

AN

IRELAND'S BIGGEST SELLING
POLITICAL WEEKLY



PHOBLACHT

Republican News

Sraith Nua Im! 5 Uimhir 17 Deardoin Aibreán 28 Thursday April 28th 1983 (Britain 25p) Price 20p



May Day 1983

Marches & Rallies

BELFAST DERRY DUBLIN

3pm Sunday 1st May
420 Falls Road
(former home of James Connolly)
Organised by Sinn Féin

2.30pm Monday 2nd May
Westland Street
March to Guildhall Square
Organised by Sinn Féin

11.15am Sunday 1st May
Parnell Square
March to join the
People's March for Decent Jobs

We have

the answer!

IN THE course of our people's struggle, every attempt by the British and their allies to defeat our national aspirations, whether through repression or political 'initiatives', has failed and been swept aside by the sheer determination of Irish people to realise victory.

The struggle for national liberation is dynamic and developing, finding new levels, overcoming and check-mating by ingenuity, or, in the case of criminalisation, by terrible sacrifice, all that the British state or Free State can mount against the desire of a people to be free from foreign occupation and economic exploitation.

Who would have believed that when ashen-faced British soldiers marched abreast in columns up the smouldering Falls Road in August 1969 that it would take tons of explosives and thousands of rounds of ammunition just to begin 'the

debate' about British disengagement?

But the people have withstood strife and trials which, when seen in scale, are of trojan proportions against all that went before.

And who in the enemy camp, in the Dublin or London administrations, could see that out of their misrule, out of the burning streets and from the ranks of the dispossessed refugees, out of the angry protesting masses, and from the dank cells of the H-Blocks and Armagh, would shine a resistance which is a beacon of hope to those on this island determined to be free.

TENACITY

We have amazed even ourselves in our tenacity over the long years of street protests, armed struggle, jails and deaths.

Given this background, it is high time now to throw off that certain lack of assuredness when it comes to dealing with the struggle of labour.

That which the unorganised working class lacks, the Republican Movement possesses — the consciousness of radical conviction and militant determination.

Strikes can be, and have been, broken; demands sold short; and workers disillusioned by their leaders. But over 13 years there has been no capitulation by republicans, despite brutal military repression, sectarian assassinations and the sell-outs of the collaborationist SDLP.

REVOLUTION

The nationalist revolution in the North has seen the Republican Movement develop its political potential through Sinn Féin, just as on the military front the IRA gives the crown forces the only answer they are prepared to heed.

In the South, republicans, ironically, at a mobilising disadvantage because of the semi-permanence of the Free State and its accompanying damage to nationalist fervour, can point proudly to the example of resistance in the North.

The answer to the injustice, poverty and national dispossession in Ireland lies in the willingness of the people to struggle and make sacrifices.

That makes republicans the greatest threat to the ruling class, both North and South, and that's what makes us the vanguard of the Irish revolution!



**NATIONAL
MARCH & RALLY**

BELFAST Sunday 8th May



Commemorative March and Rally in honour of the 12 hunger-strike martyrs who died during the present phase of Ireland's freedom struggle

Assemble 2.30pm Dunville Park
March leaves 3pm sharp
Rally at Busy Bee

**Francis Hughes
Commemoration**

SUNDAY 15th MAY
Assemble 3pm Maghera
Bellaghy, Co. Derry



UNEMPLOYMENT HIGHLIGHTED

BY JACK MADDEN

THE PEOPLE'S MARCH for Decent Jobs '83 left Cork city last Monday on the first leg of the journey to Dublin. The main aim is to highlight the spiralling level of unemployment North and South with over 300,000 on the dole in the thirty-two counties. Amongst the 25 marchers who left Cork were representatives from Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Waterford and Monaghan.

Unlike last year, when the marchers completed the entire journey on foot, this year's march has placed a greater emphasis on showing the link between workers and the unemployed by visiting industrial centres along the route and speaking to trade unionists. For this reason the marchers are being ferried by minibus through country areas and confining the marching to urban centres.

On Monday the march visited Middleton and Youghal and eventually arrived in Dungarvan, County Waterford, where it was met by a further contingent from the local unemployment action group and some members of the local trades council. Led by a lone piper, the march passed through Dungarvan to the local Crystal Glass factory where it was welcomed by senior shop-stewards from factories in the town who stressed the need for the unemployed to organise themselves and the trade union movement to support them.

PROTEST

On Tuesday the marchers visited Waterford city where after leafletting the local dole office they visited several factories, including the Waterford Crystal factory where the recent militant protest against the unfair



burden of taxation and PRSI originated.

A strike by women workers at the Ardeen Hospital over the victimisation of a shop-steward was supported by the marchers who swelled the numbers on the picket-line on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. An angry hospital administrator tried to end the picket by calling the gardai but they wisely chose to ignore him.

After meeting the mayor of Waterford on Wednesday morning and protesting against the lack of facilities for the unemployed the marchers left the city and went to Kilkenny where, determined to highlight the case of the Ardeen workers, they occupied the South-Eastern Health Board offices.

The marchers will proceed through Car-

low and Newbridge, arriving in Dublin on Thursday where plans have been made to visit unemployment exchanges and factories including the Ranks Flour Mills in Phibsboro which has been occupied by workers since February.

On Sunday the journey will finally end with marchers joining the May Day march through the city.

Republicans and May Day

THE STRUGGLE for national liberation in the North has undoubtedly led to a widespread radical politicisation of not just IRA Volunteers but of the oppressed people who realise that the fruits of our victory must be social and economic as well as the political freedom of national separation.

The term nationalism is something of a dirty word politically among left groups on the continent where it has right-wing connotations. But our nationalism is anti-imperialist and radical and we realise that if the connection is not made with the struggle of labour there will be no realisation of socialism in Ireland, just as the labour movement if it ignores the national question is also scuttling the full potential of the working class.

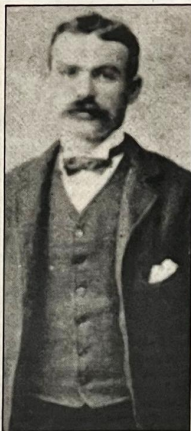
To Connolly the basic condition of socialist advance was the assertion and acceptance of Ireland's right to self-government. His opponent in the debate was William Walker, a Belfast member of the British labour movement, whose conception of socialism was reformist. Walker pointed with pride to the progress of 'municipal socialism' in Belfast. Did they not 'collectively own and control' gasworks, waterworks, harbour works, markets, tramways, electricity, museums

and art galleries? They had even organised a police band! Connolly described Walker's position as 'gas and water' socialism and insisted that the Irish question was not merely an economic question, it was also a democratic question, a question of national independence.

RECOGNITION

The debate is also contemporary. The Northern Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions traded recognition by the old Stormont government in return for a guarantee that the constitution and politics of the six counties would not be discussed by the trade union movement. By agreeing to the partition of Ireland the trade union movement has helped the British and Free State governments to divide, weaken and conquer the Irish working class.

The weakened labour movement was therefore in no position to effectively op-



● JAMES CONNOLLY

pose the staggering loss of 20,000 manufacturing jobs in the North in 1981. Neither was it in a position to defend its own members' rights, even the right to life. Brian Maguire, an AUEW shop-steward hanged in Castlereagh Interrogation Centre in 1978, casts a long shadow.



That year the annual conference of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions buried the call for an enquiry in its standing orders motion and have never raised the matter since. And in 1980 the Northern Committee's pledge of "no ambiguity in our support for the RUC" can leave one in no doubt as to where the trade union movement stands on the state repression of working-class people. It condemns sectarianism everywhere except in the forces of the state.

One has to reach a pessim-

istic conclusion. On neither its chosen ground of jobs and bread and butter issues nor on the ground of repressive legislation and practice does the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (either itself or through its Northern Committee) convince the mass of Irish workers and unemployed that it will or can take on government. By its abdication and failure, it leaves workers and the unemployed divided and frustrated, seeking elsewhere the organisations, campaigns and beliefs which promise an end to or a cure for the endemic

poverty, inequality and repression.

REPUBLICANS

And so it is increasingly that workers, the low-paid and the unemployed in the Northern ghettos are turning to the Republican Movement for a lead not only in the fight against the British but also in the struggle for social and economic justice. The Republican Movement is responding to this challenge. It has established advice centres with staff competent to handle routine problems and backed up by expert personnel.

And last year for the first time ever it held a May Day demonstration in Derry to mark International Workers' Day. In torrential rain on Bank Holiday Monday more than 350 people turned up on what will prove to be an historic occasion. By sad contrast less than 30 people attended the Derry Trades Council demonstration on the Saturday.

