

An Phoblacht

REPUBLICAN NEWS



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CHILLING H-BLOCKS

A FOURTH CHRISTMAS 'on the blanket' is the chilling prospect facing Republican prisoners in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh. Battered, naked and half-starved though they are, the 380 blanket men remain proud and defiant in their stand against the violence of the prison regime which is inflicting cruel punishment upon them for their refusal to accept the 'criminal' status conjured up for them by the British - for purely propaganda purposes.

The latest tattered communication smuggled out of the H5-Block indicates that the warders most recent brutality victim is a young Belfast man, Michael Gorman from Ardoyne, who during an obscene body search on Thursday, a week ago, was punched on the head and face and suffered bruising and a cut lip.

RESISTANCE

But certainly things are not going the way the British want. The resistance and sacrifice of the men (who are taking part in the longest protest ever, by so many Republican prisoners) the staunchness of their relatives, the unbowed vitality of the people protesting on the streets, and the striking power of the IRA (who have struck down warders doing Britain's dirty work), have all combined to thwart Britain's 'criminalisation' plans. Plans which increasingly are, and are seen to be, irrelevant as the IRA successfully pursues the national liberation struggle pushing back the 'criminalisation' / 'Ulsterisation' / 'normalisation' policy of the Mason era, incidentally bringing with this success the renewed threat of internment which would blatantly contradict the H-Blocks.

ATMOSPHERE

Without wishing to raise premature hopes of victory in the H-Blocks (hopes which have already been raised and dashed too often), it is possible to see signs of a new atmosphere emerging even within establishment circles. Warders themselves are under pressure from Republicans inside and outside the jails as Brit pawns in the front-line of the struggle and this pressure was reflected last week by the public statement of a British-government-backed prison welfare organisation, the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders.

The association's newsletter stated: "The 'dirty protest' clearly shook the prison service in 1978 and placed the staff concerned under great strain." It went on to comment about the recent Report on The Administration of the Northern Ireland Prison Service: "Although the tone of the Report is not openly critical of those who made the political decision to end 'Special Category Status', it comes over very clearly that the prison service is paying a considerable price for maintaining the political deadlock".

On the 'squalor' in the H-Blocks the association says "it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the particular political decision which provoked it was misguided."

AMNESTY

Even more importantly, last weekend it was revealed that Amnesty International have expressed concern in their annual report about conditions in the H-Blocks and have written to the British government requesting that H-Block prisoners get adequate exercise and occupational facilities (like reading and writing facilities in their cells), and not be confined to their cells for long periods. Amnesty's concern is typical of a slowly emerging concern in national and international establishment circles on a purely humanitarian basis. (However in line with their general policy Amnesty do not support political status for the prisoners.)

The British government's response to both the Northern welfare association and Amnesty International is typically defensive of their H-Block barbarity. (The Brits are particularly sensitive on this issue being well aware of their crimes.)

Direct-ruler Michael Alison slammed the director of the welfare association who ironically is named Mr. Warden - accused him of 'misguidedly espousing' the cause of the prisoners and stated that to compare the H-Blocks to 'medieval dungeons' is 'nonsense'.

The Brits' position on Amnesty International is simple. So frightened are they of what would be discovered they refuse to allow an Amnesty team to visit and investigate the blocks.

COMMITTEE

Meanwhile the newly-formed broad-based National H-Block Committee is continuing to gather support and this Sunday (beginning 1p.m.) the convening of an open conference in Dublin's Mansion House to elect a Southern-based sub-committee is, in the words of its chairman An Tath. Piaras O'Duill, "part of a new and determined effort to resolve the issue of the H-Blocks".

All Republicans plus those who deplore - even purely on non-political humanitarian grounds - Britain's treatment of the 'blanket men', are urged to attend.

Nationalist Noises Whilst Repressing Republicans

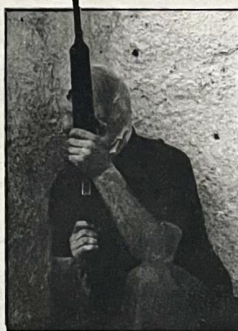
A TUNE REPEATEDLY PLAYED

IF TALKING could get us our Republic we would have had it years ago. The election of Charles Haughey to Free State premier will bring it no nearer, except perhaps to halt for Fianna Fail their disastrous drift away from nationalism with Haughey making 'official' the popular demand for Irish unity.

Haughey may well attempt to go back to making nationalist noises to satisfy folk whilst simultaneously repressing republicans for supposedly hindering re-unification - a Free State tune written by Michael Collins and W.T. Cosgrave, but since the thirties repeatedly played by Fianna Fail. However, he will be mindful of the fact that Lynch's collaboration with the British played its part in his downfall.

Nevertheless republicans can be sure of the squeeze from a man who was part of an administration which used internment as a weapon against the Republican Movement twenty years ago, and Haughey's intentions will be gauged from the continuation, or not, of the special non-jury courts, the RTE ban on Sinn Féin and the deployment of the garda task force in border areas.

The Brits have no intention of being talked out of Ireland. Their brazenness can be seen in their demands after Narrow Water and Mountbatten for an air-corridor (over which Lynch capitulated) and for the right of 'hot pursuit'. They conveniently ignore the fact that inside the six-counties despite massive repression and the imprisonment of over a thousand republicans, they have failed to intimidate



The armed struggle being waged by the IRA challenges the political values of all who stand idly by.

the nationalist people or reduce resistance.

Britain's dirty war against the nationalist people continues and Free State collaboration gives them a real bonus, both physically and in propaganda. There is no sign of collaboration being abandoned, indeed the signs at Haughey's press conference and his cabinet appointments indicate that collaboration is just to take a more subtle form.

The Brits can also draw encouragement from their activities con-

sidering the way they were treated last Monday. At Courtbane in County Louth (just south of the border) a farmer discovered eight British soldiers hiding in his pig-sty. No doubt they were acting on information supplied by Princess Margaret, but the Brits through either sheer buffoonery or contempt for the intelligence of Irish people said they were sheltering from bad weather!

A search of the area revealed that under a bridge a spy-post had been constructed from stolen bales of hay and an iron gate.

Despite local protests there were no prosecutions of these gunmen under the Offences Against the State Act, just a garda escort up to the border. One law for the Irish, a privileged one for the British.

The armed struggle being waged by the IRA challenges the political values of all who stand idly by. Sham nationalist leaders like Fitt and Lynch have found themselves obsolete against the raised consciousness of the people.

Haughey likes to give the impression that he is an authentic part of genuine nationalist desire. But he will not talk the Brits out of Ireland. He will not get the Brits out of Ireland. The only thing the British government understands is force and force is the only power on earth that will shift it.

DUBLIN H-BLOCK CONFERENCE

1p.m. to 6p.m. Sunday 16th December

Round Room, Mansion House

Haughey papers over the cracks

THE ONLY CERTAIN THING about Charles J. Haughey, new leader of Fianna Fail and Free State premier, is that he is one hard professional politician. His much vaunted reputation as a 'republican' is based on the 'Arms Trial' of 1970 and his subsequent non-condemnation of the IRA — a matter which he was quick to change on his election as leader.

However he did achieve his position mainly because of the recognition by the party's grassroots that there is a popular desire for reunification and a corresponding dissatisfaction with the handling of the North by successive Free State governments.

This deep-rooted feeling has played a part in the fall of successive governments and more recently in the rejection of Lynch's personal campaign in Cork following his pandering to Thatcher. Successive governments have chosen to ignore this, and certainly if the hysterical speeches in Leinster House on Haughey's premiership are anything to go by the Fine Gael and Labour members still choose to ignore it. It remains to be seen if Haughey has recognised this basic political reality.

Fianna Fail 'republicans' have in the past imprisoned, interned, hung, shot, starved and tortured Irish republicans whilst still proclaiming their 'true republicanism'.

BY DAMIEN O'ROURKE

They can easily do it again. Haughey himself was at the Free State Ministry of Justice during internment in 1960 and 1961 and as Minister for Justice reintroduced, after twenty years, the military tribunals to try and sentence republicans.

Son of a Free State army officer Haughey became an accountant and barrister but quickly entered Leinster House. The source of his vast fortune has never been explained, but he is known to have been involved in extensive property speculation in the sixties.

Apart from the Free State Department of Justice he has also been at Agriculture and Finance, and since his years in the wilderness after the Arms Trial he came back in the present Fianna Fail government with responsibility for Health and Social Welfare.

Although brought to power by a

classic backbench revolt, Haughey has had to placate the overthrown establishment. Only one or two cabinet ministers voted for him and the campaign between himself and Colley was as bitter as when it started in 1966, with the added split between party leaders and back benchers.

But whatever their differences, politicians always have an eye on the next election and a split party has no chance. The process of papering over the cracks had to be done immediately or not at all.

The retention of Colley as Tanaiste obviously comes under this heading. Collins continues at the Justice Department as an indication that 'security' is unchanged. The transfer of Padraig Faulkner from Posts and Telegraphs to Defence indicates that nothing will happen there either. O'Malley is to remain at Industry, Commerce and Energy although his department is to be altered and Wilson at Education and Barret at Environment probably remain at their old posts because they are not as antagonistic to Haughey as others.

There are of course significant changes, the old score with Jim Gibbons (who was chief prosecution witness in the Arms Trial) was finally settled — he goes out.

