

An Phoblacht

REPUBLICAN NEWS



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SPECIAL 4-PAGE SUPPLEMENT

1981 review of the year

The armed struggle; the heroic prison struggle; and Unionism in crisis



● The gardai, who viciously and mercilessly batoned H-Block/Armagh campaigners outside the British embassy in July, can be expected to continue to exert their efforts under the direction of the Coalition government towards repressing republican resistance hand-in-glove with the British and the loyalist RUC

BORDER NOT RECOGNISED

1982 is going to be a year of increased repression in Ireland as a whole. For when it comes to crushing the struggling people of Ireland aligned behind the resolute, unwavering, uncompromising banner of republicanism, no borders are recognised by our enemies.

That can be seen by the court in Dublin just before Christmas. It can be seen by the trial and imprisonment of those

who marched during the hunger-strike against the hated British embassy. It is seen in the concentration of Free State military hardware and paramilitary political police in border counties. It has been seen in the toleration of border overflights and incursions by British helicopters and armed British soldiers.

Our enemies rely on rep-

ressive laws and overwhelming military might, they rely on censorship and intimidation and they rely on the illusion of legitimacy which they claim from their special position of being the *status quo*. That *status quo* is supported and blessed by other institutions in society with vested interests in a cowed or, if it comes to it, a coerced people.

We struggle against considerable odds and it takes considerable resolution, resources of moral strength, and physical courage, to stand up to the evil which partition inflicts on the Irish people — most openly seen as a bleeding wound in the North but which insidiously affects the

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BORDER NOT RECOGNISED

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fabric of life throughout the thirty-two counties.

The political respect, the political gains, the international recognition and the impetus which ten courageous hunger-strikers last year gave to the struggle for national liberation will not be tolerated by the British administration or the Dublin government.

The Brits, because of the declared republican intention to challenge SDLP collaboration and, more importantly, because of unquestionable IRA successes, will almost certainly go on the offensive against activists in all fields, against Sinn Féin and against the republican publicity machine.

NEVER

The Dublin government in operating selective repression have an advantage over republicans which the Brits, as foreign invaders, can never have. As natives they have a public credibility, particularly in the institutions of state itself.

But they can never, never deliver a united Ireland or even an internal just social and economic system; because the first involves standing up to British imperialism (and loyalty) to which they historically owe their existence; and the second is something to which they do not aspire anyway, and which if they did aspire to, would by example present a threat to Britain and other allied governments, and so would also involve standing up to British imperialism.

PEACE

The republican struggle is for peace and justice — a peace to end the centuries of strife imposed by Britain on us and a justice delivered not from a pig-in-a-wig but delivered in social and economic equality at every strata in society. It is an ideal, attractive to all peace-loving people, but the terms for achieving it have been made deliberately deterring by our enemies, because it involves a revolution in thought, sacrifices and armed struggle.

The long, difficult struggle for Irish freedom requires an iron resolution, a disciplined will, a courageous heart and often, very often, the supreme sacrifice of life itself. Every loss requires replacement, every enemy attack needs to be repulsed, and any progress at all requires an offensive — in its present phase now into its fourteenth year.

That resolution is required of republican sympathisers, supporters and activists alike, as we undoubtedly face a year of military and political repression. And that forthcoming resolution will ensure that 1982, like all the preceding years, will represent another nail in the coffin of British rule in Ireland.

... WAR NEWS... WAR NEWS... WAR NEWS...

IRA attacks

IN the week before Christmas the IRA carried out several bomb and gun attacks, against a commercial target in Newry, against British soldiers and RUC men in Derry, and against Belleek barracks on the Fermanagh/Donegal border.

As usual over Christmas, although there was no IRA declaration of a ceasefire, there were no attacks.

NEWRY BOMB

A 300 lb. van bomb was planted by the IRA at the Greenbank industrial estate at Newry on Thursday evening, December 17th.

Two armed IRA Volunteers drove a commandeered van containing the bomb into the estate and left it outside the Henry Thompson Bonding Store on the Warrenpoint Road. The store contains a stock of more than £1 million worth of wines and spirits.

The Volunteers warned staff on Thompson's premises that they had ten minutes to clear the store of people, but when the bomb failed to explode the British army bomb disposal men moved in.

However, they failed to defuse the bomb before dusk and were forced to resume their task next morning.

A section of the Newry to Warrenpoint carriageway running parallel to the estate was sealed off for three miles and traffic diverted. On Friday morning the industrial estate was kept closed whilst troops defused the bomb.

Claiming responsibility for the attack, the IRA in South Down said that the bomb had been aimed at a 'major commercial target'.

DERRY ATTACKS

The IRA's Derry Brigade carried out two attacks on enemy forces on Sunday 20th December.

In the morning, shortly after 10 a.m., a booby-trap bomb exploded at the Castle Gate security barrier, near Magazine Street, on the edge of the city centre, injuring one soldier.

The sapper, who was working on repairs to the barrier, was up a ladder welding the gate, which had been damaged in a similar explosion last month.

He was hit by the bomb on his left side and received arm and leg injuries as he was blown to the ground. A number of other soldiers working with him narrowly escaped injury.



In the late evening, shortly after 11 p.m., IRA Volunteers mounted a gun attack on an RUC mobile patrol in the Waterside. Half-a-dozen high velocity shots were fired by them, but no hits were claimed.

Enemy fire was not returned and the ambushers made good their escape in a commandeered car.

BELLEEK BOMBS

An IRA active service unit mounted a mortar bomb attack on Belleek RUC barracks in County Fermanagh, near the County Donegal border, on Tuesday night, December 22nd.

Armed Volunteers mounted ten mortar bombs on the back of a

commandeered lorry which was suitably placed near the barracks.

When the attack was launched, three mortars landed in the barrack compound, two of which exploded, although no serious damage was caused, and one of which failed to detonate, and was later defused by the British army.

Three mortars landed in the nearby River Erne and four failed to go off — occupying the British army for hours as they carried out controlled explosions on the lorry.

The RUC were forced to evacuate their barracks until the following morning.

The IRA active service unit returned safely to base.

extradition."

The statement concluded: "We repeat, the IRA is a national liberation organisation aimed at ending British rule in Ireland and establishing a united Ireland."

No threat

THE IRA's Belfast Brigade has stated that it was extremely concerned about a totally incorrect story which appeared in 'The Irish News' of Saturday 19th December, which implied that the IRA intend to shoot glue-sniffers as a punishment.

'The Irish News' anti-republican story, headlined 'Parents fear IRA threat to shoot glue-sniffers', claimed that: "A fifteen-year-old west Belfast schoolboy will spend the Christmas holidays as a virtual prisoner in his own home because his parents are afraid to let him out unaccompanied."

"The cause of their anxiety is that their son is a glue-sniffer and they fear the Provos' threat to shoot glue-sniffing

youngsters."

That Saturday the IRA stated categorically that this supposed threat is non-existent and that no person will be, or has been, shot by the IRA on account of his or her glue-sniffing.

The IRA said:

"To the parents of children who may be involved we wish to state that while glue-sniffing may be termed 'anti-social behaviour' it is harmful primarily to the individuals concerned and is therefore fundamentally different to other forms of anti-social behaviour which aggravate the hardship of the nationalist community as a whole and which, are therefore dealt with by the IRA — in the last resort, and with great reluctance — by punishment shootings."

"Glue-sniffing among young people is one symptom of social deprivation in nationalist areas about which republicans are increasingly concerned and about which they will do their best to deal with by informing young people and parents alike of the terrible danger to health involved."

"We will not, and do not, shoot glue-sniffers."

Sterner IRA action

DESPITE repeated IRA warnings to gangsters operating in nationalist areas of Belfast, who are robbing and intimidating ordinary people, their activities continue to cause grave hardship.

In many cases the IRA have carried out punishment shootings on these people. Some have given up their criminal activities but a small minority continue to exploit the situation for personal gain and in some cases operate as informers against the IRA.

Reluctantly the Belfast Brigade have decided to take much sterner action against such gangsters, including execution, if they do not cease their activities forthwith. The IRA have stated: 'this is the final warning'.

In an elaboration the IRA's Belfast Brigade stated:

"The nationalist population of Belfast faces many hardships: 50% unemployment, low wages, terrible housing and poverty are all facts of life for so many."

"On top of these institutional hardships our people have valiantly resisted for twelve years the physical aggression of British imperialism and courageously supported the liberation struggle."

"As a consequence of that struggle and the rejection of the imposed institutions established by British imperialism, the nationalist people have looked to the Republican Movement for both guidance and protection. Such protection has involved not simply the defence of nationalist areas against British and loyalist attack, but has also included the punishing of those criminal elements within Belfast who have preyed upon the poor and defenceless."

"We have used many different forms of punishment, reluctantly using, on occasion, punishment shooting to the arms or legs."

"However, there are within Belfast organised criminals. These god-fathers, with the active collaboration of the RUC, have now reached a level of activity which can no longer be tolerated."

"Belfast Brigade has, therefore, taken a firm decision to deal with these god-fathers in the only effective way left open to us. And we now serve notice that we intend in future to execute such people. Belfast Brigade promises the nationalist population that it will stand firmly by this policy decision."

Punishment shootings

THE IRA's Belfast Brigade has carried out three punishment shootings in the legs.

On the night of Friday 18th December a nineteen-year-old youth from the West Circular area was punished; he was shot on the Springfield Road.

He had carried out a number of robberies and had been involved in other anti-social actions. The IRA told him to cease his activities and to compensate those from whom he stole.

On Sunday 20th December and Tuesday 22nd December, two men were shot and wounded in Short Strand for their part in robbery and other anti-social actions.

Ballymurphy apology

LATE on Thursday night, December 17th, the IRA's Belfast Brigade was involved in two shooting incidents in Ballymurphy: one in Glenalisk Park, and one in Glenalisk Road in which a nineteen-year-old youth was wounded.

The IRA has stated that it wishes to make it clear that this youth was not involved in, nor suspected of involvement in, any form of anti-social behaviour, and the IRA is distressed at the unintended injury sustained by him.

The IRA has given the two families involved in the Glenalisk shootings a public apology for any distress or inconvenience caused as a direct result of their actions.

Prison protests continue

SEVERAL types of protests are continuing in a number of H-Blocks at Long Kesh and in Armagh women's prison, the most recent new protests being brought about as a result of the transfer of 230 remand prisoners from Crumlin Road jail to the H-Blocks (and Magilligan camp in Derry) following the loyalist takeover of part of the Belfast jail three weeks ago.

The largest protests and those involving the most punishments are, of course, the 'no work' protests by the women in Armagh prison and by over 320 former blanket men now being held in H-Blocks 4 and 5 and segregated from conforming prisoners, loyalists and ordinary prisoners.

A small number of other republican prisoners, including several sentenced prior to Christmas, being held in the predominantly loyalist H6-Block are also on a 'no work' protest and two men, Jack Hone and Sean McGlinchey in 'D' Wing of H1-Block, were denied food for refusing to work or to associate with loyalists at canteen or at exercise time.

Some meals they were refused, others, like tea and bread, they themselves refused in an attempt to establish the more substantial daily dinner as their main meal if the authorities persisted with restricting them to one meal a day.

Sean McGlinchey recently spent three days on the boards and on hunger-strike having been sentenced for having his bed round the wrong way in his cell!

However, the 320 republicans who have been the backbone of the last five years of protest and who are still refusing to work are apparently thwarting the threat of the administration to disperse them throughout the Blocks, mainly because the administration fears that such a dispersal would only spread the influence of the protest.

CUSHY

Reports from the conforming Blocks confirm that sentenced loyalists hold down all the cushy jobs — such as the orderly work and canteen duties. Loyalists are allowed to wander around the wings, whereas conforming republican prisoners are ordered into their cells.

Prison warders and loyalists work harmoniously together — the loyalists receive a variety of daily papers and get supplies of cigarettes above the regulations. They also make each other tea and sit in cells chatting while the republicans are locked up. 'It was like being imprisoned in an Orange hall,' said one republican prisoner who rejoined the protest.

But, of course, conforming prisoners are entitled to remission, which hastens freedom, and it is the opportunity for gaining remission which has enticed a number of republican prisoners off the 'no work' protest.

CRUMLIN

The other protest in the H-Blocks involves those republican and loyalist remand prisoners moved to H3 after the loyalist smash-up of part of Crumlin Road jail three weeks ago which caused £½ million worth of damage and may take up to six months to repair.

These prisoners, who are awaiting trial, voluntarily segregated themselves from one another using the same arrangement reached in

Crumlin Road jail — each group taking association and exercise on alternate occasions.

The unusual support for the loyalist prisoners from loyalist politicians anxious to remain on friendly terms with the paramilitaries may also help the campaign for proper segregation (that is, into separate Blocks, if not wings) which is equally desired by loyalists and republicans. Although the politicians have been careful to avoid 'special' demands which smack of political status.

Before Christmas the British government introduced an order allowing prisoners to be remanded without appearing in court. This was because to have transported such a large number of prisoners from the H-Blocks back to the Crumlin Road remand court in Belfast for a weekly appearance would have presented opportunities for escapes, armed attacks and street protests. The British administration finally resolved its dilemma by opening a remand court in Long Kesh prison camp which began operating last Wednesday.

CHAPLAINS

Meanwhile, malicious attacks on the republican leadership by one of the chaplains to the H-Blocks, Fr. Denis Faul, have continued.

Never missing an opportunity to malign the republican cause, Fr. Faul was quoted in the *'Sunday Tribune'* and the *'Irish Press'*. Speaking about the ending of the hunger-strike, he said the prisoners



● Fr. Denis Faul, a malicious man who never misses an opportunity to malign the republican cause

took a decision to accept the regime and conform 'but were ordered by the Provisional IRA leadership outside to continue some form of protest'.

In fact, no such order was ever issued, no such decisive decision was ever taken, and that the protest is voluntary is obvious from the fact that republicans, including several former hunger-strikers, have taken personal decisions to conform, without prejudice to their status as comrades or republicans.

Fr. Faul also said that a number of prisoners had cold-shouldered him. But he knows fine rightly that his unquestionable foothold in Long Kesh rests very simply on the fact that of all the prison chaplains he is about the only one prepared to issue public statements outlining prison brutality.

That is comment enough on the quality of certain consciences and the nature of the prisoners' tolerance of Fr. Faul despite his disconcerting remarks.

Fr. Faul has now publicly declared himself to be on a moral crusade against the Republican Movement because of its political purpose which he has attempted to malign as moral usurpation.

Speaking just before Christmas he said: "The Provisionals are now posing as politicians and that has been a big changeover this year. They are trying to elbow the Catholic Church out of the way and are competing with the church as moral spokesmen for the Catholic community."

Actually, that comment is a classic example of clerical interference in politics!