In Derry again this year Sinn Féin is organising a Republican May Day march and rally on Bank Holiday Monday, May 2nd. The demonstration also salutes the hunger-strikers whose second anniversary occurs at this time. The hunger-strikers underlined that national independence is the key to social justice and equality. Only a British withdrawal can create the conditions for Irish workers and unemployed, urban and rural, Catholic and Protestant, men and women, young and old to come together and construct the socialist republic in their own interests.

The second Republican May Day demonstration in Derry with its twin demands of the right to self-determination and the right to work signposts the Irish road to socialism.

Election fever mounts

BY HILDA MacTHOMAS

SPECULATION is growing of a June Westminster election. The rumours of the last few months are slowly turning to election fever as political parties publicly name their candidates.

Last week's *Sunday Times* devoted an entire page analysing the various factors in favour of a June election and concluded that the risks incurred by postponing the election until October were greater than the risks of going to the polls.

As time goes by, the British Labour Party is healing its rifts and, besides, June will be effused with the proud-to-be-British atmosphere on the first anniversary of victory in the South Atlantic war, which Maggie Thatcher won single-handedly!

CANDIDATES

A party which seemed to have been gripped by election fever is the SDLP. In the past week they have named three of their 17 Westminster candidates: Seamus Mallon for the new seat of Newry and Armagh, John Hume for the new Foyle constituency, and Joe Hendron for West Belfast.

The move was deplored by Danny Morrison, Sinn Féin elected representative for Mid-Ulster, who accused the SDLP of having placed themselves on an intransigent hook by declaring that their decision to stand in all 17 constituencies, and "thus split the nationalist vote", was "irreversible". Hume's selection for the Foyle seat came after the SDLP declarations that he would not be the SDLP candidate for that area as he already had so many jobs. Frankie Molloy, Sinn Féin director of elections, described Hume's selection as "the stance of a party in full retreat" and "an attempt to close the floodgates on the ever-increasing tide of Sinn Féin support."

PLOYS

One of Hume's main electoral ploys, the Forum for a New Ireland, continues to make some sort of news. The participants have agreed on Dublin Castle as the venue and that UCG Professor Colm O hEocha will chair the proceedings, conveniently timed to begin on the eve of a possible June election.

The official rescue of the SDLP continues, the media throwing more than the odd life-belt. UTV's *Counterpoint* current affairs programme featured Hume in the studio with a number of Shankill Road people last week, and again he was on the air in John Simpson's Friday morning Radio Ulster programme.

While Hume on television was pouring out clichés, such as "a community is richer for difference" and the brick wall between the two communities was "a symbol of failure but also a challenge", his invited audience, which included Tommy Lyttle of the UDA, accused the SDLP leader of refusing dialogue with unionist politicians by boycotting the Stormont Assembly. The Shankill Road group brought up that point with so much insistence that eventually John Hume ground to a halt, speechless, the myth of 'Irish unity by consent' splattered all over his face.

ELECTORAL CARD

Another electoral card was laid on the



table last week by West Belfast's absentee MP Gerry Fitt. After the door of his Antrim Road house had been splashed with paint by local youths, Fitt made sure he milked the attack for all its media value. But television interviews and wide coverage in the British press will not help Gerry Fitt in retaining his West Belfast seat. He told an *Irish Times* reporter: "The SDLP would like to assume that I'm going to be defeated, but they certainly can't win. They'll come third."

Fitt, who lost nationalist support and won unionist admiration when he opposed the granting of the five demands to political prisoners in 1981, and subsequently lost his council seat, saw his last hopes of a respectable vote finally crushed when the West Belfast boundaries were changed to include nationalist Lanesdown whilst losing the loyalist Village area. The days when Fitt could "walk down the Falls", where at one time, he spuriously boasts, he was "regarded as something of a god", are days thankfully gone forever.

...

There were few signs of election fever in the polling booths of the nationalist wards in the Armagh constituency on Wednesday, April 20th. The by-election caused by the unseating of SDLP deputy leader Seamus

Mallon was boycotted by all nationalist parties. The agreed unionist candidate, Official Unionist Jim Speers, resoundingly crushed the 'awesome' challenge of his sole opponent, Tom French of the Sticky Workers' Party, by a 22,000 majority, with a staggering turn-out of 34%.

Just about everybody, except, of course, Jim Speers, called it a 'hollow victory', while the Sticks, carried away by their 4,900 votes, hailed this 'massive repudiation' by the voters of 'emotional nationalism'. The SDLP were quick to claim the low poll as a mark of nationalist support for Seamus Mallon. The Armagh constituency is now represented by four Official Unionists, one DUP member and Jim McAllister of Sinn Féin.

WONDERS

The electoral harmony displayed by Official Unionists and the DUP in Armagh, is melting away as rumours of a June Westminster election are growing. The DUP's call for an electoral pact with the OUP in the six 'constituencies with national majorities has met so far with two refusals by the Official Unionists to accept DUP nominees Ivan Foster in Fermanagh/South Tyrone and William McCrea in Mid-Ulster.

More bickering between the two main

unionist parties may lead to a local by-election in Armagh's area 'B', following the death last Easter of a UUUP councillor, whose death-bed political bequest both unionist parties claim to have. However, political observers maintain that the announcement of an election date will, as always, work wonders for unionist unity.

The perspective of agreed unionist candidates taking 'nationalist' seats because of a split nationalist vote is a cause of concern for many republicans. At a meeting of election workers in Carrickmore last Monday, Danny Morrison pointed to the dilemma facing Sinn Féin in the coming election battle: "There are those in our party who believe that our goal in the Westminster election should be an increase in the 35% of the nationalist vote."

Such an increase, he continued, would be achieved by putting forward more candidates, and he believed that the increase would be substantial as "in October we were handicapped by an image of political immaturity, and by a certain apprehension among supporters who were seriously concerned that the electoral strategy could prove to be a disastrous mistake."

But an increase in the Sinn Féin vote would also be due to Sinn Féin's constituency work and 'hard graft' in the advice centres, which, he stated, "had converted a section of floating voters, and indeed disillusioned SDLP voters." It can be argued therefore that Sinn Féin's priority should be to "devastate and demoralise the SDLP" by opposing them wherever they stand, in order to deal a body blow to this "party of ambitious career politicians anxious to board the shuttle to Westminster" and who have done little other than give "the British an excuse to claim nationalist toleration of their presence."

However, he warned that the Sinn Féin/SDLP confrontation could lead to 17 unionists being returned to Westminster and "some demoralisation and recriminations inside the nationalist community." This had to be weighed against the "value of clipping the wings of the presumptuous SDLP."

RADICAL

Sinn Féin should be prepared, Morrison suggested, "to enter into discussions" with the SDLP, on a principled basis, which would, of course, involve a recognition of republican demands for a British withdrawal, amnesty for the prisoners, self-determination, and would "presume a boycott of Westminster."

There is "nothing to be lost", he stressed, "for us at least having been seen to have attempted to secure maximum nationalist successes" while the SDLP "by repudiating discussions with Sinn Féin, can only further damage themselves."

While the SDLP leadership constantly betrayed the aspirations of the nationalist people, reneged on their promises to internees, and remained silent while prisoners died on hunger-strike, he argued "one must appreciate the gulf between such a leadership and the aspirations of its genuine supporters."

The SDLP "will have to face up to a historical compromise with the growing force of radical republicanism" or face being pushed aside, Morrison concluded, "for being more concerned with opportunism and careerism."

Rip-off denounced

LAST Tuesday a republican delegation led by Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin elected representative for West Belfast, met the EEC commissioner for the six counties, Geoffrey Martin. Mr Martin was questioned on the issue of EEC funding for the six counties and, in particular, the proposed 'integrated scheme' intended to alleviate the housing situation in Belfast. The delegation included Richard McAuley, constituency representative for Lagan Valley, Joe Austin (North Belfast), Denis Donaldson (East Belfast), Sean McKnight (South Belfast), and Jim Faulkner of Sinn Féin's housing department.

In a statement they said that "because the six counties are one of the five EEC priority areas, the British government has been able to claim a total of £684 million from EEC funds for this area in the past 10 years."

Denouncing it as a rip-off of the EEC,

but mostly of the people of the six counties, Sinn Féin pointed out that the value of EEC grants allocated to relieve social deprivation "was halved because of the British refusal to match the amount."

The delegation was assured that when the integrated scheme goes ahead the

EEC would monitor the spending of EEC money closely, to "ensure that the Brits do not rip off further findings."

The Sinn Féin delegation also pointed out to the EEC commissioner the cosmetic nature of the employment schemes funded by the EEC in the six counties, such as YTP (Youth Training Programmes) and ACE (Community Employment), which are "at best an attempt by the present British government to disguise unemployment figures; at worst, simply a form of cheap labour."