Martin O'Donoghue and his Department of Economic Planning who were the proponents of Fianna



CHARLES J. HAUGHEY

—The millionaire's smile. Of one thing we can be sure, despite any nationalist rhetoric, his regime will be of no benefit to working-class people.

Fail's failed economic policies have been firmly tipped overboard, and the appointment of O'Kennedy to the other economic ministry — Finance — in place of Colley, clearly means something else will be tried, and is regarded as a sign that Haughey will be very much on top in this area. Also his supporters Reynolds, Power and McSharry, have been rewarded with top jobs, and lesser posts will yet be found for more.

The future policies of the

Haughey government are of course, as yet unclear. They will be along: conservative economic lines and the first display of the tough Haughey touch could well be in industrial relations. He has expressed himself in favour of legislation to curb trade unionists and the fact that Gene Fitzgerald stays on at the Department of Labour where he has been preparing anti-union legislation could bode ill for workers struggling to improve their situation. The more things change...



Binmen have called a 'stop' to the load of rubbish imposed on them by Dublin County Council, who have extended their routes without consultation

The binmen's case: NOT A LOAD OF RUBBISH

INTERVIEW
BY PAUL ROONEY

THE DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL binmen's strike has now entered its third week and there are still no signs of settlement between the council and the union involved, AGEMOU. The strike involves four hundred workers, seventy-five, of whom at the Robin Hood depot in Clondalkin, were sacked because of industrial action taken by them in protest against non-consultation over extension of refuse collection routes. The rest of the workers on strike are out in solidarity with these men.

Paul Rooney spoke last week, on behalf of An Phoblacht/Republican News to Ciaran Holohan, a young worker involved in the dispute — a member of AGEMOU, he is on strike in support of the sacked men.

AP/RN: Who do you consider to be at fault in this dispute?

C.H.: Definitely Dublin County Council. There was an agreement between the council and the binmen which mapped out the routes for collection. But the council ignored this and extended routes without consultation. Workers' views are never taken into account, we are always blamed for every dispute, but this is not true. The whole situation lies in bad management on the part of the council.

AP/RN: A number of your mates have appeared in court after ignoring High Court injunctions banning them from picketing, but the council backed down on the threat of imprisonment. What do you think of this?

C.H.: It was expected, that the council would back down. I can tell you if any of those workers had been put away, there would have been an uproar. My union the AGEMOU would pull every one of

its workers from every workplace out on strike. Any other militant unions would support us. It would be a direct challenge

AP/RN: What is your opinion of the use of state legislation against workers in dispute?

C.H.: I think it's a threat against workers, who are trying to improve their working conditions. Injunctions have no real effect, because when workers are confronted with injunctions or threat of imprisonment, it only makes us more determined to win.

AP/RN: Under what conditions will you consider going back to work?

C.H.: We will only go back, when the 75 men are reinstated and compensated for loss of earnings — and that includes all those who have come out in support. We also want to be consulted on any changes in our working conditions.

AP/RN: Why have the other unions, the ITGWU and FWUI gone back or stayed at work in this dispute?

C.H.: The reasons are because the ITGWU and the FWUI agreed terms with the County Council at meetings to which our union was not invited. AGEMOU is disliked for its militancy, and because of this the employers and the Congress unions are trying to break its resistance. Mind you some members of these unions are militant but unfortunately their leaders are not.

AP/RN: Why are you a member of AGEMOU?

C.H.: It's a good militant union, which backs every dispute its members are involved in, win or lose. AGEMOU are trying to change the present trade union system of centralisation. That's the reason why members of other unions are leaving to join us as is the case at Data and Telecommunications.

AP/RN: Finally, do you believe in free collective bargaining, as against centralised bargaining?

C.H.: I believe in free collective bargaining. I believe decisions should be made at shop floor level. After all it's the workers who are trying to improve their conditions, and it should be they who decide. I'm totally against centralised bargaining, where all negotiations are controlled by union bureaucrats, who are often divorced from the real issues facing workers today.



An active service unit from the IRA's Derry Brigade launched a devastating van-bomb attack against commercial targets in the city's Waterside area.

Devastating Success

IRA ATTACKS against commercial targets continued with devastating success in Derry and Lisburn, a week ago. Also a hotel in Warrenpoint was gutted last weekend. Then on Wednesday in South Armagh four Brits had a lucky escape when a truck they were travelling in was wrecked by a bomb, but none of the occupants were seriously injured.

WEDNESDAY 5th DECEMBER

Derry

An active service unit from the IRA's Derry Brigade launched a devastating van-bomb attack against commercial targets in the city's Waterside area during the evening.

The 300 lb. bomb was 'expertly' detonated by the British military firing shots at it, shortly after 10.30p.m. The bomb virtually demolished a post office and an estate agent's office, and twelve shops are expected to be demolished. The highly successful attack damaged more than fifty premises at an estimated cost of several million pounds, including half-a-million pounds worth of stock in one large shop. The blast rattled windows in the city's Shantallow district, more than three miles away. The bomb was placed in Spencer Road in a van which had been commandeered earlier by three armed IRA volunteers.

Adequate telephone warnings were given to ensure that no civilian casualties ensued.

Ironically the Mayor of Derry, Councillor Pat Devine, had been telling guests at an insurance institute dinner about the city's mistaken television image of 'violence' when the massive bomb went off a few hundred yards away from where he was speaking at the Everglades Hotel.

THURSDAY 6th DECEMBER
Lisburn

Four bombs exploded within twenty minutes of each other in the centre of the garrison town of Lisburn in the early afternoon as the IRA once more struck decisively against commercial targets.

Three shops in Market Square were devastated by three of the bombs and a fourth bomb damaged a solicitor's office in Bow Street. It took firemen nearly three hours to deal with the Market Square blaze and extra fire tenders were called in from Dromore and Belfast.

A telephone warning ensured that the town centre was evacuated and there were no civilian injuries.

During their meeting, in the

All the operations referred to here were claimed in supplied statements by the Irish Republican Army.

WAR NEWS

evening, Lisburn council suspended their standing orders in order to debate the bombings. One loyalist councillor, William McAllister, desperately called for the recruitment of a 'home guard' to patrol the town's streets and another, Seamus Close, thought it a good time to publicly expose his sectarian hatred and ranted on about 'sub-human beings'.

FRIDAY 7th DECEMBER

Belfast

Jamal Fashions a shop in Belfast's Upper Street was the target for an afternoon bomb attack. However the shop owner foolishly incurred unnecessary personal risk by removing the bomb from the shop whereupon it was detonated - from a safe distance - by the military.

Derry

Another commercial target was hit in Derry: McDonnell and Duncan's electrical goods shop in Great James Street. The bomb exploded at 10.30p.m. starting a fire which caused some damage. Telephone warnings ensured that the street was clear of civilians.

SATURDAY 8th DECEMBER

Derry

A British military land-rover patrol was fired on in Derry's Creggan estate. But the IRA volunteer who fired eight high-velocity shots failed to score any hits on military personnel although at least one shot did hit the vehicle.

No enemy fire was returned and the active service unit went safely back to base. The land-rover was near the junction of Bligh's Lane and Creggan Heights at the time of the well-laid ambush.

A massive 'follow-up' intimidatory operation was launched in the Creggan estate by the military who not surprisingly failed to locate either volunteers or arms. Typically

the IRA's response a few hours later was to fire a further shot which only narrowly missed a Brit patrol as it moved along Creggan Street in the estate.

Warrenpoint

A hotel in Warrenpoint, County Down (a town whose name sends shudders down the spines of the British military, who can not forget their loss of eighteen soldiers) was the target for an extremely successful IRA bomb attack during the evening.

Three armed IRA volunteers entered the Seven Steps Hotel at about half-past-six and warned staff and guests to leave as they planted bombs around the bar. Two of the bombs exploded twenty minutes later starting a blaze which firemen were unable to fight as they were wisely wary of further bombs. Shortly afterwards a third bomb exploded as the fire spread through the building.

The hotel was totally gutted.

WEDNESDAY 12th DECEMBER
South Armagh

A massive 400lb. bomb hidden in a cattle truck was detonated in a Warrenpoint-style bomb attack at lunch-time when two Brit lorries drove along the Newry to Camlough road near Bessbrook.

The blast disintegrated the cattle truck and wrecked one of the two lorries although two Brits at the back of the truck incredibly escaped serious injury. Altogether there were four soldiers in the lorry all from the Welsh Guards Regiment but the other two also escaped unharmed.

Four residents from a housing estate half-a-mile away from the blast were treated for shock. In claiming responsibility for the ambush the IRA stated that all reasonable precautions to avoid civilian casualties had been taken.

Eight months ago (on Tuesday 17th April) the IRA were more successful along this stretch of road when they detonated a massive bomb hidden in a van which disintegrated an RUC landrover killing four RUC men.

FITTING ALLIES

THE MUCH-HATED former SDLP leader Gerry Fitt, and the equally-hated Vanguard leader William 'shoot-to-kill' Craig went on a joint walk-about in Belfast city centre on Saturday afternoon.

The purpose of this cheap (televized) publicity stunt, apart from boosting their over-developed senses of importance, was to ask Christmas shoppers what they thought of the proposed Atkins' conference. A conference whose rejection by the SDLP led to Fitt's resignation from the party, and whose rejection by the Official Unionist Party may well lead to Craig's resignation from that party.

That the slavish Fitt should seek a partner — even for a one-off stunt — in the bitterly sectarian Craig, is indicative of the depths to which Fitt will stoop to please his British pay-masters. In the event, Fitt hardly surprisingly, announced 100% support from the 'ordinary man in the street' for the Atkins' 'peace initiative' — a perfect percentage which must lead even the most glib observer to wonder just who was fooling who.

