in a motor vehicle accident at Cloughanrammer on the Newry to Belfast road on October 23rd last year. The driver of the other car was later acquitted on a charge of reckless driving, causing death.

However, the coroner at the inquest said that it was clear to him that the other driver had been attempting to pass at a very unsafe place and, as a result, drove into the side occupied by Martin McKenna's mini, and thereby causing his death. The coroner added that it was a great pity that a young man's life had been taken away by another's imprudent action.

JACKIE GRIFFITH COMMEMORATION

Fianna Fail collaboration slammed

THE ANNUAL Jackie Griffith commemoration took place in Dublin on Sunday 8th July, with a parade from St. Patrick's church, Ringsend, to a meeting at the corner of Merrion Square and Mount Street — the spot where Jackie Griffith was shot down by Special Branch men in 1943.

More than one hundred people took part in the march, which was led by a colour party of Fianna and gCailini, followed by the O'Neill and Allsopp Memorial Fife and Drum Band from Belfast's New Lodge.

The meeting was chaired by Sinn Féin's national treasurer, Tony Ruane, and a wreath was laid by Bill Davitt on behalf of the Jackie Griffith Cumann, Sinn Féin, Dublin, who organise the annual ceremony.

The oration was given by Rita O'Hare in which she briefly traced Jackie Griffith's career and listed the fourteen republicans who met their death in Fianna Fail's decade of repression between 1936 and 1946: shot down in the street or jail, executed by firing squad or hanged, dying on hunger strike or as a result of the inhuman prison conditions. She went on to outline the continuing repression of Fianna Fail through the fifties and early sixties, to the seventies, and up to last week's brutal actions of the Garda task force in Donegal.

Condemning Fianna Fail's collaboration with the British, she slammed their craven welcome for the statement in the recent British paper on 'devolved government' in the North which referred to the



RITA O'HARE

'close sharing bonds of history and language' between Britain and the Free State.

She said: "Of course there are 'close sharing bonds of history' — the British have provided us with more than eight hundred years of their savage, bloody history. Of course there are 'close sharing bonds of

culture' — the British and her native collaborators have almost succeeded in smashing our Irish culture and replacing it with a common imported Anglo-American culture.

"Of course there is a close sharing bond of language — the British and their native collaborators have done everything possible to destroy the Irish language and replace it with this common English language.....

"These bonds which Fianna Fail welcome are the very bonds that republicans are out to smash, and many other 'close sharing bonds' with them.

"We want to break the bonds of repression which both British and Free State governments impose on the people. We want to break the

bonds of economic injustice which are shared by the British and Free State governments and to which the British refer in their document as 'our mutual economic and trading interests'.

"It is vital to see that these bonds are as important to Britain and the Free State as the military forces which they both use. We must understand that our support for the IRA in the military fight has also to be complemented by our work in these other areas too.

"The cultural bonds can be broken by our involvement in Irish cultural organisations, the bond of language by our determination to use and extend the use of the Irish language, and the economic bonds can be broken by our involvement in economic resistance in our trade unions and local communities...."



The colour party of na Fianna and Cumann na gCailini at the Jackie Griffith commemoration in Dublin last Sunday

THE CHILVER REPORT ON TEACHER TRAINING

Clarifying the terms of the debate

BY UNA O'NEILL

THE REPORT on the future structure of teacher education in the North, published recently by the committee chaired by English academic Sir Henry Chilver, has become the subject of daily contributions in all the Belfast newspapers. The report proposes to move the two Belfast Catholic Training Colleges, St. Mary's and St. Joseph's, to the site of the state college at Stranmillis, where all the students would receive common teaching, except for subjects such as Religious Education.

Reactions to the Chilver Report have on the whole been predictable. Most Unionists have welcomed it, as well as the Sticky Workers' Party and the Irish National Teachers' Organisation. A DUP student spokesman from Queen's University denounced it as it would mean for Protestant students at Stranmillis the 'sacrifice of their identity', and Catholic clergy and lecturers have opposed it as a direct attack on the Catholic school system.

The issue, from being educational and religious, has quickly become political, and Cardinal O'Fiaich was not slow to point out the danger of such a proposition to "the Catholic or Irish character of the training given to those who will one day teach their children." Fr. Brian Brady, head of the Religious Department in St. Joseph's, in a series of three articles in the 'Irish News' presented the report as the thin end of the integrationist wedge, and an 'infringement on civil and religious rights'.

