

REPUBLICAN NEWS



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FUSION!

An
Phoblacht

REPUBLICAN
NEWS



This is the last issue of 'Republican News' in its present form. Next week we will be back again on the streets as 'An Phoblacht/Republican News' the nationwide official organ of the Republican Movement.

The new paper will be distributed on a 32-county wide basis and will be the largest circulation weekly in Ireland. It will aim not only to draw together the best of both 'An Phoblacht' and 'Republican News' but it will improve on both our reporting and analysis of the war in the North and of popular economic and social struggles in the South. We also intend to provide an improved and widened forum for Republican debate on building a new Ireland.

We view the fusion of the Republican Movement's existing two papers as an exciting and challenging step forward nearly a decade after veteran Republican Jimmy Steele re-established 'Republican News' in Belfast.

OVERCOME PARTITION

The war being waged in the Northern occupied zone of this country is not just to get the Brits off the streets of the six counties but is the spearhead of a national liberation struggle to establish a united democratic Socialist Republic which will mean revolutionary change throughout the length and breadth of the thirty-two counties.

This dictates the absolute necessity of one single united paper providing a clear line of Republican leadership. We cannot afford the possible confusion of two different papers or any possible development of a 'Northern' view and a 'Southern' view.

The essential thinking behind the fusion is the need to overcome any partitionist thinking which results from the British-enforced division of this country and of the Irish people.

In the past 'Republican News' has aimed to be in the forefront of explaining British political strategy and their 'counter-insurgency' tactics such as 'criminalisation', the H-Blocks, interrogation techniques and their attempts to dampen the nationalist people's revolutionary spirit through the 'milk and honey' of such projects as the De Lorean Motor Company. We have also attempted to report and explain Republican military activity, such as the bombing campaign, and place it in its context of 'de-stabilising' the six-county statelet.

SYMBOL OF RESISTANCE

We believe that a weakness of the war being waged in the North over the last decade has been a lack of sufficient political support for the war from the South despite the tremendous efforts of dedicated Sinn Féin personnel and others.

The new paper will not only be a symbol of resistance to the people North of the border but will also aim to become a similar focus in the South.

We believe that the new paper will become a weapon in the hands of Republicans, a weapon which will begin to help dispel any complacency in the 26 counties, not only by exposing British barbarity in the occupied six counties, but by pointing to the deprivation and suffering of the people within the 26 counties.

R.U.C.

THE SAME OLD STORY

IT MAY be a new year but for the RUC it's the same old storey: harassment and beatings in the streets, brutality and torture behind closed doors.

Dismal failure, another old friend of the hated RUC, has also been staring them straight in the face from Burntollet to Castle-reagh.

A fortnight ago despite a massive show of force (their largest ever except for their August 1977 mobilisation in defence of their English Queen) the RUC failed dismally in their attempt to curb and intimidate the Burntollet Commemoration marchers.

Once again the RUC's discipline and violently sectarian sentiments were openly exposed. For example the Dublin 'Sunday Independent' carried a front page report describing an RUC 'Chief Inspector' viciously kicking a defenceless protestor who was being pinned down on the road by other RUC men.

DISMAL FAILURE

In the past fortnight two examples have come to light of the RUC's desperate attempts to recruit touts through threats issued to interrogation victims in Castlereagh; in both cases dismal failure was the fate of the RUC once again. Both young Belfast men, who the RUC selected as their victims, wisely refused to go along with the RUC's sinister touting plans. On page 3 of this paper we record the experience of one man, John Duffy from Short Strand, who has publicly exposed the RUC's tout-recruiting attempt in his case.

The second case was Michael Quigg from St. James'. He has been held in Castlereagh three times in the past two months. Each time the RUC through threats of blackmail, brutality and imprisonment have attempted to recruit him as a tout. Each time Michael Quigg has rebuffed their attempts. The last attempt

was earlier this week. As a result of their failure the RUC have now carried out their threats and have incarcerated him in Crumlin Road gaol on spurious charges.

R.U.C. EXPOSED

Despite all their frame-ups, torture and killings of members of the nationalist community they have failed along with their British military masters to put down the risen people.

Increasingly, both the 'official' RUC actions of brutality and torture, and the 'unofficial' RUC actions of murder and other crimes, are being exposed to the public view.

In December through force of circumstances, (their crimes having become open 'secrets'), the RUC charged five of their own men with kidnapping, bombing, attempted murder and murder of members of the nationalist community, all of which increases the likelihood that Republican volunteer Jake McMahon of Short Strand met his death at the hands of the RUC when he disappeared a year ago this week. (For story see page 4).

No matter how much their prim English 'Chief Constable' Newman may whine on about the RUC being a 'reformed and disciplined modern police force', the truth stands out clearly.

The RUC remain a sectarian force which constitutes an integral part of the British war machine. Not only is the RUC rank-and file a collection of orange sectarian bigots, but the purpose of the RUC's very ex-



istence is to defend the sectarian six-county statelet and to perpetuate British colonial rule in Ireland. Therefore the RUC would still be totally unacceptable even if it were composed of angels.

Apology

'Republican News' would like to apologise to those readers who did not receive last week's copy of the paper.

Owing to an unfortunate combination of circumstances, namely, a motor accident, the atrocious weather conditions and the general shortage of petrol, we were unable to distribute the paper as widely as normal.

A BREAK IN THE MONOTONY



A THIN layer of virgin snow covered all but a few spaces on the raven black surface of the small barren tarmac yard which lay dormant outside my cell window. The first snow of an unwelcome winter had just fallen as the grey light of another dying day faded.

The sky was a swirling mass of white snow?clouds which hung threateningly, biding their time, waiting to release their monster load of freezing wintry flakes to consume the land and to paint the countryside a brilliant white.

SUDDEN BURST

It was bitter cold, I had been huddled up in the corner of my freezing cell. The thin foam mattress which serves as my bed upon the cold concrete floor was damp, worn and dirty. I was sitting upon it trying to find some warmth with the flimsy worn blankets that I had tightly wrapped around my body.

Suddenly I was drawn to the window by the burst of chatter and excitement that came from two or three of my naked comrades a short distance away as they announced the nasty change in the weather from the windows of their cave-like cells. It was a break in the almost eternal boredom and an unexpected change in the eyesore scenery of the grey barbed wire that hung lifelessly from the equally as grey steel criss-crossed wire and corrugated timbers.

The thin covering of snow glistened and glittered, blocking out the greyness and painting a new picture. It was something new to view to help pass the never ending hours, and with the imminent promise



of more to fall, the attraction drove the rest of the lads to the windows and the chatter built up.

FORGOTTEN MEMORIES

Old, almost forgotten memories of winters gone by were dug up from the back of scarred minds and were shared one after the other out the windows.

The latest news was passed across to the boys on the other side of the wing

who being unable to see out of their recently blocked-up fortified windows, were driven to their doors by curiosity to seek the answer to the abnormal commotion from their excited comrades.

Another thin fall of snow fluttered through the descending darkness and a thousand coloured lights of orange white and red, illuminated the surrounding area, sparkling and reflect-

ing off the frosted timbers flashing upon the miles of snow-covered barbed wire, varnishing the smooth carpet that lay upon the yard. The snowflakes appeared like magic from out of the blackness above, floating as if to the music of the sighing wind to their

dying at the windows, only the hearty and lonely remained braving the cold. Another sleepless night I thought.

The concrete floor was so cold that to pace the floor would be impossible in one's bare feet. Three small flimsy blankets and lying upon a damp mattress would not provide enough warmth for escape through sleep. This night will be another night huddled up in the corner fighting the intense cold amidst despairing thoughts when the pain and depression become almost overwhelming.

ANGRY WIND

The wind is rising and growing angry, it will carry the blankets of falling snow in through the paneless window.

I am very, very cold now. I can stand here and freeze at the window gazing upon this barbed wire jungle of colour and whiteness or, I can retreat to my little den in the corner of my tomb and gaze at my nightmarish surroundings, upon the dark sinister shadows which the filthy walls conjure up, or the piles of scattered, once putrifying, now stinking rubbish which scars the floor.

Cold, tasteless porridge for breakfast tomorrow morning, the promise of yet another beating and another eternity and another cold, cold night.

The monster is shedding its coat of a million snow flakes, the other monster is sleeping somewhere, tomorrow is the last day of the year. No one else is at their windows now. Dear God, I wonder how things are in Siberia?

earthly destination.

DYING CHATTER

Clouds from my warm breath departed out of the paneless window into the night. Flakes of snow and frost clung to my long shaggy beard and my eyes watered as the cold cut at my face and attacked my naked body.

Who would imagine such a beautiful night could be found in a place filled with so much misery and pain I thought as I rubbed my hands and stamped my bare feet in an attempt to bring some warmth back into them. The chatter was

BLOODY SUNDAY COMMEMORATION

7th Anniversary March

Sunday, 28th January, 1979

ASSEMBLE: CREGGAN SHOPS AT 2.30 p.m.
Prominent Speakers
Organized by Sinn Féin



IN MEMORIAM

STONE, John (Fourth Anniversary). In loving memory of my dear Brother, Volunteer John Stone, 2nd Battalion, Belfast Brigade, Oglagh na h-Eireann, who died on active service, 21st January 1975. Time unfolds another year, but memories of you are always near. Always remembered by his loving sister and brother-in-law and family, Catherine and John.