Centre raid

A COMPREHENSIVE raid by plainclothes RUC men on the Republican Press Centre on Belfast's Falls Road, on Friday 18th December, may mark the prelude to further attempts by the British administration to clamp down on Belfast Sinn Féin and, in particular, to suppress *'An Phoblacht/Republican News'* — almost exactly four years after similar raids led to the imprisonment of senior Sinn Féin and AP/RN personnel, on charges of conspiracy and IRA membership which were later withdrawn for lack of evidence.

Shortly after ten o'clock on Friday morning, plainclothes RUC men accompanied by British soldiers, and backed up by more soldiers and RUC men who remained on the street, entered the press centre premises and searched the rooms.

They paid special attention to the telex machine (through which, amongst others, supplied IRA statements are issued to the media), seized a number of messages and took samples of the telex tape. The telex room and other rooms were photographed during the raid.

The selective nature of the raid was indicated by the RUC's lack of interest in some of the rooms, used for storing republican publications and kept locked, which they did not bother to search. (The previous afternoon however, Thursday 17th December, twenty copies of Sinn Féin's foreign affairs bureau's quarterly magazine, *'IRIS'*, were confiscated by the RUC after they had arrested a former blanket man Fra McCann in Andersonstown in west Belfast.)

Commenting on the raid, the Sinn Féin director of publicity and *'An Phoblacht/Republican News'* editor, Danny Morrison, said:

"It is almost four years to the day since similar raids against our premises took place. These raids resulted in the arrest and prosecution of over fourteen members of Sinn Féin, as well as the attempted suppression of *'Republican News'*. These raids are obviously the prelude to a clampdown on Sinn Féin and republican publicity."

"It is behavior the British government to complain about crackdowns on freedom of speech in Poland when they are engaged in suppressing the voice of republicanism in Ireland."

Derry post

THE Christmas postal service traditionally operated by Derry Sinn Féin once again proved a great success, with Christmas cards being delivered — at less than the post office rate — throughout the city and parts of County Derry, and with twenty thousand 'postage stamps' specially printed by Derry Sinn Féin (the designs depicting each of the ten dead hunger-strikers) being sold.

In addition, the limited edition of all ten individual stamps in a gold-embossed folder were all sold out, with particular interest being shown from abroad, and Sinn Féin are considering printing further presentation sets of the stamps. (For details or orders, contact Derry Sinn Féin at 15 Cable Street, Derry, telephone 68926.)

The RUC's predictable response to this republican postal service in Derry, which severely affects the city's official postal service, was to harass those involved. In one instance, twenty-three-year-old Eugene Mayse, from Lona Moor Road in Derry, was arrested and threatened with prosecution for delivering Christmas cards.

REVOLUTIONARY CALENDAR

A GLOSSY well-produced revolutionary calendar, each month illustrated by a Belfast wall mural in full colour, has been produced by the Republican Movement.

The calendars are available at 80p each, or £6 for ten, plus postage, from John Connolly, 2a Monagh Crescent, Turf Lodge, Belfast, telephone Belfast 620768.

PRISON POEMS

THE pamphlet 'Prison Poems' by Bobby Sands, published by the Sinn Féin Publicity Department, is available at £1 plus postage (bulk rates available on request), from John Connolly, 2a Monagh Crescent, Turf Lodge, Belfast, telephone Belfast 620768.

DERRY SENTENCES

IN a sequel to the prolonged series of peaceful street protests in Derry city which took place during the hunger-strike, recent prosecutions against over fifty H-Block activists have resulted in heavy fines and in the imprisonment of H-Block protest organiser Martha McClelland.

At a special court in Derry held over December 1st and December 2nd, fifty-seven people were charged with a total of two hundred and forty-eight offences, mostly under the 1951 Stormont public order act. All but one were convicted.

In a crude attempt to spoil Christmas for those involved, however, the sentences were not announced until December 22nd. These consisted of heavy fines totalling over £3,000.

In addition, one of those convicted of 'disorderly behaviour' as well as of taking part in 'illegal

proceedings', Sinn Féin and comhairle member and former National H-Block/Armagh Committee member Martha McClelland, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment as well as a fine of £325.

The counts of 'disorderly behaviour' on which Martha McClelland was convicted, concerned an incident during a picket of Strand Road RUC barracks last June 13th when the car being driven by Detective Inspector John Martindale was kicked, and a further incident outside the Guildhall in Derry on June 22nd when a protestor shouted 'What about H-Block' at the then direct-ruler, Humphrey Atkins.



● MARTHA MCCLELLAND jailed for H-Block protests

As Martha McClelland was not in court when the sentence on her was announced she was not immediately arrested. Last Wednesday morning, however, when she presented herself at Derry court to lodge an appeal against her sentence she was arrested for having left unpaid fines imposed several months ago, and is now believed to be in Armagh jail.

Embassy Twenty



THE 'Embassy Twenty Defence Committee' organised intensive leafleting at Dublin's GPO on Saturday 19th December in support of the twenty men charged in connection with the British embassy riot during a hunger-strike demonstration last July.

Already one man, Patrick Kehoe, has been sentenced to three years' imprisonment and nineteen others face similar charges under the Offences Against the State Act which carry maximum sentences of twenty years.

So far no investigation at all has been held into the conduct of gardai who brutally batoned marchers and bystanders alike for several hours after the riot was over.

Jobs march



ABOUT eighty young people took part in an unemployment placard parade through Dublin, organised by na Fianna Éireann, the republican youth organisation, on Saturday 19th December.

The marchers, who carried Fianna and Sinn Féin banners as well as posters calling attention to rising unemployment figures, made their way from St. Stephen's Green, through the city centre, to the GPO in O'Connell Street and then along the quays to Thomas Street in the Liberties where they dispersed.

The march, in extremely cold and windy weather, attracted plenty of attention from Christmas shoppers thronging the streets and also attracted plenty of harassment from gardai who bullied and obstructed the young protestors along the way.



● Militant farmers on the march in Dublin

THE MYTH OF EUROPE

NINE years ago, on January 1st 1973, the Free State, along with Britain and Denmark, joined the EEC. In this article, Jim Geraghty, a small farmer in the West, points out that, far from the bonanza promised by the major political parties and the farming organisations, membership has been disastrous for agriculture and calls for a campaign to with-

draw.

He also severely criticises the Irish Farmers' Association's handling of the current 'farmers' income' campaign and, among other controversial points, demands dearer food prices and supports the export of live cattle.

BY JIM GERAGHTY

TEN years ago, the Fianna Fáil government of the twenty-six counties and the main opposition party, Fine Gael, fooled the people into believing that their future was in the EEC and that full employment and economic prosperity would follow our entry. The majority of the people swallowed the bait.

The two main farming organisations, the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers' Association (ICMSA) and the Irish Farmers' Association (IFA) agreed fully with the politicians. A vote for entry to the EEC, they said, would bring a financial bonanza to the agricultural industry: a ready market for all our produce with two hundred million to be fed.

The referendum on our entry was fought in

rural Ireland, not by the politicians, but by the IFA with the slogan 'Into Europe and prosperity'. Those who opposed our entry, Sinn Féin and others, were called negative thinkers, cranks, fools, opponents of progress, even subversives.

What are the results since our entry and where is the promised bonanza?

DROPPED

Today it is accepted by politicians in government and opposition, and by the farming organisations, that the farmer's income has dropped by 45% in the last three years. At the present rate of inflation and with the declared Thatcherite policies of the Coalition government, that drop will be much greater by spring.

As a result of the encouragement and misleading statements of successive governments promising 'prosperity around the corner', many farmers, on the advice of the agricultural

advisory service, adopted a development plan to increase production. This is a very laudable and proper approach in a well planned agricultural industry, where marketing and price agreements would be controlled by an Irish government, not by outsiders such as the EEC.

In order to increase production, farmers were forced to borrow money at ridiculously high interest rates and to put back whatever extra returns they got during the short so-called 'boom' period, (remember we had two major slumps in the last ten years to balance the boom), into reclamation, fertilisers, increased stock, farm buildings and machinery — with disastrous results.

Today, farmers owe £200 million in loan repayments and at least twenty thousand farmers are unable to meet their repayments and are facing bankruptcy and ruin. The numbers engaged in agriculture, particularly small farmers in the western counties, are decreasing at a faster rate than ever envisaged by the Manshold Plan, which saw no future for agriculture in the western areas.

Between one-third and one-half of the small farmers of the country (and the vast majority of Irish farmers are small farmers) have incomes of not more than £45 per week — for a seven-day week.

Is this the boom the IFA campaigned so hard for? And what about the increased production the farmers borrowed for?

ALARMING

The alarming facts are that we have approximately one quarter of a million less livestock today than when we joined the EEC and that the herd in the twenty-six counties has dropped by over seven million in the last year.

The main reason for this drop is that farmers are being pressurised by the commercial banks and lending agencies like ACC, over the last two and a half years, to sell off the most important asset in livestock farming — breeding stock (cows and heifers) — in order to meet repayments on loans. In some cases they are being pressurised to sell portions of their land for the same reason.

The number of cows being sold to factory buyers, or being sold direct to processing plants over the last twelve months, indicates that the full impact in the decline of our cattle population will not be felt for at least two years. Milk production is also showing a declining trend and there has been a drop in production for the last two years.

DISASTER

The IFA have been campaigning for farmers to withhold moiety repayments to the ACC and have been picketing its offices. Farmers are being taken to court for non-payment of rates.

But surely the IFA see that the EEC policy of cheap food is a disaster for the people they purport to represent.

Why do they not try and regain credibility by demanding that we pull out of full membership of the EEC and negotiate a proper trading agreement with the member states, at the same time being free to sell to the more lucrative markets where our produce would be in demand.

They clearly see that were it not for the live export of cattle to countries outside the EEC during the last two years, we would have a slump in the beef industry at present.

If the IFA took that stand, and used their political muscle to assure success, they would have the support of not only the majority of farmers, but also of everyone who appreciates how important a well-planned expanding and prosperous agricultural industry is to the welfare of the nation. Collapse of the agricultural industry, in our present pathetic economic state will mean national depression — not prosperity.

Housing won

BY KATHLEEN DWYER

MILITANT action by eight homeless Dublin families secured accommodation from Dublin Corporation in an action organised by Dublin Sinn Féin's advice centre at Blessington Street.

Seven women and a man accompanied by Sinn Féin members, approached Corporation officials as a group and said that they would not leave the Jervis Street housing offices until they and their families were given accommodation. All were housed the same day.

The eight families were among many more Dublin families who have been homeless for some weeks, usually having been evicted from Corporation flats in which they were squatting. Most of those involved in this protest were from the

Ballymun area.

Jim Burdis had been homeless, with his ten-year-old daughter, for four weeks, during which time he had called at the Corporation offices every day.

He had been evicted from a flat in Ballymun because of rent arrears a year ago and had squatted in another flat until eviction again. The rent arrears, he said, had mounted up because a promised rent-assessment had not been carried out.

Annette Whelan, who is four months' pregnant, had been living on a balcony of Ballymun flats for two weeks.

"It was as if they were trying to punish us for squatting", she said. "But what could we do? We had to live somewhere and there are empty flats all over. There is no need that we be left out with nowhere to live."

Mary Byrne had been evicted, with

her nine-month-old baby, over a month before and had been on a balcony until her brother had taken her in to his flat where she had been sharing a small bedroom with three children.

Most of her belongings had been stolen off the balcony where they had been left after the eviction.

Before Monday's protest Mary Byrne had been told that as soon as she had paid £73 which she owed in rent arrears she would be housed. She had put her Christmas double week's unmarried mother's allowance against the arrears but the Corporation had remained unmoved.

Josephine Davies had also been living on a balcony with two children, one of whom was her young brother and the other the child of a dead cousin.

Rosaleen Bridger had been evicted



● Dublin Sinn Féin campaigner Christy Burke, and two of the re-housed homeless, Rosaleen Bridger (centre) and Annette Whelan, both of Ballymun, at the protest in the housing office

after one day's warning without receiving notice to quit or a court order. She had been put out with her ten-month-old baby and her possessions put on the balcony where most of them were eventually either broken or stolen. She

had been a daily caller to the Corporation housing offices.

"I was given promises every day", she said. "But they never offered me a place until today when they realised that I was not moving until I got somewhere."

First convictions

BY DAMIEN O'ROURKE

THE first convictions under the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act since it was passed in 1976 were obtained on Wednesday 23rd December, when the Special Criminal Court in Dublin sentenced two men to ten years' imprisonment for escaping from Crumlin Road jail in Belfast last June.

The two are Robert 'Fat' Campbell, aged twenty-eight, of Ballymurphy, Belfast, and Michael Ryan, aged twenty-six of Ardboe, County Tyrone. They were acquitted of another charge of attempting to kill an RUC man outside the prison during the escape.

During the nine-day trial, several RUC men and Belfast prison warders appeared in the witness box.

ACT

The Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act is designed to circumvent the prohibition under international law of extradition for political offences and reflects the determined collaboration of the Free State government with the British in the North.

In fact this first 'successful' use of the Act in the twenty-six counties came after two failures in other cases; the first, in 1980, when forensic evidence was ruled inadequate; and the second, earlier this year, when a man was released because of a technicality in wrongly applying the Act.

The Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act lay dormant until late in

1980 when it was brought into action by Charles Haughey who had been deeply critical of it in 1976, along with other Fianna Fáil 'republicans', when the Coalition government introduced it.

Haughey, preparing for the summit with Thatcher in December of that year used the Act, along with increased collaboration along the border, to impress the British of his good-will towards them.

COALITION

The Coalition government has continued this line and, more recently, Garret FitzGerald has been offering to extend collaboration in this area by proposing that RUC men travel south to interrogate 'suspects' and that courts dealing with such cases in the twenty-six counties should be composed of two Northern judges and one Southern judge to increase the likelihood of conviction.

However, the British and loyalist strategy has been to continue to press for full extradition which they see as producing a full endorsement by the Dublin government, first of all of the British



● Dublin's infamous Special Criminal Court

presence in the North and then of the RUC and special courts there, whose methods in the past have come in for international criticism.

Dr. A.J.F. O'Reilly

LE LUKE DILLON

TÁ BAINTE faoi leith ag Tony O'Reilly leis an Iarla Gowrie, Aire Príóisúin Tuaisceart Éireann. Tá cónaí anois i gCastlemartin i gContae Chill Dara ar O'Reilly, áit a bhí ina teach cónaithe ag muintir Gowrie leis na blianta. Is dócha go bhfuil baint de shaghas éigin eile acu lena chéile mar tá comhlucht mór ag an mbeirt acu agus níl sé tuille ag ceachtar díobh.

Tuigean muintir na hÉireann staid Gowrie ceart go leor. Tá sé ina aire inniu mar is mac Iarla é agus is fuath le muintir na hÉireann: Teach na n-Iarlaí agus an córas sin go léir. Caitheimid féachaint ar shaoil O'Reilly chun a fháil amach conas ar éirigh leis bheith chomh mór, chomh tábhachtach san, sa tionscalócht agus i gúrsaí gnó.

