

An Phoblacht REPUBLICAN NEWS



Sraith Nua Imi 4 uimhir 13 Deardain Aibrean 1

Thursday April 1st 1982

(Britain 25p) Price 20p

GARDAI INVITE TO RUC

THE STATEMENT this week from a group of influential senior garda officers, calling for the extradition of political activists into British custody and adding the twenty-six counties to the beat of the RUC, is a logical development and shows how the reactionary garda leadership has taken

on a political momentum of its own, embarrassing even its political masters in government. Despite IRA military successes and the edginess of the British, there are real dangers for the beleaguered nationalist people of the North, politically unrepresented by the gutless manoeuvrings of the SDLP and the equally spineless Free State parties when it comes to asserting Irish sovereignty, but not when it comes to collaboration or attacking the only people struggling for a united Ireland.

The forces in the Irish establishment against Irish freedom (because of its political cost to them) are the same forces which were against the five just demands of last year's hunger-striking patriots. The SDLP must be politically neutralised and the British have to be militarily undermined.

Since the reaction of the Free State authorities to not just republican political and military successes, but to the ultimate loyalist reaction to

(continued on next page)



● The armoured landrover in which three British soldiers were killed by M60 machine gun fire. (Inset) RUC Chief Constable Jack Hermon who twenty-four hours earlier said the IRA were 'reeling'

SLAP ON THE FACE

ALMOST like a slap on the face to wake RUC chief Hermon out of his day-dreaming, the hand of the IRA struck out at the British army and RUC in the occupied six counties, leaving three Brits dead in an M60 machine gun attack, an RUC inspector killed in Derry city, and a sergeant seriously wounded in Belfast. But, of course, the attacks, embarrassing as they were to Hermon who had just described the IRA as 'reeling' were not related to his comments, although Paisley, to embarrass his arch-enemy, has alleged that they were.

However, the series of incidents will no doubt ensure that Hermon, or for that matter any of his political overlords, exercises a bit more discretion when predicting the 'defeat'

of the IRA. Following the Belfast ambush in which three soldiers were killed, the incident was raised in the British parliament and the bitter comments which were made were, by implication, a public chastisement of Hermon.

Direct-ruler Jim Prior appealed for 'restraint' in commenting about the 'security situation' and Labour's opposition spokesperson, Don Concannon, condemned 'loose talk about the demise of the IRA'. Prior agreed with him and said: "I think the less said about these things the better."

So cornered was Hermon that the RUC came to his rescue and took the unprecedented step of absolving him from any responsibility by falsely declaring that they had 'information' that the attack was planned before Hermon made his comments in a BBC interview.

This salutary lesson for Hermon, of jumping to conclusions and making rash statements,

should also indicate to republican supporters that the IRA, as stated in an exclusive interview in this week's *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, remains intact. And though it is subject to repression and the losses sustained in warfare, it is republican supporters who are presently being subjected to an intense propaganda war and who are the objects of the recent campaign by the RUC.

In the interview, the IRA spokesperson covers a wide range of subjects including the emergence of paid agents and exaggerated claims by the gardai in the twenty-six counties of the extent of captures of IRA equipment.

But what comes across most is the assurance and determination that the struggle for national liberation will continue relentlessly until victory; an assurance underlined not least by last week's M60 blitz on British gunmen driving through an Irish street in Belfast.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Exclusive interview with IRA

IN A MAJOR interview given exclusively to *An Phoblacht/Republican News* earlier this week by a senior spokesperson, the IRA has explained the level of its military operations, the effect of paid informers, and the republican election strategy.

The overwhelming conclusion in the words of the IRA, is that 'We are here to stay'.

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GARDAI INVITE TO RUC

(Continued from previous page)

these successes, can determine how well the nationalist people remain defended by the IRA, it is essential that republicans throughout the twenty-six counties keep public opinion informed of the dangers, whilst at the same time offering a radical political alternative to Free Statism.

The British government is prepared to encourage a destabilisation of the Free State, a destabilisation often falsely attributed to the IRA, but which in actual effect would precipitate a lurch to the right to protect British and goomben interests.

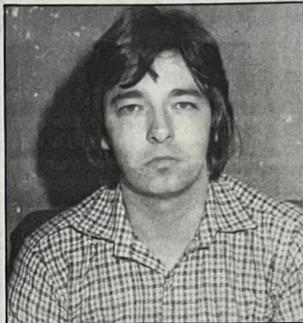
That not-so-incredible scenario is the danger of British rule's foothold in the North of Ireland and though the Brits can be, and are, unnerved by continuing IRA successes it is as well to be conscious of all the future possibilities they have up their sleeve.

Green Jackets take revenge

IN WHAT appears to be follow-up reprisals for the killing of three members of the Royal Green Jackets on Thursday morning, March 25th, by an IRA active service unit in west Belfast, a 27-year-old Ballymurphy man was kidnapped, houses were raided and several innocent people in the vicinity of the shooting were arrested.

At around 8.45 p.m. on Thursday night John Clarke, accompanied by his cousin, left his home and made their way to a friend's house in the neighbouring New Barnsley estate. However, as they approached the corner of New Barnsley Gardens they were stopped by several Brits in two landrovers who asked for their names and addresses which they gave. After a thorough body search one of the Brits grabbed a bag which contained video cassettes out of John's cousin's hand and threw them up a nearby entry. John recalls: "We were abused quite a lot. I knew they were only trying to provoke us so I decided to keep my mouth shut and play it safe."

One of the Brits moved away several yards and radioed in to the barracks their names and addresses. He then called out, "Bring him down here," pointing to John, who was then physically forced into the second jeep. Both jeeps sped off onto the Springfield Road



● JOHN CLARKE kidnapped by Brits and handed over to loyalists

and past the Henry Taggart fort, where the Brits are based. By this stage John thought he was being taken to Springfield Road barracks but they turned left into Springfield Road and into the notoriously loyalist Highfield estate.

BEWILDERED

John continues: "When the first jeep pulled up a Brit jumped out and called two men over who were standing at a corner. A few minutes later they jumped back into the jeep and shouted: 'Get him, he's a taig!' I became very nervous as I began to realise what was happening. The Brits then threw me out of the jeep, punching me in the ribs

and head, and shouted at me to run. I stood on, bewildered because I thought they would only shoot me if I did run and then say later that I was trying to escape."

The two men then came towards John and tried to grab him. "I got away from the first one, but the second one, who had some kind of iron bar in his hand struck me across the head. I ran for my life. I was terrified and I didn't know where to run to; all I could think of was to get to a telephone."

Fortunately, for John Clarke, who is an ex-internee, he was able to gain admittance to a house where he telephoned for an ambulance. He was taken to the Mater Hospital where he received five stitches to a cut in the head.

In another incident earlier that day the Dungleo Crescent home of 60-year-old Mrs Roseleen McConville from Lenadoon was broken into and raided by members of the same regiment who gained admission by smashing through a glass door. Mrs McConville who was not at home at the time, described her home as being 'ransacked' by the Brits who scattered clothing and personal belongings around the bedrooms. The following night, March 26th, about forty houses in Iris Drive in the Beechmount area were systematically searched in a follow-up to the shooting of the previous day. The area was sealed off for several hours and no-one allowed in or out.

THATCHER SNUBS HAUGHEY'S ANGLO-IRISH PROCESS

Collaboration only

BY KEVIN BURKE

THE recent 'strong words' from the Fianna Fail premier Charles Haughey, both at home and in the United States, on the desirability of British withdrawal, and his dismissal of Northern direct-ruler Jim Prior's plans for 'rolling devolution' as unwelcome, has met with an apparently studied snub from the British leader Margaret Thatcher.

Her description, in that familiar slow, deliberate, supercilious drawl, of the twenty-six counties as the 'Irish Free State', at a press conference following the EEC summit last Tuesday, March 30th, can only be interpreted as a put-down for Haughey after his recent big talk. And, whatever the diplomatic niceties required later by way of explanation, the message cannot be lost on anyone.

What London requires from Dublin is quite simply collaboration. It is prepared to allow the latter to pose as equal partners in special Anglo-Irish relationships or councils, and even, as when Haughey boasted that relationship out of all proportion during 1981, to swallow some annoyance, as long as the necessary goods are delivered in the form of imprisoning Britain's opponents or guarding the British-imposed border.

NEO-COLONY

However, although the leash is a long one, London also considers it can give a sharp tug at the collar of its neo-colony when necessary, and that is basically what Thatcher's reminder of reality is for.

The unimportance given to the Fianna Fail attitude to devolution was made clear in brusque and dismissive terms by Jim Prior after

his brief early morning meeting with the Free State Foreign Minister Gerry Collins in London on Wednesday, March 31st. He is going ahead with his plans and Dublin can like it or lump it.

So Haughey is now faced with the reality of his expected role in Britain's plans for Ireland — collaboration only. His claims of a special relationship and talk of a high-profile third parliamentary tier for the Anglo-Irish Council do not make a viable or believable story. The Anglo-Irish process, until this initiative fails, is not convenient for London at the moment.

GARDAI

If Charles Haughey is faced with a choice of positive action for British withdrawal or just piping down and continuing subservient collaboration, the Free State garda sergeants and inspectors seem to face no such difficulty.

At their conference in Bantry this week, they had made it clear that, as regards their anti-republican activities, which take up most of their efforts, they would prefer to be directly controlled from London rather than indirectly through Dublin.

Demands at the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors conference have been extensive.



● Gerry Tuite arrives at Dublin's Special Court earlier this week — one more victim of Free State collaboration

Attracting most attention has been the call for the introduction of extradition on political charges. They have also demanded other changes in legislation to increase their repressive powers, including powers to search and question without needing to arrest and using 'reasonable force', a general power of detention for twenty-four hours, the removal of any necessity for a caution before questioning, a general power to search premises without a warrant, an end to the right to bail and so on.

Failing a change in the extradition laws the garda officers want their RUC colleagues to be allowed

into garda barracks to interrogate victims; a resolution passed unanimously at the conference.

LEGISLATION

The Fianna Fail Minister for Justice Sean Doherty, himself a former Special Branchman, in his speech to the conference, avoided the extradition question stressing the powers of the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act which has already jailed six of the Crumlin Road jail escapes in the Free State.

He also promised a legislative package to give the garda more powers, but was distinctly vague about its exact nature. A result, more than likely of Fianna Fail's

dependency on Neil Blaney and Tony Gregory, to both of whom such changes are anathema.

But meanwhile, on Wednesday this week, March 31st, Gerry Tuite, the republican escapee from London's Brixton prison, appeared in the Dublin Special Court to be remanded in custody once again under the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act. And under the same collaborative device, a mother of three children, Eilish Flynn, appeared later in the day charged with possession of two pistols in Belfast in February last year.

On collaboration, despite the snubs and contempt of the British, Dublin continues to deliver.

M60 BLITZ

A WEEK of daring and spectacular military operations in Belfast and Derry city, and a landmine attack in South Armagh, has re-affirmed that the IRA remains firmly in business, its operational structure intact, its morale buoyant and its revolutionary will unimpaired.

In contrast, such a shock to the whole nervous system of the loyalist community was provided by the first and most dramatic of the week's IRA operations — in which three Brits died — that DUP leader Ian Paisley rounded on the RUC Chief Constable Jack Hermon, and in a piece of back-biting typical of loyalists under pressure accused him of bearing part of the blame for the deaths by his arrogant boast earlier in the week that the IRA was 'reeling' from the blows inflicted by paid informers.

Far from it being the IRA which is reeling, it is the RUC and the Brits themselves who are now reeling under the series of successful IRA operations, with the accompanying loss of morale.

THREE BRITS KILLED

In the most successful attack on British army personnel for ten months, three members of the Royal Green Jackets regiment were shot dead in west Belfast last Thursday, March 25th, by an IRA active service unit making full use of an M60 machine gun.

The last time Brit fatalities were so high was on May 19th last year, when a 1,000 lbs. IRA landmine at Altnaveigh in South Armagh killed all five occupants of a British armoured vehicle. Ironically, four of them were members of the same Royal Green Jackets regiment involved in Thursday's attack.

