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Iris Dhoire

THE ALTERNATIVE VOICE



Deireadh Fómhair 1991.

Uimhir 8.

DuPont Democracy

Just about every shade of opinion in the North-west has publicly come out in opposition to DuPont's proposed toxic waste incinerator at Maydown. Environmental groups, farmers, tenants' associations, the City Council, the Trades Council, public representatives, even the bishops have had their say. Every tactic has been used from marches and street theatre to the more formal opposition of city and county councils. The message is clear. The vast majority of the people of the North-west, on both sides of the Border, view the proposed incinerator as dangerous and totally unwanted.

The correct and democratic course of action for DuPont and the London and Dublin governments is to accept this and go back to the drawing board. They must address the fundamental issue of the continued production of toxic waste, not the construction of additional toxic waste incinerators.

Despite such clear opposition by the local community, DuPont intends to proceed.

Martin McGuinness comments: "DuPont officials are fond of speaking about the "special relationship" between DuPont and Derry. The current controversy makes clear just what DuPont mean by that "special relationship." DuPont are behaving as if Derry is DuPont's "company town."

"No one objects to DuPont making a contribution to the local economy. However, we must recognise that DuPont are what they are because of the efforts of the highly skilled and dedicated local workforce. Their labour has made DuPont's Maydown site highly profitable.

"People are understandably angry about the danger to their health and to the environment posed by a toxic waste incinerator. But there are other issues as important as environmental protection here: democracy, accountability and self-determination.

"The community are just as angry at being denied these rights. Without these rights, we cannot protect ourselves from

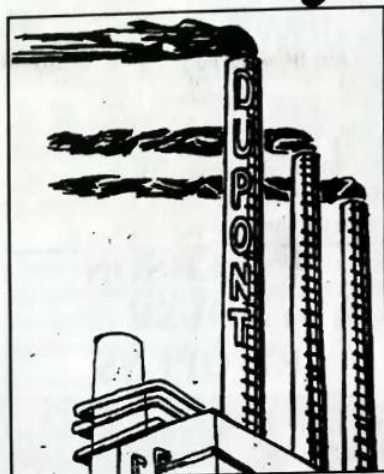
toxic incinerators or from anything else we do not want.

LOW STANDARDS IN HIGH PLACES

"Democracy is a cosmetic farce unless the powerful can be held accountable to the public. Without accountability, low standards in high places becomes the rule. Government becomes not public service but an opportunity for private greed. The current scandals erupting daily in the Free State over politicians and business moguls amassing vast personal wealth by "insider dealing" is one example.

"Unless the community has the power to make important decisions affecting its own future then there is no real democracy. DuPont is claiming the right to make a decision in the interests of its multinational business and imposing that decision over the right of the people of the North-west to make vital decisions about their future.

"When did a multinational company get the right to veto the wishes of the



majority of the North-west? Is the City of Derry not entitled to make decisions in its own best interests?

"Republicans believe that with this country partitioned and a foreign army occupying a part of it, democracy cannot exist anywhere in Ireland. The present toxic waste controversy, where vital decisions concerning people's lives and future are being taken at a multinational level, without accountability to the local community, demonstrates this. It is evident that appropriate institutions which give people real and meaningful control over their own lives simply do not exist.

"Is "democracy" the exclusive privilege of the elite who sit on the executive board of DuPont, and at select and secret government meeting in London and Dublin? Is "accountability" a privilege of DuPont stockholders, not the right of the public? Does "self-determination" mean DuPont's right to shape its future at the expense of present and future generations of Derry people?

"Ireland needs democracy with genuine accountability and self-determination. Only when such institutions exist can issues such as toxic waste be successfully tackled. In the absence of this, the people themselves must become a power for change and maintain the necessary unity to defeat the toxic incinerator issue.

NO TOXIC INCINERATOR!

COUNCIL ACTION

Derry City Council has made public its opposition to the proposed incinerator at every stage.

They have also taken up Sinn Féin suggestions and:

- * demanded that DuPont provide a "toxic inventory" - information on the toxic substances they import, and toxic waste that is fed into their current incinerator

- * in conjunction with Limavady and Donegal Councils, ordered a thorough study of the total public health impact of the sort of incinerator DuPont wants to build

- * refused to cooperate with DuPont's own "impact study," on grounds that this would compromise the Council's independence and ability to criticise or reject the study's conclusions.

