

SINN FÉIN TO CONTEST ALL 12 SEATS'

**50
Years
Ago**

"SINN Féin has decided to contest, in the next general election to Westminster, all 12 constituencies in the Six Counties which return representatives to the

British Parliament."

Thus was the Ard Fheis of November 8-9, 1952 reported in the *Irish Independent* of November 10. The report continued: "This was revealed in a statement released after a private session at the Ard Fheis of Sinn Féin in Dublin yesterday."

The *Irish Press* of the same date reported that "the decision had been reached by the outgoing Ard Chomhairle and had a direct and possibly a very important bearing on the immediate future of the organization".

The press release by Sinn Féin went on: "The contest of these elections is one means that can be adopted to challenge Britain's claim to a right to occupy and rule over a part of our national territory."

"Contest of all 12 constituencies will, in addition, constitute a challenge to the native-born, irrespective of what interests they represent, who, by attendance at Westminster, acknowledge Britain's claim to interfere in and dominate matters that by every known right are solely and exclusively the internal affairs of the Irish people."

Obviously, it was a head-to-head confrontation with the British government and with every interest in Ireland which accepted British rule here. From the outset it was made abundantly clear that successful candidates would not sit in the Westminster parliament.

The fateful decision was, of course, fully in keeping with the Republican Movement's Overall Plan and the National Unity and Independence Programme of Sinn Féin.

This much was stated to the Ard Fheis by outgoing president, Pádraig Mac Lógáin. He said that in addition to "a programme of national unity and independence" (*Irish Independent* report), "they had drawn up a Social and Economic Programme which would apply to an overall economy for the whole country as a self-governing nation and would serve the interests of the people, irrespective of class or creed."

"In that respect it differed materially from the lines of economic development followed so far by the native rulers of a partitioned Ireland which tended towards development of two separate economies based upon partition, the general effect of which was to consolidate the division of our country."

A new President of Sinn Féin was elected in place of Pádraig Mac Lógáin who did not seek re-election. He was Tomás Ó Dubhghaill of Áth Cliath, who was elected Ard-Rúnaí in 1949 and had been Adjutant-General of the Irish Republican Army at the time of his arrest and imprisonment in 1941.

The *Irish Press* and *Irish Independent* both listed the new officers and Ard-Chomhairle members: Uachtarán: Tomás Ó Dubhghaill of Dublin, Leas-Uachtarán: Margaret Buckley, Áth Cliath and Frank McGlynn, Armagh city; Ard-Rúnaith Seán Ó Ceirnáigh agus Mícheál Mac Fréiníthir, as Bhaile Átha Cliath don bheirt; Ard-Chisteoir: Ríobárd Ruiseil agus Críostóir Mac Eochaidh, as Bhaile Átha Cliath dóibh beirt.

Ard-Chomhairle: Pádraig Mac Lógáin, Portlaoise; Pádraig Ó Dubhghaill, Béal Féiste; Máire Ní Ghabhann, Ard Mhaca; Patrick McShane, Ard Mhaca; Antoine MagCana, Áth Cliath; Eamonn Mac Thomáis, Áth Cliath; Pádraig Mac Fhloinn, Áth Cliath; Seosamh Ó Cathail, Béal Féiste.

An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman stated that "over 100 delegates attended the Ard Fheis" at which momentous decisions were made.

A week before the Ard Fheis, newspapers reported that armed men had marched through Dundrum, a southern suburb of Dublin city. The *Sunday Independent* of November 2 carried a heading "Armed Men in Co Dublin",

• **Cathal Brugha — Free State troops killed him in 1922. In 1952 the Free State named a barracks after him in Rathmines, Dublin!**

while the *Irish Press* of the next day said "Armed Marchers in Co Dublin".

The *Sunday Independent* report said: "People living in Dundrum, a south Dublin suburb, were surprised some nights ago to find about 200 armed men marching through their streets. They were doubly surprised to find that they were not regular troops, but were civilians."

"Inquires made by a *Sunday Independent* reporter disclosed that recently there has been a marked increase in the activities of these men, activities carried out without any great concealment. Indeed, it was discovered that these men were making use of an army rifle range in the Dublin Mountains."

The *Irish Press* report was slightly more precise: "Close on 200 young men who carried arms were recently seen marching through Dundrum, Co. Dublin writes an *Irish Press* reporter."

'MEN CARRYING ARMS'

"For the past six months groups of men carrying arms have been seen at various places in the Dublin Mountains."

"These activities, which were more numerous in the summer, have, I understand, been known to the police authorities for some time."

The press reports have been given in full and there was nothing further carried in the media, except that a Special Branch spokesperson was quoted. He said: "The number would be nearer to two-dozen than 200."

Were these reports "leaked" to the newspapers by the Branch? Remember that Fianna Fáil was back in power as a minority administration in the 26 Counties. And Gerry Boland was serving his last period as Minister for "Justice".

Of course the reports were embroidered upon by people with lively imaginations. For instance, a Longford man who had been a patient in the old St Vincent's Hospital (St. Stephen's Green/Lower Leeson Street) told on his return home of looking out the hospital window and seeing "hundreds of armed men marching by". They were getting nearer the city centre!

The truth was that the Northside and Southside city Companies of the Dublin Battalion, IRA sometimes engaged in route marches through remote minor roads beyond the city outskirts.

They were never held through build-up areas or areas with street lighting. The Volunteers never carried arms of any kind during these exercises.

As was stated in last month's installment, training camps were held discreetly in the Dublin and Wicklow mountains. In 1952 they had been held during the St. Patrick's Day

weekend, July and September.

Why did the press reports not appear until November? The most likely answers may be that they were inspired by the Special Branch, that such covert activities were nothing new and that enterprising reporters were writing "flyers", as they are known in journalism circles.

On the front page of *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, December 1952 a recent edition of the Vatican daily newspaper *Osservatore Romano* is quoted on the question of enlistment in foreign forces:

"Fighting for one's fatherland is a duty that nobody can evade without fault, not only civil but also moral."

"But to go as a Volunteer and risk death for a foreign country, for a cause whose aims are not clear, merely to earn bread, or struck by the romantic aspect of fighting in far off lands, is not permissible."

"Also that it was inconceivable that parents should permit their sons to take part in adventures from which there might be no return and which might mean their spiritual and physical deaths."

The Republican organ commented: "It proves difficult to reconcile this commentary with the fact that thousands of Irishmen are present serving with the British forces in such far off lands as Malaya, Kenya and Korea, or with the action of some Churchmen in condemning the young men who joined the IRA to fight for their fatherland."

"In a letter to the *Cork Examiner* (as it then was), E. Fluery, 'Poppy Day' Organiser in Cork, appealing for support said: 'The need is very great and wars still continue'. The derelicts of England's imperialist wars come back to beg the charity of Irishmen."

"Now they have served her cause and since they can serve no more she throws them from her."

Elsewhere under the heading "Civilisation Comes to Kenya", a report culled from the *Irish Times* of November 27, 1952: "During the debate in the Kenya Legislature Colonel E.S. Grogan, the oldest member of the Legislature (he is 78) said that the Kikuyu (people) — centre of the Mau Mau — were regarded as the most cowardly tribe in Africa."

"They were mostly concerned about their necks. He advocated charging 'about 100 of these rascals' with treason and hanging 25% of them in front of the remainder, who should then be sent back to the tribal reserves to tell the rest."

One wonders did Col Grogan live to see Jomo Kenyatta, who had been sentenced to seven years in prison for "managing the Mau Mau", dancing with the Queen of England when she came on a State visit to an independent, but neo-colonial, Kenya a few years later.

He was then Prime Minister of Kenya but during the independence struggle British propaganda had visualized him drinking cups of human blood while swearing an oath to the Mau Mau, which title translates as the Land and Freedom Army.

Another article in the same edition of the Republican paper is headed "Britain Defends Human Rights?" It notes that the British delegation to the United Nations handed in three documents containing 32,000 words of indictment against the Communist regimes in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania.

These charged failure to observe human rights against the administrations in those Communist-dominated countries. The article says it would be more easy to write on the same subject in British-dominated countries.

"The number of Kenya natives imprisoned on November 17 was 2,200. Think of the mass internments, whole village destruction and murders committed under the Union Jack in Malaya."

CONTRADICTIONS

Yet again the contradictions in the Establishment set-up are pointed up in a piece on the "Regiment of Pearse" in the Free State Army. This battalion of the FCA had conducted a recruiting campaign in University College Dublin.

A stand was erected in the Main Hall of the College and leaflets were distributed. Army officers addressed students during lecture hours and appealed for recruits.

The most apt tribute which the FCA leaflets paid to the 'Universities Company' of the 'Pearse Battalion' was "Remember this unit is really another College Society."

The article concluded that it was heartening to know that quite a number of students were actually in the Republican Movement, although Republican activities were "of course strictly frowned upon in what is named the National University".

But it was not just Pearse's name which was ill-used fifty years ago, but those of Cathal Brugha, Harry Boland and Liam Mellows also. An editorial in the Republican organ of June 1952 saw reason to attack hypocrisy in high places.

It said the Leinster House politicians were continually "trying to make the Free State area acceptable as our country". It quoted as an example an editorial in the *Irish Press* of May 26, 1952:

"It is fitting and appropriate that Portobello Barracks (in Dublin's Rathmines area where the 'Regiment of Pearse' trained) is to be renamed in honour of Cathal Brugha."

The UI asked if it was from the same barracks that the Free State troops came who shot him to death in 1922? It said that some of those same troops might still have been members of the Portobello garrison in 1952.

The *Irish Press* article went on: "After Easter Week (1916) he survived 14 bullet wounds which would have assuredly killed a weaker man physically or one less eager to live in order to join battle with renewed enthusiasm with the British forces who were occupying this part of Ireland."

The UI replied: "Now we know, Cathal Brugha fought to drive the British forces 'out of this part of Ireland'. What hypocrisy? 'Brugha did not surrender' it says — but now 30 years after his death they try to make it appear that he was all the time fighting for the Statelet which surrender brought into being."

"Beggars' Bush is to be renamed Harry Boland Barracks. Soon we will probably have the Erskine Childers Barracks and the Liam Mellows or the Joe McKelvey Barracks. Why not go the whole way and give us the Paddy McGrath Barracks or maybe the Richard Goss Barracks? (both were executed by Free State firing squads in 1940/41)."

"Are there no depths too vile for these politicians to stoop to?"

Note: Shortly afterwards Renmore Free State military barracks in Galway was renamed "Dún Ui Mhaoiliosa" for Liam Mellows!

(More next month. Refs. *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman* June & December 1952; *Irish Press* November 3&10, 1952; *Sunday Independent* November 2, 1952 and *Irish Independent* November 10, 1952.)

FIRST (ALL IRELAND) DÁIL COMMÉMORATED

**50
Years
Ago**

THE anniversary of the Declaration of Independence issued by the First (All-Ireland) Dáil on January 21, 1919 was commemorated by Sinn Féin at a

series of public meetings held throughout the country during January-February 1953.

An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman reported these events in its February 1953 issue under a front-page headline "Ireland — United and Free: No Compromise — No Half Measures".

Meetings had already been held in Dublin, Newry, Roscommon, Belfast, Inistioge (Kilkenny) and Newport (Tipperary). In addition meetings had been arranged for Derry, Glens of Antrim, Portlaoise and other centres. Glasgow James Connolly Cumann had held its meeting on January 25.

The report described the Independence Declaration as the vindication of the men and women of Easter Week, 1916 and the culminating point of the nation's long struggle for freedom.

It was quite clear, unambiguous and left no doubt in the minds of its hearers that Cathal Brugha's words immediately following it were a correct summary of its purpose. He said: "You understand, from what has been asserted in this Declaration of Independence, that we are now done with England. Let the world know it, and let those who are concerned bear it seriously in mind."

The report continued: "We must adopt the same methods as the people in 1918 — we must set up again a parliament for all Ireland, to supplant both Stormont and Leinster House administrations, and make its writ run in all 32 Counties."

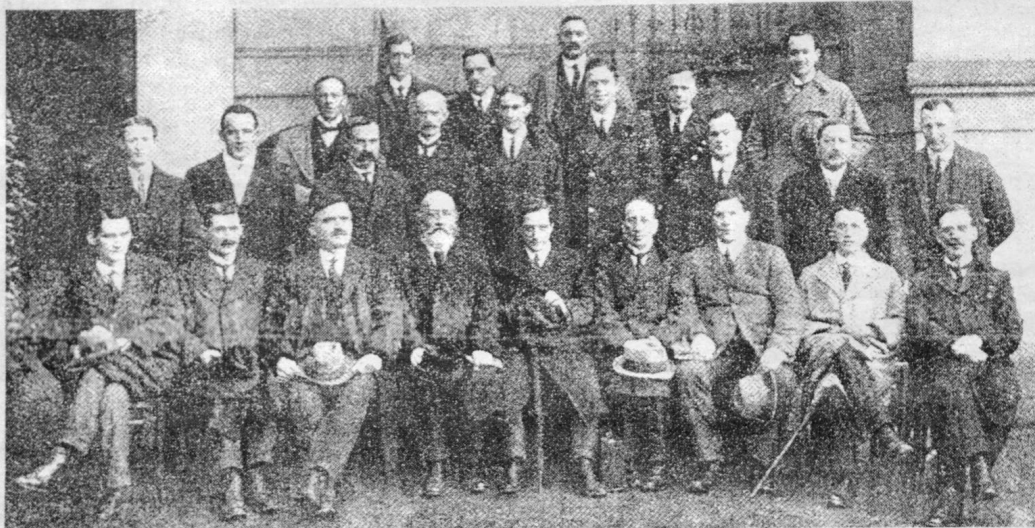
"The unity and independence of the Irish nation is a matter in the first instance for the Irish people themselves. Let us get down to the task now before it is too late. That is the significance of our commemorations of the Declaration of Independence."

Tomás Ó Dubhghaill, President of Sinn Féin, speaking at Newry Town Hall on January 22 said that political, social and economic freedom were essential.

He quoted Pearse's ideal of "Ireland not free merely, but Gaelic as well" and referred to the numbers unemployed in both Six and 26 Counties while Ministers for Finance in both Belfast and Dublin were subservient in policy to the English Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Republican Organ in the same issue reported on a meeting of Comhairle Chúige Uladh of Sinn Féin held in Newry, Co. Down on Sunday January 4, at which delegates were present from the Ulster Cumann. It said:

"Following the decision of the last Ard Fheis to contest all 12 seats in the Six-County area in the next Westminster election a Central Committee was appointed to deal with the contest of the elections. The following were appointed to the Committee:



• The inaugural meeting of the First (All-Ireland) Dáil Éireann on January 21, 1919 — commemorations were held in many areas of the country in 1953.

"Director of Elections: Frank McGlynn, 6 Abbey Lane, Armagh city; Director of Finance: Patrick O'Hagan, Mullaghbawn, Newry; Director of Publicity: Joseph Cahill, 60 Divis Street, Belfast; Director of Transport: Peter McPartland, 5 The Gardens, Bessbrook, Co. Armagh; Director of Canvass, Patrick Doyle, 45 Whitecock Crescent, Belfast.

"The Central Committee was given as its first task the issuing of an appeal to the Irish race at home and abroad for a full measure of financial and other support to enable Republicans within the Six Counties to carry through the contest to a successful conclusion.

"The Central Committee are making arrangements for the holding of Constituency Conventions for the purpose of setting up constituency election machinery.

"Offers of financial or other assistance should be sent to any of those named above," the report concluded.

The *Sunday Press* of January 18 gave six lines to the decisions regarding the Westminster contest. "They will be seeking election to the Republican Government of Ireland, (ie The 32 County Dáil) and will not attend Westminster." What could be clearer?

Next day, January 19, a Dublin daily paper reported briefly that the Ard-Chomhairle endorsed the Comhairle Chúige Uladh decision to contest "all twelve" constituencies in the next Westminster election.

"All twelve seats were last contested by Republicans in 1921. The candidates if elected, will not attend at Westminster." The message was getting through.

The martyrs of the 1940s were still being honoured in 1953. The previous November 16 in Cahirsiveen, Co. Kerry the 10th anniversary of Maurice O'Neill's execution in Mountjoy jail in 1942 was marked by the unveiling of a memorial at his grave.