BUNTAÍSTE

Cinnnte nuair a d'imir na hIarlaí Sasanacha, tháinig dúchasigh chun cinn agus tá O'Reilly ina dheas-shampla de seo. Chuaigh O'Reilly chun tosaigh go tapaigh ach chaitheamar a adhmháil go raibh buntaiste nó dhó aige.

Ar an gofadh dul síos rugadh é i mBaile Átha Cliath. Chuaigh sé ar scoil go Coláiste Belvedere. Ing dhiaidh sin d'imir sé rugbaí le foireann na hÉireann. Tráth nuair a bhí Éire ag imirt rugbaí san Astráil bhuail sé le hiníon milliúnáir agus pósadh an bheirt acu i 1962 agus bhí fás don óiche aige ina dhiaidh sin.

I ndiaidh a chéile bhí sé ina stiúrthóir ar Mc Cowens Teo, Trá Lí (1962), Bórd Baine (1962), A.C.C. (1965), N.E.T. (1966), Comhlucht Siúcra Éireann (1966), A.I.B., banc (1968).

Nuair a bhí O'Reilly i mbun Comhlucht Sídora Éireann agus Erin Foods bhí baint ghnó aige le Comhlucht Heinz agus deirtear go raibh Heinz chomh sásta le obair O'Reilly gur thairg siad post mór, taoiseach Heinz Shasana, dó, sa bhliain 1969.

INDO

D'fhan sé i Sasana ar feadh cúpla bliain arís i 1971 chuir sé suim arís in Éirinn. Le beirt eile, Nicholas Leonard agus Vincent Ferguson (bhí

a dheartháir Norbert ina mhéara ar Shligeach ar sin Sinn Féin 1967-68), cheannaigh sé Crowe Wilson Teo, comhlacht beag.

Thug O'Reilly i gceart saint an dream a leanann scaireanna agus an capitealachas go ginearálta. Leis an 'airgead paipéir' cheannaigh sé roinnt de Gouldings agus d'aistrigh se an t-ainm go Fitzwillton Teo. Ansin cheannaigh sé féin 'Independent Newspapers' in éineacht leis an mbeirt buaite tuas.

Cé go raibh an 'Indo' go nímhneach in aghaidh an Phoblachtachais i réim mhuintir William Martin Murphy chuaigh sé in oclás ar fad faoin réim nua. Fiú amháin d'aistrigh sé an 'Kerryman' ag a raibh dearcadh gaelach agus náisiúnta le seasca bliain anuas.

NA STÁIT

Tháirg sos ansin i bhfás O'Reilly in Éirinn mar d'aistrigh sé ó Shasana go dtí na Stáit Aontaithe mar a rinneadh taoiseach domhanda de Chomhlacht Heinz de. Faoin am seo bhí baint faoi leith ag O'Reilly leis an mbeirt Sasanach, National Westminster, agus thosaigh sé ag cur suime arís i ngnó na hÉireann. Deirtear go raibh diomá air nuair nár thug a chara iarthaoiseach Seán Ó Loinsigh an post sa Bhrúisléid.

Le cabhair an Nat West d'infheistigh sé i Columbia Investments, Atlantic Resources, Sunday World agus Nutley Investments. Mar is gnáthach deineadh stiúrthóir de O'Reilly san Ulster Bank, géag in Éirinn de Nat. West.

Ós rud é go raibh impireacht O'Reilly chomh mór anois chabhair beirt eile leis chun é a rialú. 'Siad san Jim McCarthy Ó Dockrells, seanchara leis a d'imir ar thoirnean rugbaí na hÉireann chomh maith agus Jim Cawley dílóidóir ó Bhaile Átha Cliath a bhí tráth ar choimisiún Fianna Fáil a bhí i mbun scrúidú ar seolán Tuaiscirt.

COSC

Cé go raibh baint ag O'Reilly san am atá caithe le Fianna Fáil agus an Loinsheach go háirithe sé an seolán, an lá inniu ann ná go bhfuil sé an-chairdiúil leis an nGearradh. Is dócha go bhfuil impireacht chomh leathan sin aige go



● Tony O'Reilly — aghaidh an rachmais

gaithfidh sé bheith cairdiúil le Fianna Fáil agus le Fine Gael.

Fresin, chabhair sé leis an dá rialtas chun chos a chur le Poblachtachtaí sna Stáit Aontaithe agus fós an bholscaireacht Shasanaigh a chraoladh.

Cinnnte, níl suim ná tuiscint ag O'Reilly i gcuachas an Tuaiscirt ach amháin an Poblachtachas agus an Sóisialachas a smachtú ar mhaithe leis féin. Is féidir a bheith cinnte freisin go bhfuil sé ina mhilliúnáir cúpla uair anois ó Heinz, Fitzwillton agus Atlantic (OLA).

Cork slander

IN a slander action by three garda Special Branch men in Cork against Jim Lane, the chairman of the Cork H-Block/Armagh Committee, Judge Gleeson of the Cork Circuit Court, giving judgement on Tuesday 15th December, dismissed the evidence of four other Branch men and said that he believed instead the story of eighteen-year-old H-Block activist Paul O'Leary.

The case taken by the three detectives — Timothy Holland, Patrick McGillicuddy and James McCarthy — rested on a speech at a public meeting at Daunts Square in Cork city, in which Jim Lane detailed the treatment of Paul O'Leary when caught by gardai pasting up posters in Cork city. He named the three as having taken the youth out to the country in their car and as having assaulted and threatened to hang him.

Paul O'Leary, and others with him at the time, told the court of his experience and said that they had recognised McGillicuddy and McCarthy as two of those involved. They had later been told that Holland had been the driver.

In their evidence, the Special Branch men claimed that McGillicuddy was on temporary transfer at Templemore at the time of the incident whilst Holland was on leave at the time. Three gardai, Detective Inspector Thorne, Detective Sergeant Culligan, and Detective Garda Corbett, claimed that they had been with McCarthy in Crosshaven, Carrigaline and Passage West, and not in Cork city at all, at the time Paul O'Leary was picked up.

Judge Gleeson, however, said that he believed Paul O'Leary's story as he was ill-treated in the exact way he described. The judge said: "I would be failing to face up to my duty and my oath if I did not say that he was ill-treated by three members of the Special Branch that night..."

"I believe the defendant (Jim Lane) in conscience believed he was truly recounting this incident to this meeting at Daunts Square."

He continued: "I think a possible explanation, being witnesses who I believe were trying to tell the truth, is that they may well have made a genuine mistake in identity."

The judge went on to say that in the case of McGillicuddy and Holland their presence was not proved satisfactorily. But, "In the case of Detective Garda McCarthy, I am sorry to have to come to this conclusion against the civic guards and despite the fact that other garda officers have sworn that he was in the country with them at the time — I have to take an unfavourable view of his case I accept O'Leary's evidence that Garda McCarthy was in on the act."

Judge Gleeson then awarded McGillicuddy and Holland £200 each with costs against Jim Lane (they had claimed £2,000 in damages) and dismissed McCarthy's claim ordering him to pay one-third of Lane's costs.

Tipperary releases

TIPPERARY Urban District Council has called on the Coalition Minister for Justice, Jim Mitchell, and the Free State president, Patrick Hillery, to secure the immediate release of Donal Wills and Richard McCormick, two Tipperary republican prisoners in Portlaoise jail.

The council passed a motion proposed by Sinn Féin councillor Finbarr Kinsane following a decision by the Court of Criminal Appeal in Dublin shortly before Christmas to release three other Tipperary men — Tim Henchy, Denis Connors and Denis Guerin — who were convicted with Wills and McCormick on a charge of conspiracy to inflict grievous bodily harm on James Buggy of County Tipperary in January 1977.

In quashing the convictions, the court ruled that an incriminating statement made by Tim Henchy was not a voluntary statement and that Denis Connors and Denis Guerin had not been lawfully detained. At the end of their first period in custody, they had been taken outside Cahir garda station and then re-arrested. The court said that there had not been a lawful discharge from custody and that the subsequent arrest was invalid.

Both Donal Wills and Richard McCormick have the same grounds as the other men for appeal against their conviction, but have been unable to do so because of a failure to lodge notice of appeal within the required time.

The further of Bob

THIS issue, as last, 'An Phoblacht/Republican News' is printing several short articles and poems by the late BOBBY SANDS, H-Block hunger-striker, IRA Volunteer, and Westminster MP, who died in Long Kesh prison camp on May 5th after sixty-six days on hunger-strike.

All were written by Bobby Sands during 1979 and 1980 when he was on the blanket in the H-Blocks and were smuggled out of the blocks on tiny scraps of toilet paper.

A collection of his poems has just been published by the Republican Movement and a collection of his writings is due to be commercially published shortly.

These three articles and two poems, 'Stars of freedom' and 'Dreamers', are previously unpublished and are not included in these collections.

'The price of freedom' spells out Bobby's unrelenting commitment to the armed struggle.

'Things remain the same' is an emotive call to the nationalist people to mobilise behind the prisoners and the republican struggle, and a reminder that British mistreatment of Irish political prisoners is nothing new. 'The poem on the wall' demonstrates one of the few methods available to the blanket men of keeping themselves mentally alert, and keeping up their morale, in terrible conditions of physical and mental deprivation.

The price of freedom

WHEN a perennially oppressed nation strikes for freedom she heralds the death, grief and suffering of her children and her children's children. Yet she does so in the hope and desire that she may see her aged bonds replaced by the liberty, equality and fraternity of all her future generations.

All liberation struggles are bitter and more often than not they are protracted bloody wars of attrition.

Our own struggle bears no different a mark and after a decade of vicious uncompromising war that mark is deeply scarred upon the very heart of the risen people.

FUTILITY

True economic and national freedom of an oppressed people cannot, nor ever will, be purchased by words, no

matter how sweet or strong these words may be.

The futility of such feeble foolishness adequately demonstrates itself in the difference between the stark poverty of the wretched downtrodden of this earth and the excessive wealth of the fortunate, privileged few. Amply demonstrated that is, by the well proven fact that these parasites of people care not a pittance for human life and suffering, let alone words.

It is a fact that is ruthlessly reinforced by a sometimes forgotten truth, that those who hold economic and political dominance over a people will, if need be (and as we know only too well), inflict terrible atrocities upon those who dare attempt to remove their powerful privileges from them. Therefore, what is stolen and held from a people by force of arms must, and can only be, taken back by the people through force of arms.

DIRECT

It must be said that an armed people are by no means a sure guarantee to liber-

ation. Our guns may kill our enemies, but unless we direct them with the politics of a revolutionary people, they will eventually kill ourselves.

Guns don't win wars. Guns and bombs may kill a man, but they cannot lead a man, nor for that matter (as we have proved), can they, or ever will they, coerce an unyielding man to yield!

So, as did the revolutionary people of Vietnam and others, we, likewise a struggling and oppressed people, must realise our people's role. We must supply the political ammunition for the weapons that reap our freedom.

That political ammunition is knowing what we want, where we are going, and how we are going to get there. If we know this and in our unity apply that knowledge to the force of our arms, we will then undoubtedly achieve our objective: an Irish socialist republic based upon the Proclamation of 1916.

WEARY

There are those who often speak of a war-weary people, a people stumbling

under the weight and labour of long years of war. I believe that such weariness is non-existent. Out of breath at times, but never weary!

The British soldier may easily weary for he stands to gain nothing but an early grave. But a revolutionary people never weary of the unquenchable desire for freedom.

Should the work-load of this labour be equally distributed amongst more, and as many, people as possible, then obviously, no matter how small the helping hand, the extra help can only add to greater resistance and indeed quicker results.

SACRIFICE

The price of freedom is a terrible price and tragically it is so often paid by great sacrifice. Many suffer so that some day all Irishmen may know justice and peace.

Many die fighting oppression so that future generations may live in freedom and prosperity. All of us must pay the price of freedom in some way. However great or small the offering, there is no difference, for we all have a part to play and we must play it willingly to achieve victory.

When we realise this and set about to do it, we then play our people's role in the struggle for our liberation. When we think of the sacrifice and determination of our comrades in Armagh jail and the terrible sacrifice paid by our fallen comrades, we must surely be inspired and prompted to add our weight by playing our part.

THINGS remain the same — torturous.

Those are the seemingly perpetual words that inevitably filter out each day from the H-Blocks of Long Kesh on miserable scraps of 'government property' stamped toilet-roll to our comrades on the outside.

Our smuggled messages today told of the vicious and callous beatings meted out, by dozens of sadistic and sectarian screws, upon naked and very vulnerable republican prisoners-of-war; of how last night we fought at our cell doors with blankets to try and stop the freezing jet of the high-powered hose from saturating our pale skeletal bodies and our filthy, already damp, mutilated mattresses that lie upon the dirty, cold, concrete floor.

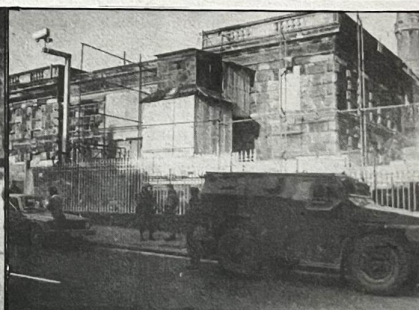
And of how we gave up, drenched, to retire to the farthest corner, up to our very ankles in water, to fight back with all we really have: our spirit of resistance.

BATTERED

We tell of how our food is restricted, cold, spoiled and meagre. We live in a continual state of hunger. It is a terrible thing but, to us here in H-Block, it has become petty and of little consequence in the face of the battered, bloody bodies of naked men.

But have things not always been the

Things remain the same



● British troops outside Mountjoy jail, Dublin, (left), during the Tan War, and Crumlin Road jail, Belfast, during the 'seventies

same for Irish republican prisoners-of-war incarcerated in British hell-holes?

There is no future in Ireland under oppression, only the same tragic history repeating itself in every decade. Every decade has brought forth the same horrendous story of the brutality and inhumanity inflicted upon Irish prisoners-of-war, men and women alike, and — lest we forget — the subsequent murders.

We need no reminder of the savage

and barbaric treatment endured by Ann Devlin, incarcerated and tortured by English and quising alike, over one hundred and seventy-five years ago; or the unflinching determination and unconquerable spirit shown by Countess Markievicz in her steadfast resistance both in and out of jail.

For that same determination and spirit is being shown to us at this very time, by the principled stand taken by Irish women incarcerated in Armagh

jail, who like our republican heroines of decades and centuries gone by, have refused to be broken or to allow themselves to be treated or portrayed as common criminals.

Indeed their spirit and determination is undoubtedly unflinching and unconquerable, never to be broken.

Similarly, we republican blanket men in H-Block remember only too well our countless James Connollys, Robert Emmets, Frank Staggs, and Terence MacSwineys, and never do we forget

that, be it the English lackey devil, the result of oppression and torture

SAN The Fianna Fail remarkably the same of Irish republican prisoners in Portlaoise jail is like from that of the traitors to captured republicans when Free Staters murdered very wings of the jail yards became execution sites. The death of Smith, murdered by Portlaoise in 1975, is the continual repetition from English and Irish is the case of those of-war tortured during 'forties, and 'fifties jail and English and holes.