The conditions were also discussed and Sinn Féin stressed that EEC money should go to the areas of greatest need such as North and West Belfast.



Border incursion

ON Wednesday of last week, April 20th, a force of 10 RUC men crossed the Fermanagh/Monaghan border at Corragut and remained in County Monaghan for over two hours.

The RUC men crossed by means of a small pedestrian bridge constructed by local people after the road bridge was blown up by British soldiers some years ago. A group of them, apparently examining a public dump on the Southern side of the border, began to smash bottles from it up and down the adjoining road.

Two of the RUC men were observed to take pieces of the broken glass and use them to puncture the tyres of a woman's bicycle passing nearby.

The intruders then withdrew and dismantled the timber frame of the footbridge, discarding it into the river.

Throughout the incursion a Free State surveillance helicopter flew overhead observing the RUC actions, but no presence of Free State forces appeared on the ground.

Commenting on the incident, Sinn Féin member James McElwain, who lives close to the scene, condemned the Free State policy of standing idly by in such circumstances.

"Now they fly idly by as well," he added.



• NICKY KELLY

Nicky Kelly

AT a meeting of Leitrim County Council on Tuesday, April 19th, a resolution was unanimously passed demanding that the Free State government release Nicky Kelly immediately.

Proposing the motion, Sinn Féin's John Joe McGil said that Nicky Kelly was innocent and had been beaten into making statements incriminating himself. The resolution was seconded by Jim Joe Short.

Jobs protest

A GROUP of unemployed people in the Liberties area of Dublin occupied the Eastern Health Board offices in Thomas Street on Tuesday morning this week. The occupation was in support of the 'March for Decent Jobs' which left Cork for Dublin on Monday, and was in protest at the cuts in public spending, and soaring unemployment, to levels which in some estates in the area exceed 50%.

The top-floor offices were held for an hour, and banners and posters calling for a dole rate which would enable people to live, and calling for jobs which would enable people to earn their own living were hung across the building.

Hospital criticised

SHANNON Sinn Féin has issued a statement condemning the treatment of an 18-year-old woman prisoner from Merick Jail at St Munchin's Maternity Hospital on Friday, April 15th.

The woman suffered a miscarriage and was in obvious distress, with no friends or relatives to comfort her. A prison officer was allowed by hospital staff not only to remain with the woman throughout her ordeal but even to loudly abuse her when she broke down in tears.

Farmers fight forests

BY JACK MADDEN

SMALL FARMERS in the Kiltubrid area of County Leitrim have launched a campaign to stop local land being converted into forestry. This is the latest in a long line of protests against afforestation in a county which has witnessed a drastic decline in its agricultural population over the years.

On Tuesday, April 12th, a picket of angry farmers was placed on a 23-acre farm which is owned by a Carlow-based garda, Patrick Boyle, when locals realised that a tree-planting company had moved in to plough the land. Since then the picket has been maintained and has attracted widespread support and messages of solidarity from farmers throughout the county.

Garda Sergeant Boyle inherited the farm some years back from an aunt. He has never worked the land and, say local farmers, it now appears that a private forestry company, Tree Farmers Ltd, have secured an interest in the farm and locals believe that when the land has been planted it will pass quietly into the hands of this company.

Frank Guckian, spokesperson for the protestors, points out that Tree Farmers Ltd have encountered opposition to their land dealings in other parts of the country and that they have tried to avoid opposition in this case by maintaining Boyle as legal owner and presenting themselves as simply working for him. Since they do not have the machinery to do the ploughing work, they have had to sub-contract another firm.

Boyle has refused to give any



• Kiltubrid small farmers mount their protest against land speculators — Frank Guckian is third from the right

assurance against the land changing hands once the planting has been completed, arguing that what he does with his farm is his business.

DESECRATED

Peter Monaghan, IFA liaison officer for Leitrim, visited the farm at the request of the pickets and expressed his horror that "such prime land should be desecrated and desecrated whilst local small farmers are so much in need of more land."

Assuring the protestors that they had his complete support in preventing the lands being planted, he pointed out that he had no objection to land being planted where it was bad and not required by local farmers. He added that

he would intensify representations to the Land Commission to implement a Section 40 order on the farm which would halt further work until an investigation could be carried out.

Joe Gallogly, Sinn Féin spokesperson on agriculture, and himself a Leitrim small farmer, visited the picket and said that through protests such as this "the message will eventually be brought home to the appropriate authorities that the people of Leitrim are not prepared to move out of their homes and county to accommodate trees which do not even create any employment in the county."

Messages of support and promises of action have come from politicians and county councillors who assure

the protestors that they will do what they can to force action from the Land Commission.

FORESTRY

Frank Guckian points out that if protests such as theirs had begun 15 years ago they might have prevented some of the best land in Leitrim being turned into forestry and summed up the attitude of the Kiltubrid farmers:

"We are totally opposed to the depopulation of this area so that the place can be taken by land speculators... We believe that the buying of large tracts of land by vested commercial and financial interests is not to provide jobs for the people of Leitrim but wealth for themselves at the expense of the people in this county."



• SUSAN & ORLA CHESNEY

Carelessness trap

LESS THAN three months after the tragic drowning of four-year-old Jim McGivern, who had wandered onto the Belfast Westlink construction site, the frightening experience of a young mother and child, also from Divis Flats, has reinforced local fears that with government bodies and contractors alike apparently indifferent to the safety of local people, the redevelopment of the Lower Falls could result in further fatalities.

The small Servia Street building site, part of the Housing Executive's piecemeal redevelopment scheme for the district, is situated in a densely populated area where play facilities are virtually non-existent.

At around 11am last Monday 23-year-old Susan Chesney and her daughter Orla, aged two-and-a-half, were walking along Servia Street on their way to the local post office. Suddenly, a 10 feet by 12 feet section of corrugated iron fencing, which had been removed earlier that morning to allow contractors' vehicles access to their site and left propped against the remaining fence, blew across the road, knocking both

Susan and the toddler down and trapping them against the pavement. Orla's grandmother, Sarah Chesney, who was walking ahead, managed with some difficulty to free the pair.

She is still angry at the episode: "The fencing was just leaning. That child could have been killed over their neglect. Not only her, other children, even an old person. What they're getting away with in this area... they just don't care."

Both Susan and the child were badly shaken by the incident, and suffered extensive bruising to the body and legs. More seriously, the child also suffered a black eye and bruised forehead. Susan's

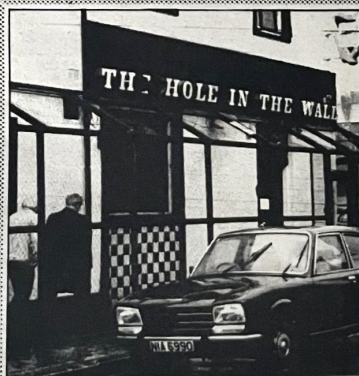
front tooth was chipped and loosened.

Within hours the loose fencing had been boarded back into place. Meanwhile, a stretch of temporary hoarding further down Servia Street still poses a safety hazard.

The six-foot high makeshift structure surrounds a large, frequently waterlogged hole some six feet deep. According to local residents it is usually left open during the day and is so flimsily fastened at night that it has been found open on several occasions.

They are concerned that despite Jim McGivern's death adequate safety measures are still not being taken on Lower Falls building sites.

The contractors at the Servia Street site, Farrans, also worked on the Westlink motorway, and on March 15th were fined £250 for negligence in connection with Jim McGivern's death.



Loyalist intelligence

THE PROTESTANT Action Force — a cover-name for the paramilitary Ulster Volunteer Force — has claimed responsibility for a no-warning pub bombing in Belfast last Saturday. No one was injured in the explosion though customers were badly shaken.

The attack occurred at about 2.25pm when the bomb went off in the doorway of the Hole in the Wall bar in Baltic Avenue, off the Antrim Road.

In their statement the PAF said that the bombing was in protest at the recent jailing of UVF men on the evidence of an informer, a possible reference to Joseph Bennett.

However, the only link this pub has with an informer is that it shares its name with that of another club in North Belfast mentioned by the tout Christopher Black in court last January as being 'controlled by the IRA'.

After that publicity loyalists attacked patrons leaving the Hole in the Wall public house possibly in the mistaken belief that this was the building referred to in court.

Fortunately, in this latest attack, no one was injured and only some windows were broken. One patron who escaped the blast said:

"I wished they'd find a bloody safe name to call it!"

Bullet study published

A REPORT PUBLISHED in the British medical journal *The Lancet* last week confirms that plastic bullets are more lethal than the rubber bullets they replaced, while also, inadvertently, supporting the widespread view that on many occasions the crown forces have fired them with deliberate intention of causing death or serious injury.

