

An Phoblacht REPUBLICAN NEWS



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SINN FÉIN ARD FHEIS 1982 GOING FORWARD



● In spite of Charles Haughey and Section 31, Sinn Féin these days gets plenty of media coverage, as this scene at last weekend's ard fheis shows

LAST weekend's Sinn Féin ard fheis, held in Dublin, was, not surprisingly, an extremely well-attended gathering which generated much enthusiasm for pressing forward with the task of building further political gains on the recent Sinn Féin election successes.

There is now, perhaps more than ever before, a realisation among republicans of the importance of political activity in complementing the liberation struggle.

That political activity extends not only to making the national case, but, as discussed and debated at the ard fheis, putting the republican strengths to work on all social, economic and cultural fronts.

That means going forward whilst the momentum is high and getting down to some very hard work.

FEDERALISM

The weekend's ard fheis also cleared up the recently thorny question of federalism, which is now not a part of republican policy.

This clearing-of-the-air allows loyalism to be properly recognised for the dangerous threat it presents to any future united democratic country, and to be analysed in its military props and anti-democratic philosophy which needs to be dismantled and defeated.

It also provides for the clear realisation that loyalism is quite a different thing from Protestantism. The former demands special rules, special concessions and special powers which federalism attempted to appease.

The latter can live easily in a democratic socialist united Ireland built on the very real slogan of 'power to the people'.

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COME OFF IT HAUGHEY!



WHAT IS Charles Haughey talking about when he declares it "a serious and ominous development" that Sinn Féin, at last weekend's ard fheis, pledged its 'unambivalent support' for the right of an oppressed people to rise up in arms against its oppressor?

It is not something new. Republicans have been saying it for years.

Determined to retain the Section 31 RTE ban on Sinn Féin, despite the election of five of its members in the North, Haughey hypocritically scrapes for excuses, and cynically hopes to sow confusion.

But those who voted for the Sinn Féin representatives were in no such confusion. They voted their total objection to the British presence in Ireland; their oppo-

sition to a new Stormont, their demand for Irish self-determination and their resistance to the oppression of British occupation.

That is not a glib 'vote for violence', it is a political declaration for peace with justice.

That is 'unambivalent' enough. But what of Haughey's own position?

He verbalises 'republican' objectives but acts in total collaboration with the British

occupiers. At church-gates and parish-pumps, many of his closest supporters make war-like anti-British speeches. Yet they support, in Leinster House, anti-republican and pro-British measures.

How about some 'unambivalence' from Charles Haughey and his 'republican' Fianna Fail followers and voters?

Do they have an unambivalent attitude to the British presence in Ireland? And is all of Fianna Fail determined, like its leader, that the elected voice of sixty-four thousand nationalists in the North should not be heard south of the border?

(See also page 2)

Typical Haughey hypocrisy

BY KEVIN BURKE

IN A typical piece of hypocrisy, the Free State premier Charles Haughey, on Monday this week, launched an attack on Sinn Féin, following its successful weekend ard fheis.

Supported by some of the Dublin and Belfast press, Haughey chose to regard one of the motions passed at the conference as "a serious and ominous development in our national life."

The motion, one of four on electoral policy, resolved "that all candidates in national and local elections, and all campaign material, be unambivalent in support of the armed struggle."

Haughey, in a statement, said threateningly:

"No political organisation can adopt such a policy and be regarded as legitimate or democratic."

He continued:

"Any party which seeks to promote its objectives through the ballot-box must accept all the implications of that process. They must seek support for their policies through argument and persuasion and not by violence and bloodshed."

"It is not possible to adopt the pretence of being democratic, while simultaneously striking at the right to life and freedom which are at the very basis of democracy."

Haughey's words, which might better have been directed at his British allies, were answered the same night by Sinn Féin president Ruairi O Bradaigh who said:

"Mr Haughey seeks to make great political



● Haughey enjoys access to the unlimited media coverage he would deny to republican political opponents

play of the very last resolution passed at the ard fheis last evening. It was one of a group of resolutions on electoral policy voted on without discussion as the delegates were

getting ready to leave.

"Of course, Mr Haughey seeks to take advantage of this resolution to defend the indefensible — the Section 31 RTE ban on

the five newly-elected Sinn Féin representatives in the six counties.

"Mr Haughey claims to speak on behalf of the great majority of Irish people North and South. By his own criterion, the ballot-box, he speaks for no-one in the North (since Fianna Fáil, like Fine Gael and Labour, are purely twenty-six-county parties) and less than half the people in the South.

"By his reference to attacks on 'fellow-Irishmen' north of the border, he seeks to ignore the many thousands of British troops on combat duty there.

"The British were not wished out of the twenty-six counties 60 years ago. My father fought alongside Mr Haughey's father at that time against British rule in all of Ireland, the one in what is now north of the border, the other south of that arbitrary line.

"I am proud of mine and I am sure Mr Haughey will not deny his.

"The great ard fheis of Sinn Féin in 1917 did not condemn the men and women of Easter 1916, rather did it support them. Similarly, the delegates at yesterday's ard fheis of Sinn Féin would not deny those who fight against British rule in the six counties today.

"Twelve years ago Mr Haughey stood in the dock in a Dublin court on charges relating to the armed struggle. He had the benefit of trial by jury and was acquitted. Since then, and for ten years now, Fianna Fáil and the Coalition deny jury-trial to people so charged.

"If Mr Haughey had been arraigned before the Special Criminal Court, he might well have been convicted and with maximum sentence would still be in jail."

Gardai strip Donegal woman

BY BRIAN MARTIN

MALE GARDAI held down a thirty-nine-year-old mother of three in Longford garda barracks on Wednesday, October 27th, while she was forcibly stripped by female colleagues.

Vera Bannon, a member of Donegal Sinn Féin, was driving from her Ballyshannon home to Dublin when she was stopped by members of the garda Task Force outside Mostrim, County Longford, at 2pm.

Her car was searched and she was then arrested under Section 30 of the Offences Against the

State Act and taken to the garda barracks in Longford town. She was left sitting in a room there from 2.30pm to 5pm. Her requests to be allowed to use the toilet were ignored during that period.

Eventually two women gardai arrived and told her to remove her trousers, which she declined to do. A male uniformed garda,

James Gill, was then called in followed by a Task Force member, Dermot Doran.

HELD DOWN

The latter caught Mrs Bannon by the legs bringing her to the floor and, with Gill, held her down whilst a woman garda forcibly pulled off her trousers and shoes.

At this point one of the women gardai, Grace Gavin, hit Mrs Bannon twice on the nose causing it to bleed profusely. Her jumper was then pulled off her and as Mrs Bannon resisted attempts to remove her bra, she was hit again by Grace Gavin in the right eye.

Ban garda Gavin was restrained by her colleague, who told her: "There is no need for that!" And further attempts at continuing the forcible stripping process were abandoned.

After the assault Mrs Bannon was allowed a visit from the prison



● Vera Bannon displays a black eye, one injury suffered when assaulted by gardai

doctor and a solicitor. But, before her release, to add insult to injury, she was charged by the station sergeant with assaulting the gardai.

Following her release she visited an independent doctor and has been receiving medical attention at

home since then as a result of her ordeal.

Her trial on the assault charge has been fixed for Tuesday, December 7th, and she is meanwhile taking legal advice with a view to civil proceedings.

Triple UDR attacks

THREE SEPARATE IRA attacks against members of the loyalist UDR were carried out over the past week, in County Tyrone.

In the first attack, last Friday, October 29th, the IRA planted a booby-trap bomb at the side of a garage belonging to a UDR soldier in Pomeroy. The bomb was wired to detonate when the soldier opened his garage door. Unfortunately it was spotted, and defused after six hours.

Two days later, on Sunday, October 31st, IRA Volunteers

opened fire on another UDR man at the Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital in Omagh. One bullet ripped through the sleeve of his coat, but he escaped injury.

In the early hours of last Tuesday, in Coalisland, County Tyrone, two IRA Volunteers opened fire on a UDR patrol as it drove out of the local barracks. The UDR returned fire, but no hits were

claimed by either side.

RP7 ROCKET ATTACK

Belfast Brigade IRA Volunteers fired an RP7 rocket at a British army saracen on the Falls Road, last Saturday, October 30th, striking a side-long glancing blow but failing to penetrate its armour plating. Following this missile attack, republican Volunteers operating from a number of firing positions opened fire with automatic weapons on the Brit patrol and on RUC reinforcements who quickly arrived on the scene.

Two begin fast

TWO republican prisoners being held on remand in Belfast's Crumlin Road Jail began a hunger-strike on Monday, November 1st, in protest at being isolated in virtual 24-hour solitary confinement in the basement of the jail.

They are demanding to be moved to the remand wings with other republican prisoners, who have made it known they are ready to accept them.

The two men, Bobby Brown and Tommy McKiernan, were arrested on July 9th, this year, and taken to Castle-reagh, where Brown sustained a broken hand, for which he received no medical attention.

Several people were later arrested on evidence allegedly supplied by Brown, but he later retracted this by sworn affidavit. His pregnant wife, Fiona, fled her home on his arrest in fear of abduction by the RUC and being used as a psychological lever against her husband.

She has since returned home and has given birth to a baby girl.

The hunger-strike had been threatening for a week before it began when the two prisoners refused prison food, relying on the limited foodstuffs brought in by their families. On Monday morning, however, they refused to eat anything.

The prison authorities claim that both men are being 'held in protective custody', but in reality they are under no threat from the other republican remand prisoners.

"It is believed that the RUC may still entertain some hope yet of pressuring the two to turn 'queen's evidence'.

Stormont invitations

BY PETER ARNLIS

SINN FEIN'S five newly elected representatives in the North's assembly elections received two surprising letters during the week. The first was from parliament buildings, Stormont, and it outlined Prior's financial lures and benefits to all assembly members, who, to qualify, must sign the roll of members.

The second letter was from the Official Unionist Party leader, James Molyneux, who invited Sinn Fein to Stormont for talks on 'security'.

Sinn Fein is pledged that under no circumstances will it sit in Stormont, but bringing saliva to the lips of the likes of Austin Currie must have been the combined salary and secretarial expenses of almost £15,000 and all the other numerous tax off-setting perks.

Next Thursday, November 11th, has been given as the date for the opening of the Stormont assembly. Nineteen members — Sinn Fein and the SDLP — will be boycotting the 78-seat assembly.

