

An Phoblacht REPUBLICAN NEWS



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R.U.C. TORTURE 'REVELATIONS'

TIP OF THE ICEBERG

While the tortured continue to be tortured, as if they are of no account, and the reasons behind torture continue to be ignored, a major public row involving the RUC, Police Doctors and Politicians has erupted, over the 'Weekend World' programme, which last Sunday examined the quality of 'justice' in the North of Ireland.

The programme briefly mentioned SAS undercover killings, and the 'blanket' protest in the H-Blocks, but dealt mainly with Castlereagh interrogation methods and the extraction of 'confessions' used to convict political prisoners in the non-jury 'courts.'

Controversy has raged over what Dr. Robert Irwin, Secretary of the Police Surgeons Association and the Chief Forensic Medical Officer at Castlereagh said on the programme and repeated last Wednesday:

"Roughly 150, 160 prisoners have shown themselves to me with injuries which I could not be satisfied were self-inflicted. I've seen five ruptured eardrums, I've seen two injuries to bones, of the forearms... joint-injuries both to the wrist and to the little joints in the fingers... some of the sites of some of the injuries would defy even a contortionist to produce the injuries. And the extent of the bruises seen on some occasions indicate that considerable force has been used from some other source. These I could not accept were self-inflicted."

Irwin also said that one man, at whose trial he gave medical evidence, was convicted despite the fact that he had over 40 bruises on his body after interrogation. (He was referring to Tyrone Republican Tommy McKeeney who is now on the blanket in H 3, Long Kesh).

REACTION

Reaction to the programme was typical.

Loyalists attacked the media, and called for British government control of such documentaries. "Disgraceful and disgusting" was Orange leader Thomas Passmore's comment.

Loyalists said that such TV exposure would put the lives of RUC men at risk. But that's nonsense. The IRA attacks the RUC because they are oppressors. Besides, the daily TV, radio and newspaper advertisements which depict the RUC as 'angels' are far more agitating than a once-off programme which describes them accurately for a change.

The 42-strong 'Association of Police Surgeons' has split along ethical and political lines, the latter being led by Whiteabbey Doctor Gerard Gould, who is fiercely pro-RUC and pro-Brit. He called for Irwin's resignation, describing his statements as "very blatantly anti-police... and were designed to give the police very bad world wide publicity."

Gould said there was no torture or beatings carried out at Castlereagh. In sharp contrast to this lie is the fact that last month two Andersonstown men were acquitted in the High Court because torture was used to extract 'confessions.' Joe Flynn was covered in bruises from head to toe, and Anthony Diamond had large welts across his shoulders, where the RUC torturers beat him with a chair.

Last Tuesday RUC chief Kenneth Newman attacked Irwin's claim as unsubstantiated. At a press conference, he read from a prepared script and refused to answer questions from reporters.

Within 24 hours Dr. Irwin hit back at Newman's denial, and challenged him to a public debate. He added that another of his colleagues, police surgeon Dennis Elliott, had "extensive personal files" on people injured during



R.U.C. thugs attack women protestors outside Armagh gaol last Thursday

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interrogation. Irwin, who is no republican, and who in fact generally supports the RUC (seeing the torture as the work of only a handful) described those being interrogated as "political prisoners" and stated that "this rate of 14 per cent serious complaints is too high a ratio for any civilized society outside a police state."

The Sticks and the SDLP (well an election is due soon) hypocritically condemn the torture, and called for remedies, as if it could be stopped. Only months ago Gerry Fitt was describing the RUC as a 'reformed force.'

Torture is an essential instrument in the British government's repression of Republicanism. The Sticks and SDLP hypocrites condemn the men in the H-Blocks for taking part in the 'Blanket' protest, and then try to make political capital out of condemning the methods which put them there.

THE BENNET REPORT

Direct-ruler, Roy Mason, has refused at present to publish the enquiry of English Judge Harry Bennett, into Castlereagh interrogation which was prompted by Amnesty International's report of June 1978. It is expected that the Bennett report will confirm that injuries and other horrors were not 'self-inflicted.'

Progress will have been made, if as a result of these exposes the Brits ability to secretly torture Republicans whilst publicly denying it, has been weakened. A chink in the curtains has revealed horrors. Independent Councillor Jack Hassard from Dungannon who is a former member of the Police Authority said last Monday:

"I will testify under oath anywhere at any time, what happened and it may shake the world when they hear what did happen..."

For those who live in the beleaguered nationalist ghettos of the occupied six-counties (and for readers of 'An Phoblacht/Republican News') last week's TV 'revelations' (the tip of the iceberg) will have come as no surprise. Brutality and torture at the hands of the RUC is only too common an experience for the young men and women unfortunate enough to be

hauled off to Castlereagh, Armagh, Omagh, Springfield Road, Strand Road or any other RUC barracks.

The suggestion, prevalent amongst the media and establishment politicians, that RUC torture is the responsibility of a few (perhaps, twenty) 'bad apples' in the Special Branch is a typical white-washing tactic.

In reality Mason, Newman and the whole of the British colonial administration are essentially dependent upon the RUC torturers to provide forced 'confessions.' The tortured victims are then ready to be neatly rubber-stamped through the Diplock courts into the H-blocks of Long Kesh.

'Smash the H-blocks,' 'Smash the RUC' and 'Brits out' remains the only valid answer to torture.



Wolfe Tone commemoration

BODENSTOWN

SUNDAY JUNE 17th 1979

STRIKE and MARCH

AGAINST
LEINSTER HOUSE TAXATION POLICY
Organised by Dublin Council of Trade Unions.
Supported by I.T.G.W.U. and A.T.G.W.U.

Tuesday 20th March

I ONCE HAD A LIFE.....

THE sun hung high above, seemingly like a gaping hole in, the still-blue sky, out of which the golden light came pouring down like honey to feed the land and ripen the barley, whilst sending shimmering hazes quivering above the melting tarmacadam surfaces. It was hot and humid, the beads of sweat lined my forehead like an ornate jewel.

I walked along the well-trodden path that lay on the perimeter of the forest and which rose steeply before me. I was in no hurry.

I had plenty of time to take in and enjoy the beautiful surroundings. A gentle breeze sighed, sending ripples across an ocean of shining green and rustic brown ferns that lay ahead of me.

Clusters of timid yellow primroses lined both sides of my avenue; of fine carried upon the breeze, a young rabbit scurried across my path and vanished. Everything was alive and buzzing but there was peace in the activity of nature.

PASSING CROW

A passing crow cawed but the bees fed undisturbed upon the side at the sweeping landscape of the flowers while the refreshing scent deep green and every shade of

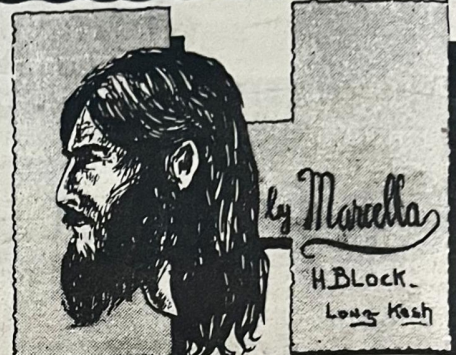


'Everything was alive and buzzing but there was peace in the activity of nature.'

black hardened clay, clustered with

SUN WORSHIPPERS

Where the life of the forest receded and fought to guard its flanks and outermost perimeter, a road in its infancy lay hollowed, out in the



OUR OLD HOUSE

machinery.

A row of houses appeared beyond, then another and another leading to a massive concrete jungle where tiny figures moved to and fro. There were deck-chairs in the gardens where the sun-worshippers gloated in contentment. A group of young lads played with a garden hose, the cool white jet of water rising into the air before toppling down upon them in a thousand shining little silver drops.

WOLFE TONE

To the right, lay Belfast, belching out the sweat of the early morning risers and the cranes of the shipyard towered toward the cloudless sky, and in the distance stood another dogged giant; 'the Divis Tower' in the shadow of its like-named mountain and nearer by, 'Napoleon's Nose' kept a watch on the city, perhaps in remembrance of Wolfe Tone who visited it all those years ago.

I retraced my gaze and found with ease our old house. Nobody I knew was there anymore, just strangers who trimmed the lawn around the ash tree that I grew up with. The fence needed a coat of paint and the front garden had been deflowered of its colour, my mother's and my father's pride and joy.

An old dog chased its tail on the street where we once played 'kick the tin' and the old fellows made their way to the bookies for the first two across the card.

Farmer Thompson's old faithful dog brought his sheep in a few fields away, and a wood pigeon fell to a distant shotgun as I arose, not from my panoramic platform, but out of the inky blackness in the corner of my filthy, cold cell, where wrapping a dirty, flimsy blanket around me to cover my naked body, I stepped towards the barred window and leant my head against it

It was a frosty February morning as I peered through a gap in the fence. This can't be any sort of a life for a young mouse like myself; cold, wet and hungry, I thought. Surely there must be something better.

I don't like the look of that place. But it smells good. Anything is better than this.

On entering, I stopped dead in my tracks, and gazed at the wonderful sight which greeted me. Am I dreaming? Am I still alive? Maybe this could be paradise?

THE FEAST

A stench was lingering in the air which convinced me that no human being could possibly live here. As for my good self, the dirt pile in the corner, containing remains of food was all too much. I immediately charged in to the feast. Afterwards I slept soundly.

Suddenly I was rudely awakened by a spaceman carrying a ray gun with smoke pouring from its muzzle. I dashed across the floor unseen, to a hole in the wall. In dismay I watched a deliberate attempt to destroy my paradise.

Sometime later I ventured out to estimate the damage. It

wasn't that bad. I would still be able to survive on the things that the home-wrecker had overlooked.

TWO CHARACTERS

Suddenly my happiness was shattered as I heard a crash. Two very pale fairy-tale characters with long beards and shaggy hair, wearing only blankets stood gaping at me.

Unlike any other humans, I thought. But as I'd seen a space man earlier on, perhaps these were inhabitants from another planet. They certainly looked it.

"There's a mouse!" screamed one of them. "Grab it!"

I'd heard those words before and leapt from my corner. But I was trapped! Was this the end?

I felt pretty defenceless as I was hoisted into the air by my tail. I was shaking with fright, while my captives were also shivering; in their case from the icy cold wind howling through the gaping window.

I soon learnt that my captives meant me no harm. The door opened and a tray of food was slid in along the floor. They didn't eat it and I wondered why. But that question was soon answered when they offered me it.

I've tasted bad porridge in my



'Suddenly I was rudely awakened by a spaceman carrying a ray gun with smoke pouring from its muzzle.'

time, but nothing like this. It was, if you'll pardon the expression, not fit for an animal?

CAMOUFLAGED

Eugene and Paul (for I had soon discovered their names) hid me in a tiny hole and camouflaged it. Sometime later I was removed and emerged into what was slowly but surely returning to the paradise I had first known I was a happy mouse once again.

My two companions addressed me as 'ar goara' ('our friend') and I frequently heard things said which I couldn't understand. And no wonder, for they were conversing in their native tongue!

I was warm, well-fed and safe. But from what I gathered everything was the complete opposite for Eugene and Paul. I often wondered what kept these men here under such terrible conditions; and as I listened to them



singing at night and taking part in various games, it puzzled me: How could the morale and spirit of these men be so high?