In his report Dr Laurence Roche, senior registrar in the accident and emergency department of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, compared injuries to plastic bullet victims admitted to the hospital during the hunger-strike two years ago with an earlier study of the effects of rubber bullets.

During the five months from April to August 1981 about 29,000 plastic bullets were fired in the North, causing seven deaths. During the two-year study of rubber bullets 33,000 rounds were fired, causing two deaths.

If, as Roche says, these figures alone are not sufficient to prove, statistically, that plastic bullets are the more dangerous weapon, they nevertheless clearly show the massive scale of British army repression directed against the nationalist people.

FLIGHT

More revealing is Roche's detailed comparison of injury rates.

Overall, rubber bullets caused a greater number of serious injuries, mainly to the face and chest, a fact which Roche attributes

to its inaccuracy and instability in flight, which makes it more likely to hit a victim sideways-on.

In comparison, the more accurate plastic bullet, which usually strikes end-on "causes more damage to a smaller area of the body," according to Roche.

"My impression is that plastic bullets tend to cause more severe injuries to the skull and brain and therefore more deaths."

On the 99 people examined by Roche and his colleagues, 31 received head injuries, three of these died and eight had skull fractures. Of the 90 rubber bullet victims, 10 suffered head injuries, of whom one died and three suffered skull fractures.

Yet despite the greater accuracy of plastic bullets, Roche found that "injuries anywhere in the head (the single most dangerous area) were less common with plastic bullets but not to a significant degree."

Although Roche himself does not go so far as to accuse the British army and the RUC of breaching their regulations that plastic bullets should always be aimed below waist level — and indeed has called only for the bullets to be modified — his study concludes:

"... If plastic bullets struck only the buttocks or legs, then the risk of death would be negligible."

In fact, as the tragic deaths of young Julie Livingstone, Carol-Ann Kelly, Nora McCabe and others show, the plastic bullet's greater accuracy has been used to murderous effect by the British army.



IRC PASSES THROUGH

A FOUR-MAN team of the Geneva-based International Red Cross (IRC) arrived in Belfast last Monday for a week-long tour of Northern prisons. Their last visit in July 1981 was part of a British government-sponsored intervention to try and break the historic H-Block hunger-strike.

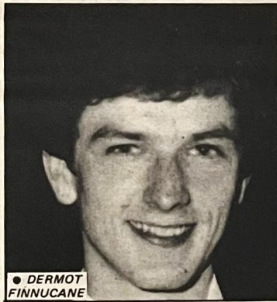
This week's visit appears to be nothing more than window shopping and no details of their findings will be released because, as one of their spokespersons conveniently put it, they were here on 'a confidential basis' and that their 'duty is to visit the inmates and the prisons'.

Sinn Féin representatives Jim McAllister and Owen Carron issued a call to accompany the delegation into Armagh Jail on Wednesday because of the initial situation there, but the Northern Ireland Office re-

fused them access.

Only a week before the arrival of the IRC team, a republican prisoner was removed from a work-shop in the H-Blocks and issued with a death threat by a high-ranking prison officer.

The warder, P. J. Kerr, who has a long record of ill-treating prisoners, told Belfastman Dermot Finnucane that if any more warders were injured during scuffles or conflicts he would hold Finnucane responsible and he would be 'killed'.



Cork and Limerick arrests

ARRESTS and harassment by Special Branch gardai in Counties Cork and Limerick in the past 10 days have caused anger among republicans and their supporters in the area.

In Cobh, six men were arrested on Monday, April 18th, after raids on their homes, and taken to the Bridewell where they were held for periods of up to 36 hours.

Neil and Ciaran McCarthy, Eddie Buckley, Ciaran Damery, Sean Boland and Kenneth O Cinneide, who have been connected with the H-Block campaign in the town, and the latter two of whom are members of the local Sinn Féin cumann, were questioned mainly about political activities.

Papers and books relating to Sinn Féin activity were removed during the raids and have not been returned.

In a statement condemning the harassment and arrests, Cobh Sinn Féin said that they would not be intimidated by such methods.

LIMERICK

In County Limerick, on Thursday, April 21st, four men and a

woman were arrested and held for 36 hours. They were Kevin Walsh, Elizabeth O'Dea, Danny McBrearty, Niall Burns and another man, who were all taken to Henry Street Garda barracks in Limerick city.

On Friday morning, another man, Michael O'Neill, was arrested and held for eight hours.

During the time they were in custody they were, at various times, threatened, abused and offered inducements. The men were also physically assaulted. Niall Burns, who received the worst beating, suffered bruising over most of his body.

Harassment in Mayo

THE Task Force have been particularly active in County Mayo recently.

A week of Special Branch harassment of Sinn Féin members started immediately after the Easter commemoration at Islandeady when Deirdre McKenna, secretary of the Mayo Sinn Féin comhairle ceantair, and the PRO, Michael Fleming, were stopped and questioned.

Deirdre McKenna was arrested a few days later and held for four hours in Castlebar Garda barracks. Also arrested were Sinn Féin's Mary McGinn, Mayo organiser; Paddy Bolger, national organiser; and Dermot Whelan, education department head. Whelan was held for over 20 hours.

UNWELCOME

The next day, the harassment continued with the arrest of Joe Mulchrone, held for eight hours, and an unwelcome visit to the home of Joe McHale, a recently released republican prisoner from Portlaoise who highlighted deteriorating conditions and rising tensions within the jail in interviews with *An Phoblacht* / *Republican News* and the *Irish Times*.



Task Force members are increasing their harassment of republican activists



● Abominable is far too mild a term to describe the conditions some of our elderly are forced to endure in '20th century, Christian' Ireland



SENTENCED TO DEATH

BY SIOBHAN O'MALLEY

A FEW WEEKS before Christmas of last year, a group of local teenagers called at my door 'collecting for the old folk'. They asked for tins of beans or packets of tea to make up hampers. They said their school had organised it. None of them knew any of the 'old folk' to whom the hampers were going.

I wish I had then a copy of the newly-published *Alone Again* for each of them and their teachers. Because what Willie Bermingham, the Dublin fireman who compiled the book and founded the ALONE organisation, does not want for those he has come to call 'his people' is this 'remote-control charity'.

He wants what he and his workers in ALONE have given: personal contact and friendship for the lonely, frightened old people, about whom this book is written.

Alone Again is a re-publication of Willie Bermingham and Liam O'Cuanaigh's first book, *Alone*, with additional material and photographs. It is in standard terms 'harrowing' and 'stirs the conscience', but the book is more than that.

DENUNCIATION

Its stark detailing of the living conditions in Dublin is an angry denunciation of all of us for allowing politicians, landlords and 'social services' to inflict such misery on our vulnerable neighbours.

Fear is the common emotion of the old men and women whose stories are told here. Fear of eviction, fear of the rent-collector, the electricity bills, the gas bills, and fear of vandals. That is if there



● During the 1982 'big freeze', the man occupying this house was twice refused admission to hospital until ALONE eventually got him hospitalised

still is any electricity or gas in their damp, filthy, rat-infested hovels.

Loneliness is also the common factor. Some of the old people ALONE discovered had had no visitors for years. Some have relatives, as old and infirm as themselves, who do their best to care for them.

DYING

One of the worst cases chronicled in

this book was of two brothers in their 70s, one dying of cancer and the other totally blind. They had not been out of the top floor of their rented house for three years. An elderly sister had tried to care for them as best she could.

The younger brother died within days of being removed to hospital, the other brother was taken to an old people's home.

Mrs Brown, a 77-year-old widow, lived in the crumbling basement of a house on the North Circular Road with her mentally-retarded son aged 50. They had been there for 32 years. Mrs Brown lived in constant fear of eviction from this formerly rent-controlled flat. The electrical wiring was so dangerous that they dare not use it.

Mrs Brown had been in hospital five times for stomach operations, each time returning to this flat where she slept with a stick beside her to kill the rats that infested the basement flat.

She was found frozen to death on the ice-covered floor of her so-called kitchen on New Year's Day in 1980. Her son died in that same basement exactly one year later. He also died alone.

REMOTE CONTROL

On the last page of this book, Willie Bermingham writes:

"Charity is essentially the act of giving a man with one leg a crutch. It could also be described as involvement by remote control."

"As a matter of principle, ALONE has never held out the begging bowl and its volunteers are not asked or authorised to make collections. Nor is it a priority to redistribute second-hand clothes and furniture while many old are trapped

in sub-standard accommodation without basic services.