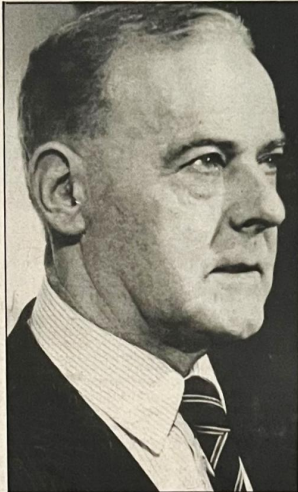
COOL RESPONSE

Last week's statement from Sinn Fein calling for exploratory talks on nationalist unity has received a cool response from the SDLP and a whimsical call from the Irish Independence Party for all nationalist representatives to resign in protest and make a farce of the assembly.

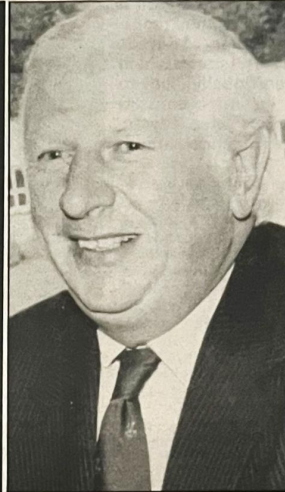
While such a move would certainly put Sinn Fein and the SDLP on an equal footing with the shaken IIP (which should recognise the ascendant force of open republicanism), the only people whom it would make a farce of would be republican supporters and those representatives foolish enough to take the IIP's advice.

The IIP would probably attend a closed conference of the kind envisaged by Sinn Fein and the SDLP would probably boycott it, even if it was chaired or sponsored by independents. The SDLP will also refuse to vigorously protest against the new Stormont because, firstly, it is the function of the SDLP to accommodate the British presence and, secondly, its overwhelmingly middle-class leaders are in competition with republicans for the ideological leadership of the nationalist people.

The SDLP knows that street protests mean resistance and the politicisation of the



● JAMES MOLYNEUX
Sinn Fein declined his invitation to Stormont
people which it would prefer to see them without.



● JIM PRIOR
dangling financial carrots to the SDLP
ted," agonised the Newsletter.

SECURITY
Official Unionist leader James Molyneux was berated for his decision to invite Sinn Fein to security talks at Stormont last Monday. It says something for his political acumen when he could make such a monumental misjudgement and hand propaganda to Paisley and to his opponents within the OUP.

Such was the agony caused to the conscience of unionism that the loyalist daily, the Newsletter, noted:

"If the five Sinn Feiners had been really smart they would have accepted the invitation — and would even yet turn up at Stormont this morning to learn what additional measures the Official Unionists have been devising for the protection of this part of the United Kingdom..."

"But just imagine if they, even now, used whatever brains are in their head and accep-

However, not only did Sinn Fein, for its own good reasons, not show up, but neither did Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party, the Alliance Party or the SDLP.

Molyneux's original motion smacked, even to other loyalists, like too much of an ultimatum to the British government: that if security was not handed over to the assembly then there was the real threat that the OUP would boycott it, thus leading to its collapse.

But at the Stormont meeting the OUP, under the counsel of Harold McCusker and Ken Maginnis, decided to call upon direct-ruler Prior to amend the devolution legislation and give the assembly control of crown forces. They then met Prior who was said to be sympathetic, but no change was envisaged.

The British government knows that loyalists in control of security would lead, at the first instance of military curfews and drumhead court-martials, not to mention

state pogroms, to the international exposure of the real nature of the six counties and show what the British are propping up.

DISCUSSIONS

Last Monday night the SDLP's 14 representatives met in Duggan's to select members to meet with Prior on Tuesday. They also announced that they would be seeking an early meeting with Free State premier Charles Haughey.

After their one and a half hour long discussions with Prior, SDLP leader John Hume said that they had urged the British to abandon the assembly and build on London/Dublin talks. They are also to seek a council set up from elected representatives of Leinster House and the Stormont assembly which would obviously be powerless, but would be the vehicle for them to claim their salaries and pretend to the nationalist people that the deadlock was being slowly broken.

Sinn Fein is opposed to such theatrics and has said that it would be a waste of time talking to Prior about constitutional issues until the British declare that they are withdrawing from Ireland and allowing the Irish people the right to decide their own future.

WITHDRAWAL

The British paper, *The Daily Mirror*, has renewed its call, first made in August 1978, for British troops to be withdrawn from the North.

In a front page story the *Mirror* asked: "How much longer will it be before Britain faces the fact that it cannot solve the Irish problem — and gets out?"

It continued: "Withdrawal would be difficult. But we have managed it almost everywhere else in the world — from Asia to Africa, from the Middle East to the Pacific and the Caribbean."

The paper, however, advocates full autonomy for the six counties, something which is unacceptable to republicans because it means continued partition and would be a threat to the nationalist people.

Reacting to the call, the *Belfast Telegraph* said that its analysis was 'simplistic' and 'dangerous nonsense'. The Newsletter called it a 'foolish' and 'ill-considered cry' which would only 'hold out encouragement to the IRA', such is the degree of ignorance of the Newsletter in its shallow understanding of republican motivation.

Tactical end to work protest

THE NO-WORK aspect of the six-year-long protest for political status, which began when Kieran Nugent refused to wear prison uniform on September 14th, 1976, was, for tactical reasons, finally abandoned by republican POWs in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh last Monday, November 1st.

The H-Block and Armagh protest began in 1976 when the British government announced that anyone arrested and charged with an offence committed after March 1st of that year would not be treated as, and given the category of, a political prisoner.

The British government hoped to force the prisoners to wear criminal uniform, carry out penal work and integrate prisoners regardless of political persuasion, for example, IRA Volunteers and UDA and UVF paramilitaries.

Nugent was soon joined by dozens of other prisoners who went on the blanket and, like the republican POWs in Armagh women's prison, refused to carry out work. The men were forced on a no-wash/no-slop-out protest in March 1978 and they were denied total washing facilities. The women undertook a similar protest from February 1980.

PROMISED

In 1980 during the first non-fatal hunger-strike from October to December the British government gave in on the question of the prison uniform and also promised a liberal interpretation

of prison work. It was its failure to live up to its commitments which led to last year's historic hunger-strikes, which claimed the lives of 10 republican martyrs.

Since the ending of the second hunger-strike, on October 3rd, 1981, several hundred prisoners maintained a no-work protest for which they paid heavily in terms of remission and other losses.

However, after much debate within the prison the men decided to scale down this aspect of their protest and use their numerical strength within the blocks to assert themselves.

As republicans move into spheres of the prison over which loyalists had hitherto had free control there have been numerous clashes. Loyalists have adopted a lock-up protest, staying out of republicans' way where they are in the minority, and, where they have control, for example, in the kitchens, retaliating by poisoning the food of the republican POWs.

MIMICKED

Ironically, loyalists have, even mimicked in part republican tactics of which, at the time, they were con-



temptuous. Some went on a no-wash/no-slop-out protest for a short period three weeks ago and two weeks ago, they smashed-up cells in the H-Blocks causing £40,000 worth of damage.

The loyalist campaign for segregation has now spread to the streets. Buses have been hijacked and set on fire and last weekend several golf-courses, bowling and cricket greens in and around the Belfast area were dug up by supporters of the Loyalist Prisoners' Association.

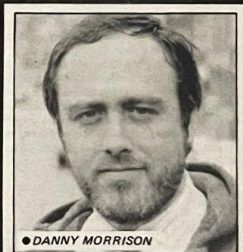
Slogans demanding segregation were dug into the lawns and last week DUP deputy-leader Peter Robinson announced that he had tabled a motion in the British parliament demanding separation of 'republican' and 'loyalist prisoners', a

demand which the DUP dismissed when it was made by republicans.

COLONIAL

In Magilligan Prison last week eight prisoners were injured in clashes which the colonial Stormont Castle described as 'co-ordinated' between loyalists and republicans.

The British government has said prisoners will not dictate the prison regime, but with Prior anxious to keep somebody in his assembly, he will have to satisfy growing loyalist demands, now taken up by the DUP, for segregation, which will now increase dramatically with almost all republicans moving into areas of the prison until recently controlled by the loyalists.



● DANNY MORRISON

Editorial change

IN ORDER to concentrate maximum attention on his constituency of Mid-Ulster, where he was elected in the recent assembly poll, Danny Morrison has resigned his post as editor of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*.

He will, however, be remaining on the Sinn Fein and co-chair as national director of publicity.

Danny Morrison edited *Republican News* for a number of years before it merged with *An Phoblacht* in February 1979 and was editor of the joint publication since then.

He is succeeded as editor by Kevin Burke, who has also been with the paper for several years.

UNION BATTLE AT BELFAST SCRAP METAL MERCHANTS EASTWOOD'S STRIKE

BY MAEVE ARMSTRONG

EASTWOOD'S scrap metal merchants on Belfast's Andersonstown Road, has always had the reputation of being anti-trade union. It is a stance which has traditionally led to many instant dismissals of workers who attempted to organise unions there.

The subsequent weakness of an unorganised workforce has meant, not only a management able to hire and fire at will, from the ever-abundant supply of unemployed, but also low pay and intolerable working conditions, which include no canteen facilities, no hot water, no heating, toilet facilities which have been condemned by health inspectors and infestation by rats.

On October 9th last, two workers, Tommy McGuinness and Harry Robinson, members of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW) and Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) respectively, began organising Eastwood's workforce to



Eastwood's workers picket the yard in solidarity with two colleagues who were dismissed by the anti-union firm

join a trade union. The majority of the workers agreed and signed up.

SACKED

Two days later McGuinness and Robinson were sacked and meetings with management quickly stalemated. Over 60 fellow workers walked out in solidarity and nine of these were dismissed too. The dismissals are now being blamed on

the recession, by Eastwood's management, but Tommy McGuinness says:

"There is abundant work and there was no need for these dismissals. Instead they have sent work out to 12 sub-contractors. We strongly oppose this. If indeed there have to be redundancies, we want a policy implemented of whoever is last into the company

should be first out."

Although the strike is receiving backing from the AUEW and TGWU, none of the strikers are eligible for strike pay as they have only just joined. A finance committee has been set up to raise money for the men, the majority of whom are married with families, and local support has already been forthcoming.

Devonshire protest

PROTESTORS from Belfast's Devonshire estate, who on Tuesday this week held up work on the construction of the Grosvenor Road end of the West Link dual carriageway, were supported in a statement issued by Sinn Féin's Alex Maskey. He said:

"Sinn Féin totally supports the stance taken by the residents of Devonshire. Close to stopping the laying of steel pylons on the West Link motorway."

"The state of repairs in their so-called 'dream houses' is a scandal and has been seriously aggravated by the piling, in the opinion of the residents."