New Year Conference

THE DELAYED Atkins party conference may well get underway in the New Year. The British government have been pushing ahead with practical arrangements for the conference, including making offices ready in Stormont. They are, of course, quite happy to hold the conference without the Official Unionists and to deal with Paisley as representative of the 'Protestant People'.

The SDLP despite their stalling are now expected to attend as 'Catholic' representatives under the leadership of John Hume after some suitable formula is found allowing them to mention the 'Irish dimension'. In fact following last Saturday's talks between Hume and Atkins, an SDLP spokesman said definite progress had been made at the meeting towards resolving the SDLP's criticism of the published agenda for the talks. Hume is to meet with Atkins again on Saturday and is to have a special 'audience' with Brit premier Margaret Thatcher before the end of the year. Thatcher has taken a close personal interest in pursuing the war in Ireland following the assassination of her close friend and advisor Airey Neave, and given her understandable lack of confidence in the idiot Atkins.

Internment

IN A 'DEBATE' in Westminster on Tuesday on the ritual renewal of the Emergency Provisions Act in the North, Direct-Ruler Humphrey Atkins defended the need to retain the provision for internment in the act. He said: "I cannot dismiss, as a practical matter, the possibility that the government might find it necessary in the future, however reluctantly, to re-introduce detention. While that possibility remains, and while there is no marked improvement in the security situation, it would be foolish to allow the provision to lapse." The order renewing the act was approved by 143 votes to 18.

Hold-Up Denials

THE BELFAST BRIGADE of the IRA have denied any involvement in a number of robberies in nationalist areas of the city: last Thursday's robbery at a bookies in the Markets area (when a number of shots were fired); and then on Monday, armed raids at the Twinbrook Post Office and at Maguire's Garage on the Falls Road. The IRA pointed out that "such activity within the nationalist ghettos only makes harder the already difficult existence which our people have".

Invasion

AN INVASION of the six-counties by the Free State army, is not to be ruled out after the election of Charlie Haughey as Free State premier according to one Unionist party leader. This ridiculous claim was made on Tuesday evening by Ernest Baird, the leader of the United Ulster Unionist Party (the hard-line loyalist group which left Craig's Vanguard party when he espoused 'voluntary coalition').

Such a claim provides further evidence of just what a fantasy world such Unionists live in. Baird, the leader of a tiny splinter group, used his claim to back-up a call for Unionists to unite (behind him?) "before Haughey and his supporters batter us to pulp".

Phone or be lifted

TWENTY-TWO-YEAR-OLD Eamonn McCoubrey of Springhill Avenue, Belfast, was arrested out of his bed at half-past-six last Saturday morning and taken to Springfield Road barracks, where for four hours the British military unsuccessfully attempted to intimidate him into becoming a tout. Wisely, upon his release Eamonn McCoubrey took the only line of defence and publicised this attempt which is in fact the Brits second attempt.

On Saturday the Brits demanded to know why he hadn't phoned them as told to do when last arrested. He was also shown books of people's photographs and was asked if he knew any of them and if he had recently seen anything 'suspicious'. He was offered money and was warned that if he didn't phone with information he would be 'lifted' every week until he did so. He was told to ring (Belfast) 23239 and ask for Gary.

Remand Man batoned

BRENDAN MEAD (Belfast), a remand prisoner in 'A' wing, Crumlin Road jail, suffered a vicious attack by several prison wardens on Wednesday 28th November. He was hit with a bunch of keys and when he tried to defend himself more warders laid into him with batons. He was trailed to the punishment cells in 'B' wing where he was further batoned and dragged across the cell by the hair. He was knocked nearly senseless, his nose bloodied, eye blacked and suffered bruising to his body. To add insult to injury he was sentenced to three days solitary confinement 'on the boards' and twenty-eight days loss of remission and 'privileges'.

Short Strand Protest

AN H-BLOCK PROTEST, organised by the local Martin Tracey Sinn Fein cumann, was held in the Short Strand area of East Belfast on Sunday afternoon. The protest marked the end of the third year on the blanket for local man Sean McVeigh.

Led by the Cathal Brugha band, the march paraded around the perimeter of the ghetto before ending at the LESA club for speeches and a performance of the H-Block sketch. The meeting was chaired by Mary McDermott, Belfast comhairle ceantair Sinn Fein, and speeches were given by former blanket-man Ned Brown and Fra McCann.

Ned Brown who made a strong appeal for active support for the prisoners ended by pointing to the large number of children present and proclaiming: "Unless you do something about the H-Blocks, these children will end up in there too."

Fra McCann described what a 'wing shift' really means - an exercise in brutality and degradation by the warders against naked defenceless prisoners and recalled that last Christmas in the H-Blocks meant only another round of beatings and of cold inedible food.

Lynch's record of failure

BY KEVIN BURKE



JACK LYNCH

Only on one issue did he show
a single-mindedness of purpose
and that was his anti-republicanism

A POLITICAL CAREER based on nothing but the ability to hit a ball with a stick could hardly have been expected to boost a man to the leadership of his party for thirteen years and to the Free State premiership for nine of those.

The fact that Jack Lynch was able to do it speaks volumes on the unreality of Free State politics and the uninspiring ideals of the participants. Lynch has left the twenty-six counties with nothing to show but further dependency; on Britain, through his collaboration to the last; on the EEC, through his disastrous entry in 1972; and on foreign multi-nationals through his constant wooing of them as economic saviours.

The sixteen years Lynch spent in Leinster House before he became compromise leader in 1966 were uneventful, his stints in various ministries were dull and his years as Free State premier did nothing to relieve the national, economic or social problems which beset all of the country.

Only on one issue did he show a single mindedness of purpose and that was his anti-republicanism - even to the end.

From August 1969 when, with Derry and Belfast in turmoil, he made his cynical 'we cannot stand idly by' speech, to the final Thatcher agreement on border overflights, he consistently worked against the national interest of the country.

His lack of action on the north at the beginning of the latest struggle culminating in the notorious arms trial in 1970; the draconian extension of the Offences Against the State Act - conviction on the word of a Garda superintendent - backed up by bombs in Dublin on the night of the Leinster House vote in 1971; and the re-introduction of the non-jury Special Criminal Court; paved the way for the years of repression which have followed both under Fianna Fail and Coalition governments.

Even his public 'forgetfulness' about British agents operating in the twenty-six counties during his premiership could not shake his resolve on this issue. And even when he knew that he was going, his last act was the collaboration on the air corridors and an anti-IRA tour of America.

Two-and-a-half-years ago Lynch led Fianna Fail to its biggest ever election victory but this in itself was to be instrumental in his demise.

Not expecting to be elected, Fianna Fail (under the spell of Martin O'Donoghue) made incredibly rash promises and even more outlandish predictions on economic issues.

From the beginning they were on a loser. Unemployment was largely undented, price increases continued unabated, the farmers caused Fianna Fail to backtrack on the 2% levy, and trade unionists immediately began a campaign on PAYE with, for Leinster House, a disturbing display of street politics.

Industrial unrest was met by government intransigency and posts and telephones, transport, power and cleansing were all areas in which strikes dragged on for several weeks.

In June of this year there was the first chance of a public verdict on the Fianna Fail performance so far, in the EEC and local election. It was disastrous for Fianna Fail. The party backbenchers were now looking for a change of direction

but Lynch had seemed to have lost heart and had no stomach for a new approach. The misgovernment continued as before.

The next crisis for Lynch was the execution of Mountbatten. Overcome with guilt at not rushing back from holiday, Lynch went to London in contrite mood to have his wrists publicly slapped by Thatcher - and to show where his heart truly lay he made concessions on the now famous air-corridor on the border.

Back home he let it be known that he was changing Fianna Fail's stated policy on the North and dropping the insistence on an 'Irish dimension'.

Sile de Valera was put up at Fermoy to challenge him and the series of promised rebellions at parliamentary party meetings began.

Tom McEllistrim was next, on the border over-flights, but Lynch insisted nothing had changed and again the rebels subsided mumbling their threats.

The American tour was not going too well for Lynch when news of the Cork by-election defeats reached him. More disastrous even than the June results, the

rebuff of his personal campaign in his home city was very severe.

He immediately made the blunder of admitting the collaboration with Britain on the border, to a Washington audience.

At home Bill Loughnane branded him a liar, and an attempt to discipline Loughnane made by Colley in Lynch's absence failed, Loughnane backtracked again. The succession battle was very much on but no-one was prepared to make an open challenge.

In the final analysis Lynch simply gave up. Unable to brace himself for the enormous task of repairing the party's fortunes he decided to go. Haughey always looked the successor in the months leading up to the resignation but Lynch knew that if he waited until next January his own choice - George Colley - would have no chance following what had to be a harsh budget.

The party establishment threw all their weight into the anti-Haughey campaign in the two feverish days before the leadership elections but although the backbenchers looked shaky they held out and Haughey was home.

Lynch had failed again.

'Incriminating' posters

TWO MEMBERS of Dublin Sinn Féin, Paddy Dundon and Martin Doherty have been given three month prison sentences in a Dublin court for selling republican posters outside the G.P.O. last month. Both men are on bail pending an appeal.

The men were charged with possession of 'incriminating documents' under the Offences Against the State Act, the first time this has been applied to posters. One of the posters (shown here) on which the charge was based first appeared in AP/RN dated 25th August.