CELL SEARCH

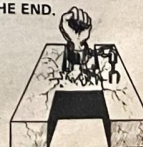
Suddenly my thoughts were interrupted as a sharp voice cut the air: "Cell searches!"

It spelt danger to Eugene and Paul. I was placed in my home and it was camouflaged. The door opened and two large men entered, batons in hand.

I feared for my friends and so peered from my nest. Both were made to remove their blankets while being searched.

I then watched as the two invaders set about our home. The contents from the pots were poured over blankets; dirt was kicked everywhere; large chunks were torn from the damp sponge mattresses. I started to think about why this was, when suddenly one of the invaders shouts, "There's a mouse. Kill it!"

Thwack! THE END.



WAR NEWS

DUNGANNON CENTRE BLASTED



THE centre of Dungannon was devastated in a successful car bomb attack during the afternoon of Thursday 8th March.

The massive bomb was in a car parked outside the Dunowen Restaurant and Alexander's Drapery Store in Market Square. In a supplied statement the Irish Republican Army claimed responsibility for the attack. Two phone warnings were given forty minutes before the bomb detonated and nobody was injured. Shop fronts were shattered over a wide area.

Several hours after the Dungannon blast the centre of Omagh was also bombed. This operation was also claimed by the IRA in a supplied statement.

The first Omagh explosion was at

the Co-op supermarket in Dromore Road, where blast incendiary bombs had been placed on window sills. The outside wall of the building was damaged; nobody was injured.

Almost half-an-hour later, a double blast occurred at the offices of the Housing Executive on the town's Gortin Road.

After both of the day's operations the IRA's active service units returned safely to base having struck another blow in the campaign to demonstrate the instability of British rule in the North of Ireland.



Part of the damage in Dungannon after last Thursday's 250lb car bomb exploded.

FOUR PRISONERS FORCIBLY BATHED

PRIOR to their appearance in court on Thursday March 1st four prisoners 'on the blanket' were dragged from their cells and forcibly bathed. They were Ian Milne (H6), Seamus Bradley (H4), Phelim O'Hagan (H4) and Tony McIntyre (H4).

Each prisoner was viciously beaten into and out of the bathing area by screws

wielding batons and punching and kicking them.

During the bathing exercise the screws used long-handled deck scrubbing brushes on the naked men leaving their bodies covered with multiple scrapes and scratches.

The screws responsible for this cowardly attack were Brian Lamoer, Freddy Spence and Matt Hale.

Propaganda stunt in Short Strand

On Wednesday March 7th, in the Short Strand area of Belfast unprimed explosives, (made up in cannisters) were discovered in a disused yard in Kilmoor Street. The Brits immediately swung into operation one of their biggest black propaganda plays in recent times, against the Irish Republican Army.

Despite the fact, well known to the Brits on the scene, that absolutely no danger existed to the residents of Kilmoor Street, let alone the surrounding streets, the Brits evacuated for a period of 12 hours families within a 250 yard radius of the spot where the explosives were found.

Upwards of 600 people were forced by the Brits/RUC under the threat of a 'massive explosion' to leave their homes. When quizzed by local people about the state of the explosives the Brits/RUC lied. They told the people that the I.R.A. had the bombs primed and it was going to take their engineer hours to defuse.

However, not all the people visited by the 'concerned' Brits/RUC agreed to move. Many said they didn't believe the I.R.A. would prime the bombs and that the Brits were using the situation for their own ends. The Brits response to these people was typical; either they moved or they would be forcibly evacuated or arrested.

It was obvious from the outset that the Brits' prime concern was not the people's welfare but to impose on them the maximum amount of discomfort; thereby hoping the ensuing frustration of being uprooted in the dead of night and having to sleep rough, would create a backlash against the I.R.A.

The Brits had an ally in their propaganda stunt. The local priest Father McCann, took up the cudgel

Brit blunder uncovers massive stake-out

AN IRA spokesman has revealed that a massive 'shoot-to-kill' stake-out by Brit/RUC under-cover squads was foiled in Short Strand, Belfast ten days ago.

A huge IRA bombing operation was due to be launched from the Short Strand and 40 unprimed bombs had been stored in a disused yard in Kilmoor Street. However, plain-clothes Brits (plus a low-flying military helicopter) were observed in the area and the IRA called off their operation. Brit bungling and republican alertness averted the death (or capture) of the couple of dozen IRA Volunteers due to be involved in the bombing operation.

The British had apparently planned to shoot down IRA Volunteers caught in the act of transporting bombs just as they did in the Ballysillan slaughter last June. On that occasion three Volunteers, Dennis Browne, Jackie Mealy and Jim Mulvenna from the IRA's Belfast Brigade (plus passer-by William Hanna) were cold-bloodedly cut down in a hail of bullets.

On this occasion the Brits 'shoot-to-kill' plan having miserably failed they launched a massive propaganda operation against the IRA erroneously implying that the IRA had placed at risk the lives of scores of members of the local population. This stunt which involved the moving of 600 people out of their houses, also backfired. It merely increased (if that is possible) the resentment of the people against the British occupation forces.

(See report below)

support. Harassing the workforce at Sirocco, it being predominately loyalist, was of no political value to the Brits.

Further proof, if any was needed that the explosives were safe was the behaviour of the Brits engineer, and the media crews reporting the find.

The media, as usual glorifying the Brits/RUC for averting a 'major catastrophe' were standing virtually on top of the cannisters containing the explosives, while interviewing the Brits chief engineer. He told listeners, in horrifying detail, of the consequences for the street had the explosives gone off. Our photograph shows the same Brit kneeling among the 'dangerous' bombs



Further proof, if any was needed that the explosives were safe was the behaviour of the Brits engineer, and the media crews reporting the find.

explosives were in. Had he bothered to check with the local Republican Movement, or awaited a statement from the I.R.A. he would have discovered the explosives were completely safe.

Father McCann, and those who feel as he does about this incident should ask themselves why the Brits permitted both the night and day, shifts of workers at the Sirocco works to continue working while people living further away than this factory from the explosives find, were evacuated. The answer is simple the Brits were trying to undermine the I.R.A.'s base of

In accepting responsibility for the bombs and apologising for the inconvenience caused to local people the Belfast Brigade of the I.R.A. issued the following statement: "Following the discovery of the explosives in the Short Strand area on Tuesday March 6 and the massive publicity campaign mounted by the Brits, the I.R.A. categorically deny that the explosives were primed, or about to detonate. We apologise for any inconvenience caused to the people but we are certain the people fully understand the need for the I.R.A. to mount such operations".

H-6 FURTHER ISOLATION OF BLANKET 'LEADERS' H-6

In an attempt to further isolate each of the 32 'blanket men' incarcerated in H6 - block, 'box-type' enclosures have been built onto the outside of their cell windows.

Available information suggests a similar picture to what happened several months ago in H5 - block. On that occasion the screws built 'hutches' on to the outside of the cells. These hutches stretched, from above the cell window to within a

few inches of the ground and ran the length of the wing. Sunlight and verbal communication between prisoners was drastically reduced although the hutches did not prevent the cold wind from blowing through each cell.

These latest constructions on the cell windows in H6 - block also reduce sunlight and verbal contact between the prisoners. The latest statement from the P.R.O. of H6 - block described how 'the screws have blocked the windows up with a 'box-type' housing consisting of wood and a wire grill covering the window."

The P.R.O. continues, "We can barely

see out and where we can see out is slowly clogging up with dirt."

This latest restriction on the men's already meagre sunlight and contact with each other, follows a period of several weeks intensive petty harassment and beatings by the screws since the men were first moved in to H6 - block.

This block holds those men whom the screw regime believed were the leaders of

the 400 'blanket men'. They were removed from other blocks in the mistaken belief that their absence would cause 'widespread demoralisation, thereby weakening the protest. But as subsequent developments in H - blocks 3, 4 and 5 have shown, far from weakening the protest, the men's removal brought forth a new leadership as determined as ever.

The opening of H6 - block and the screws' concerted efforts to break the men there did only one thing - it extended the battle for political status into yet another H - block.

An slabhra thar teanga - 'Mise Éire'

Leis An Giolla

Dúradh liom roinnt mhaith focal a bhreacadh ar pháipéar i dtaobh na teanga seo againn-ne an Ghaeilge. Le deachreachtaí thosaigh mé ar an obair seo ar son na cúise. 'Sea (mar a shíl mé im' intinn féin) "ar son na cúise." Cúis na Poblachta, an ea a dúirt mé liom féin arís, is annamh a labhraíonn mé liom féin ar a leithéid de shíl - ach i ndeireadh na dála bhuail smaoineamh mé. Cé gur feasach don chuid is mó dúinn i nGluaiseacht na Poblachta gurb amhlaidh mar atá, 'sé sin go bhfuil tábhacht ag baint leis an Ghaeilge ó thaobh na Phoblachta a bhfuilimid sa ghleic ar ar a son - cá bhfios dúinn go dtuigeann an uile duine eile an fóras céanna.

As go brách liom (im intinn féin) leis an smaoineamh agus mise ar thóir an fhírinne. Tuigeadh dom go gcaithfidh an taobh seo dár gcuspóir a neartú. Taobh amuigh de rud ar bith eile, dá mbeadh sé neartaíthe againn bheadh ábhar frásúra láidir ann sna limistéirí Caitliceacha agus bheadh fios níl ba cruinne ag na Briotanigh gur deachtóirí is duntaróirí iad féin agus nach seasann siad de réir mar a shíl siad ar fód Briotanach. Bheadh orthu a thuiscint nach ionann an Cine Gael agus an Cine Sasanach nó Briotanach - bheimís ag chur ár Saoithiúlacht chun chinn. Tionchar na Saoithiúlachta Sasanach Ponnacach is mó cúis don laghdú ar a gCultúr Gaelach agus más léir dúinn é agus an bru a cuireamh sin ar ár Muinín tig linn é a scriosadh. Ba chóir dúinn é a mhilladh.

SEOININI

Ná dearmad fosta go gceanglaíonn an teanga, saothíúlacht srl. leis an troid. Is í-shoiléir an chumhacht a bhaineann le hathbheochan na teanga go h-áirithe nuair is cuid den ghleic armtha í. De thairbhe seo rinneadh iarrachtaí sa 'Saor Stát' le blianta anuas iad a scaradh óna chéile. - Ach ní thig leis na seoin-



íní na daoine a chosc ar bhealach na Saoirse mar feicfidh ár Muinín gléas troda milltineach i gcruith na Gaeilge is cultúr nasctha leis an troid. Tagann an uile ní ó na daoine agus luíonn an uile rud orthu - de dheasca seo caithfidh a neart a leiriú is taispeáint doibh-sean sa tsi go dtiocfaidh siad lena chéile i gComhairlí Pobail.

Sin an ffor-Shóisialachas ó na daoine agus riarfaidh siad a gcúrsaí féin le dreamanna mar seo san uile áit. Ní shílím gur deacair Gaeltachtaí a eagrú astu. Mar sin má chuirimid tosach lom láithreach le cinntiú go dtéimid sa bhealach seo - gheobhaimid tacaíocht tar éis tamaill a bheadh ní ba fesaí faoin ár gcoinceapa.