"The Devonshire area people were promised by the Housing Executive that they would be consulted about the results of an independent Bruce/Shaw report, but since then have been fobbed off and abused by the housing authorities."

"They have therefore resorted to this militant action as the only way to ensure proper treatment from the Housing Executive to resolve the problems of subsidence, seriously-damaged window frames, dampness, faulty roofs and vermin which beset their timber-frame homes."

"These houses should be replaced by proper brick buildings and the people of the area should, at all times, be consulted about their own situation."

"Sinn Féin will continue to support the people in their struggle against an uncaring authority."

Liberties arrest

THE NEW Sinn Féin community centre in Dublin's Liberties has become the object of persistent attention from the Special Branch, as have workers based there.

On Tuesday evening last week, October 26th, one of the centre's workers, Declan Harris, was out walking his dog when Special Branch men arrested him, threw him into the back of a white Renault van, and brought him to Kevin Street garda barracks.

He was told he was arrested under Section 25 of the Drugs Act, told to take his clothes off and immediately told to dress again and to "fuck out and walk home." His clothing was not searched.

As he left, the Branch man remarked to the desk sergeant: "I am just warning him up. He is a Sinn Féiner."

The following day, he was arrested again, this time under Section 30 of the Offences Against the State Act, and held for eight hours in the Bridewell. Whilst he was there a group of Special Branch men raided, and ransacked, his flat, threatening his wife with arrest as well.

Limerick mills

LIMERICK Sinn Féin has issued a statement expressing grave concern at the impending job losses at the Ranks flour mills in the city, where many of the workers being threatened have served the company for most of their working lives and will find it almost impossible to find new employment in the very serious local unemployment situation.

The statement notes that "these Limerick workers are being thrown on the dole as a direct result of EEC regulations which allow the importation of cheap British flour," and continues:

"Such imports threaten the whole flour industry and should be curtailed drastically, if not stopped altogether."

"Sinn Féin fully supports the trade union movement in its efforts to save the flour milling industry against all foreign competition on the home market."

"We believe that the time is long overdue when Irish workers must begin to oppose EEC membership and, indeed, the whole economic system which forces them to carry the burden of the economic crisis."

Dublin dockers strike

BY BRIAN MARTIN

SEVEN HUNDRED deep-sea dockers and checkers began an official strike at Dublin Port on Monday, November 1st, in response to the lay-off of 30 checkers and the ending of fall-back pay to those for whom there is no work when they report for duty.

The measures taken by the main stevedoring company in the port, Dublin Cargo Handling, has incensed the dockers whose union, the Marine Port and General Workers' Union (MPGWU), was, at the time of their introduction, engaged in the final stages of discussions on a voluntary redundancy package.

Only the issue of the amount of redundancy payments to be made to the workers involved was still in contention when the employers made their unilateral cuts.

The MPGWU claims that the company is in breach of a written agreement of 1971, which introduced the fall-back pay system (now at £25 per day), in order to protect as many jobs as possible against the devastating effects caused by the introduction of containerisation.

There has already been a fall of over 50% in the workforce since 1967.

The dockers believe that the hardening of



Dublin Port and one of the vessels which lie idle following the dockers' strike which commenced last Monday

attitude by the employers is a cynical attempt to force agreement to a total of 250 redundancies, unconditionally.

The strike does not affect the container

traffic, but is holding up an estimated £3 million per week in exports and £2 million in imports, including most bulk cargo as well as cattle and dairy products.

'Frame-up' man remains in jail

BY DAMIEN O'ROURKE

THE AMAZING SAGA of the Sallins mail-train robbery frame-up continued in the Dublin Supreme Court on Friday last week, with the final rejection of the appeal against conviction of IRSP member Nicky Kelly of Arklow, who is serving a 12-year prison sentence in Portlaoise.

It is almost universal knowledge that the Sallins operation in March 1976, which netted £250,000, was carried out by the IRA, which has publicly acknowledged its involvement and the innocence of Kelly and two other IRSP men who were jailed for it, Osgrud Breathnach and Bernard McNally.

The three were picked up with other IRSP members, tortured in the Bridewell in Dublin, held in illegal custody, forced to sign false confessions, ordered to be released by the courts, re-arrested, released, tried twice (after

the death of one judge in the first trial) and finally sentenced in December 1978.

Their case has been well documented, and was part of the Amnesty International and Irish Times exposure of the Free State garda 'Heavy Gang' activities during the Cosgrave Coalition. Breathnach and McNally were freed by the Appeal Court in May 1980 after their brutal treatment was accepted by the courts.

RETURNED

Nicky Kelly, anticipating his imprisonment though innocent in 1978,

had jumped bail before sentence was passed and taken refuge in the United States. Following the release of his IRSP colleagues he immediately returned voluntarily and lodged an appeal.

He has been held for two and a half years in Portlaoise since then, and now it has been ruled that he should serve his full sentence.

The obvious failure of the courts of law to deliver justice in the case of this obviously innocent man leaves his only hope in an order from the Free State Minister for Justice for his release.

With rumours of a possible hunger-strike, an urgent campaign has been launched to secure his freedom.

Amnesty International is understood to be preparing another intervention in the case.



NICKY KELLY

SINN FÉIN ARD FHEIS 1982

Reports by Kevin Burke, Sean Delaney and Tomas O Sé



THE FIRST MOTIONS to be discussed at last weekend's Sinn Féin ard fheis were under the 'Internal Policy' section of the clar.

Not surprisingly, given the controversial nature of most of the motions, the atmosphere was quiet, although the large number of people in the hall, even on the Saturday morning (and throughout the weekend), indicated a general enthusiasm and expectancy among delegates that was clearly attributable to the assembly election results.

The only motion to arouse any controversy in this section was a proposal that delegates should be dismissed from Sinn Féin if they failed to vote at ard fheisanna as dictated by their cumann, comhairle ceantair or comhairle cuige. But even when the proposers amended this to make such delegates only 'eligible' for dismissal, it was still defeated.

COURTS

In the next section of the agenda, two motions from Dublin cumainn sought to constitutionally prevent Sinn Féin or its members from using the courts of either of the partitionist states for civil actions of a political nature. This had largely come about because of Sinn Féin's challenging of Section 31 earlier in the year in the Dublin High Court and Supreme Court.

High drama was produced when an over-enthusiastic delegate from Inchicore, Dublin, insisted that if the motions were rejected the whole morality of the Republican Movement would be brought into question.

Gerry Adams riposted that two of Sinn Féin's successful candidates in the assembly elections were considering legal action against former Northern direct-ruler Merlyn Rees for slanderous comments he had recently made against them. Adams asked:

"If we can make Rees pay our election expenses, shall we do it?"

The delegates answered 'yes' and rejected the unrealistically restrictive motions.

MEMBERSHIP

The ard fheis went on to pass a motion enabling the ard comhairle to deal with the problem of the organisational failure of the provincial comhairle cuige. These can now be replaced, where necessary, by regional executives covering a smaller area.

A crucial motion was also passed, proposed by Derry Sinn Féin, to allow participation in Sinn Féin activity through membership of local Sinn Féin departments responsible to national departments, rather than exclusively through cumann membership.

And, later in the proceedings, a similar motion proposing trade union based cumainn was passed, despite some reservations expressed on allowing 'secret' membership.

Both resolutions place Sinn Féin on a far better structural basis for the rapid expansion on social and economic fronts, necessary if the organisation is to develop its political appeal.

Further readjusting the organisational structures, to deal with changing times, other motions passed allow cumainn to be rationalised into electoral constituency boundaries; involve elected representatives, throughout the country, *ex officio* on all Sinn Féin local committees; permit ard comhairle officers, meeting with department heads, to implement and co-ordinate policy, politically and organisationally; and use regional conferences to gauge grass-roots opinion.

However, realising that organisational structure needs a general overall review, in spite of these changes, the ard fheis instructed the incoming national organiser to submit a report on the matter to the ard comhairle within three months.

YOUTH

The importance of recruiting youth to Sinn Féin and involving them further in the activities of the Movement was stressed by two motions passed. But an unfortunately-worded motion attributing the high urban vandalism rate to "the absence of meaningful work and the failure to use leisure time creatively" was rejected after a vigorous condemnation of its 'patronising tones' from Rita O'Hare of the ard comhairle.

Any work offered to deprived urban youth, she pointed out, far from being meaningful is, in fact, the most menial. And even such work is almost non-existent in these times. As for leisure, they have no social facilities whatsoever to 'use creatively'.

"Urban vandalism is a product of unemployment, bad housing and all the other economic and social deprivations suffered by youth," she said. "It is up to us to direct these expressions of anger and frustration into



● The representative of Na Fianna Éireann greets the Sinn Féin ard fheis with the clenched fist salute of socialism prior to reading the organisation's statement

political activity aimed at changing the system which causes it."

The ard fheis was told that a youth conference aimed at re-establishing the Sinn Féin Youth Department, and producing and promoting a policy on youth, was to be held before the end of November.

WOMEN

One point where debate predictably heated-up was on motions grouped under the women's and general policy sections.

A Belfast comhairle ceantair motion successfully proposed that each cumann should have an officer responsible for women's affairs. And a motion proposing that the Women's Department should be disbanded altogether was quickly withdrawn, without debate, when the strength of opposition to it was evidenced by a rush to the microphone by women

delegates.

But a motion, also from Belfast, proposing, in effect, that Sinn Féin should be actively involved in campaigning against the proposed amendment to the Free State constitution on the abortion issue was defeated, although conference duly showed its opposition to the amendment itself.

This issue of whether and when Sinn Féin should give even a token recognition of Free State institutions for the purpose of campaigning against them, occurred on several occasions throughout the weekend, not always consistently, and will undoubtedly become an increasingly relevant debate in future.

PRISONERS

The section dealing with prisoners was opened by statements that only by

Sinn Féin ard comhairle

THERE are no changes in the Sinn Féin officer board elected at last weekend's ard fheis. It remains: President: Ruairi O Bradaigh; vice-presidents: Gerry Adams and Daithi O Conaill; general secretaries: Joe Cahill and Cathleen Knowles; treasurers: Seamus McGarrigle and Brendan Swords; director of publicity: Danny Morrison.

The other ard comhairle members elected at the weekend are:

John Joe McGirl (Leitrim); Tom Hartley (Belfast); Paddy Bolger (Dublin); Francie Molloy (Tyronne); Phil Flynn (Dublin); Aine Nic Mhurchada (Dublin); Mitchell McLoughlin (Derry); and Pat Doherty (Donegal).