ANDERSON HOUSE RE-OPENS

The Western Health and Social Services Board's Tom Frawley, local hatchet man for Tory cutbacks in the Health Service, announced with a slightly red face that Anderson House will be re-opening, only 2 years after he closed it against massive public protest. Dermatology and post-natal care will be available there.

Cllr. Dodie McGuinness, who led a campaign to keep the maternity unit open there, said "The re-opening of Anderson House proves that the need is there, and vindicates the efforts of ordinary people who campaigned on the street, the Council, and family doctors who fought to keep it open.

It's time Frawley admitted that he and the Board were wrong, not only in closing Anderson House but with the cutbacks and privatisation schemes as well, which have brought fierce criticism from patients and workers alike.

RESIGN!

"In fact, it is high time Tom Frawley handed in his resignation. He has been the chief architect of cutbacks imposed by the Tory government which has arrogantly ignored the clear need of this already deprived community. Frawley's cutbacks and privatisation have resulted in more unemployment, longer waiting lists and deterioration of patient's care and workers' rights. We need a new manager who will be accountable to the community."

DID YOU KNOW?

- * that DuPont has been burning toxic waste at their Maydown plant for the last 11 years without ever having sought or been granted planning permission, and without consulting or informing the local community
- * in 1988 DuPont headed a list of the top 50 firms in the USA who were guilty of releasing toxic chemicals into the air, sea, and onto the land
- * that in 1990, DuPont paid out over £1 million PER MONTH in fines for pollution violations in the USA (source: Friends of the Earth USA Report)
- * that DuPont recently spent \$18million buying up 400 homes in the U.S. which have been contaminated by one of its factories, where toxic waste has actually been bubbling up out of the ground
- * that DuPont told the public that Jonathan Porritt of Friends of the Earth was in favour of burning toxic material at Maydown. The Derry Journal of 4 October 1991 carried Mr Porritt's denial of these claims. DuPont is prepared to lie when it suits them, despite their claims of "openness".

WORLD WIDE ALERT

"Amnesty in world-wide alert over Austin case" - so recent front page headlines in the Irish News announced that once again the RUC's abuse of detainees forced this highly-respected human rights group to intervene in the Six Counties. On August 30, Amnesty international announced its first ever "urgent action call" in the North, on behalf of 17 year old Damien Austin from Belfast.

Amnesty issues such calls rarely, using them to expose grave breaches of human rights in dictatorships around the world. Urgent Action Calls are only launched "in cases of imminent danger of torture or ill-treatment, execution or medical neglect of prisoners." The Appeal alerts Amnesty members world-wide to the particular case, requesting them to make an urgent complaint to the government involved.

Austin, son of recently-elected SF Councillor Joe Austin, was released after a writ of habeas corpus was obtained. He reported being punched, pinched, slapped, verbally abused and threatened with assassination. Medical examination showed stitches torn from his ear and cigarette burns on his face.

DERRY VICTIMS

Damien Austin's treatment corresponds with that of many people arrested recently. Beatings during interrogations in RUC barracks are rising to the level of the late 70s, when Britain was condemned by both Amnesty International and the European Court of Human Rights for torture of detainees in the Six Counties.

In the past 6 weeks, over 40 Derry people have been sent to Castlereagh. Their abuse included: wall standing for hours on end (as used against "The Hooded Men" in August 1971 and condemned as torture by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg), hard slaps over both ears at once (known to cause burst eardrums), punches to various parts of the body designed to leave no marks. Psychological abuse including death threats is commonplace. These are directed not only at the victim but at spouses, children coming from school, and relatives who work in the Waterside or attend hospital there. One father of a three year old girl was told, "When the UVF come after you, I hope your wain is hit by the ricochet."



* Cllr. Dodie McGuinness

DIPLOCK COURTS - 93% GUILTY

According to statistics published last week on the workings of the Emergency Provisions Acts from January to March of 1991:

- * 93% of those brought before Diplock Courts were found guilty
- * of those who pleaded NOT GUILTY, only 30% were acquitted
- * a total of £460,486 was paid out by the NIO in compensation during this period, compared to £450,323 in the last quarter of 1990, for damage caused by Crown Forces for during searches, and for seizure of property
- * 63% of those in custody had their initial request to see a solicitor delayed.

