

The

Starry Plough

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SECTARIANISM

Just One Weapon Of Imperialism!

***Petrol Bombs, Pipe Bombs &
Sectarian Riots
Burning Of Homes, Schools &
Churches
Harassment, Verbal Abuse,
Assaults, Stabbings, Murder &
Ethnic Cleansing....***



The IRSP have called on working class communities to remain calm and vigilant in the wake of recent violence from within the unionist community. There have been concerted attempts by loyalists to provoke the nationalist community by using violent sectarian attacks on homes and people.

In a statement released in Belfast the party said, "There needs to be no inquiry into the cause of the unrest in loyalist working class areas, the failure of the British Government and Unionist politicians to explain and promote the inevitable outcomes of even the limited democracy provided for by the Belfast Agreement lies at the core of unionist working class fears. Do the loyalist community not realise what they have got from that agreement? They have achieved total PIRA decommissioning and a consent veto over Irish unification. Hardly good news for republicans.

One of the inevitable outcomes of the pacification process is that there will be no more unionist supremacy, no more 'special favours' from the British government, although recent words from Peter Hain promising to transform loyalist areas with major investment while ignoring the rest of the working class community proves yet again that the British are one sided in this.

If the Unionist community view each small step towards equality as a concession to the catholic community, it demonstrates that there has been no real work done by the British Government in the past eleven years and a direct example of how Britain's attempt to portray itself as an honest broker rather than a major protagonist in Ireland leads directly to violence on the streets and attacks against the minority community in the six-counties.

"It is imperative that all those progressive elements within communities continue to explore all possible avenues open to securing real peace for the working class. To do otherwise, will be to return to the divisive, sectarian agenda of the ruling classes"

The statement went on, "Communities that feel themselves under threat of sectarian attack should remain calm, vigilant and act only in a defensive manner.

"As republican socialists, who are politically active in the community and the workplace, tackling sectarianism is of the utmost importance. We would also put it directly to those of our class who view themselves as coming from a British 'position' by asking them - what are you doing to tackle head-on the issues surrounding sectarianism?"

Exclusive: 'Justice' Office Occupied!

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The Voice Of Republican Socialism!

Only unified community led action can defeat this - IRSP

A Spokesperson for the Irish Republican Socialist Party, Thomas Dixon, has called for a unified community led response to the issue of joyriding in the Galliagh area following the abandoning of a stolen car on a walkway near to the spot where young Michael McLaughlin was injured recently in a similar incident.

Speaking to the Starry Plough following the incident comrade Dixon said "About a dozen members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party tonight, at the request of local residents, attended the scene of an abandoned stolen car and safely removed it from the area. This was not an isolated incident. In another similar incident recently in the same area members of the IRSP prevented a van from being burned.

"Tonight, the IRSP were contacted by residents of Knockalla Park in Galliagh who were concerned that a car that had been stolen earlier in the day, was abandoned next to their homes and was drawing a large number of local children to

the scene. The young people had already begun to break the windows in the car by the time IRSP personnel arrived.

"The IRSP immediately secured the vehicle and contacted a recovery firm who quickly arrived and safely removed the vehicle from the area. This incident happened close the spot where five year old Michael McLaughlin was seriously injured recently when a similar abandoned car was set alight. The quick response of IRSP personnel on the ground prevented a similar tragedy from happening this time.

"The IRSP would like to reiterate our call for a unified response from within the community to deal with such issues. Only unified community led action can defeat this sort of anti-social activity. The IRSP pledges that we will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the community. We sensed great anger among the local residents towards those responsible for abandoning this vehicle, particularly among parents of young children who were playing nearby. The vehicle, before



A Stolen Car which was burnt out.

stopping, smashed into a lamppost and narrowly missed hitting a child. Local residents informed us the the driver then calmly picked up his carryout of drink from the passenger seat and walked away as if nothing out of the ordinary had

happened.

Comrade Dixon concluded by saying, "We take this opportunity to tell those involved in this activity that their actions will not be tolerated by the people of Galliagh."

Alternative Processes

A successful seminar on Alternative processes was held on Saturday 10th of September in Belfast. Against a background of Irish Republicanism struggling to find relevancy as a working ideology today the IRSP held a meeting to look at where Irish republicanism is today.

The seminar was an attempt to begin to answer the question how can we as a movement and as Republican Socialists show leadership, in whatever spheres we operate, in order to develop an alternative process of conflict transformation that can galvanise the Irish people into an effective resistance against colonisation and capitalism?

As part of its broad front strategy the IRSP invited a speaker from the 32 county sovereignty Movement to speak and it was clear certainly among the audience that this openness was welcomed

The speakers were Paul Little, ex-INLA prisoners and North Belfast IRSP member and community worker, Marion Price, ex IRA prisoner and member of the 32 County Sovereignty Movement and Gerry Ruddy, Ard Comhairle IRSP.

The format of the day was a 10minute presentation from each speaker and then an open floor for questions and answers. The speakers addressed a number of key issues and there was a fair degree of consensus particularly about the failure of the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement. While the republican socialists argued strongly for the interconnection between the class and the national question Marion stated that while she believed that the only republic worth fighting for was a socialist republic the national struggle took precedence over the class question.

On other issues such as the defence of political prisoners, nationalism and catholic defenderism there was a shared view. The question of the protestant working class was discussed and generated much debate. Questions



Paul Little who spoke at the event.

and comments from the floor were lucid and focussed. The way in which the British state has integrated the community sector into its strategic aims was mentioned, as was the failure of republicans to engage with the trade union movement. Although the audience was relatively small-25 in all- that has to be seen against a backdrop of the Orange march on the Springfield road and high tension in the Short Strand following the vicious attack on a Catholic man by 10 loyalists.

The audience of mainly IRSP comrades were impressed by the high level of debate, the contributions from both the platform and the floor and the openness and willingness of all to listen and learn from each other.

All expressed the wish for more of the same.

The struggle for National and Socialist Liberation is floundering in a sense of general apathy amongst the Irish people devoid of any radical leadership.

Republican Socialists: Expressing Our Internationalism

Since 1994 when the IRSP reformed and reclaimed its roots of republican socialism, it has always been implicit that as Republicans in the Wolfe Tone tradition we were not nationalists but internationalists. In the past three years, in particular we have become more explicit in expressing our internationalism. Our comrades have visited Italy, Germany, Turkey, Spain, the Basque Country, Cuba, Venezuela and even England on political business to express our political orientation and develop our international contacts.

In September a weekend along with many other comrades from other organisations members of the IRSP took part in Camp Havana in

Glencolmille in County Donegal to raise funds for the Miami 5, our Cuban comrades imprisoned by the USA for anti-terrorist work. On local radio in Ardoyne, Belfast, on a two hour radio slot for Teach na Failte (Republican Socialist ex-political prisoner organisation) Comrade Gerard Murray gave a very moving account of the visit of Republican Socialists to the grave of Che Guevara and of the fine welcome they received from their Cuban hosts. Another comrade, Tomas Gorman visited Venezuela this year and saw at first hand the struggle to build socialism.

Just recently the leader of that struggle to build a socialist Venezuela, Hugo Chavez visited New York to attend the United Nations meeting of

world leaders. He stood on the streets of Manhattan and observed gridlock. Clearly shocked at the number of single occupant cars burning up oil Chavez said that this continuing burning and polluting of the atmosphere could not continue and the world could no tolerate the American way of life and survive.

In this edition of the Starry Plough gives some more reasons why we as a world cannot tolerate the American way of life. As now practiced, the American way of life is unbridled capitalism and militaristic imperialism. Although the mere recitation of facts can be boring remember behind the facts (collated by Comrade L O'R) are stories of human misery, starvation and death. Use the facts in Reasons to Socialist to convince our fellow humans that if this old world is to survive then we need a socialist world.

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The Starry Plough

The Starry Plough or An Camcheachta was first established in 1975 as the national newspaper of the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

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If you would like to highlight an issue of concern in your area and would like to have it published in the pages of The Starry Plough then get in touch at the address above or contact a local IRSP representative, The Starry Plough is your paper.

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Dessie O'Hare: A Question of Class!

In December 2002 Co. Armagh republican socialist Dessie O'Hare was transferred from the Midlands Prison in Portlaoise, Co Laois to the lower security Castlereagh Prison in Co. Roscommon, and put on a pre-release programme. Over the past number of years, he has been freed on 15 to 20 temporary paroles as part of that programme.

Comrade O'Hare, labeled by the media at the time as the 'Border Fox', was given a 40-year prison sentence in April 1988 for offences including the kidnapping and mutilation of Dublin dentist John O'Grady. The sentence was the longest in the history of the 26 counties for any offence other than capital murder.

Speaking to The Starry Plough, Eddie McGarrigle, director of Teach na Failte, who has been spearheading the campaign to have Mr O'Hare released said: "The background to the situation is that the Prison Service have basically washed their hands of Dessie and say that it is up to Michael McDowell when he gets released.

"Michael McDowell agreed to release Dessie in April and the prison service is now saying that the decision lies with the minister."

Mr McGarrigle, who has been working closely with Mr O'Hare's family as part of the campaign to have him released, described their anguish as they await Mr O'Hare's release.

"They have been put under serious mental torture and mental anguish as they have been waiting for three years for his release," he added.

Adding his voice to the call for Dessie O'Hare's

immediate release from Castlereagh Prison in Roscommon, Monsignor Denis Faul has called recently spoken out against his continued imprisonment along with a number of other senior figures in the Catholic Church who have thrown their weight behind the campaign.

Monsignor Faul, who has visited O'Hare in prison on a number of occasions, has spoken out, stating recently that it is his belief that O'Hare had served enough time and should be

"...the reality of Dessie O'Hare's incarceration is simple, a middle class finger is more important than a working class finger!"

released.

"The man has served his sentence and I don't believe that he should be left in jail," said Msgr Faul.

"There are so many people that are part of the forgotten wreckage of the Troubles and while Dessie O'Hare is not so much forgotten, he is part of that wreckage."

He added that Dessie O'Hare posed no threat to people in Ireland.

"People are sent to jail to be punished and get rehabilitated before their release, if they don't pose any threat to people outside," he said.

"In my opinion Dessie O'Hare has been rehabilitated, has served his punishment and would not pose any threat to people when he gets out, so any further detention of Dessie O'Hare would be purely vindictive. He should be released soon."

Criticising the way certain sections of the media have treated Mr O'Hare's case Msgr Faul added:

"The Dublin media should leave him alone and in my view he should be left to get on with his life along with his wife and two children," said the parish priest of Carrickmore, Co Tyrone.

"The man has been in jail for all these years and the prison authorities are in favour of his release. There are other clergymen that have been to visit him and they also believe that he should be released."

Msgr Faul added: *"Family circumstances and the fact that his wife has been ill means that he should be allowed out."*

A spokesperson for the IRSP recently commented on Dessie's continued unjust imprisonment to they Starry Plough as "Let's spell it out how it really is: Dessie should be freed immediately from Castlereagh Prison, this should be done not because of the Good Friday Agreement but because Dessie is a political prisoner, Dessie is a qualifying prisoner who is eligible for release. However it is our view as republican socialists that the reality of Dessie O'Hare's incarceration is simple, a middle finger is far more important than a working class finger!"

Campaign Activists Occupy 'Justice' Office: Activist Gives Starry Plough Exclusive Report

Activists breach security at Government building At 1.55 the female garda keeping to her routine left her post and made her way over to her car so as to sit and wait for her replacement to come on duty.

Activists bolted out of the park armed with banners and posters and made their way across the road and entered through the revolving doors of the Government building to the shock and dismay of the two receptionists. It was immediately made known to them that it was a peaceful protest organized to draw attention to the continued refusal of the Irish Government to release Dessie O'Hare.

At this time the extremely agitated female garda came barging into the reception and roared with a number of expletives that we must have been waiting for her to get into her car. She demanded that we leave at once that it was a Government building and that we were breaking the law. I interceded to calm her down and told her to take a chill pill, that we were not going to be lectured on law breaking particularly when the Irish Government has by its actions totally ignored a high court ruling which recognized



Dessie O'Hare as a qualifying prisoner under the terms of the GFA. This seemed to make her worse, she started roaring and screaming at us to get out. I refused her request and told her that we were engaging in a peaceful protest. She stormed out of the building to get reinforcements. One of the activists took a number of

photos with a digital camera and then left the building to put the camera off side.

A few minutes later a number of Garda reinforcements arrived and we took a collective decision to leave the building and continue our protest outside. Six special branch men who proceeded to take names and addresses of all Free Dessie O'Hare activists soon joined us. After an hour we called a halt to the protest and decided to split up in pairs so as to distract the attentions of the special branch. Not long after I received a phone call from wheelchair bound Eddie McGarrigle co-coordinator of the Free Dessie O'Hare Campaign who explained that he and another Female activist were stopped and forcibly searched by the special branch who demanded that they hand over the digital camera. Eddie told them that he or his companion didn't have a camera on his possession. They then physically lifted him up to see was he sitting on the camera and removed the back cushion of his wheelchair to search for any hidden objects. When they couldn't find anything they soon left to harass other activists.



North Belfast Housing Discrimination

The IRSP in North Belfast have called on the Housing Executive to scrap its north Belfast Housing strategy as they say it is clearly not working. Spokesperson Paul Little said, "There needs to be a fundamental change in the thinking of NIHE in relation to their north Belfast strategy. Far from addressing decades of discrimination, over the lifetime of this strategy which has one year left to run, housing discrimination against Catholics has got much worse.

"NIHE if it is to retain any credibility needs to begin to allocate social housing on the basis of need, not on a person's religion or politics. Presently the NIHE is facilitating a Unionist agenda of gerrymandering, where the political status quo is maintained by direct discrimination against those in housing need. No amount of fancy words or spin changes the fact that social housing allocations and new builds are geared towards trying to sustain a diminishing unionist community at direct costs to non unionists.

Comrade Little concluded by saying, "Do the NIHE honestly believe that that people who believe in equality, human rights and fairness are going to accept a return to the sectarian practices of 50 years of unionist misrule?"

Free John Brady Campaign

The public launch occurred recently of the Free John Brady Campaign. A press conference was held in the Teach na Failte offices in Strabane. As part of the launch a new website has been created in support of John. A spokesperson for the campaign welcomed the support that they have already received. He also stressed the need for more to be done to highlight John's plight and said that all support is welcome.

www.freejohnbrady.netfirms.com

Punishment Beatings Not The Way Forward

Calls have been made for a Grass Roots restorative justice scheme to be established in Galliagh in response to an ongoing spate of antisocial activity in the area. The Irish Republican Socialist Party locally say they have been 'inundated' with calls from residents in the Derry estate demanding that action is taken to curb joyriding as well as drug and drink related problems which have left the community living in fear.

"The IRSP are determined to take the lead in dealing with this problem. We have been patrolling the estate engaging with the young people who are behind the anti-social activity and we will also be approaching their parents, asking them to take some responsibility for their sons and daughters," IRSP spokesman Thomas Dixon said.