A large parade formed up in the Fair Green and marched to Keelavarnoge cemetery where a limestone Celtic Cross had been erected to the memory of the dead patriot. The very large local gathering was augmented by the contingents of Óglaigh na h-Éireann from Tralee, Listowel, Killarney, Castlegregory,

Ardferit and Glencar.

Scartaglen Pipe Band and the Fianna Éireann Slua from Tralee also marched. Seán H Ryan, who was introduced by Michael Murphy, performed the unveiling ceremony and delivered the oration:

"In the name of God I dedicate this memorial to every person of every clime, of every colour who has made the supreme sacrifice for the god-given right to freedom, but I dedicate it especially to the memory of Maurice O'Neill, whose name is inscribed on this stone."

Welcoming the people who had come from so many parts of Kerry to pay homage to the memory of a gallant soldier, the speaker said: "Seeing this we know that the ideals for which Maurice O'Neill gladly gave his young life are safe and that we shall yet see the Republic free from our enemies."

"Relying on the old adage 'that England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity', Maurice O'Neill saw England engaged in a great war; he wished to seize that opportunity to free his country, but, alas, he reckoned not with traitors."

Seán Ryan then traced in brief outline the contribution that Ireland had made to world civilisation and urged those present to study the nation's history if they would honour the nation's dead. Addressing the people of Kerry, he concluded: "Even in 1798 we made our contribution to the cause of Freedom."

"1867 saw the Fenian Rising led by the men of Cahirsiveen. We gave our quota in 1916 and one of the last to die for the Republic was the man you honour here today."

"The best way to honour his memory is to pledge yourselves to his ideals and to follow in his footsteps."

Preparations for similar events elsewhere were underway. A committee was formed in Co. Leitrim to erect a memorial over the grave of Staff-Captain Jimmy Joe Reynolds, IRA, who was killed with Comdt John James Kelly and Comdt. Charles McCafferty in an accidental explosion at Castlefinn, Co. Donegal near the Tyrone Border on November 28, 1938.

Leitrim people living in Dublin set up a sub-committee to assist in raising funds and those willing to help in any way were invited to get in touch with Leo Duignan, 45 Upper Rathmines Road or to attend the sub-committee meetings every second Thursday at 9 North Frederick Street, Dublin.

A leaflet was circulated under the title: "Coiste Chuimhneacháin Shéamuis Sheosaimh Mhic Raghnaill (James Joseph Reynolds Memorial Committee)". In four paragraphs it made its appeal to "mark the last resting place of this heroic Breffni soldier".

The committee officers were listed as Frank Maguire, Derraconnessey, Bawnboy, Chair; Patrick McWeeney, Crummy, Aghacashel, Vice-Chair; Peter Honeyman, Tullyhusker, Ballinamore, Eoghan Mac Cumhaill, Clogher, Ballinamore, Joint Secretaries; John McGirl, Ballinamore, John Redican, Castlefore, Foxfield, Joint Treasurers.

Paddy McWeeney was a veteran of the 1930s and '40s who spent years in the Curragh Concentration Camp. A most respected Republican, he died in 1986. Eoghan Mac Cumhaill was a national teacher and secretary also of Ballinamore Cumann of Sinn Féin.

He later moved to Ballyfeeny national school, Kilglass, Co. Roscommon and from there to Co. Wicklow before retiring and moving to Dublin. He has been a firm supporter of Feis na Poblachta and Republican Sinn Féin.

In eagrán Feabhra 1953 de *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman* leanadh le "Beath-Fhaisnéis Sheáin Mhic Chonfhaoila" le "Ferdia". Is dóigh leis an scríobhnóir seo gurab é "Ferdia" ná Séamus Mór Ó Mongáin as Dú Thuama, Béal an Átha, Co. Mhuigheo.

Fuair Séamus bás Mí Dheire Fomhair seo caite, Beannacht Dé lén a anam. Leanann an sraith den Beath-Fhaisnéis ar aghaidh go Mí an Mheitheamh 1953. Is fiú é a chur le chéile mar leabhrán. Tá stair luachmhar ann agus Gaeilge den scoth.

(More next month. Refs: *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, December 1952 and February 1953; *Sunday Press*, January 18, 1953.)

CAMPAIGN OF PROTEST OUTLINED

**50
Years
Ago**

WITH the English Coronation ceremony of Queen Elizabeth II due in June 1953, Sinn Féin began in March, 50

years ago, preparations for protest action against her being crowned as "Queen of Northern Ireland".

A circular letter was sent out from Ard-Oifig at 38 South King Street, Dublin on March 23, 1953. It was signed by Seán Ó Cearnaigh agus Micheál Mac Théinífhair, Ard Rúnaíthe and it called for protest action throughout the 32 Counties.

"We suggest that your Cumann should take any of the following courses of action where circumstances warrant," it read.

PROTEST MEETINGS: Each Cumann should make an all-out effort to hold public Protest Meetings, obtaining where possible the cooperation of GAA, Gaelic League, and other National Organisations.

"The meetings should draw particular attention to the assumed title of this foreign Queen and the danger to National morale of propaganda films and magazines.

"CINEMAS: (A) Where necessary each Cumann should write or interview the managers of Cinemas where films portraying the Coronation ceremonies are scheduled to be shown requesting them to withdraw same.

"(B) Where this approach is not successful demonstrations should be organized in the cinemas during the performances."

Under the heading *Magazines and Newspapers* Cumann were asked to approach shop owners and managers which stocked literature likely to produce special coronation editions and ask for withdrawal of such.

"Where cooperation was not forthcoming Cumann could paste small gun-slipped slogans on the shop windows, or any other course of action considered feasible.

"TRADE UNIONS: Where Trade Unions exist, each Cumann should interview the local branch secretary and members of the Union to have all labour withdrawn (a) from any Cinema where propaganda films are being shown:

"(B) Factories where Coronation souvenirs are being manufactured;

"(C) Where the handling of any kind of propaganda material or literature is involved. The cooperation of other organizations should be sought in the matter."

"CORONATION GIFTS: The following recommendations are made to the Cumann in the Six North Eastern Counties. An effort should be made by each Cumann to interview managers and principles seeking their cooperation in stopping the distribution of Coronation gifts and souvenirs.

"We are aware of various local difficulties that exist in your area; but since this matter is of vital importance to the National well-being we must insist that a very special effort be made by your Cumann. Any assistance that you may require from us we shall be pleased to give.

"Should you have any further suggestions to offer that will make the prospect more effective, please forward to Head Office without delay."

The circular letter concluded "Beir Bua agus Beannacht" (bear victory and good wishes) and the names of the joint-secretaries.

Some time later a daily newspaper report stated: "Warning stickers against publishing the (British) Coronation on June 2 have been affixed to the windows of shopkeepers advertising the event." (The stickers were worded "Anti-Irish Shop". "Some shopkeepers it is understood, have been warned to stop selling decorations."

The report also said: "Bombs addressed to prominent Six County officials exploded prematurely in Belfast's GPO in Royal Avenue yesterday. The bombs contained in

ULL BLAST

FINITE

SINN FEIN

PLATFORM

30.0

WE



Mr. J. J. McNabb, Dublin, addressing yesterday's Sinn Féin meeting in St. Columba's Hall, Derry. On his right is Mr. Gerald 'Byrne' Dublin, and on his left Mr. T. Mellon, Derry, who presided. extreme right is Mr. Neil Gillespie, Director of Elections.

themselves Republicans and who supported some movement which pretended to be Republican. It was the duty of every person to vote.

"Do not say, 'What is the use of voting? We cannot win anyway.' That is only an apology because there are a number afraid to offend their Unionist neighbour or of being penalised in some way. The man who does not vote in this election is a traitor to his country. One sees local rumpuses in the

LIVERPOOL ANTI-PARTITION CANDIDATE ILL, WITHDRAW

THE Exchange Division of Liverpool Anti-Partition Committee announced last night that their candidate, Mr. B. Glynn, is to withdraw from the election.

In a special statement the Committee announced that 'Owing to the

Mid-'Ulster' Camp Opens

COALITION GOVERNMENT

• Gearóid Ó Broin, at Sinn Féin election meeting in Derry, from the Derry Journal, February 1950.

letters, caused little damage beyond burning other mail." Presumably the letter "bombs" were incendiary devices.

Following their discovery, there was intensive British forces activity in nationalist districts, especially in the Falls Road area.

"Startling Discovery Following Lorry Crash" was the heading to an article in a Donegal local paper (presumably the *Donegal Democrat*) dated October 31, 1952.

The report stated: "Extensive inquiries have been instituted by Garda Detectives in Counties Sligo and Donegal as a sequel to a somewhat startling discovery made in the wreckage following a lorry crash in the Bunduff district on the Sligo-Bundoran road on Sunday morning.

"It appears that the lorry was being driven in the Sligo direction from Bundoran when it skidded off the roadway, turned completely over and buried itself in a deep drain.

"In the lorry, it has been established, were the driver and a passenger who, miraculously, it would appear escaped uninjured. A car had been accompanying the lorry and the occupants of the crashed vehicle entered the car and continued their journey, their destination being unknown.

"The lorry, which has a Kildare registration, was badly damaged and had to be removed from the drain in sections. It was while this operation was being carried out that the find which brought detectives rushing to the spot was made.

EASTER LILIES

"In the immediate vicinity were found Easter Lilies, revolver holsters, first aid equipment and a large wire clippers.

"Intensive garda activity followed the discovery. It is believed that the lorry had delivered a cargo of merchandise in Donegal at the weekend and was returning to its base on Sunday when the accident occurred," the report concluded.

Nothing more was heard of the crashed lorry in Donegal. However, at the annual General Army Convention of the IRA in the spring of 1953, the matter was raised.

Seán Ó'Neill, NT and brother of Maurice O'Neill executed in 1942, told the Convention of the crashed lorry and said that from the material found at the scene, it appeared to have been "an IRA lorry".

The Chief-of-Staff report to the convention had not mentioned the matter and he asked for clarification. O'Neill was a member of the outgoing Army Executive.

The C/S in reply stated that the vehicles in question were indeed under Army control. They were returning from a military operation in the Six Counties which had not materialised when the accident happened. No one was injured, he was glad to report. The target and its location were not disclosed.

A Donegal correspondent who assists this series occasionally reveals that the driver of the lorry was Gearóid Ó Broin of Dublin. Gearóid had been an organiser for Ailtirí na h-Aiséirí in the 1930 and early '40s, but had joined the Movement in the late 1940s.

He worked as a motor mechanic in Beresford Place in the centre of Dublin and will figure again in this series.

At the time, the ex-Free State Army Corporal (acting Sergeant) of Renmore Barracks, Galway, — then doing a training course in Dublin as an Irish teacher — mentioned to this writer that he had seen a newspaper report of the incident in Donegal.

There was no reference to it in *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*. It was not the practice to report on failed operations, it would appear.

It is presumed that the purpose was another arms raid. This indicated that the IRA was very much in business and was following up on its Overall Plan. Military operations by the IRA and political activity by Sinn Féin were both taking place.

On a day in February 1953, the full-time organiser for the Irish Republican Army in the Six Occupied Counties, Manus Canning of Derry city was in Dungiven. He was in the Co. Derry town in the course of his rounds.

Manus was looking in a shop in the centre of the town when he noticed reflected in the plate glass a battered-looking motor car come to a halt at the kerb beside him. A well-built figure in a trench coat emerged and came over to him.

"This is either very good — or very bad," said Manus to himself. (He related the story to comrades later on.) "Hello Manus," said the blank stranger. "How are the boys of the Old Brigade?" Manus did not reply, guessing the stranger to be a member of the British forces in plain clothes by his gross familiarity.

He introduced himself as an RUC detective and wanted to know if Manus had been in Dungannon that morning. There was no answer and the RUC man departed.

Later Manus Canning learned that there had been an armed raid on the Labour Exchange in the Co. Tyrone town that morning and that 5,000 sterling had been taken — a considerable sum fifty years ago.

The raiders were lucky to escape when they drove their car into a cul-de-sac, but succeeded in making their way out of it. *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman* in March threw some light on the episode.

SUPPLEMENT

A sheet of typescript was attached to the six-page paper and circulated with it. Headed *The United Irishman: Supplement*, it read: "Oglagh Na h-Eireann (Irish Republican Army), General Headquarters, Dublin, February 1953" and was addressed to "The Editor, *United Irishman*", as follows:

A chara,

"It has come to the attention of the Army Council that, subsequent to an armed robbery in Dungannon, the impression has been created that the Irish Republican Army was responsible.

"The Army Council disclaims any responsibility for this action and, having investigated the affair, wishes to state that no member of the Irish Republican Army was involved.

Is mise
B. Fitzgerald
Adjutant-General"

In due course it emerged that a splinter group led by Liam Kelly was responsible. Formerly a unit of the IRA the group had held an Easter Commemoration in Pomeroy, Co. Tyrone in 1952.

As people came out of a dance hall in the town at 1 or 2am on Easter Monday the group held a parade behind a Tricolour and a statement was read. In reports to the press they claimed to be the IRA — which they had severed all connection with — and that they were armed during the parade and commemoration.

The IRA leadership was concerned at the use of the name of the Army by a grouping no longer attached to it. Eventually the Kelly group called themselves Saor Uladh (Free Ulster) and issued statements over its own name.

This was a much more satisfactory position for all concerned, but it did not end the friction between Saor Uladh and the IRA. More will be heard of this later.

(More next month. References: Sinn Féin circular to Cumann, March 23, 1953; *Donegal Democrat*, October 31, 1952 and *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, March 1953.)

Beannachtaí

GREETINGS to Michael Logan, England and get well soon. From your friends in Republican Sinn Féin, England.
GET well soon, Michael. You need to keep your strength up for the 2003 Christmas Swim! From your comrades Republican Sinn Féin, Dublin.

'RETRENCHMENT OVER: ENGAGE THE ENEMY' — IRA

**50
Years
Ago**

"THE period of retrenchment is over. We can now look and plan ahead in confidence, and we pledge ourselves to engage the

enemy at the earliest possible opportunity. May God grant that that day be not long delayed."

This was the wording of the last paragraph of the Easter Statement from the Army Council of the IRA in 1953.

Its meaning for the future was not lost on the thousands who heard it read at 1916 Commemoration ceremonies in every county in Ireland, in England and Scotland, in the United States, Canada, South Africa and Australia.

The period of restructuring and preparation was past. The IRA was going on the offensive! That was the full message on April 5, 1953.

The full statement read: "To the loyal citizens of the Irish Republic, the Army Council of Oglaiha na h-Eireann sends greetings, and reaffirms the allegiance of the Army of the Republic to the principles enshrined in the Proclamation of 1916.

"It has long been customary in this annual statement to review the progress made by the Army towards achieving the complete independence and sovereignty of our country. In recent years the progress annually reported has not been very considerable. There have been substantial reasons for this.

"During the late World War due to the traitorous campaign of Quisling Irishmen, the Republican Army sustained grievous injuries.

"That it is not now defunct is a tribute to the unswerving loyalty of the few who set themselves the task of nursing it back to life, and to the unquenchable spirit of many of those who were newly recruited to its ranks.

"Since 1945, a tireless, ceaseless effort has been in progress, to draw the threads of the organisation that recognized the necessity for physical force and was willing to fight, but an Army that would be able to conduct a protracted campaign against a formidable enemy.

"This was no easy task — no job for the easily discouraged. It was a slow tortuous operation, with nothing of the spectacular about it. The difficulties met with were legion and such as would daunt all but the most confident of ultimate success. That this confidence was not misplaced we are proud to announce today.

"No longer is a struggle necessary to ensure the very existence of an army pledged to liberation. Such an army is now an accomplished fact — as yet maybe not quite as numerically strong or as well equipped as all would wish it to be, but still a highly efficient well-equipped Unit that will more than hold its own in the impending and long-overdue struggle against the British Army of Occupation in Ireland."

The statement concluded with the sentences quoted at the beginning of this article. The Army was now ready to take the offensive.

At Easter 1953, huge posters calling for recruits to the Free State Army were on display throughout the 26 Counties. These appeared on advertising hoardings, put there by professional companies to which the poster had been contracted out.