The terms of the debate must be stated clearly. The Chilver Report has been produced on the initiative of the present Tory government, whose aims are on one hand to cut down expenditure in areas such as education, health and housing, and on the other to suppress Irish nationalist demands and 'normalise' the political situation in the six-counties. The recommendations made by the report are therefore completely in line with Tory policy.

If these were implemented, what is left of the Irish character of Catholic schools would

probably disappear. Catholic schools are by no means hotbeds of Irish nationalism. But history has placed the Irish Catholic Church in the nationalist camp and Catholic schools have maintained some degree of Irish culture and transmitted a sense of Irishness which is completely missing in state schools.

CRITICAL

Republicans have a right to be critical about the Catholic clergy. On countless occasions they have turned their backs on the suffering of the oppressed, and of the imprisoned. The gates of several Falls Road churches slammed in front of the remains of Volunteer Dee Delaney.



The Chilver Report is in line with Tory policy which aims to cut down expenditure in areas such as education, as well as aiming to suppress Irish nationalist demands and 'normalise' the political situation in the six-counties.

But the six-county state is an artificial sectarian state, in which human rights are twisted and violated daily. Integration of schools in the context of the six-counties must be seen as the 'elimination of the national factor', described by Padraig Pearse in 'The Murder Machine'. Contrary to what the Sticky Workers' Party seems to think, the Catholic Church is not an obstacle to working-class unity in Ireland. It certainly plays on the division to assert its power. But it is British colonisation, and the British-initiated partition of Ireland, which constitutes the obstacle.

LABELS

If religious labels must be used, let Connolly help redefine them: "Whereas Protestantism has in general made for political freedom and political radicalism, it has been opposed to slavish worship of kings and aristocrats. Here in Ireland, the word Protestant is almost a convertible term with Toryism, lick-spittle loyalty, servile worship of aristocracy and hatred of all that savours of genuine political independence on the part of the 'lower classes'. And in the same manner, Catholicism, which in most parts of Europe is synonymous with Toryism, lick-spittle loyalty, (etc...), in Ireland is almost synonymous with rebellious tendencies, zeal for democracy, and intense feelings of solidarity with all strivings upwards of those who toil."

No thanks to the Catholic hierarchy, but this is what Catholic schools, to a small extent, have preserved, and this is why parents will support them.

GUARANTEED

The Republican position is therefore clear. As the Irish people strive to achieve nationhood, they must resist all attempts by the British to normalise and integrate them into a British education system. For this is what underlies the Chilver Report. In a United Ireland, however, national, cultural and religious rights will not have to be fought for. They will be guaranteed by virtue of the national independence of the country.

In a thirty-two county Socialist Republic, Republicans advocate the separation of church and state, and the secularisation of education, as the only way to achieve democracy and promote tolerance and understanding. But the six-counties stand at the opposite end of democracy. This should be kept in mind as the debate on the Chilver Report continues.

'On the blanket: the H-Block story' by Tim Pat Coogan, Ward River Press, Dublin. Price: South: £2.75, North: £2.50.

ON THE BLANKET THE H-BLOCK STORY

REVIEW BY DANNY MORRISON

"I AM one of the many who would die for my country, I believe in fighting the fight to the end, if death is the only way, I am prepared to die..."

So runs part of a grim declaration scrawled on a dirty cell wall, seen by writer Tim Pat Coogan when he was allowed to visit women protestors in Armagh jail. Coogan, editor of *The Irish Press* and author of several books, including *The IRA, blanket: the H-Block story* which also covers the plight of the Armagh women prisoners who were forced on to a 'no wash, no sleep out' protest in February of this year.

"I found the smell in the girls' cells far worse than that at Long Kesh, and several times found myself having to control feelings of nausea", writes Coogan. In Armagh he was allowed to speak to the women but not to the blanket men in the H-Blocks.

"When the cell door opened they both looked frightened and looked anxiously at us for a moment. They were pallid and naked except for a blanket draped over their shoulders. They stood silently, fear hardening into defiance, I felt, as we looked at the cell..."