STONE, John (4th Anniversary). In loving memory of my dear brother, Volunteer John Stone, 2nd Battalion, Belfast Brigade, Oglagh na h-Eireann, who was killed on active service on 21st January 1975. "Lay him away on the hillside, along with the brave and the bold, inscribe his name in the roll of fame, in letters of purest gold". Always remembered by his brother Louis, sister-in-law Mary and family.

STONE, John (4th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Volunteer John Stone, 2nd Battalion, Belfast Brigade, Oglagh na h-Eireann, who died on active service on 21st January 1975. From the graves of patriot men and women spring living nations. Ireland unfree shall never be at peace. Always remembered by his friends Gerard and Mary Cush.

SALUTE THE HERO

By the Brigadier

Evenin' all,

And first, may I join with the inhabitants of Bellaghy in congratulating their very own local son 'Black Bob' Overend for his single-handed defence of the village from mauling Burntoltlett marchers and thugs. While little Roy's boys stood aside and allowed the cowardly marchers to attack policemen's boots with their heads, it was Black Bob who came to the rescue.

His valiant attempt to shoot 'vermin', as he so wittily put it, on his land was, alas, thwarted by a misguided RUC man who knocked his gun up, but to "Worried but loyal" of Castledawson who has written to me, a word of reassurance. There is no question, contrary to public speculation, of this gallant, loyal, ex Convention member, and RUC Reserve being charged with attempted murder.

Indeed, so proud of him are the local citizenry that they are planning a thank you party. Hopefully this one will go with a bang, unlike the last one.

Another farewell party is being planned for some of Bob's chums in 5 UDR, which revels in its title of Ulster's most discredited regiment. I refer of course to the sad fate awaiting three of their members, James Stewart of Glenmaquil Road, Magherafelt, Robert Kerr of Killowen Drive, Magherafelt and Robert Stewart of Rockview Park, Moneymore.

Along with two UDA men they have been charged with some 22 burglaries. Tip of the iceberg really, but still, it'll have to be added to the roll of honour.

So too will two more of

Roy's boys, Military policeman James McKeefery of Nelson Drive, Waterside, Derry and his mate trooper John Drew McKenzie of the same address. They've been charged with five burglaries and causing malicious damages to schools which they robbed. They've been returned for trial in Downpatrick and I expect them to get a severe ticking off.

But enough of these peccadilloes; I must tell you about my luncheon date last week. It was with Rob Cooper of the Fair Employment agency, my old mate Glennie Barr and two of his UDA friends who shall, I think, remain

anonymous.

Bob, I must confess, is a bit mean and so he only took us to the Bodega for 'a sandwich and a working lunch.' Alas, they were fresh out of sandwiches and big spender Bob ended up ordering us each a packet of crisps instead. Glennie wasn't the best pleased, especially when Bob, in that rather high pitched whine of his, told Glennie to run downstairs for them. It is to his credit that he managed to carry out this difficult errand successfully, but, if truth be told, his remarks to me afterwards about what he and 'the boys' would do to Cooper 'after the coup d'etat' were rather bloodthirsty.

Oh well, I'm off to write to her Majesty to hank her for all the New Years hon-



ours she has bestowed on our little province — I was particularly glad to see Special Branch chief Michael Selvin getting an OBE to go along with the MBE he got for 'interrogating' prisoners in Palace Barracks. Well done, Mick!

Bye for now,
your old chum,
— The Brigadier.

R.U.C. 'TOUT RECRUITING' FAILS

"I was arrested by the RUC at approximately 6 a.m. on Tuesday 9th January under Section 11 of the Emergency Provisions Act and taken to Castlereagh.

"I'm not sure at exactly what time the first interview started but I reckon it must have been about 11 o'clock. I was brought into the interrogation room and the two peelers asked me questions about my family, my background and my social life.

SOCIABLE MOOD

"The mood of the interview was very sociable, just as if I were applying for a job. In fact when they ended their questions about my family and they began to allege that I was a member of the IRA, strangely the mood did not change.

"Anyway, they continued by saying that they knew I had been involved in a number of incidents, but regardless of this, if I would be prepared to work for them then nothing would be made of these. I denied any knowledge of these incidents and told them there was no way that I was in the IRA.

"They just laughed at me. One of them, waving a file of papers in front of me, and nodding at the wall, said that I needn't worry, for they were not C.I.D. like the people in the next room.

NOT LIKE THEM

"He said that if the ones next door had the information he had in the files in his hand, then I would be in dead serious trouble and likely get charged and sent to Crumlin Road. 'But', he continued, 'we are not like them, we work in our own

The following statement from 18 year-old John Duffy from the Short Strand area of Belfast describes a classic style of 'interrogation' and classic method of 'developing' touts.

The interrogators main approach is neither harsh nor intimidatory but is aimed at building up a 'rapport' between themselves and their victim.

The questions about John Duffy's social life flowed smoothly over into those about alleged IRA activities. The importance of the interrogation victim 'breaking the spiral' at an early point by refusing to answer any questions, no matter how apparently harmless, is well illustrated here; as is the use of the 'hard' interrogator to drive the victim further into the hands of the 'soft' men.

John Duffy carried out the correct response to the attempt by the RUC to recruit him as a tout. He has publicly exposed their futile efforts. We can recommend this course of action to further RUC victims as their wisest path if things get as far as they did in John Duffy's case.

special group, and in fact it was us who requested to have you picked up, not them'. One of them then asked me if I knew that three others from the same area had been arrested along with me, but they were only to cover for them bringing me in to put their 'deal to me.

"At my next interview, at about 3 p.m. the exact same line of questioning took place, as it did again in the third interview that night which lasted from about 7 o'clock until half past eleven.

SCARED

"The same two peelers questioned me during all my interrogations except for this third interview when they were joined by a third one. While the other two were calm and talked quietly, he shouted a lot and kept threatening me.

"He made me feel very nervous and I just would have given anything to get away from him.

"Their questions never changed and it was during this interview that one of them said that they were certain that I was



"One of them waving a file of papers in front of me and nodding at the wall said that I needn't worry for they were not C.I.D. like the people in the next room".

in the IRA and as such could be of vital use to them. I denied this, but he continued by saying that I needn't worry, they weren't going to harm me even though I was in the IRA. They weren't even going to ask me to tout on people in the Short Strand, all they wanted to know was how guns and explosives are transported in and out of the area.

"At this point I was getting really scared and my head was spinning with them going on and

on. I began to think to myself that if they were really being serious, then if I said I would work for them, they would have to let me out.

"This idea kept growing in my mind until eventually I told them I would do what they asked. The interview ended there and I was allowed to go back to my cell to get some sleep.

"The next day I was taken out again for interrogation but to my surprise, instead of the same line of questioning as

before, the whole period was spent talking about nothing in particular. You could say that they were sort of 'sweet talking' me.

"That was my fourth interrogation.

"My fifth and final one was completely unlike any of the rest. It only lasted for about five minutes, during which the two peelers asked me where was the best place for them to meet me, so that I could pass on information. I pretended to play along with them.

One of them said what about a hotel somewhere up the Upper Newtownards Road. I said, 'The Park Avenue, I used to live out near there'.

R.U.C. MUGS

They agreed and told me to be there for 4 p.m. Sunday 21st January. One of them then said we can't release you right away, because people might get suspicious. He said I would be getting out soon, as a cover the others who had been arrested along with me, would get out too.

"We were all released that night, Wednesday 10th January, at 7 o'clock.

"The reason I have made this public statement is because none of the allegations they made against me in Castlereagh are true; and having agreed to do the peelers' dirty work for them just because I was scared stiff and just wanted to get out of that place, now I am afraid that they may arrest me again and charge me, just for making mugs out of them."

— Signed John Duffy,
Short Strand, Belfast.

The first anniversary of the mysterious disappearance of IRA volunteer Jackie McMahon occurred on Thursday January 18th. Exactly one year ago on that date eighteen-year-old, Jackie McMahon, from Belfast's Short Strand area, was last seen alive by two of his friends in the company of RUC men who were questioning him about a minor incident outside Musgrave Street RUC Barracks, Belfast.

It wasn't until five months later, in May of last year that Jackie McMahon's body was discovered at the bottom of the River Lagan, not far from the spot where he was last seen alive.

Although the discovery of Jackie McMahon's body ended the five-month long nightmare his family and friends suffered in their anguished search for him, it raises the question of how his body ended up in the Lagan and who was responsible for his death.

A recollection of events leading to his disappearance and the subsequent behaviour of the RUC prior to the inquest, points to a cover-up of the truth.

Our reporter Peter Hayes looks at the facts surrounding Jackie McMahon's death and the manouevrings of the RUC to hide their involvement.

ON THE night of Thursday January 18th 1978, eighteen year old Jackie McMahon, accompanied by two friends left Roddy's Bar, in Belfast's Oxford Street, at about 10.30 p.m. On their way home they became involved in a minor dispute with members of the RUC at the entrance to Musgrave Street Barracks. After being 'told-off' by the RUC the three young lads split up.

From here onwards it is a mystery as to exactly what happened to Jackie McMahon, leading to his body being discovered in the River Lagan.

His companions later claimed that Jackie intended spending the night with friends on the New Lodge Road. They thought, although they could not be definite, that Jackie had proceeded to the New Lodge Road, after being checked-out by the RUC.

'NO RECORD' CLAIM

It wasn't until three days later on January 21st that Jackie's parents began to seriously question him not returning home, because it wasn't uncommon for Jackie to be out of the house overnight visiting friends.

The family contacted his friends who were last with him and as a result asked the RUC at Musgrave Street

if they were holding him, on a charge arising out of the dispute they had with the three youths.