Le déanaí nach iontach an rud é, an méid sin suime agus oibre dísanta ar chúis athbheochan na Gaeilge thart fá limistéirí Bhéal Féirste. Mar leiriú ar spiorad is meannma an 'Mionlaigh' in aghaidh 'cos ar bhol' na mBriotanach ar an taobh míleata agus a síor-scriosadh ar a gCultúr féin - ní fhaightear rud ar bith incurtha leis. Is fíor le rá de thairbhe seo uilig go nochtfaítear comh maith go gcuireann Muiníní Bhéal Féirste i bhfad níos mó béime ar an iarracht chun cuid dá gCultúr a choinneáil ón uaigh - ná Pobal ar bith eile in Éirinn i láthair na h-uaire. Céitear dom gur neart agus treiseacht iad na Cumann Ghaelacha sna limistéirí agus ba chóir don uile duine iadsan a fhreastal. Neartaíonn siad agus treiseíonn siad an Saoithiúlacht uilig ní hamháin an teanga ach an ceol, an rince, an tamhránaíocht, an spórt srl.

Is rud polaitiúil é ar scór ar bith nach ea? De réir mar a thuigimise féin é, bheadh ár namhaid i bponc dá mbeadh an t-athrú seo ar an Sochraí 's againn-ne go forleathan in achan áit. Ach ní foláir dúinn seo a cheangail leis an ghleic pholaitiúil muna ndéanfaimid seo beimid féin ag dul ar seachrán i ndeireadh na dála. Cén síl a déarfá - bhuel - féach ar a tharla sa 'Saor Stát' ó bunaíodh an áit úd sin. Rinneadh iarrachtaí an dhá rud a choimeád scartha óna chéile le dreamanna éagsúla agus go h-áirithe ag 'Rialtas' (an Riarachán) an 'Saor Stáit. Theip orthu i dtaobh na Gaeilge ar dtús agus níor bhain siad amach an treoir sin scríte ina 'mBunreacht' féin faoin tír a Aontú. Caithfidh a fheiceáil go cruinn an áit ina luíonn an dualgas - braitheann sé ar an nGluaiseacht Poblachtach an dá ní seo a ghreamd lena chéile - an Ghaeilge a nascadh leis an Ghleic mhíleata agus seo a mhíniú is a léiriú go soiléir ós ard i gcian agus i gcónaí. Cú bhfad dúinn an cuspóir seo má tá an toil láidir agus muinín againn as ár neart féin. Gí go bhfoghlaimimid (má

linár ndúiseacht sinn-ne) ó theip-eanna an 'Saor Stáit' beidh orainn a bheith cúramach nach ndéanfaimid amhlaidh - nach gothaímid - 'Gaeilge Searróg Suibhel' 'S é sin má chabhróimid lenár Muinín an teanga a fhoghlaim beidh orainn feachaint chuige go mbeidh comhlúadar Gaelach taobh amuigh den rang a mhaireann i saol leis an Saoithiúlacht Ghaelach fite fuaite trithi.

FOGHLAIM AN TEANG

Bhuel - ní fíú é - bheith ag labhairt faoin obair crua seo ós ar gcomhair amach - tig linn comh luath agus ab fheidir linn leanúint leis an saothar faoi trácht chuige. Mura bhfuil i do cheantar féin Cumann Gaelach, abair sin le chara, nó dream ar bith a bhfuil suim acu in athbheochan na saothíúlachta agus beidh deis mhaith ann go gcuirneoidh sibh in áit: chun an cheist a phlé. Agus rud eile de - ar chuir an teideal sin, aon saghas bhuairimh oraibh má chuir - ná lig sin corraibhuais a chur oraibh, nííl ann ach an fhírinne agus an troid dian is éigean dúinn cuid a ghlacadh ann.

AN PHOBLAUGHT ABÚ



An Ghailige isteach

POSTMEN OCCUPY UNION H.Q.

BY PAUL ROONEY

Angry postmen, fed up to the back teeth of broken promises, took over their Union Headquarters in Parnell Square, Dublin at 11.30 am on Friday March 9th. They are members of the 850-strong 'outdoor' branch of the Post Office Workers Union (P.O.W.U.), and they took this action because they were refused the £5 a week 'strike pay'. The occupiers said that they were going to stay where they were until the Union paid up.

After being out on strike in the recent 'one week strike', the men decided to carry on striking but were told by the Union that they were to go back to work, whilst the rest of the service went on another strike.

Secretary of the Dublin outdoor branch, Mick Hill, said: "The Executive of the Union told us that we are now not on strike and that our action is unofficial. We were told the strike is for everyone but us, although our case is much more crucial. I feel we are being asked to scab on our own members."

The men feel that the executive of the Union 'don't give a damn' about the postmen, and one executive told them to their face, that "We didn't care what they did, but they were not getting the strike pay".

One member said, "The Union executive is made up mainly of clerks; we have one delegate on the executive, and the clerks don't care about us. What makes us angry is that we were the first to put in the claim, and now we are left out in the cold".

The executive of the Union refused to talk with the postmen at the Union Headquarters, unless they vacated the building, although one executive member, Tadge Harrington, said on Friday that he would resign if the

executive did not meet the workers. The executive did not meet the men, and Tadge Harrington did not resign.

"Another broken promise," said one member, "the whole situation is just a pain in the neck", he added.

When the workers did vacate the building they were told that if they occupied it again the 'Forcible Entry Act' would be used, adding to the list of workers already charged under this repressive Act.

Mick Hill, secretary of the outdoor branch, said, "This is our building, they have no right to refuse us entry. I feel we are being sold down the river".



'Outdoor' postal workers picketing union headquarters in Parnell Square, Dublin, last Wednesday, in support of their £5 a week 'strike pay' demand.

The postmen have placed a picket on the Union Headquarters, until they decide on what further action to take. Their only income is what they can get from Social Welfare, which at one point was being refused, by the executive not giving the men the

correct forms with which to file their claims. This is a typical case of trade union bureaucracy acting against their members' interests; a situation which is rife throughout the trade union movement today.

"PROBATION SERVICE TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE"

P.O.W.s

AS a means of stabilising their rule in Ireland the British Government are engaged in attempting to "normalise" the situation in the Six Counties. In essence this means isolating the Republican Movement and, in particular, making I.R.A. activity irrelevant. In those areas of control where it is impossible to make things normal the British are content with attempting to internationally project the appearance of a normal situation. In particular this can be seen in their treatment of Republican prisoners.

For example, a few years ago they changed the name of Long Kesh to 'H.M.P., The Maze' and created the illusion abroad that Long Kesh was closed and that an ordinary prison had taken its place. Similarly internment was replaced by 'detention'. This was of little material importance to internees and of less importance to their families but such name-changing permitted the British to declare internationally that internment was finished.

There are many other instances of these normalising tactics. Both examples given here are merely illustrations of how, as part of their overall counter-insurgency effort, the British pay considerable attention to the prison situation. The reason for this is that because of the obvious political nature of their imprisonment, Republican POWs have always been an embarrassment to the British regime.

Furthermore, republicans have consistently continued the struggle while imprisoned and they have provided a link between support groups, P.D.F., Green Cross committees etc. and the overall struggle. Indeed at different stages of the present struggle the POWs have proved themselves capable of generating sympathy and support for themselves and for the Republican Movement.

Ironically, though the British persistently create these situations they are equally persistent in seeking ways to counter the POWs resistance to their policies. From this clash of wills we have seen Republican resistance manifesting itself in hunger-strikes and in the now historic blanket-protest. Little wonder then that some one once said "Our POWs are the front-line troops of the liberation struggle."

Like any front-line troops, between battles, they endure the constant sniping and harassments as the enemy jockeys for strategic positions. And like any front-line troops they endeavour to hold their own positions, stalling the enemy advances and taking the brunt of attrition.

GARDINER COMMISSION

The best indication of the importance placed by the British Government upon the breaking of the POWs resistance lies in the fact that when the Gardiner Commission was established a few years ago, to examine ways by which "terrorism" (i.e. the I.R.A.) could be defeated some of its major recommendations dealt with prisons. Indeed the Gardiner Report recommended, in order to defeat the I.R.A., that internment/detention must be ended, that political status must be phased out and that the 'concentration' type style of prisons must be updated.

In summary, the recommendations envisaged eating into the Republican Movement within the prisons and through this into the nationalist areas.

During internment we had many examples of this, from the 'Take Home A Terrorist' scheme to the aborted 'Resettlement' plan. In fact 'Resettlement' as a means towards 'normalisation' was first tried on internees and then, later, on sentenced prisoners, coming as it did against a true background, the dangers for Republican resistance are obvious.

Had the British regime been successful in stopping the struggle outside for the period required for their introduction of other "normalising" factors (including perhaps the establishment of some form of party political forum) the 'rehabilitation' of even a section of the POWs and the "criminalisation" of the remainder would have jeopardised the continuation of the liberation struggle and the Republican Movement would have been considerably isolated from its base of support.

STATUS REMOVED

It was in pursuance therefore of this objective that the British Government, at a time most advantageous to themselves, commenced releasing the internees. Fifty per cent remission was introduced for sentenced POWs with those released facing the prospect of serving the remainder of their sentence if re-convicted on another charge. The phasing out of political status got under way as the cages slowly emptied. From March 1st 1976 there would be no more political prisoners, according to the British. Instead there would be an increasingly small number of 'Special Category prisoners' (in the cages), while, in keeping with the 'normalised' situation outside, 'ordinary' prisoners would enjoy the luxury of a liberal regime in Europe's 'most modern prison'.

For this purpose newly designed H-shaped cell blocks - special control units - were being built.

That this counter-insurgency strategy severely underestimated Republican resistance can be seen by the way it has deteriorated into the most obvious and crude attempt at "criminalisation" now seen in the torture taking place daily in the now notorious H - Blocks.

RE-HABILITATION... AGAIN

Despite this failure, however, the British have continued with their

re-habilitation schemes. The latest example of this has only recently been revealed and it is, in effect, merely a slightly revised version of the earlier 'Resettlement' scheme, without all the camouflage.

Under the 1975 scheme 'Northern Ireland Office' (i.e. British Colonial) Probation Officers were to work hand in hand with voluntary welfare groups to help POWs to 're-settle' and also to help the families of those still imprisoned. What this amounted to was Kitson's plan of infiltrating the enemy's community.

Probation Officers were to visit POWs homes in nationalist areas, collating personal and useful intelligence information. They were to create a dependence on the British Social Services as an alternative to the moral and material support

accepted "criminal" status but indeed how willing they are to undermine the fight for POW status being waged by the Blanket-Men.

BRIT PLAN

To date the Northern Ireland Office has informed the POWs that in future:

- All welfare cases are to be referred to probation officers. All initial interviews must be carried out by them. At this stage this is not to involve men on the blanket protest but is to be extended to them later.
- Preliminary steps involving visits to prisoners' homes by probation officers have commenced.
- Students must apply to probation officers for educational training.
- Welfare officers (note this) are not to be considered for seniority but are to be replaced by probation officers.
- Applications for parole are soon to be made only

through probation officers. (F) Probation officers will be reviewing life sentences.

The last point (F) is obviously a carrot to be waved at the POWs, many of whom are serving life sentences. They have of course rejected this, with all the other points. Incidentally, the reason given for the phasing out of the prison welfare service is that they are "seen as a supportive professional reference group advocating the retention of Special Category Status (III) and an obstacle to normalisation policy which is partly being attempted and is to be reinforced." Shades of Kitson/Mason paranoia.