Eight further members will be elected from the four comhairle cuige and there is provision for five further co-options.

former political prisoners Síle Darragh, on behalf of the Armagh women; and Pádraig Wilson, on behalf of the H-Block men. Motions sending greetings to Irish political prisoners everywhere and, in particular, calling for action in support of those in England, were passed unanimously without debate.

ELECTIONS

Although the election victories were certainly a constant theme of the ard fheis, the section on elections, taken last of all, also went through without debate and its four resolutions passed unanimously.

The decisions at last year's ard fheis, which allowed Sinn Féin to enter elections in the North as well as the South, made any major discussion unnecessary.

The motions themselves stressed the necessity for preparing in advance for future EEC and local elections, and one proposed that "all candidates in national and local elections, and all campaign material, be unequivocal, in support of the armed struggle."

...ARD FHEIS ... SINN FÉIN ARD FHEIS 1982 ... SINN FÉIN ARD FHEIS 1982 ...

'Sinn Féin is here



● Sinn Féin president Ruairi O Bradaigh

We print here the bulk of the text of Ruairi O Bradaigh's presidential address to Sinn Féin's 78th ard fheis last weekend

WHEN last we met at our annual ard fheis it was with feelings of intense sorrow in the wake of the greatest hunger-strike ever, but with the fiercest pride in our martyrs and in our movement. This year the mood is the one of gladness that we have now emerged successfully from that period and that the past 10 days have seen the election of five of our comrades as representatives of the people in the six counties.

We are conscious too of the price that Margaret Thatcher and her predecessors have exacted for these victories. We know full well the price that continues to be exacted by the forces of reaction who seek in vain to stem the tide of human progress here in Ireland; and the deliberate killing of one of our election workers in Armagh city last Monday morning is a salutary reminder of this.

Peter Corrigan, father of eleven children, was singled out for death by pro-British right-wing elements for one reason only — he worked and used the ballot-box fearlessly to advance the cause of his people. We, all of us here, offer his wife and family our heartfelt sympathy; we also renew our determination to achieve the freedom he sought and thus achieve in our time a situation in which there will be no repetition of such tragedies.

This ard fheis and the incoming ard comhairle will have to address themselves to the problems of keeping the organisational network now in existence working efficiently, of exploiting the propaganda advantage of our successes among the people of the twenty-six counties, and above all of putting our newly-elected representatives to work to greater advantage not only at grass-roots level in dealing with local problems but also at the higher level of taking political initiatives to advance the cause of national liberation.

Already the five Sinn Féin representatives have invited all anti-Stormont parties, independent political persons and anti-imperialist groupings to attend a meeting to discuss how best to defend Irish national interests to which the imposition of the new Stormont poses a direct threat.

Since this is part of the national question and cannot be confined to the six counties only, we

wish to state that all those individuals, independents and others in nationalist parties in the twenty-six counties and all sections of opinion will be welcome to take part in such a conference to prevent the re-building of Stormont and strengthen the national spirit generally.

ELECTION

Unlike the successful H-Block general election in June 1981, the election of February of this year had no exceptional circumstances bearing directly on the national issue. The Dublin government's budget caused the election and was the central issue in it. A national liberation movement, with the national question as its prime issue, and dedicated to transforming a post-British rule Ireland into a democratic socialist society, did not have the immediate relevance necessary to win seats.

The denial of Sinn Féin's right of access to the electorate through the state-monopoly radio and television, continuously for 10 years now, places an unbearable handicap on a political organisation seeking the people's support and virtually hamstringing Sinn Féin in parliamentary elections in the twenty-six counties. In the spirit of a resolution passed by the ard fheis of 1972 a case was taken by one of our candidates to the Dublin High Court where it was successful but in effect too late for election purposes.

The subsequent reversal of that

decision by the Dublin Supreme Court in July last was made the occasion for a debate against Sinn Féin. Selected and out of context quotations from our spokespersons were used — one even stopped in mid-sentence in an attempt to give it sinister connotations. We were an 'evil and dangerous organisation', it was said.

As the original independence movement in 19th century Ireland — Fine Gael, Fianna Fail and the Workers' Party are all splinters from us — we have been dangerous to British rule here since our foundation 77 years ago.

Whether or not we are evil depends on one's attitude to British rule in Ireland.

The case ended with the imposition of penalties for both sides on our candidates, a clear attempt to cripple us and drive us out of public life — and this is a case of exceptional public importance, the right to communicate political ideas on the mass media. But within three months the people of the six counties gave their answer to all who would submerge us and drive us underground.

Once again we can be said: Sinn Féin is here today and will not be driven out of the public life of this country, any by a combination of British forces and Free State collaboration. A chairde, in spite of it all, Sinn Féin has once more in a new generation begun to stake its claim to the political leadership of the Irish people.

ECONOMIC CRISIS

The choice of deciding if Charlie Haughey or Garret Fitz-Gerald will be Taoiseach, while it may make headlines, can, when it arises, be a rather bleak choice and one which effectively distracts revolutionary minds from their real purpose and concern.

We are not denying that our country faces a most serious economic crisis at a time when international conditions in the West-

Federalism removed

THE QUESTION of federalism, which has been a matter of some controversy within Sinn Féin in recent years, was finally settled at this year's ard fheis when delegates voted, by the two-thirds majority required, to delete the word 'federal' from the Sinn Féin constitution.

The relevant sentence in that document now gives the Sinn Féin objective as "the complete overthrow of British rule in Ireland and the establishment of a democratic, socialist republic based on the Proclamation of 1916."

At the 1981 ard fheis, delegates voted, on a simple majority, to abandon federalism as a policy, but the necessary numbers were not obtained for the constitutional change. This anomaly has now been cleared up.

LONGEST

Perhaps because of the intensive debate on the issue last year, speeches this year were more of the nature of statements of position rather than an analysis of the pros and cons of federalism.

Nevertheless, the debate was the longest of

the weekend taking up most of Saturday afternoon with nearly 40 contributions from delegates. The tensions of last year's debate on the subject were for the most part missing, with speakers on both sides of the argument stressing their determination to preserve unity.

Indeed, many speakers stressed that federalism was not an integral principle of republicanism which should be used to tie the hands of Sinn Féin in any future political developments.

The main difficulty with federalism — its giving control to loyalists in a new Ulster province — remained the strongest, and unanswered, objection to it. And all the delegates who spoke, some apparently in contradictory fashion, recognised the real evil of loyalism.

Sinn Féin vice-president Gerry Adams, urging the abandonment of federalism, emphasised that

it did not mean a rejection of decentralised socialism. He indicated the proposals in the new document offered to the ard fheis on governmental structures, entitled 'Alternative to Federalism', which suggest democratic decentralisation at four elected levels.

CONSIDERED

In one of the other more considered contributions to the debate Ruairi O Bradaigh who, along with vice-president Daithi O Conaill, spoke in favour of retaining federalism, acknowledged that the new policy with its commitment to decentralisation, allied, to a great extent, the fears of those who saw the federal conflict as one between a state socialist model and a decentralised socialist model for a new Ireland.

Last year no such alternative had been offered. Nevertheless, O Bradaigh maintained his personal preference for the retention of the federal policy. The new governmental structures policy outlines suggested structures of government for a united Ireland based on community/people's

councils, district councils, regional councils and a national parliament.

The document goes into some detail on the powers of each level of government and gives examples of the size of areas which might be covered by the different councils.

Its main emphasis is on giving real power to the people and proposes that "all representatives at all levels should be subject to recall and accountability for any policy put forward and to dismissal if the policy does not meet with the people's wishes" and quotes Liam Mellows:

"The Irish republic must have for its foundation, the Irish people. It is they who are freeing Ireland and it is for the people — all the people — that it is being done, not for any section or group."

Some reservations on particular points in the document were raised by some cumann which had taken the trouble to study it in close detail. And these were accepted by its proponents who pointed out that the document was a basis for development which in its introduction stated that it did not claim to be either definitive or exclusive of other suggestions.

The 'Alternative to Federalism' document was accepted by the ard fheis, following the deletion of federalism from the constitution which was approved by 267 votes to 103.



● Benedict McGuire, Martin McGuire and Daithi O Conaill during their turn to speak

1982 ... SINN FÉIN ARD FHEIS 1982 ... SINN FÉIN ARD FHEIS 1982 ...

ere to stay

Specials, empty formulae or sub merged nationhood.

We have had enough of British interference in Ireland, a policy of guns, plastic bullets, prison, torture, discrimination, tanks and armoured cars on one hand and gerrymandering and a rigged ballot-box on the other.

IMPRISONMENT

As we meet here at our annual ard fheis, one of our councillors, who is also the local branch secretary of the ATGWU, Eddie O'Doherty of Carrick-on-Suir, is in Mountjoy Jail for the second time this year. His crime is his steadfast refusal to pay RTE licence fees while Sinn Féin spokespersons and elected representatives like himself are denied access to radio and television. Others of our councillors and members have prison sentences hanging over them. They are implementing your decision at the 1980 ard fheis and we must stand by them and take the opportunity to campaign against the Section 31 ban which their imprisonment gives us.

The past year has also seen English laws and jurisdiction operate once again in the twenty-six counties, following a break of almost 60 years. English policemen and their agents give evidence in a Dublin court, a British judge has shared the bench there and Irishmen who have escaped from jail in Belfast under British rule have been imprisoned in Dublin in so-called 'free' Ireland.

But the lowest and most shameful point in the catalogue of collaboration was reached last July when Gerry Tuitt, who escaped from under the lion's paw in England and made his way home to Ireland, was sentenced to imprisonment here in our capital city, not for any action carried out in the twenty-six counties, but for acts allegedly done in another country — in England itself.

We salute our prisoners who are manning the front lines daily and nightly without respite in the jails of England and Ireland. In this context we are now working to place the spotlight ever more firmly on the ordeal being endured by the prisoners in England, scattered throughout many jails, some of them enduring years of solitary confinement, far removed from relatives in Ireland and seldom having visits from them. Our thoughts are with all our men and women in prison at this time and we know they are heartened by the recent advances for our cause.

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

Unemployment south of the border is fast heading for the 200,000 mark, while north of it the figure, at 124,000, is 22% of the working population. Comparisons are being made with the great depression of the 'Hungry '30s'. It was in 1932 that Mr de Valera said that if he could not solve unemployment within the system, he was prepared to go outside that system.

A chairde, it is now 50 years later and that imperialist system has not been breached. It is time to present the Irish people with the only viable alternative — the democratic socialist Ireland advocated by Sinn Féin which will take control of our resources and develop them in a planned manner.

Just over a week ago we exposed the old canard that republicans could not achieve electoral victories east of the Bann. We won in West Belfast, and at the head of the poll too — something Sinn Féin failed to achieve in 1918 or in 1921 during the 'Four Glorious Years'.