It is as yet too early to assess whether this is just a further variety of harassment of republicans or an ominous extension of Free State censorship.



Leitrim council oppose overflights

LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL have passed a motion deploring the 'secret agreement' about border overflights entered into between Lynch and Thatcher. The motion was proposed by Sinn Féin Councillor John Joe McGilvray who said that British aircraft were regularly crossing into Leitrim and Cavan.

Councillors from all parties stated that they had received numerous reports of crossings from people in border areas who were living in fear. One Fianna Fail councillor offered the comfort that Lynch had now resigned, whilst another criticised the amount of money spent on security, he said that if the British wanted to secure the border they should pay for it themselves.

Picead ar an Roinn

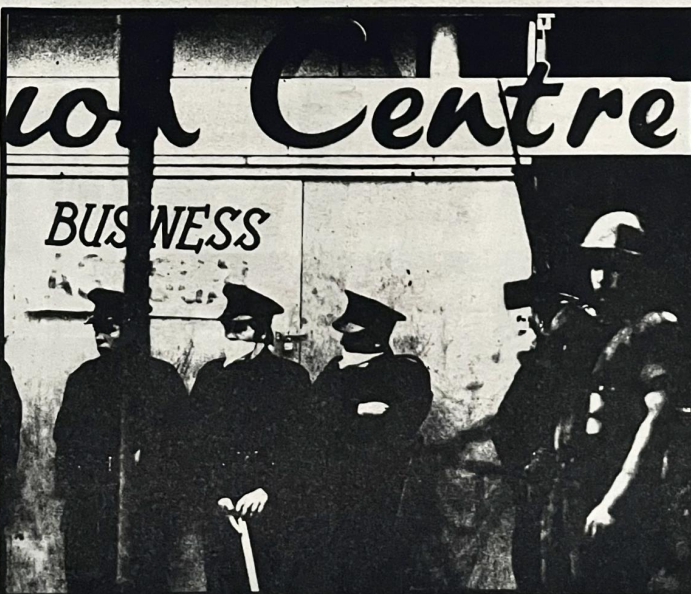
BHÍ PICÉAD ar Roinn Oideachais na Sé Chontae Fíchead an tsaothair seo caite. Bhí sé eagraithe ag tuismitheoirí ó Inse Chór i mBaile Átha Cliath. Bhí na tuismitheoirí ag gearán mar gheall ar an moill atá a dhéanamh ag an roinn suíomh ceart a sholáthar don bunscóil lánghaealach in Inse Chór.

Tá na tuismitheoirí ag lorg suíomh ceart le tamall fada ach níl aon deifir ar an roinn gúilleadh dá n-éileamh. Ní bhíonn fonn ar an roinn comhoibriú le bunú scoilleana lánghaealach.

Ach tá na tuismitheoirí chun leanúint ar aghaidh leis an troid. Tá an scoil ag feidhmiú i sean seipéal faoi láthair agus níl an foirgneamh oiriúnach.

H-Block March and Rally

Saturday 15th December
Assemble 4p.m.
March from St. Stephens Green to GPO
DUBLIN
Organised by Sinn Féin



In August '69 in Derry 'business as usual' for the 'B' Specials and playing at being in the 'centre' for the Brits meant nationalists were slaughtered and driven from their homes whilst Lynch cynically 'stood idly by'.



Areas like Short Strand in Belfast, areas where British military repression is intense and the resistance of the local people courageous, suffer up to 50% male unemployment

The most poverty-ridden area in Western Europe

BY PETER ARNLIS

APART FROM living under British occupation, the nationalist people in the North also live in the most poverty-ridden area in Western Europe, and, according to the latest annual report from the Supplementary Benefits Commission issued a fortnight ago, the poorest sections of the people - the sick, elderly, unemployed and the lower-paid - do not make full use of the benefits available.

The Commission (in the North administered separately from that in Britain) which was set up in 1966 is responsible for the administration of the supplementary benefits scheme.

Since 1976 the scheme has been under review and on Friday 30th November it was announced that it will be absorbed into a new 'United Kingdom Social Security Advisory Committee'. What effect this will have is not clear at this stage.

In their report the Commission say that they share many of the doubts expressed by others about the adequacy of the payments. They outline a series of positive recommendations but are doubtful (justifiably, considering Tory public spending cuts) of them being implemented because they involve additional costs.

UNEMPLOYMENT

In its examination of poverty the report recalls how unemployment and low earnings have long been features of the Northern economy. The unemployment figure in August 1978 stood at 13.5%. But in nationalist areas this was much higher with the male unemployment rate in Strabane, for example, being over 34%, Newry 26% and Derry 20%.

Forty per cent of all men registered as unemployed had been out of work for a year or more.

The report states that "pockets of severe unemployment ... such as West Belfast ... cannot be identified because of the way in which the statistics are produced". But it is known that areas like Ballymurphy and Short Strand, areas where British military repression is intense and the resistance of the local people courageous, suffer up to 50% male unemployment. According to the report in these places "the problem tends to become institutionalised".

The problem is exacerbated in many cases by the long-term nature of the unemployment

which leads to personal demoralisation.

Those in work are often not much better off. Many people who receive low wages do not always know of their entitlements and they should claim Family Income Supplement and rent rebates.

INCREASING

The report says that the number of people dependent on supplementary benefit is increasing. At the end of last year 116,000 were receiving benefit. Add to this figure wives and children and the

total number relying to some degree on supplementary benefit is 216,000 that is, 14.4% of the total population in the North.

Poverty is aggravated by a relatively high cost of living, especially the high cost of fuel, light and power and the high proportion of unfit dwellings (one family in ten is living in unfit accommodation).

Pensioners, 49% of all claimants, make up by far the largest group of claimants, followed by the unemployed (29%), the sick (10%) and single-parent families (7%).

The Commission quash the myth that the majority of claimants are scroungers: "People claiming supplementary are more often than not the victims of circumstances outside their control

rather than malingers 'sponging' off the state... We are certainly not aware of any evidence that a significant number of men are giving up their jobs and choosing to live on benefit instead... It is clear that the proportion of the unemployed who get more money in benefit than in work is very small."

BENEFITS

The Commission state that "the increasing number of discretionary payments", which have to be made for items which are regarded as normal needs, such as the replacement of clothing and footwear, "tends to support the argument that some claimants, particularly families with children, are unable to manage on supplementary benefit without further help."

It is in the realm of 'discretionary payments' that most people are failing to make full use of entitlements, or perhaps unaware of them. The Commission has been given wide discretionary powers (over which there has been widespread controversy) to take account of financial needs by making additions to weekly benefits (exceptional circumstances additions - ECAs) and single lump-sum payments (exceptional needs payments - ENPs) for specific expenses.

ECAs can be granted for heating expenses, laundry costs, special diets, and excessive wear and tear on clothing resulting from disability.

In practice there is virtually no limit to the range of items for which an ENP may be claimed and grants have been made for furniture, household equipment, bedding, clothing and footwear, repairs and redecoration. Almost every pensioner is entitled to a heating addition on top of their supplementary benefit yet thousands in ill-health or living in accommodation which is damp or difficult to heat are not aware of this.

Sinn Féin Advice Centres should get their hands on a copy of this report and also the Commission handbook so as to be in a position to assist people in claiming their ever-dwindling rights.

HEATING ADDITIONS

Extra heating additions	From 13 Nov 78
(1) Restricted mobility or ill-health	£
(a) If mobility is restricted because of general frailty or advanced age	1.10
(b) If extra heating is needed because of chronic ill-health (e.g. chronic bronchitis, rheumatism, severe anaemia or chronic debility)	1.10
(c) If the claimant or a dependant is housebound or unable to leave the house unaided	2.20
(d) If there is serious illness requiring extra heating	2.20
(e) If the claimant or a dependant is bedfast or cannot walk around the room unaided, and needs extra heating day and night	3.30
(f) If there is serious illness requiring a constant room temperature day and night	3.30
(2) Heating difficulties where the claimant is a householder	
(a) If the accommodation is difficult to heat adequately (e.g. damp or unusually large rooms)	1.10
(b) If the accommodation is exceptionally difficult to heat adequately	2.20
An addition may be paid for any one of the conditions (a) to (d) under the heading "restricted mobility or ill-health", and also for one of the two conditions under the heading "heating difficulties" provided that the total does not come to more than £3.30. In very exceptional cases this level may be exceeded.	
Central heating additions	0.55
(a) One or two rooms	1.10
(b) Three or four rooms	2.20
(c) Five or more rooms	2.20
If a claimant qualifies for both a central heating addition and for an extra heating addition only the higher of the two amounts is paid.	

Sinn Féin Advice Centres should get their hands on a copy of the Report of the Supplementary Benefits Commission which includes useful information, such as this table reproduced here, which outlines claimants' entitlements to a heating addition

LEFT FOUR

BY PETER HAYES

BRITISH RULE in the occupied North has created a hardship for the besieged people. Nowhere is this more acutely felt than in the naked aggression used by young people. Because of the aggression it is sometimes difficult to bring home what it is of British brutality.

But the case of a young boy from Belfast's New Lodge Road, who suffered a vicious attack, and was left for dead, and his struggle to recover, over the last four months, is a poignant story symbolising the personal misery of many Brit victims.