However, he stressed that 'punishment beatings' or any form of 'brutalisation' was not the way forward.

"The situation in Galliagh and other estates across Derry has reached a critical point, people are disillusioned and want strong action to be taken," Mr. Dixon said. "We believe the way to deal with this is to set up a restorative justice programme in conjunction with Teach Na Failte who are already involved in such work in the area. We must work with the young people and show them that their activities are damaging their community." Teach Na Failte have also called on the Housing Executive to provide premises in Galliagh which they say are vital to the project.

"While there are a number of community groups in the estate, their services are only available from 9.00am to 5.00pm and it's 'after hours' and at the weekends that most antisocial activity takes place," a spokesperson said. "If we had a facility we could offer drink and drugs counselling and other services for the young people which would go a long way towards curbing anti-social activity as well as providing employment for ex-prisoners. However, the Housing Executive have yet to provide these essential premises despite the obvious need on the estate. Teach na Failte has since met with the Housing Executive to discuss the problems in the area."

Those Marching Orange Feet!



Now that the main bulk of the Orange marches have passed it is time to evaluate some part of the processes of dialogue that have surrounded the whole issue of marches.

In Derry the business community in conjunction with the Bogside Residents Group held indirect talks with the representatives of the Orange Order and eventually facilitated an orange march within the walls of Derry. These talks

were isolated from anything else happening in the North. They were stand-alone talks.

Despite the fact that the nationalist community in Ardoyne were to be twice subjected to orange marches on the 12th against their will no one of the negotiators in Derry seems to have connected the two issues. And they are connected.

The result was that despite the best efforts of

many republicans who did not wish to see any sectarian rioting the youth of Ardoyne vented their spleen and righteous anger against the PSNI/RUC who once more showed their Orange colours.

It is clear that the main concern of republicans from a Provisional background was to have a peaceful 12th in order to clear the decks for the expected statement from the IRA (P) about its future intent. It is also clear that other republicans hoped to benefit in recruitment terms from outbreaks of sectarian rioting.

That is one reason why blast bombs were thrown in Ardoyne.

The Republican Socialist position was and is that sectarian rioting is in no ones interests as all it does is set poor Catholics against poor Protestants while the well of patronizingly dismiss the rioters and tell them to "get a life". Republican socialists supported and are part of the Parades Dialogue Group in Ardoyne.

We took the position that while we would support a protest we would not police young people. It is not the job of Republicans to police nationalist youth. But it is our job to show that there are alternatives to rioting.

We regard the Orange Order as a sectarian anti-catholic organisation that uses the false arguments of a British culture to justify its hate filled creed. Until the Loyal orders negotiate directly with nationalists and recognise their equal rights as citizens then we believe there should be no accommodation by nationalist groups with loyal orders. No talk no walk. It's that simple.

Armagh: Facing Real Problems Of Racist & Sectarian Division

Speaking to the Starry Plough, an IRSP spokesperson for the Armagh Cumann said: "People still seem to live in pretence, and this is not exclusive to Armagh. Communities still pretend serious issues such as sectarianism, racism, underage drinking, alcoholism, drug dealing do not exist.

"In discussing these issues directly with people on the ground some unfortunately still hide from the realities facing us across the sectarian and racial divide. Many feel that these problems will simply go away or reject the fact that they even exist. Sadly some even feel these vices are now normal.

"By debating these issues our party is prepared to take a stand against those who seek to undermine community solidarity such as the drug dealers and sectarian and racist attitudes in Armagh. We have all got to openly speak out against them. In Armagh we have a council who are much more interested in investing our money into museums and historical and archaeological sites than working on real issues within our divided

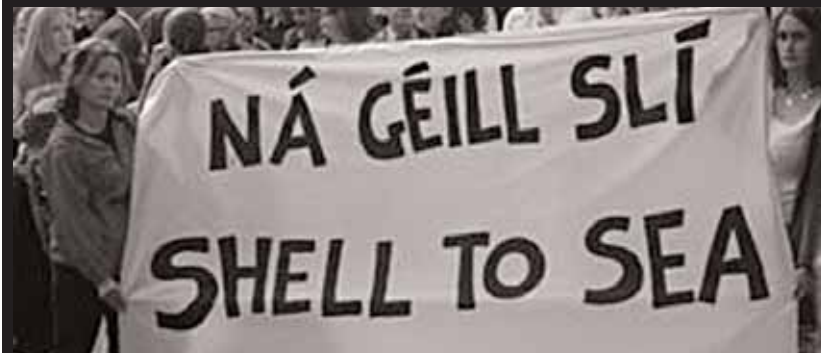
communities.

"Why won't the politicians come clean, accept there are urgent problems and face them? People ask why thousands of people leave work early; go without their launch just to vote in the local council elections on the 7th of May just to have elected representatives ignore and refuse to work for us thereafter?

"Within the last three or four years we have seen an increase in migrant workers to the county. There isn't a week that goes by without hearing of yet another attack on migrant workers and their families. Our brothers and sisters from Lithuania, from Latvia and from Poland are being set upon for no reason other than their nationality. Asian families are being attacked verbally and physically simply for the colour of their skin. But what resources are being put in place to challenge this, nothing from our elected officials in city hall.

The IRSP spokesperson stated: "We need to embrace migrant workers and help integration of our communities flow more freely. As a class we also take a stand to unite and put the pressure on council to address the issues involved here but ultimately we need a positive grassroots community response before lives are lost."

Release The Rossport Five!



The Irish Republican Socialist Party demand the 26 county administration immediately release from Cloverhill Prison the five Mayo men who have become known as the "Rossport Five," Michael O'Seighin, Vincent McGrath, Philip McGrath, Willie Corduff, and Brendan Philbin.

Dublin IRSP representative Kevin Morley today said: "These men are prisoners of the state for opposing the installation of the Corrib gas pipeline with much justification. According to Councillor Willie Clarke MLA, in the Daily Ireland (July 12, 2005) 'these men, their families and neighbours, are protesting because they believe that the pipeline is unsafe as the pressure of gas is far too high for its proximity to homes.' This argument is, of course, absolutely correct but in itself too shallow.

"The fact of the matter is that Shell, and companies like them, are transnational organisations and use countries like Ireland where the government is too weak to resist in order to maximise profits. The economy of Shell is likely to be larger than that of the 26 county administration in much the same way as that of Union Carbide was to the Indian government when the Bhopal disaster occurred back in the early 1980s. The truth of the matter is that these companies couldn't care less about 'national governments' like that of the Free State as their only objective is to maximise profits."

He said: "The 26 county government would have us believe that such companies as Shell create jobs and encourage economic growth. As far as

it goes this argument may hold water but economic growth and employment under the capitalist system are dependent on the benevolent transnational making huge profits, and once this is accomplished and a cheaper source of profit can be found elsewhere then the workforce can go to hell. In the meantime if an accident occurs on the Corrib gas pipeline and hundreds of homes are wiped out, to say nothing of the loss of life to working class people, Shell just shut up shop and relocate elsewhere leaving people who live in Ireland to pick up the pieces.

"Councillor Clarke's arguments are very well founded and his concerns equally so and as he says, 'the Rossport Five languish in a Dublin jail for carrying out a legitimate protest.' However, where the argument falls short from a socialist/communist point of view is there is no direct attack on the capitalist system which allows such activities, in fact encourages these same antics of the transnational companies, to continue. Until such an imbecilic system is brought to its knees such miscarriages of justice, which has occurred to the Rossport Five, will happen again and again. Councillor Clarke is correct to point out that 'the drive for profit in the name of progress seems to take precedent' over people's health and well-being but at the end of the day it's just another symptom of the overall capitalist system where profit is the only word that counts."

In conclusion, Comrade Morley said: "If the 26 county government had an ounce of respect for their forebears, it is not the Rossport Five who should be languishing in Cloverhill but the profiteering exploiting directors of Shell who are quite evidently, according to reports, putting peoples lives at risk."

Upsurge in Sectarian Attacks Led to Devlin Murder - IRSP

The IRSP in north Belfast condemn both Peter Hain and the PSNI for refusing to acknowledge that the murder of Thomas Devlin in north Belfast was sectarian. Sectarian murder is not motiveless murder. If an Asian or black person was killed in similar circumstances would they not say it was racist!

For 30 years we have endured this type of random sectarian attack and murder, for the brits not to acknowledge Thomas's murder as a sectarian murder, adds insult to injury.

Sectarianism needs to be confronted in north Belfast, the present brit policy of pretending it doesn't exist on one hand and on the other funding and resourcing the very division that in the end is responsible for the death of young people like Thomas Devlin.

We send our condolences to his Mum and Dad at this difficult time and urge all young people to exercise caution and vigilance when out at night.

The recent upsurge in sectarian attacks across the interfaces in north Belfast is causing great concern, following on from the murder of Thomas Devlin, the attacks on communities on either side of the interfaces mean that people are living in fear. To blame these attacks on 'football matches' is an insult to the intelligence of those communities who are living in fear! Sectarianism, the promotion of sectarianism and the failure of the British state to confront sectarianism, wherever it emanates is the core reasons for the continuation of sectarian attacks.

At the time of the Good Friday Agreement the IRSP cautioned that the agreement elevated sectarianism as an acceptable political analysis, the entire political and social structure of the six counties is based on sectarianism and sectarian attacks are a natural outcome of this political and social policy by the British.

The IRSP, facing the reality, that there is no British government strategy to combat sectarianism and community relations are calling on interface communities to take control of the situation, not to be provoked into tit for tat attacks and resist those from within the community who wish to exploit sectarian division.

The State We're In!

The health System in the 26 counties, is becoming more of a joke than ever, that is unless your name is Amanda Connolly. Ms Connolly has suffered 'from agonising headache pains' for the last 12 years. The 26 county state has only one consultant neurologist who 'specialises in migraine'. This means Amanda has to wait even longer to see Orla Hardiman, the consultant at Beaumont Hospital, for treatment who is quite evidently overworked.

The Irish Republican Socialist Party ask the question why, in a country of approximately 4.5 million residents, has only got in its employ one neurologist who specialises in this field of medical work? it is a public disgrace and one which should be condemned by all sane thinking people. Amanda, who is obviously not the only person suffering (otherwise Orla Hardiman's workload would not be so huge) from such symptoms call on the Free State minister for health to get her act together or resign. It could be argued that the recent reforms in the health service have improved the system but obviously not in the neurology department.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish Amanda all the best for the future and hope she gets well soon.

Republican Socialist Youth Movement Inaugural Ard Fheis

The Newly Formed Republican Socialist Youth Movement will be holding it's inaugural Ard Fheis in County Wicklow on the weekend of the Seamus Costello Commemoration. Visit their website for membership details and other information relating to the group. A report from the Ard Fheis will appear in the next issue of the Starry Plough

A Working Class Approach To Depression & Suicide

Republican Socialists Demand Answers to Questions on Suicide Treatment

The IRSP in north Belfast are calling on the North and West Belfast Health Trust to reveal how many of the young victims of suicide were being treated by a certain type of anti-depressant that have been subject to drug alerts in Britain and America.

The anti-depressant grouped as SSRI's which include the brands SEROXAT and PROZAC have been subject to a number of alerts of dangers to users, especially the young. The Department of Health set up a review of SSRI's in May 2003, the terms of reference included -

'to consider the currently available evidence with regard to behavioural disorders, particularly suicidal behaviour, suicide attempt and suicide and a casual association with SSRI's'.

The Federal Drug Agency in the U.S. in 2004 issued the following alert- Antidepressant Use in Children, Adolescents, and Adults Food and Drug Administration (FDA) asks manufacturers of all antidepressant drugs to include in their labeling a boxed warning and expanded warning statements that alert health care providers to an increased risk of suicidality (suicidal thinking and behavior) in children and adolescents being treated with these agents, and additional information about the results of pediatric studies.



In June 2005 the FDA further warned FDA Public Health Advisory Suicidality in Adults Being Treated with Antidepressant Medications

Several recent scientific publications suggest the possibility of an increased risk for suicidal behavior in adults who are being treated with antidepressant medications. Even before these reports became available, the FDA began a complete review of all available data to determine whether there is an increased risk of suicidality (suicidal thinking or behavior) in adults being treated with antidepressant medications. It is expected that this review will take a year or longer to complete. In the meantime, FDA is highlighting that:

"Adults being treated with antidepressant medications, particularly those being treated for depression, should be watched closely for worsening of depression and for increased suicidal thinking or behavior. Close watching may be especially important early in treatment, or when

the dose is changed, either increased or decreased.

"Adults whose symptoms worsen while being treated with antidepressant drugs, including an increase in suicidal thinking or behavior, should be evaluated by their health care professional.

The IRSP believe that the N&W Trust should make this information available to the general public, if these drugs are at the core of the recent huge upsurge in suicides patients have a right to know? The suicide of a family member is difficult enough for loved ones to come to terms with, feelings of guilt and blame are not uncommon in those bereaved. If these type of drugs, SSRI's are suspected by the medical profession of increasing the likelihood of suicide they should be withdrawn from the market and replaced by professional counseling and psychiatric treatment for patients suffering from depression.

The Danny McCartan Drop-in Project

This is an interview given by Gerard McCartan whose son Danny committed suicide recently. This interview focuses on the newly formed Danny McCartan Youth Drop-in project based in Cliftonville Community Centre. The project provides a safe environment for young people aged between 13yrs and 25yr olds. The Starry Plough republishes it here to give readers an insight into the urgent and positive support required we need to begin to tackle the issues involved.

This month Danny McCartan's father Gerard McCartan on how the family are coping since young Danny's death.

Q: In the months since Danny's death how have you and your family coped and what sort of professional help have you received from the North and West Health Trust?

Without the help of family and friends we couldn't have coped. We are also grateful for the assistance of P.I.P.S. through Jo Murphy and Phillip McTaggart. Their help and advice has been a great comfort to the family, it has also enabled us to meet other families who are trying to come to terms with suicide of a loved one.

Where we have been disappointed has been the response of the statutory agencies such as the North and West Belfast Health Trust, they were absolutely no use when Danny was alive and even less now that he is dead.

Q: What have you learned about suicide and the causes of suicide?

Since Danny's death I have studied a lot of information on suicide, I have learned through talking to other families, trying to question health experts and the internet, my knowledge of the issues surrounding suicide has greatly improved. From my own perspective it is clear whatever the causes of suicide? When patients go to the health professionals suffering from depression or suicidal tendencies there is very little help available apart from prescription of anti depressants, this is especially true for those under eighteen.

Q: Depression appears to be linked to the recent surge in suicides in North and west Belfast. Do you believe that patients suffering from depression are receiving the necessary counselling and professional psychiatric treatment?