PLAN REJECTED

In a statement rejecting the new system the POWs point out their obvious reservations about the Prison Welfare Service and show clearly how the new system is to be used as part of the overall "criminalisation/normalisation" policy. They go on to state:-

"The creation of a probation service for political prisoners is in itself a contradiction and as such is totally unacceptable."

The blanket men also have rejected the new scheme and, in fact, because existing welfare facilities (organised by those whom the Brits consider to be pro-political status) are being withheld unless the prison uniform is worn, all Republican POWs will be withdrawing from the Welfare Service. At present Sinn Féin is engaged in establishing an alternative system which will endeavour to deal with any problems which arise regarding the POWs and their families.

In the meantime the struggle for POW status continues while the British, intent on their Kitsonian 'criminalisation/normalisation' policy, pursue their war of attrition against the front line Republican troops within their concentration camps.



Long Kesh concentration camp

given by Republican Welfare and by their very presence they were to project the POWs as non-political prisoners.

Today, the British intend to re-introduce and implement the above scheme by 're-organising' the Prison Welfare system and using the revised Probation Officer system as a weapon in its "criminalisation" policy. Before this the Prison Welfare Service was used by POWs largely as a means of contacting their families in the event of death or serious illness. The re-organisation of this service has of course been rejected by the Republican POWs but other elements like the Loyalist U.D.A., U.V.F. and Republican Clubs' members are heavily involved, not only in the re-organisation, but also in drawing up (in conjunction with the British) a reformist and counter-insurgency document. Their participation in this effort, shows not only how these people have

SMASH

THE

'H'BLOCKS

BELFAST

March and rally

Sunday 25th March

Assemble New Lodge Road
Protest organised by Belfast Sinn Féin

Transport from Dublin:
For information on transport to Belfast please contact the Craft shop,
44 Parnell Square, Tel. 747611.

50,000 MARCH AGAINST LEINSTER HOUSE

IN a massive show of strength last Sunday over 50,000 workers marched through the city of Dublin against the Leinster House policy of taxation.

This massive demonstration, organised by the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, was the biggest trade union march seen in the city of Dublin since 1913, when the workers were then 'locked out'.

Moving off at 11.15 am from Liberty Hall, the march was led by the I.T.G.W.U. Band, and the tail end of it did not move until 11.45. Those taking part included most of the Trade Unions, the three Teachers Organisations, Dublin Council of Trade Unions, Sinn Fein, National Association of Tenants Organisations, the Association of Officers of Taxes, and other progressive political groups.

Many workers brought their families, and most carried placards with slogans such as: "A well heeled boot for George" and "Why should

I pay more in tax than I spend on food?"

The Sinn Fein banner bore the message: "Sinn Fein demands equality in taxation" and it was significant that many people were pleased to see it there, and were impressed by the Sinn Fein turn out. The one exception was the 'media' who avoided Sinn Fein, as if those behind the banner had the 'black plague', filming and photographing directly in front and behind of the banner and thus providing yet another example of censorship against Sinn Fein.

In conjunction with this march on Sunday many other demonstrations were held throughout the twenty six counties. Examples were:

Limerick, where 7,000 people marched, in the biggest demonstration since the 30's;

Galway, where 2,500 marched and held a meeting in the city centre;

Cavan, where nearly 3,000 demonstrated; and

Ballina, where 1,000 protested.

The I.T.G.W.U. have organised more marches for the coming weeks: Navan, March 13th; Nenagh,



The head of the march

March 15th; Killybegs, March 16th; reached Merriem Street, a letter was handed into Lynch and Colley, will lead up to the proposed widespread shutdown and massive demonstration on March 20th.

When last Sunday's Dublin march workers. The letter pointed out that:

"We in the trade union movement are not insensitive to the plight of the small, under privileged farmer, any more than we are to that of the low-paid urban worker. But we say that the big farmer does not speak for the interests of the entire rural community, no matter how much he may claim to."

The demonstration then marched back through College Green to Liberty Hall, where a massive rally was held. Amongst the speakers were: Mick Mallen General Secretary of I.T.G.W.U.; Fintan Kennedy President of I.T.G.W.U.; Harold O'Sullivan President of Irish Congress of Trade Unions; and John Carroll, Vice President of I.T.G.W.U.

The protesters were in a militant mood as they listened to the speakers. Chants of:

STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE! showed their feelings. They were in no mood for any sell out, and at times the speakers were having a hard time trying to think of suitable militant phrases, with which to keep in good standing with the audience.

Fintan Kennedy, President of

LOUGHGUILLE H-BLOCK DEMO

About 600 people braved the extreme cold and wet weather in Loughguile, County Antrim, last Sunday afternoon and marched in support of the Republican prisoners on protest for political status.

The demonstration organised by the Roger Casement Cumann Loughguile, was the first in that area for years and the first ever, on H-Blocks. The impressive turnout of local people was regarded as a successful achievement for the Sinn Fein cumann in the area.

Three leading members of Sinn Fein, all veterans of the Republican struggle, Liam Hannaway, Kevin Agnew and Sean Keenan,

spoke at the demonstration. Opening the meeting Kevin Agnew spoke at length of the past ten and a half years of intense Republican struggle from 1968 to the present day, which he stated hasn't weakened the Republican people in any way.

Commenting on the recent calls by the Sticks for a return of Stormont he said:

"Do these people forget the misery and hardship this institution caused our people? As far as the Republican Movement is concerned there will never be another Stormont."

A section of the crowd at last Sunday's march in Loughguile. This was the first ever H-Block protest in the area.



He recounted a visit he had with two South Derry Republican prisoners on the blanket, Ian Milne, and Seamus Bradley a few days before the march.

He told of how before the visit the screws dragged them out of their cells and forcibly bathed them, scrubbing their naked bodies with deck-scrubbers: He went on "But these two men, I know them well, are hardy men, they told me not to fear because no matter what indignities the Brits imposed on them the men on the blanket would never give in."

Concluding his address he asked the gathered people to say a few prayers for a young man called Patrick McPeake, from Bellaghy, County Derry, who was shot by an undercover Brit squad earlier in the week near his home.

Kevin Agnew was followed by Belfast Republican Liam Hannaway. He was brief and to the point: "The men in the 'H' blocks and women in Armagh are not protesting for better prison conditions. Their protest is for recognition as political prisoners, as prisoners of war. Let us never forget that point."

He also went on to speak about past prison struggles, one of which claimed the life of Sean McCaughey during the '40's in Portlaoise gaol.

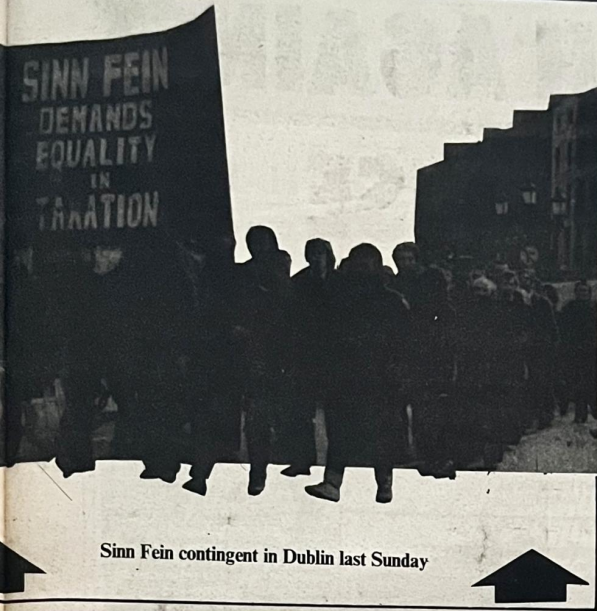
He ended his address by stating "Let there be no mistake there will never be any cessation of hostilities until our enemies leave this country."

The last speaker was Sean Keenan from Derry. He spoke of the endurance of the prisoners on the blanket protest. "Never before in the history of our country's struggle for freedom have prisoners been called on to suffer such misery."

SLIGO PRO



Several



Sinn Féin contingent in Dublin last Sunday

trade union move-
insensitive to the
small, under privi-
ny more than we are
aw-paid urban work-
that the big farmer
for the interests of
ral community, no
much he may claim

I.T.G.W.U. stated from the plat-
form:
"This massive and mighty demon-
stration has been organised by us as
an expression of our members acute
disatisfaction with the present in-
come tax code and the manner in
which it has been operated."

Mick Mullen General Secretary of
I.T.G.W.U. said, "The march is a
clear indication of the indignation
felt by every P.A.Y.E. worker at
the injustices of the present tax
system." He went on to say, "We
are sick and tired and weary of
bearing an unfair tax load." He
called on Leinster House to ensure
that by May 1st everyone was pay-
ing a fair share of income tax. At
the end of his speech he asked:
"Where do we go from here?"

He got a mighty roar of:
"STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE!"

Most of the speakers were at pains
to point out that the demonstration
was not political, which was greeted
with laughter by most of those
present, who knew full well that
this was a political challenge to
Leinster House.

Harold O' Sullivan President
I.C.T.U. said:
"This is just the first protest and

gives fair warning to the govern-
ment that they must notice what is
going on and take the right action".

The last speaker John Carroll
President of I.T.G.W.U. put the
whole protest in its correct con-
text. He stressed that some speakers
were trying to say that this was not
political, but it was a political
demonstration. He said:
"If the government refuse to
respect the rights of ordinary work-
ing people to a decent living stand-
ard then the workers of Ireland
would respond in no uncertain way
at the ballot box in the next gener-
al election." He had started off his
speech by saying "We are gathered
here outside Liberty Hall, at a point
where, since 1909 the workers of
Ireland have traditionally stood up
against injustices, against imperi-
alism and for their rights." He also
stated that in thirty years as a trade
unionist he had not seen such soli-
darity as in the protest march and
said it demonstrated that Irish
people believed in social justice and
were prepared to do something
about it.

The demonstration then ended
with the playing of the National
Anthem.

GO PROTEST



Several hundred trade unionists demonstrated in Sligo last Sunday

A poem by a woman protest prisoner, Armagh gaol 'Conscience of England'



Where are you now - conscience of England?
Were you ever there at all?
You are just an illusion in people's minds.
People who cannot or else refuse to see
your embedded evil
People who have eyes, but yet are blind.

But one day England
We shall rise up and destroy you.
Our conscience shall rip out your heart
of stone,
Your soul of hate - Your destiny is foretold.
Were not we always entwined together
in our fates.

You are not there with the men in 'H' Block
You were not there at Erin's sons' and
daughters' deaths
No England. You have no conscience.
No breath of air nor dark despair can
touch you,
For you are just not there.

Oh, Conscience of England - the devil
incarnate,
Your 'H' Block men will not have the
strength of ours
but will drop to the depths of despair.
Conscience of England, you could have
prevented this,
If you would have been there.

You are like the air we breathe
Unseeable, Untouchable,
But a part of our existence.
Our fates have always entwined together
Yours with your rape and plundering,
Ours with a widow's lament.

