

AN

IRELAND'S BIGGEST SELLING
POLITICAL WEEKLY

PHOBLACHT

Republican News

**Nollaig faoi shéan
is faoi mhaise
dhaoibh go léir**

BECAUSE of the Christmas holidays, *An Phoblacht/Republican News* will not be printed next week.

The next issue of the paper will therefore be the first of the New Year, coming out on Thursday, January 5th.

We take this opportunity to extend to all our readers best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

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● 1983, and more than 2,500 Free State troops and gardai search for a handful of republicans; 1984 will probably bring even further repression

A NEW YEAR'S resolution of repression, designed and refined to prevent the expression of republicanism, seems to be the prospect for the ominous-sounding year of 1984.

By distortion, and the exaggeration of isolated incidents, a determined effort is being made to justify an attempt to crush Sinn Féin, a legitimate and democratic political party. And the main reason is its success at the polls — both proven and potential.

The constant challenge over many years for republicans to go before the people at elections has been taken up with vigour. In the North it has resulted in Sinn Féin being poised to become the largest nationalist party. In the South, just one good showing by Sinn Féin at the outset of a newly developing electoral strategy has apparently thrown the establishment parties into alarm.

Sinn Féin has also shown that it is no mere simplistic 'Brits out!' party, but has economic, social and cultural policies and an expanding work-record which makes it a genuine radical alternative to those parties.

Small wonder that Charles Haughey, who, more than a decade ago, unsuccessfully attempted to purchase the republican struggle and thought he could ride to glory on the backs of those who fought and suffered in the North, now finds himself in alliance with the failed politician Conor Cruise O'Brien in urging a Coalition government to ban the only truly republican party — Sinn Féin.

Republicans have proven, by the suggested electoral method, that in spite of all the black propaganda

and censorship, thousands of people — in growing numbers — can appreciate the truth of their message and support their analysis for the future of this country.

The establishment parties fear that this progress will continue, but they are also afraid to fight on their own chosen ground. If they are so confident that Sinn Féin's analysis is wrong, then why not continue to challenge it at the ballot box. Why not debate it openly?

HYPOCRISY

Instead, they are changing the rules again.

But the hypocrisy of those who seek to repress does not end there, it extends also to their carefully selective condemnations of violence.

Where is the anger at the sectarian assassinations of nationalists, whether children murdered by British plastic bullets in the past or the recent victims of loyalist murder?

Where is the media publicity and detailed investigation of the crown forces' involvement in those most recent murders?

Such matters warrant but a few lines on an inside page.

HERE COMES 1984

The reality in Ireland is also a universal truth — an oppressed people will inevitably rise up to strive for freedom. In our country that has been a recurring reality for centuries.

The solution is not to condemn those who seek freedom and add to that oppression, but to remove it, and it can only be removed by the withdrawal of Britain from this island.

This spirit for freedom is stronger and more confident in Ireland today than it has been in the past 60 years. Irish republicanism can-

not be suppressed, it will be heard, whatever the attempts to silence it. Far from being ominous, 1984 can be a year of further dynamic progress. Our resolution can make it so.

Brits unsure of their next repressive response

Harrods Cautions follows hysteria

BY HILDA MacTHOMAS

THE HARRODS bombing caused the usual hysterical attention in the British press, which events in the North never receive, and renewed calls by Tory and unionist politicians for Sinn Fein to be banned.

'Holocaust!', 'Carnage!', 'Evil bastards!' screamed the Sunday tabloids, with more than a touch of the 'Falklands' spirit. The *Sunday Times*, after a paragraph on the 'cool barbarians' who planted the bomb, took up the RUC's black propaganda story of the 'split within the Provos between the ballot and the bomb' — whilst correctly suggesting that Prior's Assembly now seemed well and truly dead.

On Monday morning, however, the editorials were usually more restrained, and focussed on the question of whether or not to ban Sinn Fein. In Britain, as in Ireland, the mood was generally cautious. 'Caution' was advised by the *Guardian*, the *Times* warned against "ill-prepared switches of policy", and the *Daily Mirror* chose to advocate, as it has done several times in the past five years, "Britain's withdrawal from Ulster's affairs". In Ireland, most leading articles warned that a ban would be 'counter-productive', and would provide Sinn Fein with a 'propaganda weapon'.

From British and Irish constitutional politicians came a tidal wave of condemnations, which quickly drowned the tragic and unfortunate deaths in a sea of point-scoring hypocrisy. Thatcher called the IRA bombing barbaric and brutal. Metropolitan Police chief, and former RUC boss, Sir Kenneth Newman, displayed his experience gained in the six counties by calling a swift press conference to give his version of the bombing and cover over the police's indecision over the evacuation of the store.

INTERMENT

In Ireland, both Official Unionist and DUP spokespersons asked for Sinn Fein to be banned. DUP member Frank Millar called for 'limited internment' and the exclusion of Sinn Fein from radio and television coverage, while Harold McCusker declared:

"Simply because 100,000 political delinquents vote for murderers and advocates of murderers does

not mean that those representatives can be regarded as legitimate politicians."

CONTACTS

The SDLP, which electorally would hope to be the main beneficiary of a move to proscribe Sinn Fein, could barely refrain from demanding it. Hume chose to quote Owen Carron out of context on destabilising the South. And in a style which heralds another SDLP peacetime in the future, Hume filled the role of his predecessor, Gerry Fitt, very adequately by telling the Westminster parliament on Monday:

"As an Irish man standing in the Commons, I am ashamed. I believe that my shame will be shared by Irish men everywhere."

Lord Fitt himself called directly for the banning of Sinn Fein, at whose hands he suffered his humiliating electoral defeat, saying that Sinn Fein members were "day-time politicians and night-time gunmen".

On Sunday, British direct-ruler James Prior confirmed that following the death of unionist Edgar Graham, executed by the IRA at the beginning of December, he had advised his ministers to stop all contacts with Sinn Fein representatives.

The other options now open to the British government are selective internment, banning Sinn Fein, and cutting all contacts between Sinn Fein and the British administration — including the Housing Executive, the DHSS etc. While the first two options are, for the moment, considered by Prior and large sections of the British establish-



● A British policeman inspects the wreckage of the unauthorised Harrods car-bomb

ment as 'counter-productive', the third, which would attempt to deprive thousands of Northern nationalists of the only effective constituency representation they ever had, seems to be favoured by Prior.

For the British, it is a move which would present the triple

advantage of placating the unionists, hindering Sinn Fein's constituency work and, on the rebound, boost the electoral prospects of the SDLP, which would then enjoy the dubious, and dangerous, privilege of being the only nationalist representatives 'authorised' by the Brits.

Coalition

BY JACK MADDEN

COALITION Cabinet ministers have decided to postpone the introduction of measures to suppress Sinn Fein in the twenty-six counties pending discussions with Opposition Fianna Fáil leader Charles Haughey to agree a joint approach. The clear message emerging from that Cabinet meeting, on Tuesday, December 20th, was that the planned extension of repressive legislation to contain Sinn Fein would be preferable to sudden outright proscription.

Agreeing to even further restrictions on freedom of speech as an obvious target for any proposed new measures, the meeting, which acted on the recommendations of a report compiled on Monday by legal, military and security chiefs as well as Michael Noonan, Coalition Justice Minister, stated its aim:

"To curb the insidious activities of those who promote the activities of illegal organisations."

Indications that political parties in the twenty-six counties are seriously concerned at the rise of Sinn Fein as a radical alternative voice in Irish politics have become increasingly evident in recent months. In an hysterical reaction to the votes won by Christy Burke in the recent by-election in the



Civilians are not targets — IRA

THE Irish Republican Army have said that the placing of the car-bomb outside Harrods department store in London on Saturday, December 17th, although carried out by their Volunteers, was not the type of operation that had been authorised as part of their current strategy in England.

The full text of the IRA statement, issued by the Irish Republican Publicity Bureau in Dublin, is as follows:

"The Irish Republican Army have been operational in Britain throughout last week. Our Volunteers planted the bomb outside Woolwich Barracks and in the car outside Harrods store.

"The Harrods operation was not authorised by the Irish Republican

Army. We have taken immediate steps to ensure that there will be no repetition of this type of operation again. The Volunteers involved gave a 40-minute specific warning, which should have been adequate. But due to the inefficiency or failure by the Metropolitan Police, who boasted of foreknowledge of IRA activity, this warning did not result in an evacuation.

"We regret the civilian casualties, even though our expression of sympathy will be dismissed.

"Finally, we remind the British government that as long as they maintain control of any part of Ireland then the Irish Republican Army will continue to operate in Britain until the Irish people are left in peace to decide their own future."

ion to plan attack on Sinn Fein



Dublin Central constituency, politicians from other parties including Labour and the Workers Party bitterly denounced both Sinn Fein

and the 'irresponsible' people who had voted for them.

Such denunciations were again repeated by Coalition Defence Minister, Paddy Cooney on Friday last when, in a Leinster House address, he called on Catholic Church leaders to "say unequivocally that membership of Provisional Sinn Fein is wrong, if it is wrong".

Leaving no doubt as to what he thought of both members and supporters of the Republican Movement, Cooney added that he found it 'strange' that even after 'atrocities' republicans were not reviled in their communities as if 'there was some sort of moral blindness or lack of moral sharpness among the people', and continued by attacking Sinn Fein personnel such as trade union leader Phil Flynn, wondering "why such people are regarded as normal".

LAUNCHING PAD

Cooney's denunciation came hours before the discovery of abducted Quinnsworth executive Don Tidey and the subsequent

events which led to the death of a garda and a Free State soldier. His speech, however, featured in newspapers the following morning and marked the launching pad for a campaign of vilification against Sinn Fein and provided the rallying point for those politicians who feel sufficiently threatened by the prospect of a resurgent Sinn Fein in their constituencies to join calls to have the party proscribed.

By 4pm on Friday, Ted Nealon, whose constituency includes both Sligo and Leitrim, and who is obviously afraid that Sinn Fein may consolidate and build on the support which narrowly failed to win hunger-striker Joe McDonnell a seat in 1981, and came out again for John Joe McGill, arrived in Ballinamore and stated that the banning of Sinn Fein "may have to be looked at".

Even local politician and Free State Senator PJ Reynolds got in on the act and, pre-judging the end result of the detention under the Offences Against the State Act of local republicans, said that he was not surprised that elements in the area had been involved in the abduction of Tidey.

Throughout the weekend, Reynolds had acted as the public relations officer of 'respectability' in Ballinamore, showing more concern at the prospect of future revenue from tourism being lost by businessmen than to the harassment and intimidation by the gardai of ordinary people in the area, for whom the benefits of tourism are non-existent anyway.

TODAY TONIGHT

The main impetus for calls to proscribe Sinn Fein came, predictably enough, from RTE's *Today Tonight* programme on Saturday night when, in the wake of the London bombing and the Ballinamore deaths, Garret Fitzgerald was urged to consider that it was,

perhaps, time to make such a move.

Seemingly unprepared for this question, Fitzgerald replied that the position in relation to proscribing organisations such as Sinn Fein was constantly under review and would, of course, have to be reviewed again in the light of the weekend's events. His junior minister in the Department of the Taoiseach and Justice, Nuala Fennell, was less reticent in her comments, however, and called for the question of proscribing Sinn Fein to be looked at seriously.

The Fianna Fail response to the media pressure and reaction to the London bombing came on Sunday when, in the most significant indication to date of cross-party support for moves to ban Sinn Fein, party leader Charles Haughey said in the course of an RTE interview:

"If that (proscription) is what the government decides to do, with their full knowledge of the security situation, we will certainly support them."

He added, as an afterthought: "I don't think we should be making ad hoc judgements now in the middle of this present situation. What I think is called for is a very clear, mature attitude and total reassessment of the situation."

Other Fianna Fail members, including Michael Woods and Seamus Brennan, echoed this mood, saying that if the government decided there were links between "Sinn Fein and subversives" and if Sinn Fein could be seen to have a connection with the abduction of Don Tidey, they should be "proscribed immediately".

MEASURES

But perhaps the most pathetic endorsement of any move to ban Sinn Fein came from Workers Party leader Tomas MacGiolla, who said:

"Whilst the state must take all possible measures to ensure no repeat of the Ballinamore murders or the London bombing, my party is convinced that only the strengthening of the democratic process can or will defeat Provisionalism in the long-run."

Given past statements by Workers Party spokespersons that Sinn Fein is a non-democratic party, MacGiolla's statement can only be seen as offering support to attempts to crush Sinn Fein.

There were also further calls for the arming of all gardai and in an RTE interview PJ Rogan, general secretary of the Association of Garda Sergeants & Inspectors, called for passing of the Criminal Justice Bill in advance of any legislation governing a complaints procedure, which has been promised.

CLIMAX

Against such calls advocating increased repression, which reached their climax with a call by failed politician Conor Cruise O'Brien for the introduction of 'selective internment', opposition to such moves came from editorials in both the *Irish Times* and *Irish Press* (not by the *Independent*, which judged that the 'benefits' of proscription would outweigh any foreseeable disadvantages).

Organisations such as the Irish Council for Civil Liberties and the Irish Sovereignty Movement also opposed a ban, as did Fr Piaras O Duill, formerly chairperson of the National H-Block / Armagh Committee, who answered Paddy Cooney's 'morality' speech, saying

SINN FEIN ON BAN

IN A STATEMENT issued on Sunday, December 18th, the ardhomhairle of Sinn Fein described the threat to ban Sinn Fein as an act of national treachery against those thousands in the North who voted for Sinn Fein and are persecuted by British forces and sectarian discrimination.

The statement said:

"The threat from Garret Fitzgerald to ban Sinn Fein must be seen as more an attempt to bolster the SDLP than an attempt to prevent abductions and ransom demands. The Free State parties fear the rise of genuine republicanism and that Sinn Fein will become a major force in twenty-six county politics.

"A ban on Sinn Fein would be an act of national treachery against those thousands in the North, persecuted by British forces and sectarian discrimination, who voted for Sinn Fein.

"A ban on Sinn Fein would be totally unjust and would be totally disproportionate to the tragedy in Leitrim which we hope will never be repeated. The IRA, despite being challenged to explain its involvement, has done so and has been ignored and has stated that it is not out to attack the institutions of the Free State.

"No one talks of closing down the British Embassy or banning its officials, despite their support for British violence in the North and despite the fact that their policy relationship to British forces is totally integrated and much closer than that of Sinn Fein to the IRA.

"If Sinn Fein elected representatives are banned, can we expect the same treatment to be meted out to the British Ambassador in Dublin the next time he defends the killing of an Irish child by a plastic bullet?

"And, when the banning of Sinn Fein fails, what will happen next? Will the Dublin government go on to consider sections of Fianna Fail, or Kilimichael committees, or some journalists as being subversive? Will they declare the twenty-six counties to be a nation and declare the North to be part of England?

"When will the stupidity and irrationality of such repressive actions be realised and consideration be given to the fact that the instability in Ireland is as a result of partition and the British presence in the North?"

IRA statement on Ballinamore

THE attempted massacre of IRA Volunteers at Roundwood, County Wicklow, last August by the garda Special Branch, was obviously in the minds of the Volunteers who opened fire in self-defence at Free State forces at Ballinamore, County Leitrim, on Friday, according to an IRA statement issued the following day by the Irish Republican Publicity Bureau in Dublin. The IRA said:

"Our Volunteers were involved in the abduction of Don Tidey and Friday's shoot-out at Ballinamore.

"In the fatal shoot-out they were acting in defence of their lives and had in their minds the Task Force's attempted massacre of IRA Volunteers at Roundwood and the killing of Eamonn Byrne in Dublin.