The waiting lists for young people looking for professional counselling or psychiatric treatment are subjected to intolerable delays and waiting lists. In North and West Belfast there are no psychiatric beds for under eighteens which is a total disgrace. Whilst waiting to see a counsellor or get professional treatment patients are often given anti depressants to control their depression. I am concerned that a certain type of anti-depressants called SSRI's that has been subject to a number serious international health alerts. These drug alerts warn of the increased danger of suicide and suicidal thoughts among some patients especially those under eighteen.

Q: Was Danny being treated with SSRI's and how long had he been prescribed them? Have or did any of the health professionals involved in Danny's case advise him or you of these suspected dangers?

Yes, Danny had been treated for depression with anti depressants from he was sixteen, neither Danny or the family were warned about any potential dangers of suicide thought the use of SSRI's.

Q: Do you believe that the general public needs to be warned about the dangers of

these SSRI's?

Yes, a certain tablet Danny was taking from he was sixteen years old up until his death had never been tested on children and adolescents for side effects. Just recently the drug is being investigated in USA. We only learned of the potential dangers after Danny's death. We asked his doctor why he was prescribed this particular drug and we are still waiting for an answer.

Q: The Danny McCartan Drop-in project named by the young people of the area and Danny's friends and based in Cliftonville Community Centre. You are a volunteer for the project. What if anything have you learned about the difficulties faced by many young people today?

First of all we are very proud of the Drop-in project named after our Danny and we would like to thank all involved in keeping his memory alive. The erection of the wall mural for Danny inside the main hall of the community centre is an amazing likeness of young Danny and a wonderful piece of work by the artist. I have recently started volunteering at the drop-in and that has given me a better opportunity to get to know some of the young people. The problems that face young people today are different than in times past, pressure on young people through the media and television to be high -achievers, they are told that anything is possible. When young people 'fail to achieve', they then feel that they have failed to make the grade. Drugs, alcohol abuse and anti social behaviour then fill the vacuum in areas like north Belfast with no statutory

youth provision.

Q: In Conclusion, the DMC Drop-in project aims to campaign on the issue of teenage suicide, what direction do you think that campaign should concentrate on?

The Drop-in project aims to take a two pronged approach to the issue of teenage suicide. Firstly the drop-in itself has to provide a safe place for young people to gather and socialise. It is through talking and listening to young people that we hope to learn about the problems they are facing. It is important that young people and the wider community engage with each other, this engagement gives the young people feel a sense of self worth, an understanding of their place in the community and the important part that they have to play in making this community a better place to live for everyone. The second issue that the project is concerned with is campaigning on the issues surrounding suicide and especially the effect that SSRI's are having on our young people. The latest study by the British Medical Council and published in its journal BMC Medicine warns that it is not only young people but also adults who need to be cautious about using these SSRI's. It is of the utmost importance that the statutory health agencies north and south of the border stand up to the multi-national drug companies on issues of public health.

The Danny McCartan Youth Drop-in operates out of Cliftonville Community Centre, 60-64 Manor Street, Belfast. Tel - 028 90749147 or 028 90749332. The Drop-in operates 9pm - 11pm Mon, Wed, and Friday.

**Editorial****Eagarfhocal**

Sectarianism: The Weapon Of Imperialism

On Wednesday 17th August Thomas Devlin was buried by his family. He was killed by members of the UVF from Mount Vernon. He was stabbed five times in the back as he made his way home with two friends from a garage in north Belfast where they had bought sweets and crisps.

The UVF organisation has killed over 30 people since it declared a ceasefire. No one has been prosecuted for these murders because police informers are two a penny inside the UVF. The police are reluctant to say that Tomas's death was sectarian.

Interestingly enough despite the widespread intimidation of Catholics including repeated attacks on schools and churches in Antrim the PSNI/RUC are still in denial about the sectarian nature of the attempts by loyalists to drive out the last few remaining Catholic families in Ahoghill. Indeed they attempt to imply that some of the intimidation is part of neighbour hood dispute. This is the same PSNI that allowed three hundred UVF and UDA members to drive out families from their homes in the East Belfast without one arrest. A worker allegedly a LVF supporter or member is gunned down in Sandy Row in broad daylight by the UVF. The LVF /UVF feud has exercised the minds of the Unionist politicians more that the ongoing campaign against Catholics. Unionist politicians sit on forums, commissions and god knows what with the leadership of the loyalist gun gangs.

All of the above goes to show the inherently sectarian nature of the state here. Sectarianism has been nurtured and fed by the British ruling class as an instrument of policy. The creation of sectarian divisions is a well practiced policy whether in Iraq today, India in the early part of the 20th century or Africa in the 19th century.

We in the IRSP have always adhered to the proposition that the destruction of the existing sectarian states on the island and the creation of a socialist society was the only way to transcend the sectarian divisions, end poverty and discrimination and awaken the real human potential of all our citizens. That has been one of the reasons we have been and are critical of the Good Friday Agreement. We argued from the outset that that agreement was not only copper-fastening partition-itself a crime against the working classes but it institutionalised sectarianism. There is no incentive on elected politicians to stand up to the sectarian pressures from their own communities. Indeed many of those politicians are actively encouraging sectarianism. There is a duty and responsibility of us all active in politics in Ireland to stand up to sectarianism no matter where it comes from.

Those who argued about the progressive nature of the Good Friday Agreement and who say it is a stepping stone to a Republic could not be more wrong.

Ahoghill, North Antrim, The Fountain, North Belfast, the Lower Shankill- these and many more areas stand testimony to the sectarian nature of the state. The GFA only perpetuates, not destroys, sectarianism. There is another way and it is called socialism.

Symposium against isolation in Turkey: International Prisoner Solidarity



Symposium against isolation in Turkey was held on 25th-27th of June, an international symposium under the title "Isolation and the struggle against isolation", was held in Istanbul.

The conference was organized by TAYAD, the Association of Prisoner's Families in cooperation with the International Platform against Isolation.

It was held in the "Muamer Karaca" theatre in Istanbul. Apart from the main point of isolation practices towards political prisoners, the topic was the isolation of progressive forces, through demagogues and chevy campaigns, the occupation politics in Iraq as well as oppression and massacres by the imperialist powers.

At the beginning of the symposium, there was shown a film about the "19th December operation". The dates from 19-22nd of December 2000, entered history as the most cruel prison massacre in Turkey. During a military operation in 20 Turkish prisons at the same time, 28 political prisoners were killed. The military attack aimed to destroy the resistance against the new implemented f-type prisons and the transfer by force.

Representatives of mass organisations, trade unions, lawyer's associations, as well as intellectual and artists from Turkey and abroad, took part in the symposium and gave reports about their experiences.

The first session on Friday dealt with the medical aspect of isolation. This seminar was moderated by Prof. Dr. Hakan Gürvit, a neurologist of the medical faculty of the Istanbul

university. Gürvit spoke about his experiences with the disease Wernike-Korsakoff, which occurs mostly as a symptom of long lasting hunger strikes and force feeding. Gürvit said, that this disease was incurable. On this topic, relatives of political prisoners and a death fast veteran spoke about their experiences.

In the second session of the conference it was dealt with the juridical aspect of isolation and the politics of censorship. This program was directed by lawyer Hakan Karadag, the former president of the Progressive Lawyer's Association, CHD.

Furthermore Naime Kara, a member of TAYAD, Behic Asci, a lawyer of the People's Law Bureau (Halkin Hukuk Bürosu), Bernd Häusler, human rights chairman of the Bar Association in Berlin, Mohammad Al Samarae, spokesperson of the Iraqi Patriotic Alliance, as well as lawyer Selcuk Kozagacli, foundation member of the CHD, were invited to the podium.

On Saturday, the symposium dealt with the question of political isolation, on the basis of isolation against organisations. This meeting was held under the moderation of Erol Ekici, member of the Federation of Revolutionary Worker's Unions, DISK.

The speakers of this sessions were Hülya Sekerci, chairwoman of Özgür-Der, Meftun Gürdallar, coordination secretary of the Architecture Chamber in Istanbul, Yorgos Blahos EKA, the Worker's Center in Athens, Savas Tsakmakidis from the ADEDY, the Greek Union of Public Services, Sandro Targetti, Italian member of the Landtag in Toscana and Michael Devine, representative

of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, IRSP. There was not only discussed about the cruel prison politics in Turkey, but also reported about similar prison systems in the USA and in Europe.

One of the most famous examples was the hunger strike in Ireland in 1981, in which Bobby Sands and 9 of his friends lost their lives. One of the strikers was Micky Devine, whose son Michael spoke on the symposium as well. Convinced, that the political prisoner's struggle against isolation in Turkey will lead to victory, he expressed deep solidarity and sympathy with the prisoners' relatives. Sandro Targetti of Rifondazione Comunista stressed, that it was necessary to continue the struggle against isolation in addition to the struggle inside the prisons.

The symposium ended Monday, with a press conference in the Architecture Chamber in Istanbul. The speakers of the conference were Mohamad Al Samarae from the Iraqi Patriotic Alliance, Mohammed Safa and Darine Vehbe from the Kham- Rehabilitation Centre in Lebanon, Azmet Begg, the father of the former Guantánamo-prisoner from Britain, Dimitar Ivanov Gachev, a sociologist of the "Resistance Movement 23rd September" from Bulgaria, lawyer Behic Asci and TAYAD member Süleyman Acar.

The conference was utilized to read out a final declaration, that was signed by 27 writers, journalists and trade unionists from Italy, Britain, Ireland, Iraq, Greece and Turkey. The signatories of the declaration, especially expressed their solidarity with the prisoners in the Turkish f-type prisons. The 19th December was announced as "Day of Solidarity with the political prisoners in Turkey". But the solidarity is also dedicated for those prisoners in Israeli prisons, Abu Ghraib, Guantánamo or Bagram, who suffer torture, repression and tyranny.

It was decided, to oppose all imperialist attacks on the oppressed people, wherever they take place. The common statement as well includes the purpose of a central communication and coordination office, which is necessary for the exchange of information. There was also decided to engineer the construction of rehabilitation centres for the victims of isolation. The declaration underlines, that the isolation politics is a politics of imperialism, which aims to marginalize, destroy and subjugate individuals, organisations and states - as it was seen with examples of Iraq and Afghanistan.

It is stressed that isolation, isn't only a physical and architectural phenomenon, but used as strategy, in order to destroy the will power of those who fight for freedom and justice.

(See Michael Devine Letter on Page 14th)

Let's Make Imperialism History!

The Irish Republican Socialist Movement, the Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America issued the following statement regarding the Group of Eight meeting in Scotland and the Make Poverty History campaign, and sent its solidarity greetings to those protesting against the G8 meeting.

The G8 meeting is nothing less than a board meeting of some of the most powerful imperialist nations on the planet, who exploit the developing world for the benefit of their capitalist masters. The G8 governments and corporations are historically responsible for most of the problems of developing countries, and remain so today, yet their propaganda machine is hard at work to convince people of their good intentions. On June 10, British Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown announced that the G8 would cancel the national debts of the 18 poorest countries in the world, which comes to roughly \$34 billion Euros, but this will not end

the imperialist exploitation of those countries. In exchange for debt relief, those countries will be expected to remove any barriers to further exploitation by multinational corporations.

Meanwhile, the Make Poverty History campaign and Bob Geldof's Live 8 project have been trying to gather support for doubling aid, fully cancelling debt, and delivering trade justice for the developing world. The reality is that these measures, even if fully enacted, will not make poverty history in nations brutally exploited by imperialism because they don't challenge the root cause of that poverty. The only solution is to put an end to poverty and exploitation by putting an end to the system which is their root cause. If the people involved in these campaigns genuinely want to end poverty, they must start by working for truly revolutionary change.

The Live 8 project has specifically targeted aid and debt reduction for Africa, yet has said nothing about supporting the struggle for African self-determination and the struggle against the exploitation of their people and resources by imperialist nations and multinationals.

Kofi Maluwi Klu, a leading Ghanaian Pan-

African activist, has said: "We have a saying in the African liberation movement - 'nothing about us, without us'. Make Poverty History is a massive step backwards in this regard...The campaign is overwhelmingly led by Northern NGOs and its basic message is about white millionaire pop-stars saving Africa's helpless. The political movements still fighting for liberation on the ground are completely erased."

On behalf of the Irish Republican Socialist Movement, we give our unconditional support to the masses in Africa and elsewhere who are struggling to liberate themselves from the shackles of capitalism and imperialism.

We do not advocate reformism which alleviates some debt but leaves the imperialists in the driver's seat, nor do we wish to erase political movements fighting for liberation on the ground. We also send our solidarity greetings to those who protested against the G8 meeting.

The only way to make poverty history in the developing world is to make imperialism history.

No War But The Class War!

*Solidarity Message of Support
With Anti-Imperialist Demonstrations*

The Irish Republican Socialist Movement, the Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America sent solidarity greetings to the anti-imperialist contingent at recent anti-war demonstrations in Seattle, Washington, and to the participants in other demonstrations taking place in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington DC.

Around the globe, anti-imperialists are recognising that the battles being waged in Iraq are central to their own struggles. The Iraqi resistance to occupation shackles the armies of imperialism in place in Iraq, limiting their ability to respond to challenges they confront in Venezuela, Colombia, Iran, and elsewhere. The costs of the occupation prohibit them from purchasing peace in the class war at home through reformist measures. The successes of the resistance fighters help to counter the propaganda image of the imperialists as being impossible to challenge. Accordingly, anyone who opposes the continuation of capitalism at home must support the resistance to imperialism in Iraq.

At this moment in history, it matters little if one is Sunni or Shia, Muslim or Christian or atheist, Arab or African or

American. The dividing line is simply this: are you for or against imperialism? All those opposed to imperialism must defend the Iraqi resistance. It is not sufficient to oppose the occupation. The occupation is a reality that cannot be denied. What remains is to choose a side. To support the armies of the occupation is to align oneself with imperialist oppression, capitalist exploitation, violation of national sovereignty, and brutality against humanity. The only option in opposition to these evils is to support the resistance.

Irish republican socialists know full well what it means to be oppressed by imperialism, and we stand in solidarity with all peoples struggling against such oppression. Over the nearly thirty-one years the IRSM has existed, members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party and the Irish National Liberation Army have struggled against British imperialism in Ireland, sometimes to their death. We stand in solidarity with the oppressed, no matter who or where they are.

We demand an immediate end to the occupation of Iraq. Not slowly withdrawing or waiting for some unspecified time in the future, but immediately. We also demand full reparations to the Iraqi people for



the war and the years of harsh economic sanctions which preceded it, as well as returning all economic resources to the Iraqi people.

Here at home in the US, the primary task is to pursue the class struggle with vigor. That is the only way to defeat the capitalist class and prevent future imperialist wars. The organisers of the anti-imperialist contingent in Seattle have raised the slogan of "Oppose Democratic Party hijacking of the anti-war movement!"

We concur. The Democratic Party is as much a party of the ruling class as George W.

Bush's Republican Party is, and while it may question a particular war or how it is prosecuted, its ultimate interests are those of imperialism. The only way to make war history is to make capitalism and imperialism history. The American working class must organise to achieve that goal.