Under the heading "Guard Your Heritage", the advertisement from the 26 County Department of Defence announced: "Among the free nations of the world, ours is one of the few . . . the young man who joins the Defence Forces . . . is following in the footsteps of generations of Irish Soldiers who fought to achieve the freedom he now enjoys. The goal for which they struggled is now the heritage he is proud to guard."

A series of graphics on the posters then showed Irish soldiers from Eoghan Rua Ó Néill's time to Patrick Sarsfield, a 1798 Pike man, Emmet's Rising, 1848, the Fenians and

an Irish Volunteer of 1916. It ended "Keep Up the Tradition — join the Defence Forces".

However the IRA responded throughout the 26-County State. In each place where the poster was displayed the words "Defence Forces" were blotted out, covered over by a slip, which fitted neatly in the same typeset and red colour, and said "IRA" in very large letters.

The poster then read: "Keep up the Tradition — Join the IRA". It seemed not to have been interfered with at all. On a single night all the posters in the 26 Counties were altered. So good was the alteration that in some areas the difference was not noticed for days.

PROPAGANDA COUP

There were no incidents and no one was made amenable. People enjoyed the stunt and the feedback to the Movement was to the effect that it was appropriate — and carried out very efficiently — a propaganda coup which also recruited publicly for the Republican Army.

No poster on these lines has ever been produced by the 26-County State since!

During April the Ulster poetess Alice Milligan from Omagh, Co. Tyrone died at the advanced age of 87. Born in 1866 into a pro-British family, she espoused the Cause of Ireland at an early age. With Ethna Carbery, later wife of Séamus MacManus, she was founder-editor of *The Shan Van Vocht* (Sean-Bhean Bhocht = Poor Old Woman = Ireland), a separatist periodical in 1896, three years later it was absorbed into Arthur Griffith's *United Irishman*.

But the two gifted Northern women had held the fort during a low period in national affairs. Alice Milligan, an Ulster Protestant, was also author of a *Life of Wolfe Tone* (1898), *The Last of the Fianna* (play 1900) *Hero Lays* (poetry 1908) and *The Daughter of Donagh* (play 1920).

Margaret Buckley who had been President of Sinn Féin between 1937-1950 wrote an appreciation of Alice Milligan in the May 1953 edition of *An t-Éireamhach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*:

"I, a woman of the South, would like to lay a wreath of appreciation and affection at the feet of a patriot woman of the North, my old friend and comrade in Ireland's cause — Alice Milligan.

"I first met her in the Cork Celtic Literary Society and our friendship, like our Republican ideals, stood the test of time. She took a keen interest in our newly-formed Cork National Theatre Society, her red head, bright little face and clipped speech put courage and confidence into us and sustained our efforts.

"She came specially in 1905 to produce for us *The Last Irish King*, which was attended by the author - O'Neill Russell - who was loud in praise of the production and performance. We were a group of young people with no experience and no funds for costumes, scenery, etc.

"Alice supplied both and dressed kings, queens and courtiers royally, out of old curtains, remnants of cloth, etc. She was a perfect wizard in the effects she conjured up out of nothing.

"She, Miss O'Leary, myself and another, on a side-car were in the long procession to Cork station to meet O'Donovan Rossa on his return from exile. The fourth lady was not a Republican and was not happy in the midst of tar barrels and bands.

"She bubbled about the French Revolution, to the great amusement of Alice who chuckled and nudged me at every fresh remark.

"When I came to live in Dublin, she continued to visit me. She used to stay with Mrs Éamon Ceannt, and incidentally she it was who introduced me to that fine Republican family.

"She has now joined her patriot friends who have gone before; her poetic soul is in good company and she shall be remembered for ever."

*I feel like one who treads alone
Some banquet hall deserted
Where lights are fled, and garlands dead
And all but he departed.*
— MB"

Readers and students of patriotic verse will remember Alice Milligan's lines on Brian



• Alice Milligan

Boru Brian of Banba, all alone, up from the desert places, her *When I Was a Little Girl* (When the Fenians come I'll rise and go after); *Owen who Died - a '67 man*. (You have heard o' Hawk o' the Hilltop, if you have not seen); *To Blessed Joan of France* written in 1909 at the time of Joan of Arc's beatification (Blessed Joan of France! Pray now today, For our deliverance); *The Man on the Wheel* in praise of the cycling Irish teachers of the early Gaelic League (a man goes by on a wheel with the rain in his face).

An t-Éireamhach Aontaithe/The United Irishman in its February edition fifty years ago carried an item which is very topical today. In a panel on page six between heavy black lines it said in large bold type:

"This Land will be Neutral in any War. We have no enemy but England. People of Ireland, beware lest you be led to fight England's battle by the intrigues of Leinster House or Stormont. English troops are still occupying Ireland. There is our task. Let us face up to it now."

ENGLISH ESTABLISHMENT CONCERNED

That there was concern among the English Establishment at the prospect of protests against the coronation of Elizabeth II as "Queen of Northern Ireland" is evident from an article from the *Irish Press* of January 12, 1953 quoted in the March edition of the Republican organ. It was headed "Panic in Advance".

It was written by Terry Ward of Derry who for some years in the early and mid-1930s was assistant editor and later deputy editor of *An Phoblacht* (1925-37).

This Republican weekly was forced to cease publication for a period in 1935 due to repeated seizure by the Free State of the entire quantity of printed newspapers. There was no compensation and the printer had to be paid. Terry Ward and Liam McGabhann had to go to conventional journalism to earn a living.

Terry Ward wrote in 1953: "A (British) Labour Sunday paper suggests that messages have passed between Scotland Yard and Sir Richard Pim, Inspector-General (head) of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, outlining rigid precautions to be taken during Queen Elizabeth's visit to Belfast and the Six Counties after her coronation.

"It is possible that Mr Churchill (then British Prime Minister), on his mission to the United States, has been a little unnerved by the attention of the Irish Minute Men's patrols. But it is a fact that it would not be Stormont and the RUC if it were not to have some little panic in advance.

"So we are told 'One step contemplated by the Ulster (sic) Government is the taking into protective custody of all known members of the Irish Republican Army in Ulster, or others who may attempt to cross from the Irish Republic about the time of the Queen's visit.'

"From this foreshadowing of events it would seem that the orgy of political arrests and internments, that for very shame has halted in the Six Counties when they were exposed to the tribunal of the world, is about to break out again.

"Herbert Morrison (of the British Labour Party) has had to protest at the manner in

which the Queen's portrait is being displayed in the partisan literature of the Tory Party."

Local councils in the 26 Counties protested against any participation by representatives of the 26-County State in the coronation ceremonies. A more robust protest in Scotland was reported by the *Irish Independent* on March 23. Some Scots evidently objected to her being crowned "Queen of Great Britain" (including Scotland).

Entitled "Bomb Explosion in Glasgow Shop", the report read: "McGavigan's Ltd., stationers, Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow, who had been warned in an anonymous message to remove E II R (Elizabeth II Regina) displays, had their main display window wrecked by a home-made bomb.

"Mr Cosgrave, the shop manager, said the firm had none of the signs displayed to the street, although they had plenty in their stock rooms."

The *Leinster Leader* of March 14 reported: "When at Naas (Co Kildare) Council a resolution from Sinn Féin was read calling on all collectively and individually to protest against any suggestion of participation in the coronation ceremony and describing it as an affront to the Queen to proclaim herself Queen of Northern Ireland, Mr O'Donoghue proposed that they adopt the resolution.

"He added that the idea was to give the puppet government in the North a breathing space in order to consolidate their gains. 'We don't want any Queen Lizzie or Queen Margaret,' added O'Donoghue.

"Mr T Dowling seconded the adoption of the resolution.

"Wim Daly — So far as I am concerned this is a Thirty-two County Republic, and that is all that counts.

"Mr Dowling — It was an unnecessary and gratuitous affront to our people here, probably sponsored by Mr Churchill.

"The resolution was adopted unanimously."

The *Evening Herald* of March 19 reported under the heading "The Blame for the Border": "Should the present Queen of England be blamed for the Border?

"This question was posed at a meeting at Loughrea (Co Galway) Town Commissioners when a circular from Sinn Féin was read, which called on all public bodies to aid in making the country's protest effective against any participation by 'Free State' representatives in the coming coronation ceremonies.

"Mr M O'Regan, presiding, said he was in thorough agreement with the circular and proposed that the Board strongly denounce any move by Irish representatives to assist at the coronation.

"The Queen had the effrontery to proclaim herself Queen of Northern Ireland which was an insult to Ireland.

"Mr O'Shea, seconding, said it was about time for the Queen to do something about the Border.

"Mr J Devine — Put the blame for the Border where it should be put — on the shoulders of those who signed the Treaty. Put the blame to Mr Wainman and Mr Churchill, and on Mr de Valera who, while he was in opposition toured England, Ireland, Scotland and the United States, talking about the injustice of the Border, but has not spoken about it since his return to power (1951).

"The Queen, he continued, had shown herself to be a young lady of humility and dignity, when she visited Rome during the Holy Year.

"It is ridiculous to be trying to put the blame for the Border on one who was not alive when the Border was set up," Mr Devine added.

"The circular was adopted."

Opposition to the coronation of Elizabeth II as "Queen of Northern Ireland" was building up in a manner which was not seen when George VI was crowned "King of Ireland" in 1937. It continued to build as shall be seen.

(More next month. Refs. *An t-Éireamhach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, February, March and April 1953; *We Sang for Ireland - Poems of Ethna Carbery*, Séamus Mac Manus, Alice Milligan, published by MH Gill and Son Ltd, Dublin 1950; *The Evening Herald*, March 14, 1953; *The Leinster Leader*, March 14, 1953; *The Irish Press*, January 12, 1953 and *Irish Independent*, March 23, 1953.

DEATH OF MAUD GONNE MAC BRIDE

**50
Years
Ago**

ON April 27, 1953 Madame Mac Bride as she was known in the latter part of her life, died at her home, Roebuck House, Clonskeagh, Dublin. She was 88.

The *Irish Times* described her wake with hundreds of men and women "making their way up to the driveway of the house to pay their last respects to 'Maud Gonne' as she was affectionately known".

The report continued: "Her hands crossed, as if in sleep, her head covered by a black mantilla, and her features, even in death, displaying the regularity that gave her in the life the beauty that was renowned."

"Madame Maud Gonne lay in her brass-bound bed. Overhead three childhood portraits indicated to the kneeling visitors the promise of youth that later was so outstandingly fulfilled."

"Around the room had been placed wreaths and floral crosses, many of them designed in the green, white and orange of the national colours."

Her remains, escorted by IRA Veterans were accompanied by hundreds of people to the Church of the Sacred Heart in Donnybrook. Sympathisers lined the route all the way.

Following Mass next morning her funeral took place to the Republican Plot in Glasnevin cemetery. Thousands, including a large body of IRA Veterans and women who had laboured with her in Inghinidhe na h-Eireann and Cumann na mBan, followed the hearse.

Many lined the streets and at the GPO the command "Eyes Left" was given in memory of her husband Major John Mac Bride, one of the executed 1916 leaders. All traffic was suspended in O'Connell Street.

People recalled not only the final sacrifice of Major Mac Bride for the All-Ireland Republic but also the long years spent by Madame in succouring a people hungry and homeless under alien rule and pleading the cause for her country.

Telegrams of sympathy had been received from all parts of Ireland, the United States and other overseas countries.

Prominent among the Irish counties from which messages came were those where Madame Mac Bride had fought against the evictions. The families of evicted tenants and political prisoners also sent telegrams.

At the graveside a decade of the Rosary was recited in Irish by Dónal Ó Donnchadha after which The O'Rahilly BL, a close friend of her son Seán delivered the oration.

The O'Rahilly, was the son of the famous The O'Rahilly, IRA leader killed in action outside the GPO at Easter 1916. Having spoken first in Irish, he went on:

"Many people had made sacrifices for causes in the past but few had the courage, the love of justice and the persistence that Maud Gonne Mac Bride possessed."

"It was over sixty years since she, with a minimum of association with Ireland, found herself amongst a people depressed, starved and treated with injustice and injustice was one of the things which she could not tolerate."

"She realised that only by freeing Ireland from English rule could the lot of the people be improved and she devoted the remainder of her life to the Irish people."

"The fact that the ideal she pursued was something of a spiritual nature must have compensated her for the life of luxury she had left."

"It was because of that love of justice, that courage and that persistence that Maud Gonne Mac Bride would be remembered forever."

The chief mourners were: Seán Mac Bride, SC, TD (son); Mrs Iselt Stuart (daughter); Tiernan Mac Bride, Anne Mac Bride, Ian Stuart, Kathleen Stuart (grandchildren) and Mrs Catalina Mac Bride (daughter-in-law).

This writer had joined the cortege at St Stephen's Green and marched with it to Glasnevin. The oration by The O'Rahilly was



• Maud Gonne Mac Bride.

dignified, impressive and deeply moving to one who had studied Maud Gonne's life of service to Ireland.

In her later years she fell accidentally in Nassau Street, Dublin and sustained a broken leg. Nothing daunted, the indomitable Madame Mac Bride dragged herself into a shop doorway while she waited for the ambulance to arrive.

There she took out her journal and continued to write her work on penal reform for prisoners of all kinds. To a student who told her he was studying film-making, she replied in her irrepressible manner: "Then you can help to make films for Ireland."

REMARKABLE IRISHWOMAN

To the end, even when confined to her brass-bound bed in Roebuck House, she continued to receive visitors — especially young people — and to impart to them some of her wisdom and experience. Truly a remarkable Irishwoman.

In December 1940 at 75 years she made her way to Killoe Old Cemetery in Co Longford to face bus-loads and car-loads of mourners and a double cordon of Free State troops with fixed bayonets to deliver the oration at the funeral of Barney Casey, shot dead by military police while an unarmed internecine at the Curragh.

In *An t-Eireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman* of June 1953, Margaret Buckley, former President of Sinn Féin, wrote her tribute to Maud Gonne:

"We are the music makers, we are the dreamers of dreams..."

"Those words floated from the lips of a beautiful woman on the stage of the Assembly Rooms in Cork, down over the heads of a packed audience, who listened entranced as they gazed at the speaker — Maud Gonne — fifty years ago (c 1900)."

"She had come to establish a branch of Inghinidhe na hEireann in Cork, and the magic of her presence coupled with the enthusiastic sincerity of her mission drew around her a group of girls only too willing to follow where she led."

"Not many of them are left now (1953), but those who are remember with pride their baptism in Ireland's cause."

"She was easily the loveliest person we had ever seen; and her beauty was only equalled by her charm, which through all the years that followed was never dimmed."

"She was not a Catholic in those days, but she came to Mass with us every Sunday while she was in our city and was the cynosure of all eyes."

"Her simplicity was one of her great assets; we were only schoolgirls, and the boys of the Celtic Literary Society were only ordinary boys, but she communed with us as if we were her equals in intelligence and patriotism."

"True, among those boys were future patriots who gave their lives for the Cause for which she came to plead — Terence Mac Swiney, Tomás Mac Curtáin and many others. Liam de Róiste, who arranged all her meetings in Cork, is still with us."

"She came to us again towards the end of the Boer War (1902) with Captain O'Donnell, General de Wet's Secretary (de Wet was a Boer leader) and into a welter of West Britonism and shoneism she poured the live incense of God's freedom; her marvellous voice proclaiming Ireland's right to be free, and with entreaty and demand calling on the people of 'Rebel Cork' to be true to their tradition and claim their heritage."

"I knew her as Maud Gonne in her youth and beauty; I knew her as Madame Mac Bride when she was old and tired, but never once in all those years did she shed a scintilla of her natural charm or her enthusiasm in the fight against injustice of all kinds."

"When the battering-ram levelled the homesteads of the peasants in the Land War, Maud Gonne was there, giving service and sustenance to the dispossessed."

"When the same British rule held Irish prisoners, Madame Mac Bride was at the jail gates and in the homes of the prisoners' dependants."

"She has not joined the great Army of God, but I can hear again the melody of her words of half a century ago, impassioned, beautiful:

"One man with a dream, at pleasure
Shall go forth and conquer a crown:
And three with a new song's measure,
Can trample an Empire down."
Solas na bhFlaitheas ar a hanam."