The repetition of the same generation of Irish likewise rot and die tortured, and the need the following generations to meet the same far from oppressor. For she will unashamedly continue to maintain and economic exploitation to judgement day, it and ejected.

ARM There is but one way to remove the aged enemy. Once and for all, the physical force in the struggle. We republican prisoners

1981 review of the year 1981

The armed struggle

**FOUR PAGE
SUPPLEMENT**
by Teresa Kelly

THE IRA continued to wage the war of national liberation against the British throughout 1981, and there was no lull in military activity as there had been through the first hunger-strike campaign in 1980.

As usual, the IRA's active service units showed their versatility by switching from car bombs to sniper attacks, to rocket attacks, to landmines, thereby making it extremely difficult for the occupation forces to predict the next move.

Nevertheless, the Brit-RUC barracks in Clogher, County Tyrone, were once again destroyed by a massive car bomb on February 25th, for the second time in six months.

Several mortar attacks were mounted over the year, commercial bombings made a hole of two to three million pounds in the British purse, over fifty members of the British occupation forces were killed, and over two hundred injured. Of those killed, sixteen were members of the hated UDR, seven of whom were killed after the ending of the hunger-strike.

RPG-7 rocket launchers were used successfully, and as the Brits had to admit themselves, skilfully, in urban situations by Belfast IRA Volunteers; on May 14th, injuring five RUC men; on May 22nd, injuring two Brits; on August 2nd, injuring several Brits, one seriously, and on September 29th, killing one RUC man and leaving one injured.

OPERATIONS

Operations were carried out in the heart of Britain in spite of logistical difficulties.

Uxbridge RAF barracks in west London were bombed on January 8th. A bomb went off in Sullom Voe oil terminal, a few hundred yards away from the route the British Queen was taking on her official visit that day.

On October 10th, a car bomb exploded near a bus transporting

Irish Guards from duty at the Tower of London back to their Chelsea barracks. Twenty-two Brits were injured, nine of them seriously.

On October 17th, Sir Stuart Pringle, Lieutenant-General of the Royal Marine Commandos, was seriously injured when a bomb exploded under his car as he was leaving his home. His car was wrecked and he lost a leg in the blast.

A successful commercial bombing was carried out on October 26th in Oxford Street, in the centre of London, at the beginning of the Christmas shopping period. Three bombs were left in shops and cafes, and warnings were phoned, giving ample time for evacuation of all the premises. Oxford Street had to be closed for the rest of that day, causing heavy financial losses to local stores and shops.

Finally, the barracks of the Royal Artillery regiment in Woolwich, London, were the target of a booby-trap operation, causing slight injuries to two soldiers' wives who disturbed the device.

In the six counties there were two co-ordinated bomb blitzes, causing millions of pounds worth of damage, the first on January 26th, the second on August 5th.

Landmines were used on several occasions, mostly in the country, as on May 19th, when a 1000 lb. mine was detonated under a British army saracen, blowing the vehicle

to smithereens, and killing instantly its five occupants. A similar attack was mounted on the RUC on July 7th in Newtownhamilton, with no resulting casualties; and on August 2nd in Tyrone, killing two RUC men.

AMBUSHED

On September 2nd, two female IRA Volunteers lured two British soldiers to a Malone Road flat, in south Belfast, where they were ambushed by armed Volunteers. One was killed, the other seriously injured.

Amidst the sorrow of the hunger-strike, nationalist people in the North rejoiced when they heard of the daring escape of eight IRA Volunteers out of Crumlin Road jail in Belfast. With smuggled guns, the men took prison warders hostage and finally made their way to freedom, after a shoot-out with RUC men outside the jail. Three of the escapees have unfortunately since been recaptured in the South, two of whom have been sentenced to lengthy terms of imprisonment under the infamous Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act.

On January 21st, an IRA unit carried out an attack on Tynan Abbey in County Armagh, the mansion of the unionist aristocrat Sir Norman Stronge, killing him and his son James, an RUC reservist. After a gun battle with RUC patrols arriving on the scene, the active service unit made good its escape.

The IRA explained that their action was in reprisal for the recent spate of sectarian assassinations perpetrated on nationalists by loyalist paramilitaries.

On November 14th, the IRA executed South Belfast unionist MP Robert Bradford, and subsequently explained that Bradford and others like him, by their sectarian statements, encouraged the UVF and UDA gunmen to murder innocent Catholics.



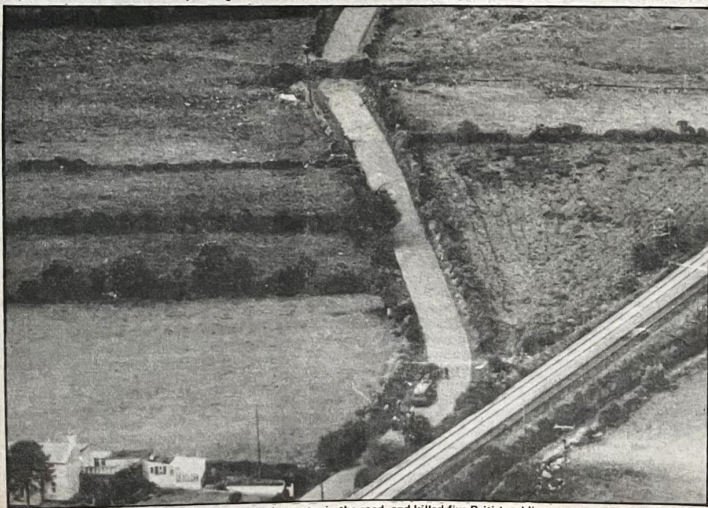
● IRA training camp



● British army bus blasted outside Chelsea barracks



● Robert Bradford, purveyor of sectarian hatred



● A landmine in South Armagh created a massive crater in the road, and killed five British soldiers

**FOUR PAGE
SUPPLEMENT**
by Teresa Kelly

1981 review of the year 1981 review of the year 1981 review of the year 1981



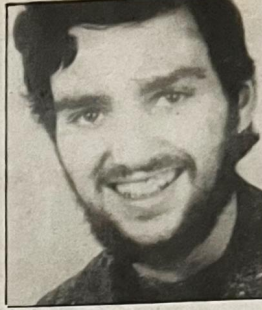
● **BOBBY SANDS**
died May 5th after 66 days



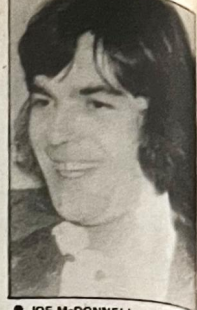
● **FRANCIS HUGHES**
died May 12th after 59 days



● **RAYMOND MCCREESH**
died May 21st after 61 days



● **PATSY O'HARA**
died May 21st after 61 days



● **JOE McDONNELL**
died July 8th after 61 days

1981 WAS DOMINATED by the grim and heroic struggle of republican prisoners for political recognition — which they undoubtedly received from millions all over the world, yet which few governments, least of all London or Dublin, would grant them.

After the earlier hunger-strike had ended, on December 18th 1980, and the British government had allowed the H-Block prisoners to read a thirty-four page document of proposed prison reforms, the prisoners, their relatives and their friends sat waiting and hoping that common sense on the part of the British would once and for all resolve this five-year-old crisis.

The prisoners were willing to end all forms of protest provided the promised reforms were implemented, and their elected O/C, Bobby Sands, negotiated with prison governor Stanley Hilditch a phasing-out of the 'no wash' protest, with ten men from H3 and ten from H5 as a test case.

On January 20th, these twenty prisoners, having washed themselves, sat waiting in their clean cells for the clothes their families had brought. But this was refused. From the prison warders right up to the British government, there had never been the slightest intention to resolve the crisis.

What Thatcher wanted was total humiliation for the republican prisoners, what the warders wanted was their fat bonus at the end of each month resulting from the prisoners' protest. January 20th was the last chance for the British government to settle to everyone's advantage, and with minimum cost to themselves.

On February 5th, the prisoners released a statement announcing that a second hunger-strike would commence on March 1st, the fifth anniversary of the removal of 'special category' status. As February drew to a close, it was learnt that Bobby Sands would begin the fast alone, and that others would join him at regular intervals.

The fast was to last 217 days. Twenty-three prisoners engaged in it, of whom ten were to die, in a calvary of false hopes, anguish and pain for themselves, their relatives and friends; lies and deceit from the British government; slander and blackmail from the Catholic hierarchy.

SANDS

Support activities slowly gathered momentum, as if weary supporters had needed longer this time to face up to the awful reality of a fast to the death.

On March 1st, Bobby Sands refused his first meal. Between five and ten thousand people marched up the Falls Road in support of the five demands. But after a slow start, events speeded up when, sadly, Frank Maguire, MP for Fermanagh-South Tyrone, died of a heart attack on March 5th. His untimely death caused local H-Block activists to consider fielding a hunger-striker.

Fearless South Derry soldier Francis Hughes had begun fasting on March 15th. Raymond McCreesh from South Armagh and Patsy O'Hara from Derry had joined him and Bobby on March 22nd. The SDLP, under pressure

from rank-and-file supporters on the ground, decided not to field Austin Currie.

Noel Maguire, brother of the late MP, after a visit from Bobby Sands' parents, withdrew his nomination papers minutes before the deadline for nominations, on Monday 30th March.

Bobby Sands, 'political prisoner', anti-H-Block/Armagh candidate, and old-time unionist and landlord Harry West, found themselves locked in an electoral battle on Thursday 9th April, as Bobby lay on a hospital bed, forty days into his hunger-strike. Hundreds of thousands held their breath that Friday afternoon, as counting was going on in Enniskillen Technical College.

Then the magic moment, the magic figure: 30,492. Bobby Sands had been elected MP.

ELATED

Nationalists all over the six counties were elated. Constitutional politicians were stunned. Journalists were breathless. The British government was shattered.

'A mandate for the IRA', screamed the headlines. 'Thirty thousand murderers', shrieked loyalist politicians. 'Traditional anti-unionist voting pattern', pontificated John Hume, whose party had semi-officially called for abstention right up to the 9th.

'A freak result due to sympathy and emotion', was all the dumb-founded British official voice could come up with. 'They can't let him die now', supporters of the prisoners thought. They were all wrong. The result was not a freak. It was repeated four months later, and even improved on.

It was not so much a mandate for the IRA, but for political status, and was understood as such by all concerned, republicans or not. And, not a month later, on Tuesday 5th May, Bobby Sands died.

The British government had seen its room for political manoeuvring considerably reduced by the election of a hunger-striker. First, the world's attention had been suddenly focused on the occupied North of Ireland, to an extent unseen since Mountbatten's death and the Warrenpoint ambush in 1979.

And this time, the British

government could not play its old tune about 'terrorists' and 'gangsters', as the game had been played according to their rules, through the ballot box. The world's press flocked to Belfast. From local folk heroes, Bobby Sands and his comrades were becoming media events. And most of all, the British government's lie that 'the prisoners had no support' lay in tatters at their feet.

HAUGHEY

Free State premier Charles Haughey, who had consistently refused requests that he approach Margaret Thatcher and officially ask her to grant the prisoners their demands, made his move on April 23rd, when he advised Bobby's distraught relatives to call for the intervention of the European Commission on Human Rights.

He also led them to believe that the intervention would take place immediately, and produce quick results. Yet it later appeared that the Commission needed Bobby Sands' signature to intervene, that they would see him alone, without his chosen advisors, that they would need two weeks to present their findings, and that the matter of 'political status' was completely outside their competence.

The Free State government had shown itself a shrewd and deceitful accomplice of the British, and, like them, more interested in ending the embarrassment of the hunger-strike than in resolving the issue.

On April 20th, three Free State Euro-MPs, Neil Blaney (Independent Fianna Fail), Síle de Valera (Fianna Fail) and Dr. John O'Connell (Independent), were allowed to visit Sands. O'Connell had previously stated that he would try to convince Sands to come off his fast.

Upset by their visit to the dying MP, they requested a meeting with Margaret Thatcher, who in a press conference in Saudi Arabia publicly humiliated them by saying: "It is not my habit or custom to meet MPs from a foreign country about a citizen of the United Kingdom."

On April 25th, Bobby's 56th day on hunger-strike, the three-member delegation of the European Commission on Human Rights flew to Belfast, in a blaze of publicity. They left the following day, without having met Bobby, who by then lay on a waterbed, still lucid but close to death.

They had managed to create an impression of movement, and lent some respectability to the British and Free State governments in their callous exercise in brinkmanship and media manipulation.

The heroic

On Sunday 26th April, twenty thousand marchers demonstrated on the Falls Road in Belfast. The size of the crowd, the many speakers who addressed the rally, US Attorney-General Ramsey Clark, Massachusetts state representative Marie Howe, American Jesuit pacifist Fr. Daniel Berrigan, Kerry GAA football celebrity Joe Keohane, Bernadette McAliskey, who was making her first public appearance since the UDA's attempt on her life and that of her husband on January 16th, finally the dozens of telegrams from all over Europe, the USA, Britain, that were read to the demonstrators; all these elements pointed to an unprecedented support for the prisoners' cause, a hitherto unequalled world interest in the plight of the Irish people.

Yet, the British were to remain unmoved. As the H-Block prisoners pointed out much later, in their October 3rd statement drawing the lessons of the hunger-strike they had just ended: "The nationalist community is politically inconsequential and impotent in the context of the six-county statelet."

ANGRY

Bobby Sands died at 1.17 a.m. on Tuesday 5th May.

As an angry nationalist community took to the dark streets, some women with bin lids, others with rosary beads, youths with stones and petrol bombs, the British army and RUC indulged in an orgy of attacks on bystanders, driving armoured cars at groups of women praying, shooting on small children with plastic bullets.

On April 19th in Derry, two youths had savagely been run over and killed by British army vehicles, Gary English, aged nineteen, and Jimmy Brown, aged eighteen.

The unadulterated violence displayed by British troops and RUC would cause many more deaths and permanent injuries, causing even 'moderate' politicians and churchmen to condemn the use of plastic bullets, concerned as they were by the rising popular indignation, and wishing that the British troops would behave in a more 'acceptable' manner.

From April, seven people were killed by plastic bullets, three children and four adults, none of them taking part in a riot. Several hundreds were injured and required hospital treatment, with injuries mostly to the head or chest, causing in some cases paralysis or blindness.

The beleaguered nationalist people were to experience in a

few months the death of ten hunger-strikers, and of many more on the streets of the occupied North, callous British disregard for their democratic voice, and the closing of ranks of the Irish establishment behind the British government.

Bobby's remains were carried on Thursday 7th May from his Twinbrook home in Belfast to the republican plot in Belfast's Milltown cemetery, flanked by a huge crowd. Estimates ranged from fifty to one hundred thousand.