In conclusion, we say no to more wars of imperialism and no to further sacrifices of working class men and women in those wars. US out of Iraq, Britain out of Ireland, and for the American working class: no war but the class war!

Conference on Raza Prisoners & Colonialism

The Irish Republican Socialist Movement, the Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America send solidarity greetings to the Conference on Raza Prisoners and Colonialism, which took place in Oxnard, California.

In a statement read out at the conference on behalf of the IRSCNA, read: "Over the nearly thirty-one years the IRSM has existed, members

of the Irish Republican Socialist Party and the Irish National Liberation Army have been imprisoned by the British imperialist state for their role in the struggle for national liberation and socialism in Ireland.

"Three members of the INLA (Patsy O'Hara, Kevin Lynch, and Michael Devine) gave their lives on hunger strike in 1981, along with seven members of the Provisional Irish Republican

Army, protesting the removal of their status as political prisoners of war.

"Irish republican socialists know full well what it means to be part of a community oppressed by colonialism and imperialism, and we stand in solidarity with all peoples struggling against such oppression."

The conference was organised by Unión del Barrio and the Chicano Mexican Prison Project, organisations dedicated to the national liberation of Mexicanos and the freedom of all oppressed people.

The CMPP, in particular, works to win Mexicano prisoners to La Causa: the liberation of all Mexicanos.

British presence in Ireland is now plain for all to see. Ireland still remains a strategic imperialist interest, which is being used to aid in the devastation and occupation of Iraq. The failure of our struggle can most accurately be credited to the rise and success of reformist elements within the Provisional Republican Movement and the marginalisation of the politics of the Republican Socialist Movement.

Like your brothers and sisters in Ireland, the African people of the world are of strategic and vital interest to the imperialist war machine. Whether you are used as cannon fodder in the American or British armies, starved so your resources can be exploited, or

armed to fight each other in proxy anti-communist wars, you are the most oppressed and potentially revolutionary people that exist. The building of Pan-Africanism and African unity through mass revolutionary organisations is perhaps the greatest possible threat that could arise for the rulers and exploiters of this planet.

From Port-au-Prince to Belfast, from Chicago to Cork, from Africa to Ireland and America, we are one class of people waging the same struggle for human liberation, boldly going forward in our shared struggle for socialism and the liberation of humankind from the shackles of capitalism and imperialism.

African Liberation Solidarity - IRSM

For over twenty years the Irish Republican Socialist Movement has expressed its solidarity on African Liberation Day with African people around the globe struggling for their liberation and the liberation of the African continent under Pan-Africanism and Scientific Socialism.

Ireland is a strategic part of the new imperial order that is reshaping the world in its bloody image. Ireland was a staging point for US troops

and warplanes in the invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq. The Irish "Free State" lackeys have made a handsome fortune charging their masters for this service. Ireland, a dominated and marginalised country with the most exploited working class in western Europe, is once again filling a role as a subservient partner in the imperial slaughter.

The failure of republicans and republican socialists to end the

A WORLD TO WIN!

Argentinian Hospital Workers Stirke

Hundreds of hospital workers are at present in the middle of a gigantic fight at the Garrahan Hospital over salary increases and budgetary changes, against a truly terrorist campaign unleashed by the national government, the Minister of Health and the massive means of communication close to their politics.

The struggle at Garrahan constitutes a new expression of firmness and bravery of workers which we have not seen before.

Garrahan is the most modern hospital in the country. It was inaugurated during the presidency of Alfonsín with the highest level in Latin America. One only needs to walk in the halls to see the lack of maintenance. Add this to the complaints made by workers that the magnetic resonator which was installed 5 years ago is not functioning due to systemic robbery orchestrated by management. It is easy to see that the responsibility of the lives of the children that they attempt to shift to the workers is actually the responsibility of the government.

One striking member of staff stated "The lack of medical attention is responsibility of the government. The work stoppage is responsibility of the government. On the other hand: The best attention to our children, the lives that are saved, IS DUE TO EFFORTS OF THE WORKERS WHO IN SPITE OF WORK DAYS OF 14 HOURS, IN SPITE OF LOW SALARIES, NEVER ABANDONED THEM."

"The struggle of the Garrahan workers is an example to all...The Government has to decide...but up to now it has only accused those of defending themselves as terrorists. But if there is a death, it will be the Government that will be responsible. Stop paying, paying, paying the International Monetary Fund. Immediate pay increases to the Garrahan workers!"

Tortured & Isolated

The Irish Republican Socialist Movement, the Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America have issued the following statement condemning the political dungeons which exist in supposedly 'democratic' states or nations under occupation by supposedly 'democratic' states.

Earlier, we called attention to the case of David Garaboa Bonillo, an activist of the Communist Party of Spain (Reconstituted) who was arrested on May 30th and subsequently tortured by Spanish authorities. We would now like to call attention to the case of Marcos Martin Ponce, a GRAPU activist who is currently imprisoned in France and experiencing brutal treatment from the authorities there.

Behind the facade of bourgeois democracy lurks the true face of capitalist and imperialist states, a face of naked brutality toward anyone who opposes them and one smeared with the blood of the working class. It's a face not unfamiliar to Irish republican and republican socialist activists who have been imprisoned for opposing British imperialism. Nor is it unfamiliar to the Iraqis who have been tortured and humiliated in places like Abu Ghraib by members of the American and British occupation forces or the political prisoners in Turkey fighting against torture and isolation with death fasts.

We in the Irish Republican Socialist Movement utterly condemn the use of torture and other means of repression against political activists involved in working class struggle and/or fighting against foreign occupation. We demand the immediate release of all political prisoners. Stop the brutality! End the torture! Amnesty for all political prisoners!

For further information, see page 14

A History Of the Red Socialist Movement

In part three of the series IRSP Ard Comhairle member, Gerry Ruane, examines the IRSM

The transition of Sinn Féin from principled revolutionary organisation to opportunist, reformist, constitutional nationalist party has been the subject of many a commentary. The whole process traces its roots to the 1980s. Before the end of that decade, the party was gradually becoming incorporated into the institutions it was supposed to overthrow, mainly through the pressure of electoral considerations and clientelist expectations.

In the aftermath of the hunger strikes clear principled political leadership was necessary if the republican socialist movement was to benefit from the mass upsurges of support that the hunger strikes had thrown up. The elections of 2 IRSP comrades to Belfast City Council along with two members of Peoples Democracy showed the extent of the support there was out there. Unfortunately deep divisions began to emerge with the republican socialist movement.

During the hunger strikes itself it was clear that the provisional Sinn Féin movement were not prepared to work along side republican socialists. During the elections in the South when the hunger strikers were put up as candidates Sinn Féin activists on the ground refused to work for the election of INLA hunger strikers. IRSP comrades were marginalised in the various hunger striker committees around the North. At the same time during the hunger strikes the INLA had stepped up its operations. Early in 1981 they had shot and seriously wounded councillor Sammy Millar who had close connections to the UDA. In April the INLA in Tyrone killed a UDR soldier in Moy. In the same month in Andersonstown a booby trapped bomb on a bus killed a RUC constable. Two days after the death of Bobby Sands Vol Jim Power was blown up when he attempted to defuse a bomb planned for the British forces in the Markets area of Belfast. Five days later another volunteer, Emmanuel McLarnon was shot by the Brits during rioting in the Davis flats area following the death of Vol Francis Hughes (PIRA). Matt, as he was better known, had been on active service and involved in attacking the Brits. Five shots were fired before Matt fell. Ironically many of our comrades attended Matt's funeral and then boarded buses to go to the funeral of Francis Hughes. During that long summer the INLA and the IRA kept up attacks. The INLA shot dead a UDR member in September. In early October the Shamrock Social Club was machine gunned by the UDA and independent councillor and former internee Laurence Kennedy was killed. This was just another one of the many attacks launched by the UDA and the UVF. An innocent Catholic widow was murdered in the Markets area by the UVF looking for alleged INLA members. The INLA as a republican organisation was not sectarian but it did not allow that to stop it taking out leading loyalists and in mid October 1981 it killed leading UDA member Billy (Bucky) McCullough. Three months later the INLA shot dead John McKeague the founder and leader of the Red Hand Commandos. Among some of McKeague's more notorious writings was a song based on "Born under a wandering Star"

"You never seen a better taig than with a bullet in his back"

Close to the spot where he had killed Seamus, Jim Flynn, a member of the IRA (Official) fell dead executed by the INLA. In line with the belief of Seamus Costello that an organisation that does not defend its members does not deserve to exist the INLA had a policy of pursuing to the bitter end those who attack it. Others who later decided to attack the membership of the republican socialist movement later found this out to their cost.

But while the INLA was able to step up military operations all was not well in the wider movement. There had been an influx of new recruits into the movement some former provisionals and some young militants eager for action. Many were not interested in the politics of the movement and could see no ideological differences with the Provisionals. There was also the usual divisions between Belfast and Dublin perhaps a hangover from the days of the official IRA when the leadership in Dublin kept the Belfast units denude of weapons before the August 1969 pogroms leaving areas defenceless, Catholics were burnt out and the slogan IRA= I Ran Away scrawled on the walls. The militants in Belfast were demanding more gear while the leadership was trying to exercise a restraining influence. Gradually the differences in the Army grew bit by bit and mistrust and suspicion developed over the next few years. Some of this was undoubtedly influenced by the activities of British agents inside the movement but it was also affected by the British use of paid perjurers which severely reduced the effectiveness of the Army.

But meantime the war continued. Eleven British soldiers and six civilians were killed when the INLA bombed the Dropping Well pub in Ballykelly. Two INLA volunteers Seamus Grew and Roddy Carroll were killed in a shoot to kill operation by the RUC in Armagh in December 1982. The RUC were also hoping to kill the then INLA leader Dominic McGlinchey. McGlinchey was named the most wanted man in both the 26-county Irish Republic and in the six counties, and became the first republican to be extradited from the Republic into British custody.

In February 1983 Neil McMonagle, an INLA volunteer was shot dead by an undercover member of the British Army's 14th intelligence Company. In August of the same year two more volunteers, Brendan Convery and James Mallon, were killed in an attack on a security sanger in Dungannon.

But by late October it was clear that there were deep divisions within the INLA after the killing of Gerard Barkley with separate statements concerning his death being issued by two separate groups. Then in November 1983 members of the

Later in 1982 the INLA took the inevitable revenge for the murder of Seamus Costello.

INLA acting without authorisation and using the name of the Catholic Reaction Force shot dead three worshippers at Darkley Pentecostal Church in County Armagh.

The IRSP immediately condemned the attack on the protestant worshippers at Darkley which was a particularly foul deed carried out with weapons supplied by INLA members. This sectarian slaughter was condemned by the IRSP without qualification and some members of the Party leadership called for direct action to be taken against the perpetrators of that action. Needless to say this was ignored.

In December 1983 the UVF shot dead INLA volunteer Joe Craven in Bawnmore. His funeral was attacked by the RUC who tried to seize the black beret and gloves on the volunteers coffin. Joe's father had been murdered seven years previously by loyalists who bombed a bar he was in.

Meanwhile in the party there was an undoubted swing to the left. The I.R.S.P. was now much more open to the idea of mass struggle. It was in the beginning of a process towards a perspective of mass struggle. Again this development brought out the uneasy tensions that always seemed to exist within Irish Republican organisations. There is a widespread misconception that Irish republicanism is only defined by armed struggle. That is not so. There is much more to Irish republicanism than armed struggle. Armed struggle is a tactic to be used as and when the objective conditions determine its use. The 1798 uprising was actually provoked by the heavy handed oppression by the British. The Easter rebellion was a perfectly legitimate use of armed force when the objective conditions were in place but unfortunately due to subjective failures was doomed to defeat. The struggle in the war of independence was a legitimate tactic in the struggle for self determination and had the support of a large section of the Irish people.

Undoubtedly the use of force in the aftermath of the hunger strikes was legitimate but armed struggle itself can have a negative impact at certain times.

Traditionally republicans sometimes found themselves torn between two positions- between the need to be part of historical struggle by participation in the armed struggle and between the need to create a mass base of political support. An uneasy truce would regularly be maintained between these two positions. Occasionally it would flare up leading to walk outs, violence and then new organisations. But the creation of new organisations would never see resolved the tensions for they would reappear in the new organisations in a different form but still recognisable as the same old story.

That was what happened to the I.R.S.P./ I.N.L.A. It was the only Republican Movement whose political wing had openly acknowledged Marxists in leading positions. Since its foundation there had always been republican socialists who had been influenced by socialist and Marxist ideas. It declared itself open-



INLA Volunteers

ly Marxist at an Ard-Feis in 1983. It did not have control over the relationship between the two wings from the start. It had only half the Ard Comhairle being set up. All that they could do were to make critical decisions. They were unlikely to be following the Hunger strikes. It was a history of involvement in the Party.

Following the 1983 Ard Feis the new leadership was elected. The previous political leadership had been influenced during the hunger strike and the 'Primacy of Politics'.

Essentially this was taken as the gun should be subordinate to the working class was to be influenced in the way that the Provos in the movement raised as the carrying of the tricolour as the dominant. Indeed the red flag led the Commemoration of the RS as the main item on the party's agenda. The leadership did reach out to offer a number of key positions to the editorship of the Star but that was not taken up. Rather the old leadership's experience and expertise

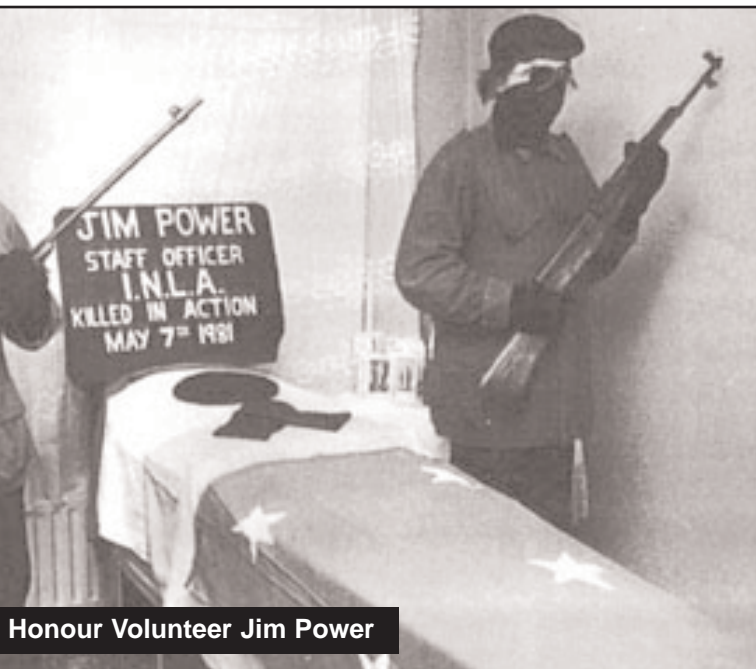
Meantime the new leadership had disputes with the Provisionals at rallies and the armed

Republican

ddy, continues with his historical



TuairimOpinion



Honour Volunteer Jim Power

1984. But the I.R.S.P. did not want the I.N.L.A. The relationship had bedevilled the movement. Within a year of the Party's split, socialists and marxists were attacking the Party internally, knowing the Party would not listen to them. However, following a number of Marxists with the Party in other political groups

in Dublin a new political leadership was formed and opposed to the drift of the Party. This new leadership was formed by the mass struggles and supported the concept

to mean that from now on the Party was to move forward, discarding the tailism of the old leadership and the red flag instead of the black flag of the movement. The annual Easter Statement. Socialism became the new agenda. But the new leadership was not the old leadership and positions to them including the Starry Plough. Unfortunately, the Party did not make a contribution, but taking their leadership despite a series of attacks over speaking rights and the I.N.L.A. tried

to work for anti-imperialist unity pointing out that, "there are enough issues on a day to day basis to help build up a spirit of left and republican forces initially." But for the Party leadership the ideological struggle was as important for. "We in the Republican tradition are great at instant campaigns, of mobilising for a cause such as the H-blocks, shoot to Kill, Campaigns around informers etc. but we are not good at the war of ideas"(ibid.)