Maud Gonne's interest in Irish national, social and literary affairs dates from the late 1880s when she met John O'Leary, veteran Fenian and Young Irelander, Michael Davitt and WB Yeats.

She supported the Irish Republican Brotherhood for a time but found it was not aggressive enough. In the 1880s she went to

Donegal and Mayo where mass evictions were causing near-famine conditions. There she led the agitation against the land system.

In France later in the decade she published a newsletter called *L'Irlande Libre* which campaigned against the injustices of British rule in Ireland. Returning to Ireland she joined the Amnesty Association which sought the release of the long-term Fenian prisoners of the 1880s.

This was the start of her many campaigns in support of political prisoners. She organised against loyalist celebrations for the jubilee of Queen Victoria, and that monarch's visit to Ireland in 1900. A visit to the USA on behalf of the 1798 Centenary celebrations was followed by support for the Boers 1899-1902.

With Arthur Griffith, James Connolly and John Mac Bride — later to become her husband — she founded the Irish Neutrality Association, starting a policy which has endured for over a century.

Inghinidhe na hEireann (Daughters of Ireland) was founded by her on Easter Sunday 1900. This Republican-suffragette organisation was supported by Constance Markievicz and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington and was eventually subsumed into Cumann na mBan at its foundation in 1914.

In 1902 she pledged the lead role in Cathleen Ní Houlihan, the play Yeats wrote especially for her. Her performance was so moving that Stephen Gwynn wrote in his diary that such plays should not be performed unless men were prepared to go out to shoot and be shot.

Years asked in a poem many years later:

"Did that play of mine sent out
Certain men the English shot?"

JAILED

Following the birth of her son Seán to her and John Mac Bride, she went back to France, returning in 1917. She was jailed in 1918 under the "German Plot" allegations.

Later she worked for the White Cross, relieving Irish victims of the Tan War. Opposing the Treaty of Surrender, she was a founder of the Women's Prisoners Defence League and was a familiar figure in public demonstrations in support of the prisoners.

A young student in 1923 related how she with an American lady friend had seen Madame Mac Bride, a tall, stately, beautiful lady dressed in widow's weeds, standing on a pile of ruins in O'Connell Street, Dublin addressing a crowd on a Sunday morning.

The American was startled at the spectacle: "Say, I guess she's radical", was her comment. Maud Gonne continued her meetings every Sunday morning until all the Republican prisoners were released.

In his *Secret Army*, Bowyer Bell writes:

"The only virile, practical Republican activity was the prisoners' release campaign headed by Maud Gonne Mac Bride making use not only of the law and the scandal of conditions in the camps and jails but of the long-lived Irish distaste for political imprisonment."

A decade later, in 1930, a police report stated: "It is of interest that much the same people appear to be behind several organisations, Mrs Maud Mac Bride being as ubiquitous as it is possible to be." Bell was quoting from the 26-County Department of Justice Memorandum on Revolutionary Organisations (S5864), April 5, 1930.

Her close friend, Mrs Charlotte Despard (1844-1939), a Republican Socialist, left her Dublin home, Roebuck House, to her when she moved to Belfast in 1922. Mrs Despard was disillusioned by the Treaty of Surrender.

For the rest of her life Maud Gonne supported the Republican Movement, in 1938 she published her autobiography *A Servant of the Queen* which told the story of her life up to 1903.

But there was another 50 years of activity in that life which gave 67 years of service to Ireland. She will, indeed, be remembered forever."

(More next month. Refs. *The Secret Army* by J Bowyer Bell; *A Dictionary of Irish History 1800-1980* by JE Doherty and DJ Hickey; *The Irish Times: An Irishman's Diary* by Brian Maye, April 26, 2003 and *An t-Eireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, June 1953.)

CORONATION PROTESTS, POLITICAL AND MILITARY

**50
Years
Ago**

ON June 2, 1953, Queen Elizabeth II of England was crowned officially as "Queen of Northern Ireland". There were

many protests throughout Ireland at this usurpation of the national right of the Irish people.

However, that evening at a protest meeting at the corner of Middle Abbey Street and O'Connell Street in central Dublin, Tony Magan — then Chief of Staff of the IRA — remarked in a private conversation that national feeling and people's attitudes were much better than in 1937, sixteen years earlier, when George VI was crowned King of Ireland.

That public protest meeting was preceded by a march from Parnell Square headed by a lorry with amplification behind which a Union Jack was trailed. One of the Dublin daily papers reported next day:

"In protest against 'this latest insult to the Irish Republic', a Union Jack was burned during a Sinn Féin meeting at the corner of Abbey Street, Dublin last night... the flag was tied to a pole, soaked in petrol and set alight while hundreds of onlookers cheered.

"As the remnants of the flag fell to the ground, Tomás Ó Dubhghaill, President of Sinn Féin, from the lorry told what the Coronation of the British Queen meant in Belfast and the Six Counties — 'of intimidation, early morning raids on Nationalist families and the flaunting of thousands of Union Jacks in the faces of Irish men and women'."

The previous night, a railway bridge at Kilsnassagh — just north of the Border and in South Armagh — was blown up and the double track from Dublin to Belfast was severed. A special train had been due to travel north to Belfast carrying British ex-servicemen to the Coronation celebrations. The train was, of course, cancelled.

The July 1953 issue of *An t-Oglach - Official Organ of the Irish Republican Army* gave a close insight into the operation: "The Operations Officer was faced with the task of making a success of the operation and at the same time ensuring that no lives were lost or endangered.

"To do this it was necessary to blow the bridge at a time when no trains were due to pass over the line. Digging a hole to receive the mine had to be carried out without attracting the attention of the RUC and Specials who were patrolling the line.

"In addition to mining the bridge, charges of gun-cotton were scoured to the inner rail of both up and down lines. In this operation, detonating fuse was used so that the detonator in the main charge was sufficient to set off all three charges simultaneously.

"The resultant explosion hurled railway sleepers and telegraph poles over a distance of fifty yards. The rails of both lines were cut and twisted and the centre of the bridge demolished.

"Shortly after the damage was discovered a repair gang of over fifty men was rushed to the spot. Working unceasingly through the morning it was not till some eight hours later that the emergency propping up of the bridge was considered safe for single line traffic.

"Newspaper accounts of the affair omitted to mention the fact that within fifteen minutes of the explosion the Operations Officer rang up the telephone exchange to notify them that the line had been destroyed and to warn that all traffic be stopped."

South of the Border also the IRA was active on Coronation day. A detachment of the Dublin Battalion was on the move early that morning. They were under instructions to disrupt and break up the live television coverage on a large screen of the British Coronation ceremonies in a hall attached to a licensed premises in Sandyford in the city suburbs.

There was no RTE television fifty years ago, only BBC which afforded just poor reception along the East coast of Ireland. The Volunteers



• The scene in Doran's Bar, Marlborough Street, Dublin, on June 2, 1957 after an IRA Volunteer smashed a TV set which was about to show the coronation of Queen Elizabeth as "Queen of Northern Ireland".

had been briefed on several occasions before the day. They travelled by car and carried a hatchet to sever telephonic communications beside the premises.

However, on arrival at the target they found a band of Special Branch disguised as a telephone breakdown gang in a lorry covering the premises. Since a conflict appeared inevitable, the officer in charge cancelled the operation.

The Volunteers returned to the city followed by a carload of Broy Harriers. They lost their escort by scattering — having first conferred as to the other courses of action. It was felt that Coronation day should not pass without some overt protest action.

The target selected this time was much smaller, a public house named Doran's in Marlborough Street in the city centre which had boasted it would openly relay the ceremony on an ordinary television set.

The Volunteers dispersed, returned the car to its owner and converged on Doran's in Marlborough Street in the city centre which had boasted it would openly relay the ceremony on an ordinary television set.

From their conversations these seemed to be British ex-soldiers, mostly Guinness employees, who had been deprived of the special train to Belfast and were enjoying their day off while the television set flickered in the corner but did not in fact receive a clear picture of the Royal pair with crowns suspended over their heads.

The OC of the operation took out the hatchet and drove it through the screen smashing it. Holding it in front of him and shouting: "To hell with Jingoism clear the way", made his way out through the ranks of ex-servicemen which parted quickly for him.

DIVERSION

Meanwhile, the other Volunteers caused a diversion by overturning tables and scattering drinks. They left the premises and went their separate ways. In the excitement the OC neglected the drop the offending hatchet behind the door on his way out.

One of the ex-soldiers followed him and fingered him for the police outside. He was arrested and the hatchet was found under his coat. Charged with malicious damage Gearóid Ó Broin was remanded to Mountjoy Jail. Later he was fined and jailed for refusing to pay.

However, sympathisers of the Movement — they were not members — approached Doran's and demanded that they pay the fine and the cost of the damage caused. This they did and Gearóid was released. He had lost his job, of course. But the point had been made that Coronation celebrations would not go undisturbed.

On the preceding weekend speakers from Dublin, Belfast and Armagh had addressed a public meeting at Hanill Street on the Falls Road, Belfast to protest against the Queen of England being also crowned as Queen of the Six Counties. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Belfast Robert Emmet Commemoration Committee.

Joe McGurk, secretary of the National Graves Association appealed to people to keep aloof from all coronation activities. They were the outward signs of a system which had held our people in subjection down the centuries.

Tomás Ó Dubhghaill, President of Sinn Féin, said that a proposed public showing of the coronation programme in the Dublin Mountains had been cancelled because fortunately, it was discovered who was in charge of it.

Pro-British elements in the South had tried to use the Coronation to flaunt their influence. They had drawn in their horns in the South.

"Please God," he said, "we will make them draw in their horns in the North, too, and not a day too soon. It is our purpose to get the British out by hook or by crook."

Éamonn Mac Thomáis, Ard-Chomhairle, Sinn Féin, Frank McGlynn, Armagh and Seán Ó Cearnaigh, Ard-Rúnaí, Sinn Féin also spoke. Frank McGlade, Chairman of the Emmet Committee, Belfast, presided.

A Labour Party protest meeting was held at Clonard Street, Belfast on June 1. Speakers included Harry Diamond, member of Stormont, Alderman Séamus McKearney and Councillors Tom O'Sullivan and Seán McGivern.

At a meeting in Foyle Harps Hall, Derry on May 31, a motion was passed repudiating the British Queen's claim to be Queen of the Six Counties. Arrangements were made for a public protest against a visit to the Six Counties by the Queen of England.

On the eve of Coronation Day twelve RUC men with Sten guns "toiled through three miles of bogland and climbed a mountain near Belfast in a precautionary measure because of fears that TV installations might be interfered with," the *Irish Press* reported on June 2.

"They went to the top of the Black Mountains, which towers 1,200 feet over Belfast, and to the brow of Glencan Hill, 500 feet lower down, to guard the TV reflector mast and booster station. They will live in wooden huts and a radio van — linked by radio-telephone to police HQ — until Wednesday" (ie three days).

Also at the weekend residents of Cross Street in Derry's Waterside objected to a Union Jack being flown from a house. A crowd of about 50 gathered and some windows were broken in the house. The RUC arrived and the householder took down the flag.

In the early hours of Coronation Day, a small Union Jack was seized and burned and slogans were written on the street in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh. The slogan read: "We owe our allegiance to a Republic and not to a foreign intruder. Irishmen this land is yours."

Gerald McBrien (17) Mullaghree, Enniskillen was fined 2 pound and bound over for 12 months. He told the court the completed slogan would have read "Coronation celebrations with eviction".

When asked by the defending solicitor was there anything wrong with "Irishmen this land is yours", Sergeant Courcy, RUC, said it was open to objection by a lot of people.

Resident Magistrate TD Elliot said the Public Order Section was very sweeping. The young man had done a foolish thing and it might have led to serious consequences.

William Love (19), 75 Drumcor Hill, Carnagee, was fined 1 pound for possession of a .303 bullet on the same date. John Burns, 18 Wellington Street and Ignatius Hynes, 46 Erne Drive, were each fined ten shillings for having torn down a British flag and thrown it on the street at New Row.

A letter from Gearóid Mac Carthaigh, Comhairle Ceantair Átha Cliath, Sinn Féin, 395 Moune Road, Crumlin North, Dublin, was carried in the *Irish Press*. It was dated June 5, 1953:

"... we wish to point out that the basis of our objection to the showing of Coronation propaganda in Ireland is (1) We recognise the right of the Irish Nation to complete freedom and (2) that right is denied and forcibly suppressed by the Armed Forces of the new Queen.

"Surely that is sufficient reason to cause any Irish person to protest?"

"As to the freedom of the individual to choose what film he/she may go to see, we need only mention that the J. Arthur Rank organisation dominates the cinema industry in Dublin and throughout the country and it decides what will or will not be shown, the public paying the price but having no say in calling the time."

Young people were being roused to opposition to the British coronation and to English rule here and the tide of national opinion was rising.

In Fermanagh, Canon Thomas Maguire, P.P. Newtownbutler, penned this letter to the Editor of the *Longford Leader* in response to that paper's report on the local Easter Commemoration ceremony:

"A chara — Your heading, 'IRA will strike in North', interests me as 'Chaplin' to it in the old days. I have to ask Seán Ó Néill (the speaker) — when?"

"Some 25 years of the old Irish Party ways are as unproductive today as they were in the past. We want something more vigorous than we have.

"The sooner Kerry (Seán Ó Néill's county) grips the hand of Derry once more the sooner we can have a joyous National Tóstal. Today we here are in mourning and rejoicing, is an insult to our dignity and our freedom!

"I would gladly welcome SF (Sinn Féin) if it gave us something more forceful than mere attention — a negative policy will get us nowhere. An IRA policy now demands a leadership far different from that of 1919-21 — it should embrace a political and military leadership of the keenest talent.

"A leadership of unbalanced enthusiasm would do immense harm. Another Easter Week none of us want, but signs are not wanting that it must come."

TRENCHANT

The situation was obviously hotting up. Another indication of that was the trenchant address of Seán Ó Néill at the unveiling of a memorial cross over the grave of George Plant in Tipperary on May 3, to read it, even now 50 years later, is still to be stirred by it.

Ó Néill stressed the non-sectarian nature of the Republican Movement when he pointed out that Plant was a Protestant Republican. He said that the martyr's death was brought about by means of an agent provocateur employed by the 26-County administration.

The speaker went further and asserted that it was only through the IRA's pre-emptive action in launching its Bombing Campaign in England in January 1939 that the 26 Counties were saved from the horrors of World War II.

"De Valera had declared his intention of cooperating in the designs of British strategy in the talk-shop of Leinster House some time before this."

But the IRA had balked the politicians in their "sinister designs of openly supporting the British Imperialist war effort."

Years later, speaking on RTE radio, Dr. Garret Fitzgerald upheld this assessment. He said that Fianna Fáil had no option but to maintain the neutrality of the 26-County State.

It was only 20 years subsequent to the Black-and-Tan War, the IRA was well organised and had a considerable quantity of arms. Siding with Germany was unthinkable and attempting to take England's side openly would make for all-out civil war. De Valera had no alternative to neutrality.

Seán Ó Néill concluded his oration by stating that "the opportune moment to resort to offensive action to that end (of driving the British garrison from the Six Counties) must be dictated by the response of the young manhood of Ireland to the appeal of the Army leadership for the recruits and resources necessary to the accomplishment of the task.

"Will the youth of Ireland rise to the occasion?" he asked. "Will the young men of military age assume the task that the privilege of Irish nationality imposes on them and become soldiers of the Irish Republican Army, and train, arm and discipline themselves to take their place in the national advance which must come if the Irish nation is to survive, for nations cannot remain stagnant?"

(More next month. Refs. *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, June 1953. *Thelrish Press*, June 2, 3, and 5; *The Longford Leader*, April 8 and *An t-Oglach*, July 1953.)

CORONATION EXPLOSIONS, IMPRISONMENT AND AN ARMS RAID

**50
Years
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DURING June 1953 further military actions against the coronation of the Queen of England as "Queen of Ireland" were carried

out by the Irish Republican Army.

The Savoy Cinema in Newry, Co Down was warned not to show the film of the coronation. It disregarded the warning and an explosion in the middle of the night destroyed the building. The film had to be withdrawn.