"The situation and atmosphere has been hyped-up by massive searches and dragnets and by the Dublin government's encouragement to Mr Tidey's

company to refuse to pay. This trigger-happiness was further borne out by the Free State army's shooting of a passer-by.

"We repeat, our struggle is being fought against tremendous odds and only because of the disastrous, immoral failure of Free State governments to face up to their responsibility and use their resources to end the evil of British rule in the North of Ireland.

"The abduction of Don Tidey and the ransom demand was related to the struggle in the North and the fatal shootings were clearly distinct from, say, a pre-meditated ambush on the Task Force or Free State army, which would be an attack on the institutions of the state.

"We regret the deaths and injuries, firstly, from a humanitarian point of view, and secondly, because the British government will now rub its hands and watch with glee as the Free State government reacts to us instead of to the British partition of Ireland."

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

BOMB BLASTS OMAGH

OMAGH town centre, in County Tyrone, was devastated on Friday night, December 16th, when a 150lb bomb exploded outside the Royal Arms Hotel in High Street.

An IRA active service unit breached the tight security around Omagh's business heart to place the 150lb bomb. A 40-minute warning was given at 6.15pm to ensure against civilian injuries and the bomb detonated at 6.55pm, leaving an eight-foot crater in the road.

The Royal Arms was specially chosen as it was frequently used by both British troops and the RUC. Earlier this year a British soldier who had been drinking in the hotel was killed when a booby-trap bomb placed on his car exploded after he left the hotel.

The Royal Arms was totally destroyed while many other

commercial buildings in High Street, Bridge Street and Market Street were also damaged.

It was estimated that damage caused by the attack was in excess of £1 million.

UDR SOLDIER SHOT DEAD

On Saturday evening a UDR



soldier was shot and killed by IRA Volunteers. The soldier was leaving work shortly after 6pm and had just climbed into his car when two Volunteers fired several shots, killing him.

ARMAGH INCENDIARY
Hewitt's Men's Shop in the centre of Armagh was the target for an IRA incendiary bomb on Monday night, December 19th. A warning was given and the area cleared before the bomb exploded. Two other bombs placed at nearby shops were defused.



BACK HOME

WATERFORD man Kevin Dunphy arrived at Dublin Airport last Friday morning, having served nine years in English jails as a republican prisoner. At the conclusion of his sentence he was served with a deportation order.

Príosúnaigh na hÉireann i Sasana

LE SEÁN MacDOMHNAILL

AG CRUINNÍÚ poiblí de chuid Chumann Éigse agus Seanchais Ollscoil na Gaillimhe le deanaí, labhair Áine Nic Ghiolla Easpaigh agus an t-Athair Reamoinn Ó Muirí i leith príosúnaigh Éireannacha atá i ngeibheann thall.

Thosaigh an sagart, atá ina sheilfineach i bpríosún na mban in Ard Macha le mion cur síos ar a dtárlaíonn i saol an chime chogaidh sa Bhreatain. Go háirithe, luaigh sé an chaoi a bhfuil rialacha ar leith ó phríosún go príosún. Chomh maith le sin tá bealaigh ar leith ag na holfigh príosún leis na rialacha a chur i bhfeidhm.

Mar shampla, dúirt sé, is annamh a thagann Éireannach parole. Thagair sé don chóras chuairteoireachta.

Bíonn an na gaolta turasanna fada a dhéanamh agus ansin déantar gach iarracht stró a chur orthu. Uair-eanta deintear an cime a aistriú go príosún i lár na hoíche gan eolas ar bith a thabhairt dá ngoilte.

SPIORAD

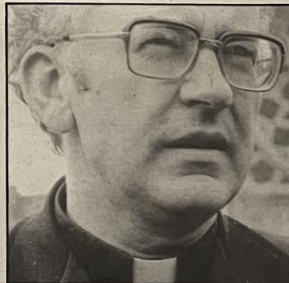
Mar sin féin choinnigh na príosúnaigh an spiorad i gcoinn. Deineann na cime comóradaí a gcomrdaíte a thit ar na dátaí is cúil. I measc na rudai eile a dúirt sé bhí Rial 43 a ligean do na scríonna áir gime a chur

i Solitary am ar bith. Thagair sé leis don dian bhrú a chuirtear ar na cime de bharr a bheith faoi ghlais le stádas Grád A.

Mar fhocal scoir, d'iarr sé cuidiú go dtabharfaí na príosúnaigh abhaile lena dtéarmaí a chur isteach anseo.

IAR-CHIME

Labhair Áine ansin, iar-chime a chailt naol mbliana go leith i bpríosún i Sasana. Dúirt sí gur cime lad na príosúnaigh poblachata i Sasana. Mar sin, dúirt sí, má tá duine ar bith ag scríobh litreacha ag na cime agus ba chóir do chéad é sin a dhéanamh, gur chuig na cime i Sasana is mó is gá a scríobh. "Cé gur deas an rud é litir d'fháil is fearr ceann ó do thír féin."



● An t-Athair Reamoinn Ó Muirí



● Áine Nic Ghiolla Easpaigh

Chait sé anuas ar na polaiteoirí anseo nár thagair an deis sa *Repatriation Bill* thall chun brú a chur ar Sasana.

I measc na geist ag an deireadh, d'iarr fear amháin dúirt an Muiríodh nach raibh siad ag dul ann de bhíodh dul, lena chara, an nach raibh cead ag Sinn t-Athair Faul, ós comhair an Féin dul agus suí ann.



Solidarity with Nicaragua

BY SEAN HALPENNY

A EUROPEAN conference in solidarity with Nicaragua and the people of Central America was convened at the Palais des Congress, Paris, last Saturday and Sunday, December 17th/18th. The conference was a response to calls for support by political, trade union and cultural organisations in Central and Latin America who had earlier assembled at a conference in Bogota, Colombia, in July of this year.

Over 400 delegates from 25 countries participated during the weekend. These included representatives from Brazil, Chile,

Colombia, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and El Salvador, as well as a broad cross-section of opinion throughout Europe. There were two representatives from Ireland, Denis Donaldson of Sinn Féin's Foreign Affairs Bureau and Claire O'Neill of the Irish Nicaragua Solidarity Committee. Sinn Féin's president Gerry Adams MP, sent a message pledging Sinn Féin's solidarity with the people of Nicaragua and Central America, and which was warmly received.

During the weekend, representatives of the FMLN of El Salvador and the Nicaraguan ambassador to France, Alejandro Serrano Caldera, addressed the conference. During his address Caldera accused the US administration of attempting to bring about a

situation "by which a provisional government will be declared which will be recognised by the USA". Caldera continued:

"Imperialism does not have the right to impose or dictate to smaller nations how they should develop or what institutions will serve their social progress or economic well-being."

At the end of the conference, a draft appeal on behalf of the people of Nicaragua and Central America was agreed and signed by the participants, including Sinn Féin. This appeal will go with a delegation to the general secretary of the United Nations and to the speaker of the House of Representatives of the US Congress.

MORGAN MISFIRES BUT TWO STILL HELD

BY JANE PLUNKETT

DISMISSING self-confessed perjurer John Morgan as a 'dishonest' and 'most unreliable' witness, Judge Murray, on Monday, December 19th, acquitted four Belfast men on trial at Crumlin Road Court of all charges laid against them by the RUC.

However, despite the discrediting of yet another show trial, the RUC signalled its continuing commitment to the paid-perjurer strategy and highlighted yet again their use of it to secure internment-by-remand of nationalists by immediately re-arresting one of the defendants outside the court. Patrick Fitzpatrick, who had spent 20 months on remand prior to his acquittal, appeared in court the following morning charged with the alleged killing of an RUC man, on the sole word of RUC perjurer Harry Kirkpatrick.

Another of those acquitted, 28-year-old Brendan Davison, was detained in custody as he was already facing other trumped-up firearms charges.

The two other defendants, 39-year-old John Huddleston and 23-year-old James Clinton, walked free from the court.

Despite the RUC's careful schooling, Morgan's five-day-long performance in the stand was disastrous, and Judge Murray had little option but to throw out Morgan's evidence wholesale. On two occasions Morgan had publicly admitted lying to the court and many of his statements in court were dismissed by the judge as 'confused and muddled' and, at times, 'tailored'.

In his summing-up, the judge also noted that an English crown court seven years ago had found that Morgan was suffering from a mental abnormality. But during the trial the RUC, who in earlier show trials had shown no compunction in using self-styled religious convert Kevin McGrady and the psychologically unstable Jackie Grimley, on this occasion, predictably, could produce no witnesses willing to claim that Morgan's mental state had ever returned to normal. This failure, too, was reluctantly admitted to by the judge.

Stating the obvious, Murray added that there was "virtually no corroboration of any of Morgan's evidence against the accused".

Referring to the charges on which Davison was acquitted which included a killing, possession and IRA membership, the judge observed that Morgan's evidence had "a contrived air about it", adding that in his opinion it had been 'coloured' by Morgan.

But despite this hint that, in future, the RUC should develop more subtlety in its coaching of perjurers, Judge Murray kept a discreet silence on the evidence of such collaboration which had emerged during the trial.

A particularly blatant example was condemned by defence lawyers during the hearing. Morgan had claimed that he attended an alleged IRA debriefing session with one of the accused, James Clinton, after both had been held under a seven-day order. But overnight, Morgan admitted he had been 'mistaken', after the RUC had apparently discovered that Castlereagh records released to defence lawyers would contradict his story.

The RUC's sudden re-arrest of Patrick Fitzpatrick has been con-



● JOHN MORGAN



● PATRICK FITZPATRICK



● BRENDAN DAVISON

demned both by Sinn Féin's Sean McKnight and by Fitzpatrick's solicitor Oliver Kelly, who pointed out in court on Tuesday that his client has already served the equivalent of a 3½-year sentence, and could spend years on remand before his trial date is set.

McKnight, who called also for the release of Brendan Davison, condemned the re-arrest of 22-year-old Fitzpatrick as "an attempt by the British paid-perjurer system to demoralise the nationalist youth by playing a game of cat and mouse with their lives".



● Sarah Grimes addresses last Saturday's meeting against the show trials

SHOW TRIALS RALLY

THE PLIGHT of scores of men and women who will spend Christmas incarcerated in the North's prisons on the sole word of RUC paid perjurers was a recurring theme of a Stop the Show Trials Committee street meeting at the Busy Bee, Andersonstown, last Saturday afternoon.

Speakers at the West Belfast rally included Sinn Féin Councillor Alex Maskey, Maura McCrory of the Stop the Show Trials Committee, and Jackie Fitzpatrick, a recently released victim of RUC perjurer Kevin McGrady.

The rally was also addressed by an English member of the Troops Out Movement, Sarah Grimes, who gave details of their campaign work against the show trials and pointed out:

"What we need to do is smash through this wall of silence. What the British government does in these trials is to create an illusion that some process of law and order is going on. But behind this illusion the reality is that internment is happening again."

OBSCENE SEARCH RESISTED

BY MAEVE ARMSTRONG

A VINDICTIVE sentence of three days' solitary confinement plus seven days' loss of all privileges has been imposed by Armagh Prison administration on a remand prisoner, Catherine Moore, who refused an order to 'open her legs', during a strip-search, according to a statement from the women prisoners. The incident took place last Thursday, December 15th.

This latest form of degrading treatment in the ongoing strip-searching of remand prisoners has been stepped up recently as a further psychological weapon against the women.

Another prisoner, Siobhan O'Hanlon, was sentenced to three days' solitary confinement and loss of privileges plus 14 days' loss of remission when she objected to a warden forcibly pulling her out of the bathroom. She was then frog-marched down the wing and locked up.

The assault arose out of the warders' continuing refusal to allow more than one prisoner out on the wing at any one time and is part of a petty campaign of stringent rule enforcement by the prison administration to victimise the women.

PAROLE

Sinn Féin's elected representative in Derry, Martin McGuinness, has called on the Northern Ireland Office to state publicly if compassionate parole for republican prisoners on the death of members of their families has been ended. This follows the refusal of the NIO to grant compassionate parole to one of the seven original H-Block hunger-strikers, Thomas McFeely, on the death of his father, William McFeely, of Dungiven.

McGuinness said:

"It is disgraceful and inhuman that republican prisoners who have an excellent record in honouring compassionate parole should be refused, while members of the RUC and UDR, charged recently with the murders of Irish nationalists, have been released on bail."



● Armagh Prison

OLD AND ALONE

BY JANE PLUNKETT

THE LIVES of old and disabled people in Altmore, Craigavon, are threatened by the continued refusal of the uncaring British colonial authorities to employ a warden and install an alarm system in their bungalows to enable them to summon help in the event of accident or sudden illness.

Some ten residents of the 20 bungalows live alone. Three are confined to wheelchairs and several are in their 80s.

Altmore, which is close to the nationalist Ardowen Estate, is believed by the local tenants' association to be the only group of mobility-standard bungalows in the area which does not have an alarm/warden system.

In predominantly loyalist Rossmoyle, such bungalows are fitted with an alarm pull-cord in every room, with an intercom system from bedrooms and bathroom.

The Altmore/Ardowen Tenants' Association has repeatedly pressed for such a system to be installed in Altmore but has met with only refusal and buck-passing on the part of authorities responsible. According to the association's chairperson, Paul Gibney:

"When we approached the Housing



● The lack of an alarm in Mary McCreedy's bungalow is not the only complaint of old and disabled people in Altmore

Executive first, they said it was a DHSS problem. The DHSS said they had joint responsibility with the Executive, but then

told us that they didn't have the funds."

One resident, 62-year-old Mary McCreedy, who is confined to a wheelchair,

lives alone. Her home-help is paid to come in for just 30 minutes each day. Though she has a telephone, that would be of little use if she had a fall in the bathroom. A cheerful woman herself, she points out that the fears of many older residents are increased by the relative isolation of the estate, beside fields.

The lack of an alarm system is not her only complaint. Most of the internal doors are too narrow for her wheelchair.

"I was at the Executive to try and widen the doors. I'm always bumping my knuckles going through. They told me there was nothing I could do about it."

RISKS

Only a tall and fit person could use the high-level kitchen cupboards fitted in the bungalows.

One of her neighbours, 50-year-old Mary Hill, is also confined to a wheelchair, with multiple sclerosis. Her husband Jackie is understandably angry at the risks to which she is exposed by the authorities' indifference.

"One time I went out to the shop and when I came back she was lying in the bathroom. She couldn't move and was lying there for half an hour. Luckily, I wasn't away any longer."



● Rosaleen McBride and her children are facing a not so merry Christmas

HARDSHIP IN DIVIS

BY MAEVE ARMSTRONG

FOR ALMOST a month now, and with Christmas virtually here, approximately 16 families in the Divis Flats complex in West Belfast have been severely affected by water seeping into the main gas supply which has rendered them unable to cook or keep warm for days at a time as many of the flats have gas heating.

Residents of Cullinstree Walk, Path and Row, including the elderly, young families and the sick, have yet again become the innocent pawns in a tussle with the bureaucracy of the gas board and particularly the Housing Executive, who have refused to take responsibility for the maintenance of a derelict public house in the complex from which the fault originates.

A deep pool of water, regularly topped up by heavy rainfall, has accumulated in the building and gradually seeped into the gas mains. Consequently this prevents the gas supply from reaching the flats and, despite protests from the residents, Sinn Féin and the local Divis Residents Association, the Executive remains uncompromisingly callous.

Residents were also angered by a Housing Executive spokesperson, quoted in the *Irish News* on December 12th, who claimed that only one tenant had been affected, whom they had supplied with alternative heating. Mrs Rosaleen McBride from Cullinstree Walk, mother-of-five children said:

"The gas usually went off around 7-8pm every night, but from last Thursday it went off altogether, came back on for an hour on Saturday evening, then off completely until Tuesday. Sinn Féin got us cookers and on this balcony we had one cooker between seven families so we were naturally very angry when we read the Irish News. It seemed that the Executive just wanted to wash their hands of it as if it was of no consequence."