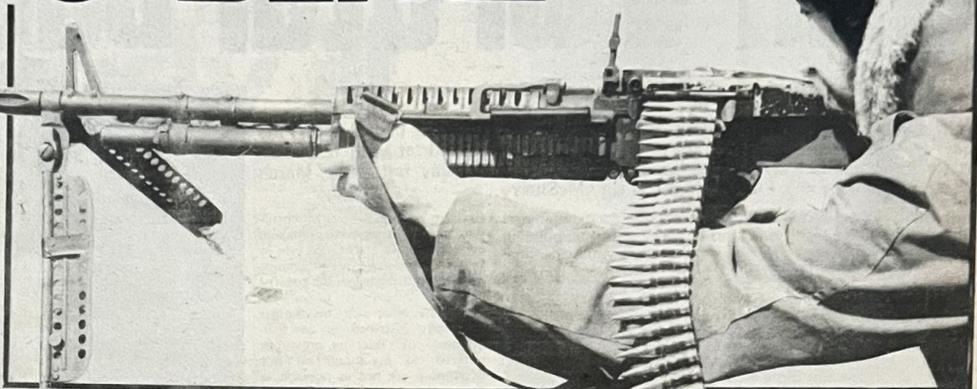
The precisely planned and carried-out IRA ambush took place shortly after 11 a.m. as a two-jeep patrol drove out of the rear entrance of Springfield Road Brit/RUC barracks into Cavendish Street, and then turned right along Crocus Street, back towards Springfield Road.

As the second Brit armoured vehicle reached the top end of Crocus Street, IRA Volunteers, who had taken over a house in Cavendish Street several hours previously, opened fire with an M60 machine gun and two .762 rifles firing armour-piercing rounds. In the fusillade of shots — over fifty rounds fired from the M60, and about ten from each of the rifles — one Brit travelling in the second vehicle was killed outright and two died in hospital shortly afterwards.

Panic-stricken British soldiers in the first vehicle of the patrol ran for cover, three of them hiding in a house in adjoining Malcolmson Street, from where they refused to come out.

Following the ambush the IRA Volunteers made good their escape, having left a spent round of ammunition connected to a small booby-trap explosive charge in an alleyway behind the house they had commandeered. The house was designed to kill or injure whichever Brit or RUC man picked up the round in the follow-up search.

However, when the IRA realised that the Brits or RUC had either missed the booby-trap or had deliberately left it intact in the hope that any resulting civilian injuries would discredit the IRA, they phoned first the Samaritans



● The car in which an RUC sergeant was critically wounded last Tuesday

with a warning, and, when that failed to produce a response, they then phoned a priest who contacted the RUC, forcing them to have the booby-trap safely defused.

The IRA ambush began to be set up at midnight on Wednesday when a five-strong ASU commanded the house in Cavendish Street. The house's occupants were treated courteously by the Volunteers throughout, and indeed one of the occupants — an elderly woman — was able to sleep through the night and was unaware of the Volunteers' presence in the house until shortly before the shooting took place. In addition to the ASU in the house, a separate ASU comprising four Volunteers provided a back-up in the adjoining area.

Prior to the ambush there were three earlier occasions that morning when the IRA had British army or RUC patrols in their sights, but refrained from opening fire because of civilians close-by. In the attack itself there were a number of minor injuries sustained by civilians mostly when ducking for cover. A 26-year-old civilian sustained a bullet wound in the lower part of the leg but this may in fact have been the result of undirected fire from some of the British soldiers on the spot, though it is uncertain. What is beyond

doubt is that the Brits and RUC cynically attempted to maximise the injuries to civilians, however caused. In one particular instance this led to a row between an RYH nurse and Brits when they tried to persuade her to admit for treatment a civilian suffering from a cut finger!

The morale-shattering impact for the Brits of this daringly successful attack, carried out only yards from west Belfast's main Brit/RUC barracks, was compounded for them by the fact that it was almost a carbon-copy of an ambush only a street away, in October 1979, when two members of the King's Own Scottish Borderers were wounded in an IRA ambush. Following that attack the RUC periodically visited the occupants of all houses facing the barracks asking them to beware of the IRA commandeering houses in the area for attacks.

The latest such RUC round of visits on local homes was on Wednesday morning, March 24th — the day before the IRA ambush!

TOP RUC MAN SHOT DEAD

In the second dramatically successful attack of the week the IRA in Derry city shot dead a long-serving senior member of the RUC. The 45-year-old RUC inspector

died minutes after leaving the Strand Presbyterian church in Patrick Street where he had attended the morning service, last Sunday, March 28th.

Just after climbing into his car, two motorcycle-mounted IRA Volunteers drew alongside, one of them firing several shots through the windscreen. The RUC man was hit in the head and died instantly. The Volunteers drove off safely and returned to base, and their commandeered motorcycle was only found two days later in the Creggan estate.

The RUC man was the highest-ranking RUC man in Derry ever to be shot by the IRA, and had been in the RUC since 1954 and stationed in Derry since 1959.

He was well-known to nationalists in the city as an arch-opponent of H-Block supporters, and in recent months had been extremely active in procuring heavy fines and terms of imprisonment for H-Block supporters who had been active during the hunger-strike.

While his death was the result of his role as a member of the British crown forces, and he would have been a legitimate target in any circumstances, the Derry Brigade of the IRA in a statement claiming responsibility for the attack indicated that his zealous persecution of H-Block activists had directly led to his being targeted.

Less than two weeks before he died, the RUC inspector had become the last RUC man in Derry to move house from the nationally west bank of the city — he lived in Belmont Road — to the relative safety of the predominantly loyalist Waterside district. In recent years all other RUC men who had been living in the west of the city had moved to the Waterside in an attempt to forestall IRA attacks.

RUC MAN CRITICALLY WOUNDED

Careful intelligence work and split-second timing led to the critical wounding, last Tuesday, March 30th, of an RUC man in civilian clothes, close to the scene of the M60 machine gun ambush five days earlier in west Belfast.

The IRA attack took place at the bottom of the Springfield Crescent cul-de-sac, in full view of a British army sangar one hundred yards away at the junction of Springfield Road and Cupar Street. However, the Brits manning the sangar were caught unawares and did not respond in time.

The RUC man, who is in his thirties, had driven into Springfield Crescent, as he did each morning, to pick up a woman who worked as a cleaner in the Henry

Taggart Brit/RUC barracks at New Barnsley where he also worked. He had recently been promoted to sergeant and was due to be transferred to Limavady in north Derry.

Before picking up the woman, the RUC man reversed his yellow Datsun car into a builder's yard to turn round.

As he did so a number of IRA Volunteers stepped forward from an entry and fired about four shots through the windscreen, wounding the RUC man in the chest. The Volunteers then disappeared down the entry into adjoining Colinview Street and made good their escape.

The RUC man was taken to hospital where he was reported to be in an extremely serious condition, and it seemed a strong possibility that he would not survive.

In view of the circumstances in which the RUC man was ambushed — in picking up a civilian who was employed at a nearby Brit/RUC barracks — it is worth reiterating an earlier IRA warning to those civilians who openly collaborate with the enemy that they do so entirely at their own risk.

SOUTH ARMAGH LANDMINE

At least one British soldier was injured when a 100 lbs. landmine planted by the IRA at Edenappa, close to the village of Jonesboro in South Armagh, was detonated at about 5 p.m. on Tuesday evening, March 30th, as a British army foot patrol was passing by.

The Brits at first denied that they had sustained any injuries, but the sheer improbability of this and the claim of a local resident that he saw a soldier hurled into the air by the explosion, forced them to revise their earlier statement and to admit that one soldier had been slightly injured.

GAMBLING ARCADE CLOSED

THE BELFAST BRIGADE of the IRA were responsible for the burning down of a gambling arcade in the St James' area of west Belfast on Wednesday night, March 24th.

The proprietor of the arcade, a local businessman, George McCann, who owns a similar arcade in Castle Street in the city centre, had been named in a series of meetings with local residents and traders, clergy and Sinn Féin members, that the planned arcade was not wanted in the area and that it could only serve as a further drain on the already limited finances of local people, especially youth.

Despite giving earlier assurances that he would not open his sulphurically-named 'clergy and social club' if there were enough local opposition, McCann went ahead and opened the premises on Wednesday evening.

Shortly afterwards, IRA Volunteers occupied the arcade and burnt it down.

BANBRIDGE BOMBING

In fulfillment of their promise to investigate the circumstances in which an 11-year-old Alan McCrum was killed after being caught accidentally in a car-bomb blast in Banbridge, County Down, earlier this month, the IRA issued the following statement in Dublin last Tuesday, March 30th, through P. O'Neill of the Irish Republican Publicity Bureau:

"Following a car-bomb explosion in Banbridge on March 15th last, in which 11-year-old Alan McCrum was killed, the IRA promised a further statement. "A preliminary investigation into the circumstances of the bomb warning has been carried out.

"IRA instructions to Volunteers on bomb warnings are very specific. A warning must be telephoned to the target area, one to the RUC and one to an independent verifiable source. Volunteers have to have these respective telephone numbers and to check that they are working. In the case of the Banbridge bombing these warnings were not complied with to the satisfaction of our investigative team.

"A full report has been given to the GHQ staff of the IRA and disciplinary procedures are now underway."

FIANNA FAIL WINDOW DRESSING CANNOT DISGUISE BUDGET REALITY

Still a brutal budget

BY KEVIN BURKE

THE longest Budget in the history of the Free State, which began with Fine Gael's John Bruton bowing out as Coalition Finance Minister with his failed attempt on January 27th, was finally delivered on Thursday last week, March 25th, by Fianna Fail's Finance Minister Ray McSharry.

In between has been eight weeks which have been dominated with Budget variations of one kind or another, but all building a picture of harsh measures to come, so that when the final product arrived the long-awaited blows seemed somehow to have been softened.

To further produce the same effect, beginning a strategy of opportunistic window-dressing, Fianna Fail introduced a first phase of the Budget two weeks in advance when, on March 12th, by special statutory order, it increased excise duty on beer, spirits and cigarettes - at a rate 2p higher than Fine Gael had proposed, and increases added to in the Budget itself by the VAT increase of 3% in the 15% rate. Also in advance, on March 15th, increases were announced of 20% in postal and phone charges.

The most publicised and controversial hardships in the Fine Gael Budget, the imposition of VAT on clothing and footwear and the removal of food subsidies, were indeed reversed by Fianna Fail. This, coupled with the delivery of most of the Tony Gregory package for Dublin's inner city - which is estimated to be responsible for 63% of the £70 million extra government expenditure announced - gave the Fianna Fail Budget a gloss which enabled both Gregory and the Sticky SFWP to support it.

Nevertheless, the reality of the Budget remains a severe cut in living standards and the continuation of the inequitable PAYE tax system by which the wage-earner pays the vast majority of tax income whilst the corporate sector, the self-employed and the

big farmer, escapes virtually unscathed.

The increases in both rates of VAT, the increase in excise duties, road tax, post office charges, and other 'outside' price rises sanctioned - such as the 8.7% increase in Dublin Gas and the effects of the 2% rise in bank interest rates and eventually in mortgage rates - will ensure an inflation rate once again this year of over 20%.

SUPPLEMENT

Budget changes in PAYE - reducing the 35% band to £3,000, the increase in the Social Insurance contributions and introduction of a youth employment levy will reduce take home pay for all but the very lowest paid, and even those falling outside the income tax net by virtue of the increased personal allowances will still be hit by the latter two levies on income.

The family income supplement at a cost of £4 million, announced in the Fine Gael Budget, has disappeared in the Fianna Fail one, and although this same figure has been allocated to two double week payments in September and December for the children of social welfare recipients, the low-paid worker loses out.

On the face of it a 25% increase in social welfare payments appears substantial, but a look at inflation rates puts it in clear proportion

and the welfare recipients remain very much as they were - making up the dreadful statistic of one in four of the twenty-six county population living below the poverty line.

On the other side, the Budget has been described as an anti-business one. But the provisions referred to in supporting this description are not as punitive as they have been painted. Profit-making companies have to pay their corporation tax six months earlier this year, and importers will in future be billed with VAT - which is paid ultimately by the consumer - at the point of entry.

DERISORY

The effect of these measures is on cash-flow only and does not hit directly at profits. The rise in the rate of Corporation Tax by 5% to 50% for the full rate is derisory as most companies successfully avoid paying this rate.