Later a cinema in Banbridge in the same county was extensively damaged for the same reason. The July issue of *An t-Óglach* — Official Organ of the Irish Republican Army commented:

"That the Headquarters training classes in Engineering are proving successful in turning out efficient Engineers was clearly demonstrated in some recent Army operations, e.g the destruction of Newry cinema, extensive damage to Banbridge cinema and the blowing up of the railway bridge and cutting of the line on the Armagh/Louth border.

"The section which carried out the operation on the Newry cinema did a splendid job of engineering by causing the maximum amount of damage to their objective whilst doing a minimum of damage to adjoining property.

"Given the materials, almost anyone can cause an explosion; it is only the trained Engineer who can estimate the amount of explosives to use and place the charge where it will be most effective.

"In this instance, the charge being placed on the steel girder supporting the balcony resulted in the collapse of the balcony, the roof being blown off and the interior turned into a shambles."

The *Irish Times* carried a photograph of the destruction which was reproduced in *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman* of July 1953.

An *t-Óglach* continued: "The section which carried out the operation on Banbridge cinema merits high commendation for the initiative displayed in overcoming the vigilance of a twenty-four hour police guard on the premises. Some of the guard were actually in the cinema when the explosion occurred."

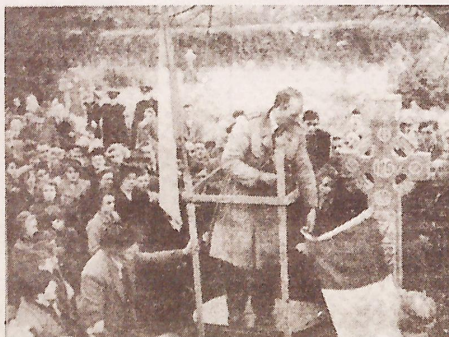
It appears the RUC were in the main body of the building when the front wall and foyer of the cinema were blown out. No injuries were caused in either the Newry operation or that in Banbridge some days later.

Some days subsequent to the two explosions the RUC raided a shop and premises occupied by Patrick Campbell, his three sons and a daughter at 34 Castle Street, Newry on June 23.

Four men later appeared at Down Assizes on July 6 on a charge of having explosive substances in their possession or under their control on June 23.

They were Patrick Campbell (62), his two sons Joseph (31) and Edward (29), shoemakers, all of Castle St., Newry and Michael Hollywood (25), labourer, St. Clare's Avenue, Newry.

Head Constable A Deighan, Newry, gave evidence of raiding the shop and premises at 34 Castle St. in the afternoon of June 23. He and other police found twelve sticks of gelignite in the chimney flue of a back bedroom. The four accused were on



• **Tomás Mac Curtáin unveiling a memorial to Republican soldiers at Beaufort, Co Kerry in 1953.**

the premises at the time.

When Joseph Campbell was asked how he pleaded to the charge, he replied: "I have taken responsibility for the stuff found. I exonerate from all blame these other people who could not possibly have known I had the stuff.

"Furthermore, as a soldier of the Irish Republican Army I take no further interest in this case," he added. Asked if he wished to give evidence or call witnesses, he declined.

The jury found Joseph Campbell guilty and on the direction of Judge Curran, the other three not guilty. Next day at Downpatrick, Joseph Campbell was sentenced to five years penal servitude.

"You are a destructive agent," Judge Curran announced as he sentenced Campbell. It was not Joseph Campbell's first time to be in prison. He was interned without trial in D-Wing of Crumlin Road Jail, Belfast in the 1940s and spent several years there.

FIRST CASUALTY

This was the first casualty of the new era in Republican history. The jails had been empty of political prisoners from 1950 to 1953 and now it was necessary to provide for the welfare and the defendants of Republican prisoners.

Therefore, Volunteers were not surprised to read in the July 1953 issue of *An t-Óglach* a notice entitled "Republican Aid Committee".

It read: "A committee has now been set up which will be responsible for the raising of funds for the relief of prisoners' dependants. Unit Commanders are urged to see that a branch of this Committee is set up in their area without delay.

"Notification of the formation of a branch should be sent to: The Secretary, Republican Aid Committee, c/o United Irishman, 94 Talbot Street, Dublin." The Movement was gearing itself up for the next phase of the fight for Irish freedom.

The Editorial in *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, July issue was headed "The Coronation — and after". The article summed up the situation by calling the claim to be "Queen of Northern Ireland" a blessing in disguise, because it aroused some feeling of nationality among Irish people.

Cinema managers in Dublin did not think it advisable to show Coronation films. Pro-British elements who wished to put on public showings had to abandon their flamboyant publicity. They cancelled their showings or arranged them under conditions of secrecy.

The British Royal visit to the Six Counties was accompanied by wholesale raids and arrests and huge concentrations of British military and armed police. This

demonstrated to the world that the English Queen was being used to show that English influence here was based on power, on stark, naked aggression despite Irish opposition.

The challenge was to the whole Irish nation and such insults would continue while the British Army occupies any part of our country. We should build the Movement and end this position for once and for all.

Indeed the situation indicated by the Editorial contrasted sharply with that of 1937 when George VI was crowned "King of Ireland". Then the pro-British elements were emboldened and brazen. The Cork office of the *Irish Times* was festooned by Coronation trappings until the IRA took action. Bricks wrapped up as a brown-paper parcels, were hurled across the street at the *Times* windows, smashing them with loud reports — as in explosions.

REPUBLICAN PROTEST

A Republican protest meeting arranged for the centre of Dublin was banned by Leinster House. It proceeded anyway and was banned off the street by the centre-city Riot Squad of the 26-County police.

Next evening a protest meeting was called for the same spot. A parade from Beresford Place fought its way to O'Connell Street. There Tom Barry and Frank Ryan — their heads banded from the previous night — addressed the crowd while clinging to the statue of Sir John Grey.

This time the drawn guns of the IRA kept the Riot Squad at bay. "Shots and Baton Charges at Dublin Meeting" reported the press next day.

But Ireland's honour had been saved by those Republicans who had repudiated the shame of those in power in meekly accepting British overlordship. The contrast in 1953 could not have been greater.

The Republican newspaper in July 1953 reported on the highly successful Bodensdown commemoration of June 21. Tomás Mac Curtáin of Cork gave the oration in which he said:

"We shall continue to come to Bodensdown and there will always be men in Ireland prepared to sacrifice themselves for the Cause, and if necessary to die as Tone did, as long as any foreign monarch is enthroned over any part of this country."

Cainteoir Iofa Ghaeilge dob ea Mac Curtáin: "Bliaín i ndiaidh bliana tagaimid anseo agus caithimid cúpla neomat in ár seasamh timpeall an fhóid bheannaithe seo. "Bíonn bród agus brón meascainne in ár geróithe. Brón toisc go raibh gádh ann go bhfaighthead fear comh breá, comh h-uasal, comh calma, bás in aonair i measc náimhad.

"Bród toisc nár theip ar Éirinn riamh fir mar é do chur sa bhearna bhaol nuair a bhí cúis na saoirse i gcrúa-chás.

"It is my duty and privilege today to speak on behalf of the Irish Republican Army, the historic successor of Tone and Emmet and Mitchel and Pearse and Brugha.

"Tone in his day, as Pearse at a later date, though starting out as constitutional agitators, were relentlessly driven to the conclusion that in the face of British superiority or force, constitutional agitation was mere-

ly 'a snare, a fraud and a delusion', and the only means by which freedom could be attained.

"History provides abundant proof that the opportunities of making a decisive strike can only be availed of by forces which are ready to grasp that opportunity.

"As we stand today around Tone's grave, we dedicate ourselves once more to that task which lies before us. Convinced of the justice of our Cause, we promise that we will not pause or relent or turn aside until we have achieved political, social and economic freedom for our country and Ireland proud and free shall take her rightful place among the nations of the earth."

MESSAGE FROM CLAN NA GAEL

Tom McMonagle of the Clan na Gael in America brought a message:

"To you who are still proponents of the philosophy of Tone, Emmet and Pearse, I bring this word of encouragement from the Clan na Gael in America:

"That, while false concepts of democracy may have somewhat distorted the thinking of many of our people in the States, we in Clan na Gael are still with you.

"We will be with you till the last vestiges of British Imperialism whether direct or indirect have been banished from the land - when Emmet's epitaph can be written, when Ireland is at last free."

Under the Clan na Gael message was an advertisement for a new Republican newspaper: "Support *Resurgent Ulster*, published at 37 Institution Place, Belfast". The subscription was the same as for *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, three pence per month.

At the end of July 1953 came news of another arms raid by the IRA, this time in England. Taken were 99 British Army .303 Lee-English rifles, eight Bren guns, 10 Sten sub-machine guns, a Piat anti-tank gun, a two-inch mortar, six mortar bombs and a Browning machine gun.

They were seized from the large armoury for the cadet force of Felstead public school, Felstead, Essex. The raiders cut two of the frames from a window and undid the catch. Before getting inside they cut through an iron bar. Felstead School was founded in 1564 and among its pupils was Richard Cromwell, son of Oliver Cromwell.

At 3.20am on Sunday morning, July 26, in Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire a police patrol followed a van for about a mile and then stopped it. It was heavily laden with the arms mentioned.

Three Irishmen were inside. They were Manus Canning (27) a painter of Lecky Road, Derry; Cathal Goulding (31) also a painter, St Edna's Drive, Silver Acre, Rathfarnham, Dublin and Seán Stephenson (25) a railway worker, who gave no address.

All three were charged with "possession of property reasonably suspected of having been stolen". Was the van overloaded and did it thus draw the attention of the police at an early hour? Some reports said a tailight was missing.

A *Daily Telegraph* report stated that the police believed the "robbery", one of the largest arms hauls in a single "theft" was "part of a well-organised plot and the loss of such a large number of weapons were considered most serious.

(More next month Refs: *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, July 1953; *An t-Óglach* — Official Organ of the Irish Republican Army; *The Daily Telegraph*, July 1953; *the Irish Press*, July 27, 28, 29, 31 and August 1, 1953; *the Sunday Press*, August 2, 1953 and *the Evening Herald*, July 28, 1953.

'NOT STEALING — CAPTURING': IRA ARMS RAIDS

**50
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"I DON'T look on a job like this as stealing - it is capturing from the enemy," said Seán Stephenson of London to

Det-Supt Elwell of Scotland Yard when accused of "stealing" weapons from the British Army.

Seán was in court in Bishop's Stratford, Hertfordshire, England on August 19, 1953 along with Manus Canning of Derry and Cathal Goulding of Dublin.

All three were charged with "(1) having broken into a cadet school at Felstead, Essex, and stolen 108 rifles, 18 Bren and Sten guns, two mortars and dummy mortar bombs, (2) having been concerned together with firearms to enable others to endanger life, and (3) having housebreaking implements without lawful excuse."

The prisoners expressed the questioning and the court as a platform to speak to the Irish people. Goulding said: "My superiors instructed me to come and pick up the stuff and deliver it to the people."

He continued: "I will not tell you where from because, perhaps, one of our men will need the time to get away." In fact it emerged later that Tony Mangan, the IRA Chief-of-Staff had been in England standing over the operation and had managed to get away safely to Ireland.

"I don't look on this as stealing," Goulding went on. "We wanted guns and we raided the enemy. The guns were going to under-armed units in Ireland."

He refused to say where these units were but said: "I accept responsibility for being the leader of this job." Canning taught Mac Stiofáin, as he became known later, his first words of Irish: "Bí cúramach" (Be careful), which phrase became their watchword. Mac Stiofáin later became fluent in Irish.

Asked where he got the rifles, Goulding replied: "We are members of the IRA and we don't talk when we get caught." Canning when questioned said that he had landed from Ireland the previous day and then refused to answer any other questions.

Mac Stiofáin refused to give his address but said: "We are members of the IRA and will make no further comment."

MJ Jardine, Prosecutor, told the court that at a house at Turville St, occupied by Mrs Stephenson, police had found a large quantity of bandages and field dressings, all the property of British Railways.

Also found was a handwritten document referring to the crating-up of cases to be described as "agricultural machinery" and despatching them to a Liverpool storage company.

"This is not an ordinary case of theft but a case in which the accused say they are members of the Irish Republican Army and it is significant that at the address of one of them is found a lot of medical equipment which might be of some use militarily in setting up a regimental aid post or casualty clearing station."

Shown the handwritten document Mac Stiofáin said: "You can save your time. I have nothing to say, and I don't intend to say anything in the future."

The Scotland Yard Detective Superintendent told the court that Mac Stiofáin was born at Leytonstone, London, that he was a Catholic and was married to an Irish girl. He had last visited Ireland in June.

The three prisoners, who were handcuffed together in the dock, were committed for trial to Herts. Assizes in October. An *t-Eireannach Aontaithe* The United Irishman in August simply quoted from a Dublin *Evening Herald* news report on July 27.

However in September when the case against the men was shown to be overwhelming, the Republican paper featured it on its front page. Verses entitled "Manus and Cathal and Seán" by M O Cinnéide were carried.

A news report under the heading "Arms Raid in England" lauded their action. "We are members of the IRA," said each in turn.

They insisted, the report went on, that their action had been "capturing from the enemy — not stealing." What a very apt summing up of our whole national position, was the comment.

"The British Army maintains occupation



Here are the three Irishmen—Manus Canning, Derry; Cathal Goulding, Dublin, and Sean Stephenson, of no fixed address—Sunday last when police found their van loaded with firearms. They have been remanded in custody.

"Police in Belfast yesterday stated that they had no information beyond what they read in newspapers concerning the reported investigation of a plot to smuggle arms into Ireland from Britain. A senior police official described the report as 'a figment of the imagination of an over-industrious British newspaper man.'"

• (left to right) Seán Stephenson, Cathal Goulding and Manus Canning pictured in the Irish Times, August 8, 1953.

forces are in six of our Irish counties and through those forces controls and dominates not merely the Six but the whole 32 Counties. They must be got rid of. . .

"What better way to equip ourselves for that action than by seizing what we require from the enemy? That is the logic of the position, a logic that has always appealed to the imagination of the Irish people, and will continue to do so as long as. . ."

"It then commented on the three, one from British-occupied Ireland, another from the 26 Counties with its 'measure of freedom' and a third the son of an exile. What a symbol of the unity of our people?"

SINN FÉIN ARD-FHEIS

Then on August 15 and 16 the Ard-Fheis of Sinn Féin was held in the Guild Room, Four Provinces House, Harcourt Street, Dublin. More than 150 delegates attended, including a number from Scotland, London and South Africa. Yes, there was a Cumann, named for Cathal Brugha, in Johannesburg, South Africa!

"The political objective of Sinn Féin is the restoration of the All-Ireland Republic, with full and unfettered control over all 32 Counties," said Tomás O Dubhghaill, President, in his Address to the Ard-Fheis.

A report in the *Irish Press* of August 17 quoted him as follows: "They proposed, he said, to adopt the Sinn Féin programme of 1916; they would contest elections North and South, and their candidates, if elected, would not take seats in Stormont, Westminster or Leinster House."

"However, given a majority, they would set up a Republican parliament for all 32 Counties, precisely as was done in 1918. It would be argued that such action would be a violation of the Treaty [of 1921], but they in Sinn Féin were not bound by the Treaty."

SURRENDER

The report in An *t-Eireannach Aontaithe* The United Irishman of September carried the President's description of the Treaty as "in its essence a surrender to the threat of immediate and terrible war."

"It is our purpose to tear up that Treaty at the first opportunity and with it the Boundary Agreement (of 1925) and any other agreements which in any way limit the right of the Irish nation to freedom and unity."

The *Irish Press* continued: "It was the policy [of Sinn Féin] to set up a financial system based on sound Christian and national principles and suited to the economic needs of the nation. This entailed a complete break of the link with sterling."

O Dubhghaill went on to condemn the high levels of unemployment and emigration in the 26 Counties and in the Six Counties and spoke of the recent public demonstrations by the unemployed on the streets of Dublin.

He described the Six-County economy as "rotating between full employment during wartime producing ships, planes and equipment for the forces of our only enemy, but in peacetime becoming the No 1 distress area of the so-called United Kingdom."

He called for the new Ard-Chomhairle for 1953-54 was as follows: Uachtarán: Tomás Ó Dubhghaill; Leas-Uachtarán: Máiread Uí Bhuchalla agus Gearóid Mac Carthaigh; Rónaithe: Micheál Mac Treinfhir agus Seosamh de Craig; Cisteoirí: Roibeárd Ruiseál agus Críostóir Mac Eocháid.