"A rat is not afraid of a five pound note — but it can be shifted with a stout stick. Hooligans are not intimidated by old folks' committees or poverty seminars — but they can be routed by able-bodied neighbours. Bullying landlords are not converted by the charitable gestures of others — but they will take notice if their illegal acts are reported to the gardai and health authorities."

"ALONE has also found that old people in squalor are not impressed by visitors compiling school projects, or 'gaining experience' in social work, or pursuing a momentary interest in poverty. Old people will, however, respond gratefully to friendship and benevolent authority."

"Out of respect for the dignity of many many hundreds of old people, ALONE has declined third-party financial support which involved gimmicky irrelevant publicity or self-promotion on the part of the sponsors."

"Unsolicited donations have underwritten ALONE activities to date, and, on behalf of the old who benefitted, the society expresses sincere appreciation."

"If, as ALONE believes, the abandoning of old people in sub-human conditions is a scandal, it is one that should be fought on a neighbourhood basis, street by street, door by door, with appropriate support from the national health and housing agencies."

"Have you an old person living alone near you? Drop in and make friends. Cook a meal, make a bed, wash a floor. Don't let old people die alone."

● *Alone Again*, by Willie Bermingham and Liam O'Cuanaigh, is published by ALONE, 3 Canal Terrace, Bluebell, Dublin 3. Price 95p plus postage.

PARENTS Falls area, any realint either principal their local school Sinn Fein far to tackle the is

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tated by the g ramme — St Josep St Comgall's, I Mary's, Divis St Britton's Parade Beechmount Ave which the Lowe Parents Association

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The Chilver F In January 198 the amalgamatio and St Mary's twi ing college, Stran

Fierce oppos Catholic Clutch prospect of the Catholic schools with a comprom will see the wha

Parents organise against school closures Learning the hard way

BY MARTIN DALY

decision this week by the Belfast Education and Library Board to close in principle to the closure of two Belfast primary schools and the amalgamation of two others — in spite of a promise last year that no decisions would be taken until 1985 at least — has added further fuel to a campaign which has been causing rising concern for several months.

highlighted by the Save Our Schools Committee of parents in the state-controlled (or Protestant) schools. A campaign has spread to parents in the maintained (Catholic) schools.

The Catholic parents in the Lower Falls area, after the publication of a list of 15 primary schools and 12 secondary schools which the British government's rationalisation of schools — an expression of the rationalisation of money for education — has led to the parents' opposition to the proposed closures, already uncovered the facts about the education system and, at the same time, some uncertainty from the body of Catholic schools, the Schools Committee.

The Belfast Education and Library Board, which controls the Catholic schools, is the equivalent of the controlled

the two Catholic colleges on the St Joseph's site.

All reference to any threats to Catholic primary and secondary schools have now been dropped by the Catholic Church, whose present position is that they do not want the issue of Catholic school closures discussed publicly.

The inference being drawn by parents is that the Church agreed to the closure of a number of Catholic primary and secondary schools in Belfast in return for the compromise solution which saved the training colleges.

IN further support of this fear was the discovery that a considerable amount of discussion had been taking place inside the state-controlled schools on the rationalisation issue over the past number of months.

These discussions involved school management committees, principals, members of staff and parents under the auspices of the Belfast Education and Library Board, with reports submitted to the Department of Education and the British minister in charge, Nicholas Scott.

In the Catholic-maintained schools, no such discussions have taken place and it is clear that principals and school teachers have been kept as ignorant of developments as the parents themselves.

The position of Scott in regard to the Maintained Schools Committee, which controls the Catholic schools, is that whilst grant aid is given to them — or withheld from them by 'rationalisation' — and certain educational standards are

required, the actual running, organisation, re-organisation and closure of schools is a matter for the committee itself to decide.

A list of questions from the Lower Falls Schools Parents Association, submitted through Sinn Féin elected representative Gerry Adams to Fr Colm McCaughan, secretary, relating to school closures, consultations and parents' representation has met with no satisfactory reply.

Meanwhile, the campaign has spread from the Lower Falls to Ballymurphy where another parents' association has been formed and there are further embryo groups in other areas of West Belfast.

A meeting between parents and teachers has also focused the attention of the campaigners on the extent of redundancies threatening the teachers, some of whom have been teaching for as long as seven years, yet are in a precarious situation.

THE parents' campaign in the area of maintained schools has put forward three basic demands:

- That every consideration be given to the educational well-being of our children and that this consideration should not be based on any mathematical head-count or on the rationing of money by the British government.

- The right to full consultation over all issues relating to possible school closures.

- An immediate end to further teacher redundancies, believing that this is an attempt to accelerate the 'rationalisation' programme.



● (Above) St Thomas's Catholic Boys' Secondary School, White Rock, Belfast; and (below) the Protestant Somerdale Boys' Secondary School, off Belfast's Crumlin Road. Attempts by Catholic parents to form a united campaign with their Protestant counterparts to fight all closures have met with a negative response



● Anne Maguire of the Ballymurphy Parents' Association (BPA) challenges Bishop Edward Daly over school cuts



● The BPA mount a picket at the Irish National Teachers' Organisation annual conference, in Derry in March, opposing cuts and teacher redundancies



MacDiarmada anniversary ceremony

A CENTENARY commemoration organised by the National Graves Association and in honour of Sean MacDiarmada, credited with being the architect of the 1916 Easter Rising, will take place in his native Killybegh, County Leitrim, on Sunday week, May 15th.

All republicans are warmly invited to attend and make the occasion a memorable one.



Bobby Sands
1954-1981
died May 5th 1981
after 66 days on hunger-strike

Bobby Sands poster

AS WE approach the second anniversary (May 5th) of the death on hunger-strike of IRA Volunteer Bobby Sands, Republican Publications have produced a new full-colour commemorative poster.

The poster, which is based on a photograph taken in and smuggled out of Long Kesh, costs Stg65p or Ir70p, plus postage, and is available from Republican Publications, 2a Monagh Crescent, Turf Lodge, Belfast (telephone 6207688), or the Book Bureau, 44 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 (telephone 726932).

Draw results

N. Kildare Sinn Fein Monthly Draw
March
1st: No. 186; 2nd: 58; 3rd: 123.

S. Down Sinn Fein Easter Draw
£100: Geraldine Kelly, Drummerod, £75: J. Fagan, Rostrevor; £50: Arthur Simpson, Milltown; £25: Jim Walsh, Castlewellan.

S. Tyrone Sinn Fein Building Fund Draw
Week 7
£100: Brian Vincent, Donaghmore; £30: Joe McDonald, Dungannon; £20: Sean Duffin, Coalisland.

Subscription rates

DUE to increased postal charges, *An Phoblacht/Republican News* has been forced to raise its subscription rates with effect from January 1st of this year.

The new rates are:-
Ireland & Britain £20
Europe £24
USA £60
Elsewhere £36

To: *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 44 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Please find enclosed for a subscription for six months/one year to be sent to:

Name
Address

Mála poist...Mála poist.

SINN FEIN CHALLENGE

A Chara,
Gerry Adams mentions one aspect of the proposed Forum, or Council, for a New Ireland when he describes it as a "short-term publicity exercise" to rescue the SDLP from the electoral challenges of Sinn Fein.

There is more at stake than merely the political future of the SDLP, and that is the future of that class in Ireland which recognises the SDLP as its Northern expression. The Forum represents the political needs of the nationalist middle class North and South of the border, and not just one section of it in the SDLP.

A more politically motivated Sinn Fein, winning mass support because of its policies of achieving national unity and overthrowing capitalism in Ireland, will be identified by the Southern bourgeoisie and their Labour Party allies as a major threat to their immediate and long-term interests. In the face of such a threat their individual party differences will be insignificant. This explains the ease with which such a significant degree of consensus has already been achieved.

The participating parties will still be competing with each other to make political capital out of the Forum, but there will be a more fundamental objective common to all of them, to ensure that the Forum brings about the demise of Sinn Fein, or of any anti-imperialist movement.

The Southern parties, especially Fianna Fail, have always exploited the national question to win electoral support. If the national question, however, were to become the major political issue in the South as it was for instance in 1918, then Sinn Fein would easily sweep all the pretensions



● Growing support for the radical policies of Sinn Fein threatens the bourgeoisie, North and South

ers under the carpet, or, even better, into the dustbin of history. The Southern parties are attempting to avoid exactly that type of confrontation by creating a forum which, they hope, take the national question out of Irish politics altogether.

For example, in the same way that the bi-partisan policy in Britain took the Irish question out of British politics, so too a common policy on partition as expressed

by the Forum could take the national question out of Irish politics, thus freeing the establishment parties from the challenge of Sinn Fein.