The RUC claimed they had no record of Jackie's arrest, but told his Mother to return the following day to talk to the RUC men on duty the night the incident occurred or to contact the RUC at Mountpottinger Barracks in the Short Strand area.

Mr. and Mrs. McMahon were becoming increasingly worried; they contacted their son's friends on the New Lodge Road and discovered that he had not been seen on January 18th or since.

It wasn't until several days later that the RUC admitted that they had detained Jackie.

Although they went on to claim that he was not brought to any RUC barracks, and that he was released after one hour's questioning in the back of an RUC landrover. Initially the RUC claimed that they had dropped Jackie off in

East Bridge Street, close to the markets area of Belfast, but they later changed this to saying they dropped him in Bridge Street, en route to the New Lodge Road.

In the weeks and months that followed Jackie's disappearance the McMahon family, already heavily burdened by having two daughters in Armagh gaol on trumped up charges, lived a most heart-rending life, living each moment for a word or clue about their son's sudden disappearance.

On several occasions both parents walked the streets of the Short Strand and New Lodge Road districts in the vain hope of finding someone who would end their misery, by telling them of their sons whereabouts.

WHITEWASH EXERCISE

Then suddenly after five months of silence from the RUC, Mr. McMahon received a message telling him to visit the Belfast mortuary to identify the body of a person answering the description of his son. Mr. McMahon duly went to the mortuary and there identified the body of his only son, fished from the River Lagan, earlier that day.

Discovery of Jackie's body coincided with the fatal hanging, of Brian Maguire in Castlereagh torture centre. The RUC involvement in both McMahon's and particularly Maguire's deaths caused widespread anger; riots and burnings spread through the Republican ghettos of Belfast for the following week.

In an attempt to cool down the situation Mason

launched an 'impartial' investigation into the circumstances of both deaths. The whitewashing exercise began when Liverpool police (notorious for their Orange bias) took charge of the McMahon case.

WITNESS THREATENED

There followed an investigation which amounted to a typical cover-up. The inquest was a farce; the RUC related their story of leaving Jackie off in Bridge Street, then a Brit military policeman gave evidence that while driving through the Short Strand area sometime in February he saw Jackie McMahon walking along the Mountpottinger Road, accompanied by another local youth. The Brit's evidence was followed by the local youth who said that it was possible he may have been with Jackie McMahon.

Predictably the coroner exonerated the RUC from all blame concerning the death accepting the Brit's statement as proof that McMahon was alive after January 18th. He returned a verdict of 'death by misadventure'; that Jackie McMahon died as a result of an accident.

But an accident was an unlikely cause of McMahon's death.

The RUC's 'chief witness' at the inquest, was in fact intimidated into saying that he was with Jackie McMahon.

This witness now claims that several months after Jackie McMahon's body was discovered the RUC called at his home to question him. Although he was out when they called he

later went to the RUC barracks, to find out what they wanted.

While there he was questioned by the so called 'impartial' Liverpool police. They alleged that he was in the IRA and should therefore be aware of the circumstances behind McMahon's death. They also claimed that the IRA had shot McMahon, and that he was the last person to be seen with McMahon before his death.

The Liverpool police were in fact terrorising the young man into believing that they thought he might have something to do with McMahon's death. They frightened him to such an extent that he was prepared to do anything, even lie about being with McMahon in order to get himself out of the barracks. He signed a statement, and perjured himself at the inquest because he feared the consequences if he did not comply.

It is obvious from these actions of the RUC that they are trying to cover-up that they were the last people known to have seen Jackie McMahon alive. They are hoping that the finger of suspicion will point elsewhere.

But the likelihood of their illusions coming to pass is remote.

The recent charging of several RUC men with murder, attempted murder and kidnapping of members of the Nationalist community only adds fuel to the popular belief that Jackie McMahon was another tragic victim of RUC murderers.

— Peter Hayes



THE CASE OF JACKIE McMAHON

I.R.A. ATTACKS

AN ARMED RUC man on plainclothes duty inside the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, was shot in the chest. He was ambushed by an IRA active service unit on the evening of Tuesday January 7th.

In a supplied statement the Belfast brigade of the Irish Republican Army claimed responsibility.

In another ambush on British occupation forces in Belfast earlier that same afternoon, a sniper fired a single shot at members of a Brit foot patrol in Whitecliffe Parade, Ballymurphy, wounding one of them.

At the village of Aghnacloy volunteers of the East Tyrone brigade IRA shot and seriously injured an RUC reservist.

**Statement on Behalf of all Republican P.O.W.s
'On the Blanket' in H Blocks 3, 4, 5.**

MANIPULATION DENIED

LATELY we have heard a lot of statements attacking the Republican Movement for using a protest going on in the H-Blocks for propaganda.

We, the men involved in this protest would like once and for all to point out to those statement makers that we are not lonely little boys being used by a wicked father to gain benefits. We are the men (and women) who for ten years have been fighting on the streets of our country in an effort to remove the British occupation forces.

We were, and are, still part of the Republican Movement, the same movement who are being criticised for making propaganda out of us. Every man on the protest is either a captured Irish Republican Army volunteer or a Republican forced to sign a statement after being tortured. We came on this protest of our own free will and can simply walk off it of that same free will. We choose not to.

Instead, we carry on the fight from within gaol using the only weapon we have — our physical and mental health, our bodies yes and even our lives, if necessary.

Our immediate aim is to be treated for what we are, Prisoners of War. But if by what we are doing hastens by one day an end to British rule in Ireland then we are more than happy to carry on, because that was our intention from the outset.

To accuse the Republican Movement of using us is to accuse us of using ourselves and we do not deny it.

—O/C Republican POW's
H Blocks 3, 4, 5
Long Kesh.

DIAMOND PROTEST

FOR THE past two and a half years, Derry Sinn Fein has been holding weekly protest meetings on Saturday afternoons at Waterloo Square outside one of the city's major stores. Week after week, a picket and placard protest is held in an effort to bring support for the return of P.O.W. status to the Republican prisoners.

To break out of the usual routine and bring the message of H-Block's P.O.W.'s out into an area of the city where it is usually ignored, the Saturday before Christmas, members of Derry Sinn Fein took their protest into one of the most staunchly pro-Brit areas of the city. The Diamond, where there stands a large war memorial to the dead of the British Army, and where the presence of the RUC creates hardly a stir of disgust.

The protestors took up positions at various points in the Diamond and in front of Austin's Woolworth's and other city shops. When it became obvious that close watching by the RUC and Brits were unsuccessful in discouraging the H-Block leafleters, a mobile patrol stopped in order to harass one of the protestors.

As the RUC moved in to surround the lone leafleter, the crowds of shoppers surprised the Brits and RUC (and the leafleters) by crowding in and making a grab for the leaflets.

Reports one Sinn Feiner: "I was handing out a moderate amount of leaflets until they started harassing me. Then everyone moved in, anxious to get a leaflet before they would be lifted by the RUC."

The RUC and Brits made the round of each and every leafleter, taking the name, even of one year-old boy. But over two thousand leaflets were given out in the freezing weather in less than one hour — a successful protest indeed.

The first Saturday of the new year, Sinn Fein protestors were again in the usual spot in Waterloo Place, but further excursions beyond the bounds of Waterloo Place can be expected.

Derry Sinn Fein promise that they will not confine the news of H-Block or the Republican viewpoint to any one area of Derry.

Liberal Party Chairman

LAST WEDNESDAY, January 10th, at a press conference held in Belfast's Europa Hotel, the President of the British Liberal Party, Michael Stead, answering questions at the end of a Liberal Party delegation three-day fact-finding visit to the North of Ireland, said they had met representatives of Sinn Fein and the Relatives Action Committee and he accepted the argument for political status for prisoners in the H-Blocks.

Their request to the British government to see the H-Blocks, had been refused, he said.

DERRY BUSES

Belfast Comhairle
Ceanntair
Sinn Fein

BUSES TO DERRY
FOR BLOODY
SUNDAY DEMOS
SUNDAY 28th JAN.

Leaving Ardoyne,
Andersonstown and
Dunville Park
at 10 a.m. Price: £2

Contact Secretary at
Belfast 23214 to book
seats

REPORTS FROM the 'blanket men' indicate that a flu epidemic has broken out in the H-Blocks; scores of men now have the flu. The men's health is being further jeopardised by the heating being turned off for one and a half hours every lunch time; in addition two of the three blankets which the men have during night-time are removed every morning at 7 a.m.

NO RESPITE

Illness provides the men with no respite from harassment and brutality.

On Tuesday, 2nd January, John Nixon (Armagh) and Bobby Sands (Belfast), were taken out of H5-Block to the prison hospital.

Bobby Sands was carried out on a stretcher, unable to walk, having lain for three days with flu and a high temperature. He was tossed up and down on the stretcher like a pancake, dropped to the ground a few times before being thrown into the back of a van.

On arrival at the prison hospital, both Nixon and Sands got more rough treatment, and John Nixon still lay naked and shivering, wearing only a towel.

SCREAMS FROM VAN

Inside the hospital both men were forcibly bathed, scrubbed and had buckets of cold water poured around them, regardless of

FLU EPIDEMIC



their illness.

In 'C' Wing, H3-Block, Sean Campbell (New Lodge Road, Belfast), was severely beaten at dinner time on Monday 8th January.

The screws who beat him were Billy Gordon, Alfie McKewey, Rab Davidson and Ronnie Shanks.

