

# An Phoblacht REPUBLICAN NEWS



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## IRA STRIKE BACK

THERE has been a welcome spate of IRA attacks against the occupation forces and against commercial interests in several towns in the North in the last week.

This follows shortly after the IRA said, in an exclusive interview published in 'An Phoblacht/Republican News' last week, that it would pay the British 'in kind for the deaths of comrades and for the deaths on the streets', in reference to the ten deaths of hunger-strikers and the seven fatal victims of plastic bullets.

Within a few days, two RUC men were killed in a land mine blast, a British soldier was shot dead, two other soldiers (one of whom was a member of the UDR) were seriously injured in separate attacks, and the RUC Special Branch man believed to be responsible for jailing the late hunger-striker Martin Hurson was shot and critically wounded. The car-bombing against commercial property came shortly after the RUC issued an 'urgent warning' that such attacks were imminent.

### STEP-UP

The step-up in IRA activity had followed a consistent level of operations since the death of Bobby Sands, on hunger-strike, on May 5th.

Throughout the first H-Block/Armagh hunger-strike, from October to December of last year, the IRA maintained a fairly low level of military activity. But during this marathon and heroic hunger-strike the IRA has maintained a higher level of operations, although sometimes tailored to suit specific political developments — Bobby Sands' election campaign and the funeral of hunger-strikers being just two examples.

The explosion of popular resistance to British rule, resulting from the hunger-strike, is being murdered off the streets quite deliberately by the British army and the RUC, without any effective

protest (and mostly without any protest) from the Catholic church and the SDLP leadership.

Furthermore, the pillars of nationalist respectability throughout Ireland, which to date have refused to take any kind of real action against the British to force them to resolve the hunger-strike, will shortly possibly wade in behind the major assault on the hunger-strikers by the Catholic church which has found, through distressed relatives, a breach in the united front of prisoners, relatives, and supporters.

### RELATIVES

They will work on the relatives, try to demoralise them and attempt to incite general defeatism (a task which Fr. Faul has regrettably spearheaded). Popular frustration and a reluctance to march, firstly, against plastic bullets, and secondly, when people cannot see that marching is saving the lives of the hunger-strikers, is being misconstrued by Fr. Faul to support his defeatist campaign.

The hunger-strike which is generated from within the H-Blocks, by the suffering, endurance, character and hope of the blanket men, continues against this background, and continues to de-stabilise British rule and influence North and South. The old pillars of nationalist respectability (more so in the North where the political change is acute) are reeling under

this de-stabilisation because it is their influence and authority which is being eroded amongst the people.

The last six months has politicised many thousands across Ireland, created new wells of nationalist sympathy, and has further alienated the nationalist people in the North from the RUC and the British

army — not from the Irish Republican Army, which was the intent of the irretrievably doomed 'criminalisation' policy.

The hunger-strikers knew that politicisation would be a major product of their sacrifice. It was not created to be shattered.

It cannot, as Catholic church-

men and nationalist politicians mistakenly believe, be sold short. What they are ensuring, by attempting once again to side-step a confrontation with their mother England, is that this politicisation will find its ultimate expression through the barrel of the freedom fighter's gun....







■ LIAM McCLOSKEY



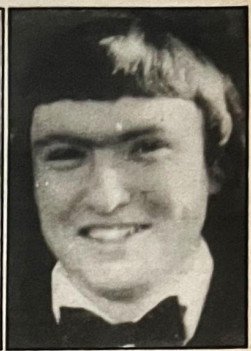
■ PAT SHEEHAN



■ JACKIE McMULLAN



■ BERNARD FOX



■ GERRY CARVILLE

# Two families intervene CRISIS POSTPONED



■ MATT DEVLIN



■ LAURENCE McKEOWN

THE planned strategy of the hunger-strike, by which the H-Block blanket men had aimed to bring maximum pressure on the British government, with the prospect of an H-Block death each week, has been reduced in effect by the decision of relatives under pressure to authorise medical intervention for Matt Devlin and Laurence McKeown last weekend.

The deliberate constant crisis has, as a result, been postponed, with the leading hunger-striker Liam McCloskey having reached his thirty-eighth day on the fast on Wednesday of this last week, September 9th, some three weeks from the point which experience has shown to be the most critical.

## JOINED

Nevertheless, this is only a postponement, and the prisoners have shown in the clearest possible terms that the hunger-strike goes on.

Last Monday, twenty-five-year-old John Pickering from Andersonstown in west Belfast joined the fast, and next Monday another prisoner will bring the number of hunger-strikers to seven.

Whilst John Pickering began his third day on the hunger-strike on Wednesday of this last week, Gerry Carville, from Greencastle in South Down and also aged twenty-five,

was just one week ahead on ten days.

Another week separates him and thirty-year-old Bernard Fox, from Belfast's St. James area, who was then on seventeen days. And another twenty-five-year-old Andersonstown republican, Jackie McMullan, is just seven days ahead again, having completed his twenty-fourth day on the fast on Wednesday.

## VISITED

Visited on Monday 7th September by his family, Jackie is reported to have developed a kidney complaint and prison doctors are taking regular urine samples, although he remains in H6-Block.

During the visit he became unwell and asked for a glass of water but was informed by the warden that he could only get water when the visit was over. His visitors therefore had to leave early.

Twenty-three-year-old Belfast republican Pat Sheehan, who completed thirty days on hunger-strike

on Wednesday, was just one week ahead of Jackie McMullan, and one week behind Liam McCloskey, who was then thirty-eight days without food.

The one week gap between each of eight hunger-strikers, which gives the possibility of constant pressure, has therefore almost been re-established by the prisoners already.

The fact that INLA prisoner Liam McCloskey, a twenty-five-year-old from Dungiven, County Derry, is now leading the fast, scotches indisputably the media contention that the INLA prisoners have withdrawn support from the hunger-strike.

In fact what they have done is to decide to reduce their participation from the one-in-four ratio to IRA hunger-strikers so far, to being more in line with the one-in-ten ratio which corresponds with the size of their group among the protesting H-Block prisoners.

## AUTHORISE

The decision to authorise medical intervention for Matt Devlin was made on Friday, September 4th, by his family when they were called urgently to the prison hospital on the fifty-second day of his hunger-strike.

When Matt had been visited the previous Wednesday his condition had been giving cause for concern with him having difficulty holding down any more than one



■ MICHAEL McCLOSKEY  
brother of foremost hunger-striker Liam, speaking at Dundalk H-Block conference last Sunday

pint of water daily, at a time when five or six times that amount is considered essential.

At 3 p.m. on Friday he is reported to have gone into an epileptic-type fit, and his mother and brother, summoned from their Ardara, County Tyrone home, and told of his dangerous condition, signed the necessary forms for doctors to give medical aid.

He was then transferred to the

Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast where he was put on an intravenous drip.

On Sunday 6th September, Laurence McKeown reached his seventieth day on the fast. (Of the ten dead hunger-strikers only Kevin Lynch and Kieran Doherty had lasted longer, the former by one day and the latter by three.)

Up to the previous day, his family had been denied daily visits to him in spite of his critical condition. On the Saturday, however, a room was set aside for them at the prison hospital and they were at Laurence's bedside on Sunday morning when doctors told them he was unconscious.

They authorised medical intervention and he was transferred to the intensive care unit of the Royal Victoria Hospital.

On Wednesday, September 9th, the relatives of the six prisoners then on hunger-strike issued the following joint statement:

*"We the families of the present hunger-strikers in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh wish to state our public support for the political prisoners' struggle for their five demands and for our loved-ones on hunger-strike."*

*"We call upon the British government to ensure a permanent ending to all the prison protests by implementing the conditions outlined by the prisoners. We request a public response from the British government to this appeal."*

## Hunger-striker No.21

# John Pickering

JOHN PICKERING, aged twenty-five, a single man from Andersonstown in west Belfast, joined the H-Block hunger-strike last Monday, September 7th, bringing the number of hunger-strikers up to six.

John, a former friend, comrade and cell-mate of Kieran Doherty, TD, is the twenty-first political prisoner to join the six-month-long hunger-strike.

John Pickering has seven brothers and

four sisters, and both his parents are alive. After leaving school at the age of fifteen John got a job as an apprentice joiner. Several months later he was arrested and charged with riotous behaviour; he spent two months in St. Patrick's juvenile detention centre in west Belfast.

John joined the Republican Movement as a young teenager. In August 1972, at the age of sixteen he went 'on the run' after being threatened, during a two-day spell in Dunmurry barracks, with being interned when he

turned seventeen later that year.

In fact, ten days before Christmas of that year, and just two months after his seventeenth birthday, John was again arrested. And he was interned, for three years, until November 1975.

Upon his release John once more wholeheartedly threw himself into the liberation struggle. But, in August 1976, he and three others, including Kieran Doherty, were captured on active service on the Malone Road. The unit were all charged with numerous operations including the killing of a UDR soldier.

After spending seventeen months on remand in Crumlin Road prison, John was sentenced to twenty-six years' imprisonment.

He immediately joined the blanket protest and was also on the no-wash protest, during which time he developed a bad ear infection.

John has only recently returned to H6-Block from hospital after an ear operation, and his hearing is still adversely affected.

He has now almost completed his first week on hunger-strike.





## WAR NEWS... WAR NEWS... WAR NEWS... WAR NEWS

ANOTHER highly successful week of military activity in the occupied North has seen the IRA's continuing ability to vary both the type and scale of its operations, remaining flexible at all times, and able to strike at will.

It has also forcefully echoed, in a welcome spate of attacks, last week's promise by an IRA spokesman (in an exclusive interview in 'An Phoblacht/Republican News') that the IRA would 'pay the British government in kind' for the death of its comrades and supporters as a direct result of Britain's H-Block intransigence.

Last Friday week, September 4th, in an attempt to create panic (and increased vigilance) among the loyalist population, the RUC warned - in a highly publicised propaganda exercise - of an impending, intensive IRA car bomb campaign.

Within hours, the RUC got their reply for being so presumptuous as to presuppose IRA inflexibility when Volunteers gunned down two off-duty British soldiers, killing one, in a south Belfast flat.

The following day they struck again, this time against the RUC, in Armagh, critically wounding a detective, and the following day killing two RUC men in a landmine attack less than two miles from the East Tyrone home of the late hunger-striker Martin Hurson.

But then, just to prove the RUC weren't entirely wrong about their car bomb 'scare' - and to further demonstrate IRA flexibility - Volunteers rounded off the week's 'war news' by planting three car bombs in Derry city and Dungannon, causing extensive damage in one attack.

Of one thing both the Brits and RUC can be certain: with ten hunger-strikers dead, and possibly more to follow them, the IRA have got a lot more 'reparations' up their sleeve!

#### CASTLEWELLAN UDR MAN SHOT

A UDR soldier was shot and very seriously injured on the night of Wednesday week, September 2nd, when he was shot in the chest during an IRA attack in Castlewellan, County Down.

The attack took place at around 10.30 p.m., as the UDR soldier got into his car at St. Patrick's Drive, off the main Castlewellan to Rathfriland road, less than a mile outside the town. He was struck in the chest by a single shot fired by an IRA Volunteer.

He was rushed to a Downpatrick hospital where his condition at first was 'very serious', but it is since thought to have stabilised.

#### STRANMILLIS BRITS AMBUSHED

In a remarkably coolly-executed and well-planned operation last weekend, the IRA's Belfast Brigade shot dead one British soldier and critically injured another after having lured them to an ambush in the city's university bedsit land.

The two British soldiers had earlier been 'chatted up' by two female IRA Volunteers at a Lisburn pub close to the British army's Thiepval barracks headquarters, on Friday evening, September 4th.

At closing time, the two Brits drove the Volunteers in their red Mini car the eight miles into Belfast, to a flat at Stranmillis Park, close to Queen's University. The flat had been rented some time previously by the IRA.

Shortly after midnight, minutes after their arrival in the flat, other IRA Volunteers burst in and fired bursts of automatic gunfire at the Brits.

# IRA attacks



● Cappagh, Monday: devastating aftermath as shocked RUC men pick up the pieces

The soldier who died - a member of the Pioneer Corps and believed to be the first Indian to be killed in 'the troubles' - was hit in the head and body. The other Brit was hit five times and was still critically ill several days later.

All IRA personnel involved in the attack returned safely to base.

Following this successful IRA operation - a repeat of a 1973 'op' when three Brit sergeants were killed and a fourth injured when they were lured to an Antrim Road 'party' in north Belfast - stringent new regulations have been imposed on off-duty Brits, limiting their already rare opportunities to relax and socialise outside their fortified bases.

Now, more than ever, British soldiers must be aware that the watchful eyes of the IRA are everywhere and that they will not be allowed to relax, any time, anywhere.

#### ARMAGH RUC MAN SHOT

In a spectacular reminder of the promise, made in an exclusive interview with a representative of the IRA leadership in last week's 'An Phoblacht/Republican News', that the IRA would 'pay the British government in kind' for the deaths of comrades, the IRA in Armagh city last Sunday morning shot and critically wounded an RUC detective believed to have been involved in the jailing of the late republican hunger-striker Martin Hurson.

The detective was also at the time suspended from duty pending the hearing of a case involving his assault of two nationalist teenagers in Armagh.

The shooting took place around

11 a.m. on Sunday as the RUC man prepared to drive his car off along Lower Irish Street. Two IRA Volunteers opened fire through the windscreen, hitting the RUC man in the head and chest, before making their escape, safely, on foot along the city's ring road.

The wounded RUC detective was one of the few Catholics in this sectarian, paramilitary force.

#### CAPPAGH LANDMINE BLAST

In the most successful operation of the week, two fledgling RUC constables were blasted to their deaths last Monday afternoon, when the armoured Cortina car they were driving in disintegrated under the impact of a 500 lb. IRA landmine.

The attack - less than two miles from the home of the late hunger-striker Martin Hurson, in the townland of Sessadonagh, on the Cappagh to Ballygawley road - marked the second spectacular fulfilment of the IRA's declared 'pay in kind' policy to avenge the deaths flowing from Thatcher's H-Block death policy, within the space of forty-eight hours.

The two RUC men were in the second car of a two-vehicle patrol which was returning from having investigated a malicious fire outbreak at Altnagallishan forest.