Beill: Pádraig Mac Léogáin (Laois); Antoine Mac gCana (Aith Cliath); Pádraig Ó Dubhghaill (Béal Feirste); Pádraig Mac Seáin (Ard Mhaca); Gearóid Ó Broin (Aith Cliath); Máire Ní Ghabhann (Ard Mhaca); Donál Ó Siordáin (Iubhar Cinn Trá) agus Éamonn Mac Thomáis (Aith Cliath).

The *Irish Press* of July 7 carried a Sinn Féin statement which indicated that the level of British harassment in the Six Counties was being stepped up.

"On Sunday, Patrick O'Hagan of Mullaghbawn, Peter McParland, Bessbrook and Patrick Mac Shane, Camlough were arrested at Bessbrook, Co Armagh at 6pm."

"They were taken to the barracks for questioning and were detained for more than four hours. While they were in custody squads of police raided and searched their homes."

"All three are members of Sinn Féin — O'Hagan and McParland being on the Central Election Committee and McShane being Director of Elections for Armagh constituency."

"They were returning home from a constituency meeting at Derrymacash, near Lurgan, when they were arrested. It is the third time within ten days that O'Hagan's house has been raided and searched."

News was carried in the *Sunday Press* of August 8 of the death of a sister of Terence Mac Swiney, Madame St Francis Xavier Nic Shuibhne died at the Convent of the Dames de Saint Maur, Tokyo, Japan.

She was within a couple of weeks of her golden jubilee. She was sister of the late Toirbealach Mac Suibhne, TD and Lord Mayor of Cork, who died on hunger strike in Brixton Prison in 1920, and of the late Seán, Máire and Peadar Mac Suibhne.

Her sister Eithne Nic Shuibhne, carried on the well-known school for girls, Scoil Ite, until recently.

The selfsame Eithne Nic Shuibhne had a letter in An *t-Eireannach Aontaithe* The United Irishman of September 1953. It had originally been sent to the Editor of the *Irish Independent* but was refused publication.

Dated 13ú Lúnasa, 1953, the letter was sent from the Kerry Gaeltacht where Eithne must have been holidaying. Her address was given as "An Gaig, Baile an Feirteirighin Daingean Uí Chais Co Chiarraí".

She was commenting on an article in the *Independent* on August 10 by Professor Busted, who she said was "recognised everywhere as a sincere speaker and writer".

Miss Mac Swiney praised him for his advocacy while a member of the Free State

Financial Commission [late 1930s] that assets be invested in dollars rather than in sterling. Events had justified his advice.

She went on to criticise him referring to the "26-County Statelet — set up by England" as the Republic of Ireland. She continued by saying that the way to restore national morale was to replace the two partition parliaments set-up under the "evil Treaty of 1921" by the "Republican Parliament never disestablished".

Its powers would be passed on "to its lawful successor after a free election throughout the land". If the Republican deal could arise they would tell those who destroyed the 32-County Republic. "We are weak, we are few, we are alone - but we refuse to capitulate."

On August 2, the Roger Casement Commemoration was held at Murlough, Co Antrim, sponsored by the Ballycastle Branch of Conradh na Gaeilge. De Valera and Seán Mac Bhríde were the principal speakers.

Some days previously a letter signed on behalf of Belfast Republicans was carried in the *Irish News* saying that they could not associate with De Valera. It referred to his persecution of Republicans and his responsibility for the deaths of Republican soldiers, including Seán Mc Caughey.

During the ceremony handbills were distributed and both De Valera and MacBride received them. The leaflet indicted the Dublin government and quoted Judge Troy of the United States in saying that "a half-a-loaf compromise" was being sought on the National Question.

"England hanged Roger Casement because his life was dedicated to Ireland, Free and Gaelic. Seán McCaughey was allowed to die on hunger strike because he sought to make Ireland Free and Gaelic."

— Issued by Republican Publicity Bureau."

FILM SHOW CANCELLED

Meanwhile a showing of the British coronation film in Killebeggan, Co. Westmeath, was cancelled. The film was to have been shown in St James' Hall by the local tennis club to raise funds.

Leaflets were distributed and slogans painted on all roads leading to the town by Westmeath and Offaly Republicans. The local GAA club took a mainly stand against Britain's propaganda machine.

In late July Liam McMillan (24) Ton Street, Belfast was sentenced to three months in a British court for "using threatening and abusive language to the police". His sister said Liam had been followed to work and pestered.

"In this court we talk English, we don't talk gibberish," said Major McCallum, RM when Liam McMillan spoke Irish from the dock.

Liam McBurney (21), Durham Street, appeared with McMillan on the same charge. He was bound to the peace for 12 months or, in default, three months imprisonment.

Both men had refused to recognise the British court, Mc Burney saying so in English, McMillan speaking in Irish. His words were interpreted as "I refuse to recognise this court - that is all I have to say."

Det-Con Farrelly, RUC, said that on a Sunday in May on the Falls Road, Belfast, Mc Burney — one of a group of five men — called him a renegade and a very poor type of Irishman. He told Mc Burney that he [the RUC man] would not be intimidated.

It was obvious that persecution and petty harassment of the nationalist population was being stepped up — as well as official insults to the Irish language.

A list of "Republicans in Jail for Ireland" was given in the Republican newspaper:

"Joe Campbell, Newry, five years; Seán Mac Cearnaigh, Belfast, four months; Liam Mc Burney, Belfast, three months; Liam McMillan, Belfast, three months; Gearóid Ó Broin, Dublin, three months."

A notice underneath announced the formation of the Republican Aid Committee "to look after the dependants of Republicans in jail". It would "undertake the work formerly done by the Republican Prisoners Release Association and the National Aid Committee."

"In communion of spirit with our own dear Comrades who suffer in England's prisons today!" — PH Pearse.

Fifty years on the quotation from Pádraic Pearse at the grave of O'Donovan Rossa is just as relevant. "Our own dear comrades are in Portlaoise, Magilligan and Maghaberry prisons today."

(More next month. Refs. An *t-Eireannach Aontaithe* The United Irishman, July, August and September 1953; the *Irish Press*, August 17, July 7; the *Sunday Press*, August 8 and the *Irish Independent*, July 22.)

JIMMY JOE REYNOLDS MEMORIAL

**50
Years
Ago**

ON Sunday, August 30, 1953 a great hosting assembled in Cloonmorris Cemetery, Bornaacoola on the Leitrim-

Longford border for the unveiling of a memorial at the grave of Staff-Captain JJ Reynolds, IRA.

A member of GHQ Staff, Irish Republican Army, Jimmy Joe Reynolds was killed in an accidental explosion at Castlefin, Co Donegal, near the Tyrone Border, on November 28, 1938.

With him died Comdt John James Kelly, Donegal and Comdt Charles McCafferty, Strabane, Co Tyrone. They had been preparing a mine for the demolition of a nearby British Customs Post. All such posts along the order from Newry to Derry were destroyed that weekend by IRA action.

This concerted strike was intended as a curtain-raiser to the IRA Sabotage Campaign in England (1939-40) which commenced seven weeks later on January 16, 1939.

The idea was that the coordinated action along the Border would focus public opinion nationally and internationally on the Partition of Ireland and the question of British rule here.

Jimmy Joe's funeral to Cloonmorris Cemetery was saturated by 26-County police and Brody Harriers. Some of the latter openly carried sub-machine guns, lining the raised railway bridge which dominates the graveyard.

Nevertheless, a firing party armed with rifles rendered military honours. Under the command of the late Bertie McCormack, they made their way into the cemetery, discharged three volleys in honour of the dead patriot and escaped along the railway line.

Panic ensued as the police called on the people to lie down, the Harriers opened fire over the heads of the public and the firing party got clear away. No arms or personnel were captured.

On the last Sunday in August fifteen years later "over 1,000 people marched from Johnston's Bridge in drenching, gale-driven showers" for the unveiling ceremony, according to the *Longford Leader* of September 4, 1953.

The order of the parade was: relatives of JJ Reynolds, Colour Party, Advance Guard, Memorial Committee, OC Parade, IRA units, Cumann na mBan, Fianna Éireann, other Republican organizations, cultural organizations, general public and Rear Guard.

Five bands were interspersed among the contingents. These were the Kiltubrid Pipe Band, St Brigid's, St Laurence O'Toole's, Dublin, Arigna Fife and Drum, Drumreilly and the Mountain Road Pipe Band, Fermanagh.

The *Longford Leader* continued: "On arrival at the cemetery, the Republican units assembled around the memorial, a splendid granite Celtic Cross, towering from the slopes opposite the ruins of the ancient ogham-inscribed abbey.

"The ceremony was a strikingly impressive tribute to a dead comrade. Mr Leo Duignan, who presided, spoke briefly and feelingly. Mr JJ Martin (Montreal, Canada) drew aside the colours to reveal the rugged beauty of the monument.

"There was a hush over the crowd and the inexpressibly moving notes of Last Post from a bugler rang out above the whistling of the wind. Then the muffled drums, and the stirring notes of the Reveille:

"Afterwards Rev T Gilleran, CC, Mohill, stepped forward to bless the memorial and to recite the prayers.

"Mr Duignan, Chairman, said they were assembled to honour a young man who had spent most of his life working for the freedom of Ireland before finally giving his life for Irish freedom.

"There would be little advantage in soldiers giving their lives for Ireland unless their sacrifice awakened in the hearts of the people

Memorial To James Joseph Reynolds

CELTIC CROSS IS UNVEILED 'Move On The Border' Call

IN drenching, gale-driven showers, Republicans from the four provinces of Ireland stood around the grave of Staff Captain James Joseph Reynolds in Cloonmorris Cemetery, Bornaacoola, on Sunday. They had marched — over a thousand of them — from Johnston's Bridge for the unveiling of a memorial to Mr. Reynolds, who was killed in an explosion at Castlefin, Co Donegal, in November, 1938.

Five bands, interspersed between the units of the parade, played ancient Gaelic laments and resurgent marches along the mile-long, narrow route. Behind the relatives of Mr. Reynolds marched a Colour Party, Advance Guard, members of the Memorial Committee, units of the I.R.A., Cumann na mBan, Fianna Éireann, other Republican organizations, cultural organizations, general public and Rear Guard.

• The Longford Leader, September 4, 1953.

like James Joseph Reynolds.

"Captain Reynolds's message to the young people of Ireland would have been to remain staunch to the teachings of Tone, Pearse, Connolly and Mac Diarmada.

"James Joseph Reynolds had always upheld those doctrines. His was no mystic Republicanism, but a living, realistic Republicanism, in the tradition of the great patriots since 1798."

Seamus Soraghan, BL, in the course of his oration, said it was his privilege to speak to the people gathered in tribute to a gallant soldier, Staff-Captain James Joseph Reynolds, who had given an example to the youth of the nation.

FENIAN PRINCIPLES

Reynolds was as a boy imbued with Fenian principles and in manhood he entered the ranks of the IRA where he could fight to realise those principles. His talent and ability quickly bore fruit and Jimmy Joe was appointed director of affairs in Longford and Leitrim.

The speaker then sketched Jimmy Joe's work in the Republican Movement and its culmination in 1938 as a result of a disastrous explosion.

He then appealed to the young men to follow the example of this patriot for the fight. They should remember that the cause which had adherents like Reynolds was a great one and worthy of their support.

The memorial inscription in Irish and in English read:

"In proud and loving memory of Staff-Captain James J Reynolds, Currycramp, who gave his life for the Irish Republic (1916) in Castlefin, Co Donegal on 28th November 1938.

"And let us not forget Commandant John Kelly, Co Donegal or Commandant Charles McCafferty who died by his side. RIP.

"We die that the Irish Nation may live. Our blood will rebaptise and revive our ancient country." — Seán McDermott."

Jimmy Joe Reynolds was just 29 years old when he died for Ireland. A personal tribute was paid to him in the *Longford Telegraph* by its editor, Tom McManus, Aughadeganan, Longford, an IRA Veteran from Ballinamuck and a journalist and court reporter of many years standing:

Having praised Jimmy Joe for his pleasant attitude to customers, who had a "grit" for the young man working in a business premises in the centre of Longford town, he went on:

"He read and studied in his spare time; he was taught in a school near his home which had the brilliant guidance of a great teacher and great Irishman in his day, John Bohan (RIP).

"Nobody left that school without knowing the history of his country and in later days, in his few leisure hours, the knowledge Reynolds had gained at school was extended.

"[It] naturally followed that his outlook was to find an outlet and he became a member of the organisation which appealed to him as a means of serving his country to the end of

restoring her fourth green field.

"In Donegal poor Reynolds met his end while engaged in preparations for an assault on the Border which separates his country. After years his memory is green..."

Jimmy Joe came to national prominence in 1935 when he, his twin brother John and two others were charged with the death of More-O'Ferrall. All of this arose from the project to evict a whole terrace of tenants from their houses in Mostrim/Edgeworthstown, Co Longford in 1934.

The tenants appealed Fianna Fáil who were the 26-County Administration at the time. Their effort met with no success, so they appealed to the Labour Party with a similar result.

At this stage they took their case, in desperation, to the Republican Movement. The Republicans held a public meeting in the town at which Michael Kelly of Lisachul, Ballaghaderreen made a much-quoted statement.

Kelly had just qualified as a secondary teacher with his BA and H Dip in Ed from UCD. He was a fine public speaker. He said the tenants would be maintained in their houses of which the landlord was the Saunderson Estate, with Gerald More-O'Ferrall, a local landowner, as agent.

Mick Kelly also said that the More-O'Ferrall estate would be cleared of trees and divided among local people. One tree would be saved, however, and used to hang More-O'Ferrall! Feeling had run very high.

In February of 1935 a party of men, including one dressed as a uniformed Garda, drove up to the More-O'Ferrall residence and asked for the man of the house.

They were admitted to the dining room where dinner was in progress. They produced handguns and attempted to take Gerald More-O'Ferrall outside. His son Richard grappled with one of the raiding party and attempted to take the gun from him.

Shots were fired and More-O'Ferrall senior was hit but a silver cigarette case deflected the bullet. His son was seriously wounded, however. The men withdrew and a bucket of tar was found on the doorstep.

The intention was obviously to tar-and-feather the agent of the Saunderson Estate. Locally it was believed that IRA Volunteers were responsible. Several days later Richard More-O'Ferrall died from his injuries. The episode was regarded as a disaster.

An all-out campaign of repression by State forces against Republicans followed. A motion condemning the shooting was introduced at a meeting of Longford Co Council by Fine Gael members, but the Fianna Fáil chairperson, Mr Belton, ruled it out of order as "political".

Incidentally, Fianna Fáil had secured the chair in 1934 only with the support of two Independent Republican councillors Matt Brady and Seán F Lynch. They sought to hold on to the chair, hence the ruling that the shooting was "political".

On April 1 Free State forces swooped in

Longford and Leitrim and seven Republicans were held and charged. Twin brothers Jimmy Joe and John Reynolds, Currycramp, Dromad, Co Leitrim were charged with the death of Richard More-O'Ferrall.

Also charged on this count were John "Nipper" Shanley, a popular Leitrim County footballer and Willie Mulligan, Aughnaciliffe, Co Longford. Three others were charged with "conspiracy". They were Mick Ferguson, OC, Longford Battalion, IRA, Mick Kelly, the speaker at the public meeting in Mostrim and Hughie Devine of Mostrim, Co Longford. Ferguson was a native of Aughnasheelin, Ballinamore, Co Leitrim and worked as a shop assistant in Cosgrave's (now Providers), Main Street, Longford.

He could not be charged with taking part in the raid on Lisard House (More-O'Ferrall's) since at the time of the raid, he and Isaac McCormack, the Battalion Adjutant and a Protestant Republican, were in the audience in the Temperance Hall, Longford where Harry Bailey, among others, was performing.

INTIMIDATING DISPLAY

As a follow-up to their raiding of homes and harassment of Republicans, Free State forces made an intimidating display with the prisoners. Covered Free State army lorries in convoy brought them from prison to Longford town courthouse.