If we identify the Forum for what it is - a nationalist bourgeois offensive against Sinn Fein - then we can predict that it will inevitably become the source of increased collaboration with the British and even greater repression against republicans and anti-

imperialists.

One final point about the involvement of the Labour Party. We are reminded of Connolly's response to a similar type of conference orchestrated by another nationalist bigot, Joe Devlin:

"No-one should go there in the interests of labour," said Connolly, "unless they wanted to sell the interests of labour."

Eamon McMahon, Belfast.

against cuts in living standards - let us inform the government that they have seen nothing yet!

When they try and bill us with higher rents and rates we will be calling on the National Association of Tenants' Organisations (NATO) to show the local authorities and government what a protest is really like.

We shall also be calling on NATO to have the entire points system used by the Dublin Corporation for housing people examined. This system is most inequitable and it is time for it to be revised.

Further to this, we have another group of school-leavers coming on to the streets in a few months' time. In view of this, we shall be seeking employment for our youth through the Youth Employment Agency and the Department of the Environment as there is a lot of environmental work that needs doing in the Rathmines area.

William Ormonde, Chairperson, Charlemont Street Community Association, 116 Tom O'Kelly Flats, Dublin 8.

Emigration controversy

Dear Editor,

The latest to join with Fine Gael's Professor John Kelly in urging a return to the 1950s style mass emigration as a 'solution' to our economic problem is Gerry Smyth of the Irish Management Institute.

Mr Smyth proposes the appointment of a Minister of State for Emigration, the fostering of 'favourable' attitudes to emigration, grants and subsidies for families to quit Ireland, and a target of 20,000 persons per annum for export!

Presumably, the tax-payer will be asked to subsidise the exile of our surplus population in the same way as the hand-outs to the tax holiday, fly-by-night, here today-gone tomorrow foreign industrial enterprises.

These proposals are obscene and amount to a declaration of war against our youth, the new scapegoats for the waste, mismanagement and profligacy of governments, both past and present. Certain sections of the establishment in this state have taken fright. Our young growing population is deemed a threat to their wealth, power and privilege.

Incidentally, where are all these overseas opportunities anyway? Or is this emigration debate merely designed to soften public opinion into accepting that the government will make living conditions so unpleasant that our 'excess' young will be only too glad to get out? This prospect must be taken seriously in view of Finance Minister Dukes' recent threat to further slash social spending.

The time has now come for the public to speak out and denounce the likes of Messrs Kelly and Smyth before their ideas become accepted in ruling circles.

Elizabeth Murphy, Irish Civil Rights Association, 24 North Circular Road, Dublin.

Coalition condemned

Dear Editor,

The Charlemont Street Community Association, Rathmines, Dublin, wish to put on record that we utterly and without reservation condemn the Coalition government's handling of the economy. The savage cut-backs in education and the Budget generally have led to it being known as the worst in the history of the state.

The humiliation of the working class by the Labour Party, Coalition partners with Fine Gael, is shameful.

We have seen thousands of workers march on the streets

being ample room for traffic to move freely.

This harassment has occurred on several Sundays over the past few months and has been aimed only at those attending Mass in St Tierny's Church - those attending services in the local Protestant churches have not received the same attention.

The behaviour of members of the British army's Queen's Regiment in the area has also given cause for concern.

As well as local people suffering general verbal abuse and foul language, there has been at least one serious case of assault and several people have been threatened that they will be 'got'.

If the occupation forces think that this type of sectarian-based harassment will break the spirit of the nationally-minded people in the Roslea area then they are sadly mistaken.

PRO, Leonard/Ahern Sinn Fein cumann, Roslea, County Fermanagh.

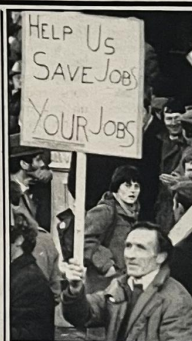
Belfast visit

A Chara,

On August 9th of this year over 100 Irish-Americans will be visiting Belfast for one week on a trip arranged by Irish Northern Aid. The trip itself will be educational as most of those travelling have never been to Ireland before.

At the moment, we are in the process of organising billets with families and if anyone would be willing to help would they please contact the undersigned.

Fra McCann, Sinn Fein Foreign Affairs Bureau, 51/53 Falls Road, Belfast. Telephone 230261.



Fight back!

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At the meeting which followed the Dublin Trades Council march in support of the jailed Ranks workers, those present agreed to continue with a campaign against the use of legislation for the purpose of jailing workers who fight to defend their jobs and living standards.

Since then, many developments have occurred. We refer to the campaign against the PAYE/PRSI increases; the continued sit-in at Carrigaline, Kingdom Tubes and Rankles (and the recent threat of jail once again for these workers); the campaign by trade unionists for the repeal of Section 31; and the People's March for Decent Jobs.

There is more need now than ever before for activists and representatives within trade unions to get together and consider how we can both aid and participate in these struggles in defence of

workers. There is also a great need to assess whether the official policies of the unions are adequate to the economic and social climate and whether these policies give a sufficient line of defence to workers and a strategy for victory.

We are convinced that a special conference for people who are fighting back on all these fronts needs to be organised. We urgently need to co-ordinate these acts of resistance by workers against the austerity policies of the government and employers.

As an initial step in this direction, we are inviting all trade unionists who took part in the Ranks solidarity campaign to a meeting this Saturday, April 30th, at 2pm. The ATGWU have agreed to allow us to use their meeting rooms for the first meeting. We will give a report at this meeting of a Limerick fight-back group which has been formed and how we can link up with them in a plan of national co-ordination.

This Saturday's meeting will take place at 2pm in the ATGWU Hall, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.

Des Boness & Alan Trimble (Ranks worker).

Books appeal

A Chara,

Dungannon Sinn Fein would like to buy, beg, steal or borrow either of the following:-

The Volunteer Earl by Morris J. Craig and *The Great O'Neill* by Sean O'Faolain.
Anyone who could help in supplying these books should contact the address below.
Sinn Fein, c/o 60 Irish Street, Dungannon. Telephone 25778.

A pat on the head

BURKE'S AT THE BACK

By Kevin Burke

HOW does the *Daily Telegraph* — the official organ of the British Tory Party's highest echelons — view our statesman-like Free State leader, the much-respected Dr Garret FitzGerald?

Perhaps the editorial in Monday's paper will give us a clue.

Declaring on the necessity of stopping "the election by Roman Catholic constituencies of supporters of the IRA, who will refuse to take their seats in the Commons," the editorial continues:

"Dr FitzGerald in Dublin is already doing his little best to help the SDLP by holding a cross-border forum..."

Who's a good boy then?

★ ★ ★

And whilst we are on the subject, what are we to make of this strange occurrence in Dublin early last month?

A Dundrum family advertised in the local *Southside* give-away newspaper that they had a second-hand couch for sale.

They received two phone calls from a person named FitzGerald enquiring about the couch and the caller said they would be out to see it.

Later that day two impressive vehicles pulled up outside the house, one bearing plainclothes members of the gardai, the other carrying none other than Garret and Joan.

The couch was hauled out of the garage and the leader of state and his spouse proceeded to walk round it, bounce on it and measure it in great detail.

The problem was would some loose-covers they had at home fit this particular piece of furniture?

Indecisive in this, as in matters of government, the great man then announced that they would think about it and if they decided in favour of two of the heavies would return to collect it.

Apparently they got a better bargain elsewhere as nothing more has been heard.

Obviously the salaries, pensions and expenses being paid to Free State politicians are proving totally inadequate.

★ ★ ★

Another breach this week in Section 31 and still the Dublin government hasn't fallen!

Following the appearance of Sinn Féin's agriculture spokesperson, Joe Gallogly, on *Today Tonight* recently, comes an interview with Ray Coady of Waterford Sinn Féin on RTE's *Day By Day* programme on Monday this week.

Coady was one of three people interviewed by Pat Kenny as the People's March for Decent Jobs left Waterford.

★ ★ ★

The attitude of RTE and the Post Office towards the non-payment of television licences has been annoying me greatly in recent months.

And it has nothing at all to do with Section 31 or the Irish language.

We have recently seen a most insulting campaign about spongers and social parasites who have not bought their £52 television licence.

And this week they announce with glee that they have caught 8,000 dodgers in the first week of their new campaign, and if others do not want the humiliation of being dragged through the courts and shamed in front of the neighbours, they had better pay up immediately.

This is typical of the mindless, self-centred, middle-class occupants of that smug and cosy ivory tower in Donnybrook, for whom £52 would hardly cover the cost of a very ordinary night-out.