Another couple, in their 80s,

Mr and Mrs Loughran, both deaf and dumb, were totally bewildered by the fault in their supply while another neighbour, Maggie Early, and her brother survived on cups of tea when the gas was off.

PUMPING

At present the gas board and members of the Water Services are trying to correct and maintain services by pumping water out of the pipes each day, but with only a skeleton staff available to all public service departments over the Christmas period, Divis residents are extremely anxious about their predicament.

Sinn Féin Councillor Alex Maskey, a member of the gas committee at Belfast City Council, who has already contacted the gas board on the issue, is again scheduled to raise the matter this Wednesday night December 21st. He hit out at "the apparent inability of various statutory bodies to accept responsibility" for a problem which was causing extreme hardship to families, and concluded:

"Once again this latest problem in Divis Flats proves that the only solution was the total demolition of the complex and the building of proper homes for the people of the area."



DUBLIN CHILDREN'S PARTY

TWENTY children from Dublin and surrounding areas were entertained at a Christmas party in Sinn Féin's Blessington Street premises on Sunday, December 18th. The children, all relatives of republican prisoners, each got a present from Santa and enjoyed the showing of cartoon films. There were songs from the children themselves, and a free draw for two bicycles and a rocking horse.



FEMINIST SANTA CLAUS

'MAMMY' Christmas made a rare appearance last Saturday, December 17th, at a children's Christmas party in the Falls Women's Centre. The party was organised by full-time and voluntary helpers and was attended by about 30 West Belfast children and their mothers.



UNUSUAL DECORATIONS

BELFAST Sinn Féin erected a large Christmas tree outside its Connolly House office. The tree has tied to its branches the names of all republican prisoners in Ireland, Britain, France and the USA.

Thirteen UDR and RUC men now face murder charges

BY EAMON TRACEY

THE EIGHTH UDR soldier to be charged in three weeks with a sectarian assassination appeared in a Belfast magistrates' court on Monday, December 19th.

Geoffrey Edwards was charged with the murder of Sinn Fein election worker Peter Corrigan, who was shot dead in Armagh on October 25th last year. Edwards was also charged with four attempted sectarian murders including, in September last year, that of Seamus Grew, who was subsequently murdered by the RUC in December.

The day after Edwards appeared in court, one of his seven colleagues, UDR Sergeant Walter Roleston, who was charged earlier in the month with the murder of Adrian Carroll, was released on £50 bail when it was revealed that a third UDR soldier, Noel Bell, one of the first to be charged with Carroll's killing, had signed an affidavit saying that he would not give evidence against Roleston.

It was not made clear at Tuesday's bail application for Roleston whether or not Bell's retraction would affect the charges against the other six UDR soldiers similarly charged with Adrian Carroll's murder.

On Thursday morning, December 15th, RUC man Thomas Andrews appeared in court charged with the murder of 18-year-old Tony Dawson

in the Short Strand in the early hours of Monday morning, December 12th. Andrews was the fifth RUC man to be charged with murder in recent weeks.

The day before Andrews appeared in court, the other four RUC men were returned for trial; one for the murder of Seamus Grew, the remaining three for that of Eugene Toman.

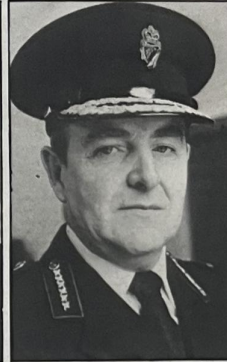
EAGERNESS

Although much has been made by James Prior, RUC Chief Constable John Hermon, and others, of the RUC's seeming eagerness to charge colleagues or UDR soldiers, it must be remembered that the press was about to break the story of UDR involvement in sectarian killings in Armagh.

Whilst the RUC men were in-



● The charging of UDR/RUC men has been forced upon James Prior (left) and RUC chief John Hermon (right) by journalists who were about to lift the lid on members of the British crown forces involved in sectarian murders



volved in the British government's shoot-to-kill policy, which attracted the full glare of public attention and was seen therefore by many as unjustifiable and illegal, it appears likely that the four RUC men charged will be found not guilty. A question mark must similarly hang over the developments of the UDR case now that Bell has retract-

ed. Only in the case of Thomas Andrews is it likely that a member of the crown forces will actually be found guilty. However, already one Northern unionist judge hearing the bail application has raised the issue of manslaughter rather than murder, a charge which would carry a considerably lesser sentence.

Death of Charlie McGinley

THE DEATH has occurred of Charlie McGinley, of Bundoran, County Donegal, following a heart attack; he was in his early 80s.

His remains were removed from the Sheil Hospital, Ballyshannon, to Requiem Mass at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Bundoran, followed by burial at St Ninian's Cemetery. The coffin was draped with the Tricolour throughout.

At the graveside, Michael Collins, chairperson of Bundoran Sinn Fein, offered sympathy to the relatives of the deceased. Brendan Magill of Ballyshannon Sinn Fein led a decade of the rosary in Irish.

Joe O'Neill, Sinn Fein councillor on Bundoran UDC, gave a short oration in which he recalled that Charlie McGinley was an IRA Volunteer in the Tan War and took the republican side after the Treaty. He was interned by both the British and the Free Staters in Newbridge Concentration Camp. O'Neill continued:

"Afterwards he went to America and immediately joined Clann na Gael which supported the Republican Movement. Steadfast and unflinching, he never lost sight of his republican ideals."

"People of the calibre of Charlie McGinley are the backbone of the Movement. They give their time and their lives, if necessary, in the furtherance of the cause. Not for them financial gain; the freedom of all Ireland will be reward enough."



Death of Maisie McNulty

THE DEATH took place on Thursday, December 15th, of Maisie McNulty, a dedicated republican all her life and an active participant in all aspects of the struggle from the '30s to the present day. Although ill, Maisie attended this year's Sinn Fein and this in November.

The funeral took place in Belfast on Saturday. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Belfast advice centre hours

THE five West Belfast Sinn Fein advice centres will be open up to and including Friday, December 23rd. They will be closed on Saturday 26th, 27th and 28th, and on Monday, January 2nd.

On Thursday and Friday, December 29th/30th, the advice centre at Connolly House, Andersonstown, will be open from 1am to 3pm.

All five West Belfast centres will reopen as normal on Tuesday, January 3rd.

Witness assaulted

BY MAEVE ARMSTRONG

SHORT STRAND man James Holmes, who was one of the main eye-witnesses to the sectarian murder by an RUC man of his friend Tony Dawson last Sunday week December 11th, was verbally abused and attacked by RUC men from Mountpottinger barracks, situated only a matter of yards away from the scene of the shooting.

Holmes received a black eye when he was assaulted by the RUC late on Wednesday night, December 14th. In a statement released the following day, Denis Donaldson, Sinn Fein spokesperson for



● Denis Donaldson of East Belfast Sinn Fein points to where Tony Dawson was gunned down by an RUC man in a sectarian murder this month

East Belfast, said:

"This reprisal, in the form of a physical attack on another member of the Short Strand community, demonstrates, contrary to claims that the present-day RUC is very

different from the RUC of 1969, that it is still a sectarian force whose members regard the nationalist community as fair game."

The Sinn Fein statement also attacked press reports which at-

tempted to tone down the deliberate, premeditated and coldly executed actions of the RUC man charged with Tony Dawson's murder by describing him as being in his 'early 40s' and a 'new recruit to the force'. The statement points out that, contrary to this:

"He is 30 years old and has been a member of the Divisional Mobile Support Unit — obviously an RUC man of some experience. Also, the blatant manner in which he carried out the murder of Tony Dawson would lead any right-thinking person to assume that he must have felt reasonably confident that among the RUC, there was an atmosphere of acceptance of his actions and a very remote possibility of him being apprehended."

"The actions of his fellow RUC men last night in the Short Strand, rather than showing embarrassment on their part, demonstrates their frustration and hostility towards the entire nationalist community."

North's repression act slammed

BY MAEVE ARMSTRONG

MAJOR ABUSES of civil liberties in the use of the Emergency Provisions Act in the North have been detailed by three groups who have been investigating the use of legal powers and the role of the RUC.

Highly critical evidence was presented by the National Council for Civil Liberties, the Irish Information Partnership and the Cobden Trust to Sir George Baker, who is officially 'reviewing' the legislation for the British government, at a press conference in Westminster last Friday, December 16th.

A new book entitled *The Use and Abuse of Emergency Legislation in Northern Ireland*, by Dermot Walsh, lecturer of law, which was launched at the conference, focussed on examining official Diplock court records and interviews with 'suspects' in RUC custody. The survey revealed that 90% of people arrested under the EPA were released without charges being preferred and that a high proportion of these

(75%) were not questioned about any specific incident but were detained to collect low-level intelligence.

Walsh's research, which was conducted when he occupied the Cobden Trust research studentship at Queen's University Belfast, also established that 40% of cases heard in the Diplock non-jury courts fell into the category of non-scheduled (criminal) offences.

DETENTION

Sarah Spencer, acting general secretary of the NCCL, called for a return to the principle that 'reasonable suspicion' should be established before arrests were made, for the restoration of jury trials, and a reduction of the present

72-hour detention period where people can be held without being charged. She stated:

"Sixty years of emergency powers have failed to solve the problem. Indeed we believe it has exacerbated it."

Echoing these criticisms David Roche, speaking for the Belgium-based Irish Information Partnership, felt that those who favour 'emergency' legislation in the six counties had failed to produce "any evidence that they have assisted the success or survival of democratic institutions."

"There is no evidence that the present powers will help restore peace, security or prosperity," he said.

On the contrary, he pointed out that existing evidence revealed that emergency legislation had 'significantly contributed' to a deterioration of the law which had been exploited by the RUC. He added:

"The Acts have abolished estab-

lished statutory and common law rules, founded and relied upon to prevent miscarriages of justice. They have permitted general powers of arrest and search and there is evidence that these powers have been, and are, abused."

The Use and Abuse of Emergency Legislation in Northern Ireland
Dermot P.J. Walsh

The dangers of DP

BY JANE PLUNKETT

WOMEN who have been given the contraceptive injection Depo-Provera at Belfast's Royal Victoria Hospital have accused doctors there of failing to inform them fully, in advance, of the unpleasant side-effects, and possible long-term dangers, of the controversial drug.

Concern has also been expressed that the Royal has for months failed to act on the manufacturers' own belated warnings concerning its use.

In recent months, several general practitioners and health workers have pressed the Royal to provide statistics on the number of women being given the drug, and indeed to inform them when their patients are given it. Several health workers approached AP/RN to voice their concern at the use of Depo-Provera in West Belfast which, in the words of one, is 'shrouded in secrecy', but they refused to be named for fear of losing their jobs.

DP is undoubtedly the most effective contraceptive available, providing almost 100% protection against unwanted pregnancy, and with the added advantage that there are no pills to be lost or forgotten. Manufactured by the American drug company Upjohn International, DP is a long-acting injection which works in a similar fashion to the 'mini-pill', by boosting the level of the hormone progesterone in the woman's body. It also stops ovulation (the release of a woman's egg each month).

One injection is claimed to give protection for three months, but doctors employed by the manufacturers have admitted that DP remains active, on average, for probably eight to ten months.

This long-lasting effect makes it particularly important that a woman should be given full information on the possible risks, since any side-effects she suffers will last until the drug wears off.

The commonest reported side-effects are loss of monthly periods, or continual bleeding, headaches, depression and massive weight gain. Others include backache, cramps, nausea, dizziness and continual tiredness.

RISKS

The long-term risks are as yet unknown, though there have been claims, based on disputed animal studies, that it could cause cancer. Some doctors have expressed concern that the drug could cause permanent infertility in some women, but little research has been done to test the truth of this. No one yet knows whether DP may harm babies who receive the hormone it contains through their mother's milk (though there is a chance that this could affect their sexual development in later years).

In the USA, which has the strictest drug control procedures in the world, DP was banned for use as a contraceptive (it has other applications) in 1978. In Britain it is licensed only for short-term use, for women whose partners have just had a vasectomy and for women being immunised against German measles (rubella). But doctors can prescribe the drug on a long-term basis, according to their 'clinical judgement'.

The RVH claims that women are carefully advised on the possible side-effects, by senior specialist



●The Royal, where use of the controversial drug Depo-Provera is causing concern to patients and health workers alike staff, before being given the injection.

But the reality is that, probably in the majority of cases, women are told few facts and are thus denied the right to make an informed decision on whether or not to accept it. In the cases reported to AP/RN, women have generally been told only that they may put on weight and may lose their monthly periods.

In the Royal, DP has many times been given, only days after childbirth, to women being immunised against German measles. In an emotional and exhausted state, these women are told that they risk giving birth to a handicapped child if they become pregnant while the vaccine remains active.

PRESSURISED

Although family planning doctors maintain that these women are free to choose other methods of contraception, some women, and some health workers, feel that they were pressurised into taking the drug. Some were not even told its name.

Andersonstown woman Susie McKenna, aged 19, was given Depo-Provera in February, just three days after the birth of her first child. Susie recalls:

"I had no choice. She said that I had to get it because of the German measles injection. I asked them were there any side-effects and they said no, it was just straightforward, but my periods might be a bit irregular. They didn't even tell me the name of it until I asked the doctor the next day."

Susie McKenna was given no written information about the drug and was given the injection only an hour after she was first told about it.

The side-effects she suffered included severe leg cramps ("Sometimes I couldn't move them"), backaches, depression and, most

seriously, continual bleeding. When she returned to the Royal six weeks later, for her post-natal examination, she was told that her symptoms were caused by DP.

"But beforehand they hadn't told me of any side-effects."

In June, four months after having 'the injection', she was admitted to the Royal for two days for a minor operation to stop the bleeding.

This kind of use of the drug on new mothers has continued, provoking growing criticisms from health workers, and West Belfast women.

WARNED

Last April, in a widely publicised announcement, Upjohn warned that, because of the bleeding problems, the drug should not be administered to mothers until at least six weeks after childbirth. Yet for months after this recommendation, doctors at the Royal's maternity unit continued to administer the drug to women within four days of childbirth.

The manufacturers' profit-dictated interest in down-playing the risks of Depo-Provera is undoubtedly partly to blame for this continued practice. Leaflets distributed with British-made stocks of the drug in late 1982 stated that, for new mothers, DP should 'ideally' be administered within a week of childbirth, even though overwhelming evidence of the problems was already available.

Doctors at the Royal have injected DP into breast-feeding mothers, shortly after childbirth, despite the 1981 World Health Organisation recommendation against this practice. The manufacturers, Upjohn, have been criticised for failing to publicise this recommendation.

LONG-TERM

According to the Royal, the drug is only administered for long-

term use in special cases, when other methods are unsuitable. In some cases, a woman's life may be at risk from a further pregnancy.

The Royal's claims appear to be contradicted by the experience of one New Barnsley mother of five who requested the injection herself and says she obtained it 'easily' on two occasions. When she came off it, after side-effects which included backache, fatigue and a 20-pound weight gain, she was fitted with a coil. According to this woman:

"There was no problem getting it. I was only in for about five minutes and then straight out. I wasn't really given the chance to talk about different methods of contraception."

Normally a cheerful and energetic woman, as a result of the DP she became severely depressed and irritable, and found it difficult to be with her young children. According to a close woman friend:

"She was absolutely and completely changed when she was on it. She was just on edge and terribly depressed all the time."

Another West Belfast mother, in her 20s, who was unable on medical grounds to use other methods of contraception, chose DP as an alternative to sterilisation. She was on it for four years, gained nearly three stone in weight and suffered several other persistent side-effects before she decided, several months ago, not to have another injection.