Armed troops formed a hollow square outside and pushed back the crowds. The children sang their own parody on a popular song of the period:

*Roll along covered wagons, roll along;
Oh, you think you have the prisoners but
you're wrong.*

The children were right! The following December after two jury trials in Dublin, the prisoners were free. The first jury disagreed. The second was directed by the judge to find them not guilty as there was no case against them.

A great welcome home with blazing tar barrels, exploding rockets, cheering crowds and enthusiastic public meetings took place. The verdict generally was that the death of Richard More-O'Ferrall was unintended but the entire incident marked "the last of landlordism to be put down in the country".

Within a short number of years the Lisard estate was broken up and the Land Commission divided it among local people.

The best account of JJ Reynolds' career is contained in a statement from the Memorial Committee, probably written by Leo Duignan, published in the *Longford Leader*, August 8, 1953.

He joined the Fianna after completing the Intermediate course with the Christian Brothers. From O/C Fianna Éireann for Co Leitrim, he joined the IRA and rose to O/C Leitrim Unit, which became one of the strongest in Ireland.

Jimmy Joe was appointed by GHQ as officer commanding all units in England, Scotland and Wales in 1937. His efficiency, determination and organizing ability in preparation for the Bombing Campaign of 1939/40 was recognised.

"Although essentially a man of action, Jimmy Joe was very widely read and an assiduous student, not only of patriotic Irish writers, but also of international revolutionary thinkers. In this regard he was probably far in advance of practically all his comrades.

"He knew what freedom meant in the daily lives of people, and could explain the significance clearly. Political freedom alone would never have satisfied Jimmy Joe; he wanted economic, social and cultural freedom as well.

"James Connolly was his favourite writer, and with Connolly he realised that the Ireland worth fighting for was the living Irish race, and the children yet to come. Always he dreamt of a fuller, freer, happier life for them.

"He was also profoundly religious. His great personal courage and fearlessness stemmed from his devotedness; knowing he was always prepared, he had nothing to fear."

(More next month. Refs. An tÉireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman, October 1953; The Longford Leader, August 8 and September 4, 1953 and Longford Telegraph, September 5, 1953.)

EIGHT YEARS PENAL SERVITUDE

**50
Years
Ago**

ON October 7, 1953 three young Irish men were each sentenced to eight years penal servitude at Hertford

Assizes in England.

They were Manus Canning (27), Lecky Road, Derry; Seán Mac Stíofáin (25), Turville Street, Bethnal Green, London and Cathal Goulding (31), St Edna's Drive, Silver Acre, Rathfarnham, Dublin.

They were brought from Brixton Prison under armed escort. In the court, a warder stood behind each of the prisoners and five Special Branch men occupied a bench immediately above the dock. All three refused to plead in reply to charges of "stealing" 108 rifles, eight Bren guns and other articles from the British War Department.

They were also accused of "breaking and entering" an armoury at Felstead School, Essex, possessing firearms with intent to enable others to endanger life and "having by night housebreaking implements without lawful excuse".

In court, Cathal Goulding said: "We are soldiers of the Irish Republican Army who believe that the only way to drive the British Army of Occupation out of Ireland is by force of arms.

"We make no excuse or apology for capturing arms from the enemy for that purpose and our one regret is that, in this instance, we were not successful in placing them in the hands of our comrades at home for use against the British forces in Ireland."

The other two men said they associated themselves with what Goulding had said. The English judge spent 38 minutes summing up but it took the jury less than a minute to reach their verdict.

Sentence was passed in complete silence and there were no demonstrations as the three IRA Volunteers were led to their cells. They were taken under armed escort to Brixton, for transfer to another prison.

Detective Superintendent Elwell had said that Manus Canning "who had no previous convictions, was born in Derry in 1926 He first came under notice politically in February 1950 when he presided at a Sinn Féin meeting in Derry. (It was in support of the prisoner candidate, Hugh McAteer, in the Westminster elections.)

"He had been very active in the affairs of Sinn Féin and the IRA. He is believed to have acted as organiser for the IRA in Northern Ireland, and is reported to have been concerned in the movement of arms into Northern Ireland." (The RUC had been busy supplying the English police with information.)

"Goulding," the superintendent said, "was born in Dublin in 1922, was married and had one child. In 1946 he was before a Special (Non-Jury) Court in Dublin for being a member of an unauthorised organisation and sentenced to nine months imprisonment.

"He is a member of the Executive Council

of the IRA." (The 26-County Special Branch had collaborated also).

"Stephenson (*sic*), married with two children, was born in London but had adopted an Irish background and called himself 'Seán'.

"In 1950 he was Chairman of a united Irishman movement meeting in Hyde Park. He was Chairman of the Sinn Féin movement in London.

"He has been seeking sources of supply of arms and ammunition for the IRA since 1951," he added.

In its front page report on the sentences under the banner headline "In Jail for Ireland" and a photo of Cathal Goulding, *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman* took issue with the remarks of the Judge, Mr Justice Streetfeild:

"With the usual smug-complacency of the English Judge said: 'We are not concerned with Irish or English politics here.' As if any Englishman can disclaim his share of responsibility for the British armed forces and their presence here.

"They are robbers in Ireland today just as they have been from the time they first put foot on our soil. If the Judge and the English generally 'are not concerned with Irish politics' as he said, let them take their occupation forces out of Ireland and the sooner the better.

"Until they do so the example of Manus and Cathal and Seán will be a guiding light to young Irishmen wishing to show their loyalty and service to the Irish nation."

A front-page advertisement carried the message "Join the Republican Movement — Fill their Places in the Ranks — Don't Hesitate — Join today — Full Information Gearbuid Ó Broin, c/o *United Irishman*."

One week subsequent to the sentencing of the three Republicans, the *Irish Press* of October 13 carried a story under the heading "Scotland Yard Fears IRA 'Reprisal'".

It read: "A Scotland Yard spokesman said yesterday that special instructions had been sent to all police stations in the West End giving a warning of attempted raids on public buildings, reports U.P.

"The raids were expected as a reprisal for the sentencing last week of members of the IRA. There were also unconfirmed reports that Special Branch policemen had been recalled from leave, and that police had been stationed at town halls, museums and other big public buildings in anticipation of raids."

The lessons of the 1939-40 Sabotage Campaign by the IRA in England had not been forgotten, it seems. Nor were the Fenian campaigns in England in the 1880s, causing the English Special Branch to be formed.

And what of the years to come, from the 1973 period forward? Thirty years later, the English Establishment's worst nightmare became a reality! We all know why.

In the October 1953 issue of the Republican newspaper the story is told of Seán O'Carroll of Castleconnell, Limerick who had been lodged in Mountjoy Jail.

A former member of the Irish Republican Army and a Sinn Féin TD from 1923 to 1927, he insisted on his right to fish in the River Shannon at Castleconnell despite ESB regulations.

He maintained that his family and others in the district have been fishing the river for generations and that they were entitled to con-

tinue doing so.

In this stand he had the support of the people of all political opinions in the area and his case was arousing considerable interest in Limerick and Clare as was witnessed by letters in the Limerick press.

The Republican organ devoted two whole columns to Seán O'Carroll situation including the complete text of three letters, one from Ted Russell, 55 Upper William Street, Limerick, another from Joseph Meskell, Einragh, Clonlara, Co Clare (formerly of Castleconnell, Co Limerick) as Secretary in 1937 of the Castleconnell Fishermen's Association and a third from Gael Óg, Luimneach.

Ted Russell, who was once a member of Clann na Poblachta and later Mayor of Limerick city, wrote about his visit to Seán O'Carroll — then over 70 years of age — in Mountjoy Jail.

"Behind the counter stood Seán O'Carroll, wearing a raincoat which did not quite cover the drab prison garb which he was wearing. He looked straight at me as I walked into the room and was the first to greet me, in Irish, in his strong, kindly voice.

"I searched the old man's face for any sign of weakness or any indication that his loss of liberty had affected his determination to continue his fight to fish in the River Shannon as his forebears had done before him.

"I searched in vain, and as if he sensed what I might be thinking he brought his fist down with a bang on the counter as he voiced his determination to resume his fishing as soon as he was released.

"As he talked I listened and marvelled at the courage and determination of this old fighter who was prepared to continue his struggle — alone if necessary — until the justice he sought was obtained. Whatever happens, thought I, this old man will never give in.

"Seán O'Carroll is fighting for more than justice in his own case, he is fighting for the liberty of every citizen in this State — a liberty which is slowly being taken from our people because we are either too ignorant, too apathetic, or just too lazy to resist the increasing encroachments on the freedoms which men like Seán O'Carroll fought, and died, to establish."

Gael Óg wrote to protest against "this grave injustice".

"For many years the ESB have engaged in the wholesale slaughter of salmon at their weir and one of the officials of the fisheries may be seen fishing in prohibited waters.

"The ruthlessly imposed Fisheries Act cost the ESB over £10,000 annually. The ESB has lost £111,143 over 11 years of the Shannon Fisheries. Is it not high time they got rid of this liability and gave it back to the men who earned a living out of it?

"Let the ESB stick to power and lighting and leave fishing to the people who can make it pay."

Joseph Maskall, former secretary of the Castleconnell Fishermen's Association, in his letter gave the facts of the situation. The ESB had stated that "no claim has been received by Shannon Fisheries or the Electricity Supply Board from Mr Seán O'Carroll under either of the Shannon Fisheries Acts (1935 or 1937). This I deny emphatically.

"On the instructions of Mr Dermot G O'Donovan, solr., William Street, Limerick, who was acting on our behalf in 1937, I submitted a formal claim on behalf of Mr Seán O'Carroll and other Castleconnell fisherman, myself included, to Mr Liam Forde, Manager of Shannon Fisheries (then a Director of the ESB) and his then Secretary, Mr Styles."

He went on to question the "heavy compensation" referred to by the ESB and stated he was "at a loss to know who received these monies". He mentioned two fisheries owned by deceased members which were "confiscated arbitrarily by the ESB without one penny compensation being paid by the Board".

In conclusion Joseph Maskall said he was "fully prepared to testify at a public sworn enquiry with regard to the methods used by Shannon Fisheries in determining the amount of compensation to be paid to various fishermen . . ."

The tactics of the landlords were evidently in use by the official riverlords of the ESB and Shannon Fisheries, but these were being met by popular resistance. Photos of Seán O'Carroll fishing the Shannon at Castleconnell appeared regularly in the daily papers fifty years ago.

Also in the October issue of the UI was a half page advertisement with a cartoon showing Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, cigar in mouth, dangling two puppets — the masters of the two Partition statelets in Ireland — Basil Brooke and de Valera.

De Valera had just met Churchill for the first time in years and photos were featured in many newspapers of the two shaking hands, or of Mr de Valera shaking the blood-stained "hands of Mr Churchill" as the Republican organ had it.

The advert was headed "Smash Partition the way it is maintained — BY FORCE!" and gave in a panel "Six good reasons why you should join Óglai na hÉireann:

- (1) "Ireland is still unfree.
- (2) "Never has an invader been known to relinquish his grip upon the invaded until forced to do so.
- (3) "The Irish Republican Army is the true inheritor of the separatist tradition.
- (4) "Despite calumny and persecution the Army has never flinched or deviated from its allegiance to the Irish Republic.
- (5) "The answer to armed troops of occupation is armed and trained patriots.
- (6) "Our rights will be conceded to us when we are strong enough to take them."

The advert continued: "Join now and prepare for action. Full information from . . . The Republicans in jail are calling you to fill up the ranks."

It concludes with a quotation from Pearse and the cartoon is given the caption "Winston's Puppet Show".

The obvious conclusion from events and publications of fifty years ago is that the Movement was becoming much more defiant and combative.

(More next month. Refs. *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, October and November 1953; *The Irish Independent* October 8, 1953; *The Irish Press*, October 7 and 13, 1953.)

REPUBLICAN AID COMMITTEE LAUNCHED

IN November 1953 a committee "to raise funds to provide for the dependants of Republican Prisoners" was formally inaugurated in Dublin.

**50
Years
Ago**

The committee was named "An Cumann Cabhrach (Republican Aid Committee)". It had been

informally in existence since the previous July when Joe Campbell of Newry was sentenced to five years for possession of explosives.

It was simply called the Republican Aid Committee for the first few months. Then in October three Republicans were sentenced to eight years in England. There would be demands on a prisoners' dependants' fund for some time and it was decided to put matters on a firm footing.

The committee became known as An Cumann Cabhrach, subtitled Republican Aid Committee, and its terms of reference and structure set out clearly in a small folder that Republicans called it's "constitution".

The objects of the Committee were stated to be:

- (a) to raise funds to provide for the dependants of Republican Prisoners.
- (b) To look after the welfare of such prisoners pending release.
- (c) To create a Central Fund from which grants may be made at the discretion of the Committee in cases of distress arising directly out of Republican activities.

The structure was laid down as follows:

The governing body shall be the Central Committee which shall be composed of a Chairman (sic), Secretary, and Treasurer, and at least four members, with powers to co-opt. The quorum for meetings shall be five.

The Central Committee shall elect three Trustees for the funds of the Committee.

The Central Committee shall be empowered to set up Sub-Committees, if necessary, to deal with different branches of the work.

Branches will be formed under the direction of the Central Committee to organise local collections, céilíthe, etc, to help the fund.

All monies raised (by Branches or otherwise) shall be paid into the Central Fund, and all grants will be made direct from that fund.

All account books and minute books in use by the branches shall become the property of the Committee and shall be open to inspection by the Central Committee on request.

It should be noted that all funds raised were to be paid into the Central Committee fund and all disbursements were to be made direct from that fund.

In that way all Republican prisoners and their dependants would be assisted in equal manner, regardless of personal popularity or other circumstances such as prominence, etc.

The front page of the folder of "constitution" read as follows:

An Cumann Cabhrach, the Republican Aid Committee (For the Relief of Republican Prisoners and their Dependents).

The address was then given: c/o United Irishman office, Sean Treacy House, 94 Talbot Street, Dublin.

The back page read: November 1953 Central Committee: Chairman: Donal O'Connor. Secretary: Tomás Ó Dubhghaill. Treasurer: Mrs E Woods.

Committee: Gearóid Ó Broin, Seán Goulding, Miss Dillon, E Ní Sculláin, Mrs McGlynn.

Trustees: Joe Clarke, Laurence Grogan and Mrs Russell.

The imprint was: Ardiffr Printer, Kilmalnam.

Donal O'Connor was the owner of the Castle Hotel, Gardiner Row, Dublin and a veteran Republican of the 1916-23 period.

Tomás Ó Dubhghaill was a trade union official, President of Sinn Féin and had been a Republican prisoner during the 1940s. Ella May Woods had served a ten-year sentence in England from 1939.

Gearóid Ó Broin was a motor mechanic who had once been an organiser with Aitirí na

An cumann cabhrach

THE REPUBLICAN AID COMMITTEE

(For the Relief of Republican Prisoners and their Dependents)

c/o "United Irishman" Office,
Sean Treacy House,
94 Talbot St., Dublin.

A CARA,

In reply to your note of the 5th instanc^e we are anxious to get branches formed of the Republican Aid Committee in all the local areas. If you can manage to get a few people together in Lifford who would be willing to form a branch to organise weekly collections, to run functions - Céilíthe, etc. to raise funds for the Committee, we would be very glad. Any funds raised should be sent on the Treasurer c/o this office as the Central Fund will have the responsibility of looking after both the prisoners themselves and their dependents whether in Dublin, London or Belfast.

I am enclosing an official collection book. You should arrange to send on any funds you collect each week and a receipt for same will be sent you. The book itself should be returned periodically for checking.

With best wishes,
Eise, La meas,

Tomás Ó Dubhghaill

• 1953 letter from An Cumann Cabhrach secretary Tomás Ó Dubhghaill about forming a branch in Lifford, Co Donegal.

h-Aiséirí. Emily Ní Sculláin came from a Republican family and with her sister was very active with the staff of An tÉireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman.

Rita McGlynn, neé McSweeney, had served a sentence in England in the 1940s while at the same time her husband-to-be Paddy McGlynn was in prison in the 26 Counties. Indeed the majority of the Central Committee had been Republican prisoners themselves.

1916 VETERAN

Of the trustees, Joe Clarke was a 1916 Veteran who with Larry Grogan had served the Republican Cause right through from the 1920s. Mrs Russell was Lily Coventry of Dublin who had married a brother of Seán Russell and was active all her life. She spend a period interned without trial in Kilmalnam jail in 1922-23.