The bomb, detonated in a culvert by a command wire, at 5.07 p.m., blew the second car apart ('the bits left of the car could be put into a couple of suitcases', said a shaken RUC man afterwards) and hurled the RUC men's bodies over fifty yards distance from the scene of the blast, which made a

crater measuring thirty-five feet in diameter and fifteen feet in depth.

The engine of the car itself was hurled two hundred yards, while a tree, a quarter of a mile away, was split by the bomb blast.

The first RUC car in the patrol, which had passed over the landmine seconds before its detonation, was thrown forward by the force of the explosion, and the occupants narrowly escaped injury, but were subsequently treated for shock.

The two RUC constables killed were both new to the job, one having been in the RUC for six weeks and Monday being his first day of duty based in Pomeroy; the second having spent a mere six days in the RUC. The operation thus exposed the folly of those seduced by the RUC's present intensive recruitment programme: want a job? - join the RUC and be killed.

Contrary to media claims that the bomb comprised 700 lbs. of explosives, and RUC claims that it was as big as 1000 lbs.; this devastating IRA landmine was relatively small by previous standards, at 500 lbs., and demonstrates the IRA's growing bomb-making sophistication.

The attack brought a strongly worded and hypocritical attack on the IRA from Cardinal O'Fiaich - as had the previous day's shooting of an RUC man in Armagh. This produced a quick reply from the IRA - through the Irish Republican Publicity Bureau - highlighting the church leader's conveniently selective condemnations of 'violence'.

The IRA said: "Cardinal O'Fiaich's statements condemning

violence always apparently coincide with IRA operations and always seem to refer to IRA actions only. The cardinal is certainly sensitive to criticisms from the loyalists, but not so sensitive to calls for leadership from the oppressed nationalist people.

"He has called the killing of armed RUC men in a nationalist area, 'murder', so we put it to him straight and ask for an unequivocal answer: was the killing by plastic bullet of mother-of-three, Mrs. Nora McCabe, an RUC murder or not? Were the killings of Catholic schoolchildren, Carol Ann Kelly and Julie Livingstone, murder?"

"The nationalist people did not hear from him after these murders and we doubt if we will hear from him now."

#### DERRY CAR BOMBS

Despite the highly-publicised appeals by the RUC last Friday week to be on the guard against an intensified IRA 'car bomb campaign', IRA Volunteers in both Derry city and Dungannon, County Tyrone, were able - three days later - to carry out audacious car bomb operations in and near the centres of both.

Two bombs went off around tea-time last Monday in Derry, causing damage to shops and massive disruption of traffic.

The most effective attack took place in the Spencer Road area of the Waterside where a van, commandeered earlier in the Gobra-scale area, and containing a bomb estimated at 200 lbs., was placed outside the Glenvale bakery. It exploded, damaging fourteen shops in the area.

In the second attack, a car commandeered earlier in the day in the Creggan area was left at the entrance to Commercial Buildings in Foyle Street. British bomb disposal men however managed to burn out most of the explosive before it exploded, and only scorch damage and damage to shop windows was done.

In both cases, a forty-five minute warning of the bombs' location had been given.

#### DUNGANNON CAR BOMB

A few hours later, in Dungannon, County Tyrone, IRA Volunteers calmly and boldly penetrated the town centre security barriers with a 200 lb. car bomb, when they unscrewed the gates from their hinges, drove the car into the main shopping street, and replaced the gates!

Massive damage, and further embarrassment to the Brits and RUC, was avoided however, regrettably, when only the detonator on the bomb exploded.

The brown Vauxhall Cavalier car used in the attack had been parked outside a draper's shop in the much-bombed Scotch Street. A warning was phoned by the IRA at 10 p.m. and the detonator exploded forty minutes later. A Brit bomb disposal team then spent six hours defusing the bomb.

The ease with which the IRA have been able to penetrate so-called 'security barriers' on a number of occasions, in order to mount varying attacks, must now be presenting a major headache to the RUC, given their own 'announcement' of a stepped-up IRA car bomb campaign!



# COALITION STRAINS CONTINUE TO SURFACE

## Anti-worker policies pursued

BY KEVIN BURKE

THE fourteen-week holiday given to Leinster House deputies by Free State premier Garret FitzGerald must, in July, have appeared to him to promise a welcome respite from the tight-rope balancing act of maintaining his slender parliamentary majority.

Normally, deputies, worn-out by their seventy or eighty working days in the year, bury themselves quietly in assorted holiday homes along our picturesque coastline or in hotter climes around the world — silent until the autumn recall.

But this summer, public dissenters on the government benches have become almost as numerous as joggers in Dublin's Phoenix Park, and hardly a day now passes without a loud moan or a grumbling warning being heard from one Coalition deputy or another, or from the not-so-independent who have also been vocal.

### REBELS

FitzGerald will, no doubt, be hoping that they will work this dissent out of their systems over the long break and return calmly to the lobby-fold next month, adhering to that principle, which is based so firmly in Free State parliamentary tradition, of never putting your vote where your mouth is.

But, just as the joggers in the park get addicted to the 'high' obtained by punishing themselves physically, political rebels can get carried away by the publicity they can obtain, particularly in their home constituency, where it is so welcome, by being 'bad boys' in the party.

Moreover, there is more than one reason for this dissent, thus

making it all the more potent. In terms of personal political survival, members of the government backbenches obviously wish, if possible, to put as much distance as possible, whilst still remaining in the party, between themselves and the Coalition leadership responsible for the non-stop budget. This instinct for self-preservation is currently perhaps even stronger in the Labour Party, but is nevertheless present, and much in evidence, in Fine Gael.

At the same time each of the Coalition parties is subject to internal strains: the Labour Party, split between pro-Coalitionists and anti-Coalitionists, and Fine Gael, between FitzGeraldites and the 'old guard'. The cabinet and senate appointments helped to emphasise both these divisions.

### FERTILE

The strains caused by the Coalition's harsh economic policies, therefore, have fertile ground to mature into open rebellion inside the parliament. The 'misunderstanding' which caused the Coalition's defeat over the leas-ceann comhairle's election — due to a sulking Richie Ryan, one of the senior old-guard members left out of the cabinet — could easily be repeated.



• The Coalition's pursuit of harsh economic policies, resulting in the continual decline of working class living standards, must surely herald major battles to be fought outside Leinster House

Since then, an equally senior 'sulker', former EEC commissioner Dick Burke, has publicly spoken of his disappointment of not being made foreign minister.

He also emphasised his new interest in a business, rather than a political, future. He is already earning more than three times his salary, as a deputy, from his positions as chairman of Player Wills, director of Abbey Life Assurance, and numerous 'consultancies', giving him a strong basis from which to exact revenge by being unavoidably absent for a crucial parliamentary vote.

Added to these are such Fine Gael backbenchers as Enda Kenny, Tom Enright and Paddy Hegarty, all of whom have publicly expressed concern about the growing unpopularity of the government's economic stringency.

And on Tuesday of this week, the chairman of Young Fine Gael, Jim Finucane, gave an outspoken warning of party grassroots' discontent if the present policy aimed at reducing living standards continued.

On the same night, Labour deputy John Ryan hinted strongly, in his constituency, of Tipperary, that he would not vote for the kind

of repeat budget that FitzGerald is promising for January. He criticised existing economic policies as going too far already and expressed major concern at public spending cuts and rising unemployment — commenting that 'Thatcherist policies' will not work.

### HIGGINS

Ryan's criticism followed quickly on similar dissension from the Labour Party's chairman Michael D. Higgins, who won a long-sought seat in Galway in the last election.

Higgins, a determined anti-Coalitionist, complained loudly that, so far, Fine Gael had got its own way in the Coalition. Higgins, during his years in the wilderness, has built himself the, not entirely undeserved, image as the last remaining principled socialist in the Labour Party. His principles could well prove a heavy burden, trooping through the Leinster House lobbies this winter.

Higgins has also kicked up a row at the refusal of ceann comhairle John O'Connell to hand over his European parliament seat, and implicitly criticised party leader Michael O'Leary for making a deal.

And, of course, before Higgins,

the Labour Party junior minister George Birmingham was raising his voice in protest at the 'piglets' speech of Fine Gael senior minister John Kelly. And so it goes on.

With such internal disarray, FitzGerald can count at least one blessing in that so far every indication supports the view that the 'independent socialists' are, though loud-mouthed, apparently determined to ensure, if at all possible, that an early election cannot consign them to political oblivion.

Small comfort for FitzGerald, though, faced with a by-election in Cavan/Monaghan, possibly in November, and the uncertainty which has continued about Paddy Agnew's seat in Louth.

### ASSAULT

In spite of this, and his unruly crew, FitzGerald appears to be ready to go down with all guns blazing if necessary, planning a further assault on living standards in a January budget, more public spending cuts, and a determined attempt at wage control.

The brutality of public spending cuts has been particularly well signalled already in the area of education, with the raising of the age-limit for school-going children and the more finer details such as refusing to allow Catholic children to travel on Protestant school buses in Wicklow.

With the Federated Union of Employers, backed up by the National and Economic Social Council, baying for a pay pause, the Coalition government may feel its hand strengthened in winning a pay deal way below the 22% inflation rate in the forthcoming 'national' wage-deal talks.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions has already shown its hand somewhat by agreeing to recommend talks to its special delegate conference at the end of the month, whilst the government and employers are indicating that they do not want a new 'national understanding'.

The strategy behind this being a willingness by both to take on, and if possible break, one of the stronger groups of workers, leading to demoralisation in the weaker sectors.

### THREAT

As a further threat to workers, the policy of deliberately allowing unemployment to rise was further underlined by the August figures, released this week and a record for the month in any year, showing nearly two thousand more out of work in the month.

More than twenty-two thousand extra workers in the twenty-six counties are now unemployed as compared with this time last year, making a total of nearly one hundred and thirty thousand jobless. On top of this, 68% of school-leavers in June have still to find work.

The developing economic situation may or may not break the Coalition government inside Leinster House, but there is certainly a major battle to be fought outside.

## Praghasanna ag ardú

LE TOMÁS Ó SE

NÍL teora ar bith leis na hardaithe praghasanna atá ag teacht go tiubh ceann i ndiaidh a chéile, go mórmhór i nDeisceart na hÉireann. Is beag nach bhfuil praghas gach rud ardaithne bliain anuas. Ní hamháin sin ach tá cuid den na praghasanna imithe suas faoi dhó nó faoi trí.

Níl an Rialtas ag déanamh iarracht ar bith chun smacht a choimeád ar na hardaithe seo. Agus

cheana féin tá siad agus lucht an chaipitil ag caint mar gheall ar srian a choimeád ar ardaithne páigh.

Sin é freagra na rachmasóirí i gcónaí.

Beidh oráinn oibrithe cur go dian i gcoinne an smaointeachas seo. Ní féidir linn brath ar cheannairí na gearchumhann chun sinn a chosaint. Bliain i ndiaidh bliana anois tá na saibhir ag éirí níos saibhre agus na boicht ag éirí níos boichte.

Caithfimid an smacht a thógaint

ar ais isteach inár lámha féin. Má tá dúl chun chinn le déanamh againn ní féidir linn troid agus ar lámha ceangailte. Caithfimid sinn féin a shaoradh ó laicnís na gcomhaontaithe páigh agus ceart a bhaint amach tre mheán stailceanna mas gá.

Tá lucht an rachmais á gcosaint féin tre ardaithne praghasanna agus tre mheán na pairitthe polaitiúla. Níl freagra sa chóras chaiteileach do riachtanaisí an phobail. Is í sóisialachas amháin atá an freagra sin le fáil. Ach caithfimid sin féin a chosaint idir an dá linn agus is tre ardaithne fíúntacha páigh amháin is féidir é sin a dhéanamh.





# HUNGER-STRIKERS UNDER FIRE

## British encouraged by Catholic church attacks

BY PETER ARNLIS

ATTACKS on the future of the hunger-strike by the Catholic Church have undoubtedly eased the pressure on the British government and encouraged British premier Margaret Thatcher to maintain her inflexibility.

Furthermore, the championing of demoralisation by Fr. Denis Faul, an assistant prison chaplain at Long Kesh, may well be the signal for a general assault on the hunger-strike by the likes of SDLP leader John Hume and arch-collaborator Gerry Fitt, who have been relatively silenced by the deaths of previous hunger-strikers and the popular support for the prisoners.

The hunger-strike is damaging the British image abroad, has led to an upsurge in Irish-American support for the republican cause, and has destabilised the nationalist political leaderships in Ireland (the Irish establishment), whose support, against the IRA, the British have usually been able to count upon.

Successive Dublin governments, the SDLP leadership, and the Catholic hierarchy have all witheld the full pressure they could muster against the British because they estimated that a victory for the prisoners would further damage British rule and their own influence, and would promote the IRA.

So, instead, they advocated middle courses and their own hot-potch 'solutions', anything to get the British government 'off the hook' and for the prisoners 'to save face'.

### THEORY

But their problem was that the British government did not want off the hook and was playing for high stakes — the demoralisation of the Irish people's struggle for self-determination — which neither the prisoners nor the IRA subscribe to, and which do not square with reality.

That is the Brits' major mistake — expecting that the final defeat of the IRA is the natural consequence of the hunger-strike ending without a

## TEN DEAD HUNGER-STRIKERS



Bobby Sands



Francis Hughes



Raymond McCreech



Patsy O'Hara



Joe McDonnell



Martin Hurson



Kevin Lynch



Kieran Doherty



Thomas McElwee



Micky Devine

victory — and that is why they have risked de-stabilisation in Ireland for that unattainable goal.

The Irish establishment has tended towards this ridiculous theory, at least in part, and that is why, once it sees any weakness at all in the hunger-strike (as with the present growing risk of family intervention), it will unleash a massive barrage of pressure on relatives, and propaganda attacks on the republican leadership, hoping to seal the fate of the hunger-strike.

The first seven families of the hunger-strikers all resisted the tremendous pressure on them to sanction medical intervention and break the hunger-strike. They all respected and honoured the wishes of their sons, and Mrs. Peggy O'Hara has written a moving account of her personal anguish at the time of her son Patsy's death (which was published in *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, August 8th).

It was in late July that Mrs. Catherine Quinn, unable to watch her son Paddy writhing in agony, signed for medical intervention. Her understandable action was congratulated by Bishop Edward Daly, in words which must have caused offence to the families of dead hunger-strikers whose devotion to their sons' last wishes apparently counted for nothing.