Over the years, she recalls, the doctors' answers to her numerous questions were very unsatisfactory:

"They don't really tell you anything about it. Anything I asked them, they said: 'Why, do you think it's not agreeing with you?' Whereas I'd like them to tell you more about it."

There is no public record of the number of times that Depo-Provera has been administered for long-term

use at the RVH family planning clinic. Ultimate responsibility for its administration lies with the Eastern Health and Social Services Board.

CHOICE

The experiences of these women underline the bleak reality that although modern, more reliable forms of contraceptive have been welcomed by many women as an essential aid in their struggle to control their lives in equality with men, nevertheless women still have little genuine choice in matters of contraception.

Because no safe and acceptable contraceptive yet exists, women are expected to endure side-effects which affect their physical and mental health. In the case of DP, the British 'population-control' oriented Family Planning Association calls merely for better counselling by doctors in order to persuade women to 'accept' its unpleasant side-effects.

Because of the unknown possibility of more serious long-term medical risks, some women's groups have called for DP to be banned. Others point out that such calls ignore the serious known risks of the pill and the coil, which has been proven to cause infertility in some women.

DP, these women argue, at least provides one additional option for women who may not be able to use other methods, and has been a welcome boon to some women.

Although the drug has been administered to over 10 million women in 84 countries - mainly in the Third World, there is said to be remarkably little definite evidence that it causes any form of illness in humans. Yet this very lack of evidence has alarmed some experts, who point out that insufficient, long-term research has been carried out on DP.

MULTINATIONAL

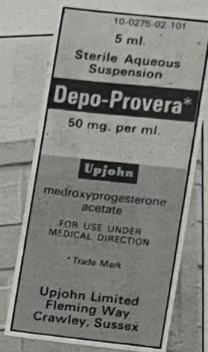
Women's right to choose is also restricted by the multinational drug companies whose priority is their massive profits, not the needs of women. Upjohn, to which DP represents an investment of over £10 million, has re-applied to both the American and British authorities for a long-term licence, following previous unsuccessful attempts. It has far more money to spend on promoting its claims than do the drug's critics. Such long-term licensing could earn Upjohn £40,000 a year in Britain alone and, in a spin-off effect, also provide a much more lucrative boost in sales worldwide.

The Campaign Against Depo-Provera has argued that racist and spurious population-control ideologies have been behind the already widespread administration of DP in the Third World, and also to Black and Asian women in Britain.

With many powerful interests ranged against them, choosing a contraceptive remains an anxiety for most women, in which they get little genuine help from doctors, who often arrogantly assume that 'doctor knows best'. As one nurse in a West Belfast family planning clinic told AP/RN:

"Many women come out from seeing the doctor still unsure whether they are doing the right thing or not, and very anxious because of the risks of different contraceptives."

"Very, very few couples attend family planning clinics, so women end up carrying all the burden and responsibility."



How about it, *Today Tonight*?

★ ★ ★

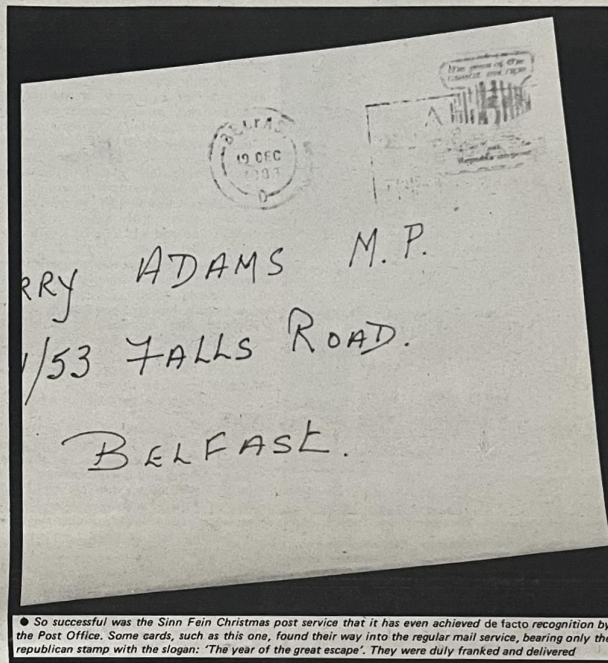
★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★

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" ' Now then, gentlemen. How would you

A Sticky question



● So successful was the Sinn Féin Christmas post service that it has even achieved de facto recognition by the Post Office. Some cards, such as this one, found their way into the regular mail service, bearing only the republican stamp with the slogan: 'The year of the great escape'. They were duly franked and delivered

"And she did," adds the *Guardian*.

★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★

One of the 'precautions' promised as a possible 'safeguard' along with the new Criminal Justice Bill in the twenty-six counties is the taping of interrogation.

★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★

The detective, named Jordan, is the second garda to be charged in connection with the death.

WHAT'S ON

PRISON PICKET

2pm Saturday 24th December
Wormwood Scrubs Prison
Du Cane Road
LONDON W12
(Nearest tube: White City)
Organised by Sinn Féin

DUBLIN BUS TO PORTLAOISE CHRISTMAS TIMES

CHRISTMAS TIMES
 8am Christmas Eve
 12.30pm Stephen's Day
 Bookings must be confirmed at
 5 Blessington Street, Dublin
 (phone 308783), prior to travelling

**CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL
IN SUPPORT OF REPUBLICAN POWs**

5pm Saturday 24th December
Church Square
MONAGHAN
Organised by Sinn Féin

**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SWIM
IN AID OF PRISONERS DEPENDANTS**

12 noon Christmas Day
3rd lock bridge
Grand Canal
Inchicore
DUBLIN
Sponsor-a-swimmer cards from
AP/RN, 44 Parnell Square
Organised by Inchicore Sinn Féin

BALLYSEEDY MEMORIAL DANCE

Featuring The Hi-lows
Monday 26th December
Ballygarra House
County Kerry
Taille £2
Bar extension

BALLAD SESSION

Featuring Latch
Monday 26th December
Cassidy's Lounge
COLLON
County Louth
Taille £1

**DUBLIN CITY RAMBLERS
IN CONCERT**

IN CONCERT
Tuesday 27th December
McAllister's Hotel
BALLINAMORE
County Leitrim
Bar extension
Organised by Sinn Féin

**FEARGHAL O HANLON
WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY**

(27th Anniversary)
2.30pm Sunday 1st January
Lathlurcan Cemetery
MONAGHAN TOWN

SEAN SABHAT COMMEMORATION
8.45pm Sunday 1st January

2.45pm Sunday 1st January
Bedford Row
LIMERICK
Speaker: Seamas Kerr

FEARGHAL O HANLON
3rd ANNUAL MEMORIAL LECTURE

3rd ANNUAL MEMORIAL LECTURE
The Way Forward
for the Republican Struggle
Speaker: Owen Carron
3pm Sunday 1st January
St MacCartan's Hall
MONAGHAN TOWN

IRISH BRIGADE ON TOUR
10pm Friday 6th July

10pm Friday 6th January
Ballinaglera Hall
BALLINAGLERA
County Leitrim
Taille £2
Organised by Sinn Féin

FRANK CARROLL COMMEMORATION

3pm Sunday 8th January
WALSH ISLAND
County Offaly
Details of Dublin bus in the
next edition of AP/RN

Registration in the 26 counties

Draft registers can be checked at local libraries or post offices. Registration forms are also available from post offices.

A televised show trial

BY HILDA MacTHOMAS
& DAMIEN O'ROURKE

A NEW LOW in gutter television was scored on Monday, December 19th, by an hour-long *World in Action* extravaganza entitled *The Honourable Member for Belfast West*, screened on the entire ITV network.

The programme, which was planned for some time as a deliberate hatchet-job on the newly-elected Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams MP — with a quick swipe at two other Sinn Féin elected representatives, Danny Morrison and Martin McGuinness — was quickly up-dated to include last weekend's events.

It had apparently been shown in several previews to British politicians and journalists and was so libellous that it could only be inspired and sanctioned by the British government.

The programme wove fact and fiction with professional skill in an attempt to show what even the most biased Orange court had been unable to prove: that Adams was, and is, in the IRA, and that Sinn Féin is closely linked to, if not controlled by, the IRA.

Shown on the eve of the Dublin government's consideration of whether to ban Sinn Féin, its objective was unfolded with sledge-hammer subtlety.

FANCIFUL

The prime witness in this televised show-trial was Peter McMullan, a former British paratrooper who deserted from that force, briefly took refuge with Belfast republicans, served a prison sentence as a non-political prisoner in Portlaoise, and then fled to the United States where he sold fanciful accounts of his past to gullible newspapers.

In fact, McMullan's actual career could only have put himself and Adams in Belfast for a total of six weeks in 1972, because of Adams being in prison but *World in Action* made sure they were action-packed weeks. Moreover, although McMullan spoke of IRA meetings with Danny Morrison and Martin McGuinness, neither have ever met him.

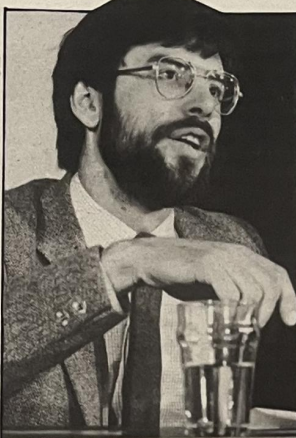
The witness's credibility was rather flawed by the fact that his interviewer was constantly suggesting what had happened and McMullan merely agreed.

However, the list of Adams' alleged activities was churned out, beginning with his first crime of being born into a republican family and progressing from there to a particularly vicious claim that he had witnessed a shooting of an innocent boy in Ballymurphy in a fictitious version of that event which would hardly build up the faith of local people in the rest of the sorry tale.

ASTONISHING

Even more astonishing for Belfast viewers — and anyone at all clued in to Irish politics — was the trio of secondary witnesses who were to add colour to the narrative.

Seamus Lynch, fresh from elocution classes, was introduced as being a member of the Workers Party; but then came Dessie 'the Devil' O'Hagan, of the Workers Party, introduced as an 'ex-internee'; and a heavily-disguised 'community worker', who explained how the IRA knee-capped kids for mitching from school, was all too clearly



● GERRY ADAMS



● DANNY MORRISON

none other than Mary McMahon of the Workers Party!

SCURRILOUS

To try and add some depth to this sorry trio, a hapless Bernadette McAliskey was conned into the programme and was left looking very foolish indeed. She was shown speaking of Adams at the time of the hunger-strike and his apparently cold impassivity during the National H-Block Committee meetings.

Immediately after the programme, however, she issued a statement which said:

"I wish to publicly dissociate myself from the scurrilous, deceitful propaganda which was issued as a *World in Action* programme on Gerry Adams.

"I further wish to apologise to Gerry Adams, the Republican Movement and the people vilified in the programme for inadvertently being used in this manner.

"The only comment of mine actually used was half an answer to two separate questions and, in the context used, the answers were distorted and given a meaning in direct opposition to the meaning intended."

But unfortunately, Bernadette had allowed herself to boast foolishly how, during the hunger-strike, Adams had 'learned tactics and propaganda' from herself and 'other activists'. She was left looking a very sorry teacher indeed.

But the programme was not satisfied at attempting to pin any and every IRA action of the decade directly on Adams, it sought to undermine him in Sinn Féin as well. It was equally inept in this regard, showing an aerial photograph of Long Kesh after the burning by republican prisoners in 1974, pointing to the UVF cage — intact among the rubble — and proclaiming:

"Adams' cage was the only one which did not fight."

The regular *Brownie* column in the old *Republican News* — contributed by different prisoners — was attributed as 'the thoughts of Gerry Adams' and one particularly humorous article by other prisoners, which appeared in *Republican News* after Adams came out of Long Kesh, was portrayed not as a 'slugging' but as serious evidence of dissent in the Movement.

Significantly, a *Sticky* local news-sheet, the *Ballymurphy News*, used that article at the time in exactly the same way and a *Sticky* journalist, Liam Clarke, carried a piece based on it in the *Sunday News*, also plugging the 'dissent' line!

DECEITFUL

The programme began with a claim that Adams had declined to be interviewed. In fact, he was not asked; Danny Morrison was, but refused, and a statement later from Sinn Féin outlined the reason (and, incidentally, underlined who could teach whom about 'tactics and propaganda').

The statement said:

"Following tonight's scurrilous *World in Action* programme, Sinn Féin have clarified why they refused to co-operate with the programme producer, John Ware.

"Republicans co-operated with John Ware on a number of programmes in the past and found him to have been deceitful.

"Several weeks before he came to Belfast, Danny Morrison discovered, as a result of a conversation, that John Ware was coming to Ireland, to do research and from that research do a programme, but with a prejudiced, pre-set format and content.

"John Ware told Ian Sturtard, co-producer of *ITV's* *The Troubles* (and now at *Thames TV*) that he was going to Ireland to 'screw Sinn Féin' and to stitch up Gerry Adams." Mr Sturtard told Danny Morrison about this conversation and Danny Morrison, as Sinn Féin's Director of Publicity, subsequently refused interviews to Mr Ware but did allow *World in Action* to film the Ard-Fheis in Dublin. Having watched the programme, Danny Morrison's suspicions were proved to be absolutely well-founded."

EDITED

Ironically, Tuesday morning's newspapers, which carried in detail the unfounded allegations against the Sinn Féin leaders, edited out the reference to Sturtard in the Sinn Féin statement.

When Morrison enquired from the *Irish News* why they had made this cut they told him that it could be libellous!

Massive disinformation Black On

BY JACK MADDER

IN THE MOST intensive operation of its Free State, the military, political, legal and media, with the connivance of a pliable media, of disinformation and anti-republican propaganda followed the discovery of the abducted O'Connell in the Deradga area of Ballinamore, County Fermanagh.

This disinformation has not alone obscured the sequence of events which followed Tidy's discovery, but the circumstances in which two people, Gar Sheehan and Free State soldier Patrick Kelly, died has been instrumental in prompting hysterical claims that Sinn Féin be proscribed.

Manipulation of the all-too-willing media was apparent within hours of the dramatic events at Deradga where, despite a massive presence of over 2,500 armed gardai and soldiers, a handful of IRA Volunteers succeeded in avoiding capture after the carefully concealed hideout in which they had been holding Don Tidy was discovered.

Dublin's evening newspapers, and newscasters on radio and television, proclaimed that along with the dead garda and soldier 'one of the kidnappers' was also wounded in a gun-battle. Throughout Friday evening these reports became even more sensational as further gun-battles were reported over a wide area until we were sent to bed assured that the 'kidnap gang' were trapped within a 'ring of steel' and sure to be 'flushed out' in the morning.

LITANY

On Saturday there followed an amazing litany of accounts of what had happened on Friday afternoon, gleaned by journalists from unnamed 'garda sources'. Amongst the more serious errors reported, were the accounts of how two Ballinamore men, Frank Prior and Joe McGilfrid had been arrested — accounts which could justifiably be termed felon-setting.

Contradictory garda statements were accepted without question by reporters who then filed contradictory stories, often within the same paper, as in the *Irish Times* which in one article referring to the arrest of Prior and McGilfrid said:

"Another intense gun-battle ensued which lasted, according to unconfirmed reports, for three-quarters of an hour. Eventually the garda overpowered the gunmen and two were arrested."

Elsewhere in the same paper we were told:

"One man was arrested and was taken to Navan Hospital to have his injuries treated. Another was arrested some time later. It was at this roadblock that Private Kelly was shot."

The *Irish Press* had yet another version involving six IRA men, one of whom was captured after the initial gun-battle while "the other five left the car and fled across fields. After a chase a second man was arrested."

Pat Rehill, one of the men involved, was arrested on Friday morning, and later, while in custody, was the victim of a terrorist's attack. Rehill was then taken to the hospital and later died.