The special £20 million levy on bank profits is only a pin-prick against the institutions which make five times that much profit and avoid paying any other tax on it by a variety of loopholes.

Equally, massive profits on speculation with development land are not made any more justifiable by the provision to increase Capital Gains Tax on them by 5% to 50%. And the new, as yet to be announced, tax on hoarding of derelict sites - at around 5% - does not negate the necessity of state ownership of all building land.

On the expenditure side too, extra government spending of £50 million in the traditional Fianna



● RAY McSHARRY - a harsh Budget softened by the passage of time

Fail area of the building industry, does indeed alleviate unemployment to a small extent but also puts larger profits into the construction companies and - with the inevitable follow up of land price rises - compensates the land speculator for the extra token taxes.

There remains no wealth tax at all. Capital Gains Tax itself is so

ineffective that it costs more to administer than it brings in, and the taxes on inheritances and gifts have such generous provisions that they are largely avoided.

The Budget has done nothing to change the grim reality of life in the twenty-six counties - none the less true for being a cliché - the rich still go on getting richer and the poor poorer.



● Navan Carpets Plant, Celbridge - Its closure this month will cost 230 jobs

630 JOBS TO GO IN CELBRIDGE AND LEIXLIP

Double blow for North Kildare

BY DAMIEN O'ROURKE

THE North Kildare area has been dealt a double body-blow with the announcement of job losses and long lay-offs in two of its main industries, Navan Carpets at Celbridge and Irish Meat Producers at nearby Leixlip. Six hundred and sixty workers are affected.

The Navan Carpets spinning plant at Celbridge Mill is due for closure on April 19th with a total loss of two hundred and thirty jobs - 142 men and 88 women. The production figures at the plant, which is part of the Youghal Carpet Holdings group, have declined from 92,000 tons of yarn to 40,000 tons over the last three years. The closure follows three-day working

for over a month and short-time working since Christmas. The Celbridge mill is the only large employer in the town and provides a local wage bill of about £1 million each year. Over half the workers being made redundant are long-term employees.

In 1980 an investment of £3.5 million was made in the factory by Foir Teo, the Free State rescue agency, and last year the Youghal Carpet Holdings chairman, Michael McStav, reported a reduced loss for the six months to June 1981 of only £58,000 on a total group turnover of £32.4 million. At that time he spoke of the "beginning of our hoped-for climb back to profit."

Now, however, management says that it has been unable to obtain increased orders for the plant in the face of competition from cheap British overseas imports.

The Celbridge mill dates back to 1776, when it was a flax operation and it has been a spinning mill for one hundred years. Because the plant is old it is unlikely that anyone will be interested in taking it over.

LEIXLIP

Meanwhile, just three miles away on the outskirts of Leixlip, the area's only other large employer, Irish Meat Processors (part of the Cork Marts/IMP Group) is getting ready to lay off 430 workers as part of a scheme which will also involve its Midleton, County Cork, factory.

The plan by the company is to close the Midleton plant for seven weeks from last Monday, March 29th, involving 200 workers there. When that plant re-opens, it is intended to close the Leixlip factory for seven weeks.

For the workers involved, who for many

months now have been on short-time working, the prospects are chilling, with experience in the meat-processing industry indicating a grave danger of the factories not re-opening at all.

The move comes about as a result of a scarcity of cattle for slaughter, mainly caused by the export of live cattle, particularly to countries outside the EEC. The EEC's refund scheme for live exports has also encouraged smuggling to the North, figures for which are put at as high as 180,000 cattle for last year.

As well as complete closures such as that of the giant Clover Meats factory in Dublin last year, over 4,000 meat processing workers in the industry in general were on short-time working for most of last year, forced to watch the jobs exported 'on the hoof'.

Sean McKenna seriously ill

BY MAEVE ARMSTRONG

SEAN McKENNA, one of the original seven hunger-strikers in the pre-Christmas 1980 fast, and who spent 53 days on hunger-strike, lies today in the H-Block prison hospital, Long Kesh, a gaunt and weak shadow of his former self. It is almost sixteen months since the ending of that hunger-strike and, apart from the concentrated treatment on heart machines and drips which he received in the Royal Victoria Hospital, the only other form of medication he has received since then has been several courses of vitamin injections.

In an interview with AP/RN this week, Sean's mother Bridgid explained that, "He is just living from day to day. He needs proper medical attention which I can't see him getting in the prison hospital. He has been waiting for six weeks now to be transferred to the Royal Victoria Hospital for a brain scan and to be examined by a neurosurgeon but so far he hasn't been moved."

Sean, originally from Newry, County Down, went on hunger-strike on October 27th, 1980, and in the eight weeks which followed, it increasingly became evident that his medical condition was deteriorating at a faster rate than that of his other comrades. (Three women from Armagh jail and later thirty more blanketmen were to join the hunger-strike.)

LAST RITES

By December 17th, the day before the hunger-strike ended, Sean was given the last rites by the prison chaplain and his mother was told by one of the doctors that he had only twenty-four hours to live. By that stage he could not hold down drinking water — which was necessary to keep him alive — his lucidity had gone, he had difficulty in hearing and his eyesight had almost completely faded.

The following day, December 18th, Sean was lapsing in and out of a coma and on all accounts it

seemed that Maggie Thatcher's stubborn intransigence would claim the lives of the hunger-strikers and in particular, Sean McKenna. Even at that late stage, when Sean's life was literally hanging in the balance between life and death, the Brits were still trying — unsuccessfully — to break the prisoners' resolve.

The next day, however, the 53-day hunger-strike ended with the handing over of the Atkins' proposals — consisting of a 34-page document — to the hunger-strikers and Brendan Hughes, O/C of the blanketmen. Everyone, both inside and outside the prisons, breathed a sigh of relief. That evening Sean McKenna was rushed from the prison hospital to the military wing of Musgrave Park hospital and then to the intensive care unit in the Royal Victoria Hospital where he remained for several days, being fed intravenously through a drip and placed on a heart machine.

EYESIGHT

The far-reaching and on-going side effects of that hunger-strike are still taking their toll to this day on Sean McKenna's state of health. His mother Bridgid, explains:

"His eyesight, which was badly affected due to protein deficiency during the hunger-strike, is almost totally gone. He has difficulty balancing himself and has to hold on to something. He cannot stand



● Sean's mother — resigned

for any length of time and most of the time is totally incoherent, not knowing who is visiting him or what they are talking about. Sometimes when you go up you think to yourself, he's improving a little, but then on the next visit he won't even recognise you and can't follow the conversation."

Bridgid, who visits Sean regularly even though she now lives in Dundalk, is understandably becoming very anxious about his condition and strongly feels that if he does not get proper medical attention in the near future then his ailing health will rapidly deteriorate.

Practically isolated in the prison hospital since January this year when he returned from the RVH Sean is cut off from his comrades in the H-Blocks and consequently from news about daily events.

The seriousness of his condition once again raises the question of 'compassionate release' for prisoners



● SEAN McKENNA

on humanitarian grounds. Although Sean is serving twenty-five years, a long prison sentence by any standard, the precedent has already been set in the release of Derry prisoner Pauline McLaughlin and also in the case of the Price sisters.

'SKELETON'

Pauline, from the Creggan estate in Derry, was sentenced in February 1978 to a range of concurrent sentences ranging from five years for IRA membership to sixteen years — in all totalling sixty-eight years — and was also sentenced to 'detention at the Secretary of State's pleasure'. Unable to retain prison food Pauline deteriorated from being a healthy 9½ stone teenager to a mere skeleton weighing under 5 stones.

In November 1973 Marian and Dolores Price from Andersonstown, Belfast, were sentenced in Winchester court for the London bombings the previous March.

Both received life sentences and immediately began a hunger-strike demanding repatriation to a prison in Ireland. After being brutally force-fed for a total of 206 days they were eventually moved to Armagh prison in March 1975. But the effect of force-feeding and hunger-strike had seriously damaged their health, and they were eventually released after a number of approaches were made by Cardinal O'Faich, among others, to the British government.

Thus a precedent exists for the release of Sean McKenna on similar grounds. His distressed mother said this week:

"I am resigned in my own mind to the fact that it will take a long, long time for Sean to even begin to make any kind of recovery. If he doesn't receive proper medical attention soon, not just vitamin injections, then I fear he will rapidly deteriorate. It is only a matter of time."

Derry widow harassed



● Rosemary McBreaty and her late husband, Volunteer George McBreaty, on their wedding day

PLASTIC bullets were fired through the living-room windows of Creggan woman Rosemary McBreaty, aged 22, at around 10 o'clock on Monday morning, March 29th. British soldiers then burst into her home and caused several hundred pounds worth of damage.

Rosemary McBreaty, the mother of three young children, Orla aged four, Kellie aged three, and one-year-old Thomas, is the widow of murdered IRA Volunteer George McBreaty who, along

with another Volunteer, Charles ('Pop') Maguire, was gunned down on May 28th last year in a shoot-out with at least six undercover SAS men in unmarked cars at the bottom of Southway and Lone Moor Road in the Brandywell area of Derry.

Coupled with the hardship of losing her husband and having to bring up a small family on her own, Rosemary has the added burden of constantly being harassed and raided by British soldiers.

This latest incident, however, could have resulted in



● Brits fired plastic bullets through her Creggan home windows

serious injury to either her or her children as glass from the windows was scattered around the living room due to the force of the plastic bullets.

THE three-week-old trial of Monaghan man, Owen McCartan Smyth, charged with IRA membership and 'counselling and procuring others' in the Free State to carry out the killing of unionists Sir Norman Stronge and his son James at Tynan Abbey on January 21st 1981, was adjourned last Tuesday in order to allow Smyth's defence counsel to make an application to the court to have evidence taken from

Stronge case adjourned

gardai in the Free State which was considered relevant to the case.

Although Smyth's counsel moved for an acquittal last Monday on the grounds that

there is no evidence or alternatively, insufficient evidence, to support the charges, the judge ruled that there was a *prima facie* case to answer, and put the case back until Thursday. Owen McCartan Smyth, a 29-year-old publican, married with two small children, has vehemently denied the charges and the prosecution's case rests solely on alleged verbal statements made in Gough barracks during interrogation in April 1981 when he was arrested at a vehicle checkpoint in Middletown, three months after the Tynan killings.

Working in Fermanagh

BY UNA O'NEILL

NIGHT FALL on a lonely country road. The eight-strong military patrol waved the car down. The officer leaned towards the driver. He recognised him immediately.

"Name, address, date of birth?" he barked.

"You know very well who I am. We have urgent business. Let us through."

"Move over to the side," the officer exploded.

"This is illegal," the driver replied.

"I am the law here," the officer screamed, taking a swipe at the driver with a clenched fist through the open car window. The driver and his passenger wound the windows up and locked the doors.

"If these bastards make a move, shoot them!" the officer shouted. Three soldiers with blackened faces cocked their rifles and pointed them up at the car. More soldiers arrived. The car started shaking under the efforts of the soldiers to push it to the side. They finally gave up. More threats. Finally, two hours later, another army officer arrived, apologised and let the two men go.

El Salvador during the elections? No, County Fermanagh, one week ago! A UDR roadblock on the main road to Belfast, near Brookeborough. The driver was Owen Carron, MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone, on his way to a meeting with one of his constituency workers. And the incident was by no means the first of such encounters for the young MP and his workers. Nor was it the worst: before, and since his election, Owen Carron has been threatened, shot at, his brother's house destroyed by a loyalist bomb, his family and friends harassed. The incident, in fact, was one of many thousands which occur each year in the occupied six counties. The British army, UDR and RUC cannot be accused of discrimination when it comes to nationalists: they ALL get harassed, old age pensioners, babies in prams, elected MPs...

THE BY-ELECTION in Fermanagh and South Tyrone took place on August 20th 1981. Voting started minutes after Micky Devine had died, at 7.50 that Thursday morning, the tenth hunger-striker to lose his life in the H-Blocks because of British intransigence. Owen was standing as a 'proxy political prisoner' candidate, in a by-election caused by the death on hunger-strike of Bobby Sands, MP. Shortly after Bobby Sands' death the British parliament passed a bill, since known as the 'Sands' Bill', to ensure that prisoners sentenced to more than six months would no longer be eligible for parliament. All Irish republican prisoners were thus excluded. Heavy sentences meted out by non-jury Diplock courts had seen to that.