### TREND

Nevertheless, the trend for inter-

hunger-strike on August 20th, followed by Matt Devlin on Friday, September 4th, and by Laurence McKeown, last Sunday, September 6th.

Bobby Sands once wrote of how he suspected Fr. Toner, the Long Kesh prison chaplain, of playing a disastrous role during the first hunger-strike and of attempting to scuttle this one. That suspicion is no longer a suspicion, but about other clerics is supported by ample evidence.

No-one can criticise a mother, father or wife for taking their son or husband off hunger-strike. But once off, the prisoner's will to resume hunger-strike has almost certainly been broken by medication which creates a huge dependence on further nourishment.

The distressed family is ripe material for moral arguments, however much those arguments are in dispute with reality, and despite the consequences which almost certainly flow from this interruption in the hunger-strike.

### INTERRUPTIONS

Given the willingness of the prisoners to continue with the hunger-strike, the cost of these interruptions will be that the hunger-strike will go on and on until prisoners' deaths once again bring pressure to bear on Britain.

This has been made more difficult by the lull created in the fast and by the fact that the Catholic hierarchy which was under pressure and being exposed for not attacking Britain has breached the hunger-strike's united front of prisoners, relatives and supporters, through distressed and vulnerable families, and will now increasingly make the unilateral ending of the hunger-strike its focus of attention.

The last three medical interventions, the calls from Catholic priests, and the decision by INLA prisoners not to continue with the hunger-strike at the present ratio to IRA Volunteers, have all been seized upon to support the case that the hunger-strike is collapsing. (Of course, the slander that 'outside' dictates the hunger-strike has been conveniently dropped by the British government and the media; otherwise how explain the voluntary decision of the INLA prisoners in the H-Blocks not to continue with the fast, as before, by immediately replacing Micky Devine?)

Last Tuesday, former hunger-strikers Paddy Quinn and Pat McGeown, who had been in Musgrave Park military hospital, were sent back to the H-Block prison hospital where Liam McCloskey remains on hunger-strike. It is obvious that the British government's aim is to demoralise Liam McCloskey through the unwitting use of his two comrades.

The hunger-strike is not collapsing but continues. The next couple of weeks, during which supporters are not faced with the prospect of an imminent prison death, should be used to assess how best to overcome frustration and to build big pressures once again on the Irish establishment and, through it, on Britain.



■ FR. FAUL  
champion of demoralisation



■ MRS. O'HARA  
emotional account

vention was not established and the parents of Kevin Lynch and Kieran Doherty, and the next-of-kin of Micky Devine, supported their loved ones on the hunger-strike. The pressure was maintained on the British in Ireland and across the water. (Indeed international pressure continues to mount. Only last week, Governor Hugh Carey of New York strongly criticised the British government for not showing flexibility.)

It must be said that despite the ten horrific deaths of comrades on hunger-strike, there is no demoralisation within the H-Blocks and the commitment to hunger-strike, and the belief in hunger-strike as the only weapon for achieving their five demands, is genuinely adhered to by the blanket men.

It is outside the prison where attempts are being made to turn a snowfall of frustration into an avalanche. It began after Mrs. Quinn's intervention, and has gathered some momentum after three prisoners in a row were taken off the hunger-strike by their families when they lapsed into unconsciousness.

Pat McGeown was taken off

## FIVE MEN OFF THE FAST



Brendan McLaughlin



Paddy Quinn



Pat McGeown



Matt Devlin



Laurence McKeown



# Dundalk conference

**THE OPEN CONFERENCE** held by the National H-Block/Armagh Committee in a Dundalk hotel, last Sunday, showed that the campaign activists are far from demoralised despite the continued intransigence of the British government after six months of hunger-strike and ten deaths.

The conference was by far the committee's best-ever attended with nearly one thousand from all over the country participating in lively debate on the way forward for the campaign.

Although the discussion from the floor tended to be dominated — as usual, and not surprisingly — by familiar faces from political groups such as Sinn Féin, the IRSP, and People's Democracy, the attendance reflected the broader active interest in the campaign especially at local level. And, importantly, it was reported to the conference that there are now 426 local action groups whereas there were only twenty in June 1980 at the time of the last full national conference.

Those in attendance at the conference included Sean Mac Mathura, secretary of Conradh na nGaeilge, SDLP councillor Paddy Duffy, Longford councillor T. Carberry, Captain James Kelly of Arms Trial fame, and Owen Carron, MP, amongst many other political activists and prisoners' supporters of various nationalist hues.

A smuggled-out message of thanks from the H-Block blanket men, to the committee and to the thousands who have worked for their five demands, was read to the conference: the men re-affirmed their commitment to hunger-strike, and stated that the 'vindictive intransigence' of the British will be reversed when they realise 'how counter-productive is their death policy'.

A 'prison report' to the conference confirmed that hunger-striker Laurence McKeown had, that morning, been taken off the seventieth day of his fast by the intervention of his family.

An important statement from the O/C of the INLA prisoners in the H-Blocks was read out.

The INLA stated that: "Up until now we have been maintaining a ratio of one INLA prisoner for every three IRA prisoners. However, we have only twenty-eight protesting prisoners... We have decided not to replace Micky Devine, therefore, and any future volunteers will be placed on hunger-strike in a lower ratio to the IRA."

The INLA prisoners re-affirmed: "You can be sure of our full and militant support for the campaign. The record of our sacrifice is obvious to everyone, and is not open to question by the gutter press or anyone else."

## STOUTLY

The national committee's report was delivered by Bernadette McAliskey, who was later to chair the bulk of the conference competently and with necessary good humour.

She said, in part:

"That we should meet in conference with heavy heart and a nagging demoralisation being stoutly held at bay is totally understandable..."

"The five demands have not yet been won. To believe that the prime reason for that lies in the shortcomings of the national

committee, or the particularly reactionary personality of Mrs. Thatcher, is to avoid reality."

"The national committee has always asserted that the five demands will be conceded when the political consequences of refusing to concede outweigh those of conceding. That strategy has been correct, and, despite its reluctance to admit to reality, Britain has moved from her original position..."

"If we did not believe the prisoners' demands could be won, we would not be here. Our task here is to decide what we must do to win the demands and organise to do it..."

"The death of ten prisoners, the refusal of the Southern government to act, the refusal of most Northern councillors to quit their council perches, all interrelate to daunt the confidence of the committed supporter and the commitment of the less active, or inactive, sympathiser."

"Our central error here has been that we have not politically convinced the campaign militants why, and how, we should make demands of such groups as the SDLP, GAA, etc., pressurising them and widening the support beyond the committed anti-imperialist..."

"It is time we asserted, by organising effectively the combined and cumulative 'clout' of the mass of the people, who the people with the real 'clout' are..."

## EMOTIONAL

"We will not win the five demands by simply marching the

feet off ourselves or by bussing our existing support from county to county as each area feels the emotional need for a large demonstration. Nor by establishing a ritual cycle with each phase of the hunger-strike which culminates in funeral arrangements and is repeated as each new prisoner steps forward."

"Let there be no more begging or demanding meetings with Garret Fitzgerald until we have done our work and rendered it impossible for Fitzgerald to refuse and politically survive. Let us not march 'en masse' nationally until we have done the work to ensure a minimum of 100,000 up the Simmons-court Road."

"Let us not bicker over each other's trade union credentials or where, when and how the general strike should be called, but let us set to work to ensure that people take the floor in conference not to say who should make the call but who has pledged their word on making an answer."

"This is how the demands will be won. So, how do we set about building that power?"

"The campaign must be broadened. We must directly involve and integrate all those who support the five demands. The present national committee is narrower than its base. Our present structure makes it difficult to broaden effectively and, at times, our attitude doesn't help either..."

"The national committee recommends that, having elected the incoming national committee in accordance with previous procedure, a body comprising that national committee, county and city delegates from action groups, together with representatives or delegates of the various sectional interests, should be formed to assist and assess the implementation of national, specialised, and local policy,

and develop suggestions for the furtherance of the campaign. Ultimate authority remains with conference and between conferences with the national committee, but the middle body would be empowered to recall the national conference, as necessary..."

## HONESTLY

Bernadette McAliskey then pointed to important points of weakness in the campaign: especially, lack of consistent and effective trade union activity, lack of agreed electoral policy, and an acute lack of finance.

In conclusion she said:

"In presenting this address, the outgoing national committee has attempted to honestly appraise the campaign so that we can go forward from this conference not despondent but determined to force from the mass of sympathy and support for the prisoners an organised national movement that will attract to its ranks tens of thousands more, integrated and active in the campaign, so we can communally assert such pressure, by way of demonstration, popular vote, mass political and industrial action, as to create a momentum capable of winning the prisoners' demands regardless of the vagaries of those who claim to lead the nation, wield power, or possess 'clout'. It can be done, it must be done..."

"We seek only the five demands — no more — but to win the prisoners' five demands, if need be, we must be prepared to take the institutions of power in this country apart."

## TIER

It was decided to set up a three-tier national committee structure in order to incorporate different spheres of support and to facilitate the campaign leadership's contact with its grassroots.

Firstly, the national committee is to be thirty-one-strong, with twenty elected by conference, four Relatives' Action Committee nominees, and six places reserved for co-optations by the committee to broaden itself.

Secondly, the committee is to select out of its membership a fifteen-strong working executive to supervise business on a weekly basis.

And then, thirdly, there is the so-called 'middle tier' (between the national committee and local activists), as proposed in the national committee report, comprising the national committee itself, area representatives and sectional interest representatives.

The twenty committee members elected by conference were: Gerry Adams (Belfast), Chris Barry (Mayo), Paddy Bolger (Dublin), Christina Carney (Dublin), Vincent Doherty (Dublin), Christine Ni Elias (Dublin), Dave Farrell (Dublin), Sean Flynn (Belfast), Jim Gibney (Belfast), Joe Keohane (Kerry), Paddy Logue (Derry), Des Long (Limerick), Bernadette McAliskey (Coalisland), Mitchell Mc Loughlin (Derry), Daithi O Conaill (Cork), Caoimhin O Caolain (Monaghan), Fr. Piaras O'Duill (Dublin), Fergus O'Hare (Belfast), Seamus Ruddy (Dublin), and Joseph Stagg (Dublin).

## MOTIONS

Motions passed at conference re-affirmed the previous direction of

(continued on next page)



● Gerry Adams, vice-president of Sinn Féin, addressing the almost one thousand strong conference during one of the day's many lively debates



# The way forward

By  
Seamus  
Boyle



● Delegates, drawn from throughout Ireland, voting at last Sunday's National H-Block/Armagh Committee open conference in Dundalk

(continued from previous page)

the campaign: building a mass, peaceful protest movement aiming at awakening the national conscience to the plight of the prisoners and pressuring the 'power points' in this country, such as the Free State parties (particularly the Coalition), the SDLP and the Catholic hierarchy into backing the prisoners' five demands.

In a praiseworthy attempt to remedy an obvious deficiency, that is, the campaign's failure to make an impact on the trade union movement, many motions were passed urging a boycott campaign of British goods, the building of hunger-strike action committees in work places, and the generating of a campaign for a general strike in support of the prisoners.

However, much hot air was exuded, especially on the latter point, and particularly by the miniscule and desperately out-of-touch Irish Workers' Group, whose four thick-skinned members always make more noise and less impact than any other political group, with their obviously ridiculous calls for a general strike now!

But most heat was generated by the discussion and motions on electoral policy, with the republican pursuit of abstentionism, with respect to Leinster House and Westminster, being fiercely contested from every angle, although eventually being upheld by resolutions resoundingly passed.

In fact, as the committee's practice is merely to endorse candidates rather than to stand them, the sharp debate was somewhat off target, and it was made clear, anyway, that the Republican Movement would continue to support the committee and build the campaign no matter what electoral policy was adopted by the conference.

This debate on electoral policy unfortunately gave rise to an unhealthy tendency evident amongst some speakers, who engaged in pure demagoguery, and floor-stampers, whose undemocratic antics had absolutely nothing in common with the democratic traditions and principles of republicanism.

There was also some unnecessary confusion about the fact that while the campaign is obviously not party political, it is most certainly political. It is, in fact, the most highly political and pertinent campaign in the country today. (It is in the process, for example, of destroying the SDLP.)

And this confusion appears to have led some to believe that political groups should not be allowed their own individual profile within the campaign (such as giving out their own leaflets, selling newspapers, etc.) — a basic misunderstanding of the purpose of the campaign and of the limited nature of the alliance (the national committee and the local action groups) which projects the prisoners' cause.

## INCORRECT

In the lively debate, and in

motions carried, on 'the way forward', there was a widespread and positive feeling that, as an immediate priority, ordinary people should be informed and mobilised, rather than establishment politicians and bureaucrats lobbied and pleaded with.

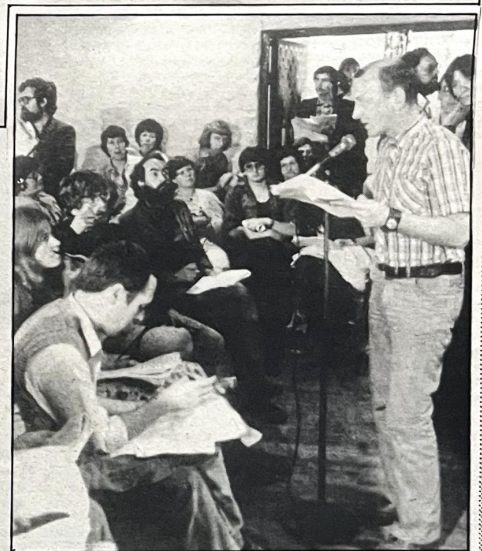
However, in this area of discussion, some activists' impatience at the campaign's failure to break Thatcher's intransigence became obvious, and some appeared to be drawing the incorrect conclusion that the committee's strategy of pushing the Irish establishment via popular pressure and lobbying is wrong.

In fact, the real problem is that the strategy has not been worked properly or fully, and much more work does need doing locally at the grassroots in order to build up irresistible pressure from below to make these forces move.

It must be realised, for example, that if Free State premier Garret FitzGerald cannot be embarrassed into meeting the prisoners' advocate, Owen Carron, then what hope is there of forcing the British government and its Northern Ireland Office into negotiating directly with the protesting prisoners?

If the SDLP cannot be pressurised off the local six-county councils then what hope is there of forcing a British Tory cabinet to do one of its U-turns?