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COUNTDOWN

A day later, when it had be-

come obvious that such were pure fiction, the *Press*, in an article entitled *Countdown*, to the effect that between 2.45pm on Friday:

"The scene became chaotic. Soldiers exchange the fleeing terrorists. There is hit in the leg and is captured."

And in a remarkable article headlined *Countdown*, the *Sunday Times* after reporting blasted details of involvement and McGilfrid in the then said:

"The remnants of make good their escape."

Nor was a single explanation offered to the media when the with four other republicans Ballinamore — Martin Pat Rehill, Denis Doherty, Joe McGilfrid, and Joe McGilfrid — were released out charge. The four arrested earlier on Friday the Offences Against the State Act.

RECOMPENSE

Vindication is small to Frank Prior who, contrary to claims, was arrested, while at home, and later, while in custody, was the victim of a terrorist's attack. Rehill was then taken to the hospital and later died.

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Information campaign shrouds Leitrim operations Task Force propaganda Ballinamore

K MADDEN

of its kind since the foundation of the legal and clerical establishments have, media, combined in a massive campaign of propaganda in the days which have followed the execution of Don Tidy, County Leitrim.

secured the true discovery, including, Garda Gary Kelly, died, but it is a clerical demands

that such accounts of the Sunday article grandiosely down to the Rescue between 2pm and 4pm.

is a case of confusion, exchange fire with the army. One of the leg and another

remarkably similar to the Sunday Tribune, belatedly gave a statement by Prior in the abduction,

of the gang escape.

single apology or to either man when they, along with the republicans from Martin Donnelly, Denis Dowling and the president John were released within the four had been on Friday under the State

EXPENSE

small recompense, contrary to media estimates while driving whilst in Garda custody of a trigger-happy "band leader" who shot and passed with his through a checkpoint, "badly from a bullet" shot, he was taken out and ordered to lie on

was arrested while in Ballinamore from a "like Frank Prior, he is the slander of the State and intimidation

ages during his detention to rot in hell, "And, "It's some day,"

and a blank cheque to bribe him to 'name was confronted by a false charge sheet the deaths of Garda Kelly and Don Tidy, would be appearing in the Court in the morning.

hatched those arrest-forming, was taken from Garda barracks in Donnelly. According to the other

three, one of whom, Denis Dowling, was taken to Clones Barracks, while John Joe McGil was detained in Castleblayney.

Anxious to create a hero who might redeem what was beginning to look like a security fiasco, state forces sang the praises of Donal Kelleher, a Garda Task Force member. Claiming that had it not been for his bravery and self-sacrifice in rescuing Tidy from the clutches of his abductors and throwing him through a hedge while being shot at, the Quinnsworth supremo might well have been killed. When questioned on television about the incident later, Tidy knew nothing about it.

Throughout the weekend this yarn grew less and less credible and on Sunday the *Tribune* reported that far from being welcomed by his rescuers, Tidy was assumed to be one of the gang. Dressed in combat gear and a balaclava, as were the IRA Volunteers, it is as likely that he was being shot at by the Garda and soldiers as by the IRA unit. In any event, he was thrown face down on the ground and roughed up, suffering cuts on his face before he could convince the Task Force of his identity. When asked by reporters the following day about this incident, Tidy graciously 'forgot' what had happened.

This type of propaganda sank to even lower depths with the exploitation of the two men who had tragically died. Gary Sheehan's genealogy of service in the Garda, stretching back to 1924, and his physical prowess, was matched by reports of Patrick Kelly whose fine record of service in the Free State army over 15 years left the reader to wonder why then he had never been allowed to graduate above the rank of private.

The purpose of this sickening episode in hero-creation had nothing to do with either of the victims but was a calculated exercise designed to generate public antipathy towards the IRA who, they would have it, not only kill Irish men, but kill the finest of Irishmanhood.

Although this ploy has achieved its objective to a limited extent, in the long-term it may prove counter-productive for the authorities, given that no substantial evidence has been produced which would hold the IRA unit involved responsible for the two deaths. Indeed, given the extent of confusion which, it would appear, existed during the 'battle', there is the strong possibility that one or both may have been killed by their own colleagues.

ADMITTED

This degree of confusion was further emphasised on Saturday when soldiers and plainclothes Garda admitted they had difficulty distinguishing between the combat gear worn by the IRA Volunteers and the similar gear worn by their own men — this would probably account for the frequent and widespread 'gun-battles' which raged on Friday evening.

In any event, the dangers were clearly not enough to warrant the issue of distinctive arm-bands for easy recognition. Questioned about this by a *Sunday Independent* reporter, one



Task Force member nervously (and pointedly) remarked:

"Out there in that crowd there'll be hundreds of people in plainclothes — us and them. The arm-bands save us from shooting each other."

Another indicator that all might not be as it appears emerged in the many divergent accounts of the initial encounter when both men were killed and, indeed, of how they were killed.

Initial reports that the IRA had split into two groups, one of four men, the other of two (although the overall figure rose to eight at times), were simply part of Garda attempts to portray Frank Prior and Jos McGil as part of the kidnap team, thus excusing to some extent the inability of Garda to capture the 'remaining four'.

Another pathetic attempt to brand the IRA as merciless and cruel was the account given by one of the search co-ordinators, Superintendent Tom Curran, who told reporters that as the search party discovered the hideout of a 'gang of four', crouching in the undergrowth, opened fire, killing Garda recruit Gary Sheehan

and Private Patrick Kelly.

BLACK

In a further illustration of this black propaganda, it was reported that three Free State soldiers and four Garda were taken hostage and, before being released, the more senior of the Garda was beaten with a rifle.

More likely is the account in Monday's *Irish Times* that the Volunteers overpowered three soldiers and four of the Garda recruits, disarmed the soldiers and led them out of the wood, to be met by a hail of bullets from the Task Force and Free State soldiers on the road, a fusillade of shots which, it is possible, accounted for at least one of the fatalities.

This is strongly supported by the refusal of the Garda to release the results of the forensic tests and post-mortems on the victims. While 'government sources' began by claiming that a grenade thrown by the IRA had 'definitely' killed Gary Sheehan, and in some reports Patrick Duffy, as well, this was later denied and, besides saying that both men had been shot, it also emerged that stun grenades rather than shrapnel grenades had been used by the Volunteers in their successful efforts to add to the confusion necessary for escape.

Even the government line changed over the weekend and what were at first described as 'brutal murders' were later described by Free State Justice Minister Michael Noonan as 'tragic killings'.

The truth surrounding these questions, which have yet to be seriously examined by journalists in establishment newspapers, may never be known if the government continues its current policy of suppressing and distorting information. This fear that the truth might come out also adds to the determination to hunt down the IRA Volunteers, who can expect little mercy if found, according to the *Evening Herald* on Saturday which commented:

"Angry troops and Garda... promised a fight to the finish if necessary. 'We are ready to take them all this time. They are nothing but scum,' a grim-faced search party member said."

These same grim-faced army and Task Force members are regarded in a similar light by many locals in the

Ballinamore district who have seen their locality turned into a virtual war-zone with the influx of Garda and army personnel who have commandeered the local St Phelim's Secondary School as a base.

Reports from the besieged town say that state forces went completely berserk following Friday's encounter. One of the men released after 48 hours' detention under the Offences Against the State Act, Pat Rehill, commented:

"They're running here and running there, up this road and back down the same road to head off somewhere else. If we put our noses out the door you'd think we had two heads on us the way they keep watch on you."

WOUNDED

In one serious incident which clearly illustrates how jittery the state forces are, soldiers manning a checkpoint along with Garda at Gortagh crossroads, near Ballinamore, shot and critically wounded a local man, John Gerard Wryne, after he had been waved through a checkpoint, on Friday last.

Returning from a function at a local hotel, Wryne and his wife Mary drove up to the checkpoint where he was recognised by one of the Garda on duty and allowed to go on. As he revved up his sports car and moved off, Wryne, who is a stock-car racing enthusiast, had just accelerated when a soldier fired at him, presuming he had refused to be searched.

As the car screeched forward and crashed, troops rushed towards it and dragged the very seriously wounded man from the driver's seat, laying him face down on the road. His wife, who was understandably screaming in hysteria, was also ordered to lie down on the road.

Locals who witnessed the incident say that no ambulance was allowed to the scene for half an hour, while both family and witnesses reject claims by Free State officials that Wryne had been shot only after he drove away when ordered to open his boot. And in a further show of insensitivity, a journalist visiting the Wryne household the following morning was met by the victim's distraught mother, who had received no contact either from the Garda or Free State army on what had happened or how her son was.

JOY-RIDING

A further incident demonstrating the over-reaction of Garda in the heightened tension following last Friday, was their *Keystone Cops* chase through Counties Kilkenny, Carlow and Kildare in hot pursuit of a car-load of young joy-riders. As has become the norm in recent days, members of the Task Force let fly bullets from Uzi sub-machineguns at the car which they mistakenly believed was the one used in an incident the night before in Enniscorthy when a car-load of people turned guns on two Garda and then stripped them of their uniforms before making their escape.

That none of the joy-riders was killed was due less to the first-power of the Garda than to their inaccurate shooting, which almost caused the death of one of their own men. That such a disproportionate level of force can be used, even if mistakenly against joy-riders, augurs badly for the future of 'law' enforcement in this country. And more disgraceful, perhaps, is the continued acceptance by politicians and the media of the 'official' Garda line.

With very few exceptions, the media have sold the official line unquestioningly since Friday last. Whilst not losing sight of the dangers this poses to whatever freedom of the press is left in this country, it would be wrong to believe that all journalists will so easily accept censorship. This was clearly seen in the reports of some journalists in Monday's newspapers when, sickened by the continuous barrage of lies, complained that after three days only one press conference had been held even though Superintendent Noel Anderson, the chief Garda press officer, was constantly present.

It was also seen in the pertinent comments of one *Irish Times* journalist who wrote:

"The team which was to find Mr. Tidy included ten Garda in uniform, five detectives armed with Uzi sub-machineguns and handguns, one Garda inspector and about ten soldiers... The gunmen were twice confronted by a sizeable number of Garda and soldiers and twice they escaped."

REVIEW PAGE

TV

Few crackers this Christmas

BY SIOBHAN O'MALLEY

CHRISTMAS TV is one long series of films, most of them bulk-bought for the Christmas season. Viewers have been conditioned to accept this attitude by programme-planners who unload their backlog of second-rate films at this time of the year, sugared by a few box-office successes, complacently assuming that any mindless rubbish will be tolerated by a passive, captive audience.

The assumption seems to be that people bring nothing else to do anyway and will sit collapsed in the armchair watching 40-year-old movies and sentimental kids and animal films without protest, unable to cope with anything that might be mentally stimulating.

... The message of peace on Earth and goodwill to all men is conveyed on TV by *Rollerball*, (BBC1, Tuesday, December 20th), a film set in a future where sport has become ritualised violence, and *Carrie* (UTV, ...

Bing Crosby singing: "Sing a song of sunbeams, let the notes fall where they may." (That's on BBC1 on Wednesday 21st.)

Little Miss Marker, on RTE2 on Thursday, December 29th, is about a little girl left with a bookmaker as security for a bet, who (surprise, surprise!) melts the gruff heart of our turf accountant with her charm. *Better Late Than Never*, has David Niven and Art Carney trying to decide which of them is the granddad of a winsome (and very rich) ten-year-old girl, and is on BBC1 on Christmas Day.

Intellectually challenging?

... Also on Christmas Day, on UTV, there's *The Capture of Grizzly Adams*, but before anybody gets worried (or excited), this is a film about a man who lives alone in the wilderness

of Canada and makes friends with the animals.

Avoid at all costs the *Walton Specials*, on Wednesday 21st and on Friday 23rd on BBC2, all the *Mr Moto* movies on Channel 4 and particularly *The Gift of Love*, on RTE2 on Friday 23rd, which stars Marie Osmond of that notorious singing family.

...

There are a few things worth watching though. *The King of Comedy*, a satire about an ambitious Walter Mitty like comedian, starring Robert de Niro and Jerry Lewis, is on RTE2 on Christmas Eve, and on Channel 4 on Christmas Day. There's the animated version of Raymond Briggs' cartoon-strip story *The Snowman* on Channel 4 on December 29th. RTE1 has *The Elephant Man* on Christmas Eve, and *The China Syndrome* on St Stephen's Day.



● Dan Heggarty and Kim Darby star in *The Capture of Grizzly Adams* (no, not that Adams!)

the *Chocolate Factory* is a better choice than *For the Love of Benji* (the lovable dog).

It's choices like these that are going to tax your brain over Christmas.

in high style.

For the art-house cinemagoer, an undoubted highlight must have been *Danton*, an intelligent perspective on the French Revolution which raises questions for revolutionaries today (never mind its director's conclusions on these questions).

Very nearly a great film was *The Year of Living Dangerously*. Fair play to its Australian director for getting the Hollywood moguls to finance a film about Indonesian politics.

A film reeking with a quirky type of class was *Merry Christmas*, Mr Lawrence. (The book is also excellent, by the way.)

Performance of the year: Meryl Streep in *Sophie's Choice*. But, as was pointed out two weeks ago, the film of the year is *Heaven's Gate*, — brutally shredded four years ago and only now released in a form somewhere near its director's intentions. An absolute must for *APRN* readers.

We were always told that recessions brought out the best in entertainment. "Remember the great films of the '30s" they said.

"Well, no we don't," we answered. But if this year's films are anything to go by, the great films of the '30s are yet another historic myth. They are making less and less films today. The market seems to want right-wing kiddie porn so right-wing kiddie porn is what we get and quality is being squeezed out.

While I'll always believe that the good guys will win in the end, it's just another depressing thought to think about as everyone goes *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*.

Parrots, prawns and praise

BY EDDIE STACK

HARK the *Herald Angels Sing*, goodwill to men, peace on Earth, and *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*. And please, Seamus, try not to puke on the parrot this year.

Let me announce here and now that I am a Scrooge about Christmas. As a spiritual event, in my opinion it has been cheapened out of existence. Christmas always brings on a spate of hypocritical appeals for republicans to lay down their arms, presumably as a Christmas present to the Brits. Republicans should always lay down their arms say these wizened men of peace but they should lay them down for Christmas in a special way. These appeals look like they will be even more frequent this year, so I recommend that you ask Santa for a sick-bag and a large spade.

Seeing as Christmas is often held up to us as a time of reflection, it might be just as well to reflect on some of the more ludicrous moments of 1983 just before we head into big bad 1984, as well as taking a brief look back on some of the best films of the year, many of which may not have found their way round to your neck of the woods even at this stage of the game.

Firstly, however, I would like to award my Free State Sherlock Holmes Award to the forgettable Chief Inspector James 'Jazzer' Murphy of the Shergar inquiry for describing the horse-nappers in such pains-

taking detail as "a big man, a little man and a middle-sized man dressed as a policeman? Or was it a bus conductor? ... We're not too sure".

My 'Slimey Slip of the Tongue Award' goes to that British Labour Party today Roy Hattersley, for making a speech against racism and saying: "I believe in calling a spade a spade".

The Ronald Reagan I'd swear those slimey Russians poisoned Lasse Award goes to Reagan's former American Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, who described a government commission as being comprised of "a black, a woman, two Jews and a cripple".

But finally, the winner of the 'Anything James Watt can do I can do it worse Award' must go to the utter looney whom Reagan has installed as his ambassador in Norway, Mark Evans Austad. Austad apparently told a leading Norwegian reporter that Norway was lucky not to have "a nigger problem". And in a speech to an international conference in Stavanger he told a stunned audience that American Indians never had any culture of their own — it was only after the white men arrived and "raped enough of their women" that

FILM

some sort of civilisation had been injected into the red race. *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*.