Through his sixty-six days on hunger-strike, Bobby Sands had become a household name, and his literary talent contributed in no little way to making the world understand what kind of people the British were keeping behind bars in the six counties.

Over forty thousand copies of the 'Writings' and 'Diary' were sold through the campaign. Extracts were quoted in the world press. Sentences appeared on the walls of Belfast and Derry, and the lark has now become the symbol of the jailed freedom fighters. Bobby Sands gave the prisoners a voice.

DIED

Francis Hughes died on May 12th after fifty-nine days, Raymond McCreesh and Patsy O'Hara died on May 21st after sixty-one days. Huge crowds of mourners attended their funerals, pickets were organised all over Ireland, mock coffins were carried by thousands of protestors to British embassies or consulates all over Europe, in America, Australia, New Zealand; vigils and pickets were organised in Britain.

On May 23rd, local elections took place in the six counties.

Although Sinn Féin did not field any candidates, in Belfast, two IRSP and two People's Democracy candidates in Belfast, standing on anti-H-Block manifestos, were elected to the city council.

Gerry Fitt, who had despicably sided with Thatcher on the prison issue, lost a seat he had held for twenty-three years. Paddy Devlin scraped through on the last count. The Irish Independence Party, which had publicly supported the prisoners' demands, gained twenty-one seats, an increase of eleven.

After two postponements, the Free State government had fixed a date for general elections in the South. It was to be June 11th. H-Block activists actively campaigned for nine prisoners, four of them on hunger-strike then — Joe McDonnell, Kevin Lynch, Martin Hurson and Kieran Doherty — and five other prisoners.



● Derry city, the old and new

Tom, Mairead Farrell, Tom McAllister, Seamus and Paddy Agnew.

Proving all the power the prisoners possessed, well, and two were Kieran Doherty for Monaghan constituency, 15% first preference, Paddy Agnew for 18% first preference, two seats prevented administration from majority in Leinster, Fine Gael-Labour coalition, with Garret Premier. However, in spite

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● MARTIN HURSON
died July 13th after 46 days



● KEVIN LYNCH
died August 1st after 71 days



● KIERAN DOHERTY
died August 2nd after 73 days



● THOMAS McELWEE
died August 8th after 62 days



● MICKY DEVINE
died August 20th after 60 days

prison struggle



...the new
Tony O'Hare,
...McKenna
...wrong,
...extremely
...elected
...the Cavan/
...votes, and
...South,
...Notes. These
...the Haughey
...gaining a
...House, and a
...election took
...Gerald as
...the wide-

role for itself in mediating between the two parties.

After a tentative statement on what they saw as necessary prison reforms to resolve the issue, a statement which the British government ignored and which the prisoners studied and answered two weeks later, the commission started a series of meetings with various political parties, hunger-strikers' relatives, and the National H-Block/Armagh Committee.

On June 23rd, as Joe McDonnell was beginning his forty-seventh day on hunger-strike, the commission met the British under-secretary for prisons in the North, Michael Alison. At that meeting he told them that he saw no problem in the prisoners wearing their own clothes.

From that day to July 8th, when Joe McDonnell died, the British government was to engage in yet another exercise in brinkmanship with the prisoners' lives, letting the commission meet the hunger-strikers, but not their O/C, Brendan McFarlane, allowing them to raise the relatives' hopes, only to crush them, as on July 3rd when Alison reneged on the clothes issue.

All along, FitzGerald, the new Free State premier, was monitoring the situation, and even met the families on July 3rd, impressing on them that they should get their sons to accept the commission's settlement. But the British government's about-turn on the clothes issue, followed by their stalling and vague public statements, ensured that the commission was shown as a puppet in their hands.

On July 8th, Joe McDonnell died, after sixty-one days on hunger-strike. Never at any time had the prisoners stated that the commission's proposals were acceptable to them, yet, in spite of a lengthy and crystal-clear statement by the prisoners on July 14th, the commission, a creation of the Irish establishment, had lent itself willingly to the cynical manoeuvres of the British government.

And the streets of the six counties echoed once more, for the fifth time in less than ten weeks, with the fracas of bin lids and of angry rioting.

A member of na Fianna Éireann, John Dempsey, was shot dead by the Brits in Belfast, and young housewife Nora McCabe fatally wounded by an RUC plastic bullet. On Friday July 10th, as Joe McDonnell was being buried with full military honours, Brits and RUC attacked the mourners and the firing party both with plastic and live bullets,

coming close to creating another 'Bloody Sunday'.

The premature death of Martin Hurson after forty-six days of fast, on July 13th, further stunned the relatives and supporters of the prisoners. Six of their comrades had now died, yet the prisoners battled on, with grim and heroic determination.

ILLUSION

The British government's last attempt to give the illusion of progress and demoralise the prisoners took place as Kevin Lynch and Kieran Doherty were entering the critical stage of their fasts, and involved the International Red Cross.

The delegation of the IRC was given a brief by the British government, so thin as to be invisible, but the prisoners condemned this new ploy, and the delegation faded away to prepare some vague report on 'Northern Ireland prisons'.

On August 1st, Kevin Lynch died after seventy-one days of fast, then on August 2nd, Kieran Doherty, TD for Cavan/Monaghan, died after seventy-three days.

The flag flew at half-mast on Leinster House for Kieran Doherty, although the few people left in the building at the beginning of the summer recess were at pains to point out that it was done for 'any' TD.

In fact, arch-bigot and unionist MP Robert Bradford was to be bestowed that same honour less than four months later.

The last two hunger-strikers to lose their lives in this heroic struggle were Thomas McElwee, who died on August 8th after sixty-two days, and Micky Devine, who died on August 20th, after sixty days. On that same day a by-election took place in Fermanagh and South Tyrone. No hunger-striker candidate this time, the British government had seen to that by hastily concocting and passing a bill through Westminster, which would bar people convicted of 'terrorist offences' in Britain and the North from standing for election at Westminster.

This bill, widely known as the 'Sands bill', demonstrated how respectful of the ballot box the British really are. In the event, Owen Carron, local member of Sinn Féin, H-Block activist and former election agent for Bobby Sands, was chosen to stand as 'proxy' political prisoner candidate, against ex-UDR man and Official Unionist Ken Maginnis. Owen Carron polled 31,278 votes, increasing Bobby Sands' majority by almost eight hundred.

This was another body-blow to

Thatcher's government, a further indication of the height of support the prisoners enjoyed. Yet, at that stage, the Brits' worries were soon to be over, as their old ally, the Catholic hierarchy, was on an all-out campaign to put pressure on the hunger-strikers' relatives.

CHURCH

The main advocate of that campaign was Long Kesh assistant-chaplain Fr. Denis Faul, with the approval of Cardinal O'Fiaich and Bishop Daly.

As early as March 1st, Bishop Daly of Derry had condemned the hunger-strike as 'immoral' and advised young people not to be 'used' by 'certain groups'. The church broke its silence a few times, asking for compromise and an end to the fast. On April 28th, the Pope's envoy Fr. John Magee, was despatched to plead with the hunger-strikers to unconditionally end their fast. To no avail.

After Francis Hughes' death, O'Fiaich had sent a telegram to Thatcher begging her to negotiate with the prisoners, but his plea was ignored. This was to be the last effort by the Catholic hierarchy to act in favour of the prisoners. Through the Irish Commission for Justice and Peace, they willingly played the British game of deceit.

By then, and after six deaths in the H-Blocks, they clearly saw the prisoners' Achilles heel to be their distressed relatives, and began a concerted effort in their direction.

Repeatedly through the last week of July and August, Fr. Faul, by a series of lies, tried to undermine the trust the families were putting in the H-Block campaign leadership.

Although always publicly exposed, Fr. Faul forged ahead, with various meetings of prisoners' relatives, in Toomebridge, in Belfast, hoping to provide a public platform for any frustration or resentment the families might have had against the whole campaign, or the Republican Movement. But the relatives remained united, and even issued a joint statement at the end of such a meeting in Belfast on August 7th.

INTERVENTION

Mrs. Quinn's intervention to save her son, Paddy's life on July 31st, was heralded as an 'example for all Christian mothers' by various clerics, increasing the already unbearable pressure on the families of Kevin Lynch and Kieran Doherty. Through public statements, Faul began to describe the hunger-strike as 'hopeless', accusing republicans of using the strike to 'gain control'. The mask was down.

The Catholic hierarchy's real fear had been, all along, the collapsing of their power base. And if their power rested on British rule, then support British rule they must.

Pat McGeown's wife intervened

on August 20th as his condition suddenly worsened. Apart from Brendan McLaughlin who had voluntarily called off his fast on May 27th after fourteen days, after it had become clear he would soon die of a perforated ulcer, now two hunger-strikers had ended their fast through family intervention.

Fr. Faul by then was paying frequent visits to the hunger-strikers' relatives, calling meetings or seeing them individually. On September 4th, Matt Devlin's family signed for medical intervention; on the 6th, Laurence McKeown's family did likewise.

On the 26th, Liam McCloskey voluntarily ended his fast after his mother convinced him she would intervene, the minute he became unconscious. Bernard Fox ended his fast on the 25th for health reasons similar to Brendan McLaughlin's. The strike finally crumbled as an effective weapon when all but one family of the remaining six hunger-strikers indicated that they would intervene eventually.

What the British and Free State governments had been unable to achieve, directly or through various official bodies, the Catholic hierarchy had succeeded in bringing about: an unconditional end of the hunger-strike. The prisoners in their October 3rd statement were not slow to draw the lesson from that fact.

Having won international recognition for their status as political prisoners, but having failed to wring the formal admission of that from an unyielding British government, the prisoners were given their own clothes, and promised some restoration of remission for 'good behaviour'.

About two-thirds of them are now on a 'no work' protest, like their women comrades in Armagh, and the rest have decided to conform to prison rules. It will take them months, maybe years, to overcome the emotional and physical strain of four-and-a-half years, of gruelling protest and ill-treatment, and a year of hunger-strikes.

On the outside, the Irish establishment has been exposed, and lost credibility and electoral ground. British criminalisation policy has been smashed.

Anti-imperialist feelings have been awakened from their slumber throughout Ireland. The struggle for Irish freedom has gained world-wide publicity. And, more important perhaps for the future, the youth of Ireland stood up to be counted.

Some joined the ranks of the IRA. Others worked tirelessly in their action groups, organising pickets, drafting leaflets, painting wall murals, the photographs of which went all over the world, as the most beautiful proof of the existence of a living popular struggle. All this was, first and foremost, what Bobby Sands and his comrades were in jail for, and what they died for.

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**FOUR PAGE
SUPPLEMENT**
by Teresa Kelly

Unionism in crisis

AFTER the well-publicised Haughey/Thatcher meeting on December 20th, one year ago, speculation filled the newspaper columns, until it was learnt, on February 2nd of this year, that joint study groups had been set up and were already operating, their brief being to reassess the so-called 'totality of the relationships within these islands'.

The phrase covered issues as widely different as Free State 'neutrality', NATO bases, a gas pipe-line from Kinsale to the North, joint campaigns to promote tourism and, finally, all the possible ways of uniting Ireland while keeping its people divided, in the British interest of course.

The issue of Free State 'neutrality' caused some heated debates in Leinster House; on February 14th, Fine Gael accused Fianna Fail of selling Ireland's defence for a mess of unionist potage; and in July, Fianna Fail accused Fine Gael of doing likewise. Inflation and the hunger-strike dealt Irish tourism a body blow from which it will take years to recover. As for the 'Irish dimension', it was used quite skilfully by Paisley to worm his way to the centre of the political stage, and make his bid for the supreme leadership of the unionist camp.

Besides several stage-managed expulsions from Westminster he launched his Carson-trail campaign on February 2nd, with a rally organised to sign a Covenant similar to that of Carson in 1912. On the night of February 5th, he also staged, for a few invited journalists, the first hillside parade of men in military formation, implying to the world that once more 'Ulster would fight'.

A series of Carson-trail rallies were organised right through February, until the final 'monster' rally in front of Stormont, which turned out to be a damp squib with less than ten thousand demonstrators. However, the media love a Paisley, and covered all the little incidents of the campaign, like the fistcuffs in Belfast's Europa Hotel between Paisley and some Dublin city councillors up on an official visit on March 5th.

COALITION

The new Coalition government which took over in the South after the June elections, was no less willing to co-operate. Cross-border security operations continued unabated, and it seemed at times that the Free State army and garda were more enthusiastic than the Brits or the RUC in giving chase to 'terrorists' on either side of the border, as became clear after the kidnapping of businessman Ben Dunne.

After the November 6th summit between Thatcher and FitzGerald, it appeared that what was planned was some kind of 'Anglo-Irish council'. The setting up of an 'Anglo-Irish court' was also mentioned. The fact that these talks were going on and producing proposals, empty as they might be, was in itself a propaganda victory for the Thatcher administration.

However, they were met with increasing annoyance by unionist politicians. The Official Unionists, torn by internal wrangling, timidly objected first to the 'secrecy' of

the talks, then to the seeming lack of emphasis on 'security'. Paisley delivered his 'sell-out' speech to dozens of rallies, press conferences and indoor meetings.

Loyalist frustration, caused by an uncertain political future and the intense media coverage of the republican hunger-strike, spilled over to nationalist districts in the shape of UVF and UDA assassins. In October, nationalist councillor Larry Kennedy from Ardoyne in north Belfast was gunned down at the door of a club.

Later that week, Robert Ewing was shot dead in front of his wife and children in his Oldpark home, also in north Belfast. Old-age pensioner Mary McKay was murdered in her bedroom in the Markets, close to Belfast city centre. The British government still refused to ban the UDA.

BRADFORD

On November 14th, Robert Bradford, unionist MP for South Belfast and guilty of frequently inciting murderous attacks on nationalist districts, was executed by the IRA. Screaming headlines, hundreds of journalists flying back to Belfast, the stage was set for another Paisley media event.

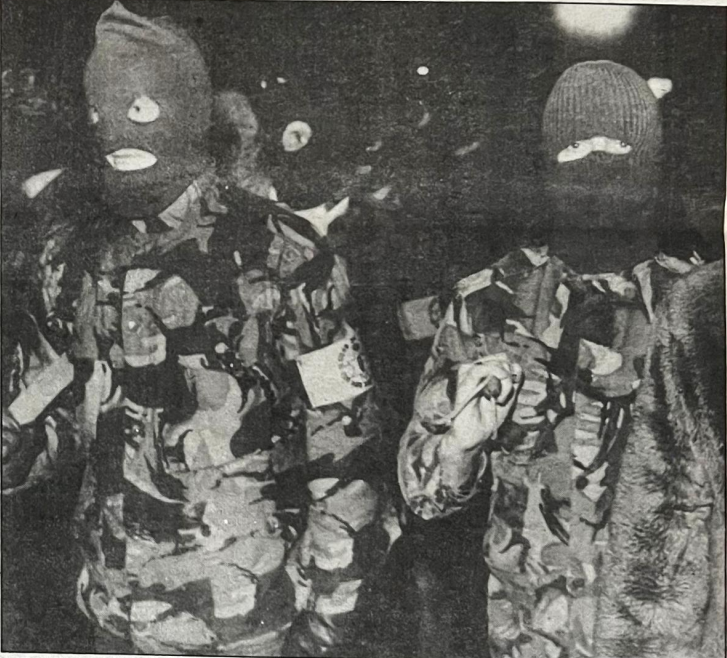
As tens of thousands of unionists had assembled all over the North on the day of Bradford's funeral, Paisley organised the heckling of Jim Prior, the new Brit direct-ruler.