But you choose not to be.
You choose your own destiny
So you will attend your own funeral
Your lands and people be the wake
England - your hands and heart are
bloodied,
You are the vampire
But Erin will be your stake

EASPA DAONLATHAIS

BHÍ Fianna Fáil ag clamhsán i ndiaidh na hArd Fhéise a bhí acu le déanaí. Bhí fearg orthu toisc gur gearradh cúpla nóiméad d'óráid Sheáin Uí Loinsigh ar R.T.E. Is fuirist fearg a chur orthu. Tá siad ag gearán ó tháinig siad i gcumhacht, cé go bhfuil níos mó ama acu ar na meáin cumarsáide ná aon pháirtí eile. Tá cuid mhaith ama a fháil ag Fine Gael agus an Lucht Oibre, comh maith.

Ar ndóigh siad Fianna Fáil an dream atá ag cosc ar Shinn Féin a bheith ar R.T.E. Cé gur toghadh seisear ball is fiche de chuid Shinn Féin ag na Toghdhán Áitiúla deireannacha níl cead cainte acu ar R.T.E., fiú mar gheall ar chúrsaf a bhainneann le Rialtas Áitiúil.

Taispeánann seo an drochmheas atá ag Fianna Fáil ar an daonlathas. Briseann an dúchas tré shúilbh an chait. Bhí léiriú eile le déanaí againn ar an easpa daonlathais seo.

na cheanntracha Rialtas Áitiúil i mBaile Átha Cliath. Bhí cúig shuíochán i ngach ceanntr go dtí seo, rud a bhí i bhfábhair na páirtithe beaga agus na comhairleoirí pobail. Ach leis an roinnt nua ní bheidh ach ceithre shuíochán i

ngach ceanntr, larracht é seo chun an cumhacht a thabhairt ar ais ina lámha féin.

Ach teipfidh orthu, mar tuigtear an lúbaireacht sin go maith. Ní éireodh leo an dullamalóg a chur ar mhuintir na cathrach. Tá feachtas maith ar bun ag Sinn Féin sa toghcháin seo cheana féin, agus is cosúil go mbuafadh siad roinn suíochán.

Dhein Fianna Fáil roinnt nua ar

Micéil Mac Conmara

Post Bag



All letters should be addressed to the Editor
An Phoblacht/Republican News, 170a Falls Rd.,
Belfast 11

NO 'OVER - EMPHASIS ON H - BLOCK'

Achara,

I felt very disturbed reading the letter published in your paper two weeks ago which criticised "Over-Emphasis on H-Block".

I understand very well the writer's viewpoint and agree the revolution must cover all aspects to be successfully completed. Yet we all know the blanket-men suffered and endured for nearly two years before the campaign for the restoration really caught fire. That happened through the presentation of the justice of their demand, not because they were not criminal but because Republican newspapers spelt out they were not.

It was from reading such articles that I decided to put my own sympathies to work. Of course I was already aware of British oppression and actively concerned, but those articles decided me that my time could be stretched to work for the blanket status too. Now my own son is 'on the blanket' and I know my 'good' work was not enough. AP-RR is read all over the world, by more than Republicans. The photos of Belfast girls in their H-Block T-shirts have been reproduced and have gone around the world.

It isn't easy to talk about deep emotions. They are not just my own anyway but shared by every mother or wife of a blanket man. The first thing you do on your monthly visit is to look deep in your boy's eyes to see how he is enduring. Then when you have hugged him while you're slugging and giving him the seal you look at as much of his body that you can see for marks or bruises.

You chat cheerfully away, smiling all the time while your mind is saying: 'That's my son, I didn't bear him or rear him to suffer like this.' But your son is a man who has chosen an honourable if hard path so you cannot undermine him by letting him see any of that. You try to gauge how much weight he has lost, how much of his cheerfulness is assumed for 'your benefit. Everything becomes 'how'. How does he endure? How is he mentally? How is his health? Your heart is

breaking for your son yet you smile and laugh with him.

All too soon your time is up, for a brief instant his sickness for home shows in his eyes, then it's hugs and kisses. You tell him you are proud of him. Your son looks at you with such love and longing yet you walk away. You his mother whose instinct is to guard and protect him and your son walks back to a hell-hole existence.

As you go up the length of the visiting room you smile at the blanket-men waiting on their people and in all their eyes is a longing. I can't describe the guilt and sadness those eyes make you feel. You sit with other relatives laughing, joking or bantering about the screws. You wait for the night when you are alone before you cry your tears. Your very dreams are full of them.

On H-Block I'm biased. To me there is no "over-emphasis". If I could achieve political status by going from one end of this country to the other on my knees I would do it for all those men. I am selfish enough to want everyone to feel as strongly and as involved as me. There is more at stake than political status. The H-Block men are fighting a part of the revolution.

In mise,
The Proud Mother of a
Republican Socialist PoW

Militarism and Mass Action!

Achara,

A new issue of the PD paper "Socialist Republic" has hit the streets of Belfast with a stunning headline: "IRAN: Mass Action shows the way". A page article does not say a word about how the victory in Iran was actually achieved. Particularly, not a word on the Fedayeen guerrillas, who played a crucial role in the insurrection which finally toppled the old regime. What we get is simple platitudes, "the masses exerted their strength", or, that the armed forces were "swept away by the sheer power of the risen people".

Avoided like the plague is any talk of armed actions unless of course it is "the masses" who are carrying them out. But, outside of exceptional situations, the "masses" do not hold arms, except for the disciplined armed organisations of the people—the Fedayeen or the IRA.

"Mass action" seems to mean not the involvement of the people as a whole in the struggle (which we all agree on), but rather, an idea that arms will fall down from the sky on the appointed day, with no preparation in advance.

On page three there is "People's Democracy: what we stand for". Paragraph one says that "the central political question for the Irish people is the political, economic and military domination of Ireland by imperialism and that the central task of the revolution is the solution of the national question through the ending of partition".

So far so good. But, how is this achieved? Paragraph six tells us how not to—"We do not accept the ideology of militarism—the belief that armed groups can substitute themselves for the masses". They prefer "the building of an organised and experienced leadership".

So much confusion in so few lines! First, "Militarism" is not an "ideology" that any one around here believes in. There is certainly a problem in combining a military campaign with the various mass campaigns but this is not "militarism".

Secondly, who is this "organised and experienced leadership"? Our friends are looking for it not the Republican Movement! With all due modesty it can be said that the Republican Movement have had a role (to say the least) in all "mass actions" during the last ten years. Really there is a bit of arrogance in all these rather

hollow P.D. claims. Finally, on the big question itself, that the Republican Movement "prefer" military operations to "mass actions". Rather, it is "mass action" itself which demands the use of physical force if we are ever to "resolve the national question" as our friends say.

I couldn't help noticing a small box at the bottom of page seven which ended as follows: "It is the duty of all anti-imperialists to demand the withdrawal of Irish troops from the Lebanon and to support the liberation struggle of the PLO." Why is it when "Brits out of Ireland" is substituted for "Irish troops from Lebanon", and PLO by IRA, our dear friends run a mile, screaming "militarism"? SEAN MCCARTNEY

Andersonstown,
Belfast.

Not National

Achara,

It is a welcome sight to see the coverage being given by AP/RR to the workers' struggles here in the 26 counties.

However, there was a drastic political error in your report last week entitled "Workers Resist Unfair Taxation". From beginning to end, the report used terms such as "the rest of the country", "national strike" and "nation-wide strike", which incorrectly implied that the 26 county Free State is a "country" and a "national state".

Your workers' reports must surely stay within the framework of Republicanism; indeed, you will hopefully soon begin to draw out the connection between working class struggles on the economic and social fronts and the Republican struggle to smash partition and win national liberation.

L. O'DOHERTY

Dublin.

Editor's Note: We fully accept the validity of this criticism.

Achara,

In reply to the letter of "Poblachtach Solaisleach" in your edition of 3/3/79 I find myself confused by what appear to be contradictions in the suggestion that there is an over-emphasis on the situation at the H-Blocks in Long Kesh in An Phoblacht/Republican News.

I find the author's claim that "other equally important aspects of Sinn Féin policy have been ignored at the expense of the H-Block horrors" less than convincing.

The front page of AP/RR on 10/2/79 commented, "Though it's early days yet this newspaper reads just like the 'Republican News' instead of the unified, revolutionary paper we intended. We can't blame Mason for that, nor Jack Lynch and his 'Soldiers of Destiny'. They haven't suppressed us yet. Where are all the reports on the social and economic

struggles of the oppressed? We have yet to receive them".

The author also talks about "convinced Republicans" being "subjected to a barrage of the barbarities of the British system". Might I remind the author that AP/RR also circulates internationally where the readers are hardly subjected to a similar "barrage". On a positive note perhaps the author can indicate what his/her ideas are for a "really effective campaign against H-Blocks in the 26 counties". From the H-Block Information Centre's position the coverage in AP/RR has already provided a positive contribution to such a campaign.

Perhaps the author is not fully aware of the implications of the H-Block situation not only in the occupied six counties but for the struggle as a whole. If he/she is not, I will only be too delighted to explain it.

GERRY BRANNIGAN
H-Block Information Centre
170 Falls Road,
Belfast.

Facilities for Galliagh

Achara,

Recently we announced the formation of an amenities committee for the Shantallow and Galliagh areas. This has now been formed, and we ask any community groups or other interested bodies wishing to join with us to improve the quality of life in our area to contact us at the Sinn Féin Advice Centre at the Shantallow shops.

We are determined to get proper facilities in the Galliagh area and to improve the existing amenities in other areas of Shantallow.

We do not intend telling our call for a post office remain just a call, but intend to embark on a serious campaign for it. With the help of the people, we will get post office facilities for Galliagh.

But a post office is only one of the basic amenities starkly absent. Proper shops are needed, for mobiles are temporary and fail to meet the people's need,

providing neither adequate employment nor the necessary goods at the right prices.

Facilities for our youth are another serious matter for concern. While an attempt has been made to build into the estate small play areas, many are inadequate and play centres and youth clubs completely absent.

But probably the worst immediate deficiency is the dangerous lack of street lighting, particularly on the road from the Templars Sports complex and beside St. Joseph's Chapel.

The Department of the Environment claims these lights are being installed—but when?

Will a child have to be killed first?
P.R.O.
Keenan and McGillen and
McDaid Bradley Sinn Féin Cumann,
Shantallow, Derry City.

Crumlin Remand P.O.W.s

Dear Editor,

Recently the media has made a fuss about what is becoming known as "Internment by Remand", even the political hacks of the SDLP and Alliance party have been shamed into speaking out against this system.

Internment is a highly emotive word and its conditions are ones with which we have all become familiar, but the word does not convey accurately the plight of the Republican remand prisoners.

The length of time on remand varies, but periods of 18, 20 and 25 months are not uncommon. In a significant number of cases even the Diplock courts cannot convict on "evidence" extracted by the Castlereagh Gestapo.

Republican remand prisoners are allowed out of their cells for only 8 hours a week. For the remaining 160 hours we are locked up and must eat meals in our cells. The 8 hours can be reduced if it is raining at the time allotted for 1 hour's exercise a day. A very touching concern for the state of our health!

There is no association (a privilege enjoyed by loyalists) so that communication between us is restricted to shouting out through windows. We are not allowed parcels of any description, no newspapers, radio batteries. Improvised games such as chess and draughts are destroyed, frequent cell searches carried out—slop pots are kicked over and floors

and prisoners' personal belongings saturated in urine. Cockroaches infest the cells. There are very inadequate washing facilities, and attempts to maintain a reasonable standard of personal hygiene are punished by terms of up to three days in solitary confinement.