PRAWNS

Whatever people were saying, most films this year were as intelligent as lobotomised prawns and as disgusting as hair in the butter. In this latter category we must place Charles Bronson's *10 to Midnight*, a glorious right-wing rant which pitched our Hero against a woman-hating slasher, who always killed his victims while running around in the buff (he was photographed from the rear lest we see... you know).

However, while this revolting film merely urged us to bring back the death penalty for everyone, the James Bond film *Octopussy* went out of its way to convince the younger ones amongst us that Russians and rabies have more in common than we assume. "Thank God we have the bomb," says this piece of 'pure entertainment' to our youth.

Get them when they're young is capitalism's ploy.

On a subtler, but no less poisonous, note *The Verdict* tried to convince us that we could all be found innocent if we had a lawyer who could act as well as Paul Newman. Try getting a standing ovation from a jury over here, Paul.



● David Bowie as Major Jack Celliers in *Merry Christmas*, Mr Lawrence, one of the best films of 1983

In fact, try getting a jury!

Tootsie broke box office records everywhere and no wonder as it was a 'feminist' picture that saw women being kept in their place. The reason that Tootsie is a successful woman is that she is really a man, played by Dustin Hoffman. Now you know, girls, what you have to do to get on.

Worst films of the year that have no discernible political bias: *Spacehunter in the Forbidden Zone*, *Bad Boys* and the execrable *Private Pops-*

icle, and *Porky's*, from those charming people who brought you 'Massacre in the Lebanon'. So this is how those Israelis are using the big bucks that are daily pumped into the Holy Land from their drinking buddies in the Pentagon.

BEST FILMS

The best films of the year? You can, I'm afraid, count them on one hand. For simple knockabout entertainment, high marks must go to *48 Hours* and *National Lampoon's Vacation*, both of which entertained

Tarraingteach agus spéisíúil IRIS

LE ROIBEÁRD MACÉASMUIN

IS IOMÁI sin rún a rithedh ag Ard-Fheiseanna Shinn Féin le dornán de bhlianta ag iarraidh go gcuirf an Ghaeilge chun cinn. Mar sin féin ní raibh toradh suntasach ar leith le feiceáil ar na hiarachtaí seo.

Ba mhínic daoine ó éagraíochtaí éagslaí ag cónaigh na Gluaiseachta mar gur mheasadar nach rabhamar ag comhlánadh bunchuspóirí an Phiar-saigh. Is mór an t-ádh é seo mar sin dóinn an iris nua *Saoirse* atá folisthe ag Gluaiseacht na Poblachta agus a bhfuil an dara eagrán ar léim agam.

Rithneachan ioldathach fiche leathanach in *Gaeilge* ar fad atá an eagrán seo. Tá sé i gceist fí a fhóisiúil gach rithne agus tá súil agam go bhfaighfidh sé an t-achóir is dual ó *Gaeilge* geoirí ar fíid na tíre.

Tá an leagan amach agus an t-eagarthóireacht go maith

agus tá gach leathanach maistre le pictiúirí. Tá an cludach toisigh an-tarraingteach. Taobh istigh tá pictiúir de chlann Mhic Ghiolla Easbhaigh ina mbeith ar *Ard-Fheis Shinn Féin*. 'Siad san na mÁ Éireann-acha is faide a d'fhulaing téarma príosúntachta i Sasain.

EATROM

Tá ceangal mór fríd síos le *Gaeilge* na Gaeilteach. Tá léirmheas ar leabhar Shéán Ó Conghaile as Conamara, *Na Stiúirí*, pictiúirí de phéinteir-éacht Oileán Thoraigh agus ailt ar stáid na *Gaeilge* i dTír Chonaill. Tá seo tábhachtach agus

ní ró-thada ó ábhar na scríbhinní seo atá an t-ailt ar thorbairt na nGaeilcolleanna.

Tá alt spéisíúil ar ETA agus ar Thír na mBascach. Chuir siad sin ariamh anail bair ar chultúr agus ar an teanga Bhascach ina gcuid gníomhaíochtaí. Rinne siad sin ainneoin saol corrach a bheith acu taobh istigh d'neagrás féin.

Tá an léitheoireacht eatom san iris seo agus beidh fonn ort nuair a thosaíonn tú a dhul ó alt go halt. Tá alt maith eolais ann ar dhaoine ámhara na bliana 1981 sna scéantóirí le tagairtí ón Athair Des Wilson.

Tá alt stair ar Eochaidh Óg ó hAnluam agus *Coiscéim Amháin ón Uaigh*, scríobhthóir-éacht chruthaíocht Bobby Sands a bhainfeadh na deora as cloch. Leiríú an-mhaith is ea ó ar an fobairt atá déanta ag Éire-

annaigh leis an cheangal le Sasain a bhriseadh. Tá briseadh an cheangail le Sasain le feiceáil arís ins na hamhráin ag deireadh an leabhair.

Sa mhullach ar seo uilig tá an príomhált — an chéad agallamh iomlán le Ruairí Ó Brádaigh d'éirigh sé as Uachtarántacht Shinn Féin. Tá cumas *Gaeilge* agus smaoine léirithe ag Ó Brádaigh anseo nach mbeadh le fáil ó leabaid Mhic Gheallaití nó ó mhóirín de pholaitóirí — bunreachtúla na linne seo.

Tá bainistíocht *Saoirse* le moladh as an iris seo atá inchurtha ó thaobh leagan amach agus éagsúlacht le hiríú eile atá ag fáil deontais riatais. Is í *Saoirse* an sórt beart dearfach atá a dhíth chun a léiriú arís gur ionann cuspóirí an Phiar-saigh agus cuspóirí Óglaigh na hÉireann an lae inniu.



ADAMS, Paddy. (Long Kesh). Christmas greetings to my dear husband again duit. From your loving wife.

ADAMS, Paddy. (Long Kesh). Christmas greetings to our dear daddy. We can't wait until you are home. Lots of love from Patrick and Brigid.

ADAMS, Davey, Paddy and Sean. (Long Kesh). Thinking of you and Paddy, Sean and Seanie and love from Paddy, time. Love and God bless.

ADAMS, Paddy. (H-Block). Christmas greetings, Paddy. Hope you will be all the Christmas soon. Greetings also to all the POWs in Long Kesh, Armagh, Magilligan, Portlaoise and all Irish POWs in England and America. From the McCaughy family.

ADAMS, Sean. (Crumlin Road). Christmas greetings to my son Sean. Always thinking of you. Merry Christmas and happy New Year to you and all your comrades. Love from mother.

ADAMS, Sean. (Crumlin Road). Happy Christmas, daddy. All our love. From Louise and Clara. xxx

BARRETT, William. (England). Birthday greetings and best wishes for Christmas and the New Year, William. From an Cathann Cabhrach, Walkinstown, Dublin.

BAKER, Liam & Paul. (Gartree & H-Block). Thinking of you both, especially at this time of the year. God bless. From mum, brothers and sisters.

BARBER, Liam & Paul. (Gartree & H-Block). Christmas greetings, Liam and Paul. From aunt Mary Anne, aunt Agnes, aunt Teresa and family; aunt Margaret and family; and uncle Joe and family.

BAKER, Liam; BENNETT, James; DOHERTY, Hugh. (Long Kesh). Always best wishes on your birthdays. Regards to all. From Raymond (Wakefield), Mary and Patrick. (Long Kesh).

BANKS, Dave. (Portlaoise). Best wishes for Christmas and for the New Year. Hope next year will be a better one for you. Thinking of you. Love from Seanie.

BANKS, Dave. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and best wishes, Dave. See you soon. From Treasa, Ursula, Patricia, Marie and Lucilla.

BANKS, Dave. (Portlaoise). Best wishes for Christmas. Dave - at last you won't have to eat Gibbers' stew on Christmas Day. From the creative and artistic pen-pusher on the middle floor and the pen-pusher in the bunker.

BANKS, Dave. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings, Dave. From Seanie, Denise, Aine, Christine, Eileen, Mick, Anne and Gerard.

BARBER, 'Twinkle'; MOORE, Catherine. (Long Kesh & Armagh). Christmas greetings, 'Twinkle' and Catherine. Take care. From Isabel and Kevin.

BARBER, 'Twinkle'; MOORE, Catherine. (Long Kesh & Armagh). Christmas greetings to you both. From Betty and all at No. 91.

BARTON, Sean. (H3). You are miles apart, Sean, but you are always with all my heart. Love from Maggie, America. UTP. xxx

BARTON, Sean. (Armagh). Thinking of you this Christmas as always. Hope you and Dolores (O'Neill) are keeping well. Cheers from a South Derry runaway.

BEATTIE, Christine. (Armagh). Happy birthday and merry Christmas, Christine. God bless you and all your brave comrades in Irish and English jails. From mum, dad, sister, brothers and family circle.

BEATTIE, Christine. (Armagh). Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. I might drop you a few lines. I've got it out, that's if I get the jumper I've been waiting three years for (ha ha).

BEATTIE, Christine. (Armagh). Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. Merry Christmas to the women in Armagh. From the Markies.

BEATTIE, Christine. (Armagh). Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. 'Bap'. Hope you won't get too drunk. Keep the chin up, Tioctaidh a ra. From 'Stalker'. UTP

BEATTIE, Christine; GUINN, Ann-Marie. (Armagh). Best wishes for a holy Christmas and a happy New Year. Hope it brings freedom to us all. From Robert.

BEATTIE, Christine. (Armagh). Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year. From Máire, Róisín and Róisín O'g.

BELL, John 'Dinger'. (Portlaoise). Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. From your loving mother, brothers, sisters and niece Clara. Dungannon. UTP

BELL, John 'Dinger'. (Portlaoise). Merry Christmas, John. From your loving sister Martina, Robbie and Tina Maria; and Kathleen and John. Dungannon. UTP

BELL, Pat; DOHERTY, Martin. (Portlaoise). Revolutionary Christmas and New Year greetings. From Paddy Dundon and Brian Heuston. UTP

BENNETT, James. (Parkhurst). Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year. 'Punter'. From John and Ann and family, and all the Bennett family.

BENNETT, James. (Parkhurst). Merry Christmas and happy New Year, James. From Catherine. xxx

BLAKE, Steve. (England). Christmas greetings and best wishes for the New Year to you Steve, Mick, Roy and all your comrades in English prisons. Thinking of you. From Gerry Small.

BONNAR, Sean. (Cage 11). Thinking of you with much love always. From Killyn. xxx

BONNAR, Sean. (Cage 11). Wishing you the very best. With love from your 'mum' in Sydney. xxx

BONNAR, Sean. (Cage 11). Thinking of you with much love always. From Killyn. xxx

Republican leadership's statement to POWs

THE LEADERSHIP of the Republican Movement sends revolutionary greetings to the republican prisoners of war and their families at this festive season. We recall with pride our fallen comrades and we are thinking especially of their families and the cost of bereavement which they have borne in the struggle for Irish freedom.

Over the past year all sections of our movement have come under political and military assaults from the British and their allies in Ireland. But despite these assaults, despite the murderous activities of the crown forces, the corruption of even British law through the use of show trials and paid perjurers, and despite the repression and the collaboration from the Free State government, we go from strength to strength - politically and militarily - and our base has the historic H-Block in Armagh hunger-strikes.

It was again from within the walls of the H-Blocks that another major humiliation was inflicted on the British regime. Sunday, September 25th 1983, is indelibly imprinted in our minds as the day of the great escape.

That escape showed exactly what determined republicans can do. Where there is a will, there is a way. The escape showed what republicans are made of, and the beatings by the prison warders and the outcry from the Brits and the loyalists showed the power of the republican movement.

Our struggle is the struggle of a people determined to be free, and no matter what is thrown against us we shall overcome.

of you at Christmas as always. Love from Carmel in Australia. xxx

BOYNE, Maurice. (Portlaoise). Best wishes, Maurice. Thinking of you this Christmas. Love from Donna. xxx

BOYNE, Maurice; TAYLOR, Will; TOWNSEND, Liam. (Portlaoise). Courage lads, we are winning. In the hour of our victory, let us not forget the brave women who have everywhere stood by us. From Danny and Julie.

BOYLE, Dermot. (Magilligan). Christmas greetings and happy New Year, Dermot. From mum, dad and Martin.

BOYLE, Dermot. (Magilligan). Wishing you all the best for Christmas and the New Year. From Dolores, Teeny and Emmet.

BOYNE, Paddy. (Portlaoise). Paddy, we are together in spirit. Christmas greetings from your ever-loving wife Eileen. xxx

BOYNE, Paddy. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings, Paddy. From your sister Margaret.

BOYNE, Paddy. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, daddy. Lots of love from Frances, Katie and Sarah.

BRADLEY, Gerard; DULLAGHAN, Peter. (H-Block). Best wishes for Christmas. From Tommy, Batchelor's Walk.

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come and we shall be victorious.

A central part of British strategy became clear during the year. That is, the dangerous development of the paid-perjurer phenomenon. Because these perjurers were from within the ranks of the nationalist people, such a development represented the fracturing of community morale and solidarity. Despite the British receiving a number of set-backs, they have been forced into treading more warily, going at it at a slower and more measured pace.

And while the show trials have certainly been discredited, a considerable amount of campaigning and street protests is before us before we force the Brits into abandoning this strategy.

Faced with Sinn Féin success after Sinn Féin success we have witnessed a certain amount of panic among the British, the loyalists, the SDLP, the Catholic Hierarchy and the Dublin establishment.

The British are once again considering internment to stem the tide of support to Sinn Féin and the increasing sophistication of the Irish Republican Army. The loyalists want Sinn Féin banned, and next spring, in the run-up to the EEC elections - which Sinn Féin is contesting nationally - we expect the full weight of those opposed to us (with the exception of the loyalists) to be thrown behind the SDLP's one-man band in the North, John Hume.

Comrades, many tasks lie before us. The political work before Sinn Féin in the twenty-six counties is daunting, but we are out to change things. The Republican Movement is working tirelessly on behalf of the freedom which only full liberation can guarantee. And the Irish Republican Army has its sights firmly set on the stages of guerrilla warfare before it, and the armed struggle which will not cease until victory.

We salute you, comrades, our women Volunteers in Armagh, our incarcerated brothers in Portlaoise, Magilligan, Crumlin Road and Long Kesh, and our comrades throughout British prisons and in jail in America.

The struggle goes on!
Beir buas agus Nollaig shona daoibh.

CLARKE, Anthony. (England). Merry Christmas, Tony. See you in the New Year. From your loving wife, Mary. xxx

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CLARKE, Michael. (Long Lartin). Happy Christmas, Mickey, and all the best for the New Year. Hoping to see you soon. From Johnny, Louise, Deirdre, Niall, Tara, Aisling agus a dádó.

CLARKE, Terry and Gerard. (H-Block). Christmas and New Year greetings to our sons Terry and Gerard. Coping and praying that this will be your last in the H-Blocks. God bless you both. Greetings also to our son Seamus Noel. Let the H-Blocks with BIC's squad without prior notice. We hope you will all have a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. From mum and Kelly.

CLINTON, Jim. (Crumlin Road). Merry Christmas, Jim, and a happy New Year. All my love from your wife Teresa. xxx

CLINTON, Jim. (Crumlin Road). Merry Christmas, daddy. From your wee daughter Rose Ann. xxx

CLINTON, Jim; DAVIDSON, Brendan. (Crumlin Road). Merry Christmas, Jim and Brendan. From Joe and Margaret.

CLINTON, Jim; DAVIDSON, Brendan; FITZPATRICK, Pat. (Crumlin Road). Merry Christmas, Jim and Brendan. From your wife Teresa. xxx

COLEMAN, Martin. (H2). Christmas greetings, Martin. Wishing you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. From Helen.