"...In one corner there was a pile of rotting, blue moulded food and excrement and the two boys had evidently been using bits of their foam rubber mattress to add to the decor as we entered. There wasn't much of a smell but the light was dim and the atmosphere profoundly disturbing and depressing.

"I felt helpless and angry as I stood and looked at these appalling and disgraceful conditions, prevented by bureaucracy and by history from talking to two of my fellow human beings who had brought themselves and been brought to this condition of self-abnegation."

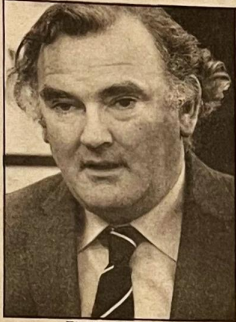
However in another cell, that of Martin Meehan (this was before he went on hunger strike), Coogan could not maintain silence. "I had to make some gesture of humanity in this diamond cut diamond situation and stepped forward to introduce myself to Meehan." They briefly shook hands and Meehan said he was 'delighted to meet me'.

SUFFERING

The effectiveness of the 'no wash, no sleep out' was revealed in an interview with a member of the Prison Officers Association, who said: "If they hadn't brought in the steam cleaning, they would have had to give way on the Special Category because the medical people were on the point of closing the whole thing down as a health hazard."

In interviews with former

blanket men and relatives of blanket men and Armagh prisoners Coogan describes the human side of the prison struggle — the suffering and the bitterness inside the



TIM PAT COOGAN

jail, the anguish and sleepless nights for families outside.

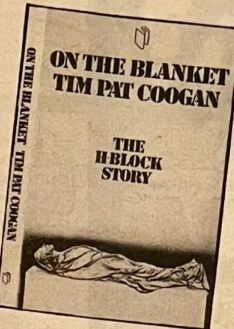
Although sympathising with the prison warders Coogan also discovered that the average warder's income is £10,000 per annum, when he asked an official what exactly did the additional inducements amount to he was told, "Well, I am not prepared to say, actually."

Without these people — mainly drawn from the UDR, RUC and British army — the British government's 'criminalisation' programme would collapse.

SPECIAL

In the introduction to the book Coogan writes: "Ultimately, the H-Block question exposes the dilemma of British rule in Ireland, the tensions of a divided country, and the roots of republican violence."

In the book he elaborates on the social background of the prisoners, the British occupation and the war. He also describes how the majority of prisoners ended up in H-Block — through 'special treatment'



(torture) in Castlereagh which produced signed statements and which were then accepted in the 'special' non-jury courts.

He advocates a settlement of the protest based along the lines of the status of Republican POWs in Portlaoise jail, which amounts to political status, but the IRA would have to make a conscious effort not to make political capital out of whatever settlement is reached.

WELCOME

The book was speedily compiled and written within the last few months, a period which included the O'Faich/Atkins talks, the lull in IRA attacks against warders and the disappointing judgement of the European Commission. He suggests that the Strasbourg decision did not reflect the merits of the case but a political consideration of 'powerful interests' — if the precedent of political status was set in Ireland there were implications for the other member states who have similar prisoners.

Overall, the book is a welcome contribution (there are orders for thirty thousand) to an increasing popular awareness of the desperate struggle within the jails. When compiling it Tim Pat Coogan was very conscious of the very real threat of the men taking the ultimate step of protest, a hunger-strike, to resolve the crisis. (The illustration on the cover is of a painting by Robert Ballagh and appears to show a dead blanket-man on a morgue stone.)

In conclusion Coogan writes: "Solving the issue of the H-Blocks and Armagh will not of itself immediately lead to an all-Irish solution. Not solving it, however, renders any hope of progress, towards any form of peace, utterly impossible."

which drove Tim Pat Coogan to write "On the Blanket". It was the resolute stark, pungent analysis of *The H-Block story*, as told by Tim Pat Coogan, which persuaded me to write this review, and to break my silence.

"These are the factors which those in charge of British policy in the North might well take into account as an indication of the counter-productive nature of their attempts to break the physical and mental health of the prisoners in their charge. They have provided the raw material and evidence for 'On the Blanket', thus, they have tilted the balance against their own savagery."