DRASTICALLY

Sixteen-year-old Stephen Montague was on the threshold of adulthood. He had an inclination to become an engineer and his parents believe he could have been successful. But the events which occurred around midnight on August 8th this year so drastically affected his life that he is now in the position, to quote his father, "Of being back to square one, and beginning his life all over again."

Young Stephen fell foul of the British army just after he had left a friend's home. Internment anniversary protests were taking place throughout nationalist districts in Belfast and minor rioting had flared in the New Lodge Road area.

In Hillman Street a British soldier fired a plastic bullet at Stephen and brought him to the ground. Members of a snatch squad laid into him with batons, viciously kicked him around the head and trailed him along the ground by the scruff of the neck.

An hour later the RUC at North

Four months after being trailed along the street by the scruff of his neck Stephen Montague, who was also suffered brain damage, is seen being trailed along the street by the scruff of his neck.

Queen Street barracks received a telephone call from the British army to say they had discovered an unidentified body in the loyalist Tiger Bay area. So badly beaten was Stephen that the Brits thought that they had succeeded in killing him. When he was taken to the city hospital the doctors thought that he had been shot in the head.

LIFESUPPORT

For the next two weeks Stephen lay in a coma, attached to a life-support machine. For another three weeks he remained in intensive care. After a further four weeks he was eventually released from hospital.

ATHRÚ AG



LEFT FOR DEAD: MONTHS ON

MAYES

has created a legacy of misery and
people. Nowhere is this hardship more
sion used by British troops against
ity and widespread nature of this
ng home what it means to be a victim

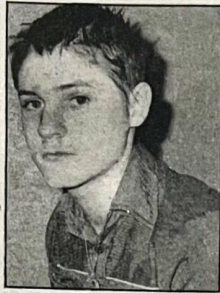


being trailed along the ground by the British army
neck Stephen Montague's knees are still badly sc-
he also suffered brain damage, although not irr-
gtoned by the Brits.

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had discovered
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that the Brits
had succeeded
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PORT

weeks Stephen
ched to a life-
For another
ained in inten-
further four
tually released



STEPHEN MONTAGUE
—Today his battle to return to some
form of normality continues

words; he forgets how to read or
write; he can not describe the
most simplest of objects, although
he knows in his mind what they
are; and he is irritable and easily
loses his temper.

RE-EDUCATION

When out of doors he carries a
letter from the hospital explaining
that he has a speech defect and
can not pronounce his name. On
two occasions within the last
month Brit patrols have harassed
him when he did not have the
letter and was unable to give his
name.

He attends a speech therapist in
the Royal Victoria Hospital who
is also giving him elementary edu-
cation such as learning to read and
write. At home his family are
assisting him in his re-education
by helping him to pronounce
words and to write.

When he first got out of hospital
Stephen had extreme difficulty

walking. Injuries to both his knees
were so bad that skin graft surgery
was carried out.

His most cherished pastime, be-
fore the attack was riding his
motor cycle. Now he can only ad-
mire it in the backyard of his
home. Other normal pastimes
such as dances, which youths
enjoy, are now beyond his reach.

Anywhere he goes a member of
his family needs to be with him as
a guardian.

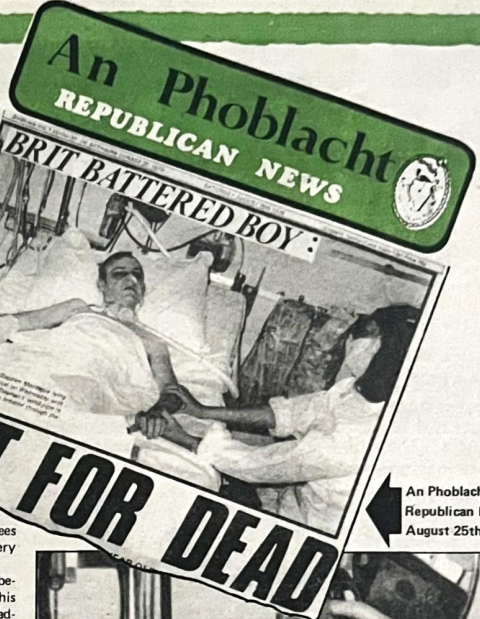
BITTER

Obviously his parents are ex-
tremely bitter about the attack
and how it has left Stephen.

His father does not believe that
justice will be done to the Brits
responsible. As far as the family
know no British soldier has been
even questioned, let alone charged.

The case itself and the manner in
which the RUC are handling it is
reminiscent of many others in-
volving British soldiers, such as
the murders of Brian Stewart, Leo
Norney and Danny McCooey,
where the culprits got off un-
punished.

There is no reason to think that
those responsible for beating
Stephen Montague will fair any
worse. Meanwhile the battle to
return to some form of normality
for Stephen continues.



An Phoblacht /
Republican News,
August 25th



Attempted-murder victim Stephen
Montague lying in hospital in Belfast
four months ago. His wind pipe was
cut open in order for him to breathe
through the attached tube

AGUS ATHRÚ EILE



TÁ AIGHNEAS ar siúl faoi láthair idir an RUC agus Arm na
Breataine. Tá an dá fórsa sin ag iarraidh ceannas a bhaint amach
i gcúrsaí 'slándála'. Tá athrú ag teacht ar an bpolasaí a bhí ag
Rialtas Shasana le blianta beaga anuas.

Nuair a tháinig Arm na Breataine
go dtí an Tuaisceart i 1969, bhí
ceannas acu i gcúrsaí slándála. Ach
níor éirigh leo Óglaigh na hÉireann
a chloí. Tháinig malairt aigne ar
Rialtas Shasana i 1976 agus bhain
siad triall as polasaí nua.

Bhí an polasaí sin bunaithe ar an
smaoineamh gurab ionann Óglaigh
na hÉireann agus coirpigh. Ós rud é
go raibh glactha ag Rialtas Shasana
leis an teoiric sin bhí sé ag luí le
reasún gurab iad an RUC an fórsa
chun deighleáil leis na 'coirpigh'
sin.

Is de bharr an t-athrú polasaí sin
a thosaigh an t-ágóid sin Bliocanna

H. Bhí na Sasanaigh ag iarraidh coir-
pigh a dheanamh des na príosúnaigh
chogaídh. I rith an ama sin bhí ar
Arm na Breataine an tárna háit a
thógáil i gcúrsaí 'slándála'.

Ach ní raibh na ginearál in Arm
na Breataine sásta. Níor tháinig
feabhas ar bith i gcúrsaí 'slándála'.
Chreid na saighdiúirí go bhféad-
faidís bua míleata a bhuachaint ar
Óglaigh na hÉireann dá ttabharfaí
cead a gcinnt dóibh. Tá droch-mheas
ag na saighdiúirí ar na polaiteoirí
toisc go bhfuil orthu troid dár leo
féin le lámh amháin ceangailte.

Tháinig an smaoineamh sin chun
chinn tar eis bháis an t-ochtair déag



OLDFIELD

An mbeidh se ag gairi i gceann
bliana

saighdiúir i Warrenpoint. Chuir
Thatcher, Maurice Oldfield i gcean-
nas ar an dá fórsa chun an t-aigh-
neas eatarthu a réiteach.

Ach is soiléir anois go bhfuil Rial-
tas Shasana ag tabhairt cúl leis an
teoiric gur coirpigh iad Óglaigh na
hÉireann. Ní chloistear a thuilleadh
an chaint sin faoi Godfathers agus a
leithéid.

Níor éirigh leis an polasaí sin na
hÓglaigh a dheighilt ó mhuintir na
hÉireann. Tá siad ag baint úsáid as
teoiric nua anois. Sin, gurab ionann
Óglaigh na hÉireann agus cumann-
aigh.

Iarracht is ea é sin chun na hÓ-
glaigh a scarúint ó mhuintir na
hÉireann. Ní éireoidh leo é sin a
dheanamh. Tá rud bunúsach
amháin nach dtuigeanann siad. Tá
Óglaigh na hÉireann ag teacht céad
faoin gcéad le cultúr na hÉireann.

Is traidisiún fada in Éirinn é an
troid ar son saoirse na hÉireann.
Glacann Éireannaigh leis an traidis-
iún sin agus fiú amháin muna n-son-
taíonn siad le gníomhartha uile Óg-
laigh na hÉireann tuigeanann siad gur
ag troid ar son saoirse ata na hÓg-
laigh.

Tá dúil ag muintir na hÉireann sa
saoirse agus ní chuirfead deiradh
leis an troid ar a son go dtí go
mbeidh saoirse againn.

No half-measures: Political status is their demand

BY PETER STEELE

THE UNEXPECTED RELEASE on appeal of twenty-five-year-old Derry Republican John Curran, brings the total number of 'blanket men' released this year to eleven.

He walked to freedom last Friday when in Belfast's High Court two appeal judges ruled that the evidence used to convict him in April of this year had too many 'ifs' and 'buts' in it, and they quashed his six-year sentence.

So flagrant was the absence of any concrete evidence at the trial that both appeal judges criticised the trial judge, Russell, for accepting the validity of the evidence. The winning of the appeal once again illustrates the unjust and corrupt nature of the non-jury Diplock courts, and stamps them as nothing more than glorified sentencing tribunals.

John Curran was arrested on August 10th of last year and charged with commandeering a car in the Shantallow area of Derry. At the trial the only evidence against him was given by two RUC men who claimed that they saw him driving a commandeered car whilst they were on duty in plainclothes in an unmarked car. (This is a rare insight into the 'Ulsterisation' even of under-cover work - with RUC replacing the military.)