Screams were heard from the back of the prison van taking him out of the block.

TWO MORE REMOVED

On Tuesday 9th January two more men suffering from 'flu were removed from H5-Block to the prison hospital. The men were Jim Smith from the

Bone and Martin Heeney from South Derry.

A statement written the following day, Wednesday 10th January, by the P.R.O. of H-Blocks 3, 4 and 5 outlines the bleak conditions in Britain's 'Siberia'.

"Today (Wednesday 10th January) we rose once again naked, freezing cold and hungry, to face yet another nightmarish day. It is so cold that we are unable to walk upon the concrete cell floor in our bare feet; the water in the drinking container has frozen and my filthy foam mattress upon the ground is wet with the snow that came in through the window during the night.

"I had no sleep again last night, my three flimsy blankets being no match for the biting bitter cold. I spent last night huddled up in a corner listening to many of my comrades coughing and groaning, whilst scores of men lay shivering from flu, fighting against high temperatures and severe pain.

"There is no let up here for 350 men fighting for survival in Britain's 'Siberia'."

Bishop speaks out

IN A special sermon on Christmas Eve in St. Mary's, Sligo, Bishop Conway appealed for prayers and sympathy for all prisoners, north and south.

In strongly condemning the conditions under which Republican prisoners are living in Long Kesh, he made particular reference to the scandal of the non-jury courts that had convicted these men in the first place.

The Bishop read a very moving letter from the altar which

he had received from the mother of one of the men on the blanket. In it, she told of the degrading and intolerable situation that exists for her son.

Bishop Conway went on to say that he was against violence of any kind but he particularly detested the state violence that was characteristic of the admin-

istration in the north of this country and that he abhorred what was happening to the men in the H-Blocks.

He said that every prisoner, no matter why he was in prison, has basic rights as a human being and that these rights must be protected at all times.

Token Hunger-Strike at St. Pat's

Seven teen-age Republican political prisoners held on remand in St. Patrick's training school, Glen Road, Belfast, have staged a four-day token hunger strike in support of the fight being waged for political status for POW's. The protest lasted from Saturday 7th January to Tuesday 10th January.

THE FIRST DAIL

THE BLOODY aftermath of the 1916 Rising with the protracted executions of 14 Republican leaders over a period of one week; the hanging of Roger Casement in August 1916; the mass gaoling in internment camps of thousands and the iron fist of Britain's military machine, created in the Ireland of 1919 for the first time since the 1798 Rising a nation in revolt.

When the British prime minister Lloyd George decided to hold a general election, in December 1918, Irish Republicans believed the process of hammering the final nails into the coffin of British rule in Ireland had begun.

THE 1918 ELECTION

On December 14th 1918, for the first time in the history of the Irish nation ALL the people were being asked to choose between an Irish Republic as expressed in the Sinn Féin manifesto or to support the collaborationist policies of the Irish Par-

liamentary Party; which in effect meant the continuing domination of Ireland by Britain.

Against a background of massive intimidation which included the arrest and gaoling of over one hundred prominent Sinn Féin activists; the confiscation of electioneering material; the suppression of Republican pap-

ers; the closing down of any national papers which carried Sinn Féin election addresses; and the intimidatory presence of large numbers of Royal Irish Constabulary and British troops outside polling booths all over Ireland, the Irish people overwhelmingly and unequivocally demanded a Republic.

They expressed this demand by electing 73 seats for Republicans out of a total of 105. Although Sinn Féin won 73 seats they only had 69 members elected because owing to the immense popularity of Eamon De Valera, Liam Mellows, Arthur Griffith, and Eoin MacNeill the people elected them to each represent two constituencies.

The rest of the 105 seats were held by twenty six unionists and six members of the Irish Parliamentary Party.

The election result represented a tremendous victory for Republicanism and underlined the spirit of resistance among the people throughout the country.

FIRST MEETING

Dail Eireann assembled for the first time in the 'Round Room' of Dublin's Mansion House on Tuesday January 21st 1919 at 3.30 p.m. In her book

Members
of the
First
Dail
Eireann



Members of the First Dail Eireann photographed in 1919.

'The First Dail' Maire Comerford, who attended the meeting, and watched the proceedings from the public gallery describes the feelings of those involved in the Republican struggle: "No day that ever dawned in Ireland, has been waited for,

worked for, suffered for like that January Tuesday".

Thirty out of a possible 105 members attended. Apart from the twenty six unionists and the six Parliamentary Party members, who were invited but refused to come, the 'Round Room' echoed with the words "Fé Glas ag Gallaihb" ("Imprisoned by a foreign enemy") in reply to the roll call of representatives names. The final tally showed that 34 Sinn Féin elected representatives were held in gaol by the British; others were unable to attend as they were 'on the run' from the British.

I.R.A. ACTION

On the same day that the Dail was inaugurated the Irish Republican Army struck the first blow in the 'War of Independence'. They shot dead two R.I.C. men during a raid for gelignite at Soloheadbeg, in County Tipperary. The raid was led by Dan Breen and Sean Treacy.

All but one of the 105 delegates elected were male. The sole woman, Constance Markiewicz, later to be appointed Minister for Labour in the Dail Cabinet, was elected, like many of her comrades while in gaol. On her release in April 1919, her constituents with thousands of other Dublin working class people welcomed her home in a massive display of support in the streets.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The business of the first Dail got under way with the election of Cathal Brugha to chair the proceedings. Firstly the Provisional Constitution of the Dail was read and approved. Then Cathal Brugha took to the floor to read the 'Declaration of Independence'. When he finished the reading he again addressed the crowded hall. Delegates, you understand from what is asserted in this declaration that we are now done with England. Let the



Jubilant crowds gather at Liberty Hall, Dublin, to welcome the released Countess Markiewicz.

DEMOCRATIC PROGRAMME

WE DECLARE in the words of the Irish Republican Proclamation the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies to be indefeasible, and in the language of our first President, Padraig Mac Phiarais, we declare that the Nation's sovereignty extends not only to all men and women of the Nation, but to all its material possessions, the Nation's soil and all its resources, all the wealth and all the wealth-producing processes within the Nation and with him we reaffirm that all right to private property must be subordinated to the public right and welfare.

We declare that we desire our country to be ruled in accordance with the principles of Liberty, Equality, and Justice for all, which alone can secure permanence of Government in the willing adhesion of the people.

We affirm the duty of every man and woman to give allegiance and service to the Commonwealth, and declare it is the duty of the Nation to assure that every citizen shall have opportunity to spend his or her strength and faculties in the service of the people. In return for willing service, we, in the name of the Republic, declare the right of every citizen to an adequate share of the produce of the Nation's labour.

It shall be the first duty of the Government of the Republic to make provision for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of the children, to secure that no child shall suffer hunger or cold from lack of food, clothing, or shelter, but that all shall be provided with the means and facilities requisite for their proper education and training as Citizens of a Free and Gaelic Ireland.

The Irish Republic fully realises the necessity of abolishing the present odious, degrading and foreign Poor Law System, substituting therefor a sympathetic native scheme for the care of the Nation's aged and infirm, who shall not be regarded as a burden, but rather entitled to the Nation's gratitude and consideration. Likewise it shall be the duty of the Republic to take such measures as will safeguard the health of the people and ensure the physical as well as the moral well-being of the Nation.

It shall be our duty to promote the development of the Nation's resources, to increase the productivity of its soil, to exploit its mineral deposits, peat bogs, and fisheries, its waterways and harbours, in the interests and for the benefit of the Irish people.

It shall be the duty of the Republic to adopt all measures necessary for the recreation and invigoration of our industries, and to ensure their being developed on the most beneficial and progressive co-operative and industrial lines. With the adoption of an extensive Irish Consular Service, trade with foreign Nations shall be revived on terms of mutual advantage and goodwill, and while undertaking the organisation of the Nation's trade, import and export, it shall be the duty of the Republic to prevent the shipment from Ireland of food and other necessities until the wants of the Irish people are fully satisfied and the future provided for.

It shall also devolve upon the National Government to seek co-operation of the Governments of other countries in determining a standard of Social and Industrial Legislation with a view to a general and lasting improvement in the conditions under which the working classes live and labour.

Post Biao

All letters should be addressed
to the Editor at 170a Falls Road,
Belfast.

THE BRITS REAL ROLE

Dear Editor,

I was heartened to read the leader article in *Republican News* (6.1.79) entitled 'The Irish Revolution' and its treatment of British war propaganda in the occupied six county zone about the age old enigma of their "peace keeping role" here in Ireland.

They go to great lengths to portray this imperialist role as 'keeping the warring factions apart' yet their military operations and bases are for the great part confined against anti-British forces and to nationalist areas. And Roy Mason publicly boasts that his army is primarily on the offensive to "stamp out the IRA".

The Irish Republican Army, by its very nature and undisputed history, remains a force dedicated to the overthrow of British rule in Ireland and the setting up of a democratic socialist Republic where the 'unfettered control of Irish destinies' is 'sovereign and indefeasible' as stated in the Proclamation of 1916. It is not anti-Protestant but anti-British, and yet the British endeavour to counter Republicanism worldwide by their assertion that the war here is religious. It is clearly not and the casualty figures and financial statistics of 1978 bear witness to that. In the last two weeks of that year four British soldiers lost their lives in occupied Ireland.

They were not the victims of sectarianism but the fact that they were serving members of an army of occupation engaged as the enemy in a war of national liberation. The intent and motivation behind Irish guerrilla figures is not criminal but a desire to see their country free of foreign interference and military presence so that self-determination can be won.