Let us go from here, bend ourselves to our tasks of building outwards and upwards from those recent successes, and come back next year with even greater victories!



Ruairi O Bradaigh receives a standing ovation following his presidential address

ern world are as serious as anything we have witnessed in our own lifetime. There are some who might suggest that further suffering, misery and insecurity would be a good thing because it would force the Irish people along the way of revolution. But we say that the Irish people have suffered enough over the centuries, and indeed for the past 60 years.

The northern part of our country has been at war for the past 13 years while many of the horrific social problems that now threaten our community stability and traditional way of life are now beginning to make their mark in Ireland. This is because some of the anti-social anti-human effects of modern industrialisation, international trade blocs and post-Keynesian capitalism have only begun to hit Ireland in a big way in the past dozen years.

It is bad enough for us to be forced to note, and avoid the mistakes of America and West Germany in the late '60s which Sinn Féin clearly outlined, criticised and suggested policies for a decade ago. But when the horrors of drug-abuse, urban decay, rural decline, commercial exploitation of spiritual and cultural values as well as vital material needs, all combine in a society which is still in the grips of various degrees of colonialisation, where the young population is rising rapidly, and where neo-colonialism has replaced Sinn Féin self-reliance as

a short-term solution to growth, then truly can it be said that the problems that face us and the political challenges that confront a national revolutionary movement such as ours, are truly daunting.

We are not saying that all is lost, that we as a people cannot do it; that Ireland cannot be free, sovereign and self-sufficient, neutral, non-aligned and culturally self-reliant, of course not. It has been the basic doctrine of Sinn Féin throughout the decades that not only could Ireland achieve a full nationhood, but that she had an absolute right to do it and that it was the duty of each and every element of the Irish national movement, in whatever field it was involved, to work towards that aim and that dream.

DESPERATE MEASURES

Independent economic historians have suggested from the outset that the effort to go it alone by the twenty-six-county state was doomed from the beginning, in spite of the strenuous attempts to impose a type of Sinn Féin policy, *a la* Arthur Griffith, in the circumstances of the late 1930s and 1940s that were in some way favourable.

Whatever about all that, it is perfectly obvious now that the type of new economic departure which the Whitaker Blue Book, with the political approval of de Valera and Lemass brought about in the years after 1958 was the first of a series of desperate short-term measures that in turn required such life-rafts as the Anglo-Irish Trade Agreement of 1965, the Lemass/O'Neill cross-border talks and, finally, total immersion in the EEC in 1973 which brought a short boost to farming up to 1978.

Now the full implications of all that scenario are coming home to us in a situation where international economic circumstances are worse than at any time since the Wall Street Crash of 1929. We are, quite frankly, in the wrong league, on the wrong road, and running in a competition whose rules we have no power to decide, whose competitors are for various reasons more favoured than we are, and whose final outcome and criteria for evaluation are simply not what we in Ireland wish, desire or

need in the very different circumstances in which we find ourselves compared with the majority of long-established former colonising states in Western Europe.

That does not mean that we can opt out or cease to confront our difficulties. It does mean we must tackle our problems in our own way and according to our priorities in everything from the problem of British occupation of our land to the pressures to force us into NATO. That is why the Fianna Fail economic plan is doomed to failure and even Mr Haughey himself, if he were to do the cap of an independent accountant, knows this. So does Dr FitzGerald and Mr Bruton and all the others who are prepared to load the burden of debts and economic mistakes that they made on to the backs of ordinary Irish people as soon as Brussels even hints that they may get the International Monetary Fund to stop their squandering ways.

CELTIC SEA

Nowhere can the crunch on all this be seen as clearly at present as in the case of our fishermen and the dispute about the future protection and intelligent harvesting of the Celtic Sea. Sinn Féin stands by the fishermen and their claim to earn a living by exploiting the seas around Ireland in a regulated and informed way.

But we should also remind those opportunistic politicians and so-called fishing and community leaders who now whinge for Irish fishing rights and for the need to protect our vital natural resource, that the vast majority of them campaigned for EEC entry in 1972 and, through various organisations, railroaded people to vote for the Treaty of Rome even though they were fully aware of the consequences of the logic of entry.

The reality is that fishing stocks are one of the natural resources which Ireland brought to the EEC relatively underdeveloped at a time when most of the European powers had plundered their own fishing stocks. Ireland, next to Britain, has the largest reserve of territorial waters and natural fish stocks in the EEC but instead of exploiting this for our

selves as one of the few home-based industries that could help to build us up into a strong and independent economy, we are expected by the Treaty of Rome to allow in the big European boats to plunder what we still have and what we could continue to harvest intelligently if given the opportunity.

And in return? Why will we get those long lists of regional and social fund hand-outs that are produced before election time and that are little more than drops in the ocean, national dole hand-outs that shut the mouths of politicians for the time being, that are totally inadequate and piecemeal in a regional context and because of the way they are administered only tend to make us more dependent and less self-reliant in the building up of our own economic resources.

STORMONT

While the successes of our newly elected representatives have ensured that there will be no going back to any kind of Stormont — the Stormont that our movement never recognised right from the outset in all the dark years after 1921 and which was finally toppled by us in 1972 — let the political position, as we see it, of those political victories and the hypocrisy of Haughey and Prior and the SDLP about our part in it be spelt out clearly.

We are saddened but also amused at the way Mr Prior is now being blamed by the Dublin and London, as well as SDLP and Alliance, establishments because the election 'did not produce the right results'. Have no doubt about it, if the results had been 'right', Britain and Mr Prior and indeed Mr Haughey and the SDLP would have pushed ahead with further steps to patch up the basic injustice. The six-county state itself was set up to produce 'right' results every time — and to hell with Irish national rights as well as the rights of the Northern nationalists. Concern is only expressed when the results 'go wrong' as they have on this occasion.

I have news for Mr Haughey, Mr Prior and Mrs Thatcher, however. Times have changed. There is no going 'back to Stormont', 'B'



Martin McGuinness, Gerry Adams, Francis Molloy and others turn to speak in the debate on federalism

... SINN FÉIN ARD FHEIS 1982 ... SINN FÉIN ARD FHEIS 1982 ...

ACTION NOT WORDS DEMANDED

NOT SURPRISINGLY, unemployment was the major concern of delegates who addressed the ard fheis on a range of economic motions.

Demands were made for more Sinn Féin members to stop just talking about it and go involve themselves in unemployment action committees. In particular, the paucity of Sinn Féin support for the Waterford to Dublin 'jobs march' earlier in the year was criticised.

Lay-offs and redundancies came in for particular consideration from a number of delegates having personally experienced them in recent months and a call was made to concentrate efforts in preventing the run-down to the state-sector industries which must form the basis of future socialism.

A motion from Clones urged full Sinn Féin involvement in May Day marches as a sign of true commitment to working-class unity and a Dublin delegate suggested that a swing to such demonstrations could be afforded at the expense of so many commemoration ceremonies.

The necessity of involving small farmers

as well as workers in mobilising on economic issues was stressed as was the imperative strategy of always explaining the link between the national struggle and that of the working-class.

Delegates were reminded by national organiser Paddy Bolger that sloganising was not enough. Hard work at building for campaigns and demonstrations could not be ignored.

Some controversy arose around a motion proposing that the number of hours worked by any worker should not be more than 35 hours.

The proposers neglected to deal directly



● Intense debate is reflected in the intense concentration of some of the platform party

with the point that earnings should not be reduced by this although they pointed out that the capitalists were gaining all the advantages of new technology by laying-off workers whilst the change of improvement in hours was being lost.

An irate Galway delegate, who declared himself a 'father of five', told the ard fheis that he often worked 35 hours in two days and could not afford to do otherwise.

The motion was rejected but perhaps the

cumann which proposed the motion might expand more clearly on its ideas in this particularly relevant area sometime in the future.

The only other hint of acrimony in what was an enthusiastic debate on economic affairs, was an out-of-tune contribution from a country delegate who suggested that members who were so concerned about workers should join the Labour Party or Workers' Party.

Farming policy launched

AS PART OF its continued expansion of social and economic policy the Sinn Féin ard fheis adopted, on the proposal of its agricultural spokesperson, Joe Gallogly, a new agricultural policy document.

The document stresses the fundamental importance of agriculture as Ireland's greatest national resource and states its aim as maximising the return from the use of the land.

"The principle aim," it says, "should be to maintain as many families as possible on the land in economic security."

And it demands, as a prerequisite of development to full potential, that Ireland withdraws from the EEC and becomes free to negotiate new trading agreements, both with the EEC itself and non-EEC countries.

NATURAL RESOURCE

The policy document goes on to pin-point land distribution as being one of the basic problems of agriculture and goes on:

"Land is a natural resource to which there is no absolute title by any individual or group of individuals short of the entire nation. It must be utilised and controlled in the interests of the nation in the form of family or co-operative custodial ownership."

"Nobody should be allowed to hold for personal enrichment large tracts of land. Nobody can have the right to hold land in a non-productive or undeveloped state."

"Only resident citizens of the republic will be allowed to own, purchase or lease land within Ireland. No alien should have a right to purchase or hold land."

"An upper limit must be placed on the amount of land any individual may hold. Ranches and estates must be taken over and worked either by being leased to a group of families to run on co-operative lines or broken up into economic family farms."

"As far as possible, the family farm should constitute the working unit in production."

"Absentee land-lords should not be allowed set or lease land for long periods. Farmers who have to leave the land should not be allowed set or lease land for long periods. Sinn Féin has reservations on the concrete system."

"With an aim to bringing small-holdings up to economically viable units, preferential consideration must be given to suitable small farmers when



● JOE GALLOGLY

Sinn Féin's agricultural spokesperson

land becomes available on public market or is acquired for distribution."

DECLINE

The policy document goes on to describe the decline in the farming population and condemns the purchase of land by what it describes as "a new aristocracy — doctors, vets, lawyers, teachers and business people, who hold it as a security at a time when money is rapidly losing its purchasing power. Those people should not be allowed to acquire land."

It calls for part-time farmers to be allowed to acquire land to make their holdings economic and for small industries to be established in congested farming areas to help such people. There should be a possibility of migration from congested areas when a large farm becomes available for breaking up in a non-congested area.

The document goes on to outline ways in which many farms, presently uneconomic, could be made viable.

Of prime importance is the introduction of a major drainage scheme fully grant-aided, with repayment by annuities of the 50% which at present has to be paid by small farmers who cannot afford a lump sum.