On Monday 23rd November, Paisley's Carson-trail rally was renamed the 'Loyalist Day of Action', for increased security and against the London-Dublin talks. Paisley's Third Force of marching men was out in strength all day, and at a Nuremberg-like rally that evening in Newtownards. Meanwhile, the 'moderate', Official Unionist Party timidly attempted to regain some credibility by proposing a scheme of 'security networks' in border areas, where the IRA had been particularly active in October and November.

Yet Bradford's death seemed the catalyst for a re-alignment in the unionist camp, behind Paisley and his hard-line security demands, and away from old-style 'moderate' unionism. The UDA and the UVF murdered three young nationalists in the wake of Bradford's death, and staged their own 'Day of Action' rally in the shipyards. But the hardening of attitudes could be seen all round, and in 1982 nationalists will have to take further positive steps to defend themselves against loyalist aggression.



● On the Carson trail

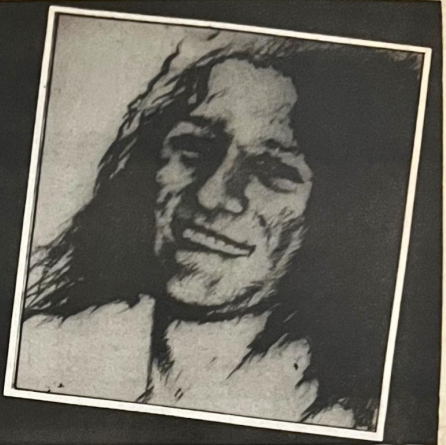


● Third Force on the march



● Catholic funerals, a tragic result of British-backed loyalist sectarianism

writings by Sands



The poem on the wall

"A SWORD of light hath pierced the dark, our eyes have seen the star,

"Oh Eire, leave the ways of sleep now days of promise are,

"The rusty spears upon your walls are stirring to and fro,

"In dreams they front uplifted shields, then awake,

"Mo Chraoibhin Cno!"

The poem was written upon a small square piece of tatty, wrinkled toilet paper. At the top and bottom, barely legible, was the title, 'Mo Chraoibhin Cno', and the author's name, Ethna Carberry. 'Mo Chraoibhin Cno' being 'My Cluster of Nuts', 'My Brown-Haired Girl' - Ireland.

The poem, written upon such humble stationery, secreted, cradled and smuggled into and around the tombs of H-Block, was doomed to disintegration, its blue ink now paling to cloudy mauve here and there where dampness had crept in.

One is isolated in solitary confinement in which loneliness and depression are but two rigours that plague a man. All within an atmosphere of tension and fear.

One's friends and family come constantly to mind; freedom and sights, green fields and life, almost forgotten.

"The misty glens and purple hills a fairer tint shall show,

"When your splendid sun shall ride the skies again,

"Mo Chraoibhin Cno!"

It is exceptionally hard to scratch something upon a wall with a minute brass link from a rosary, but it is a distraction.

GAEILGE

From behind layers of dirt and filth, clinging to flakes of dried paint, Gaeilge

phrases and words peer out and clutch the wall. Once the walls were smothered in Gaeilge lessons. The now Cardinal O Fiach gave this a special mention after his last visit to H-Block.

After some time, the task was complete: 'Mo Chraoibhin Cno', in all its glory, amongst the shadows upon the scarred wall, to be read and re-read, learnt and recited, a source of strength. What else is there, 'cept this woman upon the wall?

Then we were moved to a different wing. Always being harassed, never being allowed to settle. The torturous wing shifts, back and forth, back and forth, the torture never ebbing.

Then we were back, back to 'Mo Chraoibhin Cno'. But she was gone! Sharing the same fate as the wall-papering of Gaeilge that once had flowered upon the walls.

Mutilated and scratched, the verses washed and melted into curled-up wisps of paint by the steam-hose, the scalding water, and bleaching detergents, some educated screw having patiently obliterated the poem, like the Gaeilge, from the walls.

But not from my mind, nor from the minds of our people. Eight hundred years of oppression, English oppression, has not achieved that, and today or another eight hundred years will not change it either. For we refuse to yield.

In H-Block, naked men resist and speak the silver tongue of their nation, for we know:

"Within the gloom we hear a voice that once was ours to know,

" 'Tis freedom, freedom calling loud: arise!

"Mo Chraoibhin Cno."

CREASED

Creased through constant folding, frayed and smudged by the dirty hands of the naked, and alike to the naked, 'Mo Chraoibhin Cno' was just about on death's doorstep.

That was why, for the posterity of such beautiful words, I began the painfully slow task of scratching, word by word, line by line, 'Mo Chraoibhin Cno' onto a patch of yellowish, once white, cracked paint upon the wall.

"And in your oaken measure the yellow mead shall flow,

"What day you rise, in all men's eyes - a queen,

"Mo Chraoibhin Cno!"

Outside of our own modest compositions scratched upon the mutilated walls, poems (let alone such a heart-stirring poem as 'Mo Chraoibhin Cno') are, as is any form of reading material, non-existent in H-Block.

In a cold, concrete cell, naked and hungry, tortured and lonely, there is little or no warmth or comfort to be found.

Dreamers

*THROUGH silver mist the war notes ran,
The ancient Cu cried on the wind,
Where an angel bore a shining blade,
Against all of them that sinned.
And I saw them ride from a thousand glens,
And I heard their battle songs,
The Gael moving o'er the sweeping plain,
And they marched ten million strong.*

*And at their fore was Aodh O'Neill,
And by his side Aodh Ruá,
O Ruairc, O Brian, Aodh Maguidhir,
And the kings of a thousand tuath.
And I watch them march to the Bearnna Bhael,
And once again they fell to woe,
For they know not just what they sought,
And they know not how to go.*

Stars of freedom

*THE stars of freedom light the skies,
Uncrowned queens of yesteryear,
They were born mid shades of royal hue,
From mystic wombs they did appear.*

*Silver gems that pierce the dark,
Heavenly virgins in disguise,
That stir the heart with love and flame,
And light great flames in all men's eyes.*

*Oh star of beauty in nightly hue,
You have inspired bondmen to kings,
And lit the ways of despairing folk,
From dreams to living things.*

*In the seas of time you float serene,
Oh silver stars of nations born,
And you draw a tear to free men's eyes,
Through dungeon bars forlorn.*

*Oh star of Erin, queen of tears,
Black clouds have beset thy birth,
And your people die like morning stars,
That your light may grace the earth.*

*But this Celtic star will be born,
And n'er by nystic means,
But by a nation sired in freedom's light,
And not in ancient dreams.*

the English devil or the result is always the same: torture.

SAME

Fail regime of today is same, and the treatment of prisoners-of-war held in little or no different treatment dished out to publicans in '21 and '22, the machine gunned the jail and the exercise execution yards.

of Volunteer Thomas killed by Free Staters in 1975, is a tragic example of repetition of oppression and lackey alike. Similar to the republican prisoners during the 'thirties, fifties in Crumlin Road Jail and Free State hell-

on continues as the pre- of Irish men and women die and are relentlessly the next generation, and generations, may prepare me fate unless the pen- Britain - is removed; unashamedly and mercifully maintain her occupation exploitation of Ireland day, if she is not halted

ARMED

one way to halt her and ed enemy and oppressor, all the only way, by in the form of armed ican POWs in H-Block,

MALA POIST

All letters should be addressed to: The editor, An Phoblacht/Republican News, 51/53 Falls Road, Belfast, or 44 Parnell Square, Dublin.

Swatragh harassment

A chara,

In the Swatragh area in recent weeks, and indeed throughout South Derry, the occupation forces have stepped up their campaign of nationalist harassment. The RUC and UDR have recently been assisted in this campaign by the hated 1st Battalion Paras.

The RUC have been the prime culprits in this move to please local unionist MP William Ross and his cronies, who have continually asked for a permanent RUC presence in Swatragh and other South Derry villages.

The people of Swatragh would hardly warm to these thugs, who, on the recent loyalist day of action were seen openly conversing with hooded loyalist gangsters in nearby Maghera. How many of these will be brought before the courts and convicted, under the same laws which are used freely to imprison members of the nationalist population?

In conclusion, we would wonder how RUC chief Jack Hermon has the nerve to ask an oppressed people, many of whom have suffered so much at the hands of his bully boys, for faith in 'law and order' and support for his thugs.

PRO,
Seamus McCusker
Sinn Féin cumann,
Swatragh,
Co. Derry.



● No support for Hermon's thugs

Imperialism

Dear editor,

Perhaps to many people the subject of British imperialism and its grip on the Northern six counties of Ireland is out of context, or obsolete, in the 1980s. Many point to the massive injections of cash and the subsidies that the British government puts into the North and observe that, therefore, British imperialism is a bygone reality.

This, however, is a dangerous conclusion to draw, because it is only a one dimensional perspective and aids Brit propaganda. To be sure the British state receives no benefits from the North and neither, in general, do British capitalists, owing to declining industries and the IRA bombing campaign.

The whole rationale for the military occupation, for the Brit

ruled elite, is that it must not be seen to be beaten by an armed insurgent force of 'ordinary people'. Were this to happen (or rather, when), it would give, by its own example, proof to others within its territory that guerrilla war is a practicable method of attaining liberation.

In short, it is political imperialism that the British state maintains; and this — as is well known by nationalists — is no less oppressive than economic imperialism.

Katerina,
Chester,
England.



Royal parasites

Dear editor,

If I were a member of the British royal family and had the perspicacity to realise that I was being supported willingly in my luxury by the charity of a nation, many of whose people and children are suffering miseries of deprivation through lack of money for even the barest essentials, I would be so abjectly ashamed that I would want to curl up and die.

We hear many stories, through the media, of people who are found to be drawing state benefits whilst perhaps doing some part-time work: they are 'cheating the system', they are 'parasites'.

We hear also of many old people with a modest sum saved from a lifetime's work and who therefore fail to qualify for benefits received by their less thrifty neighbours. These old people are forced to dissipate what little they have to maintain even a tolerable lifestyle, the irony being that most would not even think to complain.

British government statistics show that many hundreds of thousands refuse even to claim the allowances to which they are 'legally' and (who would deny?) morally entitled.

Living alongside these people (by no means literally) we have the British royal family with assets worth probably hundreds of millions of pounds at their disposal, but who are allowed — indeed encouraged — to exist on public money which has to be paid by, or withheld from, general society.

If taking more from the state than is necessary for a basic existence is the main requirement to qualify as a 'social scrounger', then British royalty has established and maintains unassailable records in that field.

The media regularly vilify those in poverty who dare to seek a little more than they 'deserve' or 'need', whilst concurrently paying pathetically sycophantic homage to British royalty and anyone even

Dear sir,

Each year I put Christmas greetings into your paper for my fiancé Martin Hurson who was murdered by the British on hunger-strike on July 13th.

So I made up this little poem and I hope you will put it in for me.

*I'm remembering you,
Martin, this Christmas,
A Christmas so sad and sore,*

*'For I can't visit you in the
H-Blocks,*

*'Like I did many Christ-
mases before.'*

*Your fiancée, Bernadette,
xxx.*

Thanking you,
Bernadette Donnelly,
Tanderagee,
Pomeroy,
Co. Tyrone.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Unfortunately this tribute reached us too late for inclusion in the Christmas issue.

remotely connected with them. (Full front page headlines for Lady Diana's midwife — for God's sake what's happening?!!)

Does not this sickening condescension make its recipients physically ill? Are they so steeped in it that they can't even see it for what it is? Or are they so devoid of pride in themselves that they haven't the wit to care?

When, in the name of God, are people going to wake up? Paying your 'share' willingly or even for the further glorification of pomp and ceremony will not improve your own standing in society, it will not make restitution to the old woman alone and dead from hypothermia, nor will it breathe new life into the baby dead as a consequence of social neglect.

Anti-royalty,
Strabane,
Co. Tyrone.

How dare they?

A chara,

Even in politics we can find situations that are laughable.

Recently, at the so-called London summit between Thatcher and FitzGerald, these two people met and decided they would 'solve' the problems of the beleaguered, occupied six counties of Ireland.

These same two people have imprisoned hundreds of young men and women purely on the supposition that they create a threat to the British regime in the North. They have allowed eight people to die of plastic bullet injuries without even a word of remorse or consolation to their families.

These two people, who allowed ten young Irishmen to die the torturous deaths of starvation in the hell-holes of the H-Blocks, have the utter audacity to attempt to pacify the people of Ireland with some Mickey Mouse Anglo-Irish council they have created from their demented imaginations.

How dare they? They have presumed to create a council to decide the fate of the natives of



REMEMBERING



● The late Martin Hurson and his fiancée Bernadette Donnelly

the six counties, without even asking for their representation!

Even the blind among us could see that this is a political manoeuvre on the part of both the Free State and Britain.

Mrs. Thatcher, through her intransigence, has shown how little she cares for the Irish people. Now that the hunger-strike is over she is attempting to gain lost world prestige by showing mock concern over the war in the North.

And to complete the picture she has commanded her lackey, FitzGerald, to pay his due to the British crown by ignoring the British murders in Ireland and by committing himself to this farcical council.

But, Mrs. Thatcher, it is too late for this game-playing. The world is well aware of England's role in Ireland. This awareness has been bought at dear cost, for it was paid for in Irish blood.

We know that there would be no war except for the British military presence in Ireland. There would be no necessity for freedom fighters in Ireland were it not for the British occupation. It is entirely evident that the IRA has brought Britain great political embarrassment throughout the world and forced Britain into a state of defensiveness.

Through the use of strategically limited force the IRA will end this imperialist regime to an end in Ireland. We in America recognise the leaders of Ireland, and to them we say: Victory be yours, God bless Ireland's freedom fighters.

D. McEntee,
Virginia,
USA.

The press

Dear comrades,

I feel I must write to you about another struggle which should be fought through the pages of your fine uncensored newspaper: that is the fight against the capitalist press.

Since the merger of 'An Phoblacht' and 'Republican News' I know you have had great 'What the papers said' articles, which are very welcome. I also know most republicans are aware of the lies of the 'Express' Mail', etc., but in a movement that is growing rapidly we must make members aware of the power of the press.