As part of that war of ideas a motion was proposed and passed at the 1984 Ard-feis committing the party to Marxism. Those who voted for included volunteers in the Army who simply put their hands up to vote without an adequate understanding of its meaning. It is this writer's contention (and as one who supported the motion) that in retrospect the motion was premature and that the necessary preparatory work had not been done. That is not to say that Marxist and socialist ideas do not have a relevance. On the contrary those ideas were and are never more relevant. But in the situation then prevailing within the movement without the primacy of politics as central to all parts of that movement then the motion on Marxism was an irrelevance.

Unfortunately for the leadership of the party we did not win any ideological struggle with our own comrades. The I.N.L.A. went on as before.

An internal discussion document in 1984 by the then educational officer of the I.R.S.P. (who was also then a member of the I.N.L.A.) was critical of the evolution of the I.N.L.A. He accused it of 'tail-ending' the I.R.A. and going into "sometimes conscious competition with it." It would "jump into bursts of frenetic activity against RUC, UDR, British Army to be followed by periods of low or little activity as the repression brought on crushed the operational potential of the INLA. A few big jobs and the leader-

ship of the struggle would pass to them, "Such an idea was primitive."

He went on to point out that, "the shooting of off-duty UDR and RUC men has not had a political effect -" and that "the attacks on loyalist politicians as a response to sectarian assassinations is a political mistake."

He outlined support for what he called a 'war of position' which he defined as an acceptance that there would be no major shift in the balance of forces against British Imperialism until there "is either a political challenge to the 26-County state or a decisive political change in Britain."

This document was circulated at one of the few times when the I.N.L.A. actually listened and made some responses to the I.R.S.P. leadership. At least 3 armed actions occurred in the South in an effort to raise the dangers to Irish neutrality, (the bombing of the Schull Radio Mast) and the continuous attacks on the living standards of the working class, (the high jacking of and free distribution of bread.)

The problem for the I.R.S.P. was that it was not capable of doing any solid political work to win support in the working class because of its internal problems. Thus the I.N.L.A. actions in the South were perceived by other socialist groups and by some inside the I.R.S.P. to be ultra leftist adventurism. This was despite the adoption by the Party of a position known as 'the Primacy of Politics' from a document by Jim Lane who was the last functioning Chairman of the Party.

In a highly critical internal document of the I.N.L.A. the then General Secretary of the Party argued that

"-the political leadership of the army should rest with the party leadership.-It does mean the development of an overall political strategy for guerrillas in the national liberation struggle, the development of areas of work where guerrilla action can detonate mass actions and where there is an integrated political military response to events." (Aspects of the National Question. Internal I.R.S.P. document for the 1984 Ard Feis.)

The Easter Statement of the Republican Socialist Movement in 1986 was produced against a background of demoralisation inside the IRSP. The inability to forge fraternal links with the army or which ever faction was in control of it and the inability of the comrades in the Party to carry out any serious political work left politics in a vacuum. Nevertheless that statement is the clearest position of the socialists in the Republican Socialist Movement and deserves to be looked at.

There was a clear opposition to USA imperialism policies in the Philippines, South Africa, Nicaragua, Afghanistan. Apart from the need to establish the internationalist credentials of the movement many IRSP'S felt it important that by attacking the USA's policy they were clearly differentiating themselves from the Provos. For years many Noraid delega-

tions had come over to Ireland and supped with Sinn Fein. The IRSP was very clear in its opposition to the reactionary positions of some of these revolutionary tourists. As the statement said "The true patriot must be an internationalist, for how could one oppose oppression in Ireland and condone it world wide" There was the distinctive opposition to loyalism, "flaunting its racialistic hatred of the northern nationalists and instigating a sectarian murder campaign." Externally the I.R.S.P. called for "-an alliance of armed and political vanguards. An alliance of the worker and the unemployed, an alliance of the urban and rural worker. An alliance of the republican and the nationalist, an alliance of the marxist and the socialist. In short an alliance of all those who have longer any vested interest in the status quo." (Easter Statement 1986.)

But fine words butter no parsnips! Dissidents began to physically attack party members. Five of the 1984 Ard Comhairle were threatened. Shotguns were forced into their faces and they were forced to resign from the Party. For a number of years while the INLA was under pressure from the Special branch these dissidents were given a free run by the State. Apart from attacking the IRSP they engaged in Bank robberies and became in effect de-classed. They were losing all touch with revolutionary politics. The means had become the ends. That should have been no surprise to anyone involved in revolutionary politics. Revolutionary struggles worldwide are littered with the debris of former comrades gone bad in the downturn of struggle. The skills used to aid the revolutionary struggle suddenly in the absence of that struggle become the means to individual and private enrichment.

Meanwhile the leadership of the INLA itself had gone through a number of changes and in a reaction to all the petty moves of the dissidents became hostile to all politics. This was the traditional republican response of militarists to politics. If it is not bringing in recruits, then get shot of it. Volunteers became loyal not to the politics nor the ideals of the republican socialist movement but to its leaders. The cult of the military leader had arrived. The days of Mad Doggery while they whipped up the military demoralised the political wing for there was really no response to the internal criticism made by the party. There was an almost total breakdown in relationships between party and army. In such a situation the political level of the army recruits was neglected.

The previous army leadership had personally recruited informers like Grimley in Craigavon. into the army. The new leadership concentrated on ex-Propos and anyone who wanted a piece of the action. Many of the recruits had no idea who even Seamus Costello was!! They became prey to the emotions of the time and some sunk to the base level of sectarianism. So we had a situation where formally committed to Marxist ideas comrades on the ground were capable of sectarian actions and former comrades were gathering together to wipe out the republican socialist movement. The scene was set for bloodletting.

Seamus Costello: A Legacy

By Danielle Ni Dhighe, IRSCNA North American Co-Coordinator



Seamus Costello was one of the greatest leaders of political struggle to ever emerge in Ireland. His greatness lay in his ability to "inspire not only the dream but the confidence of its achievement, and the commitment to work towards that end," as Bernadette Devlin McAliskey described it. From his earliest days as an activist, his talent for leading and inspiring others was apparent. He was only seventeen years old when his leadership of an Irish Republican Army unit earned him the nickname of "The Boy General."

Seamus Costello, like James Connolly before him, stood for the

unity of the national liberation struggle and the class struggle. Neither man could conceive of an Ireland liberated from British imperialism truly being free without it also being liberated from the shackles of capitalism which kept the Irish working class in the condition of wage slaves for domestic and foreign capital. Not for them was a capitalist republic. Connolly's daughter Nora spoke at Costello's funeral and described him as "the greatest follower of my father's teachings in this generation."

When he founded the Irish Republican Socialist Party and the Irish National Liberation Army on 8 December 1974, it was because he saw no other vehicles capable of leading the struggle for national and class liberation. The Official Republican Movement had become mired in reformism, while the Provisional Republican Movement at the time were largely right-wing militarists.

Costello tried to work within the ORM, but his efforts were blocked by its leadership and he was finally forced out. It was then that he brought together republican socialists (many of whom were also ex-

Officials) and trade unionists to form the Irish Republican Socialist Movement.

The IRSM was quickly baptised in blood by the Official IRA. Three members of the IRSM would be killed before a truce was reached, but that didn't stop the OIRA from assassinating Costello on 5 October 1977. The Officials were an example of just how wrong former revolutionaries could go when they went down a path of reformism. An Official IRA gunman may have pulled the trigger, but the gun was loaded by British imperialism and its lackey of Irish capitalism - all of whom feared Costello and what he represented.

The death of Seamus Costello was not only a loss to the IRSM, it was a loss to the Irish working class and the struggle as a whole, just as Connolly's death was in 1916. However, for all that was lost without his leadership, his powerful legacy remains an inspiration for anyone who claims the label of republican socialist.

Seamus Costello was no dilettante or armchair supporter of the struggle. From the age of sixteen until his death at thirty-eight, nearly every moment of his life was spent in political or military struggle, fighting on behalf of the Irish working class. While interned in a prison camp, he spent his time studying

and used his new-found knowledge to organise lectures to educate his fellow prisoners. As an elected councillor, he used his position to involve the working class directly in council business and inspired them to take the task of liberation into their own hands. His only allegiance was to the working class.

If we truly wish to honour the memory of Seamus Costello, first chairperson of the IRSP and first chief of staff of the INLA, then we must follow his example and devote ourselves fully to building the only fitting memorial to Connolly, Costello, and all the men and women who devoted their lives, and sometimes sacrificed them, to the struggle - namely a thirty-two county socialist republic on the island of Ireland. There can be no better memorial and Seamus no doubt would have agreed.

Only the Irish working class can build a better tomorrow for itself and in doing so provide an example for the working class internationally, to inspire it to wake from its slumber induced by capitalist ideology, break its chains, and establish a new world order where people come before profit. Our task is to follow in the footsteps of Costello and continue to build the IRSP into a serious revolutionary party armed with the correct ideology to see the struggle through to a successful end. As Costello continues to inspire us, so must we inspire our fellow workers. Liberation is in our hands as a class. That is the enduring legacy of Seamus Costello.

Onward to the socialist republic, comrades!

ANNUAL SEAMUS COSTELLO COMMORATION

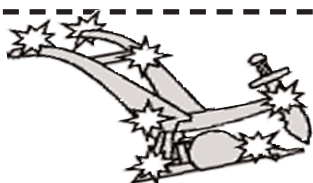
IRSP Ard Comhairle member John Murtagh urged members and supporters to turn out in large numbers for the annual Seamus Costello commoration.

He said, "The annual event is a very important date for Republican Socialists in that it commemorates the execution of the founder of the IRSP Seamus Costello by counter revolutionary forces.

"Comrade Costello's murder took from us the most capable revolutionary of our time and it is important for all Republican Socialists to come to Bray on October 2nd to pay tribute to him and his ideals."



**NOTHING HAS CHANGED!
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dedicated to the removal of
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for national liberation & socialism!

Teagmháil | Contact

The Irish Republican Socialist Party has Cummain established in cities, towns and villages in Ireland as well as Republican Socialist Committees in Europe, United States, Canada and Britain. Each IRSP cumann meets regularly to activate, educate and organise events locally such as public and political educational meetings, solidarity protests, pickets and demonstrations from community to workplace struggles. To find out more about the IRSP in your locality then use the contact details listed below.

Ireland: irsp@irsm.org

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County Tyrone:
c/o 31 Patrick Street, Strabane, County Tyrone.
Tel: 028 71 884616

Down, Armagh, Fermanagh Munster & Connaught:
Email: irsp@irsm.org

Dublin, Leinster:
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Email: dublinirsp@hotmail.com

Republican Socialist Youth Movement www.rsym.org

IRSP Abroad: irsp@netwizards.net

Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America (IRSCNA) and the Federation of Irish Republican Socialist Committees Abroad (FIRSCA):

PO Box 8266
Austin TX 78713-8266, USA

Email: irscna@irsm.org

Online: <http://www.irsm.org/firscna/irscna/>

IRSC and FIRSCA has members, supporters and contacts active in working class struggles and prisoner solidarity campaigns throughout United States, Canada, Latin America and in towns and cities throughout England, Scotland and Wales, and across Europe and other areas. Write for further details on how you too can actively participate with like minded individuals in solidarity with the struggle in Ireland.

IRSM Online & Other Links

Official IRSM Website: <http://irsm.org/irsp/>

IRSM Statements: <http://irsm.org/statements/>

Starry Plough Publications & Free Derry Books:

Hours: 11am - 3pm Weekdays
45 Great James Street (First Floor)
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Tel: 028 71 262999
plough@irsm.org
Postal Address: PO BOX 1981, DERRY, BT48 8GX

Ex Republican Socialist POW Support Organisations

Teach Na Failte (Strabane):
31 Patrick Street, Strabane, Tyrone
Tel/Fax: 028 71 884616

Teach Na Failte (Belfast):
Costello House, 392b Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6DH.
Tel/Fax: 028 90 238321

Teach Na Failte (North Belfast)
Unit 8, Flax Centre, Ardoyne Ave,
Ardoyne Phone: 028 90 751 705
OPENING HOURS: Tuesday, Wednesday
& Thursday 11.00am to 4.00pm
Email: teachnafailten@btconnect.com

Teach na Failte: www.teachnafailte.org

Prisoner of War Website: <http://irsm.org/irspows/>

Free Dessie O'Hare Campaign
www.irsm.org/irsp/free_dessie

James Connolly Society: www.wageslave.org/jcs/

Larkspirit: www.larkspirit.com

Cork IRSP Online: www.irsm.org/cumann/cork

Derry IRSP Online: www.angelfire.com/space/derryirsp

Dublin IRSP Online: www.dublinirsp.150m.com

Republican Socialist Forum:
<http://rsmforum.proboards23.com/index.cgi>

Republican Socialist Martyrs Flute Band - Belfast
<http://www.irsm-belfast.com/>

RSM Memorial Flute Band - Derry & Strabane
<http://www.angelfire.com/band2/rsmmemorialfluteband/>

Book Review

IRSP Ard Comhairle Member, Liam O'Ruairc reviews Alan Woods book *'Ireland: Republicanism & Revolution'*

More than twenty years ago, every group on the British left used to publish books outlining their position on the Irish conflict. However, very few bothered to do so since. So it is significant that Alan Woods, one of the leaders of Ted Grant's Committee for a Marxist International, recently published a book on what he calls the "revolutionary dialectic of republicanism". Also significant is the space he devotes in it to the IRSM, as many groups tended to ignore the organisation. The IRSP has been in contact with Alan Woods' political tendency for a few years, and our Political Secretary has written a foreword to this book. But unfortunately the book is very weak.