THE CONVEYER BELT

In the late 70s, at the so-called "height" of torture in places like Castlereagh, a British policy was identified and dubbed "The Conveyor Belt," where people would be processed step-by-step from the community through to the H-Blocks or Armagh Jail.

It began with a person (often too young to be interrogated without the parents being present) being targeted for harassment on the street - taunting and frequent stop-and-searches. Eventually the person would be arrested and brought for up to 7 days interrogation in places like Castlereagh, Gough Barracks, and Strand Road RUC Barracks. Victims were severely beaten until they signed self-incriminating statements.

INTERMENT BY REMAND

The person was then charged and held for up to 2 years without bail before trial. Because the new laws created for the special Diplock courts accepted flimsy or non-existent evidence, and because these were brought in to coincide with the phasing out of internment, this period aptly became known as "internment by remand." Finally, the Conveyor Belt brought its victim

to trial in a Diplock court, sitting without a jury. The "evidence" often consisted only of the "confession" beaten out of the person during heavy interrogation over 7 days. It was presented to the hand-picked Diplock judges, such as Chief Justice McGonigle, a founder of the SAS. An indication of the readiness of these judges to accept and convict on whatever evidence was laid before them was the fact that the ONLY evidence convicting over 90% of the prisoners in the H-Blocks was their own uncorroborated "confessions."

LED TO HUNGER STRIKES

This "Conveyor Belt" process led directly to the appalling prison conditions which erupted in 1980-81 hunger strikes in the H-Blocks and Armagh Jail. Hundreds of people, unjustly imprisoned, were held in ever-deteriorating conditions. Savage brutality towards these political

prisoners was common, and worried relatives visited only to learn of fresh beatings and injuries to their children.

Torture centres such as Castlereagh do not exist in isolation, nor at the whim of individual RUC members. They are tools of a legal system geared to meet the needs of Britain's war machine in the Six Counties. The young people sitting today in the H-Blocks and Maghaberry are the end products of a legalised "Conveyor Belt" system which deliberately takes young people out of the community and processes them through a series of stages which results in them spending their young lives as political prisoners.

Now they are cranking up "the Conveyor Belt" once again. Will YOUR son or daughter be one of its victims? CAN you protect them from this fate, while Britain rules this part of Ireland?



CRUMLIN RD. - at boiling point

A chara,

It has been over 12 months since the relatives and friends of Republican prisoners held in Crumlin Road Jail took to the streets of Derry to protest against the brutality inflicted on defenceless young men awaiting trial there. Twelve months on, and nothing has changed.

In any other country, the law states that a person is innocent until proven guilty.

Here in the Six Counties international law is turned on its head. Those held in Crumlin Road Jail, in many cases for well over a year, have been found guilty of nothing!

Forced integration with Loyalists leaves teenage nationalists at the mercy of a sectarian prison regime - a regime well known to collaborate with Loyalist murder gangs on the outside, and UDA, UVF and UFF prisoners on the inside.

Face the facts - would an impartial prison staff allow personal letters bearing the name and address of the family and friends of nationalist prisoners to fall into the hands of Loyalist prisoners, many of whom are charged with sectarian attacks on the nationalist com-

munity? Would an impartial prison staff

deliberately leave the cell doors of nationalists open, making them easy prey for Loyalists to physically attack them?

Physical brutality in Crumlin Road Jail is the next step from the physical brutality in the purpose-built centres of Castlereagh, Gough and Strand Road. Because such treatment is common knowledge doesn't make it right.

Few of us can even imagine the pain and terror inflicted by slaps, punches, kicks and being thrown around a room. We can never imagine the isolation, the psychological pressure, as the family of those

detained are threatened. But we can bring it to the attention of others. We can object. We can be the voice of those whose screams no one is supposed to hear.

These aren't strangers living under some totalitarian regime thousands of miles away. This is happening at your doorstep. These are young men and women from the Brandywell, Creggan, the Bogside, from Ballymagroarty, Shantallow and the Waterside. Recently Mickey Kinsella from Derry was scalded with boiling water thrown from a landing on 'A' Wing while on his

way to breakfast. This happened in spite of assurances from the prison administration that this particular section of the landing would be screened off to prevent such attacks taking place.