Sean MacBride points out, when discussing a settlement:

"It is worth recalling in passing that a British Royal Commission on the Treatment of Treason-Felony Convicts, established in May 1870 by Gladstone and presided over by Lord Devon, criticised severely the treatment of the Irish Treason-Felony prisoners in English prisons, and recommended that a separate part of prisons should be set aside for Irish political offenders."

ARMAGH

CANNON, Patrick, McILCAR, Peter. (4th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vols. Patrick Cannon and Peter McIlcar who died on July 17th 1976. Always remembered by their friends and comrades in the Republican Movement.

CANNON, Patrick. (4th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Volunteer Patrick Cannon who died on active service on 17th July 1976. Always remembered by the McQuillan/Cannon Cumann, Sinn Féin, Ath Clait.

CUNNINGHAM, Alphonsus, KANE, Paulins. (7th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vols. Alphonsus Cunningham and Pauline Kane who died on July 21st 1973. I measc Laochra na Gael go raibh a n-anamacha. Always remembered by their friends and comrades in the Republican Movement.

DOUGAL, John. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Flan John Dougal shot dead while on active service on July 9th 1972 by British forces of occupation. Ní dhéanfaimid dearmad air. Always remembered by his friends and comrades in the Belfast Brigade.

DOWNEY, Joe. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Joe Downey, shot dead by British forces of occupation on July 21st 1972. Thug sé a raibh aige ar son saoirse. Always remembered by his friends and comrades in the Belfast Brigade.

DUGGAN, Julie. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of my dear wife Vol. Julie Duggan, Cumann na mBan, Portadown, who died as a result of a car accident 8th July 1972. Mary Queen of Ireland pray for her. Always remembered by her husband, David.

DUGGAN, Julie. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of my daughter Vol. Julie Duggan, Cumann na mBan, Portadown, who died as a result of a car accident 8th July 1972. Go ndéanfaidh anam, Always remembered by her loving mother Mrs. Smith and family.

DUGGAN, Julie. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Julie Duggan, Cumann na mBan, Portadown, who died as a result of a car accident 8th July 1972. Mary Queen of Ireland pray for her. Always remembered by her brother Sean and wife Alice and family.

DUGGAN, Julie. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Julie Duggan, Cumann na mBan, Portadown, who died as a result of a car accident. Gone but not forgotten. Always remembered by the members of the John Green Cumann, Sinn Féin, Castlereagh.

HIGHSTEAD, Derek. (4th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Derek Highstead, Sinn Féin organiser in England who died on 16th July 1976. Ní dhéanfaimid dearmad air. Always remembered by his friends and comrades in the Republican Movement.

HIGHSTEAD, Derek. (4th Anniversary). In memory of a dear husband and father, Derek, who died on 16th July 1976. "To Sam and all his family circle we extend our most profound sympathies. Our love for you will always keep, it cannot fade, it lies too deep." Always remembered by your loving wife Mena, Brendan and Bride.

HIGHSTEAD, Derek. (4th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Derek Highstead, Sinn Féin organiser in England, who died 16th July 1976. Always remembered by the Derek Highstead Cumann, Sinn Féin, Castlereagh.

MOLLOY, Tobias. (5th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Tobias Molloy who died on July 16th 1975. Thug sé a shaol ar son saoirse multoir na hÉireann. Always remembered by his friends and comrades in the Republican Movement.

REID, James. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. James Reid, Belfast Brigade, Óglach na hÉireann, who died on July 15th 1972. Always remembered by his friends and comrades in the Belfast Brigade.

SCULLION, Louis. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Louis Scullion who died on July 14th 1972. Thug sé a raibh aige ar son na Poblachta. Always remembered by his friends and comrades in the Belfast Brigade.

Sympathy

DALY. At a meeting of the Martin Forsythe cumann, Rathfriland, Dublin, a vote of sympathy was passed with the relatives of Miriam Daly. One minute's silence was observed.

MILLER. It was with deepest regret that we learnt of the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Miller, mother of our comrade Sam (H3). To Sam and all his family circle we extend our most profound sympathies. From the blanketmen, H-Blocks 3, 4 and 5.

O'NEILL. The Volunteers, 4th Battalion, Belfast Brigade (the Cages, Long Kesh and Camp), give their regret the death of Vol. Terence O'Neill, Belfast Brigade, Óglach na hÉireann, shot down while on active service by Crown Forces. We extend our most profound sympathy to his sorrowing wife, daughter and family and family we extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy. I measc Laochra na Gael go raibh a n-anam asal.