There was a recent outbreak of scabies affecting 80 prisoners, and skin and scalp rashes are commonplace. Letters go astray, broken windows are not replaced and heating is often cut off.

Added to this are the taunts and jeers of the screws. Verbal retaliation means a term in solitary confinement.

As a group opposed to British domination of our country we are being subjected to very special treatment indeed. We often wonder what Mr Mason's definition of "special status" really is.

P.R.O.
"C" Wing
Crumlin Road Jail,
Belfast.

Boycott E.E.C. Elections

Achara,

The Belfast Sub-Committee of the Ulster Sinn Féin Anti E.E.C. Committee at its inaugural meeting in Belfast, expressed concern over the complacency shown towards the forthcoming European elections by opponents of the E.E.C.

The Committee, which comprises some of the 1975 Boycott Committee (which campaigned during the six county convention elections), has been formed to help implement the Sinn Féin Boycott policy of the June E.E.C. elections.

We urge fellow Sinn Féin members to launch their own campaign. The best way we can show what we think of the E.E.C. and this cynical election charade is to stay at home and not vote.

P.R.O.
Ulster Executive
Sinn Féin

Green Cross Refute Mason's Lies

Achara,

In answer to Mason's recent claim that men refusing to go "on the blanket" were being denied money from Green Cross for their families and threatened that if they came off the blanket the money would be stopped, we in Green Cross refute this scurrilous claim absolutely.

Irrespective of whether men are "on the blanket" or not their families receive the weekly payments due to them from the collections Green Cross make. All these men are political prisoners and innocent victims of Mason's Special Courts, special torture and brutality. So long as there are political prisoners, Green Cross will continue to make collections for the dependants of these men and women.

To resist the position—No prisoners' dependants will be denied money because the prisoner comes off the blanket protest or did not go on it.

M. FLYNN
P.R.O. Green Cross '73
Belfast.

Women's Aid Bus

Dear Sir,

Belfast Women's Aid exists to provide refuge and support for women and their children who have been abused physically and/or mentally.

At any one time we have a child population of approximately 30, and one of our major problems in attempting to provide educational and recreational facilities for these children is our lack of transport.

In view of this being International Year of the Child, we have decided to concentrate our fund-raising efforts at this time on our most urgent need—a Minibus.

We hope to have this minibus on the road by Easter and we would like to appeal to you on behalf of the children to make this dream a reality.

Any donation will be gratefully acknowledged.

Yours sincerely,
P.R.O.
Belfast Women's Aid
c/o 30 Shanahan Road,
Belfast 7.

CROOKS, SAD NEWS AND A FAILED ROMANCE

Evenin' all,

And first, my congratulations to Bobby Crooks in getting into the BBC as head of news. Last week he was working for the black propaganda squad in Lisburn, this week he can carry on telling the same fibs at a much larger salary to a gullible public. This means that we in the 'security forces' have got total control of the major news outlets.

It also augurs well for the chances of someone like James Gerard Richard Shortt getting a job in the NI BBC. Jimmy, who claims joint British and Irish nationality, has told me a little about his amazing career which includes being a Franciscan Monk in Kilkenny and a Sergeant in the 144 Detachment of the Paras (Cadet Force).

I do think that his obsession with Japanese martial arts and his habit of breaking into Chinese chants while in the middle of a conversation about Gaelic football might confuse some of his colleagues in the BBC, but, the next time I'm looking for a Kendo stick fighter to go up the Falls Road and confuse the Provos, I'll bear him in mind. I'll have to change his NIJ Press card (17487), Metropolitan

Police ID card (2650) and IFJ card (GB 2359) numbers, however, as they're a bit of a giveaway.

SAD NEWS

And now, some sad news. Last time I was in Dublin having a chat with my old chum, Buffalo Ned Ryan, he introduced me to the Lone Star Ranger, SB man Jude Murphy. He was proudly wearing his Silver Star which he was awarded for allegedly single handedly preventing the escape of Sean MacStiofain from the Mater Hospital a few years back, and he struck me (well, he would have if Buffalo hadn't intervened) as a splendid clean cut acquisition to the Force—as the Garda are known these days.

Anyway, last week, after hanging around the local bar trying to eavesdrop for three hours, Jude wandered out to take the air. Imagine his dismay when he found three juveniles apparently tampering with his car. Treading boldly, in true Star Trek manner, he tackled them, using all the consummate skill and knowledge in martial arts that police academy had taught him.

Picking himself up from the gutter, he was horrified to discover that these young reprobates were kicking the tripe out of him. It was but a moment for his steely reflexes to take over as he staggered to his feet and attempted to flee. Alas, he was pursued by kicks and oaths and when he tried to find sanctuary in a nearby house, his attackers battered down

the door and stabbed him in the neck with a broken bottle. He is now in hospital. I'm really cut up about this one, I can tell you! Where will it all end? Get well soon, Jude, I know you're not a hopeless case!

FAILED ROMANCE

And now a tale of love, romance and intrigue, concerning the belle of the Moy, M/S Violet Corrigan. Violet used to love Ernest George Finlay of Rehagey Road, Aughnacloy, a fine upstanding member of the UDR. He, too, was besotted with her, and thought of her every time he played with his Walther—which had been issued to him by his C/O for his personal protection. Alas! The fair Violet proved to be a fickle jade and took up company keeping with Billy White, thus giving Ernie the heave-

ho. Rancour coursed through Ernie's tormented soul (has the Brigadier flipped his lid? Editor) and, last September he approached Violet and her inamorata as they sat canoodling in a parked car in Moy. Brandishing his beloved Walther he poetically threatened to blow White's effing head off if he did not cease trifling with V's affections. 'I'm in the UDR,' he cried, 'and have a licence to kill!'

Unfortunately the cowardly White touted on him, and, as a result, he got a three months suspended sentence from that savage enemy of the police, Gerard McCann.

In the same court, another sorry tale emerged when fellow UDR man Stewart Talbot of Gortin Crescent got fined £118.10p and banned from driving for a year. Stewart, I am informed, had been drinking in the Dungannon Swifts Social Club at Stangmore, and, on leaving these salubrious premises in a 'slightly emotional state' (believed to be 215 mlgms) drove his car straight into a parked car owned by Inspector Magee of Ulster's finest.

Running from his house, the gallant Inspector pursued the drunken UDR man and apprehended him, charging him with drunken driving, careless driving, failing to stop after an accident and being very silly. A whip round for Stewarty in the club, where he is a popular figure, raised the 10p. Only another £118 to go.



CONTRIBUTION

And if you're thinking of sending in a contribution, perhaps you'll add £30 for ex Welsh Fusilier and present UDR man Brian Gillen, of Lincoln Courts, Waterside, Derry. Brian 'got drunk, I'm sorry to say—must be the strain—perhaps he should join the Eddie Maggs Fan Club and Suicide Battalion—anyway, for I digress, Brian went with his mates across the border to Bridgend, bringing his Walther with him.

Unfortunately he fell in with wicked people and they nicked it on him and had him arrested by the Garda. The shame of it! But don't worry, although all the above UDR personnel may have been just a trifle silly, they are still all members of the regiment and held in as much esteem as before.

Finally, I'm worried about little Kenny Newman. He's not been looking at all well recently, it seems that the Bennett Report, which the dwarf has been sitting on for the past three weeks in order to make him look taller, says that Kenny has been telling fibs and that some of his boys in Castlereagh have been helping suspects to inflict all those injuries on themselves. Ken's been trying for a job in the Met for the last six months, but will Bennett do his chances any good? Watch this space.

Bye for now,
your chum,
The Brigadier

P.S.—To the well wisher who wrote to me commiserating about what happened to my bullet proof armoured car—some stupid mechanic with a blowtorch set fire to the wretched thing when it was parked in barracks in Lisburn and did £8000 worth of damage—don't worry, I am insured. And to AK of the D.L.F. Keep taking the tablets. Roy does, and look how handsome he is!

STOP PRESS—In view of his obvious experience I have decided to appoint police surgeon Dr. Robert Irwin as one of the judges in my 'Police Thug of the Year' competition. All entries to be in by April 1st.

duirt siad

"The IRA shot rather badly and the paratroopers rather too well... Each side fired the same number of bullets, 340 altogether—but the casualty rate was 13 to nil".

Major-General Richard Clutterbuck, Brit expert on 'Terrorism', talking about 'Bloody Sunday' in a recent interview published in the 'New Yorker' magazine.

"What has happened is that the Provisional IRA has won the respect of its enemies, army and police alike. There has been a reorganisation. It is smaller but tougher".

'Politics Today' column of the London 'Financial Times' (2/2/79).

"Nobody cares much about the men who come back from Ulster. If they die they may get a brief mention on the 9 o'clock news".

Dr. Michael Simpson, psychiatrist.

"These young men come over here to lend us their assistance only to die doing their duty".

The Coroner at the inquest last week of Brit under-cover agent, L/Cpl. Paul Harman, shot dead by the IRA in December '77.

"Perhaps if we did not have the current situation in Northern Ireland you would never have appeared inside a court".

Judge McGonigal, sentencing three Tyrone men on a political offence.

"An unversed visitor at the Mansion House might never know that British soldiers occupy part of this country, that the prisons of the six counties are full of young men and young women who would never have seen the inside of a police station or a prison were it not for their opposition to the British occupation of our country".

Hibernia's Brian Stephens on the Stickle Ard Fels.

"I was convinced that, due to the description I gave, this person would be acquitted. This was not the case. He was convicted".

Dr. Robert Irwin on a political prisoner who received over 40 bruises in Castlereagh.

"America is a very important area for us. All the feedback I am getting is that the H-Block campaign is doing very considerable damage".

Viscount Brookeborough (son of former 'Prime Minister of Northern Ireland') speaking in the 'House of Lords' (8/3/79).

"The British should copy the Republic and introduce legislation to ban such programmes".

Unionist Councillor, Billy Bleakes, on the 'Weekend World' programme on RUC torture.

"The Minister of Health gave a box of cigars to every smoking Minister who didn't smoke during the recent Fianna Fail Ard Fheis".
Journalist Donal Foley in 'Irish Times'.

"Cities along the Ohio River, downstream from the nuclear reactor at Piqua, have shown increases in cancer rates of 20 to 50%".

Counter-Information Services 'Report on the Nuclear Disaster'.

"The compulsory EEC legislation means that it is going to take Northern Ireland's drivers longer to Europe and back".

'Irish News', explaining higher freight costs.

"(The Klepsch Report) demonstrates that there is a direct link between EEC industrial policy and effective co-operation in European armaments procurement".

Geoffrey Rippon, leader of the English Tory group in the European parliament.

"Mr. Fitt was one of the people who pressed for the building of Divis Flats. He was a member of the then Belfast City Corporation which designed Turf Lodge, Divis Flats and Shankill Flats".
W. Glendinning, Alliance Councillor.

Sinn Fein Public seminar

on
SUNDAY, MARCH 25th
2.30 to 5.00 p.m.

in
BUNDORAN, CO. DONEGAL.

Speakers:
Aindrias O'Ceallachain "Republicanism & Socialism"
Risteard Behal "The E.E.C. from the frying pan into the fire"
All enquiries to: O'Neill's Pub, Main Street, Bundoran.
Organized by: Sinn Fein, Bundoran.