In a massive show of nationalist support for the prisoners' cause, Owen Carron was elected with 31,278 votes, a majority of 2,230 votes over his main opponent, Official Unionist candidate and ex-UDR major, Ken Maginnis. Owen's majority was even greater than that of Bobby Sands.

A 28-year-old unemployed teacher of Macken, County Fermanagh, Owen Carron, long-time republican, H-Block activist, election agent for Bobby Sands, had become the MP for all Irish political prisoners in Irish and British jails. Owen also became, on that day, the MP for all Irish republicans, and his fiery election speech was their outburst of anger, their cry of

defiance after years of British propaganda, and British lies that 'republicans were isolated', that 'they had no support'.

The British and Free State governments were all too well aware of the political disaster Owen Carron's election represented for them. All they could do to minimise its effects was to deliberately ignore and isolate the young MP. Shortly after his election, Owen Carron had requested to see the then Free State premier Garret FitzGerald. In spite of the fact that Laurence McKeown and Matt Devlin were by then extremely weak, and nearing death on their hospital beds in the H-Blocks, the request was turned down. Demands for the ban on Sinn Fein spokespersons to be lifted to allow RTE interviews of the newly-elected MP were equally met with refusal.

The infamous Patrick Cooney, then Free State Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, declared to the *Sunday Press* on August 30th 1981: "The ban itself shows that these organisations are invalid."

Shortly after this first rebuttal Owen Carron's request to meet the British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, was turned down. Later in September Owen Carron accompanied a one-hundred strong delegation of prisoners' relatives to London. There again, Thatcher, who had welcomed with open arms RUC and UDR widows some weeks before, refused point-blank to meet the delegation.

WITH the ending of the hunger-strike on October 3rd 1981, the pressure exerted by the prisoners' heroic fast on the media, and which had brought the world's press to Belfast, then receded. Owen Carron's numerous statements on repression and on political and economic issues of concern to his constituents, were by and large ignored by the local press, while Alliance Party and SDLP members, with or without electoral mandate, were quoted word for word no matter how trite or irrelevant their utterances.

As soon as Bobby Sands had been elected Owen Carron and a team of political activists had undertaken to do constituency work on behalf of the people of Fermanagh and South Tyrone. This continued after Owen Carron's election with full-time staff based in two offices, one in Dungannon, the other in Enniskillen, dealing with the many day-to-day problems of an economically deprived community under military occupation.

Yet all this went unreported. Now and again, selective quotations from Owen Carron would be printed, relating exclusively to Owen's views on the armed struggle, in an attempt to depict him as 'condoning the murder of innocent people'. In the most recent issue of the *Sunday World*, March 28th 1982, a column entitled 'In my own words', devoted this week to Owen Carron, displays eleven quotations, three of which are related to the prison issue and five to 'political violence'. Which proves, of course, very little other than that Owen Carron makes no apology for his beliefs. Which is more than could be said for the previous week's subject of the same column, Mairead Corrigan, whose 'own words' were but a string of mutually contradictory platitudes.

OWEN Carron's tireless work on behalf of political prisoners, and the assistance he gives to the numerous victims of harassment at the hands of the British army, RUC and UDR, equally failed to attract media attention. Since the ending of the hunger-strike last October the *Irish News* has waged its



● Owen Carron meets supporters on a walk-about during last August's by-election in the Fermanagh and South Tyrone constituencies.

own modest battle to help Father Denis Faul regain some of the popularity he lost through his underhand and divisive intervention during the hunger-strike.

Numerous statements by Father Faul are published, denouncing this or that arrest, in order to refurbish his somewhat tarnished image as 'defender of human rights'. The *Irish News* also gave some coverage to that non-event, the self-styled 'Help The Prisoners Committee', formed in the summer of 1981 by several clerics, including Faul, and some opportunistic politicians, desperate to defuse the hunger-strike campaign. Those people are presently involved in trying to talk the prisoners off the no-work protest, instead of denouncing petty harassment taking place in the jails.

Faced with such open hostility from the British and Irish establishment, contemptuous disinterest on the part of the official media, and harassment at the hands of the British army, RUC and UDR, Owen Carron is, however, strongly attached to the republican abstentionist position. "I stood as a prisoners' candidate," he declared to *AP/RN*. "The prisoners are Irish republicans who reject the authority of a British parliament to rule over any part of Ireland. The British government allowed the former MP for my constituency to die of hunger. I couldn't in all conscience go and sit among the very people who could have prevented his death."

Owen added: "I don't see why I, as an Irish MP, should sit in a British parliament.

It would be a contradiction for me to do so. Besides, in tactical terms, I don't think there is anything to be gained by going, except perhaps the salary, which, all extras included, could reach the £30,000 mark. We have to beg for every penny we need. We had been without an office in Enniskillen for several weeks because of lack of funds. I don't even get supplementary benefit because they say 'my salary is waiting for me'. My wife has also been informed that when her stamps run out, she won't be getting supplementary benefit because I am supposed to maintain her... with this huge salary!"

FRANK Maguire, the MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone whose untimely death in March 1981 prompted H-Block activists to stand Bobby Sands for election, himself attended the British parliament two or three times a year, the minimum required, in order to remain on the payroll. Many constituents thought he did not sit at all. Maguire often complained about the small amount of time devoted to Irish affairs, and the fact that when the subject came up for discussion, most of the MPs walked out.

Recalling Frank Maguire's career, Owen Carron remarked: "The only two Irish MPs who managed to make themselves heard throughout Irish parliamentary history, were Parnell, and more recently, Bernadette Devlin. And in the context of the whole

struggle, they were no All Britain seems to force."

He concluded: "I am asserting the rights of twice rejected British refusing to take my parliament. And at the honouring their trust constituency work as"

However, if Owen may serve as an excuse to attack or ignore, I do not prevent a vast amount of work being carried out, surgeries, one in Enniskillen, tel. 26854) in Dungannon (4 Ann Street) office caters for about 100 people. Enniskillen is still

is Owen Carron's base that of Frank Maguire local people are most their MP for help. He hold a clinic in Dungannon for a few hours. Now can avail of help and to 5 p.m. five days a Saturday.

The Dungannon, Francis Mollay, Sinn Féin director of elections, a welder, married. Helped by another Francis Mollay death of the constituency, best land traditional families of planter

gh and South Tyrone



● Flanked by Mrs Rosaleen Sands (left) and Marcella Sands (right) Owen Carron awaits the result of the August by-election



● Francie Molloy, manning the Dungannon office in Ann Street (above, right)



● A regular occurrence — detained at an RUC checkpoint

offices, departments of the direct rule administration system, and even the British army, UDR and RUC, have reluctantly co-operated with the new team of constituency workers.

After the killing of loyalist extremist Robert Bradford last November there was an upsurge of arrests. In the Dungannon area it amounted to a mini-internment.

"To keep the loyalists happy, people with no political connections other than that of being nationalists, were arrested for periods of three to seven days, with no charges preferred," Owen Carron recalled. The offices have had a lot of work since then, ringing the various detention centres to trace people, pressing for their release or getting a solicitor to them.

Owen Carron spends at least one day a week in jail visits. Since his election he has seen all the prisoners from his constituency in jail in the six counties. He visited Armagh jail last week. And at the end of February he saw thirty of the Irish republican prisoners in English jails, and hopes to see the remaining prisoners within the next fortnight. On top of the obvious morale boost of such a visit for the prisoners in England, Owen's trip helped publicise the ongoing campaign to have them repatriated.

Because of the circumstances of his election Owen Carron is deeply committed to the prisoners' cause and sees his duty to them as one of his first priorities. Apart from visits and publicity, his work consists mostly of helping families to obtain visits, and helping to trace prisoners who have been moved to the H-Blocks from Crumlin Road jail without the family being told.

OWEN Carron and Francie Molloy are also presently engaged in building a strong Sinn Fein constituency party in Fermanagh and South Tyrone. Yet Owen would not describe himself as a 'Sinn Fein MP'. He was elected as a 'proxy political prisoner' candidate, and that is all there is to it.

"We have to keep our work on a non-party line," Francie Molloy explains. "We don't want to be accused of hi-jacking the prisoners' seat."

Owen Carron also stresses that, notwithstanding political labels, both surgeries have answered queries and successfully dealt with complaints from unionist constituents.

"Some of them contact us very discretely," Francie explains. "People are ready to use anyone," Owen Carron adds.

"Unionists often ask me not to write back in a headed envelope, because many postmen are UDR, or loyalists, and they are afraid. But I don't use House of Commons' stationery anyway," he said with a smile on his face.

land, on the hills, left to nationalists.

The towns are unemployment black-spots. Dungannon, for example, has an unemployment rate of 31%. Housing is generally bad. A lot of the new estates which were hurriedly built by the newly formed Housing Executive in the aftermath of the civil rights campaign, are already in a poor state of repair due to bad planning and low quality materials.

In the Lisnahull estate in Dungannon people cannot afford the gas heating system. Three houses were burned because of gas explosions. Like another estate in Dungannon — Ballysaggart — Lisnahull is rat-infested. In Ballysaggart, the rats are coming into the houses through the heating system. Francie Molloy accuses the local Housing Executive: "They refused to accept responsibility, refused to clean the estate. They said that they were not satisfied that the problem lay totally outside the houses. Mrs MacAdam, of the Housing Executive office in Dungannon, implied that the houses were dirty."

Another estate, the Ballygawley Road housing estate, was made into a slum by years of Housing Executive neglect, and havoc and destruction spread by the occupation forces.

"Ken Maginnis was interviewed by the local press and declared he would help," Francie Molloy remarked. "But he did not mention the fact that it is his UDR battalion which caused most of the damage."

Housing forms about 15% to 20% of the major cases handled by the two surgeries,

including allocation of houses, repairs and various grants.

In Fermanagh and South Tyrone, as in most of the six counties, big farmers, especially dairy farmers, did well out of the EEC. They are mostly unionists. Nationalist farmers involved in dairy farming on a much smaller scale, and getting by with small market gardens, find that they cannot survive in the EEC.

"The Milk Marketing Board is trying to eradicate them," Owen Carron says. "They give them a lot of tests, on the apparatus and the milk. One of the latest tests is called the Rezasurin test. They invariably fail it and then their milk licence is withdrawn — their livelihood is taken away from them."

It is such farmers that Owen Carron's team try to help in applying for grants, 'hill' subsidies and road grants.

BEING arrested, stopped for P-checks, taken to the barracks, is no rare occurrence for the nationalist people of Fermanagh and South Tyrone. At the end of 1981, the military police had made a name for themselves, in the Dungannon/Coalisland area wrecking people's cars at roadblocks, arresting young people several times on

the same day, holding people for hours to check their identity.

Since last August the two surgeries have dealt with over 400 cases of serious harassment, including raids, and arrests under the Emergency Provisions Act.

While the Thatcher government may ignore Owen Carron, British government

Enniskillen surgery report of work from August 20th 1981

Queries to Department of the Environment, cases in the small claims courts, income tax, school grants etc.	129
Supplementary, sickness benefits etc.	117
Arrests, intimidation	170
Housing	110
Prisoners	33
Farming grants	19
Telephone	22
Electricity	14
Electoral registration	57

Dungannon office: figures are about two-thirds of these, except for a greater incidence in cases of harassment.

MÁLA POIST

All letters should be addressed to: The Editor, An Phoblacht/Republican News, 51/53 Falls Road, Belfast, or 44 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

POWs in Britain

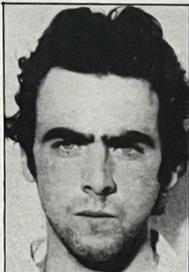
A Chara,

On behalf of the Irish republican POWs incarcerated in 'D' wing, Wormwood Scrubs on the night of August 31st 1979, I wish to make a reply to the scurrilous and misleading sections of Mr Gibson's report on the prison officers riot at that prison on that night. It would be pertinent to say that the report was one-sided, malicious and, indeed, in parts, totally fictitious.