We must tell them about William Martin Murphy's 'Irish Independent' and how it fought Jim Larkin and called for, and gloated over, James Connolly's death; and how after Brit withdrawal from the twenty-six counties the Independent group promised to handle Brit papers to this country so that we would never lose our slave mentality. Also, during the Spanish Civil War the Irish newspapers backed Franco's fascist movement.

The press is indeed powerful

and so we must begin to teach our readers how to see through Fleet Street lies. Then you might see less of what I see in Dublin, such as some republicans buying 'An Phoblacht/Republican News' on a Saturday and the likes of the 'Daily Star' on a Monday.

Victory to the people's army.
Noel Wynne,
Dublin.

Speaking Irish

A chara,

We in na Fianna Éireann welcome the rare gift from RTE in the form of 'Anois is Aris'. In doing this we also join with thousands more in calling for more true Irish material and Irish language programmes on RTE.

We are keen to become fluent in our native tongue. It is part of our culture and our identity as a sovereign nation. As Davis said: 'A nation without a language is but half a nation'.

The Irish language has an important part to play at present, as in the past, in the Irish struggle for freedom. And what a pity so many republicans have to wait until they are imprisoned to learn their own language. But prisoners, especially in the Kesh, are a great inspiration to us all.

Having said this, we wonder whether any qualified Irish-speaking republicans, around Dublin elsewhere, would be prepared to give some of their time in setting up study groups for learners on the lines proposed by An Bord Gaeilge.

Many outside the Republican Movement are also keenly interested in brushing up their knowledge. It would be a difficult task but it should be a rewarding one.

Na Fianna Éireann slua,
Baile Átha Cliath.

Limerick condemned

A chara,

On a recent holiday in the south-west of our beloved country, I learnt with dismay of three women prisoners in Limerick jail sentenced for their political beliefs, but classified as criminals by our 'English puppet state'.

I had heard of our prisoners in English prisons, Long Kesh, Portlaoise and Armagh, but never anything of these gallant women in Limerick prison. Is this the usual republican failing — out of sight, out of mind?

A note on the state of Limerick prison: it was condemned for

demolition in 1945, but is still in use.

So how about some of your kind readers sending a card or letter at this time of the year, to let them know they are not forgotten?

They are: Marie Murray (Dublin), Marion Coyle (Derry), and Deirdre McDonnell (Belfast).

A prisoners' supporter,
Dublin.

Beloved Ten

A chara,

The curtain is not down. The murder of the ten hunger-strikers in Long Kesh is not the end: it is but one of the pages of Irish history. The book is open and the pages are written in blood.

Those ten names will illuminate our lives, for there was a meaning to their life and a meaning to their death. They lived and died according to the laws of honour which bind all freedom fighters from one generation to another. They sacrificed themselves in the war of independence, for a better future.

They died so that the will to be free should be rekindled in the hearts of all freedom-loving people of the world. The fire that burned in their souls they sent out to kindle other sleeping hearts. And this fire will not be extinguished.

The ten who died in Long Kesh prison were not alone. There are many more. We know that every man in Ireland is like our Beloved Ten, ready to give the lives. We shall draw fresh strength from their bravery and self-sacrifice. This generation of Irishmen and Irishwomen has been educated to suffer and to sacrifice. In the end we shall stop the occupation of Ireland by strangers.

The names of the ten dead hunger-strikers will shine in the darkness. They believed that the objective for which they gave their lives will come true.

The greatest tribute you can give a fallen comrade is to pick up his rifle and continue the battle.

Up the Provos.
Tom O'Leary,
Irish Northern Aid,
Philadelphia,
USA.

English support

Dear editor,

I have long studied the Irish situation. At one time I was pro-British army, and at the time of the Birmingham bombings I would have favoured capital punishment for those responsible.

I was also very interested, however, in Cyprus and EOKA, and could not help noticing that both the Irish and Cypriots told the same stories of British army brutality and torture.

I abandoned my pro-Brit stand and became an active campaigner for a united Ireland. Today I work with several pro-republican groups and send birthday cards to Irish political prisoners in British prisons. When holidaying in the Free State last July I sent postcards to every single POW in British prisons.

I am unemployed and spend most of my day reading Irish politics; writing to MPs, the press and other public figures; and I pledge my continuing support and efforts to all the nationalist people in the North.

I would also like to remind my fellow Catholics in Scotland and England that while the Catholics of Ireland, North and South, are Gaelic, and the Protestants of Ulster are mainly of English and Scottish descent, that is only a generalisation.

Some Protestants are of Gaelic descent, and some Catholics are of the six counties are descendants of persecuted English and Scottish Catholics. Names like Sands, Hughes, Hurson, are English names; the O/C in Long Kesh is called McFarlane — an old Scottish name.

Hugh E. Eggleton,
Oxfordshire,
England.

**Burke's
at the back**
BY KEVIN BURKE

A CAUCUS CHRISTMAS CARD

FR. SEAN McMANUS, director of the discredited Irish National Caucus in the United States, used to raise funds by appealing for money for the prisoners' dependants and then keeping it to run his own egotistical political lobby in Washington.

But since his more frequent and louder condemnations of the IRA this ploy has had to be abandoned and McManus has been largely dependent on CIA finance, which has to be more fully accounted for.

This Christmas, however, the Caucus cleric has come up with the most appalling fundraising appeal I have seen in some time.

The appeal has been posted out to those he believes to be his supporters, accompanied by a Christmas card.

Here are some extracts, the emphases are his own:

"Dear Friend,
"Ireland has given so much to the world and to God that I am certain this Christmas God's Son - Jesus, the Lord of the Universe and Prince of Peace - is especially blessing Ireland....."

"I pray that the Prince of Peace will bless you and yours in a very special way this Christmas."

"You have shown, by your generous support of the Irish National Caucus your commitment to peace and freedom in Ireland....."

"You could have refused to hear my cries for help - but you did not. You gave - and gave generously. Of this I am certain - this Christmas the Prince of Peace will bless you for that....."

"Thank God, the Irish National Caucus is making progress - because of your generosity. We have come a long way, but there is still a long way to travel....."

"Christmas is the time for giving - and you are a giving person. Can you give one more time? Can you, once again, come to Ireland's aid?..... I trust you can. It is my hope - indeed my prayer - that you can."

"Please send at least \$25 - and please send it right away..... Please make your Christmas gift today. Make it with faith - with hope - with love. I really need your help."

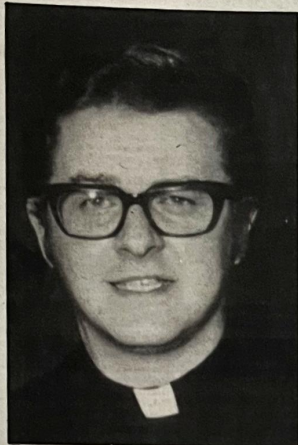
"I have to face 1982 - and I have to face it with confidence and with the knowledge that I can depend on you and your unselfish devotion to Irish freedom and peace."

"I am asking you in the spirit of Christmas - in the name of the Prince of Peace - please again help me."

"Please send at least \$25. Please send \$25 as your Christmas gift so that I can face 1982 with confidence and hope..... If you can send more than \$25 then so much the better. But please send at least \$25....."

"Do not put my letter aside - please answer without delay - today - right away please."

"Thank you. Hoping to receive your Christmas response right away. May the



● Fr. Sean McManus, the Caucus cleric, has come up with an appalling fund-raising appeal

Prince of Peace bless your house this Christmas and may He shed His peace on the little land you and I love so much.

Sincerely (sic),
Fr. Sean McManus."

And then:

"P.S. Please help me to face 1982 with confidence - alone I can't do it. Please send at least \$25 right away - I'm counting on you - and so is Ireland, this Christmas. Please don't let us down. If you can give more than \$25, I will be especially grateful. Could you possibly give \$50? Fr. S. McM."

The United States government supplies aid to the military regime in the Philippines. It also supplies aid to the military regime in Guatemala, and to the military regime in Argentina, and to the military regime in Turkey, and to the military regime in El Salvador.

The United States government is currently organising major economic sanctions against Russia - because the Russian government is supplying aid to the military regime in Poland.

It's all rather confusing, isn't it?

When a problem gets very close to you it can often alter the way you look at things. And I see that in the Polish pope's message for January 1st - the 'Day of Peace' - that old Catholic theory of a 'just war', which has been gathering dust for some time, has been revived.

Pope John Paul II says: "Christians, even as they strive to resist and prevent every form of warfare, have no hesitation in recalling that, in the name of an elementary requirement of justice, peoples have a right and even a duty

to protect their existence and freedom by proportionate means against an unjust aggressor."

That should ensure silence from the episcopal palaces of Armagh and Derry for a while, but I'm sure they will talk their way out of it.

What do SAS men do when they retire? Twenty-nine-year-old Christopher Simpson, who left the regiment in 1975, went into business with his mother, running a prostitution racket through a London massage agency which supplied girls to top hotels such as the Savoy and Waldorf.

A London court was told that mother and son earned at least £100,000 in profits each year and that in the three years after leaving the 'crack' British army regiment (motto: 'Who Dares, Wins') Simpson 'went from rags to riches'.

Found guilty of controlling prostitutes, the two were fined a total of £45,000 and given eighteen months to pay - which will leave plenty of change out of a year's profits. As far as money is concerned the regimental motto could be altered slightly: 'Who Pimps, Spins'.

A Dublin garda is to appear in court on January 18th charged with beating up a man in Crumlin garda station last August.

The victim, William Travers, was arrested under the Offences Against the State Act in Walkinstown, Dublin, on August 15th and taken to Crumlin garda station. Some time later the same day an ambulance was called to the station and he was removed to hospital where he was detained, because of the injuries he had received, until August 25th.

The 'Irish Times' publicised Travers' story while he was in hospital and forced the gardai to report on the case to the Director of Public Prosecutions who ordered that the gardai involved be summonsed.

After six weeks of searching, the London police are now on the last stage of their quest for a cache of 300 lbs. of explosives which they say the IRA have stashed in a London garage. So far, 387,254 garages have been searched and another 2,000 remain to be checked.

The cost of the search to date is estimated to be close to £5 million and has uncovered eighteen stolen cars, one stolen motorbike, one stolen horse, several Borstal escapes, an assortment of minor stolen items and two bodies, but so far no explosives.

Now what if the IRA have moved this elusive explosive from a garage that had not been searched to one that had already been searched?

Three hundred and eighty-nine thousand two hundred and fifty-two; three hundred and eighty-nine thousand two hundred and fifty-three; three hundred and eighty-nine thousand two hundred and fifty-four... One, two, three, four...

Polish solidarity

SINN Fein has issued a statement on the current crisis in Poland expressing 'full solidarity with the Polish people'.

The statement says:

"As far back as August of last year, Sinn Fein expressed solidarity with the independent self-governing trade union movement whose founding principles were in keeping with our own Eire Nua policy of worker ownership/participation and self-management."

"We appreciated a message of sympathy from Lech Walesa on behalf of Solidarity at the time of Bobby Sands' death. Now with Poland in the grip of military rule our sympathy goes out to the entire Polish people."

"Sinn Fein stands with the popular democratic socialism of Solidarity. In Verona on December 14th and in Turin on December 19th our President, Ruairi O Bradaigh and Director of Foreign Affairs, Richard Behal, marched with Italian socialist and communist parties in support of the people of Poland."

"We deplore any attempt by Western imperialism to exploit the agony and suffering of the Polish people. This historic nation has been a buffer zone between East and West for too long and an acknowledgement of Poland's right to freedom and independence is vital for the advancement of socialism and the welfare of the Polish people."

English protests

FOUR top security prisons in England were picketed on Sunday 20th December by supporters of Irish republican prisoners held there.

The pickets, organised by Sinn Fein in Britain and supported by Troops Out and other groups, took place at Wormwood Scrubs in London, Gartree in Leicestershire, and at Hull and Durham prisons. About fifty people took part in each picket which lasted three hours.

Earlier in December, on Thursday 10th, the South London Irish Solidarity Committee, which has been formed out of the area's hunger-strike action group, held its first public meeting. The meeting, in Lambeth town hall, was addressed by a brother of Irish prisoner Paul Hill, who was framed by police on the Guildford bombing in 1974 along with Patrick Richardson, Gerard Conlon and Patrick Armstrong.

In Glasgow, on Saturday 12th December, the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee held a march from Roystonhill to Blackhill, where a rally was held.

Meanwhile, the Troops Out Movement in London has announced that it is now providing a round-the-clock telephone service to assist people with problems arising from the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The telephone number is 01-267 2004.

German conference

A TWO-DAY conference of West German Irish solidarity groups was held in the city of Munster on December 19th and 20th with an almost total representation from the various solidarity groups in the country. The conference was attended by Sean Heilpenny, secretary of Sinn Fein's Foreign Affairs Bureau.

Discussions centred on the gains in terms of building up solidarity work arising from the three week tour by Sinn Fein representatives in October, and how this could be developed. Better co-ordination between the solidarity organisations and Sinn Fein was also examined and tentative plans were made for a 'Brits Out' tour of West Germany in the New Year.

Italian tour

AN extensive tour of Italy was completed just before Christmas by Sinn Fein president Ruairi O Bradaigh and Richard Behal of the Sinn Fein Foreign Affairs Bureau.

Accompanying them on the tour was the Belfast traditional music group 'Auld Hand'. The visit was organised by the Italian political and party Democrazia Proletaria and the Irish solidarity group in Padua.

Apart from the concerts given by the musicians, the tour included several personal meetings between the Sinn Fein delegation and Italian politicians and trade unionists.

On Wednesday 9th December they met a group of shop stewards in Venice and later held a press conference there. On the following day the two Sinn Fein

representatives had a meeting with the president of the regional council of Veneto, Bruno Marchetti, and with the city council of Venice, again followed by a press conference.

On Friday 11th December a press conference in Rome was followed by meetings with the president of the province of Rome, Roberto Louari; the mayor of Rome, Ugo Vetere; and the international representative of the trade union UIL.

On the same day, Ruairi O Bradaigh addressed a conference on 'The crisis of world relationships and the role of liberation movements in the Third World' organised by the Lelio Basa Foundation for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples.

In his address, Ruairi O Bradaigh spoke of the major international attention focused on the 'Irish struggle' by the

hunger-strike deaths during the year. He outlined the background to the prison struggle and the events of the hunger-strike and the significance of the British and Free State's closer collaboration arising from the latest Dublin/London summit talks. He also dealt with the question of Free State neutrality and NATO efforts to end it.

Briefly dealing with the historical background to the current struggle in Ireland he continued:

"Imperialism has divided the working class in the North of Ireland, giving the descendants of settlers from England and Scotland a marginal advantage socially and economically over the native population. It exploits both at different levels. The power structure which causes this, the British presence and the North of Ireland state must first be broken before the working class can be united."