ARMAGH PICKETERS ATTACKED

Our photograph shows members of the hated RUC attacking protesters outside Armagh women's prison shortly after a picket organised to mark International Women's Day.

In the forefront of the photograph, being bundled towards an RUC landrover is Mary Enright, a member of the Belfast group, Women Against Imperialism, which organised the picket. (Mary is also a leading member of Belfast Relatives Action Committee).

The picket which took place on Thursday 8th March was attended by about forty people. While it was going on women prisoners hung banners from their cell windows to acknowledge the street protest. Messages of solidarity were exchanged between those on the outside and those inside, and Republican songs were sung.

The RUC attack on the picketers resulted in eleven people being arrested and charged with disorderly behaviour and obstruction.



Members of the hated RUC 'celebrate' International Women's Day by attacking women protestors outside Armagh prison.

Comhairle Cuige Laighean report

The Comhairle Cuige Laighean held their monthly meeting on Sunday 11th March at No. 5 Blessington Street, Dublin.

Those present were George Lynch, chairman; Larry Ryan, treasurer; Sean Halpern, vice chairman; P. O. Sean Crowe, youth organiser; Paddy Duffy, secretary; Brendan Golden, organiser; Aine Ni Ghabhain, education officer. Also present was Joe Cahill, Vice-President of Sinn Fein, and Walter Lynch, General Secretary.

It was a lively meeting, and the situation of Sinn Fein in Leinster was discussed fully. Reports were received from each of the officers, and from the delegates representing the different areas. One suggestion was that these monthly meetings be moved around the area in order to facilitate delegates who found it a problem to get to Dublin.

The sale of *An Phoblacht/Republican News* was discussed, including the general impact of the paper. Delegates felt that it was a very good paper now, and that sales were going up.

The local elections were discussed, and Walter Lynch (Director of Elections) said that some areas were working very hard, whilst others were dragging their heels. He felt that an all-out effort must be made now. He said that a new 14-page manifesto is now available, and there will also be available a 6-page pamphlet, a condensed version of the manifesto.

Joe Cahill said that a committee had been set up in Dublin to deal with prisoners, and that H-Block committees had been set up in Derry and Belfast. He pointed out that the film "Prisoner of War" was available with speakers, but up to date only Dundalk had booked it. Joe Cahill pointed out that a National Demonstration was being held in Dundalk on May 19th and that Leinster must pull out all the stops, and get every available person there.

At the end of the meeting the following statement on the tax situation was issued:

"We of the Comhairle Cuige Laighean declare our support for the workers in both the agricultural and urban areas who are fighting the injustices of the present income tax policies of Leinster House. We believe this is a fight between the 'Haves' and the 'Have-nots'. We demand equality in taxation, equality in the distribution of wealth."

NEWTOWNABBEY VIGIL



THE newly formed Newtownabbey Relatives Action Committee recently held a 24 hour vigil (pictured above) in Bawnmore estate, on the Northern outskirts of Belfast.

During the 24 hour vigil they handed out leaflets to the local people and posted walls in the area with 'H' Block posters.

Members of the committee addressed

passers-by through a loudhailer explaining the background to the 'blanket men's' protest. A speaker read out a letter of support from local Republican POWs imprisoned in the cages of Long Kesh.

The reception to the protestors from local people was friendly with many generously donating to the collection and others offering their houses for tea-making.

NEW DERRY CENTRE RAIDED

On Monday 5th March, exactly one week to the day, after its opening, the new H-Block Information Centre in Derry was raided by a large force of Brits, complete with sniffer dog and 3 RUC Special Branch men. The Bogside Sinn Fein Advice Centre, in the same premises at 15 Cable Street, was raided at the same time.

Our photograph shows a voluntary helper at the centre which is continuing to operate efficiently despite the Brit raid, which was a typical act of pure harassment.



Dublin North Central Candidate Selected

A convention for the forthcoming local government elections, organised by the Liam Mellows/Jim Bryson Cumainn, Dublin North Central, took place on Sunday 25th February.

George Lynch was elected candidate; D. Casey, Director of Elections; T. O'Donovan, Finance; Sean Quinn, Publicity; and Sean Purcell, Transport.

George Lynch, who comes from the area, is a member of the Sinn Fein Ard Comhairle. He is a long standing member of the trade union movement and is a voluntary social worker.

BANNED S.C.A.R. CONFERENCE GOES AHEAD

Sunday March 4th saw the first national conference of the Students Campaign Against Repression (S.C.A.R.) which was held at Magee University College, Derry City. There was an encouraging turn-out of students with delegates from many universities and colleges both North and South.

The organisers of the conference, Magee Students Union, had given due notice to the college administration, yet the conference was 'banned' on the grounds that it was 'controversial'. The fact that Elizabeth's visit in 1977 was 'controversial' as were the visits of Lord Melchett and the Peace People, did not seem to cause any undue concern to the college administration.

Despite the 'ban' and despite the arrival of the hated R.U.C. the conference went ahead without interruption.

The proceedings opened with an address by Joe Edwards of the Trade Union Campaign Against Repression (T.U.C.A.R.).

He spoke of the unity forged between workers and students struggling against repression all over the world.

He spoke of the murder of Brian Maguire in Castlereagh; and of how

large numbers of his fellow-workers had been brought onto the streets of Belfast in protest at his death.

He stated that discrimination in employment is a form of repression and that there are more types of repression than the higher levels such as torture and murder.

He also pointed out that the H-Block 'blanket men' are not just protesting for better conditions but are engaged in a political struggle against 'criminalisation'.

AIMS

A good discussion on what the aims of SCAR should be then followed and four main points were decided upon:

- (i) the repeal of all repressive legislation, North and South;
- (ii) the abolition of the H-Blocks and the restoration of political status;
- (iii) the abolition of the Diplock courts in the North and Special Criminal courts in the South; and

(iv) an end to British interference in Ireland, acknowledging the right of self-determination for the whole of the Irish people.

A proposal from a Northern delegate that one stated aim should be 'solidarity' with Republican freedom fighters was deferred until the next conference.

ROLE

The role of the student movement was then discussed including ways of breaking the Sticke stranglehold on the Union of Students of Ireland (U.S.I.). Trinity and U.C.D. students spoke of the failure of the U.S.I. hierarchy to face the realities of repression and of how they were parroting Sticke policy through their 'Peace, Jobs and Progress' campaign.

A Derry Delegate pointed out that until we remove partition we can have neither peace, jobs nor progress.

The conference ended with the election of an interim national committee and it was decided to hold another conference in a few weeks time in Dublin.

Meath convention

A convention of Meath Sinn Fein will be held in Crinon's Hotel, Navan on Thursday 22nd March at 8.30 pm sharp. All Republicans are invited to attend.

PROTESTORS DISRUPT DIVIS FLATS CEREMONY

At the recent opening of the Divis Flats Community Centre in Belfast's Lower Falls, members of the Lower Falls/Divis Flats Relatives Action Committee staged a protest demanding POW status for Republican prisoners.

The 'opening' ceremony which was designed to take place amid a blaze of publicity, ended up as a 'damp squib'. No matter where the pro-Brit hacks from Belfast's City Hall went with their entourage from the media, they were followed by the H-Block protestors chanting anti-Brit slogans.

Our photograph shows the protestors occupying the inside of the community centre which was set aside for a 'slap-up' meal for the Brits' yes men!



It is time for Irish people everywhere to come to terms with themselves in their relation to what has always been called "The Irish Government" since 1921. What- ever claim to administer the rule of law over a portion of Ireland the men in Leinster House possess, they have absolutely NO CLAIM to call themselves the govern- ment of the Irish people.... or the Irish Government.

A British Prime Minister's pen scratched a winding, crooked line across the beautiful face of Ireland. Then he declared that from that day in 1921, there would henceforth be two countries in the little nation, thus two governments were set up by the British, one in Belfast and one in Dublin.

The fact is that such British interference cannot create a legiti- mate government in any part of Ireland. But if one insists that the government set up in Dublin is an Irish government simply because it is on Irish soil well then ask yourself what country is Belfast in?

Sure!!
So the government set up in Belfast must also be regarded as an Irish government. Just because an Irish tricolour floated over Leinster House in Dublin and a Union Jack scarred the

Time to come to terms with 'The Irish Government'

by Tom Duffy



● This crowd in Dublin bear only empty titles.

skyline in Belfast, one is no more entitled to claim the word "Irish" than the other. In fact, neither of them has this claim because each had its birth on a table in Downing Street, London.

NO NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

The nearest approach to a government of all Ireland was the duly elected assembly to the Dail Eireann of 1919. This assembly or government was trampled on by Lloyd George's Black and Tans and left in dis- array and unable to function on

behalf of the whole Irish nation. Since that time there has been NO NATIONAL IRISH GOVERNMENT. The crowd in Dublin making this claim bear only empty titles.

However, in spite of all that I have said, these Dublin repre- sentatives could have acted out their role as Irishmen, as ordinary patriots. They could not, even then, have legitimised their claim to be the valid government of the Irish people. But they could have accrued a certain respectability and

honour if only they had kept reminding England that they, like every Irishman, would never be satisfied with a divided country. Instead, they settled themselves into nice comfortable jobs and paid lip service occa- sionally to the United Ireland Ideal.

DELINQUENT POSTURE

Their unpatriotic aspect has escaped the notice of the whole world simply because the world has never been interested in any- thing Irish. And many or most

Irish people came to regard the Dublin government as the legiti- mate government of Ireland.

Now, since the patriots in the Irish resistance movement have, by their efforts to free the nation from British rule, thrown into noticeable relief the delin- quent posture of the shameful men in Leinster House, the Dublin crowd have become as adamant in keeping Ireland divided as the loyalists of Belfast and the military brass of England. Yet they still call them- selves the Irish Government.

Irish county organisations seem to feel it an honour to have a representative of this counter- feit government at their various functions. I too, was at such a function recently, and when I began to sing the "Patriot Game" the Free State visiting dignitary got up and walked off. Certain travel agents seem to think that they are beholden to these digni- taries. If only they realised it, it is the other way around.

One such agent I know, would not allow his name to appear in the Journal of the recent Northern Aid function in Astorian Manor although he did make a contribution. Imagine such fear or respect for dignitar- ies with false titles!!

China-Vietnam-Cambodia-Cuba-Ethiopia-Eritrea

'SOCIALIST' INVASION

Recent events in the so-called 'socialist' countries are making it important to look at the attitude of these countries towards the question of national self-determination.

By
Juan Sosa



Back in 1968 there was the inva- sion of Czechoslovakia by Soviet tanks, under the guise of saving the country in spite of itself, from the danger of capitalist restoration. In reality the Soviet Union was act- ing like an imperialist power - such as when the American Marines are sent into Latin American countries or like the well-known colonial ex- ploits of the Brits. The Soviet Union was simply acting out of self- interest; it was protecting its own 'sphere of influence'.

Much more recently there have been two cases where troops of a socialist country have moved into other states for much more laud- able reasons.

GREAT SACRIFICE

In 1975, Cuban troops were sent to Angola to aid the nationalist MPLA movement in repulsing the racist South African invader. This admirable internationalist act by the Cubans involved a great sacri- fice for a small developing nation.