The report, leaked to the public some two-and-a-half years after the event, indicates that a Home Office investigation shows that the tension on the wing was created by republican POWs, black prisoners and London gangsters who were locked in rivalry with one another as they sought to obtain a degree of institutional power within the wing. The report labels these groups of prisoners and maliciously accuses them of intimidation. The fact is that these factions were not rivals and their existence was due merely to the social groupings that take place in any closed and artificial environment.

The solidarity that existed among the prisoners at Wormwood Scrubs can be easily seen by the fact that participation in protests and demonstrations was always 90%. Indeed, Mr Gibson chose to ignore that the records show that in the fortnight prior to August 31st 1979 the prisoners in 'D' wing (numbering about 70) refused to participate in prison routine regulations as a protest against prison conditions.

This was a peaceful protest. Of course an admission by Mr Gibson of this fact would indicate voluntary solidarity by the prisoners and the desire to conduct peaceful protests. However, for the benefit of Mr Gibson's argument these facts



● Stephen Nordonne: We urge other prisoners to resist oppression and become politically conscious

have been ignored. Indeed, they are not the only facts ignored!

Irish republican POWs in the 'Scrubs' (as in English prisons generally) were and are strongly organised in the tradition of captured Volunteers of the IRA. Our strength of organisation never has or never will be used to intimidate, pressurise or coerce any single or group of social prisoners. Institutional power is something we detest and deplore. Over the past ten years at the hands of the institutional power that is the British penal system we have suffered the deaths of four of our dearest comrades, mindless brutality, massive periods of solitary confinement, years without visits, and harassment in all forms. For Gibson to suggest that we are a faction intent on prison power is not only scurrilous, it is, in fact, a contradiction in itself, since it is contrary to the history of our prison struggle.

We show solidarity with all prisoners who struggle for better conditions in prison. We have a deep sense of solidarity with black prisoners because of the way they in particular are abused and mistreated by the large racist and fascist element within the Prison Officers' Association. We have never had any influence over black prisoners save to urge them to resist oppression, to become

politically conscious and be assured of the solidarity of the POWs in the face of oppression. This we have pledged to any group of prisoners or individuals suffering at the hands of the penal system. This will continue to remain our stance.

Gibson can propagate what balderdash suits the Home Office's needs. But can he really delude himself and continue to ignore reality? That the POA are in control of the prisons. That this may be the last opportunity to perform a public inquiry into the machinations of the penal system. That gives the 'minimum force' as used on August 31st 1979 who knows the result the next time the POA flex their muscles!

Stephen Nordonne, Irish republican POW, Wormwood Scrubs, England.

Clones

Dear Editor,

As unemployment levels soar nationally and the cry for jobs is raised we in Clones watch bemused. Here, unemployment is the rule rather than the exception and for years the emigration ship has provided the only answer for our workers. Today, however, emigration is no longer an option and we are left to rely on our own resources.

Ironically, the boat to England, once an answer to our problems, is now a large factor in causing unemployment. Cattle for export, rather than people, has left our meat industries idle. We have reached the stage in Clones where a person is considered lucky to have five months' work each year. Even these few months are on the basis of a three-day-week.

A delegation from the work force in Tunney met packers met the prospective candidates in the recent general election from both major parties to point out the plight of all the unemployed in Clones. These politicians gave an

A Chara,

With interest and criticism, I read the letter 'Armed struggle and social issues' in last week's edition of AP/RN (March 25th) by the Connolly Youth Movement.

I am glad that the CYM showed interest in the article about the 'Youth Opportunities Programme' and the agreement on basic arguments put forward by the writer. But, as a member of Belfast Sinn Féin Youth Group, I feel the need to answer some of the criticisms aired by this organisation.

As the editor makes it quite clear there is no contradiction between waging war against the British imperialist forces and getting involved in social issues. It is merely getting your priorities right. How can you put any issue above that of fighting for your rights of freedom and self-independence? Should the issue of unemployment, for instance, come before that of defending the rights of Michael McCartan, Julie Livingstone, Carol-Anne Kelly, Brian Stewart and countless others to life? All the above mentioned young people had no connections with any political or military group and were all murdered in cold blood by British imperialist forces.

Incidentally, all the perpetrators of these killings, in instances where charges arose, walked free from the courts. With a rotten barbaric system of so-called law and order what other means of

undertaking that whether in government or in opposition, they would work on our behalf, as a matter of priority.

Do we believe them? While hopeful that they will honour their commitment, we have good reason for scepticism. The past record of successive administrations has been abysmal. With this in mind, we leave nothing to chance and have decided that



● Bloody Sunday was just one episode in the grim nightmare of life in the six counties - a nightmare which can only be ended when Ireland is free of British imperialism

justice can you offer? The only alternative we see is armed struggle. We believe that the only means to a united Ireland and defence of the Irish people is through the military campaign, but that does not mean relying solely on this campaign to achieve our aims.

The reasons behind the bombing of factories and shops, etc., is to create British political instability and wreck the British economy in the North. Unfortunately this does also create unemployment amongst our own people but it is ridiculous to say that it is one of the major causes of massive unemployment.

How can one say that the military campaign has not further-

ed the aims of the IRA? Armed resistance shows Britain that the Irish people will not sit back and leave their land to be divided and conquered. No-one can put a time limit on a war. CYM mentioned the Civil Rights Movement. I thought of Bloody Sunday, of defenceless people gunned down in cold blood by animals in uniform who again walked off scot-free. Think again my friends, you cannot find your dream in a nightmare or grow a good harvest when your fields are deep-rooted with weeds. It is only when you get rid of Britain, can you really hope to build a better country for the Irish people.

C. McKenna, Belfast.

We sent a statement outlining the above to the *Northern Standard* but for reasons best known to themselves they have refused to print it.

We hope you might find room in your newspaper.

Peter McAleer, Sean McPhillips and Edward McGovern, ATGWU Shop Stewards, Clones, Co. Monaghan.

Scoil Gaelach Bheal Feirste

LE TOMÁS Ó SÉ

TÁ BILEOG eolais foillsithe ag Pobal Feirste ag tabhairt cúntais ar Ghaeltacht Bhéal Feirste, Pobal Feirste agus a scoil. Tugann siad cúntas dúinn ar an tús Pobal Feirste agus ar an fás a tháinig orthu agus ar a scoil le breis is fiche bliain anois.

Ach, ag caint dóibh faoi staid na Gaeilge inniu deir siad: "tá breis is leath-mhíllín duine in Éirinn a bhfuil líofacht eigin Gaeilge acu, ach mar is eol dúinn uilig, is beag acu siúd a labhrann go rialta í. Tá an Ghaeltacht ag crupadh léi, agus taobh amuigh di ní fhaigheann an cainteoir Gaeilge fallt í a labhairt mórán ina shéal leathúil. Bíonn brú mílte ineach ar na teaghlaigh Ghaelacha sa Ghaeltacht ón tímpéalacht.

"Baineann teanga le pobal, agus té baol ann go bhfaífaí an Ghaeilge ina teanga gan phobal. Mura mbunófar comhthionóil, níl pobail, Ghaelacha sa Ghaeltacht, níl beatha i ndán don Ghaeilge, gan tracht ar athbheochan.

BUNTAÍSTÍ

"Bíonn buntaístí áirithe ag a leithéid sin de phobal: tugann na teaghlaigh míneach agus tacaíocht dá chéile, agus bíonn Gaeilge ag páistí na gcomharsana. Chomh maith leis sin, agus bh'éidir gurb é seo an rud is tábhachtaí, téann



● Páistí ag foghlaim go sona sísta sa naiscoil i mBéal Feirste

pobal Ghaelach i bhfeidhm go mór ar úsáid na Gaeilge sa gheantar thart tímpéal air."

Chuide sin chuir siad Pobal Feirste ar bun i 1960 agus i 1971 bhunaigh siad bunscóil le hoidéachas - tré - Gaeilge - a thabhairt dó bpáistí. I 1978 bhunaigh siad

naiscoil dhátheangach a ligfeadh do pháistí ó chúlra an Bhearla freastal ar an mBunscóil.

DeFréir a chéile d'fhás na scoil-eanna mar a deir siad: "Thosaigh an bhunscóil le 9 páiste, agus an naiscoil le 7. Eatarthu, anois, tá 98 páiste ar an scoil. Tuigfeadh

an fás níos fearr ó na huimhreacha seo; tá 3 páiste ar an scoil a rugadh i 1972, agus 41 a rugadh i 1978. Tá iarratas faighte do 50 páiste don scoilbhliain 82/3, ach tá seans ann nach féidir leis an scoil iad uilig a ghlacadh mar gheall ar ghanntanas airgid, nó ní airgead

stáit taobh thiar di".

CAMILÉIREACHT

Seo mar a chuireann siad síos at na deacrachtaí a bhí acu maidir le bunú na scoile: "I 1967 chuir an Roinn Oideachais in iúl d'fhear a bhí ag déanamh fiosrúcháin fan cheist go gcuirfeadh siad an dí ar dhuine ar bith a raibh baint aige le scoil Ghaelach sna S6 Chondae. Níor chuir siad lena bhfoical, ach ba léir riamh a naimhdeas don scoil.

"Bhí siad seacht mbliana sular aithin siad mar scoil dhleathach í, idir chur ó dhoras, chaimiléireacht, neamart, leithscéalta agus labhráiganna. Ansin féin níorbh ionann aitheantas agus airgead, agus nuair a d'farr an scoil tacaíocht an stáit, diúltáidh an t-iarratas ar chúis-eanna gan bhunús. Tá na tuismitheoirí ag troid in éadan na breithe seo, ach go dtí go mbainfidh siad, beidh siad ag iompair na scoile ar a ngnailneacha féin."

Tá ar na tuismitheoirí an t-airgead d'fháil le coistáisi uile na scoile a íoc. Agus ní an méid sin airgid acu féin. Mar sin tá siad ag brath ar chabhair uainne Gaeil na hÉireann. Bigi fail leo. Seo cabhair airgid chig an seoladh thíos.

An Rúnaí, Scoil Ghaelach Bhéal Feirste, 58a Shaw's Road, Belfast.

Raising a stink

Burke's at the back

BY KEVIN BURKE

IT WAS strongly rumoured after the H-Block riot at the British embassy in Dublin last July that several plain-clothes Special Branch gardai had been bated by their uniformed colleagues when the latter ran berserk attacking everything that moved.

At the time most of us dismissed it as one of those stories that are too good to be true.

But at the annual conference of the Garda Representatives Association about to take place in Ennis, a resolution from Division No. 22 seeks that "visual identification of plain-clothes gardai at the scenes of serious incidents be made available."

So it seems the rumours were correct. Meanwhile, the gardai remain touchy about their continuously declining image and another motion demands, "that the garda press office be seen to take a more active hand in repudiating false allegations against members of the force in the media."

And to back this up, another resolution looks for all members to have "adequate training in all firearms including Uzi sub-machine guns."

There was some puzzlement too at the time of the Ben Dunne kidnapping as to how Dunne and his 'rescuer', *Downtown Radio's* Eamonn Mallie, drove through a number of garda checkpoints without anyone recognising the much-sought-for missing millionaire.

The answer is supplied among the conference resolutions too with a motion seeking "that as a matter of urgency all members performing checkpoints have proper radio communication of suspects and vehicles."

Well, headquarters can't really be expected to think of every little thing, now can they?

But, more importantly, there are many resolutions on uniform, and it appears that gardai are very fashion-conscious these days. Among uniform and equipment sought are natty short-sleeved shirts 'for summer wear', trousers and batons for female gardai, personal 'scotch-lite vests' for each member and ear muffs for use at firing ranges (and presumably on winter nights).

But most urgent of all is a plaintive call from Division No. 24 "that all members be issued with four pairs of socks per annum."

Now that is something I imagine they will really raise a stink about at the conference.

★★★

The buying off by Charles Haughey of Fine Gael's Dick Burke (no relation) with the £60,000 per annum EEC Commissioner's job seems to have ended for the time being, and perhaps permanently, the veto of Tony Gregory in Leinster House. Fianna Fail plus Neil Blaney and the ceann comhairle's casting vote will now beat any other combination. A Fianna Fail win in the Dublin West by-election would mean Blaney's vote would be the only one required for a continued



● Gardai have demanded 'visual identification' of plain-clothes officers so that they do not mistakenly beat them up

majority. It could also be the end of the spat of Tony Gregory stories which for the past few weeks have been repeated with glee around his inner Dublin constituency.