COLLINS, Tommy. (Long Kesh). Happy Christmas, Tommy. Love from Jane.

COOKE, James. (Portlaoise). Greetings and best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. From Miriam, Frank, Tony and Little Ken.

COOKE, James. (Portlaoise). Wishing you all the very best for Christmas and the New Year. From your loving wife, Mary. xxx

CORBETT, Gabriel. Our first Christmas, Gabriel. It won't be the last. From your loving father, Corky. xxx

COREY, Hugh Joseph. (H-Block). Nollaig shona, Joey. Love from mummy, daddy, Peter, Mary and Sean. xxx

COREY, Martin and Joseph. (Long Kesh & Magilligan). Christmas greetings to our loving sons and brothers Martin and Joseph. Thinking of you always and especially at this time. Cookee! Love from Susie. UTP

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THE TONY AHERNE SINN FEIN CUMMANN, CLONES, sends Christmas greetings and best wishes to all republican POWs in England, Ireland and America, and in particular to those prisoners from the South Fermanagh/North Monaghan area, hoping that you all follow the example of Seamus McElwain in gaining an early release.

THE TONY AHERNE SINN FEIN CUMMANN, CLONES, sends Christmas greetings and best wishes to all republican POWs everywhere a very happy Christmas.

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...N, NEWTOWN ABBEY, sends
...ld in England and Ireland, es
...er on earth can stop the prog-

HACKETT, Patrick. (Parkhurst). Bannacht na Nollag agus gach da-shúil don aithneáil. Ó Camon, Dóirín agus Sean.

HARTE, Gerard. (Portlaoise). All the best for Christmas and a happy New Year. We miss you and will be thinking of you. From mam, dad, Janet and Elizabeth.

HARTE, Gerard. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year. Gerard, God bless you. Love from Maureen and Sean and granny in England. UTP

HARTE, Gerard. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and a happy New Year. That wish would be the key to all wishes to set you free. Love from aunt Thelma, uncle David and family; aunt Treasa, uncle Steve and family; uncle Willie and family; and all your friends in Dundale.

HARVEY, Spike. (Magilligan). Wishing you a very happy Christmas, Spike. You are always in my thoughts and prayers. God bless you. Lots of love from Paul; ine. UTP

HAUGHEY, Stephen. (Portlaoise). Best wishes for Christmas and a happy New Year. You always take care. From mum, dad and family.

HAUGHEY, Stephen. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas greetings and a happy New Year. Stevie, you are always in our thoughts. From your loving wife Marian and children Kevin, Stephen and Julie.

HAUGHEY, Stephen. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings and best wishes, Stephen. From Mrs Quinn and family, Dundale.

THE D'ARCY/HURSON SINN FEIN CUMANN, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE GALWAY, wishes all republican POWs at home and in Britain all the best for 1984. Eventually the one who wins is the one who knows he can win the stronger or faster man.

DERRY SINN FEIN wish all republican POWs in Long Kesh, Crumlin Road, Armagh, Portlaoise, Limerick and in English and American jails a very happy Christmas. Tiocfaidh é.

COUNTY DERRY AND SOUTH-WEST ANTRIM SINN FEIN sends Christmas greetings to all the republican POWs at the area.

THE SEAN DOLAN/JOE MCGINLEY SINN FEIN CUMANN, WATERSIDE, DUBLIN, wishes all republican POWs in jail, all republican POWs everywhere and also the 19 escapees 'on the run' a very merry Christmas and happy New Year.

HAYDEN, Vivian. (Portlaoise). Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. From the Creagh family. UTP

HAYDEN, Vivian; KELLY, Joe; FOX, John. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and a happy New Year. We miss you and will be thinking of you. From mam, dad, Janet and Elizabeth.

HAYES, Bill. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas. We are always thinking of you. All our love from mam, dad, Sheila, Carol, Noel and Aisling.

HAYES, Bill. (Portlaoise). Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. From Breda, Tom, Mary, Liam, Frank, Paul and Ita; Maura, Tommy, John, Michael and Peggy. Dear Shane, Conor, Gemma and family.

HAYES, Bill. (Portlaoise). Christmas and New Year greetings. Bill. From Paddy, Clare and family; Sean, Susan and family; Paddy, John, Sean and family; and Maureen, Tommy Jack, Margaret and Tom.

HAYES, Bill. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas. Bill, Lots of love and best wishes from Maelia, Theresa and Mary. xxx

HAYES, Bill. (Portlaoise). It does not matter how long it takes to get to your mind, for a day without a thought of you is very hard to find. Happy Christmas. Bill. Love from granny.

HAYES, John. (England). Nollaig faoi shian is faoi mhaise dúl. Declan.

HEANEY, Tony. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas. Tony. From an old flame.

HEANEY, Tony. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas. Tony. From your sister Collette.

HEANEY, Tony. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas to uncles Tony and Marty. From Michael, Lisa and Kristin.

HEAPES, Gerry. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and a happy New Year. Gerry. From Elita, Patricia, Margaret, Patrick, Gerard, Carmel and Barbara.

HEGARTY, Ian. (H4). Best wishes for Christmas, Ian. Thinking of you. From Patsy (Patsy) and family.

HOGAN, Eddie. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Eddie. From 'the boys and girls of Fairhill'.

HOGAN, Michael. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Michael. Lots of love from mam, dad, Patrick, Henry, Mag and Berny.

HOGAN, Michael. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings to you, Mickey. From all at No. 10.

HOGAN, Michael. (Portlaoise). Have a merry Christmas, Mickey. From Rose and family.

HOGAN, Michael. (Portlaoise). Merry Christmas, Mickey. Lots of love from Lillian, Pat and family.

HOGAN, Michael. (Portlaoise). Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. From Rose, Brian and wee Praisas.

HOGAN, Michael. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas. Lots of love from Bob and Sarah; Hughie, Mary and family; Mick and family; and the O'Boyle family; and family.

HOLMES, Paul. (Wormwood Scrubs). Christmas greetings to you, Paul. Lots of love for now and the New Year. From Mary, Tommy and family.

HUDDLESTONE, John. (Crumlin Road). Happy Christmas, John. Hope to see you at home in the New Year. From your wife Chris and children Sean, Frances, Ruairi and Ronan. xxx

THE HENRY DUFFY SINN FEIN CUMANN, MID-LOUTH, sends seasonal greetings to all republican POWs in British and pro-British jails. Tiocfaidh é.

THE DUFFY/DOWNEY SINN FEIN CUMANN, DUNDALK, extends seasonal greetings to all republican POWs in British and pro-British jails. Tiocfaidh é.

CUMANN SHINN FEIN BHAILE DUIN FINN, BEAL FERRIE, sends Christmas greetings to all republican POWs in Ireland, England and America.

see you at home on the 25th. Keeping our fingers crossed. From the 'foreigners'. xxx

HUDDLESTONE, John. (Crumlin Road). Merry Christmas, John. Hope we'll meet again in person. Love, Christmas greetings to all the POWs in all the jails, Kesh, Portlaoise, Crumlin Road, Armagh, and English prisons. From Maureen, Alice and all the McElroy family.

HUNTER, Rab. (Portlaoise). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Rab. From Bertie K and all at 126 cul-de-sac.

HUNTER, Rab. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings to you and all your comrades. Rab. From Chris.

KAVANAGH, Dathi. (Portlaoise). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year, my son. Keep your spirit and faith up, I'm always thinking of you. Lots of love from mam, xxx

KAVANAGH, Dathi. (Portlaoise). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. 'bobby brother'. From Michael, Ann and family.

KAVANAGH, Dathi. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and best wishes, Dathi. Mag, Ken and the girls. Bertie and Jim.

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KAVANAGH, Dathi. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and best wishes, Dathi. Mag, Ken and the girls. Bertie and Jim.

KELLY, Joe. (Portlaoise). All the best at Christmas, Joe. See you soon. From ma, da, Frances, Collette and Michael.

KELLY, Joe. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and good luck in the New Year. Tommy Dave, Selina, David Jr and Mark.

KELLY, Joe. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and good luck in the New Year. From the lads in the Lansdowne.

KELLY, Joe. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and good luck in the New Year. From June, Raymond and family.

KELLY, Joe. (Portlaoise). All the best for Christmas and the New Year, Joe. From Tommy Kay, Alice and Mrs O'Brien; Ann and Elizabeth; Chris and Noleen; Billy, Maura and Laura; and Ray. Terry. xxx

KELLY, Martin. (H-Block). Happy Christmas and a happy New Year, Martin. Lots of love from Cathy. xxx

KELLY, Martin. (H-Block). Happy Christmas and a happy New Year, Martin. Lots of love from mum and dad. xxx

KELLY, Martin. (H-Block). Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year. From Brendan, Yvonne and family.

KELLY, Seamus. (H-Block). Christmas greetings, Seamus. From Hilary, Jean and close friends and family.

KELLY, Seamus. (H-Block). Happy Christmas, Seamus. From the Tolan family.

KELLY, Tony. (Wherever you are, son, we wish you and your comrades a very happy Christmas. From mother, father, brother, sister and family.

KELLY, Tony. (Wherever you are, son, we wish you and your comrades a very happy Christmas. From mother, father, brother, sister and family.

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Susan, xxx

LENEGHAN, Mark. (Crumlin Road). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. From Jean, Liam, Jackie and Antio. xxx

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LENNON, Sean. (H1). Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year, Sean. Love from all the Lennon family.

LYNAGH, Jim. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Jim. From the Gildernew family.

LOUGHLIN, Gerard. (H-Block). Thinking of you, Gerard, especially at this time of year. Love from your wife and family. xxx

LOUGHLIN, Micky. (H2). A Mhuirín, wishing you peace and strength at Christmas. Thinking of you always. All my love, Alanna, xxx

THE MARTIN FORSYTHE SINN FEIN CUMANN, RATHFRANMACH, COUNTY DUBLIN, sends Christmas and New Year greetings to all republican POWs in Free and British jails. Tiocfaidh é.

THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND CLUB OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA sends Christmas greetings to all Irish republican prisoners in English, Irish and American jails. UTP

LOUGHLIN, Micky. (McVeigh, Sean. Magilligan, H4). Christmas greetings and happy New Year to you both. Lots of love from 'Squid', America. xxx

LOVE, Stan. (Magilligan). Merry Christmas, I know I'm a lonely one, but we'll be together this time next year. I love and miss you. From your darling wife Maria. xxx

LOWE, Stan. (Magilligan). Merry Christmas, daddy. I can't wait until you're home to spend your Christmas with us. I love you. From Gemma. xxx

LYNCH, Martin. (H-Block). All my Christmas love to Chris and to you, mas, love. Even though we're apart, I'm with you always. Tó grá agus duit. I love you. From Gemma. xxx

LYNCH, Martin. (H-Block). Merry Christmas to the best daddy in the world. All my love, kisses and hugs. From Martin O. xxx

LYNCH, Martin. (H-Block). Merry Christmas. From Owen and Ann; Linda and Ann. xxx

LYNCH, Martin. (H-Block). Happy Christmas and a victorious New Year, Martin. Best wish from Owen.

LYNCH, Martin; QUIGLEY, Linda; TUMELTY, Brian. Christmas greetings and all the best for the New Year. From Marion and Tony Sloan (Portlaoise) Sorcha and Anthony.

LYNCH, Peter. (H2). Love and best wishes for Christmas. Congratulations for your 21st on December 28th. We wish we could give you the keys of the Keep. Thinking of you always. Love from mum and dad.

LYNCH, Peter. (H2). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year and many returns for your 21st, Peter. We'll celebrate it for you. Love from Róisín, Nuala and Catherine.

LYNCH, Peter. (H2). Happy Christmas and a happy New Year. It was worth the try. From aunt Kathleen and Joe.

LYNCH, Peter. (H2). Happy Christmas and a happy New Year to you and your 18 comrades. Robert, Better luck next time. From mam and dad.

KERRY, Robert. (H-Block). Christmas and New Year greetings to you 'Rab'. From the lads in the New Lodge Road, Belfast.

KIRBY, Terry. (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you, God bless you always. From your loving mum and dad. xxx

KIRBY, Terry. (H-Block). You are always in our thoughts, God bless. From Joe, Linda, Siobhan and Lianne. xxx

KIRBY, Terry. (H-Block). Happy Christmas to my brother Terry. Thinking of you, God bless. Love from Clare, Frances and Marcella.

THE PAUL FOX/LAURA CRAWFORD SINN FEIN CUMANN, WATERFORD, sends Christmas greetings to Eamonn Nolan and Bill Hayes (Portlaoise).

THE PAUL FOX/LAURA CRAWFORD SINN FEIN CUMANN, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, sends revolutionary Christmas greetings to all those struggling throughout the world against imperialism and domestic socialism.

THE GOSW/LOUGHLIN SINN FEIN CUMANN, DUNDALK, sends Christmas greetings to all republican POWs in jails at home and abroad.

THE JOHN FRANCIS GREENE SINN FEIN CUMANN, CASTLEBLAYNEY, sends Christmas and New Year greetings to Brian Cunningham, Brian (Dundalk); Laurence and Leo Green and Brian (H-Block); and all Irish republican POWs, especially those from County Monaghan and the Louth and Armagh areas. Tiocfaidh é.

THE IRISH FREEDOM ASSOCIATION, TORONTO, CANADA, sends Christmas and New Year's greetings to all republican POWs and their families. May the New Year bring peace and other successes.

IRISH NORTHERN AD, MANHATTAN UNIT, NEW YORK, send solidarity and Christmas greetings to our compatriot and fellow Manhattan unit member John Moloney and his comrades in Portlaoise and to all Irish political prisoners everywhere. UTP Nollaig Shaoiach.

LAMBERT, Stephen. Happy Christmas, Stephen. We hope your time goes quickly. All the best from Martin and Catherine. DUB.

LOUDON, 'Tomboy'. (H3). A very merry Christmas, 'Tomboy'. It won't be long before you'll see you. From Mick Gorman, Portlaoise.

LOUDON, 'Tomboy'. (H3). A very merry Christmas, 'Tomboy'. It won't be long before you'll see you. From Ellen and family and all in Dub-in. UTP

LENNAGHAN, Mark. (Crumlin Road). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. From Jean, Liam, Jackie and Antio. xxx

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KIRBY, Terry. (H-Block). You are always in our thoughts, God bless. From Joe, Linda, Siobhan and Lianne. xxx

KIRBY, Terry. (H-Block). Happy Christmas to my brother Terry. Thinking of you, God bless. Love from Clare, Frances and Marcella.

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THE TERENCE MACSWINEY SINN FEIN CUMANN, WEST LONDON, sends Christmas greetings and best wishes for 1984 to Busty and Gerry Cunningham, John McCuskey, Eddie and Elaine (England), Gerry FitzGerald, Gerald Markey, Peter Rogers, Sean Stewart and Gerry Tuile (Portlaoise), and to all Irish POWs in Irish and English jails.

THE MOLLOY/DEVLIN SINN FEIN CUMANN, REPUBLICAN TRANSPORT send Christmas and New Year greetings to all republican POWs in Free State and English jails, especially those from the Strabane area. Greetings also to all our supporters.

COUNTY MONAGHAN SINN FEIN COMHAIRE CEANTAIR sends Christmas greetings to all republican POWs imprisoned in Ireland and abroad, with special greetings to County Monaghan POWs in Long Kesh, Portlaoise and Britain. Tiocfaidh arís.

MOORE, Anna & Jackie. (Armagh). Christmas greetings. You are always in our thoughts. From the Starkey family.
MOORE, Catherine (Armagh). Merry Christmas and happy New Year, 'sis'. Love from your big brother Gerry and Allison, xxx.
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O'BRIEN, Gerard. We'll have a drink for you this Christmas. From sister Marie, brother John, John and Frank, John and Rose-Marie.