Call for 'separation' or 'segregation' - call it what you like. But call for the end to forced integration of Republican and Loyalist prisoners in Crumlin Road Jail. Call for an end to the physical brutality. Your silence condones such action.

Is mise,

Pauline Collins,
Derry Sinn Féin PoW Dept.

squatters-

— putting Creggan refurbishment at risk

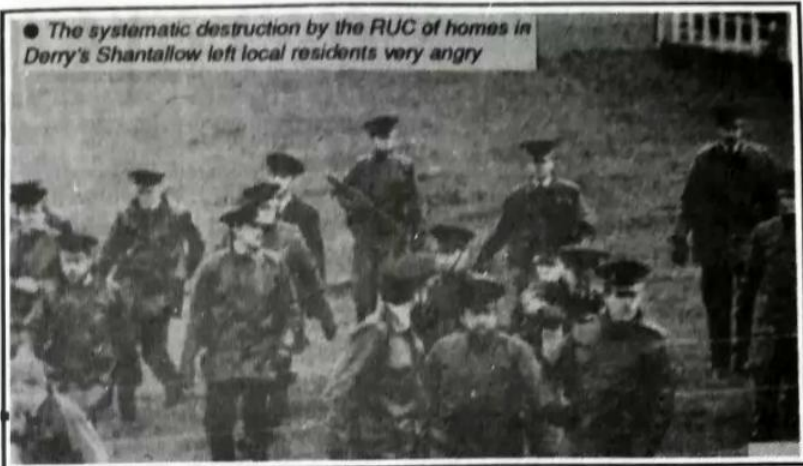
Refurbishment schemes in Creggan are in danger because of squatting, says SF Councillor Dodie McGuinness, and both the Housing Executive and the community have a role to play to ensure the refurbishment schemes are not lost.

Cllr. McGuinness said, "The refurbishment scheme in Lislane is now mostly finished, and other schemes are on board. But these are being put at risk by many people squatting into accommodation purposely left empty for refurbishment. Long-time residents who have waited for refurbishment of their homes now face disappointment as houses and flats deliberately not re-allocated by the Executive are squatted into."

"Where work can't be started due to squatting, the workforce will simply go on to the next scheme planned, and that area's scheme loses its funding and goes to the bottom of the list. The permanent residents lose out.

"I have asked the H. Exec. to make such empty homes uninhabitable (removing main services) to protect the permanent residents whose refurbishment is endangered. The community also has a role to play in refusing to tolerate squatting. For example, Lislane formed a tenants' group which looked after vacant properties. People accepted that the local community was not going to allow them to squat, and didn't, and the scheme went ahead. Everyone needs to pull together to make this work."

● The systematic destruction by the RUC of homes in Derry's Shantallow left local residents very angry



R.U.C. WRECK HOMES



Over the past six weeks, Derry has been subjected to widespread "search and wreck" operations by the RUC. In one five day period in September, over 100 homes were raided. Shantallow was particularly badly hit. The hostile and arrogant manner in which the searches were conducted, together with the systematic destruction of many homes, left residents extremely angry, especially in the Ardnamoyle Park area where a virtual curfew was imposed during the operation.

One resident, who was not at home when the RUC raiding party arrived, had her front door smashed down, every room in her house ransacked, and her personal belongings rifled through. The RUC then proceeded to rip up her stair carpet and smash one of her chairs with a crowbar.

On returning to her devastated home, the woman was subjected to verbal abuse and harassment.

"I asked them under what authority were they searching my home - a legitimate question. They replied: 'We've got the f-ing power to do whatever we want.' They'd already been in the house for over 20 minutes before I arrived and they remained for another full hour."

A neighbour, who witnessed the RUC breaking into the house, heard one RUC man say to another, "Let's wreck the place; we won't have to clean it up."

Sinn Féin Councillor Géaróid Ó hEara was physically and verbally abused by the RUC when he, and other local people tried to intervene and prevent the raiding of unoccupied homes.

Derry Volunteers Commemoration Committee Second Annual **PRESENTATION DINNER & DANCE**

on

Friday, 8th November, 1991

Dinner will be served at 8.30 p.m. sharp

Cabaret and Dance

Taille (incl. bus).....£12.

Sinn Féin National Draw now on!
First prize £10,000 or car.
Tickets £10 from usual outlets.
If you're not in you can't win!!