You know the kind of thing: Question: What is the difference between Tony Gregory and a bishop? Answer: When Charlie Haughey meets a bishop he only kisses his ring.

★★★

Britain's Lord Scarman, who conducted the 'inquiry' into the 1969 civil rights riots in the North, and more recently reported on last year's Brixton riots, warned last week in the House of Lords that at one time during the Brixton riots only "a few unreinforced policemen... stood between inner London and a total collapse of law and order."

If that line had broken the only way to deal with the situation would have been "the awful ultimate requirement of calling on the army," said Scarman.

And the noble lord continued: "To turn the military inwards on the British people is something which our tolerant and free society cannot possibly accept. I wonder how the loyalists liked that one?"

★★★

In a Cookstown, County Tyrone court-room last week, a story was told of an RUC sergeant getting a touch of his own medicine. A 21-year-old man was charged with causing grievous bodily harm to the sergeant whom he had given a severe beating and kicking in the town early one morning last month.

The court was told that the man had actually eaten parts of the sergeant's ears off and also part of his forehead. And an RUC inspector begged the court not to allow the man out on bail as he had a history of a similar type of offence and the RUC "are afraid that he might do the same again."

The judge did allow bail, however, and made it a condition of the bail that the man is to report twice every week to the Cookstown RUC barracks!

A Derry RUC man who appears to have been unmoved by the IRA's shooting dead of RUC Inspector Duddy in Derry at the weekend, was admitted to Altnagavin Hospital in the city on Monday night. He had shot himself in the foot. Whether it was accident or on purpose has not been established.

★★★

The March edition of the RUC's official magazine *Police Beat* heaps praise on the Free State gardai for their enthusiastic collaboration against the 'common enemy'. The magazine welcomes in particular the arrest and imprisonment of six of the eight Crumlin Road jail escapees in the South and the arrest of Brixton jail escapee Gerry Tuite which it says makes 'welcome legal history'.

★★★

One man, however, who might not share the same view of just who is that 'common enemy' is Ronald Smith of London, a former policeman who, for the last three years, has been attempting to have an inquest held in Britain into the death of his daughter, Helen Smith, at a drinking party in Saudi Arabia.

Smith has gathered convincing evidence that she was murdered but at all times has failed to have the case pursued further by what he believes to be an establishment cover-up.

Outside the High Court in London last week where his lawyers were attempting to have an order made for an inquest to be held, Ronald Smith said:

"If this is British justice they can keep it. I am not going to stand any more indignities from these people. I can understand perfectly why the IRA and the Basques take to bombs and bullets, because they have tried every other avenue to get truth and justice."

★★★

Three British paratroopers got a touch of French justice this week when they received the relatively light sentences of five years' imprisonment from a court in Foix in south-west France. The three were found guilty of the manslaughter of a young Algerian-born Frenchman who was found dead with a fractured skull in the town of Pamiers last October.

All three, Peter Doswell, John Lamb and Gerald Smith, are members of the Third Battalion of the Parachute Regiment, based at Tidworth in Hampshire.

★★★

The more murderous activities of British soldiers are not usually made much of in the British media — that is when human beings are concerned.

But last Sunday's *News of the World* gave its front page main story to a report on officer cadets at Sandhurst, Britain's top army college, who were involved in killings at a local pub. On this occasion the victims were a dozen doves in a dove-cote into which the soldiers threw a smoke-grenade, either burning or choking the doves to death.

About twenty trainee officers were involved in the incident and after their sadistic action "ran off laughing and joking and disappeared in several cars."

A British army spokesman told the *News of the World* that so far "the culprits haven't been traced."

WHAT'S ON

GAYS AGAINST IMPERIALISM LAUNCHING RALLY
8 p.m. Friday 2nd April
Speakers include: Rita O'Hara, Bernadette McAliskey, Tony O'Hara, Fergus O'Hare and Liz Noonan
LIBERTY HALL
Dublin

LOUTH SINN FEIN CONSTITUENCY MEETING
3 p.m. Sunday 4th April
White Horse Hotel
West Street
DROGHEDA
Co. Louth

All Sinn Fein general election workers to attend

BUS FOR LONDON EASTER COMMEMORATION
Leaves 10.30 a.m. Sunday 11th April
Hall of Memory car park
Broad Street
BIRMINGHAM

SOCIAL
Featuring the O'Hagan family
Monday 12th April
Kells Room (Donnelly lounge)
DUNGANNON
Co. Tyrone
Easter raffle draw will take place at this function
Organised by Sinn Fein

REPUBLICAN RE-UNION
Featuring 'Blue Lagoon'
Friday 16th April
DRUMCONRATH
East Meath
Speaker: Owen Carron

JOE CLARKE 6th ANNIV. COMMEMORATION
After 10.45 a.m. Mass
Sunday 18th April
Oliver Plunkert church
Followed by march to Glasnevin
FINGLAS SOUTH
(40c bus from Parnell Street)

H-BLOCK SOCIAL
Featuring 'Phoenix'
Friday 30th April
Russell Arms Hotel
NAVAN
Co. Meath
(Supper and bar extension)
Taille: £4

Draw notices

An Cumann Cabhrach, West Limerick
Annual raffle
1st: No. 3975; 2nd: 5077; 3rd: 3080; and 4th: 4605.

Co. Monaghan H-Block 400 club draw
Week 16
£100: Hugh McKenna, Doohamlet;
£50: Seamus O'Hara, Conerevey; and
£50: John Leonard, Ganon.
Week 17
£100: K. McKenna, Monaghan town;
£50: Ollie Campbell, c/o Roost Bar, Clones; and £50: P. Hamill, Monaghan town.

Apology

SINN FEIN, Belfast, would like to apologise to the families and friends of Volunteers James McCade and Brian Fox, whose names, due to a typographical error, were unfortunately omitted from a recently published poster honouring the Volunteers of the Belfast Brigade who have died on active service during the present phase of the freedom struggle. We would also like to offer our apologies to the family and friends of Flan John Dempsey, the date of whose death was mistakenly printed as August 2nd and not July 8th. These errors will be corrected in any future publications.

PREJUDICED FREE PRESS

TV REVIEW BY HELEN STEVENS

LAST week an IRA spokesperson appeared on British TV. "The IRA," he said, "attacked political and military targets, not ordinary civilians."

The interview (not, of course, for real), was the focus of three plays in ITV's *Crown Court* series (shown over three days, 23rd to 25th March, last week), in which TV reporter John Dickens went on trial under Section 11 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 1976. No journalist has in reality yet been charged under this section, which forbids "failing to give the police information that could have helped to arrest or convict a terrorist."

The context was emotive. A bomb has exploded at a bus station in England,

isations'. In the *Panorama* Carrickmore case in 1979, when an IRA road-block was filmed, the programme's editor was fired (though re-instated after union pressure), and the film was seized by the police; but Dickens had none of these problems.

But on the plus side, both the British policeman and the RUC man are revealed as 'rats', and the liberal journalist's case for freedom of enquiry was put strongly enough to persuade the jury, made up of ITV viewers, to bring a 'not guilty' verdict.

"If people like me can't even talk to people like the IRA," says Dickens "then all we're ever going to get on

Northern Ireland is half the story."

At the same time, the grave limitations of such journalists were clear. Dickens raises the possibility that the bomb might have been planted by the British Secret Service — but dismisses it as 'preposterous' (forgetting the Littlejohns). He states, in his defence, that he detests political violence and disbelieves the IRA, and that he conducted a very hostile interview — even interrupting the IRA spokesperson when he started to talk about the British army murdering people.

For all his belief in the idea of a 'free press', he is riddled with British prejudice.





● MAURA McCRORY

New officers

THE mother of an H-Block prisoner, Maura McCrory of Belfast, has been elected chairperson of the National H-Block/Armagh Committee at its first meeting since its national conference in Dublin last month. Bernadette McAisley is the new vice-chairperson.

Other officers elected by a fifteen-strong committee include two ex-blanketmen, Belfastman Fra McCann, who will liaise with the prisoners, and Tony O'Hara of Derry who has been appointed convener of the defence committees formed to defend action group members facing charges because of their activities.

Two publicity officers have been elected, Paddy Logue of Derry and Vincent Doherty of Dublin, and Christine Ni Elias of Dublin will fill the posts of secretary and treasurer.

At its first meeting the new committee reiterated its main priority as being continual monitoring of the situation in the H-Blocks and Armagh and pursuing the prisoners' cause.

It also welcomed the conference decision to extend its brief to highlighting the treatment of Irish political prisoners in England, to campaigning in defence of action group members on charges because of protest activity and to investigating repressive practices and legislation North and South.

Dublin debates

THE first in a series of political debates organised by Dublin Sinn Fein's Education Department took place on Tuesday, March 30th.

About 20 people took part in a wide-ranging and interesting exchange on the motion 'That Sinn Fein should not engage in constitutional politics'. Although the attendance was slightly disappointing this in no way prevented a very lively debate taking place.

Future debates, which are open to all Sinn Fein members, will be held on each alternate Tuesday and anyone wishing to speak either on a team or from the floor will be most welcome.

The next debate will be on the motion 'That the Buy Irish campaign is a waste of time' and will be held in 5 Blessington Street, Dublin, at 8.30 p.m., Tuesday, April 13th.

New cumann

A NEW Sinn Fein cumann, named after martyred hunger-striker Martin Hurson, has been formed in Longford town.

At its inaugural meeting, which was chaired by Sinn Fein councillor Sean Lynch, the following officers were elected: chair: Pat Healy; vice-chair: Tom Hayden; secretary: Gerry Farrell; and treasurer: Pat Murtagh.

Glasgow ban

STRATHCLYDE Regional Council, which is responsible for the Glasgow area in Scotland, has banned the use of its public halls and buildings for all meetings on Irish affairs, even though it allows their use for public meetings on a wide range of subjects organised by a variety of political groups.

The council decision was communicated to the Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee after it had complained that on three occasions it had been refused a meeting room on the untrue grounds that all accommodation was in use on the dates sought.

The action committee has begun a campaign to have the discriminatory decision rescinded and have already secured the interest of the Scottish Council for Civil Liberties and three Labour MPs in the issue.

The battle for El Salvador



AS THE POPULAR armed struggle by the FMLN guerrillas intensifies in El Salvador, with ambushes in the heart of the capital, San Salvador, American and international opposition to US involvement in the affairs of this small Central American country continues to mount. An opinion poll last week showed that 73% of US citizens oppose sending more military aid to El Salvador, yet Reagan appears set to continue to support

the right-wing regime and US State Department propaganda is apparently conditioning the American public to something even more 'adventurist', despite the ghost of Vietnam — possible direct US intervention.

In the following article Ciaran Dowd examines the deteriorating situation and the progress of the war for national liberation.

THE RESULTS of last week's elections were predictable. President Duarte of the Christian Democrats (a double misnomer) obtained 40% of the vote, whereas Major Roberto D'Aubisson (known as 'Major Blowtorch' because of his use of one in torture sessions) of the extreme-right Arena party got 30% — the rest was spread amongst the right-wing candidates. An unstable coalition government now seems likely. In a country where voting is obligatory (on pain of imprisonment, even death), there was a surprising amount of people (around half the electorate) who followed the opposition's advice to abstain. There was no moderate or left-wing voice to be heard in these rigged proceedings.

Britain was the only country in western Europe to send 'observers' to this election in a bid to legitimise the proceedings (the Brits also granted a £1 million loan to the dictatorship). The so-called observers sat in their hotels or were driven round the 'respectable' areas in armoured cars and listened to the government's lies. Journalists, however, were out and about and saw how the provincial capital of Usulután (see map) was cut off by the guerrilla forces during the election and generally witnessed a stepping up of the war effort. At one guerrilla check-point one journalist was told:

"The people live in such terrible conditions and this (i.e. with guns) is the only way they can change things. We have got to stop the elections because they are just a game."

A couple of weeks ago three Dutch journalists were killed by the government troops for daring to report on these guerrillas.