Several weeks ago we witnessed a BBC TV programme on the clandestine activities of one Brit Captain Nairac. Carried in that same programme was an interview with that SAS man's parents who by their words typified the warped thinking of the British military and upper classes. Nairac's father appealed to Irish Catholics and Protestants to stop killing each other and live in peace—yet did he not realise that sectarian violence has not occurred for over a year and during that period the IRA has forged ahead in its fight to rid Ireland of British imperialism by shooting her soldiers and bombing her economic installations here.

This is not Catholics killing Protestants yet Brit propaganda has portrayed it as such!

Nairac's father went on to say that his son "loved the Irish" but could never understand why they killed one another. What kind of a person who loves the Irish parades around South Armagh by day uniformed and carrying a double barreled shotgun and by night stakes out Republican areas as a plain clothed SAS assassin?

Come off it Mr. Nairac, your son was part of a murderous army occupying foreign soil and as such was eliminated.

During 1978 the Irish war of liberation waged relentlessly against the British at home and abroad. It was directed both against her regular troops and local cohorts and exposed the absurdity of Masons claim that the IRA was 'defeated' and 'normality' was returning.

Republicans shall not let up until Britain's declaration of intent to withdraw is made so enabling political progress to be made towards a united socialist Republic. Speed the day!

Sean Greene,
Belfast

SHAMEFUL STICKS

CERNED THAT CONSENT IS ONLY AVAILABLE WHEN WE ARE IN SUCH A POSITION THAT IT DOES NOT COMPROMISE OUR ASPIRATIONS AND PRINCIPLES AS SOCIALIST REPUBLICANS."

But compromised they were. To-day the Stick prisoners in H-Block have been completely absorbed into the system while their leadership have verbally attacked the granting of political status. Last month a 'Republican Club' councillor launched a scathing attack on the idea of special category status and pledged that his party would not support such demands.

To attack these brave men is the lowest form of political opportunism. Current issues of Stick periodicals like 'United Irishman' and 'Ballymurphy News' completely ignore the mass torture of Irish civilians both inside and outside the jails. All opposition, such as it was, to repression has been dropped.

Although the Sticks regularly



disassociate themselves from the Irish struggle for liberation they take a different line when talking to international contacts. At the last 'Anti Imperialist Festival' held by the Sticks, in 1976, Tomas MacGiolla made the following militant statement. "This (the Irish) struggle must, as we have always stressed, go hand in hand with the struggle for national independence. It is a source of great joy and encouragement that, since the Anti Imperialist Festival of 1974, struggles similar to our own (sic) have been won by the peoples of Vietnam and Angola. Their victories have already ignited the torch of freedom in other countries."

So, it is clear that the Sticks, when briefing foreign liberation groups, attempt to give the impression that the armed struggle in Ireland is being waged by their organisation. Such hypocrisy is totally in line with Stick thinking. To try and compare the heroic victories of the peoples of Vietnam and Angola with the reformist policies of the Sticks is sickening. Traipsing around occupied beaches behind the coat-tails of Brit warlords like Carter and Melchett and calling for the return of a Loyalist Stormont is the ultimate in 'revolutionary' politics in the eyes of the Gardiner Place reformists.

History will record that the Sticks were a vital part of the Brit civilian demoralisation programme. Their part in the attempts to portray the Irish struggle as a 'religious war' has been considerable. Nothing, however, will condemn the Sticks to ignominy more than their shameful record on repression.

Martin Armstrong
Andersonstown
Belfast

Peace for whom?

A Chara,

Let us take the Word "Peace" and what it means to us here in the War Zone of the North of Ireland.

PRISONS: full of men and Women who fight for Justice Freedom and Peace.

EMERGENCY powers Act, to stop the People fighting for Freedom Justice Peace.

ASSASSINATIONS: by RUC and SAS against men and women who fight for Freedom, Justice and Peace.

CRIMINALISATION: of men and women who fight for Freedom Justice and Peace.

ELIMINATION: of every thing Irish that cries out for Freedom Justice and Peace.

Is this the Peace that some so called Christians were calling for our Christians?

Today some leaders of the Christian Faith think more of their temporal masters than the master and Lord of Heaven and Earth, Christ HIMSELF. It's a great pity that man tries to Please Tyrants and oppressors rather than GOD.

I would like to remind those Gentlemen of Christendom that Re-

sistance to Tyrants is obedience to GOD. Religion in ones heart is more important in the eyes of God than on ones knees. Joseph and Mary with the child Jesus had very little Peace when they had to flee to Egypt for safety.

What Peace had those men on Remand in Britains Hell Holes?

What Peace and Comfort was given to those Gallant men on the Blanket in H. BLOCK LONG KESH? or the Girls in Armagh?

Did I hear any one shout out about Peace for Them,

NO, I DID NOT. NOR DID YOU. Did the young Boys and Girls coming from Midnight Mass get Peace, when they were questioned by foot patrols as to where they were and where were they going to.

Well my wish for the New Year is that those who only saw and spoke the truth an odd time last year, will like the three wise men see the light in 1979, and speak out a lot more.

Creggan Waspier,
Derry City

Derry Christmas Post

A Chara,

A fortnight of diligent work by voluntary workers this year once again operated the special "Christmas post" organised by Sinn Fein for the people of Derry.

Nearly ten thousand cards were delivered all over Derry, from as far away as Dublin, Belfast and even Scotland. The largest majority of those cards, of course, came in to Derry's four Sinn Fein Advice Centres from the people of Derry.

For three pence customers were able to ensure their cards' delivery before Christmas. Very few stamps as such were used—a supply of H-Block stickers and a small supply of colourful harp stickers were used as stamps, but otherwise the cards were simply franked with "Sinn Fein Doire" and the date.

By 6 p.m. on Christmas Eve, all four Sinn Fein Centres were cleared out of cards, which were delivered with the exception of half a dozen cards left in the Centre after the closing deadline; even these were delivered within the Christmas period.

There were about nine cards the Centres postal staff were unable to deliver—these being cards incorrectly addressed, or where the people had moved. These "dead letters" are held at the Bogside Sinn Fein Centre at 15 Cable Street.

The Post—now in its 4th year—was operated to aid the hard-pressed Prisoners Dependents Fund (An Cumann Cabhrach), which in Derry now has nearly 200 P.O.W.s on its books at the minute, with a large number of families depending on it for necessary aid.

P.R.O.
Derry Sinn Fein

Sex discrimination

A Chara,

McGlade's Bar in Belfast city centre was very much in the news last week for refusing to serve a group of women in the public bar simply because they were women.

Whilst the actual incident itself may not seem the most pressing or glaring example of sexism (especially compared to the pittance received by many working women which their employer insultingly calls "wages"), it nonetheless has a much wider significance.

McGlade's refused to serve women in the public bar solely on the grounds that they were women is indicative of a more general attitude towards our sex. McGlade's argued that the admission of women to public bars would make men feel uncomfortable, "cramp their style" and make them more inhibited.

We wonder if those same men experience similar feelings when their wives/Mothers/sisters cook their meals, clean, shop, wash their clothes and look after them when ill?

We also wonder what these inhibitions waiting to be liberated (but only in the presence of male company) are?

Such an attitude encapsulates a contradictory view of women. It both reveres her, by attempting to protect her from "bawdy jokes", "bad" language and whatever other kind of behaviour it is "alleged" goes on in public bars and it also holds women in contempt.

It holds them in contempt because their presence is considered a fetter, a brake on men's freedom—women are seen negatively—a drag to have around on such occasions—certainly not man's equal.

What we must do is to continue our fight to be able to walk the streets day or night free from fear of attack or abuse from any man (unfettered or otherwise). We must struggle to win a decent living wage for our labour outside the home as a recognition of its importance and we must fight for equal pay wherever possible.

We want decent houses to live in, nurseries where we can see our children are receiving the expert care and attention they need. We reject the twin roles of domestic and wage slavery.

There can be no revolution without women's liberation. There can be no women's liberation without revolution.

Women Against Imperialism,
BELFAST.

POLITICAL STATUS
IS A RIGHT
- NOT A PRIVILEGE

ON MONDAY 8th January a French petrol tanker the *Betelguese* was ripped apart by a series of explosions: the end result of which was the death of 50 workers, 43 on the ship and 7 terminal crew. The oil was being drained at the time.

Reports show that this oil tanker in the past had been found to be sub standard as regards safety precautions. The owners of the *Betelguese* openly admit that the ship did not have the inert gas safety system - this is a system involving non-inflammable gases being pumped into the ship's tanks as the oil is unloaded to prevent a combustible mixture of oxygen and oil fumes forming. If this was the cause of the explosions it cannot be excused by the comments of the owners who said: "No tanker of the class of the 61,766 ton *Betelguese* had the inert gas system". That's no answer to the families of the dead who most certainly wish it had.

DISGRACE

Not only is the state of these oil tankers a disgrace but a situation where an oil company - Gulf Oil - 'owns' the terminal at Bantry Bay is a disgrace. Gulf Oil run the terminal as one observer said like a 'Texas Ranch', whose only concern is to make money.

The Harbour Authority have no control over Gulf Oil activities. Add to that the refusal of Gulf Oil to allow the chief witness of the disaster - the man in the terminal control room - to speak to the press. It appears that explosions were heard before the official 00.55 a.m. initial explosion; and the indications point to some sort of a cover-up being established.