IDENTIFICATION CONTRADICTED

The RUC justified their identification of John on the grounds that they 'knew him well' and that it was part of their job 'to know men like him on sight'. They thus clearly

labelled him for the judge's benefit as a known Republican. This point was obviously not lost on Russell.

Despite the evidence of the car owner, who contradicted the RUC evidence by denying that John took his car, Judge Russell concluded that John played some part in the affair and sentenced him to six years!

John Curran is not surprised that the RUC should try to frame him given that they tried once before. In December '77 he was also imprisoned on remand on a previous charge of commandeering a car, but in April '78 he was released when the RUC dropped the charge. Prior to that he spent thirteen months interned between October '74 and November '75.

At the age of twenty-five John Curran has therefore spent three spells in jail totalling nearly three years, in the last five years, without a single successful conviction against him. His case provides a clear illustration of the quality of British justice in Ireland - a picture reinforced by the appalling conditions in which he was held for the past seven months: naked in an empty stench-filled cell in H4-Block. By comparison with other released H-Block men John's period 'on the

blanket' is relatively short; but even one day in the notorious Blocks is an arduous trial.

PSYCHOLOGICAL INTIMIDATION

He describes the worst pressure the blanket men are under as psychological intimidation through the constant threat of assault by prison warders.

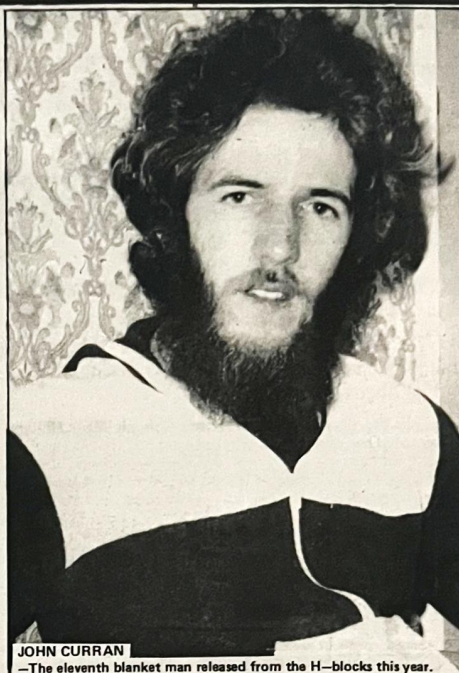
The warders deliberately play on the men's nerves by threatening to 'hammer' them and by rattling keys and banging grills, normally a sign that cell-raids and the accompanying violence and humiliating intimate body-searches are on the way. But then nothing happens.

However recourse to explicit violence by the prison warders is never too far below the surface.

For example, a fortnight ago (one week before John was released) practically all of the blanket men were assaulted, (although few were injured) when warders went on the rampage after the men had partially wrecked the grills surrounding their cell windows, using chairs newly issued to them by the prison authorities. (Initial reports mistakenly indicated that only H5-block was issued with the chairs).

The warders primary concern was to retrieve the remnants of the chairs, but in the process they assaulted the men.

John Curran believes the issuing



JOHN CURRAN

—The eleventh blanket man released from the H-blocks this year.

of chairs was a first step in a thwarted attempt to 'normalise' the conditions inside the H-Blocks: "If left unchallenged it would have resulted in other minor improvements, ultimately the men would be faced with being naked in a cell filled with the usual things. But no half-measures will be accepted. It is recognition as political prisoners that the men want."

Worrying about their families is another factor which burdens the protestors and being denied a weekly visit which is replaced by a monthly one, magnifies the worry. John Curran believes that most of the men, as he did, go on a visit in a trance.

He thinks that being released into the fresh air after such prolonged cellular confinement produces a surrealistic state of mind.

His recollection of monthly visits is that they passed so quickly that at the time he often did not comprehend what took place during the half-hour. However, the visit came rushing back into his mind when he was returned to his cell.

DRUNKEN WARDERS

Although living conditions inside the H-Blocks are depressingly grim the protestors have grown partially accustomed to them but the same can not be said about the warders. According to John, evidence that they are under strain (presumably from both the conditions and IRA attacks) can be seen every day; many of them turn up for duty steaming drunk, and in fact some appear to be permanently drunk!

National Women's Conference

Report by Siobhan O'Malley

A NATIONAL women's conference, which was organised by the thirty-two-county Irish Feminist Federation, was held in Trinity College, Dublin, last weekend. The agenda had set out a schedule for a wide variety of topics for discussion covering all aspects of discrimination and repression against women.

However, far too much time at the conference was taken up with discussions on what form the structures of the federation should take, and unfortunately for many women present, who were not aware of the complicated political disagreements between the various groups within the federation, the various lengthy arguments were mostly incomprehensible.

There were however several excellent reports given by various workshops on education, childcare, health, and violence against women.

The report on education gave an incisive account of sexism in schools, showing how children are stereotyped in sexist roles from primary school onwards - 'John' helps daddy fix the car, while 'Mary' helps mammy wash the dishes. Attention was drawn to the low proportion of girls taking science subjects, as opposed to boys, whilst a higher proportion take music and art, these being considered 'feminine accomplishments'.

There were reports from members of the Rape Crisis Centre in Dublin and Women's Aid. The latter told the conference that there was an urgent need for another refuge in Belfast for battered women and their children.

A spokeswoman for Dublin prostitutes asked for help in their campaign against harassment and brutality and the federation agreed a proposal that practical and unconditional help be given, and that a campaign be launched to set up a rehabilitation centre for women who wanted to get off the streets.

A motion was passed by the conference

to endorse and actively support a statement from Belfast Women Against Imperialism expressing solidarity with women political prisoners in Armagh; condemning the harassment and intimidation carried out by the RUC; and pledging support to the Armagh Eleven due in court on January 2nd. (These are the eleven women arrested after a picket at Armagh jail on International Women's Day this year). The conference also passed a motion that there should be action on behalf of women political prisoners in the South.

Policy of the federation in future is to be decided at future national meetings but the steering committee will be allowed to take action at short notice. The point was made that all threads of the women's movement and related groups must be drawn together for the federation to be effective. It remains to be seen whether, considering the differences of politics and class within the grouping there can be enough unity on the broad issues of women's rights to make this possible.



The report on education gave an incisive account of sexism in schools, showing how children are stereotyped in sexist roles from primary school onwards - 'John' helps daddy fix the car, while 'Mary' helps mammy wash the dishes.

LONDON INDISCRETIONS

by Maurice



JUST BACK from London, where I've been getting briefed about this Haughey chap, by Conor Cruise O'Brien, who seems to be one of the better sort of bogtrotters.

He tells me that he has sacked that Commie Mary Holland, and accepted my congratulations, but I am not too happy about the appointment of an elderly drunken leprechaun, Dermot McEvoy as her replacement. The Cruiser, admits that McEvoy, a former Blueshirt, is halfwitted and rarely sober, but claims that he is useful for baby-sitting. And he gets paid in gin which Cruiser gets at the old duty free.

We lunch at Quaglin's with Fatty Soames, the new Governor designate of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. I suppose that, as Churchill's son-in-law and a director of Rothschilds he is genned up about what your average African peasant wants and how he thinks, but I didn't get much chance to find out, for, to be candid, he was in a blue funk.

He kept trying to hide under the table and jabbering about how that witch Thatcher was trying to get him killed by the fuzzy-wuzzies. Not a pretty sight, I'm afraid, and it wasn't made any better by the Cruiser inviting another chappie to join us.

WARNER

He said he was Sir Frederick Warner, formerly our man in Tokyo, and he did seem an affable chap, prepared to stand his round and drink an immense amount of vodka. So much so in fact that, I confess, I ended up in what we in the trade call 'a Gerry Fitt situation', that is, unconscious under the table with the blubbering Soames. It was only on awakening that I found out that the Cruiser and Sir Frederick had vanished, having picked my pockets

first and taking with them many top secret memoranda.

Worse still, the next day my security buffs tell me that Warner is a well known Russki spy and a personal friend of old Blunty and Philby. What on earth is the Cruiser doing with a bouncer like that?

O'DONNELL

Anyway, enough of my London indiscretions. Back in rotten old Belfast and safely ensconced in the Castle, I was just about to start sampling the port, when the phone rang. It was Lord Justice O'Donnell, one of our tamest High Court Judges, wanting some advice.

It seems that the RUC men who bombed and shot up the Rock Bar in Keady in June '76 are due up in court soon, despite all efforts to hush the whole sordid affair up, and now, a sixth one of them, David Wilson, who was an accomplice has applied for bail. He claims to have seen God in Crumlin Road, which is as unlikely as seeing Gerry Fitt in Andersonstown, and O'Donnell didn't want to release him, but I ordered him to do so. Once out, we can bribe him to keep his mouth shut and not give evidence.

And talking of keeping your mouth shut, I am a bit worried about the police force in Dunmurry. Stephen Jackson (25) of Cyprus Close, Seymour Hill, as loyal a fellow as I've come across, had occasion last August to celebrate after an Orange march. Accordingly, he was merely indulging in some good natured horseplay in the street when he was approached by an officious busybody of an RUC man, who ordered him to desist. Naturally Jackson felt aggrieved at this blatant discrimination and proceeded to make, considering his condition, as neat a summation of the loyalist case as I've heard in a long time to wit:

"I am a Loyalist. I can sing and shout what I like. The RUC (a foul suggestion which is probably a physical impossibility has been deleted here in the name of decency). No surrender. We'll wreck this town tonight. God Save the Queen".