The first problem is that in terms of analysis Woods is often crude. For example his analysis of the causes of partition (66-67) or alleged moves towards integration of North and South during the 1960s (83, 108) is highly questionable. (For a more sophisticated approach of those issues see Paul Bew and Henry Patterson *'The State in Northern Ireland: political forces and social classes'*, Manchester University Press 1979, pp.62-70 and 129-133) His analysis of class divisions during the war of independence, treaty and civil war has been undermined by historical research. (See Richard English, *Nationalism and the Class Question in his Radicals and the Republic: Socialist Republicanism in the Irish Free State*, Oxford University Press, 1994, pp.1-66) Alan Woods would probably defend himself by saying that he is not a professional historian or expert on Ireland, but is writing as a Marxist militant, and that his book should be judged in terms of its contribution to the debates within Irish Marxism. But here again, he is on weak grounds. He shows no familiarity with the various debates on Ireland within the different schools Marxism. (he should check: John Martin, *The Conflict in Northern Ireland: Marxist Interpretations in the journal Capital and Class*, http://www.cseweb.org.uk/pdfs/018/018_056.pdf). And his knowledge of Connolly, and the various polemics his work gave rise to, is weak. For example, Woods writes: "In the First World War, Connolly pursued a consistently internationalist line. Although he had no direct contact with Lenin, the two men instinctively adopted the same position from the outbreak of the hostilities." (53)

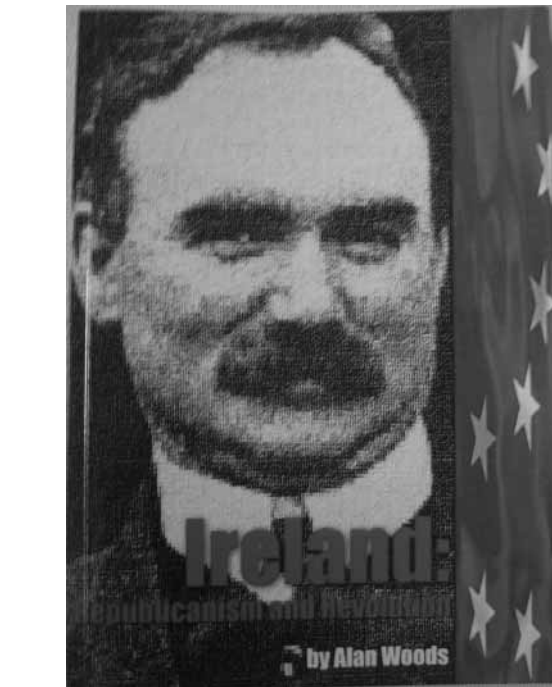
But this is simply not true. Whatever the internationalist propaganda written during the first six months of the war, or the initial slogan of serving neither King nor Kaiser, Connolly's position rapidly moved from a declared stance of neutrality to an intensely partisan, pro-German position. Connolly welcomed German victories because the weaker Britain

became, "the stronger became every revolutionary force". German victories for Connolly were the victories "of the most enlightened nation in Europe...whose democracy is most feared by the cunning capitalists of the world."

The German working class "had advanced nearest to the capture of the citadel of capitalism". (Irish Worker 5 September) Connolly's opinion did not change later. In the Workers Republic (9 February 1916) he published an extraordinary article by an American, Frederick C. Howe, which ran two full pages of the paper praising the virtues of "German State Socialism". It was this 'State Socialism', Connolly claimed in his article "Secrets of Germany's success-state socialism." that explained Germany's successes in the war. In one of the last articles written by Connolly, he argued that the German Empire was 'a homogeneous Empire of self-governing peoples' which contained 'in germ more of the possibilities of freedom and civilisation' than the British. (Workers Republic, 18 March 1916) Indeed in the final issue of the Workers' Republic a week before the Easter Rising, (in an article included in Aindrias Ó Cathasaigh's Connolly: Lost Writings), Connolly hailed "the wonderful fight being made by the Germans against odds" and inclined to the conclusion that "the German Nation is incomparably superior to any nation in Europe." It was not Lenin who appealed to Connolly, but rather Lenin's life long opponent, the Polish Socialist leader Joseph Pilsudski, who also had allied himself militarily with Germany and Austria and against Russia in order to fight for an independent Poland. Connolly applauded Pilsudski's Polish Legion for fighting alongside Germany against Russia as a contingent on the Austrian army. (see Workers Republic 15 April 1916) This illustrates the fact that Woods' grasp of Connolly and debates within Irish Marxism is clearly limited and insufficient.

Alan Woods' understanding of the dynamics of Republicanism in general, and Provisionalism in particular, is unsatisfactory. His argument is based on the distinction between "left and right republicanism" (75). However this is inadequate as the fundamental opposition is that between revolutionary republicanism and reformist constitutional nationalism. This was Peadar O'Donnell's point, when he opposed De Valera not because he wasn't a socialist, but because he was pretending to be a republican while really being a constitutional nationalist. Alan Woods is extremely hostile to the Provisionals, who are the 'villains' of the book so to speak. For him they are a "bourgeois right-wing trend in Republicanism" (111).

However the fundamental problem with the Provisionals is that they belonged more to the tradition of



Catholic defenderism and nationalism than that of Republicanism.

According to Woods, the Provisionals are a product of a bourgeois conspiracy: "It was the Southern state intelligence services that set up and organised the Provisionals. The money and the guns of the Provos were supplied through the agency of two right-wing ministers in the Dublin government." (86) Woods's understanding of the arms crisis is approximate and superficial. There has been considerable debate about the role of Fianna Fail in financing the Provisionals and the extent to which the former was responsible for the development of the latter. (See Justin O'Brien, *The Arms Trial*, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2001 for the most serious treatment of the question) This remains highly speculative and cannot displace defence as the primary determinant in the formation of the organisation, and offers a conspiratorial distinct from a structural rationale for the formation of the Provos. August 1969, not Fianna Fail machinations was the central reason for the formation of Provisional IRA. (Point made clearly by Anthony McIntyre, *A Structural Analysis of Modern Irish Republicanism 1969 - 1973: thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, Queens University Belfast*, 1999) Woods omits to mention that the Officials also benefited from the financial backing of the same two "right-wing ministers in the Dublin government". Cathal Goulding asked them for £50,000 and was promised £1500 on account in 1969. (See Henry Patterson, *The Politics of Illusion for more details*) Woods reduces the Republican armed struggle to acts of 'individual terrorism'. (pp.117ff)

For all his opposition to the 'individual terrorism' of the IRA, Woods should take note that Trotsky said that "under conditions of civil war, the assassination of individual oppressors ceases to be an act of individual terror". (Leon Trotsky, *Their Moral and Ours*, New Park, 1968, p.46) The conditions in the six counties were those of open conflict. In that context, the armed struggle is qualitatively different from individual acts of terrorism. As Connolly put it: "we believe that in times of war we should act as in war". Woods also mentions on three occasions that the

Provisionals engaged in the burning of left-wing books. (pp 15, 87, 111) This looks apocryphal given that there were at least eleven copies of Lenin's State and Revolution and many copies of the Communist Manifesto in the Provisional IRA's library in Long Kesh; as well as hundreds of Marxist Leninist titles. (Cfr. Kirsty Scott, *Men of Letters, Men of Arms*, The Guardian 2 December 2000)

Woods' strategic alternative to 'individual terrorism' is based on the primacy of trade union work and the construction of 'a party of labour based on trade unions' (124). For Woods, trade unions "are probably the only real non-sectarian mass organisations that still exist. This is the base upon which we can build! That would undoubtedly be the message of James Connolly, were he alive at this time." (134) The problem here is that his assumption is that sectarianism and trade unionism are opposites. Sectarianism is seen to exist outside trade unionism, or if inside, a regrettable aberration. But sectarianism and trade unionism are not opposites, except in the realms of abstract analysis. Trade unions in a sectarian society cannot remain insulated from the society of which they are part. In 1971 for example, a militant engineers' march against the British Government's Industrial Relations Act was led by Billy Hull. Just weeks later, the same shop steward led the same workers out on a march to demand internment and repression. There is a whole literature about the development of sectarian trade unionism and about the mutual acceptance between unionism and trade unions. The first problem facing activists in the unions is that of a divided clientele and an institutionally divided movement.

Woods appeals to the tradition of Larkin and Connolly. James Larkin had some successes in 1907 not least because he was an official of an English union, and therefore less open to attack by Loyalists on grounds of national allegiance.

Connolly was far less successful. For example, his organising of mine workers in Larne were thwarted overnight once workers discovered that he represented a Southern union; which resulted in the miners not only abandoning Connolly,

Continues Page 13

This Is Republican Socialism!

The Irish Republican Socialist Party is an organisation created by and for working class people, to aid working class liberation in Ireland and internationally with others who share that common goal.

The IRSP stands in the tradition of James Connolly, seeking an end to all forms of exploitation and the creation of a 32 county socialist republic, with the working class collectively owning the means of production, distribution, and exchange, as well as democratically administering society.

Socialism

The socialism we embrace is the kind that liberates, not enslaves. We strive towards a society that functions to meet human needs, not the need for profit. Our socialism is a means of liberating our class from all forms of oppression, whether economic, political, religious, cultural or social. It is a socialism that envisions our class controlling their own destinies and that of the nation as a whole.

National Liberation

The struggle for national liberation cannot be separated from the class struggle. Any attempt to isolate one from the other will result in failure. It is meaningless to speak of a free nation, if the overwhelming majority remain oppressed, and national sovereignty is lost through multinational corporate control of the economy just as much as by partition.

At the same time, someone who refuses to challenge British imperialism in Ireland cannot claim to be fighting for socialism and the continuation of partition props up the divisions in the working class of Ireland that hold us back from our own liberation. We have no choice in whether or not we wish to consider the interconnection of the national and class questions, reality forces us to do so.

We define the national liberation struggle as that struggle which seeks to force a British military withdrawal from the occupied six counties. The destruction of the pro-British loyalist armed forces. The withdrawal of British political influence from all parts of Ireland. The ending the partition of the island of Ireland and the overturning of both the partitionist governments presently administering political affairs of Ireland.

The gaining of collective economic control of the nation's resources by the nation as a whole and the eradication of any control or influence exercised by foreign capitalists over any aspect of the Irish economy. The recognition of a separate Irish cultural identity and the establishment of revolutionary 32-county socialist republic.

We aim to build a strong alliance in Irish society of our class in towns and cities, agricultural workers in the country-side, unemployed workers, working class refugees, linked as a movement internationally with other like-minded liberation struggles.

We firmly stand-by the struggle for a republic. On that we are inflexible, but our struggle for the republic is a means to an end. For us, the national liberation struggle is but an aspect of the struggle for socialism.

Loyalism & Nationalism

We distinguish between loyalism and Protestantism. We recognise the right of everyone to their own religious beliefs, provided they do not use these beliefs to oppress others. We have no quarrel with Protestant workers and welcome them to join us in struggle. However, we stand totally opposed to the political ideology of loyalism.

Loyalism is a reactionary, sectarian and pro-imperialist ideology, with which we can make no compromise. We recognise that nationalism in the context of the Irish struggle is progressive, but we also recognise that nationalism can play a reactionary role. The national chauvinism of the Tories, National Front, etc. is counter-revolutionary and anathema to socialists. The nationalism of an oppressed country is vastly different from such reactionary jingoism. We support all struggles against imperialism throughout the world.

Class mobilisation

Only by mobilising our class north and south - Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter - can the goal of national liberation and socialism be achieved. Workers have distinct interests as a class, ultimately opposed to any other class, we must join together as a class to win control of society.

For a fighting union

As republican socialists, we take lesson from battles that have gone before us, in the community and in the workplace. We must reclaim our unions and organise the unorganised. We remain committed to the revolutionary industrial unionism of Larkin and Connolly. As republican socialists we see the creation of a fighting 'rank and file' trade union movement as something that still holds potential and we support the building of a revolutionary shop stewards' movement.

Equality

Our class faces daily, relentless assaults inflicted on us from many quarters and a constant onslaught of attempts to divide us. The IRSP oppose and fight against all forms of inequality and oppression, including that of women, travellers, lesbians, gays, or other sexual minorities, refugees, Africans, Asians, and any other oppressed sector of the working class. We oppose racism, Zionism, sexism, homophobia, national chauvinism, and anything else which divides our class. We support reproductive rights and unhindered access to contraception, including a woman's right to choose abortion. We are opposed to religious sectarianism and seek the complete separation of church and state and a secular society.

Our Earth

The increasing destruction of our environment is due to mismanagement of industrialisation and the inevitable product of a system, which puts profit before all else, that is, capitalism. The IRSP is committed to sustainable and renewable energy sources, preservation of the ecology and biodiversity of our planet, with protection of all species and the promotion of a healthy environment for all people and animal life.

Revolution not Reform

The IRSP believe that the present class system cannot be reformed out of existence. There exists no parliamentary road to socialism and the liberation of our class. We need to build an organised working class movement with the politics capable of leading the fight against capitalism. Our class are entitled to control over all the wealth of society and to obtain it through any means necessary.

If you agree with us, then we urge you to join the Irish Republican Socialist Party and help build a movement that can accomplish these aims and objectives. Be part of the Irish revolution!

Continued From Bottom Of Page 12:

but the strike as well. When Larkin criticised Connolly for not making as much headway as he had, Connolly's reply was instructive: "...he (Larkin) is for ever snarling at me and drawing comparisons between what he accomplished in Belfast in 1907, and what I have done, conveniently ignoring the fact that he was then the secretary of an English organisation, and that as soon as he started an Irish one his union fell to pieces, and he had to leave members to their fate." (Levenson, James Connolly biography, 221) The second problem is that with a divided movement, taking political stances outside purely trade union issues would drive away one section or another of the divided clientele. The trade union movement only exists on the basis of least common denominator between workers. 'Politics' have to be avoided. So for instance, the trade union movement has been reluctant to take up the issue of repression because it would alienate Protestant workers. A few trade unionists set up the Trade Unions Committee Against Repression.

When Brian Maguire, a AUEW/TASS TUCAR activist, was found hanged while in police custody in 1978, the trade union movement was notorious for its self-censorship on the issue fearing to alienate orange workers. Woods does not mention this incident. However, he makes a great deal of the fact that in August 1969 a meeting of

trade unionists in Harland and Wolff declared their opposition to sectarianism. (pp 88, 123) Referring to this incident, even a labour historian sympathetic to Woods' view maintains that "there is a danger here of exaggerating the trade union contribution. The number of Catholic workers in the shipyards for example had fallen dramatically since 1969..." (Civil strife and the growth of trade union activity: the case of Ireland, Government and Opposition, issue 4, 1973, p.407) Woods should meditate Connolly's conclusions about trade unions in the North: "The historical backgrounds of the movement in England and Ireland are so essentially different that...the phrases and watchwords which might serve to express the soul of the movement in one country may possibly stifle its soul and suffocate its expression in the other...the doctrine that, because the workers of Belfast live under the same industrial conditions as those of Great Britain, they are subject to the same passions and to be influenced by the same methods of propaganda is a doctrine almost screamingly funny in its absurdity."