THE BANTRY BAY DISASTER *An indictment*

Jack Lynch was soon on the scene and attempted to prevent a public enquiry being called but public opinion would have none of it. In the past this company has been warned about the way in which it was running the Bantry Bay terminal but it appears that these were only publicity stunts by Free State governments.

OIL SPILLAGES

There have been 24 oil spillages since the terminal opened and with this disaster there has also been oil spillages ending up on the beaches. The company say "We are pleasantly surprised by how little the spillages are" - we say there should be none at all.

By SEAN MELLOWS

The real issue raised by this disaster is the very type of 'gombeen republic' Jack Lynch and his ilk have built. The concern of these multi-national companies is to make good profits and successive governments of the 'gombeen republic' have gone out of their way to bring them in tax and duty free.

Lynch said "when Gulf Oil first became interested in Bantry they had at least one other location in mind - on the Clyde. The Government were satisfied that the absence of harbour dues was a major factor in the decision to locate at



The blazing tanker, 'Betelguese', beside what remained of the jetty at Whiddy Island.

Whiddy". The benefit of their presence is said to be "worth £40,000 a week to local shops and business"; and what do the builders of the gombeen republic call the loss of 50 lives? That's the real cost to us the people.

ROBBED

Only recently Tynagh Mines declared that they are closing down as resources are depleted to which they added that they weren't making money. Who do they think they are kidding? Not us nor a growing number of the Irish people. We are being robbed blind by these companies; and while our people of the six counties are murdered by British troops and the

RUC the multinational companies are killing our people in the 26 counties.

And what do the politicians get out of it you ask - well drop a line to Jack Lynch and his wife and ask them about their world cruise in 1968 with Gulf Oil to Japan where they launched a Gulf tanker.

The disaster at Bantry Bay is not only an indictment of Gulf Oil and oil tankers that are used but also of those people and their mentality who have built the gombeen republic. The time has come for the end of multinational companies exploitation of our resources and people - that is the only answer to this disaster.

Report; courtesy of An Ghuth Newsheet of the Patrick Carty Cumann, Sinn Fein, Bundoran.

The Shiel Hospital

A REPLY to a motion put forward by Sinn Fein Urban District Councillor Joe O'Neill from the Minister for Health Mr. Haughey concerning the improvement of services in the Shiel Hospital, Ballyshannon sparked off a lively discussion at the monthly meeting of Bundoran Urban District Council.

Co. O'Neill said that since Comhairle na hOspideal was founded, all our small hospitals had been run down and as a result our community has suffered. The hospitals in Sligo and Letterkenny are now trying to service an area with a population of 200,000. Sligo was overcrowded and the staff were working under bad conditions, they have not time to clean the place properly. Now Comhairle na hOspideal have told the North Western Health Board to remove the maternity units from hospitals such as the Shiel. He called on the U.D.C. to protest in the strongest possible way against the Government who are responsible for the faceless men who make these decisions.

Councillor Sean McEniff said he would have to disagree with Co. O'Neill about the Sligo hospital being filthy and said that the staff do a good job with good service provided by top consultants. He stated that a large extension was being built in Sligo to cater for the overcrowding and that in general the N.W. Health Board was doing a good job. He said that the maternity unit was not being removed from the Shiel.

Co. O'Neill disagreed about the fifth. He said that he was a patient in the hospital and that if the Co's would look at the surgery end of the hospital they would see what he was talking about.

"Regarding maternity being removed from the Shiel, this was only the thin edge of the wedge. People had to leave this area often as early as eight o'clock in the morning and would not get back till late afternoon, just to be X rayed. There was no reason why this could not be carried out in the Shiel; When Comhairle na hOspideal and the N.W. Health Board decided to remove surgery from the Shiel the politicians said not to protest as the hospital would get cold surgery and other services would be upgraded. At a meeting of the Shiel Hospital Action Committee Mr. Joe Brennan T.D., when he was in opposition stated that the Government could overrule Comhairle na hOspideal, but now that he is in power this does not seem to apply. Mr. James White said the same thing when he was in opposition. The politicians are liars and have let the people down as regards the hospital", said Co. O'Neill.

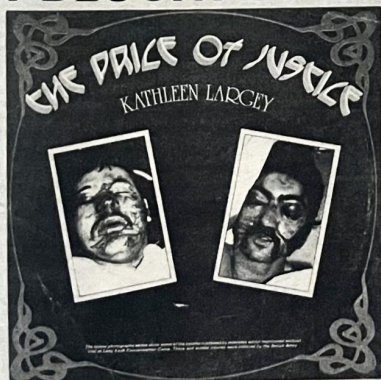
The reply from the Department of Health to the Resolutions were:

1. The Resolution "That the Minister for Health be requested to revoke the powers of Comhairle na hOspideal", was noted.
2. The Resolution "That the services in the Shiel be improved and increased":

A detailed study of the services to be provided in a Community Hospital has been carried out. The implementation of the recommendations is being considered at the moment with a view to the introduction, as soon as possible, of the Community Hospital concept in a number of hospitals including the Shiel.

Co's Brian McEniff and Sean O'Connell asked what the Minister meant by a Community Hospital. Sean McEniff said he would get a meeting with the manager of N.W. Health Board. This was agreed.

H-BLOCK APPEAL



The LP record (above) 'The Price of Justice', is now being sold to help finance the public battle being waged by the 'H-Block Information Centre on behalf of Republican prisoners on protest for political status. Anyone wishing to buy a copy should make enquiries at 170A Falls Road, Belfast or ring Belfast 46841. The price of the record is £2.50.

Bundoran Sinn Fein

Bundoran Sinn Fein (County Donegal), have selected two candidates for the forthcoming Urban District Council election on June 7th. They are Paddy Brady, West End and Joe O'Neill, Main Street. Joe O'Neill has also been selected to contest the County Council election on the same day.

Support the
POWs

THE BRUTAL treatment meted out to the Irish Republican prisoners held in English prisons, more than anything else, guaranteed that campaigns of protest would be initiated to have the POW's transferred home to serve their sentences... pending an amnesty... in jails near their homes. To date only four prisoners (Hugh Feeney, Gerry Kelly, Dolores Price and Marian Price) have been granted repatriation. This followed a hunger strike in which all four were forcibly fed and reached the verge of death.

Two other Republicans, Frank Stagg and Michael Gaughan, were allowed to die by Roy Jenkins, then Brit Minister for Home Affairs, rather than accede to their demands. Noel Jenkinson and Sean O'Connell also died in Brit prisons due to lack of medical care. Many believe Jenkinson was murdered by the prison authorities because of his outspoken support for the Irish Republican Army.

HULL RIOTS

When the riots started in Hull Prison over two years ago Irish political prisoners were to the forefront of that struggle. Such was the reaction within Whitehall that the Brit propaganda machine went to great lengths to suggest that the Irish militants had 'engineered' the riots to speed up repatriation. Thereafter

England The 'Special' Prisoners

by O'scáir

There are nearly 100 Irish Political Prisoners in Jails scattered all over England; more than a score of these prisoners are not Republican Volunteers, but were framed-up by the English police to demonstrate the supposed efficiency of their 'anti-terrorist' operations.

However in the Spring of 1973 when the Irish Republican Army brought the war to the heart of England's capital for the first time, an active service unit was captured. The unit, captured in London, was composed of volunteers from the Belfast Brigade and included a young man named Martin Brady.

This article describes some of the 'special' treatment he and his comrades have been given while being denied the special category status of political prisoner-of-war.

the harassment of the Irish prisoners rose to new heights with segregation and prolonged periods of solitary confinement becoming prison policy.

Martin Brady was one of the POW's who was to suffer most... since the Hull prison riots he has been in solitary confinement. To-day, two years after, he is still kept in a segregation unit. He is alone in a tiny cell twenty four hours a day and is unable to distinguish day from night.

Since Hull the Brit authorities have increasingly adopted a policy of continually moving Irish prisoners from jail to jail the length and breadth of England in an attempt to totally disorient and demoralise them. Martin was moved from Gartree prison seven months after the riots in Hull. Several months ago trouble broke out in Gartree after some prisoners complained of cell-mates being stupefied with drugs. Martin once more bore the brunt of the establishment's fury... he was charged with 'inciting a riot', sentenced to a further six months solitary, and moved yet again, this time to Wakefield.

'F' WING

The segregation units at Wakefield had been closed for two years following a television film exposing the horrendous conditions prevalent there. When Martin arrived at Wakefield the units were instantly reopened under another name—'F' wing. English public opinion demanded that the segregation units be closed because they were much too harsh for British criminal el-



Martin Brady: A former Ulster and all-Ireland boxing champion. Martin has been in isolation in prison in England for two years now but remains unbowed and unbroken.

ements...all of that same volume of protest has remained muted since Martin Brady was locked up.

The conditions under which Martin now exists is made worse by the fact that his once a month 'visit' is completely destroyed by two screws. The duo remain seated beside both Martin and his visitor. The situation in and his visitor. The situation has deteriorated so much that Martin has, for the past few months, refused to take his visits. His mail is so heavily censored that all letters have now become meaningless.

Like all his brave comrades languishing in English prisons,

Sinn Fein Department of Education Announcement

THE 1979 Sinn Fein Speakers List has now been issued to all Comhairlí Ceantair. Of particular interest this year are several lectures on the Sinn Fein 1979 election campaigns and our attitudes to the aspirations and philosophy of Loyaltyism.

Advice and assistance in organising lectures and seminars is available at all times from the undersigned or from the Provincial Education Officers.