If those who pose as the representatives and allies of the bel-



● Paddy Logue (Derry), one of the new members of the national committee

eaguered nationalist people cannot be moved then how can our enemies?

Any ultra-leftist or factional tendencies to reject pressuring the Irish establishment, to ignore cultivating majority middle-of-the-road nationalist opinion, or to campaign on the basis that republicans and their supporters alone can build the necessary movement, must themselves be firmly rejected despite the understandable frustration felt by activists and by prisoners'

comrades, relatives, friends and supporters at the mounting death toll in the H-Blocks.

Patience, hard slogging work, and keeping one's nerve on the road already mapped out, of broadening the base of support for the campaign, are what is required at this stage to win the prisoners' five demands, given that the blanket men themselves remain committed to dying rather than be broken, de-humanised, and criminalised by the British invader and their loyalist allies.



# Pat Sheehan

BY UNA O'NEILL

**TWENTY-THREE-YEAR-OLD** Belfast IRA Volunteer Pat Sheehan is, this Saturday, thirty four days without food in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh.

Although Pat has already lost more than two stone in weight, his fighting spirit and determination remain undaunted, and his only concern is for the continuation of the hunger-strike campaign, which he was the seventeenth blanket man to join on August 10th, for the achievement of the five demands in spite of Britain's criminalisation policy.

Pat Sheehan was born on May 28th, 1958, in Belfast, the second eldest in a family of four. His elder sister Louise, born in 1957, is single and is a qualified P.E. teacher. His younger sister Anne, born a year after him, got married just last week and works as a clerk.

Pat's younger brother Kevin, born in 1961, is serving a ten-year sentence in the H-Blocks, having been arrested in November 1979.

## MOTHER

Pat's mother was born Mary Dowling, from a Falls Road family. Her father, Jimmy Dowling, was the superintendent of the Falls Baths in the 'thirties and 'forties. As a result the Dowling children were all keen swimmers, and all four Sheehan children were taught to swim at a very early age by their mother.

Mrs. Sheehan's mother, Maggie Dowling (nee Bradley), who died in 1945, is described by a former friend, eighty-one-year-old Basil McLaughlin as, 'the first woman in Belfast to ever rattle a bin lid', in the days of the Black and Tans.

The Bradleys, a republican family from Ardoyne, got more than their fair share of the harassment and terror meted out to the nationalist population by the Black and Tans.

Maggie Bradley's brother, Hugh, was interned on the 'Argenta' in the early 'twenties; he later emigrated to the United States.

Another brother, Cahill, was hounded during the 'twenties. He became the first nationalist ever to be deputy lord mayor of Derry. He also sat in the six-county senate, until his death in 1957, as one of the few nationalists there.

Mary Dowling, Pat's mother, studied at St. Dominic's High School on the Falls Road. In 1956 she married Belfast man Hugh Sheehan and presently works as a clerk.

## FATHER

Hugh Sheehan, Pat's father, now fifty-four-years-old, was born into a family of Gaelic footballers and hurlers. His father, his four brothers and himself all played Gaelic games and appeared for St. Gall's GAC.

The Sheehans lived at the top of the Springfield Road. Hugh Sheehan's mother, Pat's grandmother, now aged over eighty, was born Mona McCarr, from a well-known republican family in Ballycastle.

Mona McCarr's brother, Patrick, one of the 'Murlough Bay Martyrs', was shot dead by the RUC on July 17th, 1921, as he was walking past Ballycastle barracks. Mona McCarr's cousin, Alex McBride, had been dragged from his home by the Black and Tans on June 12th, 1921, and murdered in cold blood.

Pat's father is a carpenter by trade. Self-employed for many

years, in 1972 he decided to run down his business and to seek employment following a lengthy stay in hospital, due to disc trouble, the result of a car accident and an unfortunate attempt at lifting heavy machinery by himself.

## MIXED

For the first six years of married life Hugh and Mary Sheehan lived in a house on Woodstock Road then, in 1962, moved to the Springfield Road area, where Pat grew up, in a comfortable semi-detached house on Isadore Avenue.

The Avenue was then 'mixed', meaning that three Catholic families were living there, but the Sheehans being the only ones with young children, Pat's playmates were all Protestants.

The street was quiet, the neighbours friendly. Pat started attending St. Gall's primary school, like his father before him, and was also beginning to learn the rudiments of hurling and Gaelic football.

Pat's mother remembers him as her 'best baby', who 'never looked for attention'. During Pat's first year at St. Gall's, his master told Mrs. Sheehan: 'He's so quiet you'd forget he was in the class.'

Pat did very well at St. Gall's, 'one of the best pupils I ever had,' says Br. Leopold, the headmaster. Former school-friend Brian Moore recalls that he and Pat used to go to each other's house to do their homework. Pat helped Brian with maths, in which he excelled.

Brian recalls walking home with Pat and being chased by loyalist youths as they were crossing certain streets: 'Pat's street was okay; but in other streets you had to run. That way Pat became aware at an early age that there was something wrong.'

## TENSION

Political tension rose in the late 'sixties. Yet the house in Isadore Avenue was rarely singled out for attention.

One Christmas Day, however, Mrs. Sheehan remembers that they were raided by the RUC. Apparently a neighbour had reported seeing a rifle fired from a window of the Sheehan house. Indeed, the RUC found a toy gun and some caps, a Christmas present which the boys had been 'testing' in the attic that morning.

In 1969 Pat passed his 'eleven plus' and was admitted to St. Malachy's college in north Belfast. His mother used to drive him to school every morning.

'One of these mornings was the first time I realised he was not a wee boy any more,' Mrs. Sheehan recalls. 'We got a flat tyre on the way to St. Malachy's. While I was panicking and wondering what to do, as St. Malachy's were very fussy about late-coming, Pat set about to change the wheel.'

'Because he was small then, and so quiet, you did not realise the talent was there. He only

## Portrait of a hunger striker



needed help to lift the spare wheel. We got to school in time.'

Because the Sheehans lived outside of what had become the nationalist ghetto of west Belfast, Pat had to be collected by car from his friends' homes and from Clonard Hall, to which he went with his friends on Saturday evenings, and sometimes on Wednesday evenings from the 'under eighteen' disco.

The Sheehans' house had become the occasional target for stone-throwing and threatening phone calls.

One morning in 1970, a gang of loyalist youths armed with bricks, cudgels and batons, came to the door to threaten the family. Mrs. Sheehan recognised only one of them: a young boy from Isadore Avenue.

The boy had been in and out of their house for years; Mrs. Sheehan had had to phone his mother more than once as the lad suffered from haemophilia and even a nose bleed required emergency treatment.

Mrs. Sheehan could not help asking him: 'Why, Thomas? Of all people, why are you here?' Years of uneasy peace came to an abrupt end when he answered: 'Because you have turned this place into an IRA den!'

## BARRACKS

At weekends Pat kept in touch with his old friends from the Clonard area. Every Saturday he would walk down to Clonard where he met his mates.

The British army were patrolling the streets, and nearly every Saturday Pat was stopped for a P-check. Many a time Pat's parents had to pick him up from Springfield Road barracks.

One such Saturday, in 1972, Mrs. Sheehan got a phone call from friends saying that Pat had been arrested and taken to Springfield Road barracks. On her way into the barracks she met two women, one of whom told her: 'I'm home from America, and I've just seen a child being battered by a soldier with a rifle and I'm wanting to complain about it.'

Mrs. Sheehan soon discovered that it was her son. She rang her doctor and a solicitor and finally got to see Pat. He had a huge bump on his head.

A British army major burst into the waiting room shouting, 'Whoever is going to make a complaint will be arrested!'

Nevertheless, a complaint was formally made, and Pat was able to leave the barracks with his mother and the two witnesses; but, as they were walking out, a Brit put his hand on Pat's shoulder and



● One-year-old Pat pictured in Ballycastle, 1959



● Pat (then aged two) and his elder sister Louise (aged three) in Ballycastle, 1960



● Pat (far right) following his first communion, in 1965, with: Anne, Louise and Kevin

re-arrested him, accusing him of having assaulted a soldier. 'It was a case of, 'you drop yours, I'll drop mine', they do it all the time,' Mrs. Sheehan states.

## SPORT

Pat worked well at St. Malachy's college. His favourite subjects were French and Irish.

In the Spring of 1972 he went to Paris on a school trip. The heavy ash-tray engraved with the omnipresent Eiffel Tower which he brought back to his mother from that expedition still has pride of place on the mantelpiece. Pat also spent several summers in the Gaeltacht.

In spite of a marked allergy to music lessons, which stirred his imagination into inventing the most unlikely excuses for missing them, Pat was always fond of music, Irish music especially, and liked to go to ceilis and sessions in the various Gaelic clubs.

From an early age Pat had taken a great interest in sport. In



● Louise Sheehan with Pat's father, Hugh, and mother, Mary

primary school, every June the children were brought to St. Patrick's training school, on the grounds of which St. Gall's sports day was held. Pat was in all the teams, took part in all the races.

On summer holidays his parents took the children to Cushendun or Ballycastle, and Pat spent his days outdoors, swimming and fishing.

Pat's house is full of all the medals and cups he won playing hurling and football for St. Gall's GAC, which since 1975 has ranked as one of the top four clubs in the county league.

Pat trained several times a week, right up to his arrest, and after his eighteenth birthday was playing in both the minor and senior teams.

Hugh Sheehan recalls that Pat did not like it too much when his parents came to watch him play, as he feared his father's critical eye.

Pat even tried boxing for a while, encouraged by the example of a friend of his father, Jim

McCourt, who had won an Olympic medal. But he returned to his first football.

In 1972, Pat joined a football team. According to a former friend, 'Pat was the kind of player who would expect to get it to such open displays of age of fifteen tried to be as older in order to get into the IRA sooner.'

was found out. He did not like too much to do door-to-door to do a bet on, it was then. Apart from feeling he frequently voiced his to such open displays members of the Flann members of the future IRA. Of always kept his involvement, even in those

HANDGUN One day, in September, Mrs. Sheehan had gone to see Pat (then aged fifteen) and his younger brother, Kevin,



# Intelligent, politically aware and an extremely cool operator



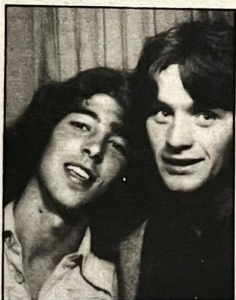
Pat's mother, at last Sunday's hunger-strike picket on the Falls Road.



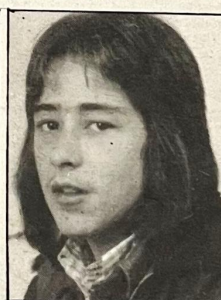
Pat, seen here taking a rest during the 1967 Christmas festivities with his mother at their Isadore Avenue home



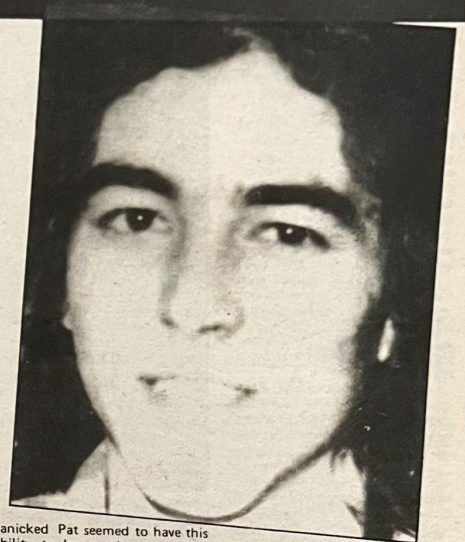
Louise and Pat on holiday in Tramore, Co. Waterford, 1974



Pat (left) with Ray Lewis, an old friend



Pat's younger brother, Kevin, pictured here in 1977, is now also in H-Block



panicked Pat seemed to have this ability to know what to do and when to get out of dangerous situations in times of intense street-fighting.

When he reached the required age he had no problems getting into the IRA and quickly moved in to positions of responsibility.

A comrade of Pat, who worked under him from 1977 until Pat's arrest in January 1978, recalls that Pat often drove the Volunteers of his IRA cell to their operational location as his nerveless impeccable driving was enough to instill confidence in his comrades.

Yet Pat was aching for action and occasionally got a replacement driver so as to be able to play his part.

Pat's comrade remembers all the roadblocks Pat drove them safely through, and more than once Pat had to make a quick decision, pretend to slow down and pull to the side as ordered by the RUC or Brit patrol, only to accelerate at the last second and turn into the next street.

One such narrow escape involved a ten-minute chase of Pat and his comrades by two 'pigs' and several land-rovers. The Volunteers managed to lose them and run away from the car but were spotted again and had to climb over several back walls before finally making their way to safety.

A certain speech by the infamous direct-ruler Roy Mason, in December '77, who 'had the IRA beaten', sparked off a successful Christmas bomb blitz, and Pat's cell was one of the most active in giving the lie to Roy Mason's claim.

'We'll see if Mason has us beat here,' Pat remarked cheerfully as he was driving his team from the city centre through heavy security after one such operation. One of the bombs had been wrapped as a Christmas box, with a nice bow, and left at one of the commercial targets by them with the remark: 'The Provies are not that bad now, they're giving you a Christmas box. You've got five minutes to leave the building. Merry Christmas!'

Always on the look-out for new targets, Pat was working very long hours for the IRA, what with

planning operations, driving the weapons to the required spot, and then the operations themselves.

## WORRYING

In the months preceding his arrest Pat's cell would carry out about five bomb attacks a week. Yet he managed to keep his family life separate from his republican involvement, mostly to save his parents from worrying.

One day, Pat and three comrades were standing at a street corner and suddenly Pat ran into the nearest shop. Everyone followed him and asked, 'What did you run from?' 'My ma, driving past in a car,' he said.

In safe houses Pat was always the quiet one, sometimes causing people to wonder what this inscrutable youth was thinking about. Soft-spoken and well-mannered he never hesitated to use his authority to make sure none of his comrades messed about in the houses that sheltered them.

Pat's comrades still feel the loss caused by his arrest in January '78, and one admits: 'He was a fantastic driver, a cool operator and a great Volunteer - very hard to replace.' He recalls Pat driving his cell back to base with his usual calm, singing 'Daddy Cool' as if to underline the obvious.

Although Pat always first opened 'Republican News' to the 'War News' page, his reading ranged from Irish history to books on foreign struggles, and while he is quite knowledgeable on the fall of Cuban dictator Batista, the latest book he asked for, from his parents, was 'Strumpet City'.