The most questionable part of the book is the part dealing with the British left (110-112). The majority of organisations on the British left are a variety of Trotskyite groups which, in common with Trotsky on the Irish revolution, have an abstract and idealist understanding of the Irish question. However Woods presents Trotsky as if he

had been a defender of the 1916 Rising instead of one of its detractors. (57) It was against the likes of Trotsky that Lenin wrote his defence of the 1916 Rising. Alan Woods castigates the British left for supporting the sending of troops to the North in 1969. According to him a "honourable exception" (110) was the Militant Tendency (to which Woods and Grant belong), and this political tendency "has a proud record on Ireland". "We were the only consistent ones who opposed the sending in of British troops in 1969." (112) Woods goes on to quote a resolution they tried to pass at a 1969 Labour Party conference and a September 1969 article from The Militant newspaper.

However, he omits to mention that the same article supported the introduction of British troops under guise of preventing a 'blood bath': "A slaughter would have followed in comparison with which the blood-letting in Belfast would have paled into insignificance if the Labour Government had not intervened with British troops." (Militant, September 1969) In fact, the IMG (to mention just one organisation) had explicitly opposed the sending of troops. (see USFI statement, September 1969)

It is dishonest for Alan Woods to rewrite history as if the political tendency to which he belongs was supportive of the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland because it has a disgraceful record as it was the group on the British left which was

the most vehemently opposed and hostile to the liberation struggle in the North. No wonder that Woods does not venture beyond 1969. He wouldn't be able to point to any progressive intervention his political tendency made during the 1981 hunger strikes for example. Woods then attacks the rest of the British left for "uncritical support for the Provisional IRA" and ignoring the Republican Socialist tendency. (111) This is laughable. The only groups on the British left who gave any real support for liberation struggle and the IRA were the RCG/Irish Solidarity Movement, RCP/Irish Freedom Movement, Red Action, the Leninists of the CPGB/Hands Off Ireland. The rest of the left came with inanities about 'individual terrorism', 'petit bourgeois' etc.

Far from ignoring the Republican Socialist Movement, members of Red Action have been jailed for participating in INLA activities, and the Leninists of the CPGB held a number of joint schools and statements with the IRSP. It is unfortunate that Alan Woods nowhere explains why his political tendency made a U turn in its position on Ireland. There is nothing wrong about being mistaken, everyone makes mistakes. But he should have admitted it, this piece of revisionist rewriting of history will never win anyone to his political line.

Republican Socialism The Only Alternative

The Irish Republican Information Service recently issued a statement and we quote: "THE body styling itself 'Limerick Republican Information Service' is not connected with the Irish Republican Information Service (IRIS), 223 Parnell Street, Dublin 1, email saoirse@iol.ie and has not been authorised either by IRIS or by the body that sponsors IRIS, Republican Sinn Féin. Therefore it is totally unauthorised and should be regarded as such."

It appears that a number of very prominent members of RSF from the wider Limerick area have left RSF. All political organisations have internal disagreements and disputes. Republican organisations are no different from the many left wing organisations that have doctrinal disputes. We have no wish to delve into the internal affairs of RSF. But it is clear from the position in the prisons, from our knowledge of the organisations that once were part of the Provisional movement and from the lack of activity on the ground that there is a major crisis of confidence in the so called 'dissidents'.

In a number of speeches and statements the IRSP have said there was a crisis in republicanism. But the IRSP has been prepared to do something about that crisis. We repeatedly called for a Republican Forum and took part in futile talks with other republicans, that against our wishes called itself 'Republican Congress' at one meeting and then never met again. If one was cynical one could say some of the participants were only interested in getting electoral support.

The IRSP wrote to a number of republican and left wing organisations requesting a meeting but their desire for dialogue was so strong we never even got an acknowledgment never mind a meeting. Despite this and despite our reservations about the organisation behind the anti-internment rally in Ballymena on August 9th 2005 the IRSP supported spoke at and provided a band for that rally as well as helping to defuse possible violent situations following the march. The speech below from Paul Little clearly outlines our reasons for supporting this march

The reasons for our reservations are and were clear. We are not into so called 'provo bashing' We have made clear our political disagreements about the political direction of Sinn Féin and we will continue to make criticisms not only of Sinn Féin but of all other nationalist and unionist parties which condone or support capitalism. We are not in the business of yelling, 'Sell out' and 'traitor'. The IRA (P) has made their decisions. They fought a war. They called a ceasefire. They decommissioned their weapons. That's their business.

Too many republicans, having for years accepted the leadership of the Provisionals and their politics, are jumping up and down trying to make sense of it all now. They think they can re-create the conditions that led to the formation of the IRA (P) in the first place. They can't. The world has changed and political circumstances in Ireland have changed so republicans and socialists have to adapt to the changed circumstances. Our business in the republican socialist movement is to radicalise the working class and for that we need a strong working class revolutionary party. We recognise that the republican project has suffered a severe setback.

To all those socialists and republicans who seek a way out of the impasse that the broad republican tradition is in we say there is only one clear way forward. Take the class road with the IRSP, ditch the nationalism and put your energies and efforts into the radicalisation of the Irish working class. Join the IRSP. It is the only viable alternative for republicans and socialists!

Kevin Lynch Remembered

Hundreds of Republicans came to Dungiven in County Derry for the annual Kevin Lynch commemoration on 31st July. Eddie McGarrigle, Ard Comhairle member from Tyrone, spoke on behalf of the IRSP. He used the occasion to highlight the ongoing sectarian attacks that are taking place in certain areas of the six counties such as North Antrim. He criticised the leaders of the main unionist parties for failing to show leadership in terms of sectarianism emanating from within unionist areas.

He also relayed a pledge from the INLA that until the Irish working class win their freedom under no circumstances will the INLA even consider decommissioning their weapons and leaving communities defenceless. This was important at a time when unionist paramilitaries are increasing their attacks on vulnerable Catholic communities and the upcoming news of PIRA disarmament.

Philip McGuigan MLA spoke on behalf of Sinn Féin.



Members of the RSM Memorial Flute Band marching in Dungiven

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Stop The Brutality: End The Tortures!

Amnesty for All Political Prisoners!

Again we publish the following letter from a tortured Spanish political prisoner of G.R.A.P.O - Marcos Martín Ponce: The torture continues.

A Chara,

On the 8th Of August they (the Police) took me out to the Palais (something similar to the National Audience Chamber in France) for another extradition trail, I have now lost count of how many I've been through already, anyhow both to and from it the Gendarmes escort in charge of searches wanted me bend down naked.

As I refused to comply, four of them got in to the small and dirty cage (Police Cell) where they do the searches and while two of them jumped on top of me to immobilize me, the other two started to kick me on the legs and punch me in the stomach until I fell on the ground. The then proceeded to further kick me in the ribs.

It is this way as nobody knows (or nobody wants to know!) that behind this façade that the 'Democratic France' presents in front of public option that these dungeons exist. A place were they can do anything they want to us. The impunity that these people have is such that when you are to go in front of the tribunal, and you object to what has happened to you they then mockingly accuse you of obstruction and lying while they look at each other, smiling sarcastically.

And even they have the audacity to leave you like a liar, arguing, "that in France they respect the Rights of Man, as since a long time ago it existed as a democratic state and blah blah..." It is incredible the arrogance they have. You just feel like spitting in their face and telling them, although they want to ignore you, they are fascists which not only protects the torturers but they are encouraging them to feel they can act with impunity.

I can assure you that this is the law of the jungle. Yes, I know that in Spain, especially in prisons and in

detention points the Civil Guard and the National Police take acts of torture much further (I learned recently of brutal tortures on the PCE(r) David Garaboa by the National Police several months ago), but not because these characters haven't reached such a sinister level I'm not going to stop denouncing them. Moreover, I want the world to know that although they humiliate us, we are still here and standing firm, resisting. My revolutionary dignity is still intact, even stronger.

The people should never forget that the political prisoners that are now being tortured, dispersed, isolated etc, once that decided to give the step forward towards a consequent struggle in the benefit of all the people without asking any benefit in exchange.

Anybody who is conscious of what is happening and fails to act within their possibilities, it is in some ways, looking the other way and so facilitating the fascist oppressors. And those who are not looking the other way should remind them so. Each one should look inside themselves and tell themselves, once being conscious of what is happening, can carry on only preoccupying themselves with themselves, and never taking part with the issues involved, because if it is this way, all their so-called titles of anti-fascist, of communist, of anarchist or of progressives should be thrown to the rubbish bin.

This is time to react and that these actions are not left without a response for each tortured prisoner, there should be the most consequent denunciations to let them see that the political prisoners are not alone. That we are not an exchange coin with which they can blackmail or intimidate the Resistance Movement, that we are revolutionaries, and therefore we are part of this struggle of the people, and that the fascists are not going to get away with it every time they want to!

TO RESIST IS TO WIN! WE ARE STILL WINNING!
*Marcos Martín Ponce
Fleury Merogis Prison, France.*

Solidarity Request:

You can write a letter or send a post card of solidarity to Marcos:

Marcos Martín Ponce
No. 325695-S
MAISON D'ARRET DE FLEURY-MÉROGIS
7, Avenue des Peupliers
91705 Sainte Geneviève des Bois
France

Solidarity Protest:

Write letters of protest, let them know that you or your party/organisation will not tolerate this legalized brutality; organize protest action or picket to highlight these mounting inhuman horrors.

Show your solidarity with the communist political prisoners being tortured and isolated by French and Spanish authorities.

French Embassy & Consulate

36 Ailesbury Rd, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.
www.ambafrance.ie.

Spanish Embassies & Consulates

Embassy - DUBLIN - 17A Merlyn Park, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.

Commercial Office - 35 Molesworth St. Dublin 2.

Institute - 58 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4.

Stop The Brutality! End The Tortures!

Prisoner Solidarity

A Chara,

My initial thoughts on the conference (Conference on Isolation and the Struggle against Isolation, Istanbul, Turkey) are of a deep respect and regard for the Tayad members and their supporters who helped make the conference a thoroughly professional and fitting event.

Overall it is my opinion that the situation has reached a critical point and necessary steps must be taken in order to alleviate the suffering that the prisoners and their families are having to endure. The affects on the people involved in the struggle were clear to see during my short stay and in particular those who have lost loved ones.

International pressure must be brought to bear on the Turkish government in order to initiate some sort of process where the prisoners' human rights are adhered to.

This deadlock between the state and the prisoners must be resolved in the international arena. In my opinion the censorship issue can be tackled more effectively in this arena and because of this the committee that was formed during the conference must work on the same agenda.

I would like to pay special tribute to some of the people I met during the conference. The father of two death-fasters Fahrettin Keskin has showed me that even when we suffer the most horrendous of tragedies we can still come out of it with the strength and determination to defeat these imperialist regimes. I spoke with an ex-prisoner who experienced the horror of the attack on the woman's prison on 19th December 2000. She explained some of the realities of the conditions in the prisons.

Some of the other stories I heard have helped me become more aware of the inhumane practices that the prisoners are having to endure.

Michael Devine, Derry
(Son of INLA Hunger striker Mickey Devine)

Message From Sweden

A Chara,

The Provisional IRA's decision to surrender its weapons and disband did not come as a surprise to us. Since Sinn Féin signed the peace agreement in 1998 their leaders Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness have been eager to transform the movement's ideological commitments from revolutionary republicanism to constitutional nationalism.

The decision of the PIRA's Army Council to suspend all military actions, and to force their units to hand over its weapons to the IICD, is not "historic" in any sense. It is the logical result of the Stormont-agreement of 98, which main purpose is the disarming of the republican movement, and the normalization of British rule in Ireland.

The Provisionals has not fired a single bullet against the occupation troops in years. Instead they have turned their weapons against people in the broader republican movement, in its attempts to silence the republican opposition. And for that purpose there is no need for armalites and semtex.

The Ireland Information Group in Sweden supports the republican groups that continue to wage armed and political struggle against british imperialism in Ireland - those who have not abandoned their goals; a united republic of Ireland, built on equality and social justice, as proclaimed by the men of 1916.

Ireland Information Group of Sweden

Litr each Dear ga

Red Letters

We encourage our readers to write to the Starry Plough. Please remember to keep your letters brief and to the point due to restricted space.

IRSCNA: Honouring The Hunger Strikers Martyrs 24 Years On.

On this the 24th anniversary of the death of Irish National Liberation Army Volunteer Michael Devine on hunger strike, the Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America send our greetings to the national hunger strike commemoration taking place today in Derry.

Ten brave men, including INLA Volunteers Patsy O'Hara, Kevin Lynch, and Michael Devine, died

on hunger strike in 1981 not just for their rights as Irish soldiers and political prisoners, but for the liberation of Ireland from over 800 years of British imperialism and the liberation of the Irish working class from the shackles of capitalism.

While much has changed 24 years later, the struggle for national and class liberation continues. Let the example of the hunger strike martyrs

inspire us as we continue the long struggle which they proudly took part in. Let no one say that their deaths were in vain. The best way we can honour their memories and sacrifices is to never give up as we boldly go forward in our struggle for the liberation of the Irish working class from the shackles of capitalism and imperialism.

As Patsy O'Hara said: Let the fight go on!

book leabhar

Who needs Irish?

Reflections on the importance of the Irish language today.

By Gearóid Coleman,
Edited by Ciarán MacMurchaidh.

This book comprises thirteen essays from prominent Gaeilgeoirí that explore the enduring significance of the so called 'national' language for contemporary Irish culture. Alan Titley's essay 'how did we get here from there' discusses the continuing legacy of the language in the hiberno-english of his mother's generation.

Poignant reminders, according to Titley, of a nation that succumbed to the imposition of an imperial language and culture. This self-deprecation of the Irish peasant resulted in a 'devilish bargain' being made by the church with the imperial state that ensured that Ireland would 'anglicise

in tongue, catholicise in religion and respectabilise in society'. There are some interesting anecdotes here touching on Titley's first encounter with Irish, as well as a critique of the free state's project of reviving the language. He also draws attention to the efforts of Pádraig de Brún in translating Homer's *Odyssey* and Dante's *Divina Commedia* into Irish.

Kate Fennell, a Russian speaker, explores the importance of sound in language. She claims that 'the sound of Irish seems to be lodged in the subconscious mind of our people'. She interestingly compares some of the rich consonantal sounds of Irish to Russian, but laments the misguided sense of inferiority prevalent among Irish speakers in the Gaeltacht, particularly and most worryingly among the young. Neasa ní Chinnéide outlines the importance of bilingualism in the context of the European Union and the diversification of Irish culture. She warns of the impending silence to the question regarding our cultural uniqueness in the absence of Irish Lillies O Laoire offers a personal response to the current situation in Irish with a stimulating essay drawn from her bilingual upbringing. The unique, poetic and philosophical perspectives afforded

by Irish are described by the writers Eilís Ní Dhuibhne and Gabriel Rosenstock. Ní Dhuibhne tells of her decision to write in Irish and the need for a more comprehensive literature in the language. She illustrates the problem faced by writers in Irish by asking if James Joyce would have achieved a portion of his world renown if he had written in Irish. In spite of this she argues cogently for more literature in the language.