"Major arterial drainage must be a central government priority and lesser



● A section of the approximately 400-strong delegates at this year's ard fheis

drainage of rivers and small tributaries should be the responsibility of regional or local authorities."

The new policy also states:

"Every farm must have access to a suitable piped water supply. Individual and group water schemes in remote areas should be 100% financed by government grant."

A major programme to increase land fertility, particularly on small farms, is also necessary, the document says. Schemes providing low-cost fertiliser could dramatically increase stocking rates in poor areas, where farms have often been starved of fertility for 200 years.

This stock increase would also require realistic grants, with long-term low interest or no-interest loans, to provide proper farm buildings, 50% of which, on small farms, are inadequate and outdated.

The policy also calls for classification, as to dairy, beef, sheep, tillage, vegetable, fruit or forest farmers, for all economic units in order "to monitor production and development and plan marketing well in advance, thereby eliminating the dangers of scarcity and surplus, booms and slumps."

The necessity for agricultural education at all levels is stressed, with emphasis on practical farming for those young people taking it up.

And the policy document also suggests that the agricultural co-operatives, as at present constituted, should be replaced by one national agricultural co-operative with branches throughout the country.

Such a co-op would purchase, process, package and market all agricultural produce and carry out all subsidiary processing activities, the work-force not to be employees of the co-op but

shareholders with the farmers.

Farm supplies would be produced and supplied through the national co-op which would also operate its own banking system. All forms of government taxation would be levied on the co-operative rather than on the individuals in the industry.

The only controversy during the debate on agriculture arose on a motion which altered the initial proposal in the policy document from one of outright opposition to the concrete system to one of mere 'reservations' on it.

A dispute between Duggan's Francis Molloy and the session's chairperson, Phil Flynn, flared up as to whether the amendment had been rejected or accepted on a show of hands.

Molloy's persistence won him a card vote with the amendment being shown, contrary to Flynn's belief, to have been carried.

The democratic process

THE FUTURE of Fianna Fail, as I write, seems set to be decided by the death of one deputy and the serious illness of another.

A scenario I would think that puts a different complexion on the political 'death lists' being talked about just a few weeks ago.

In future, deputies supporting governments relying on wafer-thin majorities will live in a state of constant terror. After all, they can never know the moment when, staggering perhaps out of Buswell's Hotel, they will be nudged under the wheels of a passing taxi by an opposition member who has just caught a glimpse of the latest opinion polls.

Which is, after all, what democracy is all about.

☆☆☆

Former Monaghan UDC Sinn Fein councillor Jim Lynagh is currently serving a five-year sentence in Portlaoise for possession of ammunition last April.

On Tuesday of this week he appeared again in the Special Court charged with IRA membership on the date of his arrest. The charge was dismissed.

Lynagh told the court he was found in possession of bullets after having been asked to pick up two jackets by two men from the North called Patrick Peoples and McCoy. The bullets had fallen out of the pockets.

Answering a question from the State Counsel, he said it was only a coincidence that the names he had given were those of two Special Branch men who had given evidence for the prosecution against him.

☆☆☆

Dromed man John Reynolds, who is well in his 70s, was fined £5 some time ago for taking up an H-Block collection.

This, John, a brother of Jimmy Joe Reynolds who was one of three IRA Volunteers accidentally killed in a premature explosion in Donegal in 1938, refused to pay on principle.

Just recently John was arrested in Dromed, County Roscommon, and taken by taxi to Mountjoy Jail accompanied by two gardai.

He was kept in Mountjoy from Wednesday to Saturday morning when he was given a rail voucher to travel back to Dromed.

Although he reported himself none the worse for wear, it was undoubtedly a total unnecessary act of vengeance on an elderly man.

The total cost of the exercise including the taxi fare at £70, the gardai's pay, meals and allowances, the cost of his stay at Mountjoy and the rail voucher home could not have been less than £200.

John Reynolds has still not paid the fine.

☆☆☆

A document on 'building a withdrawal movement' is currently being circulated in the Troops Out Movement in Britain and some 'Deep Throat' therein has sent me a copy, for what reason I am not sure.

The document is apparently causing some consternation over there, criticising as it does the TOM's prime demand of 'Troops Out Now' as a mere catch-phrase which is unnecessarily restrictive for those looking for positive practical solutions to work around.

The point to be made is not withdrawal now, which is a diversion, the document says, but to make the general point that there can be no British solution and work from there considering, in particular, the dangers of loyalism after withdrawal.

Trying to convert the British public into IRA supporters is not practical politics, it says, and making the case of the Irish political prisoners is best done by an Irish organisation on a humanitarian/nationalist basis within the Irish community.

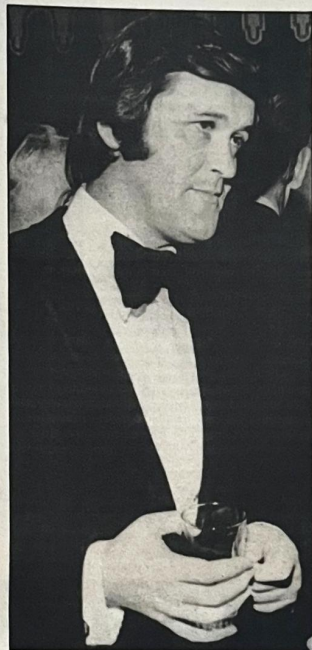
TOM needs to orientate itself towards the labour movement and campaign on the obvious, easily understood and supported aspects of the withdrawal argument such as plastic bullets, emergency legislation and army atrocities, the document argues.

Seems like the most sensible thing to come up in the TOM for some time.

☆☆☆

The SDLP's Armagh assembly member, Free State senator and deputy-leader, Seamus Mallon, was very prominent at the funeral in his constituency last Monday of Thomas Cochrane, the sergeant in the British army's UDR who was executed by the IRA.

Burke's
at the back
BY KEVIN BURKE



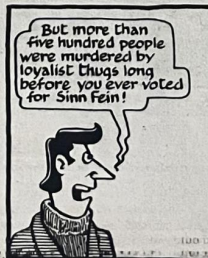
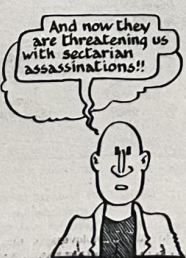
● Michael O'Leary, moving from party to party

And no doubt Mallon stood to attention as a volley of shots was fired over the grave by Cochrane's UDR colleagues, who had paused in their harassment of the nationalist population for the occasion.

Mallon was not spotted at another Armagh funeral of the previous Thursday, however, when Sinn Fein member Peter Corrigan, gunned down by loyalist assassins, was buried.

☆☆☆

The crush of television cameras and media hacks in the Mansion House last weekend caused one pressman to observe that Charles Haughey's launching of his economic plan, ten days previously, had attracted far less attention.



A sign of the times, I suppose some would say.

☆☆☆

Amusing to read on Monday morning the pompous *Irish Press* editorial suggesting that Sinn Fein choosing to discuss some of its business in private justifies censorship under Section 31.

And on Tuesday some desperate *Press* columnist added that somehow Sinn Fein, unlike all the other political parties, has no right to restrict circulation of its constitution and rules to its own membership.

Yet we all know that the *Irish Press*, like the other establishment media, only comes flocking when Sinn Fein is big news, like now. There have been plenty of times when the *Irish Press* has refused to carry advertisements, refused to print statements and refused to attend press conferences in connection with important matters being raised by Sinn Fein, because at the time they thought they could afford to ignore them. Or, if they do turn up, deliberately misinterpret what is said.

Which doesn't give them much right now to come demanding entry anywhere.

☆☆☆

What a happy paper the *Evening Herald* has become since going tabloid at the beginning of last month.

On Tuesday of this week its main stories told us on following pages that Dennis 'Minder' Waterman had found a new love in singer Rula Lenska. Singer Tanya Tucker has found romance with songwriter Dean Dillon. Mary Tyler Moore has found true happiness with executive Ed Menken.

And Michael O'Leary has found Garret FitzGerald.

The paper's slogan is 'The Herald Has It'. I hope it isn't catching.

☆☆☆

Whilst on the subject of the former Labour Party leader.

Last week's *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, which came out on Thursday morning as usual, was the only newspaper anywhere to predict the resignation of Michael O'Leary following his poor performance at the Labour Party conference the previous weekend (see *AP/RN*, October 28th, page five - 'A Spent Force').

All the other papers were 'shocked' and 'astounded' when O'Leary announced his decision on Thursday evening.

Don't forget, you read it here first!

WHAT'S ON

BALLAD SESSION
Featuring 'The Jolly Beggarman'
8pm Friday 5th November
Bridgid Burke's
Old Bawn
TALLAGHT
County Dublin
Admission £1.50

CEILI & BUFFET
Featuring 'The Bolshoi Ceili Band' & special guest Seamus Tansley
8pm Friday 5th November
May Hotel
BALLINA
County Mayo
Speaker: John Joe McGirl
Tickets £2.50
Bar extension
Meal served 10.30pm sharp
Organised by N. Mayo H-Block Group

RELEASE NICKY KELLY
PUBLIC MEETING
1pm Saturday 6th November
GPO
DUBLIN

'WELCOME HOME' SOCIAL
(for Joe Larkin ex-Portlaoise POW)
8pm Saturday 6th November
The Brown Derby
James's Street
DUBLIN
Buses 21, 21A, 78 & 79A
Organised by Sinn Fein

FRANK DRIVER
COMMEMORATION
After 11.30 am Mass
Sunday 7th November
BALLYMORE EUSTACE
County Kildare
Prominent speaker

EDENTUBBER COMMEMORATION
3pm Sunday 7th November
Assembly at The Border Inn,
Newry Road, near Dundalk, for
march to monument
EDENTUBBER
County Louth
Dublin bus leaves Blessington
Street at 12 noon, fare £2

IRISH POWs IN ENGLISH JAILS
PUBLIC MEETING
8pm Wednesday 10th November
Junior Common Room
Trinity College
DUBLIN
Admission free
Speakers: Neil Blaney TD, MEP; Richard
Balfie MEP; & Paddy Prendiville (journalist)

OICHE AN PHIAIRSAIGH
PEARSE NIGHT
An informal bilingual evening of
music, poetry & dancing
I léidir beidh Comhaltas Ceoiltoirí Éireann, Coláiste Eoin/Iosagáin, Rinceoirí Uí Mhúrmáin & Muintirí Rath Cairn
8pm Dé Céadaoin 10 Samhain
Ostán Gresham
BAILE ATHA CLIATH
Ticket £1.50 (Míe Léinn 50p)
A eagrú ag
Fondúireacht An Phiairsaigh
Teil: 854225/752231

IRISH SOCIAL NIGHT
Featuring Joe McShane & guests
Thursday 11th November
The Blue Anchor Lounge
BELLURRYN POINT
County Louth
Admission £1
Bus from Dundalk
Organised by An Cumann Cabhrach

BALLAD SESSION
Featuring 'The Dublin City Ramblers'
8pm Friday 12th November
Bridgid Burke's
Old Bawn
TALLAGHT
County Dublin
Admission £2
Buses 49 & 49A
Organised by Fianna Éireann

REPRESSION IN THE SIX
COUNTIES DAY-SCHOOL
10.30 am to 5 pm Sat. 13th November
Glasgow University
University Gardens
GLASGOW
Admission £1 (50p UB 40)
Speakers: Dennis Canavan MP, Vince
Mills (Ind. Labour Publications), & a
member of Derry Trades Council

IRISH POWs IN ENGLISH JAILS
PUBLIC MEETING
12 noon Saturday 13th November
Shopping Centre
Finglas Village
DUBLIN
Speaker: Kieran Nugent (the first
H-Block 'blanket-man')
Organised by Sinn Fein

REVIEW PAGE

TU & RADIO

Games, romance and Angels

BY SIOBHAN O'MALLEY

THE SECOND two episodes of 'Harry's Game' shown by UTV, on Tuesday and Wednesday last week, were all too predictably a disappointing follow-up to the first.