Then, early this year, the Vietna- mese army invaded the bordering 'socialist' state of Kampuchea (Cam- bodia). The Pol Pot regime was certainly very repressive, and its re- lation with the people was far from democratic. But, did the Vietna- mese have any more right to in- vade Kampuchea, than the Soviet Union had in crushing the Czecho-

slovakian attempt to build socialism "with a human face"?

In both Angola and Kampuchea, the forces which intervened were on the side of progress and social- ism. In Kampuchea the national right to self-determination was over-ruled by the need to safeguard the Vietnamese revolution.

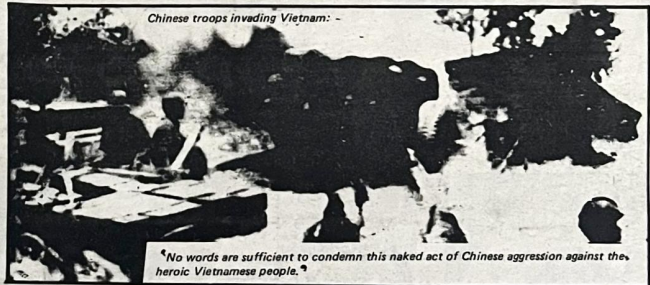
But who decides when national rights and world socialism come in- to conflict?

Two other cases prove without a doubt that the national right to self-determination must be preserv- ed, even under socialism, except in the most exceptional circumstan- ces.

DUBIOUS PROGRAMME

The Cuban aid to Angola was followed by a much more dubious programme of military assistance to the Derg regime in Ethiopia. At first this was restricted to help against the invasion by Somalis, which was backed by the imperial- ists. Sooner or later though the Cubans were bound to get involved in the Ethiopian offensive against the oppressed nation of Eritrea, where liberation forces had been previously supported by Cuba.

This involvement almost defini- tely included Cuban soldiers fight- ing directly against the Eritrean lib- eration army in the big Ethiopian push against the "rebels" to-



wards the end of last year. The ex- ample of Ethiopia is being followed today by the new regime in Iran which is doing nothing to accommo- date the national aspirations of the Kurds.

"Progressive" regimes are follow- ing in the footsteps of their pre- vious dictators - the Emperor Haile Selassie and the Shah - in oppres- sing the national minorities within their states.

BORDER CROSSED

On February 17th, Chinese troops crossed the Vietnamese border. Their object: to "punish" Vietnam, and to "teach the Vietna- mese some necessary lessons" in the words of Chinese Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing.

The result is to tarnish the image

of socialism among hundreds of thousands of people throughout the world. The Chinese version of "aggression" by tiny Vietnam is as credible as the Brits invading the Isle of Man on the pretext of Manx imperialism.

The Vietnamese, having suffered for decades under the boots and the bombs of French and American im- perialism are today faced by an in- vasion of "comrades".

No words are sufficient to con- demn this naked act of Chinese aggression against the heroic Viet- namese people. It's ironic that "Human Rights" Carter was in- formed of Chinese intentions during Deng's visit to the U.S., to which he offered no objection, (who would when their enemies fell out?)

The Brits of course are keen to provide the Chinese with the Harrier jets - business as usual, eh old chaps!

Now the Cubans tried to cover up their dirty job on the Eritreans by talking about imperialist "support" of the rebel forces. The Chinese do not even try to hide their inten- tions - to become a member of the imperialist club!

By their latest actions (in Vietnam and Eritrea), the "socialist" states of China and Cuba are busy provid- ing the worst possible advert for socialism. The answer of course does not lie with the smiling im- perialist Carter, but in developing a clear democratic socialist policy which will respect the rights of national minorities and of the self- determination of nations.

Birthday Greetings

COYLE, Patrick, P.O.W. H 3 Block.

Congratulations Patrick on this your 22nd birthday. May your next be spent in freedom. From your Mother and Father.

COYLE, Patrick, P.O.W. H 3 Block.

Best wishes Patrick on your 22nd birthday. Always thinking of you. Love from John, Margaret and children. Also from Joseph, Geraldine and Pauline.

COYLE, Patrick, P.O.W. H 3 Block.

Greetings Patrick on your 22nd birthday. "They may break you in body but never in spirit". Love from Hugo, Philip, Paul, Raymond, Vincent, Declan, Angela, Yvonne and your sister Marion in Limerick Gael.

FINUCANE, Seamus, P.O.W. H 6 Block.

Happy birthday son on this your 22nd birthday. Maybe you will get a new blanket. I don't think so but no harm in trying. You are always in my thoughts and prayers Seamus. From your loving Mother XXXX.

FINUCANE, Seamus, P.O.W. H 6 Block.

Happy birthday Seamus on this your 22nd birthday. You are always in our thoughts and prayers. Keep up the fight. From your loving brother. Patrick, Geraldine, Michael and Kathleen.

FINUCANE, Seamus, P.O.W. H 6 Block.

Happy birthday Seamus on this your 22nd birthday. Continue your fight for freedom and rights. Ireland's true fight for justice and rights. God bless you and all your brave comrades. Love from brothers Martin, Dermot and Eilish.

FINUCANE, Seamus, P.O.W. H 6 Block.

Happy birthday Seamus on this your 22nd birthday. We support you in your fight for political status. May your next one be spent in freedom. From Sue, Martin and Padraig Pearse.

FINUCANE, Seamus, P.O.W. H 6 Block.

Happy birthday Seamus on your 22nd. You are getting an old man now. We know that your rightful demands shall soon be won. God bless you and all your brave comrades. From your loving sister Roseleen and Joe, also David and Karen.

FINUCANE, Seamus, P.O.W. H 6 Block.

Happy birthday Seamus on this your 22nd. To fight tyranny and injustice is to do God's holy will. May your courage and determination be an inspiration to us all. God bless you and all your comrades. From Rita and Maire. Keep up the fight.

McCLUSKEY, John, Wormwood Scrubs.

Birthday greetings to you John for 12th March. From all your friends in Leicester and London.

ROONEY, Philip, P.O.W. H 3 Block.

Happy birthday Philip. We are all behind you in your struggle for political status. All our love from Eilish, Lisa, Karen, Tony and Bernie, also Frankie H 5 and Mairead, your Aunt Minsie, Uncle Willie and family, Luton.

EASTER LILIES

ORDER YOUR EASTER LILIES NOW!

Available from
Mrs. P. King, 29 All Saints' Park,
Raheny, Dublin 5
Price: £10.00 per 1,000
Honour Ireland's Dead:
Wear an Easter Lily!

TOM SMITH COMMEMORATION DUBLIN

Assemble: Berkeley Road Church after 10.30a.m. Mass on March 17th. (St. Patrick's Day). March: to Glasnevin Cemetery for oration and wreath-laying ceremony.

All Banners Welcome
Organised by Cumann Mhic Chaba/
Ui Chaoighligh, Sinn Fein, Baile munna/
Fionnghlas.

AN CUMANN CABHRACH DUBLIN

St. Patrick's night Ceili
17th March. 9 pm - 1 am.
Osta John Devoy
Aisling Ceili Band

Tickets £3 each include three course meal and bus fare. Bus leaves 44 Parnell Square at 8 pm. and returns there after the Ceili.

Please book tickets in advance to ensure a seat on the bus.
Tickets available from 44 Parnell Square or ring P. King, Dublin 314941.

IN MEMORIAM

MURRAY, Kevin, (5th Anniversary)

In proud and loving memory of Volunteer Kevin Murray, Oglaiha Na hEireann, killed on active service 15th March, 1974. Always remembered by the officers and members of the Carry, Crowley, Loughran Sinn Fein Cumann, Dungannon, Mary of the Gael, pray for him.

MURRAY, Kevin, (5th Anniversary)

In proud memory of Volunteer Kevin Murray, Oglaiha Na hEireann, killed on active service 15th March, 1974. Always remembered by the officers and members of the McDonald/Murray Sinn Fein Cumann, Kilishill.

McDONALD, Patrick, (5th Anniversary)

In proud memory of Volunteer Patrick McDonald, Oglaiha Na hEireann, killed on active service 15th March, 1974. Always remembered by the officers and members of the Carry, Crowley, Loughran Sinn Fein Cumann, Dungannon.

McDONALD, Patrick, (5th Anniversary)

In proud memory of Volunteer Patrick McDonald, Oglaiha Na hEireann, killed on active service 15th March, 1974. Always remembered by the officers and members of the McDonald/Murray Sinn Fein Cumann, Kilishill.

HUGHES, Cathal, (7th Anniversary)

In proud and loving memory of Volunteer Cathal Hughes, 2nd Battalion, Belfast Brigade, Oglaiha Na hEireann, shot by enemies of Ireland, 8th March, 1971. His courage will be an example to us all. Inserted by the Cathal Hughes Cumann, Dublin.

SMITH, Tom, (4th Anniversary)

In proud and loving memory of our comrade Volunteer Tom Smith, murdered in Portlaoise Prison on 17th March, 1975. Always remembered by his comrades in Portlaoise Prison.

H - BLOCK MEETINGS

P.O.W. FILM

Meetings on H-Block at which the film "Prisoner of War" will be shown are as follows:

SHANNON Tues 20th March
LIMERICK Wed 21st March
WATERFORD Fri 22nd March
NENAGH Fri 23rd March
CAHERCIVEN Tues 27th March
LISTOWEL Wed 28th March
TRALEE Thur 29th March
STROKESTOWN Easter Monday
DUNDALK Thur 5th April

Any other areas wishing to hold meetings using this film please contact, Sinn Fein, 44 Parnell Sq., Dublin 1.

ANDERSONSTOWN H-BLOCK MEETING

Belfast Sinn Fein is organising an H-Block lecture and film in the Andersonstown social club on Tuesday 20th March at 8 p.m.

St. Patrick's Day

DERRY MARCH

Saturday 17th March
Assemble 2.30 p.m. Creggan Shops
Defend P.O.W. status! Brits out!
March organised jointly by Sinn Fein and R.A.C.

GARTREE PICKET

A picket will be held outside Gartree Prison, near Market - Harborough, Leicester, from 1.30 p.m. until 3.30 p.m. on Sunday 1st April.

Transport will leave from Birmingham Hall of Memory in Broad Street at 11.30 a.m.

SUPPORT THE P.O.W.'s
Protest Organised by Birmingham Sinn Fein

COMHAIRLE CEANTAIR LUIMNEACH

A film and lecture on the H-Blocks will be shown in the Gaelic League Hall, Thomas Street, Limerick Wednesday, 21st March at 8 p.m.

GET WELL

GET WELL SOON

The paper's staff send greetings for a speedy recovery to Eddie. Hope you're back up and about soon.

GET WELL SOON

Glad to see you out of hospital Mark and on the road to recovery. From everyone on the paper.

APOLOGIES

'An Phoblacht/Republican News' would like to apologise for omitting the names of 2 women P.O.W.'s from the list of protesting prisoners held in Armagh jail, which we published on our centre-spread a fortnight ago. They are Lynn O'Connell and Sadie McGilloway.



Solidarity Greetings

DINES, Sammy, P.O.W. H Block.
Short Strand R.A.C. send congratulations and solidarity greetings to Sammy Dines for having completed TWO YEARS ON THE BLANKET. We may have brave men but we will never have better. Venceremos!

DINES, Sammy, (H 5)
Congratulations son on having completed your second year on the blanket in England's hell-hole. From your Mother and Father, brothers and sister in Vulcan Street, Short Strand. Also from Sheila, Theresa and Mary.