DEATH SQUADS

The elections will not have much effect, however, on the genocidal repression carried out by the armed forces and the notorious 'death squads'. In a small country, with the same population as the six counties, there have been 35,000 people killed over the last two years.

But, the desperately poor workers and peasants of El Salvador are fighting back. The success of the liberation struggle in nearby Nicaragua in 1979 was a big boost to this struggle. By early 1981 the FMLN (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front), the guerrilla movement, was ready for a general offensive, but in spite of popular support, this failed. As one of the FMLN leaders said recently: *"We never thought this was a war which would be won in one big battle. Since the general offensive of 1981 the guerrilla army has developed into a real army, well organised and trained, led by people with dedication and great experience."* The results of this transformation have been seen in the last year.

In the country areas the liberation movement has gradually increased the areas under its control (see map). In these liberated zones agrarian reform is now under way, literacy programmes are implemented and, for the first time, a public health system operates. To protect these areas a 20,000-strong popular militia has been formed which operates alongside detachments of the Revolutionary People's Army. In these areas election day on March 28th passed by just like any other. For months no army patrol has ventured near them to harass and murder the villagers. The military balance of forces is clearly shifting in favour of the guerrillas as their sophistication and popular support increases. Recently the government launched 2,000 soldiers against guerrilla enclaves in the strategic Guazapa volcano area (near San Salvador, the capital) but they



● FMLN guerrillas: well organised and trained, full of dedication and experience



● Salvadoran military police escort the funeral of yet another of their dead right-wing colleagues

Europe declared on the eve of the elections: *"We want a just and democratic society, free from outside intervention. We work for the majority — the peasants, the workers, the intellectuals, the middle classes, and against the tiny oligarchy who run the country."*

LEGITIMATE

International support for this just struggle is vital and Salvadoran leaders believe it has helped to restrict the war of aggression against their people. The governments of France and Mexico have even gone so far as to recognise the FMLN-FDR as a legitimate force. Britain remains amongst the few governments in the world to support the genocidal regime, which is, of course, no surprise.

As the struggle in El Salvador reaches a critical stage there is an increased need for international solidarity to isolate the government and support the national liberation movement — the FMLN-FDR.

Events in neighbouring Guatemala will also be affecting what happens in El Salvador. Last week a group of military officers seized power in a coup against President Garcia. Though speaking about 'authentic democracy' the reality of the new government is an increased drive against the guerrillas in that country too. The recently unified guerrilla movement in Guatemala, with its massive support amongst the indigenous people will, however, be able to confront this new menace and be victorious as in Nicaragua. As one of the FDR representatives in



had to retreat with heavy losses. Most spectacular of all was the attack on the main air force base earlier in the year in which the guerrillas destroyed most of the regime's air striking power.

The government troops are seriously demoralised as they see no end to the fighting. The wealthy fourteen families who own virtually the whole country are the only ones who stand to benefit from a victory by the government forces in this contest. The broad opposition front — the FDR (Democratic Revolutionary Front), has brought together all the consistent democratic and nationalist forces in the country. As one of the FDR representatives in

Fimínteachas

LE TOMÁS Ó SÉ

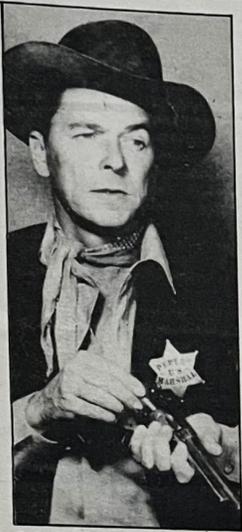
BHUEL, a chairde, tá pobal El Salvador ag cur Stáit Aontaithe Mheiriceá — bagairt ar SAM. Agus ní hé mise atá á rá ach an t-uasal Ronnie Reag an féin. Tá imní air. Deirtear fiú go bhfuil sé ag cailliúint codladh na hoíche.

'Sea, agus ba chóir dúinn é a chreidiúint, mar tar éis an tsaol sé Uachtarán Mheiriceá an polaiteoir is mó a sheasann leis an bhfirinne ar an saol seo. Fir iad na hUachtaráin sin nár inis an bhreag riamh. I ndeireadh na dála is ionann, chomh fada agus is féidir ar an sochaí atá i SAM agus an sochaí a bheidh le fáil thuas ar neamh. Tá daoine ann nach greideann go bhfuil sé sin fíor, ach gach seans gur cumannach nó sóisialaigh iad. Tá slí maireachtála Mheiriceá mar shampla dúinn go léir. D'fhéadfaid go léir ceachta a fhoghlaim uathu.

'Sé atá á dhéanamh ag Ronnie ná go bhfuil sé ag méadó ar méid airgid atá á chaitheamh aici ag gléasra chogaídh. Tá sé ag iarraidh modhanna nua le daoine a mharú a aimsiú an t-am ar fad. Is fíor an seanfhoth "Is fear a bheith marbh ná a bheith dearg".

Ach, a chairde, ná bíodh son imní oraibh tá Ronnie cliste. Ní raibh aic géachta nua a cheapadh leis an mbreis airgid d'fháil. Ó a bhuaicill, an disteacht, cad a dheim sé ach gearradh siar ar an gcaithear a bhí a thabhairt ag an stáit dos na boicht. Mar atá ar eolas againn go léir níl mórán guth ach san sna meáin cumarsáid.

Tá ceacht sa mhéid sin don domhan uilig. Ní haon geochach é Ronnie. Tá sé lán tsásta satailt ar dhaoine iuca agus iad a bhruí fóid chois. Aon fhear atá sásta a dhaoine fíon a bhruí faoi chois, bíof cinnte



● Ronnie ag ullmhú chun teacht "i gcabhair" ar mhuintir El Salvador

go bhfuil sé lán tsásta na "greasers" in El Salvador a choimeád ina áit cheart.

Is cinnte go gcaithfidh Ronnie na "greasers" a chosaint uathu féin. Peaca is ea é saoire a bheith ag tír bheag cosúil le El Salvador nó Nicaragua. Peaca is ea é dul i gcoinne mianta Mheiriceá. Caithefear pionós a thabhairt dóibh.

Tuigeann Ronnie an saoire go maith. Má tá cumannachas nó sóisialachas i réim díte ar bith is féidir a bheith cinntir nach bhfuil saoire ann agus is féidir uisce faoi thalamh a thosnú ina goinne. Is minic a d'obrígh an cileas sin cheana.

Tá daoine a déarfadh go bhfuil an rud céanna ar siúl ag na Rúisigh san Afganastáin. Ach i ndeireadh na dála ní sheasann na Rúisigh leis an saoire. Is leor san mar mhíniú ar sin.

Tá daoine ann ná tuigean dearcadh Ronnie ar cheard-chumainn. Ach léiríodh mé an scéal dár leitheoirí le dhá shampla. Féach i dtosach ar cad a tharla dos na stúirthóirí aeraicta. Thug Ronnie bata agus bóthar dóibh nuair a chuaigh siad ar stailc. Ceannaireacht dearfach, a chara.

Ach ar an daobh eile den scéal tá Ronnie lán i bhfábhair na ceard-chumainn sa Phóilainn agus cén fath nach mbeadh a fhad is iad siad sa Phóilainn. Beidh Ronnie síad a fháil is a fhannan siad ansin.

Faoláthair tá rud amháin eile ag déanamh innf do Ronnie. 'Sé sin Jimmy Molyneux. Creidseann Jimmy go bhfuil na Yanks ag obair i goinne Thuaisceart Éireann. Is soiléir do Ronnie go bhfuil Jimmy imithe glan as a mheabhair.

Fágfaidh mé slán gaibh an tseachtain seo le smoinneamh beag amháin — má tá muintir na hÉireann ag brath ar Ronnie Reagan chun saoire na hÉireann a bhaint amach, b'fhearra dóibh glacadh leis go mbeidh ba ag damhsa ar an ngealach sula ndéanfadh Ronnie faic.

IN MEMORIAM

ALLSOPP, Robert. (7th Anniversary). In loving memory of my son Robert who died on March 23rd 1975. RIP. St. Joseph, pray for him. "These seven years without you, Robert, are the saddest I have known. I treasure every thought of you when I am on my own. I mourn for you in silence, no-one sees me weep, for shed my tears with a broken heart, when the world is fast asleep." Never forgotten by his mother, sister, brother-in-law and nephew Robert. Remembered also by his uncles, aunts, all the Allsopp family circle and all his friends.

ALLSOPP, Robert. (7th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Flan Robert Allsopp, Belfast Brigade, na Flanna Éireann, who died on March 23rd 1975. Always remembered by the committee and members of the Jim McNeill/Robert Allsopp Flute Band, New Lodge Road, Belfast.

CARR, Robert. (2nd Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Robert Carr, Oglagh na hÉireann, Newry, who died while on active service duty on April 1st 1980. In proud and loving memory of Vol. Tony Henderson, Belfast Brigade, Oglagh na hÉireann, who died while on active service duty on April 4th 1971. Thus sé a raibn aige ar son saoire na hÉireann. Never forgotten by his friends and comrades in the Belfast Brigade.

MCCABE, Patrick. (9th Anniversary). In loving memory of Vol. Pat McCabe, Belfast Brigade, Oglagh na hÉireann, who died on active service duty on March

27th 1973. You are gone but never forgotten. Always remembered by Geraldine.

MCDERMOTT, Sean. (6th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Sean McDermott, Belfast Brigade, Oglagh na hÉireann, who was shot dead while on active service duty on April 5th 1976. Chaitheas a saol ag obair agus a troid ar son saoire muintir na hÉireann. Never forgotten by his friends and comrades in the Belfast Brigade.

MCDERMOTT, Sean. (6th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of my son, Vol. Sean McDermott, 1st Battalion, Belfast Brigade, Oglagh na hÉireann, who was killed in action on April 5th 1976. Sois siorraf é anam. Always remembered by his mother, brother and sisters.

MCDERMOTT, Sean. (6th Anniversary). In loving memory of Vol. Sean McDermott, Belfast Brigade, Oglagh na hÉireann, who was killed while on active service duty on April 5th 1976. RIP. Mary, Queen of Ireland, pray for him. Always remembered by Sean and Damien (H-Block) and all the Lennon family.

MCDERMOTT, Sean. (6th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Sean McDermott, Belfast Brigade, Oglagh na hÉireann, who was killed while on active service duty on April 5th 1976. Sadly missed but never forgotten by Pauline and Raddo, and Harry (H-Block).

O'RAWA, Edward. (9th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol. Eddie "Mundo" O'Rawe, O' Coy., 2nd Batt., Belfast Brigade, Oglagh na hÉireann, who died on active service duty on April 12th 1973. Mary, Queen of Ireland, pray for him. Always remembered by the Lower Falls Commemoration Committee, Belfast.

Sympathy

DEE, ENRIGHT, McELLIOTT, MORIARTY, QUIGLEY, LISTOWE comhairle ceantair, Sinn Féin, extend their deepest sympathy to the Dea family, Listowel. Tom Enwright; John Joe McElligot; the

Moriarty family and the Quigley family, Listowel and their family circles on their recent respective bereavements.

O'CONNOR, Dave and Paddy, Dublin, extend their sympathy to Peig, Kay, and Robin on their great loss. Jim's help and encouragement to us over the years will never be forgotten. Tom Enwright; John Joe McElligot; the

EASTER COMMEMORATIONS

ALL NATIONALIST cultural and sporting groups, and trade unions, are invited to take part in the Easter commemoration ceremonies which are organised by the National Graves Association but no banners are to be carried on the parades.

People who wish to take photographs of the parades and ceremonies must first obtain permission from the organisers; and, in Belfast, press cards are available from the Republican Press Centre at 51/53 Falls Road.