From Rome the Sinn Fein delegation moved to Verona where over three days they met officials from the city council and the three main general workers' trade unions: CIGL, CGIL and UIL. They also met with the national director

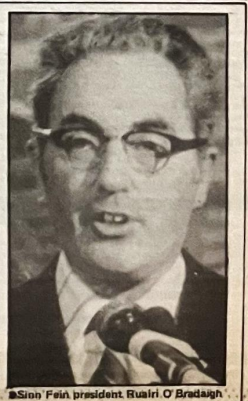
of Democrazia Proletaria and gave several television and radio interviews.

On Thursday 17th December the delegation met the president of the regional council of Lombardy, Sergio Marvelli; the mayor of Milan, Carlo Tognoli and Euro MP Mario Cappanna.

The previous day, Cappanna had staged a protest at the EEC parliament during the address by the British prime minister Margaret Thatcher. As Thatcher began her speech, Cappanna rose from his seat holding a poster of Bobby Sands and remained standing throughout the speech to Thatcher's discomfiture and the consternation of British Conservative Euro-MPs.

On Friday 18th December, Ruairi O Bradaigh and Richard Behal addressed a public meeting in Turin and on the following day met the mayor of Turin, Diego Novelli, and the vice-president of the regional council of Piedmont, Laura Marchiaro.

On the final day of the tour, Sunday 20th December, the Sinn Fein delegation met with the mayor of Ceria, Mario Sasso, and a number of city councillors.



● Sinn Fein president Ruairi O Bradaigh

Tribute to Bridget Maguire

BY A FRIEND AND COMRADE

BRIDGET Maguire died and was buried a few days before Christmas. She was aged seventy. She died in a neighbour's house, sitting in a chair, waiting for a cup of tea.

At her funeral in Belfast a guard of honour escorted the cortege to Milltown cemetery. Bridget was to be the last Maguire to leave a home which had for so long been an open house for republican activists.

Situated at Westrock bungalows in west Belfast, Bridget's was one of those 'temporary' aluminium bungalows erected in the late 1940s.

Since then it had constantly been raided by the RUC in search of 'big Ned', Bridget's husband, who escaped from Belfast prison with Jimmy Steele, Paddy Donnelly and Hugh McAteer. Ned died in 1965 aged fifty-two, and the Maguire household — like the rest of Belfast — went through a period relatively free from RUC or military harassment, with only the habitual problems of bad housing, unemployment, and discrimination to worry about.

OPEN

In 1969 Bridget's became, once again, an open house, and while neighbouring womenfolk played bingo in the front room republicans plotted in the bedroom underterred by sounds of 'legs eleven' or 'two little ducks'.

The back door was always open, and many mornings Bridget awoke to find men sprawling asleep on the settee, the floors, or the spare bed. Many nights the house vibrated to the sounds of gunfire and explosions as Orange snipers from Springmartin and/or British army riflemen fired into the area from Curry's timber yards.

A 'drop of tea and a piece of bap' was always on offer, and Bridget — seemingly oblivious of the republican militarists who swamped the small home with their various pieces of equipment — went through it all asking only: 'If you're making tea I'll take a wee drop in my hand'.

DAUGHTERS

In 1971 her daughters, Dorothy and Maura, were shot dead by the British army. Another daughter, Madge, had died from illness several years earlier, at the age of sixteen.



● Damn your concessions, England: the wall slogan provides a fitting epitaph as the funeral cortege of Bridget Maguire passes by



● The late Bridget Maguire

The British army claimed at first that Dorothy and Maura were armed, but were subsequently to admit that this had not been the case. A guard of honour and firing party made up of women paid their tribute at Dorothy's funeral,

and as it joined Maura's (a married woman who lived in Clonard), both funerals made their sad journey together up the Falls Road to the cemetery. Dorothy was aged nineteen, Maura was thirty.

In 1976, Bridget's son Martin, a well-known boxing champion, died of cancer. He suffered dreadfully during his illness but was always cheerful and fun-loving right up to his death. He was aged twenty-five.

Despite her troubles Bridget soldiered on, growing a little older and truer. As neighbours' children were murdered or imprisoned, and the long war continued, Bridget's home continued to play its role in republican resistance.

The bingo sessions became less frequent as her health gradually broke down and two of her remaining three sons went in and out of prison, interned or sentenced. They both received news of their mother's death while in Long Kesh; Ned in the cages, Micky on protest in the Blocks. They were both refused parole. Bridget wouldn't have been surprised.

'What would you expect from a pig but a grunt,' she would have said, 'God forgive me.' And so he will. Nà bac Bridget. Tíocfaidh an lá.

Death of Sean Breslin

THE death took place on Monday 21st December of Sean Breslin, a long-time member of the Cathal Hughes Sinn Féin cumann, Rathmines, Dublin. A comparatively young man at his death, he defied a long illness to continue active cumann work until shortly before his death.

During the H-Block hunger-strike campaign Sean Breslin designed and painted many of the banners carried in Dublin. He travelled to the Fermanagh and South Tyrone constituency for both by-elections to act as a voluntary election worker and attended all the funerals of the hunger-strikers.

He will be greatly missed by his comrades in the Republican Movement in Dublin. I mearc na laochra go raibh a anam.

IN MEMORIAM

McCABE, Jack. (10th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Volunteer Jack McCabe, GHQ Staff, Oglagh na hEirann, who died on active service on December 30th 1971. Thit sé sa bhearna bhailiú ag tríd ar son saoirse, ní dhianfar dearmad air ariamh. Always remembered by the members of cumann Mhic Cháibáir / Uí Chóiláin Sinn Féin, B&C.

Sympathy

BRESLIN. Deepest sympathy to the Breslin family on the death of Sean, from his friends in the Cathal Hughes Sinn Féin cumann, Rathmines.

BRESLIN. The Gaughan/Kennan Sinn Féin cumann, UCD, extends deepest sympathy to the family of our dear friend and comrade Sean Mór Breslin, who died on December 21st. I mearc laochra na hEirann go raibh a anam.

BRESLIN. The Dublin battalion of na Fianna Éireann extends sincerest condolences to the family of our friend and comrade Sean Mór Breslin. Ar dheis Dá go raibh a anam dílis.

BRESLIN. Deepest sympathy to the Breslin family on the recent death of Sean, from Jim, Theresa, Aisling and Jimmy Go ndana Dia trócaire ar ahanam.

DAVITT. The Jackie Griffin Sinn Féin cumann, Dublin, extends deepest sympathy to Liam Davitt and family on the death of his wife. Go ndana Dia trócaire ar ahanam.

MAGUIRE. Deepest sympathy to Michael and family on the death of his mother Bridget, deeply regretted by Beaky McKee and Fat Campbell (Portlaoise).

Thanks

THE CUNNINGHAM FAMILY. SHORT STRAND would like to thank the local working men's club for their most welcome and generous donation to our son, Peter.

GREEN CROSS would like to acknowledge with grateful thanks the generous donation of £200 from 'Friend of the Prisoners', Royal Hospital, Belfast.

Sinn Féin AGMs

Carlow

AT the annual general meeting of the O'Hanrahan/Lillis Sinn Féin cumann, Carlow, held on Sunday 20th December, the following officers were elected: chair: Tom Kenny; secretary: John Browne; treasurer: Kieran Foley; PRO: Mary Mulhall; and delegates to the comhairle ceantair: John Browne and Mary Mulhall.

Wexford

AT the annual general meeting of Wexford Sinn Féin comhairle ceantair, held on December 14th, the following officer board was elected: chair: John Byrne; vice-chair: Nick O'Reilly; secretary: Des McCabe; treasurer: Ned O'Connor; organiser: Phil Kelly; PRO: Sean Doyle; and education: Pat Walsh.

WHAT'S ON

NO. 5 CLUB

Now open every night
Mon. to Fri.: TV & films
Sat. & Sun.: Music
5 Blessington Street
DUBLIN
Doors close at 10.30 p.m.

SEAN SABHAT

COMMEMORATION
Speaker Daithi Ó Conaill
Sunday 3rd January
Assemble Bedford Row
LIMERICK
Organised by Sinn Féin

FRANK CARROLL
ANNUAL COMMEMORATION
Sunday 3rd January
WALSH ISLAND
Co. Offaly

SINN FEIN ADVICE CLINIC
8 p.m. - 9 p.m. every Wednesday
Community Centre
Ballyphelane
CORK

DARTS CLUB
Sinn Féin members and supporters are invited to the first meeting of the Kevin Barry Darts Club with a view to forming a darts league 8 p.m. Wednesday 6th January Kevin Barry Club 44 Parnell Square DUBLIN

BLOODY SUNDAY
10th ANNIVERSARY
Sunday 31st January
DERRY

For further information
contact: 15 Cable Street
tel: Derry 68926



STORMONT ASSEMBLY ON THE HORIZON AGAIN

Paisley's reaction

BY PETER ARNLIS

ALTHOUGH a number of American Protestant churchmen this week launched a campaign to force the US State Department to revoke the ban on Ian Paisley (whose application for a visa was turned down on December 21st), up until Thursday the ban still stood.

However, Paisley has announced his intention of touring Canada instead, and perhaps will make a 'daring' entry into the United States to show them just how irresistible he really is!

The line up for the loyalist anti-IRA tour intended for the last two weeks in January originally included the late Robert Bradford MP (shot dead by the IRA in mid-November), Paisley himself, his side-kick and deputy leader of his Democratic Unionist Party, Peter Robinson, and Official Unionist Euro-MP, John Taylor.

The November IRA operation eliminated Bradford (although his widow is now expected to replace him), and Paisley's reactions to the killing and his outbursts were what provoked the US State Department under pressure from Irish-American politicians — to revoke his visa.

CONSPIRACY

Paisley's reaction to the American ban was that it was proof of a conspiracy between Washington, London and Dublin to bring about a united Ireland. That night his paramilitary Third Force sealed off the coastal villages of Glenarm and Carnlough on the Antrim coast.

On Christmas eve, the Third Force set up road-blocks in County Fermanagh several hours after three of their members were charged with taking part in an earlier, illegal road-block.

Despite the arrests the RUC had a very lenient attitude to those charged. The three men were briefly arrested, held, charged in police custody and released on their own bail, their identification remaining anonymous.

During that night's roadblocking in protest against the RUC arrests, an armed and hooded member of the Third Force robbed the shop of Mrs. Margaret Murphy at Macken, near Kinawley, of several hundred pounds.

TRIP

Had Paisley been on the US trip he would almost certainly have over-shadowed his fellow travellers on the loyalist anti-IRA



● WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN: the intended line-up for the loyalists' Operation USA propaganda tour in January was to have been (back row) Peter Robinson and Robert Bradford (right) and (front row) Ian Paisley and John Taylor; the IRA's execution of Bradford and Paisley's visa denial have left Operation USA looking ragged

tour which would have also included attacks on the London/Dublin talks, which have American government support, and the recent hints from direct-ruler Jim Prior, following his sparsely-attended economic summit on December 21st, that there could be some form of devolution this coming year.

The setting up of an advisory assembly has been mooted before, but such an assembly would be actually an emasculated parliament with only powers to draft legislation and advise the British ministers at Stormont who would make all executive — that is, governmental — decisions.

But an assembly by whatever name and with whatever limited powers would, from a Brit point of view, present a 'good picture' of progress.

UNQUANTIFIABLES

However, the unquantifiables to the Brits must be that in the event of elections what exact threat would Sinn Féin present to the SDLP's present monopoly of nationalist representation, and the real danger that the

loyalists (and in particular the DUP) could turn such elections into a mandate for a UDI-style government, threatening six-county 'independence', even if it is only initially a propagandist threat.

The first unquantifiable they would attempt to deal with in the traditional fashion — by repression, including the harassment and arrests of leading republican activists.

The second could play into British government hands in allowing them to press the Free State government for greater cross-border collaboration to reassure loyalists that the summit talks are not an attempt to sink them in a united Ireland, but that they are genuinely attempting to be friends, by crushing all breathing republicans.

SPECULATION

Speculation about future British intentions came from the absentee MP for west Belfast, Gerry Fitt, on December 18th, who predicted that there would be Spring elections to an eighty-member

Stormont assembly.

After an Alliance Party delegation met Prior on December 22nd they stated that the British intend to pursue plans for devolution. Then in an interview on BBC radio on December 27th, Prior expressed his hope that there could be some form of devolution in 1982 but was non-committal about its exact parameters. It appears that he will hold further talks with the various parties before reaching a firm conclusion some time in February.

Loyalists, whilst publicly dismissive of any assembly which does not restore Protestant rule, would almost certainly take part in the elections to it, and there would even be those who would want to take their seats. The opposition to the continuous postponements of council meetings has grown — an editorial in last Wednesday's 'News Letter' was entitled 'Time to call it off' — and the protests have disrupted the construction industry and private developers since local councils are depriving themselves of influencing Department of the Environment planning procedures.

BELFAST man Desmond Mackin has been freed by the United States Court of Appeals after a fourteen-month battle against attempts to extradite him to the North by the British government.

On Wednesday 23rd December the senior court upheld a ruling of federal magistrate Naomi Buchwald on August 13th, which had turned down the British extradition request because the charge was 'political' in character.

Twenty-six-year-old Desmond Mackin is wanted by the British on charges of attempting to kill an SAS man on March 16th 1978 and membership of the IRA. The incident which is the subject of the charges was an SAS murder bid on Belfast's Glen Road against Mackin and a companion, Bobby Gamble.

Despite Mackin being shot three times, and Gamble eight times, and being immediately arrested, unconscious and unarmed, both were charged with the attempted killing of a British soldier.

WEAKNESS

The weakness of the case against both men was demonstrated when they were granted bail, but following threats to his life, and

Mackin freed

having no confidence in the Diplock Courts, Dessie Mackin jumped bail and went to live in the twenty-six counties with his wife and child.

Ironically, Bobby Gamble was later acquitted of the charge against him.

Mackin 'illegally' entered the United States in 1980 to coordinate the H-Block publicity tours of former blanket men Kieran Nugent, Fra McCann and Liam Carlin. He was arrested in New York on October 1st 1980, along with McCann, and was on the point of being voluntarily deported to Dublin when the extradition move was made by the British government.

He has since then been held without bail in New York's Metro-

politan Correction Centre.

SIGNIFICANCE

The United States denial of the British extradition attempt on political grounds will have immediate significance in the case of two other Irish republicans who are being held in the US awaiting extradition proceedings.

The Free State government are currently attempting to extradite Michael O'Rourke, who escaped from the Special Criminal Court in 1975; and the British government have another extradition attempt pending against William Quinn on charges of killing a policeman in London, the same year.

In addition, the ruling by the United States court that IRA activity against Britain constitutes political action, will severely weaken attempts to introduce extradition into the Free State, where the ban on extradition is based constitutionally on accepted international law.

Recently, British sources have suggested that the Free State court's acceptance of republican activity against Britain as 'political' would not be upheld as meeting the requirements of the meaning of a 'political offence' in international law. The US court has now disagreed with that assessment.