Pat's social life, although curtailed by the war, took him to discos in the Green Briar, folk nights in the PDF club, in Andersontown, and even the Ardoyne fleadh in August 1976.

## SHOT

He had gone there one night with a few friends, and when his mother did not see him the following morning and heard reports that a fellow had been shot in Cambria Street, and was in the Royal Victoria Hospital, she drove to Ardoyne and asked local

(Continued overleaf)

some friends whom they had invited for that evening. The Sheehans always preferred to collect their friends and to drive them home as loyalist assassination squads were on the prowl then and frequently attacked people walking in and out of nationalist districts at night.

The door bell rang. Mr. Sheehan opened the door and was met by a young man wearing an anorak. He had never seen his face before. On the other side of the hedge the low purring of an engine and the top of a man's head indicated that this unexpected visitor was not alone. The man with the anorak asked for Pat, adding that the fellow on the bike wanted to speak to him.

Mr. Sheehan immediately grew suspicious, and shouted towards the back of the house to a friend in the sitting room: 'Eugene, come here quick!'

The man pulled out a hand gun and fired twice, once in the direct-

ion of Hugh Sheehan, missing him by inches, and the second time aiming at his daughter, Louise, who was walking down the hall to enquire about the fuss.

The bullet narrowly missed her too and went through a table. The bullet hole is still there, in the Sheehan's dining-room table, a constant reminder of that frightening evening.

As Hugh Sheehan had been able to see one of the two men, the Sheehans feared for their lives and fled to safety that very night, to Hugh's mother. Later, they got a house on the Falls Road near St. James'. No-one was ever charged for the attempted murder.

Pat and his younger brother Kevin, who had followed him to St. Malachy's the previous year, had to switch over to De La Salle secondary school. Kevin lost a lot of his interest for studying from that moment. Pat had just started his fifth year, and tried his best to settle down and finish his 'O' level courses.

Pat stayed at La Salle until the summer of '74 and then, at the age of sixteen, decided to attend the College of Business Studies, which he did, on and off, until 1977.

He passed six 'O' levels: Maths, English, Irish, French, Religion, and Metalwork. He was preparing for the ONC in Business Studies in 1977 when he decided to interrupt his school career because of his political involvement. His brother Kevin, had been so upset by the attempted assassination in 1973, and the subsequent move, that he lost interest in school and decided to follow a shorter City and Guilds course to become an electrician.

## RELIABILITY

Pat's coolness and reliability while performing a task had got him quickly noticed in the Fianna. 'If he could get away with walking, he would never run,' is the description given by a former comrade of Pat's behaviour during a riot. While others might have



# Pat Sheehan

(continued from previous page)

people if they had seen Pat the previous night. He was finally tracked down to Tennent Street barracks and the full story of what had happened began to emerge.

Unable to get a taxi, Pat and two of his friends had begun walking home from Ardoyne when a car drove up behind them. One of Pat's friends, 'Bap' Overend, started running, and did not hear the men in the car saying 'police'. He was shot in the leg, and Pat and his mates were arrested.

'Bap' was later charged with having a gun, such a ridiculous allegation that it was dismissed by the court once its purpose had been fulfilled, that is, preventing the young men from starting a legal action.

One Christmas morning, Pat's mother came home to find Pat's clothes lying in a basket, covered in blood. She ran upstairs. Pat was found asleep in bed.

He had come home from a dance the previous night and while driving along the M1 with a crowd of friends, spotted a man lying on the side of the motorway.

When they stopped to enquire, the man got up and started running across the bog meadows at the bottom of St. James'. Pat ran after him, finally caught up with him and, having reassured him, got him to hospital.

The man was a merchant seaman who had foolishly decided to go to a Shankill Road bar for a quiet drink. There, the presence of a strange face aroused suspicions and a gang took him out, savagely beat him up, and left him for dead at the roadside.

## LIKEABLE

Yet, in spite of these tribulations, Pat enjoyed going out with his friends, and although his wit often hit its target he is described as 'extremely likeable', and quite a success with the female dancers who were the only reason why he would ever consent to stepping on to the dance floor. Always neatly dressed, Pat preferred casual wear, denims and the like.

The seriousness of Pat's republican involvement did not prevent him, on rare occasions, from 'acting his age'. His old friend Brian recalls that one afternoon as Pat, himself, and another childhood friend, Ray Lewis, were taxi-ing 'up the road' and into a road-block set up by the notorious Marine Commandos, Pat shouted abuse at them from the open window.

The taxi was stopped and as they all got out Pat calmly slipped away in the company of two girls who were walking past, waving back at his unfortunate friends, a big grin on his face. Brian and Ray were arrested, roughed-up, and dropped by the Marines at the top of Hannahstown Road, a long walk from home.

## ARRESTED

Pat was arrested from his home one morning of January '78. After a day in Castlereagh interrogation centre, his parents got a phone call asking them to go to Donegal Pass barracks, where Pat was about to be subjected to an identity parade.

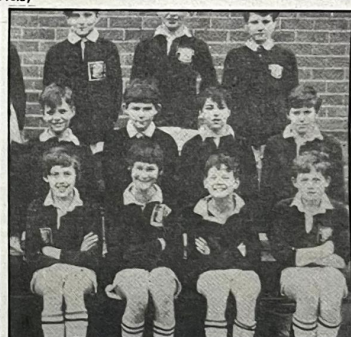
Pat, with the bedraggled look of one who has slept overnight in RUC custody, stood in a line-up of fairly ordinary young men



● St. Gall's Sports Day, 1968, shows Pat leading the field in the relay



● St. Malachy's senior football team, 1976, with Pat (centre, middle row) and Micky Culbert (right, front row) who is now on the H-Block blanket protest



● St. Malachy's 'under 13' 'A' team with Pat third from left in the middle row

taken from the street. Of the three 'eye-witnesses', one picked him, the other two did so at first, and then retracted their statements.

The witnesses had been put together in a room with photographs of Pat spread out on a table. The RUC were not going to take any chances.

Two days later, Pat was charged with causing an explosion the previous week at John Hand's 'Cash and Carry' in Lincoln Street.

Pat's parents happened to know where he was on that morning; he had been interviewed about a job at Gloucester House, and a member of the Department of Manpower staff gave evidence on his behalf.

Yet, after thirteen months on remand, first in Long Kesh then in Crumlin Road jail, Pat was tried in March '79 in a Diplock court and sentenced to a harsh fifteen years, which seemed even more cruel when the next case, a UVF man caught after shooting through the door of a house, got ten years.

## SILENCE

As soon as he was taken to the H-Blocks Pat joined the blanket and no-wash protest. In H3, he was sometimes called 'the quiet man' as he never talked unless he felt it absolutely necessary. He is particularly remembered for his long silence as a quiz got under way. Then an hour or two later he

would be heard calling out the number of his cell and his answer.

He loved chess and although the late Kieran Doherty was the undisputed champion, and the only one not to need a chessboard diagram to play, Pat held his own remarkably well, and tended to use psychology in his tactics. Games would last up to three days.

Pat's legendary affection for his mattress had him carve a chess board on the ceiling of his cell so as to be able to ponder on the situation while having a little rest!

Yet, like 'Big Doc', Pat was singled out for beatings because of his self-confidence and his absolute refusal to be broken by the warders. His swagger and slow delivery have him nicknamed 'John Wayne' by the warders and even during times when the beatings relented, one of the few who 'got it' was Pat.

## LAUGH

Actively involved in the cultural life of H3, Pat was in the middle of all the debates, on a variety of topics from abortion to euthanasia. And his ability to keep his cool in all circumstances helped him to develop a remarkable skill in smuggling letters and tobacco.

His characteristic laugh identified him in this world of sounds which is the H-Blocks, 'like a sneer', according to a former blanket man Harry

Robinson, who spent over two years in prison with Pat.

Harry recalls Pat's interest in international news and, amongst the usual chit-chat about sport, a long conversation he had with Pat on the methods Castro had used to gain support while his guerrilla army was fighting Batista.

"Pat," Harry recalls, "was always trying to win support and explain what the struggle was about. He wrote to many trade unionists in Ireland and abroad to explain about the five demands."

## TROUBLE

Pat's parents, in the months coming up to his arrest, had slowly realised that their son was actively involved. Yet, as Pat wrote to them in a letter when he was twenty-one days on hunger-strike: 'Since I was about fourteen, I've brought you a lot of troubles and heartache.'

"The trouble he gave us?" Mrs. Sheehan exclaims, recalling the letter, and as if answering her son face to face.

"It's the trouble the Brits gave him! If you weren't a republican the Brits would make you into one."

In the mid-seventies, Mrs. Sheehan would have described herself as 'a moderate mother' and 'an SDLP voter'.

She recently stormed out of a meeting of hunger-strikers' relatives with the SDLP.

"After me canvassing for them

and voting for them all these years, the first thing I asked of them, they said 'no,'" she says referring to the SDLP's refusal to withdraw from local councils.

Does Margaret Thatcher and her government, and all the previous British governments, fully understand the profound effect of all these years of oppression, and finally of Thatcher's death policy, on ordinary, 'moderate' families, and on young, intelligent, generous youngsters?

All the various strands of Pat's life, from his stable family background, to the storm which started shaking Irish society in the late 'sixties and caused him to take up arms for the liberation of his country, all those facets of his young life reflect the same image: that of an extremely strong character at peace with himself, even in his adolescence, because of an acute awareness of 'what is to be done'.

## HEART-BREAKING

As Pat is about to start his sixth week on hunger-strike, it is worth reading his own words as he wrote them for his parents, on the twenty-first day of his fast, August 30th last.

"Dear Hugh and Mary,

"This is probably the last letter you will receive from me from the H-Blocks as I expect to be moved to the prison hospital some time this week. (In fact he was not moved then.)

"I know the next few weeks are going to be a very unpleasant and heart-breaking experience for you, to say the least, but I ask you not to mourn for me when I do die. I wouldn't want that.

"Although I have a lot to answer for, I believe that I will be going to a place free of the trials and tribulations of this life.

"Since I was about fourteen, I've brought you a lot of troubles and heartache, and you have always stood by me through thick and thin, and for that I am eternally grateful.

"It breaks my heart to think of how much suffering you are going through at present, but I know you will stand by me until the very end.

## GOOD

"Don't think that I don't remember all the good times. These days those thoughts are the foremost in my mind, especially the time in Cushendun and Ladore and Christmas dinners when we were all together.

"But having said all that I have no regrets about what I am now doing. If I didn't believe that we are right, or that we will eventually break the Brits, I wouldn't be on the hunger-strike.

"There's a piece I read from the Bible pretty often which helps me a lot, and I think it should help you also. It's from 'Romans', Chapter 5: 'We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us.'

"Anyway I'm still keeping okay and have no medical complaints so far, although still have the constant craving for food. A packet of cream crackers and cheese would go down well or even duckling 'a la orange'.

"I'll have to finish off here, but I'll see you on Monday 7th. Give Louise and Anne my love and take care of yourselves.

"God bless, all my love, Patrick."



# hunger-strike.... hunger-strike.... hunger-strike.... hunger-strike

## North

NORTHERN protest activities over the past week have continued to be carried out with a vigour and frequency which belie current, wishful media speculation about the hunger-strike 'collapsing'.

At the same time it must be said that the 'tail-off' in many areas — while understandable given the duration of the hunger-strike — must be reversed as a matter of priority in order to parallel the continuing level of sacrifice on the part of the prisoners themselves.

The key-note of the campaign was again spelt out this week by Owen Carron, MP, at a rally in Lurgan on Tuesday night: "We stand fully behind the prisoners and we will organise such a campaign that all over the world Britain will continually be reminded of the brutal barbarism in the H-Blocks."

A march and rally took place in west Belfast on the evening of Thursday week, September 3rd, with several hundred people from the lower and mid-Falls areas assembling at Dunville Park or joining in as the march made its way up the Falls Road.

Led by the Clonard Martyrs' band, demonstrators paused briefly outside the home of hunger-striker Pat Sheehan — where they were addressed by his mother — in the St. James' district, and again in the same district, outside the home of hunger-striker Bernard Fox — where marchers were addressed by a brother of Bernard's.

The march then proceeded to a rally outside Andersonstown barracks, meeting up there with a contingent of Andersonstown marchers who had come from the home of hunger-striker Jackie McMullan. The rally was chaired by national committee member Maura McCrory, and speakers were Paul McDonnell — brother of the late Joe McDonnell, and Bernadette McAliskey.

That same evening, in Derry, a rally at the grotto followed a torchlight procession through the Bogside; while in Randalstown, County Antrim, the weekly march to Whitehill — Laurence McKeown's townland — was well attended.

On Friday, September 4th, one thousand people attended another torchlight procession through the County Derry town of Dungiven — home of hunger-striker Liam McCloskey — which ended with a rally at the castle addressed by veteran republican Sean Keenan of Derry and Mrs. McCloskey, Liam's mother.

Belfast activities included 'white-line' pickets from Castle Street, in the city centre, to Lenadoon in west Belfast; from Poleglass to Twinklough; and at Newington/Cavehill in north Belfast.

The weekly picket continued at Waterloo Square in Derry city on Saturday, with veteran republican Barney McFadden among the speakers, and in west Belfast the carnival site behind Andersonstown leisure centre was the scene of a fast and vigil which extended over the weekend.

The vigil at the Elk Bar, in Toomebridge, on the County Derry side, continued as usual on Saturday.

Last Sunday morning, September 6th, in Belfast, the mid-Falls hunger-strike committees held co-ordinated 'white-line' pickets outside several churches. As a follow-up on their theme, 'Year of the hunger-strike', they staged a march and rally that afternoon with various groups assembling at different points in west Belfast to march to a rally on the Falls Road, outside Dunville Park. The gathering was addressed by Mrs. Sheehan, mother of hunger-striker Pat Sheehan, and by Liam Shannon of the ex-prisoners' association.

Later, on Sunday evening, the newly-formed Thomas McElwee Sinn Féin cumann, from Greenlough, in South Derry, marched from Smithtown cross-roads to Glady corner.

On Monday, the emphasis shifted back to Belfast with 'white-line' pickets at Turf Lodge, Springfield Road and Shaws Road; together with the weekly protest outside Andersonstown barracks, by marchers who had assembled at the Busy Bee.