O'NEILL, Belfast. In sympathy with the death of Vol. Terence O'Neill, Belfast Brigade, Óglach na hÉireann, who died on July 15th 1972. "Life springs from death and from the graves of patriot men and women spring living Nations." To his wife, daughter and family circle we extend our most sincere condolences. O'NEILL. It is with proud regret that we learned of the death of our dear friend Vol. Teddy O'Neill. To his wife Mary and child Sínead we extend our deepest sympathy. From Barney, wife and kids.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

BATESON, Anne. (Armagh Jail). Happy birthday Anne. "It is not they who can inflict the pain, it is they who can endure the most who will ultimately triumph." Victory to the women in Armagh. From all your friends and comrades Rosemary, Margaret and Patricia (Armagh).

BATESON, Anne. (Armagh Jail). Birthday greetings to our friend Anne. "Your courage is an inspiration to us all." From all your friends and comrades Rosemary, Geraldine, Raymond, Terry and all the kids, Short Strand.

BATESON, Anne. (Armagh Jail). Birthday greetings to Anne. We are all behind you in your fight for political status. From mum, dad, brothers and sisters.

BATESON, Anne. (Armagh Jail). Birthday greetings to Anne Bateson on protest for political status in A Wing, Armagh Jail. From all the members and supporters of the Bateson-Le-Sheridan Sinn Féin cumann, Ballymasuigan.

HART. Seamus. Congratulations Seamus on your birthday. From Kevin, Frankie and Frankie.

HART. Seamus. Happy birthday son. You are always in our hearts and prayers. From father, mother, brothers and sister.

HAYES, John. (Wakefield). Birthday greetings to you John on your birthday.

day on July 8th, and a big hello to all your mates over there. From Ma, brothers, sisters, and all your mates in Raheny.

HAYES, Bill. (Portlaoise). A very special birthday wish to a very special person. From mam, dad, Sherry, Carol, Noel, granny and all your relations in Ferrybank.

HAYES, Bill. (Portlaoise). Lots of love on your birthday Bill. Thinking of you every day. From Kathleen and baby Aidan and Gail.

KELLY, Julian. "Birthday greetings so warmly meant, so extra special too. Because it's so sincerely meant, especially for you." I love you, from daddy, James J. Kelly, Portlaoise.

QUINN, Jimmy. (H-Block). Birthday greetings to Jimmy Quinn for July 11th and solidarity in your struggle for political status. Tíocfaidh ár léig. From Michael Quinn.

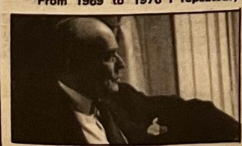
Solidarity Greetings

HOGAN, William (H3-Block). Congratulations on completing this year of the blanket. By your courage and determination you have successfully resisted all attempts to break you and criminalise you and your comrades. Freedom and justice are well worth fighting for. Victory to the blanketmen! Love from mother, father and all the family.

Mac Bride speaks out

SEAN MacBRIDE, former Irish republican leader and politician, and today an internationally-respected United Nations diplomat, has spoken out against the H-Blocks for the first time. He did this in the course of a newspaper review of Tim Pat Coogan's book, *'On the blanket: the H-Block story'*, published in *The Irish Press* on Thursday 3rd July.

MacBride writes: "From 1969 to 1976 I repeatedly



SEAN MacBRIDE

protested against the methods used by the British forces in the North in dealing with prisoners..."

"When the H-Block situation developed at the end of 1976 I remained silent. I felt, on the one hand, that it was imposing an intolerable burden on the unfortunate prisoners involved; while, on the other hand, it was being exploited for propaganda purposes..."

"I was quite firm in my decision to remain silent on this issue, and I did so until it was necessary to review briefly my own attitude and reaction to the H-Block campaign for two reasons."

"In the first place, I sense that this was the attitude held by a great many people, including Tim Pat Coogan."

"In the second place, it reveals the short-sightedness of the British authorities in their savage attempt to break the mental and physical health of the prisoners held by them. It was the insensitive brutality of those in charge of British policy in the North

WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOYALISM?