Cumann and Comhairlí Ceantair should send requests for speakers to the Director of Education at Head Office. At least six weeks advance notice must be given to ensure the availability of the speaker or speakers of your choice.

Christine Ni Éilias
Stiúrthoir Oideachais
Ard-Oifig

Martin realises that conditions will not improve much until a victory has been achieved over the H-Block issue at home in Ireland. (Indeed, the prisoners-of-war in England have shown more solidarity with their comrades in H-Block than many people at liberty in the occupied Counties.)

The POW's in England must not be allowed to become the forgotten prisoners... they are in need of support and solidarity. The coming victory over the H-Block issue will not be complete until we force the Brit Government to repatriate our prisoners from England.

SUPPORT IRISH POWs
BRITISH OUT OF IRELAND

**BLOODY SUNDAY
MARCH, LONDON**
SUNDAY, JANUARY 28

Assemble: 2.30 p.m. at
Speakers Corner, Marble Arch
Demonstration called by Sinn Fein

**"Refusniks", Easaontoiri, An K.G.B. --- Gulag Archpelago
Moscow "Terrorists" Coirpeacha, An Chraobh --- Speisialta --- H block
London no --- An Saol Timpeall orainn - ne.**

NÍ FOLÁIR de daoine Soisialachas a fhoghlaim agus aire a thabhairt de fhlaingt a ndearthaíreacha. Mura n-éiríonn siad ina Soisialaithe beidh siad ar bhealach a mbasctha lena saint Rachmasach.

Fulaingíonn an Rúis leis an galar chéanna a chleachtann a chomharanna Rachmasacha. Is focal agus gníomh gránna é i dtír ar bith, chur faoi chois, agus is cúl bá a bheith ag duine—do na h-Easaontóirí—Solzenitsken, Skerensky agus eile. Is dúil do duine a shaoir agus gach ceart sibhialta is daonna a bhfuil intiúghe mar bun ceart dó. Spreagann ansnachta agus daorsmachta ó dream ar bith is cuma ce h-íad, Cumannaigh, Soisialaigh, Rachmasaigh nó Daonlathasaithe, na daoine chun Reabhlóide. Ní shéanfadh duine

ar bith ceart na nGúidach Rúiseach an Rúis a fhágáil nó cead leirmheastóiríreacha na n-Easaontóirí a dtuairm a nochtadh.

Cad chuige a n-usaideann an 't-larthar Saor' slat tomhaiste leithleach fá choinne a n-Easaontóirí amháin nach n-usaidítear ar ár n-Easaontóirí Poblachtacha. Sin rud a chuireann deistín agus iontas orainn. Cén fath a nglactar Easaontóir ar cheann amháin agus tugtar treasairteoir ar an duine eile. Guerilla a ainmnigh fear amháin agus 'Scéimhítheoir' an fear eile. B'fhéidir go síleann an t-larthar go ndeach-

aigh na n-easaontóirí sa ghleic ar son Saol Rachmasach 'Daonlathach'—mar dhe. 'Sf mo thuairim féin ag breathnú ar na lathairacha coinnéil mar Castlereagh srl. na h-Ordaithe trí nó seacht lá, cúirteanna Diplock, an idirdhealú a raibh an agus a bhfuil anseo fós i dtithe obair easpa cead cainte saor srl.—go scríobhfadh Solzenitsken dá mbeadh sé ina Ghael—an 'Long Kesh' Archpelago le níos lú clammer agus fothrom. Níor ghlaic an Rúis an deis ceist a chur ar an Doctúir Owen faoi aon rud a mbeadh aige deireadh a chur láithreach leis an fhulaing neamhdhaonna na H Blocanna. Agus cathain a dtabhairfeadh a Rialtas cearta daonna dosna

daoine le deireadh a chur dosna 'Cumachtaí Speisialta' sna Sé Chontae. An é nár chlois an Rúis faoi H Block—bhuel—caithfidh duine sreangscáil a sheoladh don Ambasáid i mBaile Atha Cliatha nó Londain—b'fhéidir go dtí Moscow. An é an fáth nach bhfuil ann ach rud go dtáispéanann sé go bhfuil na Rúisigh níos fínní do thairbh gur ciontach iad freisin. Bheimis i gcuachas dá mbrathfimis ar chabhair agus bá ón lathar ná on Oirthiar. Gheobhaimis a mbeimis in innhe na tháil mór nó beag. Ach, go prímhde measaim go bhfuil orainn feachaint 'chugainn féin—Sinn Féin—an sean ghaois. Cathfimid an troid abhua chan i tsí míleata, i tsí

seisialta ag lorg críthe agus aighneacha na daoine uilig, i tsí plaitiúil le ciall Seisialach agus i mbealach cultúrtha ag athrú ar saolta ó cheann Ponncanach Sasanach go dtí ceann Gaelach. Is cuid den Ghleic iad na fir sna Blocanna H i dtráidisiún fada Reabhlóidí Poblachtacha Gaelacha. Ag síor bhrú na mBriotanach chun athrú, chun geillint, chun a dtráidisiún Impeiriúil is chumachtaf a athscrúdú agus faoi dheireadh chun chúil leis an fadhb Sasanach in Éirinn reitithe acu dúinn-na. Go mbrosatfa Dia an lá...

• An Fear



POEMS OF RESISTANCE

- from the H-Blocks



So I wait

By EAMONN H 5 Block.

The dawn breaks and another day begins,
Apprehension and fear of what it holds,
Still I wait.
Thinking of you far away alone, also waiting,
Stirs my heart,
Both with grief and pride.
Grief; Because we are apart,
Pride: In that you stand by me now,
When I need you most.
The people know of what we go through physically,
But they know not our hearts,
And the pain and loneliness we sometimes endure.
Yet we are one, together,
For we love two: Those who fight and stand behind us,
And Ireland.
For although in cells of H Block we lie naked,
Our spirits cannot be chained.
Our fathers and forefathers proved it before,
And now we have proved it again.
For we seek no glory for ourselves,
But for her, who has seen blood on her soil for so long.
Mother Ireland, the darkest hour must come before the
dawn.
So I wait, carrying on the protest for recognition.
Wait too my love, victory is ours.

DEDICATED TO WIVES AND SWEETHEARTS



A RETORT

Man's inhumanity to man
Is found in every shape and guise,
In Every state or land
Where the tyrant does reside.
The imprisoned man and starving child,
The tortured and oppressed,
Are in abundance all the while
Where the rich man does invest.

And he or she who rebel
To break that cursed bond,
May stand before the world and yell,
"Do not scorn me, You stood by, while I was
wronged".

By PADRAIC, H 5.

MODERN TIMES

By MARCELLA
H 5

It is said we live in modern times,
In the civilised year of seventy nine,
But when I look around, all I see,
Is modern torture, pain and hypocrisy.

In modern times little children die,
They starve to death but who dares ask why?
And little girls without attire,
Run screaming, 'napalmed' through the night afire

And while fat dictators sit upon their thrones,
Young children bury their parents' bones.
And secret police in the dead of night,
Electrocute the naked woman out of sight.

In the gutter lies the black man, dead,
And where the oil flows blackest, the streets run red.
And there was He who was born and came to be,
But lived and died without liberty.

As the bureaucrats, speculators and presidents alike,
Pin on their dirty, stinking, happy smiles tonight,
The lonely prisoner will cry out from within his tomb,
And tomorrow's wretch will leave its Mother's womb!



You exposed Britannia's lies to all,
About the nation that they hold,
So you have brought us nearer freedom,
With the truth at last now told.

Such was the flame you kindled,
It lit up the Irish sky,
And it spurred the people to action,
Least one blanketman should die,

So thanks again to the R.A.C.,
We are forever in your debt,
When our country is reunited,
Your part we will not forget.

By LOC MARLEY, H 4.

MASON'S PRAYER

By BRENDAN
CONNOLLY, H5

After all my shady dealings Lord, and all my lowly
schemes,
My criminalization policy is now bursting at the seams.
My tears begin a running, my head's cupped in my
hands,
Oh! God those bloody blanketmen have ruined my
lovely plans!
I tried my best to break them in many brutal ways,
Just like my hero Cromwell did, in ancient by-gone days,
I thought they'd never do it, they'd never stand the
pace,
But, God, those bloody blanketmen, just spat back in my
face!
I tried to brand them criminals, that blasted I.R.A.,
For refusing to be British, I'd make those rebels pay,
I called them thugs and murderers, for all the world to
hear,
But then they went and proved me wrong, they
wouldn't wear the gear!
Heaven knows what I have suffered, my God what I've
gone through,
With Castlereagh and H-Block and Vanessa Redgrave
too,
Then that meddling Archbishop, Dear Lord he surely
should be hung,
Along with that Minto wretch from Malta, for
throwing bags of dung!
Everyone is against me, they want me to give in,
'Amnesty' and 'Red Cross' say "Let the Provos win",
I just can not make them realise, they fail to
comprehend,
That British pride's more precious, than lives of
Irishmen.
Now the headlines scream for status, T.V. and wireless
roar,
There's thousands out there marching, I can't take it
anymore!
These rebels 'on the blanket', have me crazy as can be,
Now I'm a shattered broken man, why me, dear Lord,
why me!

A Bright Star

By ROIBEARD, H 5.

A bright star shines through my window each night,
Bringing me comfort in my trial and plight,
High in the sky, far away and free,
Shining so brightly, bringing comfort to me.

My feeble existence is punishment for revolt,
Beatings, endless confinement, hunger and cold.
For refusing to play along with their propaganda
and lies,
To forsake my cause and be criminalised.