On Tuesday night, several thousand attended a rally in Lurgan, which began in the Teghnevan estate and ended in North Street. Peter Corey of Lurgan Sinn Féin chaired the meeting and the main speaker was recently-elected MP, Owen Carron.

Owen Carron said: "This is not a



● Relatives of three dead County Derry hunger-strikers at a torchlight protest in Dungiven on Friday, September 4th



● On the Falls Road, last Sunday



● Falls taxi-drivers show support

time for despair. What has happened is understandable. We must never forget that men gave their lives for five demands, and those demands must, and will, be won.

"People said we could not win Fermanagh and South Tyrone, yet the people stood behind the prisoners. I believe we can win the five demands and will do so when all the Irish people stand together and say clearly that they support the prisoners."

"Thatcher thinks she can break the hunger-strike. She thinks she can ride the storm out. She will not. We stand fully behind the prisoners and we will organise such a campaign that all over the world Britain will continually be reminded of the brutal barbarism in the H-Blocks. Victory to the hunger-strikers!"

Back in Belfast, at noon that day, patrons of the Shamrock social club, in north Belfast's Ardoyne district, had completed their seven-day token fast, having lost over a stone in weight apiece, and having raised a total of almost £1,000.

Patrons of the Martyrs' Memorial Club in Ardoyne immediately commenced another seven-day fast, due to end next Tuesday, September 16th.



● Picketers outside the RVH hospital in Belfast this week, where hunger-striker Jackie McMullan used to work as a clerk



# hunger-strike.... hunger-strike.... hunger-strike.... hunger-strike

## South

IN SPITE of last Sunday's H-Block conference in Dundalk, which was the focus of attention for hunger-strike campaigners the previous week, there was still a high level of local activity in the twenty-six counties.

On Thursday week, September 3rd, there was a major rally in County Leitrim, where almost two thousand people marched through Drumshanbo to a meeting which was addressed by Owen Carron, MP; former Fianna Fail minister Kevin Boland; Jim Gibney of the National H-Block/Armagh Committee; Goretti McDonnell, wife of the dead hunger-striker Joe McDonnell; and recently-released Armagh prisoner Silé Darragh.

The following night Owen Carron addressed a well-attended fund-raising ceili in Carrickallen, County Leitrim, and a similar function was held at Drumkeeran on Monday.

Also on Thursday week, in County Clare, there was an attendance of five hundred at an H-Block concert in Lisdoonvarna. A standing ovation was given at the event to a brother of the dead hunger-striker Patsy O'Hara, Tony, himself just released from the H-Blocks. The gathering was also addressed by Sinn Féin vice-president Daithí O'Connell.

On the same day, in County Mayo, a hunger-strike information stall set up in Swinford attracted considerable local interest. The following day, in Tipperary town, another information centre was opened and has remained open since then.

Such caravans, stalls and premises have become a permanent feature in cities and towns all over the twenty-six counties.

Last Saturday, September 5th, over three hundred people took part in a march in Ballybofey, County Donegal. At a meeting which followed, speakers included Owen Carron, veteran Derry republican Sean Keenan, and Ballyshannon Sinn Féin councillor Anthony O'Malley Daly.

In Castleblayney, County Monaghan, local action group members began a token forty-eight hour fast, on Saturday, in the town centre.

In Ennis, County Clare, a public meeting, attended by about one hundred and fifty people, was addressed by local speakers.

A large placard parade was held in Dublin on the same day, marking, in particular, the eve of the All-Ireland hurling final. About one thousand people marched through the centre of the city to a meeting at the GPO.

Last Sunday morning, hunger-strike supporters in Ennis, County Clare, were also aiming their activity at the All-Ireland final with a poster picket lining each side of the main Galway to Dublin road as thousands of fans travelled to the match.

In County Donegal, on Sunday, there were marches in Buncrana and Bundoran.

Later, in the evening, four H-Block activists returning to Cogh from the Dundalk conference were arrested in Dublin and held until lunchtime on



● Daily picket mounted by Walkinstown, Dublin, hunger-strike supporters, last Tuesday



● Continuous daily picket of the British embassy in Dublin, Wednesday, September 9th

Monday at the Bridewell Garda station. All their conference documents were confiscated and attempts were made to elicit from them details about what took place.

Hunger-strike activity in Kerry has also been continuing at a high level in recent weeks. The Fleadh Ceoil in Listowel, at the end of August, saw major action with large marches and meetings on each of the three days. An information centre was maintained in a caravan in the town square. There was similar activity, the following week, in Tralee, for the Festival of Kerry.

On Sunday 30th August, there was a major march and meeting in Ballylongford, and at a public meeting in the parish hall there, the following Tuesday, speakers included Fianna Fail senator Dan Kiely and the Fianna Fail chairman of Kerry county council, Eamonn Walsh.

In County Cavan, recent activity has concentrated on a petition to local Leinster House members which has been circulating around the county.

During the week there has also been publicity for the hunger-strike centred on a number of individuals in the twenty-six counties.

Honeymooning father-of-thirteen Hugh Carey, governor of New York told reporters in Dublin that the British government were being 'implacable, obstinate and stubborn' in not reaching a solution to the hunger-strike. However, he went on to express strong support for the 'policy adopted by the FitzGerald government' on the issue and expressed concern about the increase in support for the IRA, both in Ireland and America, as a result of the hunger-strike.

Also moved by the de-stabilising effects of the hunger-strike was Liam

Hyland, the Fianna Fail deputy for Leix/Offaly. He told a local party meeting that action had to be taken before it is too late.

The failure of the 'democratic process' is having serious effects, he said, especially on the 'impressionable young population'. Too many 'reasonable people in public life' have remained silent in the hope that a solution could be found and their silence has been interpreted as an indication of complacency and a lack of interest, he said.

Jim Kemmy, the Limerick independent deputy, again bared his teeth last week having, with fellow independent Noel Browne, rejected an invitation from Paddy Agnew, TD, to visit him in the H-Blocks before speaking without full information on the issue.

This time Kemmy attacked his fellow trade unionists in the Dublin branch of the Bricklayers' Union for passing a mot-



● Kerry GAA man Joe Keohane, controversy flared after his election to the National H-Block/Armagh Committee

ion supporting the prisoners' five demands.

Kemmy attempted to brand the proposer of the motion as a racist who had just returned from working in South Africa. Johnny Wolfe, who proposed the motion, hit back publicly, stating that he had never worked in South Africa and had lived in Dublin for the past five years.

Kemmy also found himself in trouble at home in Limerick, with a letter from a group of corporation workers in last week's 'Echo' expressing disgust at his pro-Thatcher stance since his election.

There has been controversy too around last Sunday's election of Joe Keohane of the Kerry GAA to the National H-Block/Armagh Committee.

Keohane, a Kerry selector, former All-Ireland star, and one of the best known GAA officials in the country, has been attacked by anti-republican senator John A. Murphy and the consistent Dublin GAA stirrer Tom Wolfe.

Keohane's involvement in 'politics' however, was defended by GAA president Padraig McFlynn and Kerry county board chairman Frank King. Hardly surprising, indeed, in an organisation which has launched countless politicians on the basis of their prowess on the playing field.

## Formholadh do Mhíchéal Rua

Seo leacht a thug comraidí de Mhíchéal Ó Dáimhín sna H-Blockanna ar chloisnín do go raibh Mhíchéal marbh. B'é Mhíchéal an deichiú fear a fuair bás ar stailc ocras sna H-Blockanna.

BA MHAITH liom ómós a thabhairt do laoch óg eile a thug a raibh aige ar son cuis na hÉireann. Micheál Ó Dáimhín as Doire Colm Cille a fuair bás anseo i gcarcair na Ceise Fada. Dála a chomrádaithe chaith sé seal fada anseo ar an agóid phluide agus ar an agóid shalachair.

Ceithre bliana a bhí sé faoi ghlas. Ní

raibh ann ach fear óg, ach fear ab ea é a raibh grá agus dóchas mór aige dá thír is dá mhuintir. Gan amhras bhí sé an-toilleannach is an-dionbhálta ag obair is ag troid chun fuí bás d'fáil ar son saoirse na tíre seo. Seasann a fobairt uasal mar chruthúnas ar sin.

I ngéibheann dó, chuir sé suim mhór i dteanga agus i stair na nGael. Thosaigh sé ag foghlaim na Gaeilge, is le himeacht ama déirígh sé ní ba lófa.

Fear an-chliste, lan de chiall ab ea Micheál Rua. B'shin an airm a thugamar air. Bhíodh áthas an domhain air do bheith páirteach sna conspóidí is pléanna a bhíodh ar siúl sna sciatháin. Sin é an cineál fir a bhí ann.

Fíor shóisialaí ab ea é. D'aithin sé fadó

agus é ina ógánach nach mbeadh fíor síocháin agus ceart le fáil in Éirinn fad is bhí na Sasanaigh is na Caipitigh náisiúnta ar rialú a mhuintire. Ghlac sé go hiomlán le teagasc an Chonghaligh.

D'aithin sé freisin nach mbeadh ach an t-aon glé amháin chun saoirse a bhaint amach. 'Sé sin síl na troda. I ndeireadh na dála nuair nach raibh na meáin troda aige bhain sé feidhm as an t-aon ghleas amháin a bhí fágtha aige, a chorp féin. Anois tá deireadh curtha lena thadhfulaingt. Tá sé imithe chun Doire Colm Cille, a chre dúchais féin.

Cuimhnímís ar a fobairt uasal an lá seo, is guimís chun Dé ar a shon.





# hunger-strike....hunger-strike....hunger-strike....

## Abroad

ALTHOUGH protest activity abroad and interest in the hunger-strike has ebbed and flowed in size over recent months, there is a permanency about it which, without doubt, remains an uncomfortable pressure on the British government.

A few recent newspaper editorials and articles from around the world illustrate the point.

Zimbabwe's leading daily newspaper, *The Herald*, carried a strong editorial on Wednesday, August 19th, entitled 'the iron lady' in which it condemned Thatcher's total lack of compassion. The previous Friday, the same paper carried an article analysing the road to a united Ireland.

*The Australian*, of August 22nd carries an editorial headed 'Ulster: time to quit', in which it urges British withdrawal, although in favour of an independent six-county state. The hunger-strike and the by-election victories have changed things greatly and it can "no longer be claimed that the republican movement has no popular support," the paper says.

The *Moscow News* of Sunday 30th August carries an article from its London correspondent slamming the British government's handling of the crisis and its attempts to cover its responsibility in an avalanche of propaganda.

Meanwhile, protest activity continues. In the United States, the New York demonstration in front of the British consulate last Saturday, September 5th, drew fifteen hundred people and was addressed by state assemblyman John Murtagh.

Last Sunday, a major rally was held in the Catskills resort area which drew participants from across north-eastern states.

Last Monday, September 7th, President Reagan arrived in New York for a meeting with Mayor Koch and was confronted by two hundred demonstrators demanding intervention in the hunger-strike crisis.

Hunger-strike supporters in Daly City, California, began a 'Boycott British' campaign by picketing a British merchant ship, 'The Colombia Star', at nearby Oakland.

In Australia, the hunger-strike begun by Sydney H-Block campaigner Ned O'Connor in solidarity with the hunger-strikers is reported to be continuing. He is demanding Australian government support for the prisoners and has attracted statements of support from many members of parliament. So far, O'Connor, who began his fast on August 9th, has not responded to a message from the H-Block protesting prisoners in which they requested him to end his fast.

In Flanders, the Werkgroep Ireland solidarity group's recent activities have included information displays on the hunger-strike at the Guides and Boy Scouts Annual Meeting and at a major festival in the Devine area. Hunger-strike wall slogans are much in evidence and the window of an insurance company displaying photos of the British royal wedding was covered, last weekend, with posters of the ten dead hunger-strikers.

In Paris, on Wednesday, September 9th, there was a picket in front of the British embassy which was attended by Socialist Party members of parliament. And a letter was handed in to the presidential house from a group of leading French intellectuals asking President Mitterand to intervene in the hunger-strike at his meeting with Margaret Thatcher the following day.

## Britain

THE effects of the hunger-strike on opinion in Britain have had a much deeper effect than protests from the Irish community there and their immediate supporters.

Not only has the occupation of Ireland by Britain taken a more central position for the British left, but the silence of others on Ireland has also been breached. The hunger-strike and on British withdrawal continue to be made, often coming from some unexpected sources.

One recent example of this is a



● Picketers at the TUC's annual conference in Blackpool, last Monday, had marched there from Manchester over the weekend



● Picketers outside Westminster Cathedral in London, last Saturday, were threatened by off-duty Brits and moved on by the police

letter to the archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Robert Runcie, from nine Church of England clergymen in Oldham, near Manchester, urging him to press the British government to end the H-Block crisis.

Writing that they are 'moved and shocked' by the hunger-strike deaths, the nine churchmen say that the British argument that the republican prisoners are 'terrorists and criminals' has been 'blown apart by the hunger-strike deaths'. They go on to urge their 'fellow British to find a new understanding and sympathy for the people of Ireland and the agony of their struggles.'

And this month's issue of the English Catholic monthly magazine *'The Clergy Review'* has called on English Catholics 'to lead their countrymen to a full recognition of the wrongs done to Ireland in the past.'

The article says that the Catholic church in Britain has been so anxious not to allow itself to be identified with the Irish cause that it has rendered itself 'practically speechless'. At the same time, it argues, the Catholic church in Ireland, while far from speechless, is just as restricted in its political and cultural awareness.

Christian church leaders should make a supreme effort, it submits, to see themselves not as pastors of particular sections of the population of Britain and Ireland, but as jointly responsible for everyone without distinction.

The impact of Ireland on the British Labour Party continued to be much in evidence during the week as the party prepares for its annual conference, at the end of the month, where the debate on a united Ireland will be a major one for the first time in recent years.

The significance of the shift in opinion was illustrated in a new Labour magazine *'New Socialist'*, just issued, where, in response to a questionnaire, all three of the contenders for the party's deputy leadership — Denis Healey, Tony Benn and John Silkin — expressed support for the idea of Irish unity, although to differing degrees.

In an interview with *The Irish Times*, last Tuesday, September 8th, Tony Benn expressed the view that British public opinion was quite clearly in favour now of a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland. He condemned Thatcher's handling of the hunger-



● An unusual standard bearer for the IRA in the Swiss town of Biel

strike and expressed the view that the fast looked as though it would go on and on.