'Harry's Game' was the television adaptation of a best-selling novel of the same name by former journalist Gerald Seymour, inspired, he says, by the time he spent reporting in the North.

He portrays the war in the North as a ritual game that no-one can win and makes no attempt at any political, or even historical, explanations for

what is happening. Harry is a British agent sent into Belfast to find the man who killed a British government minister. He finds him, shoots him, is shot himself in mistake by British soldiers, and then is finished off by the man's wife. All very symbolic and meaningful but, en route, the British are all clumsy, bumbling, old idiots or stupid, bored squaddies

and the IRA are all evil psychopaths who manipulate thick Paddies, which is an embellishment on Seymour's original book probably designed to make viewers feel better.

ADAPTATION

'The Ballroom of Romance' on Friday on BBC and Sunday on RTE, was another adaptation for television, this time of a short story by William Trevor. Set in rural Ireland in the 1950s, it is the story of Bridie, nearing 40 and getting desperate. The ballroom was the only

place to meet prospective marriage partners in those days and if a woman did not meet a man who would marry her, a lonely life loomed ahead.

Bridie sees only too clearly that her choice is limited. Marry for security, acceptance and children to keep you company, or spend your life alone. Love does not come into it and Bridie cannot afford to be choosy.

The play was harrowing in its portrayal of the indignity and frustration of a woman's life in rural Ireland and the resigned acceptance of it as



● 'Ballroom of Romance': portrayal of indignity and frustration inevitable.

'The Ballroom of Romance' still has its counterparts in Ireland, as was shown in a recent documentary on the status of Irish women.

HOSPITAL

'Angels', the hospital soap opera on BBC1, is cautiously introducing issues that TV series like these usually carefully avoid, like racism, adoptions that do not work, unemployment and lesbianism.

The level of acting is very high and altogether this serial is watchable for its serious attempt at showing what nursing is really like, not the romantic idea many young people have of it as laying cold hands on fevered brows.

The hard work and long hours, the studying and low pay are themes of the twice-weekly serial. I am surprised it has not come under attack from Margaret Thatcher in the current health service pay dispute, as a secret weapon for the workers' cause.

Something for everyone

BY SEAN O'BRIEN

THE APPEARANCE of the fourth issue of the republican magazine *IRIS*, bang on time, three months after the third, is in itself an optimistic sign that the welcome publication is now really in business, given the early problems which arose since it first appeared as a 'quarterly' magazine in April 1981.

And this issue of the well-produced magazine is sure to be sold out as quickly as the last.

Keeping to its task of more in-depth analysis of issues than is possible in a weekly newspaper, and with an important emphasis on the angle of polit-

ically educating its readers, the magazine offers a good selection of articles.

Going to press in the immediate aftermath of the assembly elections, *IRIS* reviews the background to Sinn Féin's electoral intervention, the campaign lit-

self and the results. There is also a 'look inside' one of Britain's cosmetic six-county reforms, the Fair Employment Agency.

The other main features are a lengthy look at the historical backgrounds to the crisis in the Irish economies, North and South, and the first of two articles examining the role of the trade unions in relation to the national question and the domination of the economy by foreign capital.

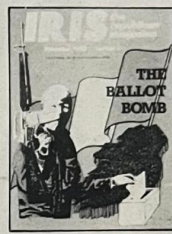
Both articles hopefully signal that a long-time gap is to be filled

MAGAZINE

ed with the regular publication of material lending itself to education and discussion as a back-up to political activity.

WOMEN

The armed struggle is given its usual major coverage with an exclusive interview with two women IRA Volunteers; a view from a veteran republican on today's struggle and the excellent calendar of armed actions which has been carried by the magazine since its inception and



gives a graphic picture of the IRA's ability to wage a continuous war.

An article smuggled out of Crumlin Road Jail, by former Sinn Féin national organiser Jim Gibney, gives an insight on 'unofficial' segregation between re-

publican and loyalist prisoners.

On the cultural front, as well as articles in Irish, there is a look at progress made in the language by the H-Block prisoners. The magazine declares its intention 'to devote space on a regular basis to poetry, and begins with a selection from Dublin poet Steve McDonogh.

Another article examines the influence of political events on the ideals and policy of the GAA.

And if all that is not enough there are book reviews and an article on the liberation struggle by POLISARIO in the Sahara.

Something there for everyone.

■ *IRIS* is available through all the usual republican outlets and costs £1 (sterling); IR£1.20; or £1.50 in Britain and elsewhere.

IN JULY of this year, three local teenagers went fishing on Lough Derravaragh in Westmeath at a place called Ballinphort. To get a good foothold near the water, they stood on what they thought was an old tree-trunk.

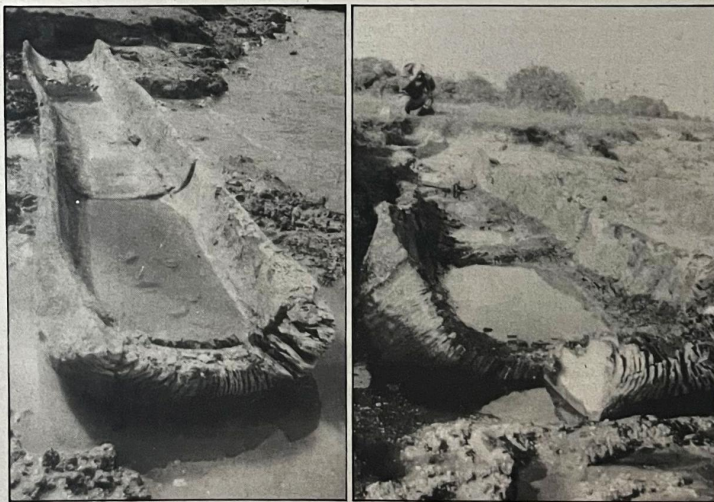
This was a favourite fishing place of theirs and the old 'tree-trunk' had been there for as long as they could remember. The water was particularly low that day and one of them noticed regular marks on the tree as if it had been carved. They scraped some of the mud away from around it and, to their excitement, discovered that the tree-trunk was in fact a dug-out canoe.

They reported their find to the local council and the Board of Works sent a work-team to dig the canoe out of the mud. Officials from the Archaeological Division of Westmeath County Council came from Mullingar to see it. They confirmed that the vessel had been carved out of the bole of an oak tree, and was at least 900 years old. Because of its size (25 feet long) it was probably used to carry people, animals and goods across the lake. These canoes were used mainly on inland waters from the stone age right up to medieval times.

ANALYSIS

A team from the Science Department of Queen's University in Belfast arrived and, with the permission of Dublin's National Museum, cut a large piece out of the stern for analysis. Queen's University have the only facilities for analysis of this kind in Ireland.

The canoe was then left where it was found. On enquiring, the youngsters who found it were told that the National Monuments Department did not have the canoe but that they were considering towing it out into the lake and sinking it to preserve what was left. This, however, was never done and with exposure to the air, and the damage done by cutting pieces out of it, the canoe is now almost



● The dug-out canoe, at least 900 years old, pictured before and after its disintegration — the result of wanton neglect

unrecognisable.

Pat Orange from Dun Laoghaire, a keen fisherman and conservationist who knows Lough Derravaragh well, took photographs of the boat before and after its dis-

integration. He says:

"The kids that found this must be disgusted. They went to the trouble of reporting it and finding out the history of it. They condemn kids for vandalism and not caring

about their environment but this is bureaucratic vandalism."

Pat compares the treatment of this boat, nearly a thousand years old, with the fuss made about the salvaging of the Mary Rose in

the English Channel and the amount of money spent on that exercise:

"Our heritage is disappearing fast enough without the people who are supposed to protect it acting so irresponsibly."

MUSEUM

The size of the canoe would undoubtedly have made transportation to a museum and preservation difficult and expensive, but there are two areas in Ireland where it could have been displayed.

At Lough Gur in Limerick, where there is evidence of habitation dating from 3,000 BC, there is an exhibition centre and a collection of artefacts found in the area.

At Craganowen, in County Clare, dwellings like those that existed at Lough Gur have been reconstructed in a village on crannog surrounded by a palisade. This is also a replica of the fortifications used at the time. There would have also been room here for something as big as the Lough Derravaragh dug-out to be displayed.

Local sources have said that had they known that the National Monuments Department were going to do nothing there was enough local interest and concern in the find to have saved it. Unfortunately, the canoe is now beyond rescue and the remains will no doubt sink back into the mud of Lough Derravaragh.

A spokesperson for the Office of Public Works expressed regret and frustration that the money and expertise to salvage and preserve the canoe is not available. He claimed that the Mullingar Archaeological Society had been approached and invited to offer suggestions as to what could be done but had not replied. The canoe had been impossible to date accurately by the normal means and it could have been built from 600 BC right up to 1200 AD.

The spokesperson also said that the National Museum, whose responsibility it rightly was, just did not have the facilities to handle anything that large and this was why it was left in the hands of the OPW's Archaeological Department.

And as a postscript, one local man speculates:

"This canoe could have carried some of the High Kings of Ireland to their council on the Hill of Tara, which overlooks Lough Derravaragh."

GET WELL SOON

DEVLIN. The staff of An Phoblacht/Republican News, Belfast, send their very best wishes to Geordie Devlin of the Short Strand for a speedy recovery following his recent heart attack.