OVERZEALOUS

Alas, the overzealous policeman whom I'll sack when I get his name - was not touched by this pleasing display of loyalty, and punched the inoffensive Jackson in the stomach. Jackson, it seems, then proceeded to vomit all over the constable, and was promptly beaten unconscious.

Such vicious police behaviour must and will be curbed. I intended to have a chat about it with my old mate Punchy Wright who is in charge of security at Crumlin jail,

but when I rang up and asked for him some idiot at the other end started whimpering about how they (whoever they may be) had 'biffed Punchy'.

Amidst his tears he started to beg me to send a helicopter to get him and the rest of the screws (whatever they may be) out. I had to put down the receiver. Fella was hysterical. Have to get Punchy to have a word with him.

REQUEST

And now a word of warning. Recently I have received several letters from readers asking for scandalous and salacious information concerning members of the security services who have been involved in the courts on charges of a sexual nature. This kind of request must stop! As Supremo it is unthinkable that I should sully my hands with such muckraking and filth. Is this not a family paper, I ask?

Do you out there in readerland both expect me to deign to even mention RUC man Francis James Latimer (21) of Gough barracks who is up on a charge of sexual assault and GBH and has just got bail or the case of the former Guardsman in England who was murdered by his wife and her lover because he used to dress on parade with his 'wife's nighty under his uniform?

If so, you will be sadly disappointed. Bye for now, Maurice.

duirt siad

"People who care about Ireland - all of it, its ordinary people, their freedom and well-being - should mourn the resignation of Jack Lynch as its Prime Minister."

The hypocritical Peter Jay, former Masonic propagandist in Washington, who certainly doesn't care about Ireland, but does care about the loss to Britain of a key collaborator.

"So the man they vote for will be the man they feel most likely to keep them employed. And for some of them, to keep them well employed with large cars, plenty of interesting work, and a lot of social occasions for the wives."

Cynical Irish Times editorial view of the voting pattern of the Fianna Fail parliamentary party in the leadership election.

"The only consolation - but a considerable one - is that Mr. Haughey and his party seem likely to lose the next General Election. May it come soon!"

Scour grapes from Conor Cruise O'Brien who at the last Leinster House General Election was summarily dismissed by the electorate for his pro-British servility.

"I was as much responsible for security during that period of office as anybody else. And I want to remind him that when I became Minister for Justice in 1961 there was a violent campaign being waged from this part of the country across the border into the six-counties. I as the Minister for Justice was responsible for successfully bringing that violent campaign to an end. Now that's my record on the question of security and that's what I will stand on before any audience in this country."

Charlie Haughey speaking on the 1957 to 1973 Fianna Fail period of office (when they introduced internment of Republicans), whilst debating a political opponent during the run-up to the last Leinster House General Election.

"Ironically, the rise in prison officers' deaths has come at a time when the government is largely abandoning its campaign of portraying IRA men as criminals: now the accent is on branding them as communists."

Sunday Times reporter Andrew Stephen.

"Those who join a party to leave and rejoin, pending the outcome of their deliberations on whether to leave again, are parasites who have nothing to contribute."

Jeremy Birchill, chairman of the Young Unionists, bitterly attacking William Craig and his Vanguard grouping inside the Official Unionist Party for their threats to leave the party if it does not go to the Atkins conference table.

"Unionism is so patently, and blatantly, wrong that its exponents can only defend it by ruthless, unjust means - discrimination, disfranchisement, internment, crooked laws and judges, judicial murder and violence, and by the use of loyalist paramilitary gangs."

Andersonstown News editorial on British democracy in Ireland.

Síocháin nó Cogadh

TÁ rogha ag Sasana anois. Is féidir leo dul ar bhóthar na síochána nó is féidir leo cúl a thabhairt don bóthar sin agus aghaidh a thabhairt ar an gcogadh. Bhí Robert Mugabe ceannaire de chuid an Patriotic Front ag labhairt i Lonnainn le déanaí. Bhí Mugabe ag caint i gcomhtheas na cainteanna atá ar siúl faoi láthair chun teacht ar réiteach i Zimbabwe. Lean sé air agus dúirt sé "Leanfaimid ag troid i gcoinne an cúlínéachas, is cuma pé gné ina bhíonn sé."

Tá na Sasanaigh ag iarraidh brú a chur ar an Patriotic Front géilleadh agus glacadh leis na coinníollacha seo chogaidh atá i gceist acu féin. Dúirt Joshua Nkomo go raibh dhá phointe sna coinníollacha seo chogaidh le réiteach fós...

(i) Aistharrainnt trúpáir na hAifrice Theas as Zimbabwe.

(ii) Go mbeadh fórsaí an Patriotic Front agus fórsaí an 'Rialtais' i Salisbury ar chomhchéim.

Tá ciall agus reasún leis na pointí sin agus ní féidir teacht ar síocháin gan na pointí sin a shocrú.



DUBLIN HOUSING CRISIS

DUBLIN'S HOUSING CRISIS was the subject of a press conference, called by the newly-formed Dublin Housing Action Committee last Tuesday.

Members of the committee (above) pointed out that 8,615 families are currently on Dublin Corporation's waiting list for accommodation (an increase of one thousand since June) and, of these, 2,407 families are sharing a home with another family.

Only 1,980 new dwellings were built by the Corporation this year and on Monday they did declare a 'Housing

Emergency' and asked for an extra £28 million for house-building, but a similar 'emergency' declared in 1974 is still supposed to be in operation. The action committee stated that this amount of money would merely lead to major increases in the cost of building land unless radical controls were introduced.

A major demonstration on housing is to be held in Dublin on Saturday 15th December, assembling in Sean McDermott Street at 2.30p.m.

CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR ENGLAND

THE LONDON-BASED Prisoners Aid Committee would like to remind people to remember Irish political prisoners who are far away from family and friends in jails in England this Christmas.

People should especially send cards and greetings to those prisoners who are in solitary. Hugh Doherty in Winson Green, Birmingham and Eddie Butler in Durham have been in solitary for nearly two years. In Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, Tony Cunningham, Bussy Cunningham and Liam Baker are in their thirteenth month 'on the blanket', protesting against the British government's refusal to transfer them to jails in Ireland. Cards can be sent to these prisoners at 'HM Prison', followed by the addresses given here.

AUSTRALIAN GREEN CROSS

AP/RN would like to point out an omission in the issue dated November 24th. An article on Green Cross '73 stated 'The American-based Irish Northern Aid, and the Southern-based equivalent of Green Cross. An Cumann Cabhrach, both make generous donations to Green Cross.' The article omitted to point out that the Australian Green Cross also make generous donations to both Green Cross '73 and to An Cumann Cabhrach.

GLASGOW

HANDS OFF IRELAND supporters in Scotland continued their series of public street meetings in Glasgow with a meeting in Castlemilk shopping centre on Saturday 17th November despite pouring rain and harsh winds. All the speakers argued that since British workers and Irish workers face the same enemy - the British imperialist state - every victory for the Republican Movement is also a victory for British workers. All the speakers also called for support for the H-Block blanketmen.

HANDS OFF IRELAND

THE NINTH ISSUE of the Hands off Ireland bulletin has just been published by the RCG in London. This latest issue includes an IRA leadership interview, a report on the war in the border areas and an article on revolutionary nationalism. There are also reports on the H-Blocks, English prisons, press censorship and protests in Britain plus a speech from a representative of the Zimbabwean Patriotic Front.

The price per copy is 25p (plus 10p post) (5 copies £1.10, post free) and it is available from RCG Publications Ltd. (AP/RN) 49, Ralston Road, London.

DURHAM

MORE than fifty people supported a picket at Durham prison on Saturday 1st December. The picket was organised by 'The North of England Irish Prisoners Committee' which is supported by Sinn Fein and various English left-wing groups. Republican prisoners in the prison are Eddie Butler and Ann and Eileen Gillespie.



GLASGOW DRAW

Irish harp. ticket no. 1669
£30 ticket no 883
£20 ticket no 1021
£10 ticket no 1531

Draw held in aid of Green Cross '73
The organisers would like to thank everyone who throughout the year has supported functions and ballots to raise funds for prisoners' dependants and would like to make a special mention of the efforts of the Billy Reid flute band and individuals in Lanarkshire.

SOUTH TYRONE ANNUAL DINNER DANCE

REPORT BY SEAMUS BOYLE

'We are striving for a thirty-two-county democratic socialist republic and we are not ashamed of it'

ADAMS

SPEAKING AT a Republican function last Friday night to commemorate the Pearse centenary, Gerry Adams, Vice-President of Sinn Fein, said that 'We are striving for a thirty-two-county Democratic Socialist Republic and we are not ashamed of it.'

Brendan McAnallen, chairman of South Tyrone Comhairle Ceantair Sinn Fein, welcomed well over eight-hundred people who turned out at the Four Seasons Hotel in Monaghan for the annual dinner dance which was this year specially dedicated to the commemoration of Pearse's birth.

Brendan recalled that Martin McKenna who had addressed them last year had been tragically killed in a road accident just two months ago. There followed a minute's silence for those killed during the war of national liberation. The speakers were then introduced.

BRANNIGAN

Gerry Brannigan (H Block Information Centre) said it had been a great honour to have been invited and that the turn-out was very impressive. He said he usually had to announce bad news only, from the H-Blocks. "But tonight I can begin with good news.... at 4p.m. another blanket-man, John Curran from Derry, who was sentenced on 27th April won his appeal and has just been released."