I have fought for my country and her liberation,
For the people to decide their own determination,
To break the shackles that invaders have enforced,
To destroy the monster that kills without remorse.

So on the blanket my struggle goes on,
I never will yield for my spirit is strong,
For a cause I am proud to have played up my part,
Serving my land with body and heart.

So come bright star, tonight you must stay,
But soon disappear when dawns a new day,
For your people who slept are now awakened,
To join in the fight, to take back what was taken.

Thank you

DEDICATED TO THE RAC

Two years ago when this began,
Our friends were very few,
But now we are known across the world,
For that we must thank you.

In those early days support was thin,
Yet you set about your task,
And with tireless determination,
You tore down the British mask.

***** Birthday Greetings

KEARNEY, Seamus H4 (On the Blanket). Birthday greetings to you Seamus on your 22nd Birthday. We are proud of the strength and determination you and all your comrades have shown. Thinking of you always. Love from your brothers Sean and sister Ann, Aunt Vera, Edna, Patrick, Frank, John and Noreen, Theresa the Carmichaels and Hollands.

McQUILLAN, Joseph, H3 Block. Happy 20th Birthday Son. Your fight is our fight. From your loving Mum and Dad.

McQUILLAN, Joseph, H3 Block. Best wishes on your Birthday. They have you in their keeping, we have you in our hearts. Love from sister Kay.

KEARNEY, Seamus H4 (On the Blanket). Happy Birthday to my Son on his 22nd Birthday. It doesn't take a special day to bring you to our mind, you are with us everyday. God bless you and your brave comrades. Love from Mum.

KEARNEY, Seamus H4 (On the Blanket). Happy Birthday big brother. I hope your next one is spent at home. Always thinking of you, Michael.

O'HAGAN, Piper, H Block. Happy 20th Birthday Piper, from Mum and Dad and all the family. They may have you in their keeping but we have you in our hearts. Keep your spirits up!

McQUILLAN, Joseph, H3 Block. Many happy returns Joseph on your 20th Birthday. Always in our thoughts. Love from brother Jim and Pauline.

McQUILLAN, Joseph, H3 Block. Best wishes on your birthday dear Brother, from Bernard and Owen.

***** Solidarity Greetings



MILLAR, Sammy, H Block 5. Congratulations on completing **TWO YEARS ON THE BLANKET** and also 23rd Birthday greetings. Keep going Sam, your fight is right. From Seamus, Phyllis and kids.

MILLAR, Sammy, H Block 5. Congratulations on completing **TWO YEARS ON THE BLANKET** and happy 23rd Birthday. Best wishes from your brother Joseph and family, Denmark.

MILLAR, Sammy, H Block 5. Well done Sammy on completing **TWO YEARS ON THE BLANKET**, also happy 23rd. Best wishes from your brother Danny, Eileen and kids. Keep up the fight, you will win in the end.

MILLAR, Sammy, H Block 5. Congratulations on completing **TWO YEARS ON THE BLANKET**, and a happy 23rd Birthday, from your sister Mary and family, Canada.

MILLAR, Sammy, H Block 5. Congratulations on completing **TWO YEARS ON THE BLANKET** and happy 23rd. Lots of love and best wishes from your Dad. I'm proud of you son, keep up the fight!

BRADLEY, Eamon, H Block 6. Congratulations on completing **TWO YEARS ON THE BLANKET**. Your fight is our fight. Best wishes from brothers, father and sisters.

ROGER CASEMENT CUMANN, longhuille, North Antrim, sends solidarity greetings for 1979 to our H Block prisoners and comrades, especially, Sean Boyle, Danny Clarke, Pearce McMahon, Malachy Carey, Brian Boyle (Portlaoise gaol). Also remand P.O.W.'s Sean Connolly and Charles Garton. We support and will carry your cross for Ireland's freedom.

Support the POWs

Get well soon—

To Billy, recovering from a motor accident. Get well soon and hope you're back on the road speedily.

— From all your friends.



Gaol Oration for Dead Volunteers

THE FOLLOWING is an oration written by a Volunteer and read out at a parade held in C Wing, Crumlin Road Gaol on Sunday 7th January in honour of Vol. Francis Donnelly and Vol. Laurence Montgomery, killed in action two days previously.

"We Republicans here interned-on-remand are always acutely aware of the high risks that are incurred especially by our fellow comrades of the Irish Republican Army presently engaged in military operations against the enemy. Nevertheless the unexpected deaths of our comrades in action still brings a stabbing pain to our hearts.

"On many occasions over the past number of years we have had to stand assembled in muted silence to honour fallen comrades and today yet again we are gathered with heavy hearts to do just that.

"Vol. Frank Donnelly and Vol. Laurence Montgomery both of 'A' Coy, 3rd Battalion, Belfast Brigade have been taken from us. Both were completely aware of the risks they took yet both undoubtedly never faltered to do their duty. For this, they have now joined the long list of former comrades killed while in action.

IN MEMORIAM

BLAKELY, Rosemary (3rd Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Volunteer Rosemary Blakely, Cumann na mBan, who was accidentally killed while on active service on January 13th 1976. "You carried on and knew no fear, you have joined the ranks of the brave who gave their lives for Ireland". Mary Queen of Ireland, grant her rest. Sadly missed by her many friends and comrades in Cumann na mBan.

BLAKELY, Rosemary (3rd Anniversary). In fond memory of Volunteer Rosemary Blakely, who was killed in action on 13th January, 1976. Gone, but not forgotten. Always remembered by Mary and Seamus.

KELLY, John (4th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of my friend Volunteer John Kelly, killed in action 21st January 1975. He who dies for Ireland Lives. Always remembered by John and Mary Ann Stone and son Francis.

LIGGITT, Francis (6th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Volunteer Francis Liggitt, 2nd Battalion, Belfast Brigade, Ogligh na h-Eirann, who was killed by the British Army while on active service on 18th January 1973. Always remembered and sadly missed by all who knew him, by his comrades in the Republican Movement and Brigade Staff, Mary Queen of Ireland, grant him rest.

MCDONAGH, Martin (3rd Anniversary). In proud memory of Volunteer Martin McDonagh, 3rd Battalion, Belfast Brigade, Ogligh na h-Eirann, who was killed in action on 13th January 1976. Your body has left us but your thoughts and memory will always remain. From Mary, Patricia and family.

SLOAN, Michael (7th Anniversary). Today recalls sad but proud memories of our friend Fian Michael Sloan, 2nd Battalion, Na Fianna Eirann, who died on 11th January 1972. "Ireland unfree shall never be at peace". Remembered always by Liam, P.O.W., Long Kesh and the Stone family.

SLOAN, Michael (7th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Fian Michael Sloan, 2nd Battalion, Na Fianna Eirann who died on 11th January 1972. Mary, Queen of the Gael, pray for him. Remembered always by John, Mary Ann Stone and son Francis.

STONE, John (4th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of my dear Son, Volunteer John Stone, 2nd Battalion, Belfast Brigade, Ogligh na h-Eirann, who was killed on active service on 21st January 1975. I miss you Son like no-one knows. As each year passes the emptiness grows. The tears in my eyes can be wiped away, but the ache in my heart will always stay. Always remembered by his loving Father, Mother and brother Francis.

STONE, John (4th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of my dear Brother Volunteer John Stone, 2nd Battalion, Belfast Brigade, Ogligh na h-Eirann, who died on active service on 21st January 1975. Old Ireland he loved with true faith and devotion. He fought and died for the cause he loved best. Always remembered by his loving sister Teresa, brother-in-law Eddie and family.

"How can we pay homage to their courage?
"How can we honour their selfless sacrifice?"

"To this there is but one answer: We must endeavour to smash once and for all time that armed and inhuman machine that necessitates such sacrifice: The British war machine.

"We, as prisoners of war should be well aware that this was their sworn aim, as it is ours, and that because we are prisoners, does not prevent us from participating in that struggle in which they have died.

"In deep, inside here we have a novel chance of combatting that same machine that destroyed these two lads. To us, these two comrades should inspire us. We are not alone

in this struggle so that it itself should give us courage to withstand the pressure of British repression.

"Let not their sacrifice be in vain, let each and every one of us go forth with renewed courage. And for that, let us pray that these two comrades be honoured in a true and fitting way. To quote Pearce: "In an Ireland, United, Gaelic and Free".

"To you Volunteer Frank Donnelly and you, Volunteer Laurence Montgomery, may you rest in peace and in the blissful company of all those others who have answered the "call to arms".

"To your wives and children we offer our heart-felt sympathy. Fuair sibh bás ar son ár dtír. Ní dheanfaimid dearmad oraibh, go guile a muinte na nGael ar a son."

**NOTES
DORMAS**



LAWABIDING CITIZEN PONDERERS:



WILLY THE WEARY PUNTER LOPES TO HIS ACCOUNTANT'S OFFICE AND SAYS:



ON HEARING THE NEWS THAT HE IS TO BE POSTED TO IRELAND AN UNHAPPY BRIT MUSES ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF UNWELCOME ADDITIONS TO HIS FEATURES:



TWO R.U.C. MEN ARREST EACH OTHER ON KIDNAPPING AND MURDER CHARGES



DEAR ME! SO MANY BAD APPLES!



'HE UNHAPPY BRIT' IS STILL WONDERING IF BULLETS ARE BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH...



SO GET YOUR COAT AND LET'S GO SEE WHAT 1979 LOOKS LIKE!