GET WELL SOON
DEVLIN. The staff of An Phoblacht/Republican News, Belfast, send their very best wishes to Geordie Devlin of the Short Strand for a speedy recovery following his recent heart attack.

...SINN FEIN FHEIS 1982 ...SINN FÉIN ARD FHEIS 1982 ...



• Aine Nic Mhurchadha

Cultural aspects stressed

INTRODUCING the section on culture, Sinn Féin's director of cultural affairs, Aine Nic Mhurchadha, told delegates of progress made in the area since the establishment of the new department.

The example of the prisoners was constantly quoted in the debate as one to follow on the matter of culture, and underlining this, on the Saturday evening, the Robert Emmet Trophy — presented some years ago by the Robert Emmet cumann in Inchicore for the cumann which did most during the year to promote cultural activities — was awarded to the cumann in Portlaoise Jail where a Gaeltacht wing has been set up during the year.

Ruairi O Bradaigh made the presentation, which was accepted, on the prisoners' behalf, by recently-released republican prisoner Sean O Cearuill of Offaly.

The ard fheis formally accepted a document prepared by the department entitled 'Towards a Policy on Culture' which outlines methods of raising consciousness in regard to cultural matters in the Movement.

Suggestions towards this end include use of Irish by Sinn Féin members, provision of Irish lessons, use of Irish in publications, on banners and placards and involvement in musical, historical, folklore, artistic and sporting projects.

The document also suggests the promotion of education systems on the lines of Pearse's St Enda's.

DÍOSPÓIREACHT AR CHULTÚR

TUARAIS Ó THOMAS O SE

D'OSCAIL Aine Nic Mhurchadha an díospóireacht ar chursaí chultúir ag an Ard Fheis. 'Sí ceannasáí Ríonann Dúchais agus labhair sí ar obair na bliana. Dúirt sí gur theastaigh uaithe an Ríonann a chur ag obair ar fud na tíre ach nach raibh éirthe go dtí seo ach tosach a dhéanamh i mBaile Átha Cliath.

Cuireadh an dréacht pholasaí ar chultúr amach chuig na cumann go luath sa mbliain ach ní bhfuair na mórán toradh ar seo ós gur iarradh ar na cumann go dtí an dréacht pholasaí a phlé go mion. Ní raibh ach dhá rún ag plé an pholasaí seo. Glacadh leis an dréacht pholasaí mar pholasaí Shinn Féin gan athrú ar bith.

Dúirt Aine gurbh iad na príosúnaigh is mó a bhí ag cur na Gaeilge chun tosaigh. B'íad príosúnaigh Poblachta Phort Laoise a bhíuigh Trídísí Róibéard Emmet i mblána i ngeall ar chur chun

chinn na Gaeilge. D'iarr Aine ar na cumann níos mó oibre a dhéanamh sa bhliain atá romhainn.

D'iarr sí ar na teachtaí chomh maith físeacht chuideachadh bhíodfaí an polasaí nua ar an seilf. D'iarr sí go ndéanfaí obair ar an bpolasaí agus gur chóir go dtuigfeadh gach ball de Shinn Féin an polasaí agus an tábhacht atá ag baint leis.

Chroíchnaigh sí, ag moladh dos na teachtaí sampla na bpríosúnaigh a ghlacadh agus oibríod go dian, go dtí go mbeimid, i bhfoicil Bobby Sands: "A sov-

ern people, free in mind and body, separate and distinct physically, culturally and economically."

Labhair roinnt mhaith teachtaí ar na rúin. Mhol Caoimhín Ó Caoilín ó Mhuineachán gur chóir chomh oibríod le grúpaí eile atá ag obair ar son na teangan. Mhol Mícheál Mac Comarra ó Bhaile Átha Cliath gur chóir do gach poblachtach a dhíodú ceadúnas teilifíse a fóc mar agóid i gcoinne polasaithe RTE i leith na Gaeilge agus Alt 31.

Labhair Eddie Fullerton, comhairleor chontae 6 Thír Chonailí i bhfabhar na rúin chomh maith. Dúirt seisean leis gur thug na príosúnaigh sampla dinn ar chóir dinn go léir a leanúint. Mhol Deasún Breathnach, Baile Átha Cliath gur chóir dinn go léir clof le leagan Gaeilge ar n-ainmneacha. Níl brí ar bith leis an leagan Beirle de na hainmneacha agus chur a bheith dílis dinn féin

caithfidh an leagan Gaeilge a úsáid.

Thagair Ruairi Ó Bradaigh don Gaeltacht agus polasaithe eacnamaíochta Shinn Féin nuair a thug sé aitheasc uachtaránta. Dúirt sé: "Mar an gcéanna i gcás na Gaeltachta. Níl tade tagtha chun solais i scéal an údaráis le bliain anuas nár léir don dall le fada. Níor theastaigh son fhothair ar leith, ná go deimhin son chár cleanta ar leith ó Today Tonight — The Workers' Party Programme" leis na lochaí a bhí ag atá ar phleananna forbartha na Gaeltachta a mheabhú dinn. Ach amháin b'fhéidir gur léir ón tuarascáil is déanaí gur beag gnó Gaeltachta nach mbíonn idir ghabháil éigin polaitíochta ag baint leis — nó ar a laghad gur mó ar fad an tábhairne a bhíonn le cumas polaitíochta áitiúla cuid de na fir gnó a fhaighneann deontais ná a gcumas chun Gaeilge a labhairt agus gnó a riaradh trí Gaeilge. "Anuas air sin anois tá Tuarascáil

Telesis againn a chruthaíonn arís, is baolach, go raibh cuid an-mhór den cheart ag Sinn Féin i gcaitheamh na mblianta sa mhéid a bhí le rá againn faoi thorbairt na tionclaíochta trichéile in Éirinn. Níl ábhar áthais ar bith dinn a bheith ag maíomh anseo gur chuir muid comhairle a leasa ar dhaoine faoin chur amú airgid a bhain le go leor leor de na deontais a fíodadh agus a fíod le deimhin lucht gaimbín áitiúla. Ar ndóighe d'fáilid ár n-ádh polaitíochta nach bhfuil son pholasaithe againn maidir leis na cúrsaí seo ach an oiread. Dúirt siad ó go minic cheana. Ach dála scéal na n-ionadaithe tofa agus an chinsireacht ar RTE, tá an scéal an-chasta nuair a fhaighneann d'ádhach go bhfuil comhairleoir idir náisiúna mór le rá seata a d'earbú gan náire go raibh substaint an chirt ag polasaithe Shinn Féin an t-am go léir."

International dimensions

IN THE COURSE of his presidential address to the ard fheis on Sunday, Ruairi O Bradaigh spoke of the international dimensions of recent electoral successes, first of all by the H-Block prisoners and now by Sinn Féin.

He told delegates of an Italian tour in December last year during which he had been formally received by the mayors of all the principal cities and by the presidents of many regional and provincial councils.

He continued: "In all cases our analysis that the struggle in Ireland is the age-old fight for national independence and that we represented a national liberation movement was accepted, as was the demand that the British should leave Ireland. In all cases too, our Italian hosts stated that it was the election in turn of Bobby Sands, of Kieran Doherty, Paddy Agnew and Owen Carron which impelled them to take such a public, political stand on the Irish question.

"This quest for political recognition and support across the world must now be redoubled involving all levels of government, trade unions, international organisations and so forth.

PALESTINIANS

"Here, Sinn Féin wishes to record once more our solidarity with the gallant Palestinian people and their Lebanese allies who have suffered such an appalling holocaust in recent months at the hands of those who have driven them out and would deny them their homeland and self-determination as a people.

"The withdrawal of PLO forces from Beirut was, for those conscious of Irish history, reminiscent of the flight of our Wild Geese after the Siege of Limerick, and the aftermath was similar: relentless persecution and attempted genocide. And, of course, the Western powers who supervised the evacuation of Palestinian troops departed before their agreed 30-day period was up and

left the way open for the massacres of men, women and children at Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

POLAND

"While on the international scene, we repeat once more our support for the Polish people in struggle under the leadership of Solidarity ever since August of 1980. In pursuance of our exchange of messages with Lech Walesa then, Sinn Féin has condemned the imposition of martial law in Poland last December and deplores the more recent driving underground of the people's organisations there.

"We have taken this stand, not for opportunistic reasons of power politics, some notorious Western bloc leaders have done, but because we support all genuine efforts by people to take control of their own lives and destinies, of their communities and places of work, id because we take a neutral and non-aligned stand with regard to the power blocs, both East and West."

DEBATE

These themes were taken up later in the day during the debate on Foreign Affairs motions which extended solidarity to national liberation struggles throughout the world and in particular to the Palestinians.

A motion on Polish Solidarity brought some warnings from speakers of right-wing pro-imperialist influences in Solidarity. However, in an impassioned speech, Pádraig Malone of Limerick agreed with condemnations of the hypocrisy of such as Reagan and Thatcher in expressing support for Solidarity whilst oppressing their own trade unions, but added:

"There is something fundamentally

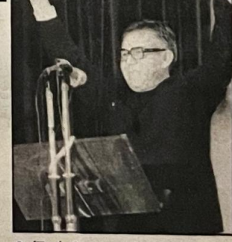


wrong with a workers' state which turns on its own working class. Solidarity is by no means perfect, but we must support it."

The ard fheis overwhelmingly passed the motion fully supporting "the struggle of the Polish people for trade union rights, political freedom and national liberation" whilst condemning all foreign interference.

Another motion which attracted debate was one stressing that the Republican Movement holds, no brief for organisations such as the Red Brigades and seeking that Sinn Féin be distanced from them. It was also passed overwhelmingly.

The ard fheis also passed a motion endorsing and adopting the 'Algiers Declaration' on the rights and liberation of peoples as produced by an international conference of liberation movements in Algeria in 1976.



• (Top) foreign delegates are introduced; (bottom) Benjamin Caras of the Chilean Socialist Party

The declaration deals extensively with the rights of peoples to exist peacefully, retain national, territorial and

cultural identity; the right to political self-determination; rights over natural wealth and resources; rights to language and culture; rights of minorities; and the rights of liberation movements to wage war.

A motion was also passed condemning the nuclear war plans of the American State Department.

VISITORS

Following the Foreign Affairs debate, the numerous foreign visitors were introduced on stage and given a hearty welcome by delegates. Messages of solidarity from other organisations were also read out.

John Underhay of the British Troops Out Movement; Leo Battisti of CCN, secretary of the Chilean Socialist Party, of which the late President Allende was a member; addressed the ard fheis on behalf of all the overseas guests.