- CO. ANTRIM**
After 11 a.m. Mass, Cargin cemetery
- CO. ARMAGH**
11.30 a.m. Moy Road/Bamrook Hill, Armagh
- 10 a.m. Féris crossroads/Ballymacnab March to cemetery
- 11 a.m. Rangers' Hill, Crossmaglen March to graves of David McHugh (Irish Citizen Army)
- CO. LONGFORD**
3 p.m. Ardagh March to graves of David McHugh (Irish Citizen Army)
- CO. MAYO**
3 p.m. Swinford Road, Killmash March to grave of Brig. Sean Corcoran
- MONAGHAN TOWN**
2.30 p.m. O'Hanlon Memorial, Clones Road
- CO. OFFALY**
2.45 p.m. The Square, Clara
- CO. SLIGO**
12 noon Ballysadare
11 a.m. Collan
3 p.m. Sligo town
- CO. TIPPERARY**
3 p.m. Coolbawn Cross, Fethard March to grave of George Plant in St. Johnstown
- After 10 a.m. Mass, Barba So., Nenagh March to Republic Monument
- CO. TYRONE**
12 noon Aghyran cemetery
11 a.m. Carrickmore March to Garden of Remembrance
11.45 a.m. Coalsland cemetery
12 noon English cemetery
11 a.m. Galbally cemetery
- CO. WATERFORD**
3 p.m. The Glen, Waterford March to the military barracks
- CO. WEXFORD**
11.30 a.m. Foley's garage, Ennisicorthy March to St. Mary's cemetery
3 p.m. Crescent Quay, Wexford town March to St. Ibar's cemetery, Crosstown
- LONDON**
2 p.m. Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park
- EASTER MONDAY DUBLIN**
2.30 p.m. Baker's Corner March to Dean's Grave

GREETINGS

HARVEY, "Spike" (Magilligan). Happy birthday, Spike. You don't look a day over 21. May your next one be spent in freedom. Lots of love from Pauline. UTP. xxx.

HARVEY, "Spike" (Magilligan). Best wishes on your 28th birthday, Spike. One

foot in the grave already! From Patricia, Bronagh and Louise.

McARRIGLE, Paul. (H-Block). Happy birthday, Paul. The plints are on you. From all your "Chicago ladies", Karen, Georgina, Maria, Reenie and Moira.

McKEEFRY, Patsy. (Magilligan). Happy birthday, Patsy. From your brothers, sisters, mother and father, Swatragh, Co. Derry.

O'HAGAN, Fintan. (H-Block). Belated birthday greetings, Fintan, for the 26th. All our love and best wishes. From mummy, daddy, Dara and all the clan. Tiocfaidh arís.

WALSH, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Best wishes on your birthday, Kevin. Hope to see you soon. From all your friends in the Terence McSwiney Sinn Féin cumann, west London.

COULD all commemoration committees, in conjunction with the Republican Movement locally, please send photographs of the ceremonies, to 44 Parnell Square, Dublin (tel. 746711); or 51/53 Falls Road, Belfast (tel. 46841).

SINCE the execution of loyalist extremist Robert Bradford last November and a spate of IRA attacks on RUC and UDR men, the public perception of the intervening period has been one of relative IRA inactivity, the appearance of informers prepared to turn 'queen's evidence', the seizures of arms and explosives dumps in the twenty-six counties, and an intense propaganda war the most recent expressions of which were the RUC Chief Constable's remarks last week that the IRA is 'reeling' and the boasts last Tuesday at the annual meeting of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors that support for the IRA was on the decline.

In an interview with a spokesperson for the IRA, authorised to speak on behalf of the leadership, AP/RN put a number of questions which seem foremost in supporters' minds.

Q. Although there have been major operations this past two weeks — car bombings and the M60 attack in Belfast — it would appear that there has been a drop-off in IRA activity. What is the explanation for this?

A. First of all we have had a number of problems, logistical problems or problems with materials and supplies. These are difficulties which any guerrilla army faces and they have to be constantly overcome. All setbacks are only temporary but, of course when our supporters see a lull they naturally get worried that we are in trouble. But as we said after the Crocus Street attack, 'We are here to stay'.

None of the difficulties are attributable to the recent appearance of paid agents. The fabric of our army has not been damaged by the recent arrests of people framed by these agents. Were, for example, active service personnel being eliminated regularly then that would present difficulties, but our Volunteers operating in nationalist areas are like fish in friendly waters and it is this close relationship between the IRA and the people which dogs all counter-insurgency attempts at defeating us.

With regard to the frequency of IRA operations. The public's awareness of operations is when they happen. But as we, and often the Brits know, for every operation that is successful there are perhaps half a dozen which do not come off. We had six landmine failures in a row which had they exploded would have radically altered the situation, the political situation. Earlier this year we almost wiped out a para patrol in Forkhill. But the mine only partially exploded, slightly injuring them.

It would take too long and security doesn't permit going into all the unsuccessful operations or the ones that don't surface in the public eye, but you will appreciate that there is a constant turn-over in operations all the time.

By the way, for three weeks before Christmas the place was snowed up and we couldn't carry out an operation. City units couldn't 'run back' from ambushes and rural ASUs couldn't go near dumps without leaving trails.

Strategy

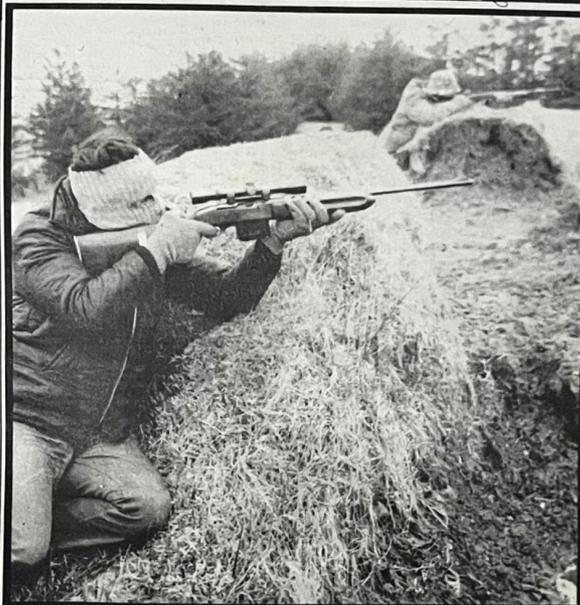
Q. What about Hermon's recent statement, though qualified, that the IRA is 'reeling'?

A. Hermon was just repeating what his political predecessors at Stormont regularly stated in order to maintain morale and pretend there was a light at the end of the 13-year-old tunnel for the British and the loyalists.

Psychological warfare is a very important element in counter-insurgency strategy. One of the IRA's major fears, going back to the hunger-strike, was that the British government by their intransigence, were intent on inflicting a psychological defeat on the nationalist people. But their intransigence and the incredible heroism of the hunger-strikers actually fuelled nationalist determination to see this struggle out.

Hermon's remarks must be seen in the context of such warfare, intensified since the ending of the hunger-strike and being exploited because of low IRA activity. Hermon undoubtedly also foolishly believed that the new development of the use of agents to imprison people — many of them innocent or only peripherally involved —

'We are here to stay' — IRA SPOKESPERSON



was the explanation for the lull and this led to the state of euphoria in which he made his blunder.

Q. What about the arms' finds in the South?

A. It has been Free State government policy to promote any captures into major arms finds. In this way they hope to discredit the IRA, demoralise people and deter our supporters from holding equipment. It also is used to politically placate the Brits and assuage loyalist criticisms that the Free Staters are inactive and turn a blind eye to IRA activity, which is a complete lie.

Now, there were finds in Louth — mortars and launchers. No pictures were shown of this find. The mortar bombs were the old Mark-1 type from the early Seventies which proved to be a failure and which were in a harmless state. They were dragged out of a bog. There was an ammunition find in Castlebellingham — in a ditch. Again no photos and we don't know who owns it or if it actually existed.

There was an arms find in Monaghan. We lost seven rifles. This loss was due to a massive garda search and we believe their attention was brought to the dump by good surveillance. In this case they made extensive use of propaganda photos. The 'large' explosives find, two tons was claimed, which was reported in Monaghan, did not exist. What was actually caught was a beer keg full of explosives and three bags of nitrate. There were no photographs of this small find which belonged to us. The large ammunition find, ours, in Emyvale was seized as a result of a paid agent.

In south Donegal there was a supposed find of 100lbs of gelignite. Not ours. We don't even know if it ever existed.

Q. But has not the phenomenon of the 'supergrass' affected the IRA?

A. We disagree with this terminology. They are paid British agents. Those that have been recruited by the RUC have very limited information at their disposal, apart from that which they invent. There has been no infiltration of IRA active service units and where any Volunteer has broken in RUC custody our security personnel usually crack informers in debriefing sessions. For

an informer to be valuable to the enemy he has to give accurate and vital information and this is his downfall. But these agents who turn 'queen's evidence' are unbelievable.

The first one, Kennedy, his evidence was so incredible that at the end of the day even the corrupt British court couldn't accept it.

At present the use of, and propaganda about, these touts and agents, is more directed at the nationalist people than the IRA.

Agents

Q. Is the IRA satisfied that all steps have been taken to prevent the recruitment of paid agents?

A. All IRA Volunteers a year ago were encouraged to resign if they thought they could not withstand the pressures. This invitation to resign is an ongoing one and all Volunteers are aware that their involvement in the IRA is a voluntary one. Secondly, every effort was and is being made to educate Volunteers in anti-interrogation techniques and instill in them or deepen their political commitment.

Volunteers who fall in to the trap of informing are given every opportunity to redeem themselves by telling their superiors of the damage they have done. If an admission is made, and provided treachery hasn't been engaged in, then they normally only suffer a dismissal. If a Volunteer is caught lying or informing he would be court-martialled, and would run the risk, depending on the gravity of the allegations, of execution.

The IRA is very reluctant to execute one of its own Volunteers for all the very obvious reasons and it is only after a whole process, which is clearly understood and accepted by Volunteers, is exhausted, that such a serious step is taken.

If those who are presently giving, or have said that they will give evidence, if they persist and if they actually do give evidence, they will be executed on sight. They have sentenced themselves to a fugitive's life. If they don't give evidence the IRA will take a much more lenient view. If they do give evidence they can be assured that some-

where, sometime, the IRA will catch up with them.

Q. Last year's hunger-strike brought massive international attention to the struggle in Ireland and seemed also to be a significant turning point for an increase in support for the IRA. What were the effects of the hunger-strike?

A. As the hunger-strike progressed and as the heroism of the hunger-strikers caused a reawakening of national consciousness and an increase in passive support for the IRA, the IRA had serious doubts as to whether this passive support could have been organised into a structured active support. Of course, the IRA and the Republican Movement has benefited in terms of resistance, recruitment and support and this will become visible over the next two years, because the assimilation of recruits and security checks takes considerable time.

So big was the effect of the hunger-strike on the nationalist population, especially the youth, that republican structures were not capable of absorbing the potential and at any rate security and the fear of building on an emotional upsurge would have made this undesirable.

Elections

The hunger-strike served, at a great cost, to educate nationalists as to the nature of the forces and elements involved in Irish constitutional politics and served to educate republicans, or to remind republicans, of the forces ranged against them. It also served to politicise many sections of the people.

Q. Does this mean that that will manifest itself in electoral support as in last year's successful electoral interventions?

A. This is not necessarily so as was proved by the Sinn Fein intervention in the twenty-six county elections recently.

Q. Under what terms would you support the contesting of elections, given the likelihood of assembly elections in the North later this year?

A. What republicans have to make up their minds about is what part the electoral tactic is going to play in the overall struggle. There are two ways of using the electoral tactic: as a straight intervention at a time when it is felt that the vote will be maximised behind a republican candidate, as during the hunger-strike; or using the electoral process as a necessary part of the revolutionary process.

The former is much more simple to grasp and to carry out than the latter. The latter is much more difficult, not least in terms of working out whether or not it's even the correct thing to do! But also because if republicans are to contest elections, and there are many reasons advanced: the need to build a political base; the need to be seen clearly as public representatives of people we profess to lead; the need to stop collaborationist elements masquerading as representatives of the nationalist people. The difficulty is that these short-term objects cannot be achieved with any lasting effect merely by 'interventions'. It can only be achieved by the building of a political party which identifies completely with ordinary people in their everyday problems, which is non-constitutional and principled and which takes an ideologically sound and republican view of the two partitionist states.

Q. What about Prior's proposed assembly?

A. We disagree with any form of assembly aimed at shoring up the six counties. The only thing that will work and bring stability to Ireland is that the Brits get out and leave the Irish to decide their own future. If Sinn Fein contests elections and if the IRA sees contesting as fitting the above criteria then undoubtedly the IRA would have no objections.