The controversial interview given by Greater London Council leader Ken Livingstone to the British Forces Network, in which he gave his opinion that British soldiers should refuse to operate in the North of Ireland has continued to have reverberations following a decision not to transmit it.

Speaking on local LBC radio in London, Tony Craig, who did the interview with Livingstone, slated the Ministry of Defence for its political censorship.

A day-long seminar on the British Labour movement and Ireland, held in Coventry last Saturday, September 5th,

was organised by the Coventry Trades Council and chaired by its president Colin Lindsay. About one hundred people took part.

At the seminar the significance of British withdrawal from Ireland as a key issue in British Labour politics was analysed. The fifty resolutions on Ireland at the forthcoming Labour Party conference were strongly welcomed, as was a report from the Labour Committee on Ireland which told of that group's considerable success in gathering support for its aims of a united Ireland, an unconditional withdrawal of troops, an end to the loyalist veto and backing for the prisoners' five demands.

It was pointed out that the H-Block campaign in Birmingham is now the biggest left-wing pressure group in the city, outstripping the campaigns on El Salvador and Poland and able to draw on the support of large numbers of activists. It is, significantly, far from being dominated by Irish expatriates.

One area which remains entrenched, however, was reported to be the Trade Union Congress (TUC), the leadership of which continues to block advancement on the Irish question. Their main weapon in this was identified as the existence of the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions which is dominated by loyalists. The traditional role of this committee, it was stated at the seminar, was to defend Protestant jobs against Catholics, rather than to protect workers from the bosses.

The TUC's annual conference began in Blackpool, last Monday, September 7th, and a three-day march to there in support of the hunger-strikers began from Manchester on Saturday morning. Meetings were held in Bolton and Preston en route, and in Blackpool on arrival.

Meanwhile, other protests last weekend included a picket outside Westminster Cathedral in London on Saturday afternoon. The thirty demonstrators came in for considerable harassment from off-duty soldiers from nearby Victoria barracks. Black flags were torn down and wreaths kicked about.

When a group of soldiers arrived on the scene with a can of petrol, threatening to burn the protestors, police moved in and took the opportunity of dispersing the picket.

## WHAT'S ON

**HUNGER-STRIKE MARCH**  
2.30 p.m. Saturday 12th September  
Assemble Dun Laoghaire shopping centre  
March to British military attache's residence, Gleneary

**DUN LAOGHAIRE**  
Dublin

**FUND-RAISING SOCIAL**  
8.30 p.m. Saturday 12th September  
44, Parnell Square  
**DUBLIN**  
Admission £1  
Organised by Liberties Sinn Féin

**LIAM LYNCH COMMEMORATION**  
3.30 p.m. Sunday 13th September  
Assemble Gortbridge  
Parade to monument  
**ARDFINNAN**  
Co. Tipperary

**'ROCK THE BLOCKS'**  
Concert of rock & traditional music  
Postponed from  
Sunday 13th September  
Date to be set  
Blackrock Park  
**DUBLIN**

**HUNGER-STRIKE MARCH**  
7.30 p.m. Monday 14th September  
Assemble: the Roundabout  
off Rathoath Road  
**CABRA**  
Dublin  
March to clinic of  
Labour Party leader Michael O'Leary  
St. Peter's school, Peters Road

**OWEN CARRON ELECTION FUND**  
**SUPPER DANCE**  
10 p.m. Monday 14th September  
Mostrin Arms  
**EDGEWORTHSTOWN**  
Co. Longford  
Admission £2.50

**CHARITY CONCERT**  
Featuring Tara  
Monday 14th September  
St. Patrick's Hall  
**DUNGANNON**  
Admission £1  
Organised by  
the Carty / Crowley / Loughran  
Sinn Féin cumann

**FUND-RAISING SOCIAL**  
Music by Count Down  
8.30 p.m. Friday 18th September  
Barry's Lounge  
**GALBALLY**  
Co. Limerick  
Admission £1

**HUNGER-STRIKE MEETING**  
Guest speaker Owen Carron  
8 p.m. Saturday 19th September  
The Square  
**NAYAN**  
Co. Meath

**HUNGER-STRIKE MARCH**  
Saturday 26th September  
Assemble 1.30 p.m. People's Park  
(near railway station)  
**LUTON**  
England  
Organised by Sinn Féin (Britain)

**SOCIAL NIGHT**  
Saturday 26th September  
Brehony's Lounge  
**CLONDRA**  
County Longford  
Proceeds to Owen Carron election fund

# MARCH AGAINST PLASTIC BULLETS

Sunday 13th September  
Assemble 2.30 p.m.  
Busy Bee  
**BELFAST**



# Two reviews by Brownie

'IRELAND LIVE ON' was written by Seamus McKearney and was first produced in 1951 by Cluan Ard in Belfast.

A few months ago it was reproduced in Clonard Hall. This more recent production came about when a number of people associated with the presentation in 1951 came together and formed 'The Ben Madigan Drama Group' — a name suggested incidentally by the late Sean 'Batt' Mc Ardle.

The Irish Republican Felons Association, in Belfast, sponsored the drama group, whose name 'Ben Madigan' derives from the old name for Cave Hill whose association with the United Irishmen is well known.

On Wednesday 2nd September, on the thirty-ninth anniversary of the murder of Tom Williams, the National Graves' Association presented 'Ireland Live On' in a commemoration to Belfast republicans Tom Williams, who was hanged on September 2nd 1942, and Gerard O'Callaghan, shot dead by 'B' Specials at Hannahstown on August 31st 1942 — two days earlier.

A capacity audience packed into Andersonstown leisure centre in anticipation of a night's education and entertainment which was to match the consistently high standard of functions organised by the National Graves, whose work I am always happy to praise and commend. We were not disappointed.

'Ireland Live On' relates a selective period of Irish history from 1791, commencing with the formation of the Society of United Irishmen to the Rising of Easter Week 1916 and the deaths of the republican leaders at the hands of British firing squads.

It consists of ten acts or scenes, threaded together by a fine and historically sound narrative, and if I have any criticisms to make, they are that the acoustics in the leisure centre (no fault of the organisers) were terrible, and that the intervals between each act were over-long, with off-stage and back-stage noises tending to flout the performance.

The costumes were excellent, and songs from Billy Barrett, Maire Andrews, and Tom Tully, and a recitation from Malachy

## Ireland Live On

### Drama review



● The cast of 'Ireland Live On' are applauded at Andersonstown leisure centre, Belfast

McNally, more than diverted attention during the intervals from the changing of scenery on stage. Special praise too for the choice of bodhran, fiddle, Irish warpipes, feadóg, flute feadóg, uilleann pipes, guitar and crumrum piano for musical backing.

Before the opening scene, Liam Burke, speaking briefly in Irish and English, dedicated the performance to those actively engaged in the struggle for Irish freedom, and then as he left the stage we found ourselves in the backroom of Peg Berkeley's inn, in company with Wolfe Tone, Samuel Neilson, Robert Simms, Thomas Russell and Henry Joy McCracken.

#### ● TONE

The year was 1791, and the above company were putting finishing touches to the 'manifesto' of the United Irishmen. Hope was in the air, fine words were spoken, brave deeds to be done, and the discussion ranged through logistics, intentions, and aspirations until — satisfied with their work — all involved nodded assent to the finished document.

'I think,' said Tone, 'a toast would be in order.' As Peg Berkeley

arrived with a flagon of wine, the woman behind me nudged her companion and whispered: 'Trust the oul' lads, they'll always bring the drink into it.'

Rafferty the blind poet was ushered in to partake in the toast, and the old Gaelic Ireland personified by the blind bard, and the new radical Ireland of the United Irishmen, joined together in song.

Then a shadow fell over the group, as Rafferty predicted, in Irish, their fate of 'treachery, exile and death'.

And thus the stage was set and the narration brought us through the action to Jeremy Hope's cottage. As the leaders regroup for the advance on Antrim, this scene had an amusing side-piece when Betsy Gray arrived with news of arrests and asked for Henry Joy McCracken.

'There's no-one here of that name', said Mollie Hope, in words used many times since by wary owners of republican 'call-houses'. In the discussion which followed, as reports of failed risings in parts of the country were digested, McCracken retorted with the immortal and ever pertinent explanation: 'The rich always betray

the poor'. Tone's reliance on the respectable class, 'the men of no property', was proving to be well founded.

And thus by narrative through the defeat at Antrim, Russell and Neilson in jail, Tone dead, with Russell facing the hangman's noose at Downpatrick — to Robert Emmet's home in Rathfarnham.

#### ● EMMET

The predictions of Rafferty had indeed come true, with a vengeance, as recriminations echoed through the Emmet residence following Emmet's aborted insurrection. There is insufficient detail here to the social and radical nature of Emmet's proclamation, but the spirit of the day is captured well by the actors.

So much so that when the Brit raiding party arrived and set about Anne Devlin, the woman behind me exclaimed: 'the pigs', in indignation.

The Belfast audience had, so to speak, experienced it all before. Especially the next scene, when with shades of Diplock, Robert Emmet's speech from the dock was brilliantly delivered by Brendan Carson, much to the displeasure

of a very credible Lord Chief Justice.

So, from the United Irishmen to the Young Irelanders to the Fenians, with a nice touch in the Dublin Castle scene when the frustration of the British Commissioner, trying to fathom the resilience of Irish resistance, has a toadying officer declaring in exasperation: 'I'm half-Irish myself and I can't understand them'.

#### ● PEARSE

The hanging of the Manchester Martyrs, with the audience responding to and joining spontaneously in Eddie Keenan's rendering of 'God Save Ireland', brought us to Pearse's oration at the graveside of O'Donovan Rossa, with Pearse's prophetic words delivered in full in a scene with which we have become all too familiar in recent years.

From there to the proclamation of the Republic, with eleven characters re-enacting a striking cameo based on Páge's famous painting of the interior of the Dublin GPO in 1916. Pearse, pacing his cell, brings the play towards its conclusion on a poignant note as he ponders his fate.

Tone appears, and McCracken and Emmet, and the fine words of Pearse's poem 'The Fool' are spoken by the unrepentant separatists, with Pearse repeating the verses in full, and as the rifle party's orders echo off-stage, 'The Mother' is recited.

The narrator takes us to the end of the period of Irish history covered by 'Ireland Live On', with the cast and audience joining in the song from which the play derives its name. All in all, an excellent and ambitious job of work by all concerned, including Joe Quinn the producer, and all the actors.

I enjoyed it immensely and considered the standard of acting and singing by an amateur company with little collective experience to be very high. The narration was historically correct and politically sound, with all the right republican conclusions.

Congratulations to all involved in its production, and to the National Graves, for a fitting tribute to Tom Williams and Gerard O' Callaghan.

In conclusion, a word of praise to the Brollies, whose rendering of republican songs — especially the by-now standard and moving H-Block Song — was well received by an appreciative audience.

## Moving Hearts

### Record review



MOVING HEARTS is a fairly new band, made up of a number of veterans from the Irish folk and traditional music scene, including Christy Moore, Donal Lunny, Declan Sinnott and Davy Spillane. For the past few months they have been playing sessions up and down the country with a fine selection of new, strongly national and social songs.

The music they play differs from that performed by Planxty, a band with which some of the above-mentioned musicians came to prominence, but the political overtones come as no surprise given the Woody Guthrie songs in — for example — the original 'Prosperous' LP, or the predominance of anti-pollution, anti-nuclear, pro-nationalist tunes in Christy Moore's repertoire, all before the days of Moving Hearts.

As well as those mentioned already, the band consists of Keith Donald, Brian Calnan, and Eoghan O'Neill, and they have produced a new double-disc compilation comprising of four songs: 'Landlord', 'Category', 'On the Blanket', and 'Skibbereen Races', the last one with Mick Hanly in the guest spot.

#### ● H-BLOCK

An indication of the band's commitment to the H-Block/ Armagh prison crisis is the special limited edition of 'On the Blanket' which, along with 'Skibbereen Races' on the flip-side, is given free with the 'Landlord/Category' single. Indeed, the artists involved, with many others, gave their services free to compile a very fine H-Block LP released last year.

The music they play on both these singles will make a very definite impact on the young people who normally buy records, and could well give RTE a headache if this impact is measured by success in RTE record charts. 'On the Blanket', recorded live in Sligo, is different from the original, stronger than it in delivery and updated to take in the hunger-strike, with impeccable musical backing from Moving Hearts.

The last verse is particularly pertinent: 'Tonight as I

stand here in Sligo, my heart filled with sorrow and shame, I'm mourning poor Martin Hurley, his body laid down in Tyrone. This young man had so much to live for, his dying must not be in vain. As we stand here tonight, let's remember the fight of those on the blanket.'

Such sentiments cannot but help to politicise and re-awaken the national consciousness of audiences throughout the twenty-six counties.

#### ● LANDLORD

So, too, will 'Landlord', an undisguised attack on landlordism and Racism, with the landlord meeting a suitable end:

'I've a run-down room and a two-way roof. That man's a thief, I've even got the proof. He likes to take, he doesn't have to give, I have to pay a rent to have a place to live...'

'Oh landlord, how could you treat me so cold, you've got a mortgage on my body, the deeds on my soul.'

The other songs, 'Category', and 'Skibbereen Races', (called 'B' sides, methinks), are both instrumental. Having been weaned — in my teens — on rather purist traditional music, I found the mixture of sax, congas, bouzouki, uilleann pipes, bodhran and assorted guitars, hard to keep up with. That's my fault of course, not the music's or the musicians', which are excellent.

Of the two arrangements I prefer 'Skibbereen Races', not least because of the strong pace set by the uilleann pipes and bodhran. 'Category' is something which I'm getting used to liking, without any great problem.

The problem with never buying records is that you cannot keep up with new trends so I'm indebted to Tom Cahill (of T.C. Enterprises and Company Ltd.) for donating both these records to me. For those of you who haven't got such kind benefactors I recommend that you buy both these singles, you won't be disappointed.

By the way, you should all also try to hear Christy Moore singing 'Cry of the Morning'. A powerful anti-establishment song. Le sin, sin.



# Days and months

WHEN The original speakers of the Irish language in Ireland arrived in this land, more than two thousand years ago, they found before them people speaking a different kind of Celtic, as modern Welsh is different from modern Irish.

The experts believe, however, that the two peoples would not have had anything like the same communication difficulty as we would have in Wales today (without having made some prior study of the other language).