The fact is that for thousands of families the price of the licence, which they are constantly being told to run out and buy, represents either the whole, or the best part, of a week's mon-



● All the other papers have been boosting their circulations by massive usage of heart-warming photographs of the tour of Britain's Charles and Di, and little Willie, to Australia and New Zealand. So that you won't feel left out, here's a couple of such heart-warming snaps from Adelaide, South Australia, earlier this month.

ey on the dole.

So the choice is either to throw out the telly and sit staring at four blank walls all day or pay up a week's money and sit starving in front of the box.

★ ★ ★

I have decided after all to postpone the sensational publication of the diaries of Oliver

Cromwell which were recently offered to me for a sum in excess of two figures.

A slight doubt still exists over the authenticity of the documents which, although described by one eminent historian as "typed in a hard-nosed puritanical style", I have thought better to submit to further expert examination. Watch this space!



WHAT'S ON

IRISH SOCIAL NIGHT
Featuring The Breakaway Ramblers
9pm Friday 29th April
Upstairs Lounge
The Stag's Head
Lincoln Street
DUNDALK
County Louth
Admission £1
Organised by An Cumann Cabhrach

RELEASE NICKY KELLY PICKET
Saturday 30th April
Portlaoise Prison
PORTLAOISE
County Laois
Dublin bus leaves Parnell Square at 11am — fare £3

BALLAD SESSION
Featuring Póitín (Ardes)
8.30pm Saturday 30th April
Cassidy's Pub
COOLON
County Louth
Organised by Sinn Féin

BALLAD SESSION
Featuring The Irish Brigade
8.30pm Sunday 1st May
The Grand Hotel
SLIGO
Organised by the National Graves Association

UNEMPLOYMENT MEETING & FILM SHOW
Featuring *Unemployment*
8pm Monday 2nd May
Liberties Community Music Centre
Kevin Street
DUBLIN

RELEASE NICKY KELLY CONCERT
Featuring Christy Moore, Moving Hearts & The Outfit
8pm Tuesday 3rd May
Francis Xavier Hall
Upper Sherrard Street
DUBLIN
Speakers: Bernadette McAlissey & Ivor Browne
Admission £4 (£2 with dole card)

BOBBY SANDS COMMEMORATIVE FUNCTION
Featuring The Shandy Folk
8pm to 12 Wednesday 4th May
Camelot Hotel
Malahide Road
DUBLIN
Admission £2
Buses 42 & 42c

BOBBY SANDS COMMEMORATIVE SOCIAL
Featuring Noel Hill & Friends
8pm Thursday 5th May
The Spinning Wheel
Mary Street
DUBLIN
Admission £1

BOBBY SANDS MEMORIAL FUNCTION
(in aid of An Cumann Cabhrach)
Featuring The Dublin City Ramblers
8 to 12pm Thursday 5th May
The Carolan Rooms
The Embankment
TALLAGHT
County Dublin
Organised by Sinn Féin

WELCOME HOME SOCIAL FOR SEAN CONNOLLY
(recently released from Magilligan)
Featuring The Malachy Doris Trio
9pm Thursday 5th May
Thornhill Hall
CUSHENDALL
County Antrim

FUND-RAISING SOCIAL
(for the Gael Scoll, Beal Feirste & Gael Scoll, Inchicore, Dublin)
Featuring Christy Moore & Friends
8.30pm Friday 6th May
The Belgard Inn
TALLAGHT
County Dublin
Admission £3

SOUTH DOWN BUSES FOR BELFAST MAY 8th RALLY
Leave Rostrevor 12 noon travelling via Hilltown, Killoo & Downpatrick.

COMMEMORATIVE PAGEANT
(a cultural night of poetry, music & song in honour of the 10 H-Block hunger-strike martyrs)
8pm Wednesday 11th May
Francis Xavier Hall
Upper Sherrard Street
DUBLIN
Tickets are available from 44 Parnell Square
Price £2.50

ANNUAL WOLFE TONE COMMEMORATION
2.30pm Sunday 19th June
BODENSTOWN
Sallins
County Kildare

TV

REVIEW PAGE

A normal life

BY SIOBHAN O'MALLEY

GERRY REYNOLDS lives in Turf Lodge and runs a youth club in Divis Flats. He would like to broaden the activities of the club more and have discussions among the young people about their lives. But this club is under the control of the local church, St Peter's, so the strict rule is that "all problems are left outside."

The kids play football, snooker, and table-tennis, go to roller-discos and sing songs. A *Little Peace* was the one chosen for this programme, part of the *Living Proof* series on UTV on Monday and called *Live Life — Respect Life*, the motto of the youth club. The conception of the organisers of the club of living and respecting life seems to be that if you ignore all the realities of life you will get by, a version of

the 'pretend it's not happening and maybe it will go away' school of thought.

The commentator, speaking over film of Brit patrols round the flats, made the claim that "normal life is returning, thanks to the security forces" but neglected to say that not only does normal life include guns and tanks in the streets, but, for the people of Divis, an existence in the tower blocks of crumbling, damp flats beside

a motorway and open sewers.

HATRED

A shot of young people showing obvious contempt and hatred for the presence of an RUC/Brit patrol was incongruously explained away with "these betide any local who shows anything but dumb insolence to the soldiers."

This film was a propaganda exercise trying to promote the old British line of 'we're only here to keep the peace'. But no amount of distorted reporting could conceal the young people's true feelings about the British presence, and even Gerry Reynolds has to admit that ping-pong a few nights a week is no answer to the problems of Divis.

GLASGOW

The *Broo* was the last in a series of five films about Glasgow shown on BBC2 on Sunday.

The people who live in Glasgow's East End include the city's homeless, the winos and long-term unemployed. They live in the derelict tenements and buy the few necessities of life in the local flea-market, the 'Barras'.

For those who cannot even afford the prices in the 'Barras', there is 'Paddy's Market', where single shoes and used razor blades are on offer.

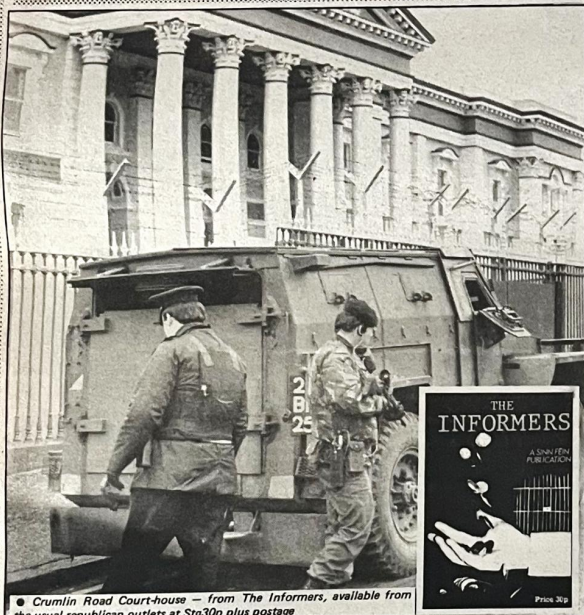
The Salvation Army run a hostel in the area which is the only home some of these people have known during their entire adult life. There are more children in care in the East End than in any other part of Scotland, England or Wales.

The welfare services are too inadequate to cope with the sheer mass of hopelessness and misery that is life on the broo for the people of this area.

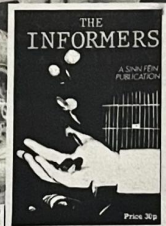
Like Divis Flats, life is 'normal' in Glasgow.



● A few nights of ping-pong are no answer to the social deprivation in West Belfast's Divis Flats



● Crumlin Road Court-house — from *The Informers*, available from the usual republican outlets at Stg30p plus postage



The Informers

BY ANN BERRY

"SO FAR, up to 300 men and women, the large majority of them from the nationalist community, have been charged solely on the uncorroborated word of these informers. Most have been held for prolonged periods on their flimsy so-called 'evidence' awaiting trial."

Sinn Féin's latest publication, *The Informers*, examines the background to the charging and imprisonment of these people through the use of paid informers.

This concise pamphlet is not a comprehensive, personalised account of the informers' actions, or of their victims, though individual cases are used to illustrate the points made. Instead, it shows how "the systematic use of paid informers is part of a conscious strategy which the British administration has evolved in an attempt to weaken the Republican Movement."

It shows that the RUC's use of paid informers is not a "retreating new phenomenon" but only the latest weapon created by the British in their campaign of repression against the nationalist people. It links the informer tactic with the other repressive methods used in the last 12 years.

The pamphlet exposes the Brit tactic of changing laws to suit themselves, of introducing non-jury Diplock courts, of creating the conveyor-belt system that processes the arrested person through interrogation in Castlereagh, accompanied by the usual physical and psychological torture, to an inevitable conviction in a Diplock court.