O'BRIEN, Gerard. Happy Christmas, Gerard. From Adrian, Noel, Terry, Colin Anita and Helena.

O'BRIEN, Gerard. Greetings to our darling son. In this Christmas season, thinking of you more than ever. God bless. From mum and dad. UTP

O'BRIEN, Gerard. Happy Christmas, Uncle and Aunt. From Winnie, Special, Orla and Mark. UTP

O'CONNELL, Patrick Aaron. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings. Love and best wishes from dad, Kieran, Collette, Liam and Bernard.

O'CONNELL, Patrick Aaron. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings. Love and best wishes from Pat, Judith, Karen, Louise and Elaine. From Ann.

O'CONNOR, Rory. Season's greetings for Christmas and the New Year, Rory. Greetings also to the lads in Irish and English prisons. From the Markys.

O'NEIDAN, Vivian. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings. Love and best wishes from dad, O'Josephine, Brian and Roslin.

O'HAGAN, Flinta & Faim. (H-Block). Thinking of you both always, especially at Christmas-time. Beannacht na Nollag agus rath ó Dnia san Athbhallain oradh go mír. La grá mór

O'HAGAN, Paddy. (Magilligan). Happy Christmas to darling Paddy. From all your family.

O'HANLON, Slobhan. (Armagh). Wishing that we could be together this Christmas. Love and best wishes to you and your family. From Matt. xxx

O'HANLON, Slobhan. (Armagh). Merry Christmas. Slobhan. All the best for 1984. From the Wright family.

O'HANLON, Slobhan. (Armagh). Merry Christmas and happy New Year, Slobhan. Dáiríre agus rath ó Dnia san Athbhallain oradh go mír. La grá mór

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THE FEARGHAL O'HANLON/BISHOP HEBER MACMAHON SINN FEIN CUMANN, MONAGHAN TOWN, extends special greetings to all republican POWs but especially those from County Monaghan who are in Irish jails. We extend a sincere welcome to all our comrades who were released during the past 12 months, especially to Seamus McDowell and his 18 comrades who made their own way home. Comhghéirdas doibh go léir agus soirre san athbhallain.

QUIGLEY, Tommy. (Brixton). Christmas greetings. Tommy. Keep the chin up. From Christy and family.

QUINN, Ann-Marie. (Armagh). Wishing you the best Christmas and the New Year, Ann-Marie. We're going to kill this Che fellow, whoever he is (ha ha!). Love from the Williams family. UTP

QUINN, Brian. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Brian. I'll have a drink for you from the Williams family. UTP

QUINN, Jimmy. (H4). Christmas greetings. Jimmy. From Danny, Elish and the family.

RAFFERTY, Terence. (H-Block). Christmas greetings. Terry. From Sally O'Brien.

RAFFERTY, Gerard. (H3). Merry Christmas, Gerard. Sorry you can't be here under my mistletoe, but perhaps in a few Christmases. Lots and lots of love from Diana. xxx

REILLY, Joe. (Portlaoise). Thinking of you over the Christmas. Love from all your family.

ROBBINS, Billy. (Portlaoise). Wishing you a happy Christmas, Billy. Be down soon. From the Robert Emmet Sinn Fein cumann, Trinity College Dublin.

ROBBINS, Billy. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Billy. We're all well and we told him to call back later - he asked, "How much later?" From Dave, the family and everyone in the "Mary Clancy cumann".

ROBBINS, Billy. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Billy. We'll have a few drinks for you. From Paul. UTP

ROBBINS, Billy. (Portlaoise). Season's greetings. Billy. From the Williams family. UTP

ROBBINS, Billy. (Portlaoise). All the best for Christmas and the New Year, Billy. My sales are down at the GPO so any chance of a loan of a tenner?

ROBERTS, Gary. (H-Block). Dáiríre agus rath ó Dnia san Athbhallain oradh go mír. La grá mór

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SMYTH, Claran. (H7). Season's greetings to our brother Claran 'Zack' Smyth on his seventh Christmas spent in that hell-hole of a prison at the lovely town of Raymond and Bernadette. Big Lig Dina and Lizzie. Adm mór.

SMYTH, Claran. (H7). "You may chain my hand and shackle my feet, you may even throw me into a dark prison, you shall not enslave my thinking, because it is free." Happy Christmas, Claran. From all your friends in Philly.

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Brian Cushman, Michael Hogan and all the lads (Portlaoise). To and to Whitey and Tommy (Magilligan). From the Bell family, Dungannon.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Willy, Piercey and Mark Doherty (Crumlin Road); Martin Kelly (H8); and all republican POWs everywhere. Best wishes from B.I.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Piercey (Crumlin Road). You are always in our thoughts. From Willie Foot and all the lads on the ACE scheme, Gonnascate.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the republican prisoners in Ireland, England and America. Special greetings to all the POWs from the Short Strand. Thinking of you always. From George Devlin, Short Strand.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Gerard Fitzgerald, Rab Hunter, Nicky Kehoe and Sean Stewart (Portlaoise). Best wishes and God Bless. From Roisin and the kids, UTP.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to the 'Blessington Five'. From the 'Chisler'.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Eddie Butler, Brendan Dodd, Harry Dugan, Joe O'Connell and all your comrades. They have you in their keeping, I have you in my thoughts. Love from Una.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all our friends at Magilligan and Long Kesh. From Lois, Joan, Wanda and Lynn, America.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Jimmy Gavin, Mick Gorman, Vivian Hayden, Brian Quinn and all the lads in Portlaoise. From Louis Walsh and family, UTP.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the republican POWs and to all republican prisoners throughout the world. From

Colm, Joan and Aisling Scullion and the Scullion family, Ballyscullion, Bellaghy.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Seamus, Swann, Dailh Kavanagh, Peter Rogers, Jim Mythen and Rab and all the lads in O'Pearall cumann, Loch Garman, Nod.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Martin Joe Reilly, Portlaoise. Have a nice Christmas. From Jim Monaghan and the Cairns.

REVOLUTIONARY GREETINGS to Pete Sugrue, John Sullivan, Matt, Paddy and Pat (Portlaoise). And to Brendan Dowd (England). Remember, lads, it's all the Killeenah. From Ned Donnell and the Cairns.

SEASON'S GREETINGS and good wishes to all Irish republican POWs in Ireland, Britain and America. From Pat, Mal and Michael Holden, Hemel Hempstead, England.

SEASON'S GREETINGS to all republican POWs in English jails. From Maurcen Maguire, Dublin.

SEASON'S GREETINGS to all Irish political prisoners at home and abroad. "If it's a crime to love you, Ireland, then I'm proud to be". Go mbann! Dia daobh. From Liam Haddock.

SOLIDARITY GREETINGS for Christmas and the New Year to all republican POWs in the H-Blocks, Cages, Crumlin Road, Magilligan, Portlaoise and US prisons and a special mention to the women in England and the prisoners in Ireland. "Revolution until Victory!" UTP. From all the lads in England.

SOLIDARITY GREETINGS to all republican prisoners in Britain, Ireland and America. From Noel, Helen, Paddy and Deirdre, West Herts, England.

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THE pronunciation given in brackets is as near as possible to the sound.

CH is sounded as LOCH ERNE.

D and T before A, O and U are thick, spoken with the tongue pressed against the upper front teeth.

DH and GH are like a G far back in the throat almost a gargle.

Táim (taym) - I go.

Téann tú, sé, sí (tayn too shay, shee) - You go, he, she, it, goes.

Téimid (taymeed) - We go.

Téann sibh, síad (tayn shiv, shee-ud) - You, they, go.

Ní thím (ne haym) - I don't go.

An dtéann tú (un dayn too) - Do you go?

Nach dtéimid? (noch daymeed) - Don't we go?

ag snámh (egg snawv) - Swimming

Cóis trá (cush traw) - To, at the seaside.

Samhradh (sowhrh) - Summer.

Thar lear (hor larr) - Abroad, overseas.

Geimhreadh (gyurwh) - Winter.

Téim cois trá sa samhradh - I go to the seaside in summer.

Ní théimid cois trá sa gheimhreadh (gyurwh) - We don't go to the seaside in winter.

Nach dtéann siad ag snámh gach lá? - Don't they go swimming every day?

An dtéann sé thar lear gach bliain? - Does he go abroad every year?

Téann sí ar scoil aois - She goes to school now.

Ní théann tú ag snámh sa gheimhreadh? - You don't go swimming in winter.

An dtéann sibh thar lear gach samhradh? - Do ye go abroad every summer?

Ní thánn an cat ag snámh cois trá - The cat doesn't go swimming at the seaside.

PHRASES

1 - Ní thánn sé leis (nee hayn shay leh) - It doesn't go with it.

2 - Bíonn aadha fada ar na ba thar lear (bee-un ayekeh fadair eor ruh boh hor larr) - Foreign cows have long horns.

3 - Ag snámh in aghaidh aeas (egg snawv in eye assuh) - Going against the mainstream.

4 - Téann an scoil amach air (tayn un shkall umoch air) - The story gets around about him.

REMEMBERING THE PAST

Magilligan Prison

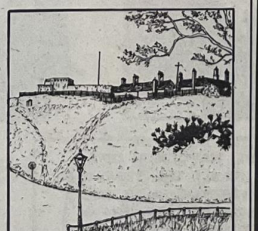
BY PETER O'ROURKE

THE IRA raid on the Magazine Fort in the Phoenix Park, Dublin, in December 1939, was the most extraordinary arms raid in Irish history.

During the autumn of 1939, at the height of the IRA bombing campaign in England, Tom Doyle presented a plan to the IRA's GHQ staff for raiding the Free State's main arms store, the Magazine Fort. The idea appealed to the headquarters staff because, while the IRA had a considerable number of weapons stored around the country, ammunition was in very short supply. A decision was taken to go ahead with the raid.

The intelligence work and preliminary planning for the raid was undertaken by Doyle, Michael Traynor and Jack McNeela. With all the necessary information on procedures within the fort, it was decided to carry out the raid during the Christmas holidays. The Dublin Brigade was alerted, lorries were organised and the O/Cs around the country were informed that safe dumps would be required.

The raid on the Magazine Fort began at 8.30pm on the evening of December 23rd, 1939. A Volunteer, posing as a delivery man, called to the gate of the fort and informed the guard that he had a parcel for the officer in charge. The gate was opened and within minutes IRA Volunteers had occupied the fort and rounded up the entire garrison.



During the raid, which lasted two hours, over 20 lorry-loads of ammunition were removed from the fort. By the time the alarm was raised, the IRA was free and clear with one million and eighty-four thousand rounds - the bulk of the Free State army's supply.

The Free State government, greatly embarrassed by the raid, immediately set about the task of recovering the ammunition. Although dumps had been secured by local units throughout the country, they could not conceal such unexpectedly large quantities of ammunition and within a fortnight almost all of the ammunition had been recovered.

BRESLIN, (Ganley), Sean, (2nd Anniversary). The Cathal Hughes Sinn Féin cumann, Rymiscilly, Lanesborough, Dublin, remembers with pride our friend and comrade Sean Breslin who died on December 23rd 1974. He was a devoted comrade and his many friends in the area.

BRESLIN, (Ganley), Sean, (2nd Anniversary). In loving memory of Sean Breslin who died on December 23rd 1974. He was a devoted comrade and his many friends in the area.

CARROLL, Roddy; GREW, Seamus, (1st Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of our friend Roddy Carroll who was murdered by the RUC on December 23rd 1974. He was a devoted comrade and his many friends in the area.

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COMERFORD, Míre, (1st Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of our friend Míre Comerford who died on December 15th 1982. A true republican in life, Mary, Queen of Ireland, pray for her soul. From all the lads in England.

COMERFORD, Míre, (1st Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of our friend Míre Comerford who died on December 15th 1982. A true republican in life, Mary, Queen of Ireland, pray for her soul. From all the lads in England.

DEVILIN, Eugene, (11th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol Eugene Devlin, Ogligh na hÉireann, Strabane, who was shot dead by British troops on December 27th 1972 while on active service. Thus sé a raibh aig a tróid ar son na saoirse. Never forgotten by his friends and comrades in the Republican Movement, Strabane.

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FOX, Brian, (9th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol Brian Fox, Ogligh na hÉireann, who died as a result of an accident while on active service in England on December 23rd 1974. Thus sé a raibh aig a tróid ar son na saoirse. Remembered by his friends and comrades in the Belfast Brigade.

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while on active service on December 21st 1974. Always remembered and sadly missed by his brother-in-law, FOX, Brian, (9th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol Brian Fox who was accidentally killed in England while on active service on December 21st 1974. Always remembered by his friends and comrades in the Republican Movement.

GRANT, Edward; QUINN, Brendan, (10th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol Edward Grant and Brendan Quinn, Ogligh na hÉireann, Newry, who died on active service on December 21st 1974. Always remembered by his friends and comrades in the Republican Movement.

MCABE, Jack, (12th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol Jack McCabe, GHQ staff, Dublin, who died as a result of an accident while on active service on December 27th 1971. Chait sé a shaol ag tróid ar son na saoirse. Never forgotten by his friends and comrades in the Republican Movement.

MCABE, Jack, (12th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol Jack McCabe, GHQ staff, Dublin, who died as a result of an accident while on active service on December 27th 1971. Chait sé a shaol ag tróid ar son na saoirse. Never forgotten by his friends and comrades in the Republican Movement.

MCABE, Gerald, (12th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol Gerald McCabe, Belfast Brigade, Ogligh na hÉireann, who died on active service on December 21st 1971. Fuair sé bás ag tróid ar son na saoirse. Always remembered by his friends and comrades in the Belfast Brigade.

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MCABE, Gerald & James, (12th & 9th Anniversaries). In proud and loving memory of our sons Vol Gerald and James McCabe who were killed on active service, Gerald on December 21st 1971 and James on December 24th 1974. Memories are something no one can steal, death is a heartache no one can heal, some may forget you, now you are gone, but we will never forget you no matter how long. Always remembered by their brother Thomas, Carmel and family; friends and comrades in the Belfast Brigade; Jimmy and family; Mary, Raymond and family; brother Peter, aunt Maggie and all friends and relations in Shannon and Belfast.

MCABE, Gerald, (12th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of our son-in-law Vol Gerald McCabe, Ogligh na hÉireann, who was murdered by the RUC on December 21st 1971. He gave his life in freedom's cause and faced the tyrant's guns. Mary, Queen of the Gael, pray for him. Always remembered by his father and mother-in-law and family circle in Belfast and Shannon; and also remembered by Mr and Mrs M. Gettigan.

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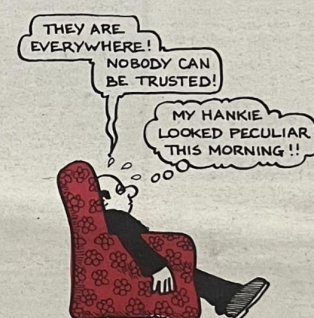
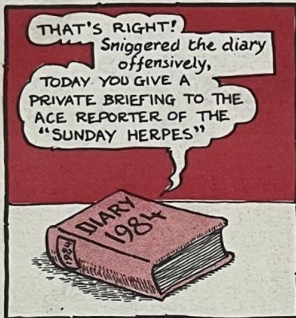
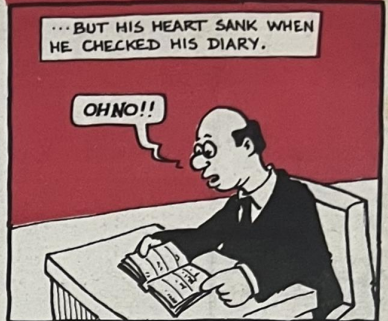
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