The Irish language borrowed from that of the Cruithnigh (Picts) as, no doubt, they did from us. For perhaps four hundred years the two languages (wed side by side, Irish eventually prevailing).

As we have seen, with the coming of Christianity, the P-Celtic again began to influence the development of Irish directly in such words as carraig (carrec), nos (naws), caoin (cain), and banne (drop, eventually meaning milk, or bainne, as it is today) and indirectly, in such words as the Welsh 'ofrend', from the Latin 'offerenda'.

Thus, we have today the Irish word for Mass - Aifreann, which is frequent enough in place-names, such as Carraig an Aifreinn, the Mass Rock - which reached the Welsh directly through the Latin and which they transformed before passing it on to us in Welsh clothing. We had to make our own alteration to fit it into the Irish language mould.

## NUMBERS

In Portugal most of the days of the week have numbers, and Monday (segunda - feira) is second day; Tuesday (terça - feira) is third day; Wednesday (quarta - feira), fourth day; and so on.

Sunday, however, is Domingo, and Saturday, Sabado, as in Castilian.

Most other languages in Europe, to my knowledge, have a mixture of paganism and Christianity in their origins and show much more influence of the Latin, including our own.

Thus, Luain means nothing in Irish except Monday, the word coming from the Latin word, luna, the moon, and which appears in English in 'lunatic' and 'lunar'.

De Luain means 'on Monday', the word going into the genitive or possessive case after 'De' (from 'dies day, again of the Latin: on the Day of the Moon).

Mairt, Tuesday (De Mairt, on Tuesday), again comes from the Latin word for the planet Mars.

Ceadain, Wednesday, however, goes back to early Christian Ireland, where the week was broken up into various fairs, the better to discipline the body (ag mairt an choirp, as the saying goes).

Ceadain was the 'first fast', Dear-dain, Thursday (Thor's Day, carefully observed by the Dublin Vikings), was the second fast (dub, in modern Irish, means second).

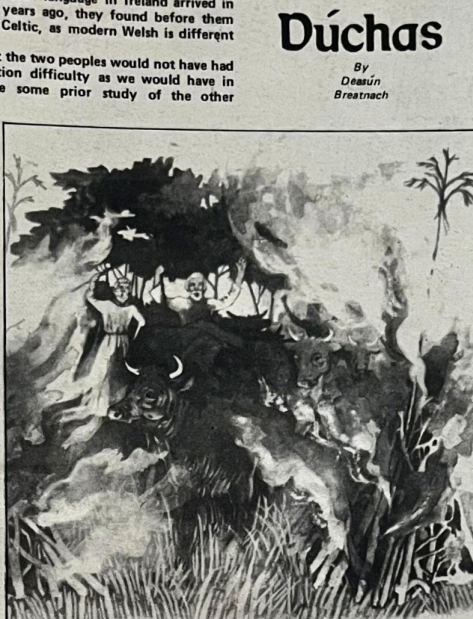
Aoine, literally 'fast', for Friday, was a day of special fast and abstinence, as it was until recently in a Christian's Lenten observance.

With Saturday, Satharn (De Satharn, on Saturday), we return to paganism, this time in reverence of Saturn. But back again we come to Christianity with Domhnach (De Domhnach, on Sunday), which has its roots in the Latin words for the Day of the Lord (again to be found in place-names).

## MIXTURE

The French, Castilian and Italian versions are very close to our own - Lundi, Mardi etc., in French; Lunes, Martes, etc., in Castilian.

In the Irish names of the months, again we have a mixture of Latin and Celtic roots: Eanáir (mi éanáir, month of January, from the Latin two-faced god); Feabhra, again via the Latin (month of expiation), is February; Márta, again from the Latin and to



● On La Bealtaine (1st of May) the symbolising the sacred oak tree. Then the Celts lit bonfires topped with poles and Druids drove cattle through the flames to purify and protect them from disease

honour the god of war, Mars, is March; Aibreán coming from the Latin word for the second month (March having begun the original Latin year), is April.

Bealtaine, however, survives from the ancient Irish calendar and is believed to have its origin in 'the month of the fires of Balor'.

Balor was an early sun-god, followed throughout most of Ireland by his grandson, who killed him and took his place, Lugh Lamh Fhada, Lugh of the Long Hand (meaning the sun's rays).

La Bealtaine was one of the great national public holidays of ancient Ireland as it was for most of Europe, the first day of May, now Workers' Day (and the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker).

Pagan superstitions connected with La Bealtaine survive to this day in parts of Ireland as they do in parts of England and Scotland, in Brittany, in north-west Spain, and, indeed, in many other places in Europe.

Meitheamh is a strange one: it means June. But how did it enter Irish and Ireland? The Breton word is mezhven, which means 'middle of summer', and this may be the origin. What a fantastic journey... and story. Does any reader know it?

## FOLKLORE

Iul (mi iul, the month of July), again we have courtesy of the Romans.

But back we go to pagan Ireland for the next month, Lúnasa, rich in folklore. It has nothing at all to do with the moon. The target is the sun-god, Lugh Lamh Fhada. (Lúnasa formerly was Lughnasa).

This was the time when most of the crops were in, with plenty for all and a relaxation from the tyranny of the seasons.

September in Irish is Meán Fómhair or Mi Mheán Fómhair (the month of the middle of autumn). The follow-

## Dúchas

By  
Deasún  
Breastnach

ing month is Deireadh Fómhair, literally the last (month) of autumn.

In Breton, the sister language spoken in north-west France, the name of the next month, November in English, is close to the Irish, Ar Vi Du (An Mhi Dubh), is the Irish translation, meaning the Black Month).

The Irish term for November very likely is older - Samhain or Mi na Samhna. Frankly, I can merely guess as to its meaning. It is so old; Samhain, the season of the unreal, of the underworld, of visions and magic and spells. Certainly all that and much more goes with the reputation that goes with the vigil of November 1 - Oíche Shamhna, Englished as Hallow E'en.

## SLEEP

But perhaps the word has its deepest origin in the word for sleep, this being the sleeping month of the year. The word I have in mind is from the Greek, somnos (there is an English word from that, somnolent); and in modern Irish we have a like word, sun (suanais, a dormitory).

Again, perhaps an expert could come to our aid?

The last month is Nollaig (mi na Nollaig, month of Christmas), December. It has its origin in the Latin word for born: Natus (the birth of our Saviour). A similar word for the same thing will be found in many other European languages including, of course, Welsh.

I had intended to be very brief in showing how the Irish language has grown up, as it were, in Ireland, so that it is the most 'guaranteed Irish' thing we have, though one might think otherwise from the shy way the Irish Goods Council treats that same Irish language in campaigns to persuade people to buy Irish goods so as to create more jobs for the Irish in Ireland, an objective with which, of course, we have no quarrel: the reverse, rather.

## IN MEMORIAM

KANE, Michael. (11th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Michael Kane, Belfast Brigade, Óglaigh na hÉireann, who died as the result of an accidental explosion while on active service duty on September 4th 1970. I maeis Laochra na nGael go raibh a nam. Never forgotten by his friends and comrades in the Belfast Brigade.

MULVENNA, Patrick. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Patrick Mulvenna, Belfast Brigade, Óglaigh na hÉireann, murdered by the treachery of anti-Irish, pro-British elements on August 31st 1973. "The fools, the fools, the fools, they have left us our Fenian dead and while Ireland holds these graves Ireland unfree shall never be at peace until Ireland is again always remembered by Mrs. Maguire, Ned (Long Kesh), and Ann. A Mhuire na nGael dean idirghrúir ar a shon.

PETTICREW, Anne Marie. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of my dear sister, Vol. Anne Marie Petticrew, Belfast Brigade, Cumann na mBan, who died on September 1st 1973. RIP, Mary Queen of Ireland pray for her. In my heart your memory I will keep. Always

remembered by her loving sister Katrina ('A' Wing, Armagh jail).

PETTICREW, Anne Marie. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of my dear sister Vol. Anne Marie Petticrew, Belfast Brigade, Cumann na mBan, who died while on active service duty on September 1st 1973. Mary Queen of Ireland pray for her. Too good in life to be forgotten in death. Always remembered by her loving sister Bernadette, brother-in-law Jim and niece Clara.

PETTICREW, Anne Marie. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of our dear daughter, Vol. Anne Marie Petticrew, Belfast Brigade, Cumann na mBan, who died on September 1st 1973. RIP, Mary Queen of Ireland pray for her. Always remembered by her loving mother, father, sisters and brothers.

PETTICREW, Anne Marie. (8th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of my dear sister, Vol. Anne Marie Petticrew, Belfast Brigade, Cumann na mBan, who died on September 1st 1973. RIP, God St. Anne pray for her. In my heart your memory I will keep. Always remembered by her loving brother Brian (H6).

## Sympathy

DEVINE. Our most sincere sympathy to the family, friends and relatives of Micky Devine, who has given his life on hunger-strike for justice and peace in Ireland. Mary Queen of the Gael pray for him. From the McAleer family, Dublin.

DEVINE. The members of An Cumann Cabhrach, Walkinstown, Dublin, wish to express their most sincere sympathy to the family, friends and comrades of INLA Vol. Micky Devine who gave his life on hunger-strike for the just demands of his fellow POWs and for the freedom of the Irish people. Mary Queen of Ireland pray for him.

DEVINE. The Dorothy Maguire Sinn Féin cumann, Dublin south-west, offers most sincere sympathy to the family, friends and comrades of INLA Vol. Micky Devine who laid down his life on hunger-strike for the demands of his fellow POWs and for justice and peace in Ireland. "Ireland unfree shall never be at peace."

ISAACSON. The Frank Staggs Sinn Féin cumann extend deepest sympathy to Maurice Isaacson on the death of his father.

ISAACSON. The Robert Emmet Sinn Féin cumann extend deepest sympathy to Maurice Isaacson on the death of his father.

McELWEE. The father, mother, sisters and brothers of the late Thomas G. McElwée, RIP, wish to sincerely thank all his comrades in Long Kesh, Armagh and all other prisons throughout Ireland

TRAYNOR. The staff of 'An Phoblacht/Republican News' extend deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Paul Traynor who died, aged twenty-five, on Tuesday, September 8th. His work as a solicitor displayed a genuine concern for anyone, particularly the underprivileged, who found themselves faced with an unequal battle to the family law system. Republicans will remember him in particular for his immediate and reliable response in visiting those held for periods in custody under repressive legislation. A visit from him, for which he never looked for reward, never failed to be a source of reassurance and encouragement to those who found themselves, even for a short period, in such circumstances. Go ndána Dia bráclaire ar a nam.

TURLEY. The John Green Sinn Féin cumann, Castleblayney, offer deepest sympathy to our comrade Brian and his family on the recent death of his mother.

TURLEY. The Castleblayney H-Block Committee extend our most sincere sympathy to our member Brian and his family on the death of his mother.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

and Britain for their letters, Mass cards, telegrams and floral wreaths received. The Holy sacrifice of Mass will be offered for their intentions. Our Lady Queen of Ireland pray for us.

## BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

MCCARTNEY, Ronnie. (Albany, Isle of Wight). Happy birthday, Ronnie. Hope your next birthday is in freedom. Love to you and all Irish POWs in jails in England and Ireland. Victory to the hunger-strikers. Love from Una, Eddie, Rosie, and family. xxx.

MCCARTNEY, Ronnie. (Albany, Isle of Wight). Happy birthday, Ronnie. I

hope your next one will be spent in freedom. Love to you and all your comrades in jails in Ireland and England. From Mary McCartney, Waterford Street.

WILSON, Padraic. (H-Block). Belated birthday greetings, and our sincerest good wishes, to you and all your comrades in your resistance to Britain's criminalisation policy. Though separated by three thousand miles of sea we stand beside you in your struggle to be free. All our love, from the Wilsons, Alan Blanchard and family, Hampstead, New Hampshire, USA.

## Solidarity Greetings

CORBETT, Gabriel. (H-Block). Congratulations, Gabriel, on completing four years on the blanket. "I'll wear no convict's uniform, nor meekly serve my time, that Britain might make Ireland's light a hundred years of crime." Thinking of you always. Victory to the hunger-strikers. From your sister Shirley and friends, Mary and John.

CORBETT, Gabriel. (H-Block). Congratulations to you, Gabriel, on completing four years on the blanket. Keep your

spirits up. Victory will be yours. From your sister Patricia, John, nieces Nicola, Sarah-Jane, and Patricia, and nephew Joseph. God bless.

CORBETT, Gabriel. (H-Block). Congratulations, Gabriel, on completing four years on the blanket. Thinking of you today and every day. Victory to the hunger-strikers. From mum and dad, sisters Josephine, Theresa and Carmel, and your brother Gregory. UTP.

CORBETT, Gabriel. (H-Block). Congratulations, Gabriel, on completing four years on the blanket in Britain's concentration camp. "It is not they who can inflict the most on those who endure the most who will conquer." From the Martin family.

## TYPE-SETTERS REQUIRED

'AN Phoblacht/Republican News' require type-setters to work part-time in our Dublin office. Experience an advantage, but not essential. Training will be given to suitable applicants.

Apply to The Manager, 44 Parnell Square, Dublin, telephone 747611.

## SLIGO SINN FÉIN

A NEW temporary county executive of Sinn Féin has been appointed in Sligo. Applications for Sinn Féin membership should be addressed to the secretary - Tommy Love, 41 St. Edwards Terrace, Sligo.

## DRAW RESULTS

An Cumann Cabhrach, Dublin  
August draw  
£100: 80; £50: 11; £25: 240; £10: 372 and 264; and £5: 74, 99, 385, 125, 326 and 212.

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## Death of Paddy Murphy

THE death has taken place, on Wednesday week, September 2nd, of veteran Cork republican, Paddy Murphy. Paddy joined Na Fianna Éireann in 1927 and later transferred to the IRA's Cork Brigade, serving for many years on the staff of its 1st Battalion. He remained an

uncompromising republican up to his death at the age of seventy-three.

At the removal of his remains and his funeral on Friday, 4th September, the cortege was led by pipers from the Cork Volunteer Pipe Band whilst a guard of

honour of old comrades flanked the tricolour-draped coffin. In St. Finbarr's cemetery, a bugler sounded 'The Last Post' and 'Reveille' over his grave and an oration was given by Cork republican, Gearóid Mac Carthaigh.





*The people's army on patrol*