The flavour of the activity of An Cumann Cabhrach may be obtained from this letter to a Donegal man who had offered to help. It was signed "Tomás Ó Dubhghaill" and went as follows:

"In reply to your note of the 5th instanc^e we are anxious to get branches formed of the Republican Aid Committee in all the local areas.

"If you can manage to get a few people together in Lifford who would be willing to form a branch to organise weekly collections, to run functions — céilíthe, etc to raise funds for the Committee, we would be very glad.

"Any funds raised should be sent to the Treasurer c/o this office as the Central Fund will have the responsibility of looking after both the prisoners themselves and their dependants whether in Dublin, London or Belfast.

"I am enclosing an official collection book. You should arrange to send on any funds you collect each week and a receipt for same will be sent to you. The book itself should be returned periodically for checking."

The valuable work done by An Cumann Cabhrach for several decades had been carried out since the 1916 Rising by various bodies: Irish National Aid and Volunteers' Dependants' Fund, White Cross, Irish Republican Prisoners' Dependants' Fund,

Green Cross in the 1940s, Green Cross 1973 from that year on, etc.

From 1953 right through the '50s, '60s, '70s and up to 1986, it faithfully discharged its duties. With the departure of the Provos from the revolutionary path, the Central Committee, as it was constituted in 1986, went with them.

The Dublin and Cork branches rejected this move and remained loyal to the Republican cause. A number of Republican prisoners in Long Kesh, Portlaoise and England refused support from An Cumann Cabhrach and the Dublin and Cork branches undertook to care for them.

These branches were reorganised into a new organisation named CABHAIR (Irish Republican Prisoners' Dependants' Fund) with an identical "constitution" or terms of reference and structure as An Cumann Cabhrach had.

Ever since 1986 CABHAIR has had prisoners to support and has carried out this duty fearlessly and faithfully. Never does it need support more than at present as the jails fill up steadily again. While British rule remains there will be resistance to it and consequently prisoners to be cared for.

The November 1953 issue of An tÉireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman carried on its front page a piece from the *Cork Weekly Examiner* of October 24. It told of the fear of continuing protests against the coronation of Elizabeth Windsor as "Queen of Northern Ireland" (sic).

"Fifty Gardaí from adjoining districts were drafted into Athlone to assist the local force in protection duty during the showing of the Coronation film in the Church of Ireland Hall. Inside the hall twelve Gardaí stood watch over the projector. There were no incidents.

"The film show, to which admission was by invitation, was under the auspices of the local Women's Branch of the British Legion.

"Over 1,000 saw the matinee and night performance and the audience included people from many parts of the Midlands and the West. The hall had been under police protection day and night for the previous week."

A different story was told by the *Irish*

Independent of November 14. It was headed "IRA Disclaimer — removal of wreaths from Cork Cenotaph" and read as follows:

"Lt-Col John Lucey, OBE, who was in charge of the Remembrance Day parade ceremony at Cork last Sunday when wreaths were laid on the 1914-18 War Memorial informed an *Irish Independent* representative that he had received a letter from Cork No 1 Brigade, IRA as follows:

"A Chara — Re the removal of wreaths from the Cenotaph at the South Mall, it seems to be the popular opinion that this was an action organised by members of the IRA.

"I wish to inform you that no member of the above-mentioned organisation took any part in this indecent action and furthermore that the IRA authorities do not agree with or uphold acts of this nature."

Meanwhile, it was noted that in Glasgow 1,000 copies of the Republican newspaper were confiscated by the police because of an allegedly seditious article which appeared on the front page of the September edition concerning the three IRA men who were then awaiting trial in England on an arms capture charge.

Also in Glasgow, a young man, William Hall Brown, was held on an arms capture charge. He was brought before Paisley Sheriff Court. The charge against Brown was similar to that with which the three IRA men were accused and awaiting trial in Brixton prison.

He was alleged to have captured arms from a British army cadet hut. Marked in the hut were the letters SRA, indicating that the capture was the work of the Scottish Republican Army.

In Africa and Asia in 1953 the British Empire was fighting to maintain its hold. Armed resistance to English rule was taking place in Kenya and Malaya.

'SCORCHED EARTH POLICIES'

The Republican organ commented: "Scorched earth policies to starve out whole country-sides, mass public executions, cannibalistic tortures are among the declared lines of policy now being used to suppress what are being termed 'terrorists', 'communists' and 'murderers'.

"In Kenya in a wide area surrounding the Aberdare Mountains all livestock has been driven off to the British farms in the highlands, and food growing forbidden in the area."

Another article on the same page is headed "Hirelings commemorate Battle of Britain". There were over 200 guests at the RAF Association (Dublin Branch) in the Royal Hibernal Hotel. Maurice Dockrell, a Fine Gael TD attended and said: "We will do all in our power to help the Association.

"The Dublin police were also there in strength to ensure that no young Irishman took exception to the proceedings."

A piece headed "Conflicting News" makes interesting reading:

"1. Leinster House Minister for Foreign Affairs walks bare-headed in homage behind the corpse of the late King George VI of England and Seán T (Ó Ceallaigh, 26-County President) sends a telegram of sympathy expressing Ireland's sorrow.

"2. Leinster House will not attend Garden Party given by the British Ambassador on the occasion of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth of England; it would be inconsistent with their 'republicanism'.

"3. Mr de Valera and his shadow [Mr Aiken] are entertained to luncheon in London by England's Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill.

"4. Meanwhile Major de Valera denounces Partition in Bradford [England] at a meeting commemorating the death of Robert Emmet."

The contradictions here remind one of the behaviour of the Provos fifty years later: laying wreaths on British war memorials in memory of British soldiers including those shot in the Six Counties since 1971 — perhaps by themselves.

(More next month. Refs. An tÉireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman, October and November 1953 and *Irish Independent*, November 14, 1953.)

'THE MONTH OF THE PRISONERS'

**50
Years
Ago**

DECEMBER 1953 was dedicated to the support of the Republican prisoners and their dependants. Every December for the next ten

years was to be so devoted.

The campaign of the Republican Aid Committee started within days of the sentencing of the three Irishmen in England on October 7. The following weekend a three-inch double column advertisement was placed in the *Sunday Press* newspaper of October 11.

Headed "Eight Years Penal Servitude!" it made a direct appeal for assistance for the prisoners and their dependants. The text read as follows:

"Eight long years out of a man's life! What a dreadful thought, but more dreadful still to the man himself is the fear that during those eight years his wife and children, his dependants, may be in want.

"Last week three young Irishmen were sentenced to eight years' penal servitude in England. Already there are four others imprisoned in Crumlin Road Jail, Belfast, one of whom is serving five years' penal servitude.

"We can help those prisoners most effectively by helping to provide for their wives and children while they are in prison. Help them by subscribing to the Republican Aid Committee.

"Subscriptions, large or small, should be sent to: An Rúnal, Tomás Ó Dubhghaill, c/o United Irishman office, 94 Seán Treacy Street, Dublin."

An *t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman* of December 1953 carried on its front page photographs of Seán Mac Stófan, Manus Canning and Joe Campbell, all prisoners of the Crown. A photo of Cuthall Goulding had been carried on the front page of the November issue.

The paper, under its page one headline "A Striking Contrast" also carried a photo of ex-British soldiers marching under the shadow of the GPO in Dublin with Lieut-General J Hartigan taking the salute on Sunday, November 8 (Poppy Day).

"It is a sad paradox that one page can contain such conflicting photographs," the lead story said. "All Irishmen — one body of them marching, in effect, to honour the enemy which has imprisoned the other three.

"And sad, too, that they are marching under the protection of a government which pays lip-service to Anti-Partition and the like and acts simultaneously in the service of England.

"Seeing such imperialist demonstrations on the streets of Cork, Belfast or Dublin might deter many, inclined to say, 'What can be done if, in fact, the Occupations Forces can parade freely in Ireland?'

"That philosophy could have been aptly applied to our history for hundreds of years now; but it took clear-sighted, high-principled men to rise above it and in so doing, lift the mass of the people with them.

"Such men are not lacking today... [the prisoners] are the men, and it is fitting that they should demonstrate fully the spiritual unity of Republican Ireland, representing — as they do — the Six Counties, the 26 Counties and the Exiles.

"Fortunately their imprisonment by England is helping in a magnificent way to lift once again the mass of our people out of the depressing philosophy of defeatism and despair.

"They do not ask for votes of sympathy or ink-deep resolutions. What they do require is your support, real, live support which alone can help to realize the objectives for which they are now spending their young lives in England's prisons. Join the Republican Movement."

A "strap" at the bottom of the page repeats the message to join the Movement and adds "Full Details: G Ó Broin, c/o *The United Irishman*, Seán Treacy House, 94 Talbot Street, Dublin."

Meanwhile, in Belfast on December 4 a British court sentenced the abstentionist

November, 1953.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE:

Chairman: Donal O'Connor.

Secretary: Tomás O Dubhghaill.

Treasurer: Mrs. E. Woods.

Committee:

Gearóid Ó Broin, Seán Goulding, Miss Dillon

E. Ní Sculláin, Mrs. McGlynn.

Trustees:

Joe Clarke, Laurence Grogan and Mrs. Russell.

ADVERT PRINTER, KILMAINHAM

An cumann cabhrac

THE REPUBLICAN AID COMMITTEE

(For the Relief of Republican Prisoners and their Dependents)

C/O "UNITED IRISHMAN" OFFICE,
SEAN TREACY HOUSE,
94 TALBOT ST., DUBLIN.

• An Cumann Cabhrac/Republican Aid Committee's constitution, November 1953.

Stormont MP for Mid-Tyrone Liam Kelly to 12 months imprisonment for sedition.

It was alleged by RUC witnesses that during an election meeting the previous October he had said from a public platform: "I will not give allegiance to the bastard Queen of a bastard nation. Do I believe in force? The answer is Yes, the more the better and the sooner the better."

If true it appeared as if he sought to be arrested and jailed for remarks which were deliberately provocative. He said he would not recognise any court set up in Ireland by the British Crown.

Kelly who had been imprisoned in Crumlin Road Jail, Belfast during the 1940s, had splintered from the Republican Movement about 1950, he set up a political organisation confined to the Six Counties called Fianna Uladh. In court he stated that he "accepted and upheld" the 1937 Constitution of the 26 Counties.

POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS

Since 1933 when Pádraig Mac Lógáin, later President of Sinn Féin, was elected for South Armagh as an abstentionist in the Stormont elections of that year, a political restriction was imposed on candidates in order to secure nomination.

They were required to give a solemn public undertaking that if elected they would sit in Stormont. The unionist regime was taking a leaf out of the Free State's book. In 1927 they had brought into law a similar undertaking for candidates in 26-County parliamentary elections.

Both partitionist assemblies, North and South, had now driven and excluded Sinn Féin and other Republican candidates from public life. Liam Kelly had signed such a political test oath to secure nomination.

His address to the court was believed at the time to have been written for him by Seán Mac Bride, then a TD for Leinster House:

"It is not sedition for an Irishman to say that Ireland belongs to the Irish people and that no foreign monarch or country has a right to claim or exercise jurisdiction in any part of Ireland."

Very good, but he went on to say: "... I accept and am prepared to uphold to the best of my ability the Constitution which the Irish people adopted by referendum of the 1st July, 1937." He should have said "the people of the 26 Counties" and that this Constitution confined its writ to 26 Counties only.

An *t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman* in its October 1953 editorial headed "All Ireland!" stated: "Elections for Stormont are being held and each candidate must declare that if elected he (sic) will take his seat and with it the Oath of Allegiance [to the Crown of England]."

"There is only one fitting answer — to refuse to make this oath, in fact, to boycott this election. Surely it is obvious by now that we will never get rid of this galling imposition by submitting to it.

"But when one of those Nationalist MPs

refused to enter Stormont and sought instead to attend at Leinster House he was told he could not be admitted there. He was representing an area outside the 26 Counties and to admit him would raise 'legal and constitutional difficulties' — it would be a breach of the sacred agreement of 1922.

"There is only one solution — the Sinn Féin solution: To set up a Parliament for all 32 Counties — to scrap both Leinster House and Stormont and supplant them by the All-Ireland Republican Parliament.

"It is a job which must be carried by all the Irish people, requiring the co-operation and active energetic support of North and South, East and West."

The editorials in the Republican newspaper in its November and December issues continue to clarify the position regarding Liam Kelly.

His election manifesto said: "I have no quarrel with constitutional government as it exists in the 26 Counties. My aim is the de facto extension of the Constitution enacted in Dublin a few years ago to all the land of Ireland."

The December editorial said: "... its [the Southern statelet] successive governments have vied with each other in co-operation with our national enemy and this co-operation has been even more complete and blatant since the adoption of the new Free State Constitution in 1937."

It went on to mention that the "Southern statelet was founded to undermine the Government of the Republic [the All-Ireland Dáil] and that its [Free State] army has acted as the first line of defence of the continued British control (it has never yet fired a shot against the invaders)."

The death of Seán McCaughey on hunger and thirst strike, the rounding up of escapees from Derry jail when they crossed into Donegal and their internment in the Curragh, the handing over of Harry White and Mick Quill by Stormont to the 26-County police in the expectation that they would be executed were all examples of the cross-Border collaboration of the 1940s.

Republicans agreed with Liam Kelly on the points of abstention from Stormont and the use of force against British occupation but rejected acceptance of the collaborationist state in the 26 Counties.

Fianna Uladh was never organised outside a small area of Co Tyrone. It developed contacts in Belfast and along the 26-County side of the Border, later a small armed body called Saor Uladh emerged. Both organisations had faded by 1960.

The Republican paper noted the jailing of four young Scotsmen charged with having conspired to overthrow British rule in Scotland. They were sentenced to 12 months imprisonment each, having been found not guilty on some charges and guilty on others.

"But their trial has certainly caught public imagination in Scotland. Many who previously would not have dreamt of breaking the connection with England are beginning to think and the trial has been a wonderful morale

booster for Scottish Nationalists.

"Certainly by all accounts the police stooge 'Cullen' is not very popular today in Edinburgh," the report concludes.

The activities of the British occupation forces in Kenya are also covered. "Captain Griffiths of the King's African Rifles, charged with murdering two Africans who, he said, 'were trying to escape', admitted to having shot them in the back with a Bren gun.

"He returned half-an-hour later and finding one of them still alive, he confessed to have shot him in the temple 'to put him out of agony'.

BOUNTY

"In evidence it was stated that there was competition between the various battalions as to the number of Africans they had killed or wounded — a bounty of five shillings or 10 shillings was paid by the officer to successful marksmen, while a scoreboard was kept in the barracks.

"Capt Griffiths' unit was due to leave soon for Malaya so he was anxious to increase his score as much as possible before leaving, so his men were told 'to shoot anything as long as it is black'.

"So we have the people of Kenya faced with heavy bombers, machine-guns and rifles, while they depend on knives or the few guns they have managed to commandeer. But it is the Kenyans who are the terrorists!"

The Barnes and McCormack Memorial project is also reported on. A local committee was formed at a meeting in Banagher, Co Offaly — home to Peter Barnes — some time previously. Tom Keena, chair of the County Committee, attended.

"The purpose of the committee is to raise funds for the erection of a suitable memorial in Banagher to Peter Barnes and James McCormack, who were executed in England in 1940.

"Mr M Verney, Birr, said that the GAA Central Council presented a football and hurling shield to the Offaly County Board some years ago for competition amongst football and hurling teams in the county, the gate proceeds of which were to raise funds for this purpose.

"The County Board had at present about £70 in the fund, and he proposed to get the Board to re-start the competition in the coming year. It was decided also to hold céilís and concerts in various centres.

"The following committee was elected: Chair: PK Egan, Co C; Hon Secretary, Seán Hynes; Treasurer, K Kenny; Committee: F McIntyre, W Burke, H Johnston, J Kelly, P McNally and M McIntyre."

It took nine years to complete the work.

(More next month. Refs. *An t-Éireannach Aontaithe/The United Irishman*, October, November, December 1953; *The Sunday Press*, October 11, 1953 and *Songs of the Fighting North*, published 1956.)