Rosenstock offers an intriguing and pithy insight into his relationship with Irish bringing to bear its inherent mystical and revolutionary qualities.

For Rosenstock, a commitment to Irish is an anarchistic act, a way of saying no to mainstream culture, a commitment to difference. His erudite essay 'How I discovered Irish or how Irish discovered me' is an inspiration to anyone with an appreciation of the power and beauty of language.

The Gaeilscóilfocht movement is treated by Lorcán Mac Gabhán, where the government's apathy, and in some cases, hostility to language promotion is censured. Anna Heusaff draws our attention to the burgeoning interest in Irish

expressed by immigrants. This is certainly becoming a phenomenon throughout the island with people from all over Europe and Asia making an effort to learn Irish. By showing such an interest in our cultural heritage, they act as a foil to our indifference foregrounding our sense that we should be bilingual, as well as deepening our appreciation of the value of cultural and linguistic difference.

Being an Irish speaker is not always easy however, especially if you live in the north, as Pádraig Ó Mianáin contends; his essay 'Passing the torch to the next generation' Drawing on the poetry of Cathal O Searcaigh, Máirín Nic Eoin deals with the challenges of hybridity while Brendan Ó Doibhlin and Doncha Ó hEallaithe complete this collection with discussions on the continuing legacy of the Irish language.

Defiant, optimistic, impassioned yet rational, these essays are unanimous in their insistence that Irish is an ineluctable part of our identity to be neglected at our peril. This book challenges our apathy and urges us to face the question of what it means to be Irish in the 21st century.

"What have you done for the Irish Working Class?" -Murtagh

Hundreds of members and supporters of the IRSP gathered in County Kildare in June at the annual Wolfe Tone Commemoration. In an oration that asked members of the party to examine their commitment to the politics and ideals of the IRSP, John Murtagh asked those present to examine what they have done in the last twelve months in the cause of the Irish Working Class.

He said, "Comrades and friends to be an Irish Republican is a heavy responsibility for we have a duty to ensure that the high ideals that are associated with Irish Republicanism are maintained and upheld. When the Society of United Irishmen was formed it espoused the most radical ideas and beliefs of the times- liberty equality and fraternity. We in the republican socialist movement still adhere to those basic principles and believe that for our society they can only be truly implemented in a genuine democratic republic for all the people on this island based on socialist values and principles.

Therefore no member of this movement should dishonour the principles of republican socialism by either word or deed. Unfortunately past members of ours, people who we once called comrades, have when they were expelled or left this movement, betrayed the beliefs they once espoused. There are people purporting to be in the INLA involved in drug dealing, protectionism and criminality operating particularly in the Dublin area. Needless to say they are not part of this movement.

However these criminals do share something in common with the political elites who run both parts of this country. They both have damaged real politics by their cheating lying distorting and corrupting influences. Many ordinary working class have become jaded and cynical about what passes for politics on this island. Double speak spin-doctoring and lying are all that we now expect to hear from the politicians who daily appear on

our TV screens. And it is no good republicans pointing the finger of blame at someone like Michael McDowell and crying that he is trying to criminalise republicans. Like Caesar's wife republicans should be above suspicion. And that is not the case today.

Comrades let me be frank. We have a long way to go to reassure the Irish working class that republican socialists are deserving of their support. We have a long difficult road ahead of us. Therefore there is a responsibility on all of us here today to ensure that we live up to the high values we expect of republican socialists. Ask yourself what have I done in the past 12 months to advance the cause of the Irish working class.

Outside of republican commemorations - Have I marched for good causes such as the anti-war movement? Against bin charges or water rates? Have I been involved in pickets? Gone to trade union meetings? Been active in my local community associations? Sold the party newspaper? Indeed have I written for the Party newspaper? Have I recruited young people to the Party? Have I contributed to the Party's finances? Have I campaigned against poverty, injustice or repression? Have I read the writings of James Connolly? Do I know anything about Wolfe Tone? Have I educated myself in republican and socialist history and ideas?

OR am I one, who hating the "Orangies" joined this movement so that in the marching season I might get the chance to have a crack at them with something substantial? Or am I, a bar room republican content to drink with those who once smelt the cordite, in the hope that people will see me as "one of the boys".

So long as the northern statelet exists so long will there be instability, sectarianism, and hatred, capitalism and exploitation. The futile attempts since 1998 to establish political institutions based on Stormont have failed. They only mirror

the previous failures to establish some form of local government.

While the middle classes knelt and prayed in their churches on one day a week the other six days they were exploiting their workers and engaging in total hypocrisy. The two states were confessional states for if people believe their creed or nationality is more important than their class then capitalism and imperialism can continue to exploit the workers.

Over the nearly thirty-one years the Irish Republican Socialist Movement has existed, members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party and the Irish National Liberation Army have been imprisoned by the British imperialist state and its free state allies for their role in the struggle for national liberation and socialism in Ireland. Our class analysis has remained the backbone of republican socialist politics through the years of struggle, both armed and unarmed for a socialist republic. It will continue to do so as we determine the best way forward for our class, our cause and our struggle. We do not ever forget the suffering of the families and loved ones of our fallen comrades have endured, indeed still endure in the uncertain political climate of today. That is why the work many of our comrades are doing in Teach Na Failte is so important for it allows us to remember honour and work with our volunteers who endured the jails of the oppressor.

I also want to express our solidarity with republican prisoners in the jails of the North regardless of what organisations they belong to. We recognise them as genuine anti imperialist fighters regardless of our differences on strategy. And of course we send our greetings to our comrades still in jail especially Comrade Dessie O'Hare a victim of the vindictive Free state ruling class.

Full Speech online: www.irms.org

Honouring The Hunger Strikers: 24th Anniversary



At one of the largest Republican Socialist National Hunger Strike commemorations held in the city for over twenty years families, friends and former comrades of the INLA hunger strikers met in the Rosemount area of Derry to honour all the martyrs of 1981. Derry Ard Comhairle member and former P.O.W Martin McMonagle addressed the the annual IRSM commemoration. The platform was also shared in an act of working class solidarity with the mother

of brave Michael McLaughlin, the six year old boy badly burned by local 'joy-riders' after a stolen car was set alight.

In speaking at this years commemoration which marked the 24th anniversary of the 1981 hunger strike comrade McMonagle said that it was "in occasions such as today are for us to gather and pay a humble homage to the valour shown by our comrades who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their beliefs. We have a duty as republicans who honour all of the dead hunger strikers, to use today's commemoration to motivate ourselves for the challenges of today's struggle.

"It can never be over emphasised what a difficult period the 1981 hunger strike was for Republicans. What at times can

seem a world away, or a dark day that has just come to pass, the world in which we now find ourselves in, hasn't changed that much in the intervening 24 years. The primary cause of the conflict remains. the British rule of our country.

"Our people are still oppressed, divided and partitioned and no amount of spin can alter that fact. When we say 'our people' let us be totally clear we refer to all the people on the island of Ireland -Catholic Protestant, dissent and migrant workers. Black skinned white skinned, brown skinned gay or straight they are all our people.

"Republican prisoners are still being mistreated in Maghaberry as the British attempt to re-impose their failed policy of criminalisation. From this platform today we salute the courage and determination of those prisoners, who are fighting against injustice just as the hunger strikers showed their resolve to defeat that same policy of criminalisation."



Cuimhneam

Fallen Volunteers & political activists remembered

The staff and volunteers of the Irish National Liberation Army remember with pride our comrades whose anniversaries occur at this time.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Vol. Seamus Costello | Assassinated | 5 Oct 77 | Co. Wicklow |
| POW Colm Maguire | | 10 Oct 87 | Co. Laoise |
| Vol. Patrick Campbell | Killed in Action | 10 Oct 99 | Co. Antrim |
| Vol. Alex Patterson | Killed in Action | 12 Nov 90 | Co. Tyrone |
| Vol. Ronnie Bunting | Assassinated | 15 Oct 80 | Co. Antrim |
| Vol. Noel Lyttle | Assassinated | 15 Oct 80 | Co. Antrim |
| Vol. Tony McClelland | Killed in Action | 16 Oct 79 | Co. Armagh |

"When the freedom of our country and class has been won, let us guard it well, remembering it was paid for in the blood of those now dead. The building of the revolutionary party is the only tribute befitting our comrades."

The Ard Comhairle and Membership of the Irish Republican Socialist Party remember at this time our comrades who died in the struggle for a Socialist Republic.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Vol. Seamus Costello | Assassinated | 5 Oct 77 | Co. Wicklow |
| POW Colm Maguire | | 10 Oct 87 | Co. Laoise |
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"Whenever death may supound us, let it be welcome, provided that this, our battle cry, may reach some receptive ear and that other hands reach out to pick up our weapons, to entone our funeral dirge with the staccato of machine gun fire and new cries of battle and victory ever onward, Venceremos"

Republican Socialist POWs in Maghaberry, Portlaoise and Castlereagh remember with pride the volunteers of the Irish National Liberation Army who gave their lives in the struggle for Socialism.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Vol. Seamus Costello | Assassinated | 5 Oct 77 | Co. Wicklow |
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'If you hoist the green flag and remove the English army....unless you set about establishing a Socialist Republic all your efforts will have been in vain' James Connolly.

Insertions:

If you would like to place an notice into Cuimhneamh then please contact the Starry Plough office with details as soon as possible before you want it to appear. Our contact details are on page 2. Family notices are especially welcome.



An

The Starry Plough

Camchéachta



Pairtí Poblachtacht Soisalach na h-Éireann

The Cruelty Of Capitalism!

The Failure Following Hurricane Katrina: “A Question of Class”



Following on from the aftermanth of Hurricane Katrina the Irish Republican Socialist Movement and the Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America wish to first extend our sympathy to all the victims of Hurricane Katrina, our condolences to all those who lost friends and family, and our solidarity with all of the survivors.

There is no doubt that the question of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath is a question of class and race. The wealthy and middle classes, mostly white, were able to escape while the working class, mostly black, was left to die and the survivors left with an even greater nightmare.

While hurricanes are a natural phenomenon, their impact on human communities can be managed to prevent loss of life and even to reduce the damage caused by the hurricane itself. Hurricane Katrina has revealed that there was a clear pattern of systemic neglect which contributed to making New Orleans and nearby areas of the Gulf Coast more vulnerable to hurricanes and a disaster of this magnitude more likely. The systemic neglect was a conscious decision based on class and race, with a quarter of metropolitan New Orleans living under poverty level, most of whom are African-Americans.

Flood control systems could have been strengthened, especially after a 2001 report from the Federal Emergency Management Agency warned that a hurricane striking New Orleans was one of the most likely disasters to happen in the near future (the most likely disaster was a terrorist attack on New York City, another failure of the Bush Administration to heed the report's warnings). The Bush Administration, however, chose to cut flood control funding by 44 percent to pay for the illegal imperialist war against Iraq.

To the Bush Administration and the capitalist class it represents, sacrificing working class men and women in foreign imperialist wars is of far greater importance than protecting working class lives in the US.

In 2004, the US Army Corps of Engineers proposed to study how New Orleans could be protected from a catastrophic hurricane, but the Bush Administration refused to fund the research. In 1990, a federal task force began restoring lost wetlands surrounding New Orleans, which would have reduced storm surge during a hurricane, but starting in 2003 the Bush Administration's policy was to turn this land over to wealthy developers. For the Bush Administration or anyone else to say this wasn't avoidable is a lie.

There were deep flaws in how the disaster was managed even before the hurricane made land-fall, both by federal and local authorities. It was appropriate to order a mandatory evacuation, but what about the people without cars or money? What about the elderly, the disabled, or the homeless? While the US government and media have attempted to lay blame on the victims or survivors for not leaving, all methods of egress were blocked -- train service, bus service, and plane service were all halted before Katrina hit.

The poorer sections of the working class, especially those who were African-American (the population of New Orleans is 70% African-American), were abandoned to their fate by the capitalist system and a corrupt political leadership on several levels. Those that survived were again abandoned when it took nearly five days for relief efforts to begin, and those efforts

began rather halfheartedly and only after there was mass outrage from people in the US and around the world.

Members of the media were able to get to areas hit hard by Katrina as early as Monday, yet it took until Thursday and Friday for official aid to start arriving. During that delay, offers from other states and countries were refused by the federal government, condemning countless survivors of the initial flooding to death by hunger, dehydration, and drowning. Cuba generously offered to send 1,100 medical doctors with 26.4 tons of medications and diagnosis kits at no expense to the US, but this was rejected while US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice favored waiting for "the Lord" to come.

We can easily contrast this with how well Cuba handles hurricanes. Cuba only lost sixteen people when last a powerful category 4 hurricane struck, the highest death toll in forty-one years on an island constantly hit by hurricanes. Less than two months ago, 1.7 million people were quickly and safely evacuated on short notice in preparation for Hurricane Dennis. If a third world nation is capable of such a response, the US has no excuse.

The interests of the capitalist and middle classes were represented by the voices hysterically condemning looting and calling for the looters to be shot. For those people, the crime of stealing a television was much greater than the crime of abandoning tens of thousands of people to death or the survivors to squalid refugee centers. Are a few DVD players, which are no doubt insured by the stores in the first place, really of more importance than human lives? Sadly, the answer appears to be yes. This is the reality of

the capitalist ideology and its promotion of private property as the most important thing in society.

It should be noted that while Alabama suffered the ravages of the hurricane, native daughter Condoleezza Rice bought a \$3000 pair of shoes in New York, and while New Orleans drowned, Bush reminded many of Nero by strumming a guitar.

We hold the capitalist system and the Bush Administration primarily responsible for the deaths caused by Hurricane Katrina and the gross neglect of the survivors. We demand that all of the survivors be treated with dignity and given safe, clean housing rather than being pushed into squalid, overcrowded refugee centers. We demand that the US government accept the generous offer from the Cuban government to send medical aid. We demand that the rebuilding of New Orleans and other areas affected by the hurricane, such as Biloxi, Mississippi, includes rebuilding wetlands, increasing the efficiency and safety of flood management systems, and a real concern for working class communities, as well as plans for future disasters which includes quickly and safely evacuating everyone, no matter their income or skin color.

In conclusion, this should be a wake-up call to all workers that our lives are of no consequence to those who hold the real power in our society. The hurricane did more than destroy cities and lives, it also laid bare the cruelties of the capitalist system for all to see. It's up to all of us to not forget what we saw and to redouble our efforts to create a system where human lives always come first.

FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION & SOCIALISM!