The appearance of informers is meant to demoralise the nationalist community and fracture communal resistance. The Brits and their loyalist allies, enthusiastically supported by the media, attempt to portray the informers as 'converted terrorists, stricken by conscience' who had voluntarily approached the RUC.

This pamphlet nails that lie, showing the informers to be as much victims of the Brit repression as the people they named. The kidnapping of whole families, reported in the press as 'families fleeing into

PAMPHLET

protective custody', is shown to be the deliberate isolation of the informer and his family so that the RUC's grip on them could be strengthened by a combination of threats and bribes.

The undoubted damage done by the informer tactic is already being nullified by the nationalist community's rejection of the surrounding Brit propaganda of 'weakening support' for the republican cause. That rejection will be helped by the clear analysis provided by the pamphlet.

And just this week, following the conviction of 14 men on the evidence of UVF informer Joe Bennett, both Ian Paisley and Jim Molyneux, condemned the use of 'supergrasses', and their guaranteed immunity from prosecution. This concern for justice contrasts strangely with their gleeful support for the 'shoot-to-kill' policy by the RUC which resulted in the recent murders of six men in County Armagh, and can be explained quite simply.

These loyalists would prefer the swift unabashed military repression of the nationalist revolution and a return to full sectarian rule, not, as they see it, the pussy-footing around with tourists who are now putting their brethren, as well as republicans, away.

Scoil an Phiarsaigh

BY MAIRE DE BARRA

THE THIRD annual Scoil an Phiarsaigh was held in Scoil Eanna, Rathfarnham, County Dublin, last weekend (April 22nd to 24th). Organised by Fondúireacht an Phiarsaigh, the school commemorates the ideals of Pearse by each year choosing a theme on which several lectures are delivered and matters debated. This year's theme was 'The English Mind in Ireland'.

Tomas MacAnna, director of the Abbey Theatre, officially opened the weekend's events. He asked if Pearse were alive today whether or not he would hold out the same hope for freedom as he had in 1916.

There was a school of thought in this country, MacAnna said, which believed that nationalism is out of date and that Ireland and Britain are one cultural unit. The same people held that Irish was a useless language, best left to die.

CENSORSHIP

A very well-attended lecture delivered by journalist and broadcaster Tom McGurk on 'The Foreign Culture Pushers in RTE' highlighted the blatant censorship imposed by Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act and pointed out that it debared Sinn Féin's elected local councillors and representatives from air-time. He further

FESTIVAL

justification for the calls to establish an Irish language television station.

And reflecting on those who control RTE, he commented that "to make any headway nowadays one would have to be between owning a Mercedes and being a member of the Workers' Party."

NEW PHENOMENON

On the same subject Ite Ní



● Padraig Pearse addresses Irish Volunteers near Dublin in 1915

Chionnaith, of the College of Commerce in Rathmines, said that there now exists that powerful force with which Pearse did not have to contend with:

"Until the anglicised mentality which dominates RTE is ended, our cultural identity will be further and further eroded. The mentality which Pearse and others opposed so strongly is that which prevails in RTE."

On Saturday, the chairperson of the New Ireland Group, John Robb, claimed in his lecture on 'Internationalism and Nationality' that nationalism as we understand it today is a relatively new phenomenon. He asked why people should be constrained within nations and why sovereignty should be so important.

DISAPPOINTING

A more disappointing aspect of the weekend's events was a symposium on 'Economic and Cultural Dependence in Ireland' where speakers Síle deValera, of Fianna Fáil, and Vivian Murray, of the Irish Goods Council, failed to come to terms with the real causes of our dependence. A slightly more realistic picture was painted by historian Daltu O'Ceallaigh and Michael O'Loinsigh of the Irish Sovereignty Movement.

Overall, the organisers reported that they were very pleased with the weekend's attendance pointing to the fact that on a few occasions they had to turn people away from the doors.



● Tomas MacAnna, director of the Abbey Theatre

South Armagh man wounded

A SOUTH ARMAGH man lies seriously wounded in the hospital one week after being shot by a British soldier in an incident which the RUC have attempted to describe as 'accidental'.

Twenty-seven-year-old Pat Craven from Bessbrook was shot in the leg a number of times as he waited for a lift with his brother-in-law Gerry Mooney on the Newry to Camlough Road as they prepared to go to Newry to play a darts match at around 9pm on Friday, April 22nd.

As a burst of fire rang out Pat fell to the ground bleeding. Francis Cassidy, a neighbour, states that "a few minutes later around another five shots were fired and I saw British soldiers running up to Pat."

Local people are highly sceptical

of the RUC version which said that British soldiers were operating a checkpoint a few hundred yards away when there was an accidental discharge from one of the soldier's weapons. Local people attribute the shooting to a policy of deliberate recklessness.

Pat Craven was rushed to hospital in Craigavon and haemorrhaged so badly that in transit he had to receive seven pints of blood. Fortunately, however, his leg, which doctors thought at first they may have had to amputate, has been saved.



● The wanton recklessness of a British soldier almost cost Pat Craven a leg at this spot



● Martin Lafferty who has been stopped by the British army and RUC no less than 44 times in two months

Stopped and beaten

A 20-YEAR-OLD Claudy man who has been stopped and searched a total of 44 times in two months by the British army and RUC was physically assaulted by the RUC in Strabane two weeks ago.

Martin Lafferty was stopped by the RUC in Castle Street on April 15th. He was punched and kicked and dragged into a landrover where he was again punched in the stomach. When he was thrown out of the landrover he sustained cuts and bruises to his hands and knees.

Neither is the harassment just a recent experience by him and his family. Martin's father, Neil, was interned in the 1940s and again in the 1970s. He died only seven months after being released in 1975.

In December 1982 Martin was beaten up by the RUC and sustained cuts to his back, legs and an arm. He took an assault charge out against the RUC which is still pending.

Two weeks ago his 25-year-old brother, Joe, was threatened during interrogation in Castlereagh

Barracks that he would either be shot or that a booby-trap bomb would be placed under his car.

The ineffectiveness and reluctance of establishment politicians such as the SDLP or the independents to act on the family's behalf was demonstrated when, despite approaches, no publicity appeared in any of the local press.

Sinn Féin elected representative Martin McGuinness commenting on the recent incident said:

"For years harassment of young people such as Martin Lafferty has been so commonplace that these so-called elected representatives have become apathetic in the face of it, simply accepting it and completely ignoring the personal indignity and suffering caused to many innocent members of the nationalist community."

No home for baby

MRS GLORIA SPEAK awaits the birth of her first child in seven weeks time in a tiny caravan so riddled with dampness that the very mattress is soaked from 'condensation' each morning. Mrs Speak has already been hospitalised three times with a threatened miscarriage during pregnancy.

Doctors are so concerned about the risk her living conditions pose to her pregnancy that she must go into hospital on May 18th, five weeks before the baby is due, and remain there until the birth of her child.

The Speaks' caravan has no water and no toilet and already Mrs Speak has been

told that the hospital will not allow the baby to be discharged until they are properly housed. The caravan sits on a patch of grass not far from Mrs Speak's parents' home in Glenside Gardens, Sion Mills, County Tyrone.

POINTS

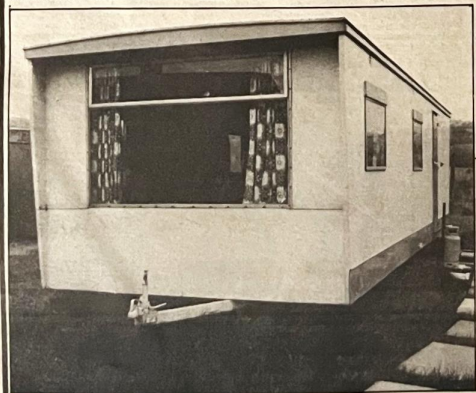
Letters about Mrs Speaks' appalling living conditions were sent to the Housing Executive pleading her case for accommodation from her own doctor, from a welfare worker, and two from Altnagavin Hospital, meriting her 92 points on the housing list. Despite this, the Housing Executive failed to house the Speak family.

Only this past week, an empty house in Glenside Gardens was allocated. Mrs Speak went to the Housing Executive offices:

"I was told there was nothing they could do, and nothing I could do, until after the baby is born."

Martin McGuinness of Sinn Féin, who is fighting to get her housed before the baby is born, stated:

"This is a clear example of urgent need, which the Housing Executive is completely unable to respond to. The Tyrone countryside is dotted with caravans used by people in urgent need of housing, and in Strabane, with 800 on the waiting list and very few houses available to give out, many people feel it pointless to register for a house. Nothing can excuse this situation or make it acceptable to us."



● The Speaks' damp-ridden caravan



● Gloria Speak was told nothing could be done until the birth of her child