Brannigan said that "starvation diets have replaced the systematic beatings ... for over three years the blanketmen have done more for this war than possibly anyone else... they have forced an examination of the state and they have thus politicised the nationalist people of the six-counties and people throughout Ireland."

He paid tribute to the older republicans who carried the tradition of resistance down through the lean years. If the blanketmen did not have this tradition and the support and encouragement of their relatives then their struggle would be more difficult.

The bearded Fra McCann who was recently released from the H-Blocks was then introduced and he was given a standing ovation.

He said: "In my two and a half years in the H-Blocks I have come to know the blanketmen of South Tyrone intimately. If they are anything to go by then the people of South Tyrone are people of rare quality."

Mary Mullen whose son Pat is 'on the blanket' presented Fra with

a £100 cheque for the H-Block Information Centre.

O'DUILL

An t-Athair Piaras O'Duill, chairman of the National H-Block Committee, explained its background and the intention of broadening out the base to take in people who have not previously been involved in working for the H-Block men.

Apparently in a reference to Vincent Browne's dishonest article in the current issue of *Magill* magazine, he said: "It has not been easy, we have been criticised already ... some in the media say we already have failed to broaden the base. Yet these people who have criticised are the very people who do not themselves lend a hand."

He urged people to attend the Dublin conference planned for next Sunday, at which a south-based committee will be elected.

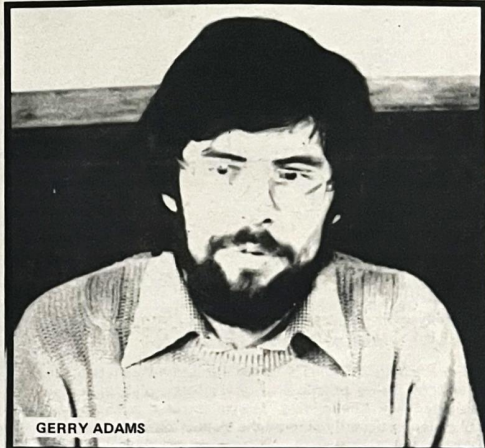
CAGES

A message from Tyrone Prisoners of War in the Long Kesh cages was read out. They thanked people for their support and said that all stops should be pulled out in mobilising for the H-Blocks.

Over the last twelve months the IRA had proven that they could not be beaten, but the POWs urged the need to take up other political issues: "We must echo the cause of the unemployed, the no-property class and the small farmers for these are the people on which the future of Ireland will be built; these are our people and those for which the struggle continues. It is not enough to drive the stranger from our land to let the traitors of Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, SDLP and their lackeys sow in the furrows we have ploughed. It is up to you to go from here and sow that furrow that our army and people have ploughed at a very high cost. Go and spread the word and carry out the deeds of the Socialist Republic on which we stake our future."

"Let the coming year be the starting point for a massive effort to carry the socialist republican message to every household in Tyrone and from there to every household in the nation."

As an adjointer to this call Brian McGeown from Dunganannon said: "We may have eight strong cumainn



GERRY ADAMS

but no way have we eight hundred members. I urge ex-prisoners in particular, it is not too late to get off your knees and stand up and be counted."

ADAMS

The guest speaker, Gerry Adams, was then introduced. "I heard someone say earlier that I was the guest of honour but I think the honour must go to Fra McCann as a representative of the blanketmen... the blanketmen are one single manifestation of Republican resistance to Brit rule. The Brits say the IRA pick on soft targets. But the Brits, day in day out, pick on, beat and attempt to repress what they thought would be easy targets - the blanketmen. And they are learning that there's no such thing as a soft target when you pick on a Republican target." To this there was loud applause.

Commenting on the recent so-called initiative from the British government Adams said that the only British initiative any Irish person can demand is a British withdrawal - of their political, economic and cultural influences. "We want them out - their whole structure must be taken down."

Referring to the election of Charlie Haughey as Fianna Fail leader which had given rise to mistaken elation in some republican sympathisers he said, "Fianna Fail never did anything good for the Republican Movement. The Republican Movement in the thirties put Fianna Fail into power and they went on to execute Republicans. In the forties Fianna Fail was in power when Sean McCaughy died after being on the blanket for five years

before resorting to hunger-strike. Fianna Fail was the party that allowed one-eighth of the population to emigrate - Fianna Fail stand for the men of property."

FIANNA FAIL

"There are major differences between us and Fianna Fail", continued Adams.

"Pearse stood for no compromise and for freedom. Fianna Fail are not following in the footsteps of Pearse. There is only one way for freedom to be obtained, and when obtained, maintained, and that is by armed men. Fianna Fail have used their armed men to prop up partition, not to smash it."

Adams said that the struggle had brought down Faulkner, Cosgrave, Fitt and Lynch and it would bring down anyone who "stands in the way of our freedom". He said the Republican Movement is not merely a Brits out movement. "We are striving for a thirty-two-county Democratic Socialist Republic and we are not ashamed of it. The society we want will give people a better deal and increased happiness. We want to create a situation where people can take control of their own destinies."

He paid tribute to Pearse and the Republican generations. "They guaranteed the Brits wouldn't get an easy ride. They have sowed .. we are the people who will do the reaping. Our resolution in 1980 should be to intensify the effort. If you are doing nothing you should be ashamed. If you are doing something then you should do more. Merry Christmas and a very revolutionary, and hopefully very successful, new year," he concluded.

Mellows/Kavanagh commemoration in county Wexford

ABOUT one hundred and fifty people attended the annual Mellows/Kavanagh commemoration at Castletown cemetery in County Wexford last Sunday. The assembly point was Gorey's '98 memorial, the unveiling of which, in 1892, Liam Mellows himself attended as a boy.

The parade, to the edge of the town, was led by the tricolour attached to an original '98 pike, followed by the St. Patrick's Fife and Drum Band. The marchers then travelled by bus and car to Castletown cemetery, eight miles away, to the graves of Liam Mellows, executed without trial by the Free State on 8th December 1922, and of the Kavanagh brothers, Liam and Denis, who both died in 1927 (Liam whilst still in prison) as a result of illness caused by imprisonment and hunger strike.

Phil Kelly, Sinn Féin Alderman

on Wexford Corporation introduced the main speaker Diarmuid O Suilleabhain, the writer and gaelic scholar, who paid tribute to Mellows as a republican and socialist. He described him as a man marked by lesser men for death, because they feared and lacked his integrity, his well-bound honesty. "The price of freedom is all too often death", he said, "and those who sow its seeds are often not its reapers".

He attacked successive Free State governments for their indifference to their fellow countrymen.

"As long as might was right and Stormont held, as long as draconian laws and brutal B Specials kept the outraged northern minority at bay all was well as far as Dublin was concerned", he said.

Local veteran republican, Dick Cooper, who had, as a member of Na Fianna in 1922, attended the burial of Mellows, then recited a decade of the rosary.

Wreaths were laid on both the Mellows' and Kavanaghs' graves on behalf of the Republican Movement by Michael Sheils, Gorey Town Commissioner, and on behalf of Sinn Féin in Wexford by Michael Nolan and Sean O'Duinn. A member of Na Fianna Éireann sounded the Last Post and Reveille to conclude the proceedings.



Liam Mellows grave in Castletown cemetery

Annual sale of work

THE ANNUAL Cumann Cabhrach Aonach na Nollag - Sale of work - was held in the Mansion House Dublin last weekend. A variety of stalls were manned by local Cumann Cabhrach committees and Sinn Féin cumain. All proceeds go to the prisoners dependants. The photograph shows members of the Walkinstown committee ready for action.



Sectarianism at Ulster Poly

THE FAIR EMPLOYMENT AGENCY is currently investigating the 'religious' hiring practices of the Ulster Polytechnic. Not surprisingly their preliminary results indicate a sharp anti-Catholic bias particularly amongst the manual staff.

The Poly which borders on the Loyalist Monkstown estate and is not far from the UVF stronghold Carrickfergus, has always been dominated by a 'security' force, most of whose members double up with RUC or UDR part-time work. (A number of the teaching staff are also active UDR members. Not because they need the money, but

mainly because the elitist Queen's University is Protestant-dominated so that Catholics are shunted off to the Poly.

The union is Sticky led, which predictably leads to the usual noise about Peace, Jobs and Progress but little action. When they helped organise an Anti-Apartheid group they invited all political parties except the 'Provos and Paisley'!

These people are so cowed and brow-beaten that they do not have the least political discussion on a situation which is clearly too close for comfort — the war against the Brits.

Most serious of all is the Poly's involvement in 'educating' the sectarian RUC, through its Diploma in Police Studies. These notorious torturers casually wander down the corridors, trying desperately to look like ordinary students.

Clearly a more educated RUC means a more sophisticated, and therefore effective force to persecute the nationalist people. An educational establishment surely involves itself with the repressive forces at its own peril. When these forces are welcomed with open arms, and internal 'security' is placed in the hands of sectarian gangsters, people are playing with fire.

A WELL-FINANCED witch-hunt has been launched against five Oxford left wingers.

But this is no normal witch-hunt; it is an incitement to the type of violence associated with extreme Loyalists in the North of Ireland.

The five victims are Pat Lally, Alan Thornett, Peter McKintyre, Tony Richardson, and Dave Simpson. Their photographs and names appear in posters being widely circulated in Oxford.

The posters publicise the participation of the five in a demonstration in Oxford on October 20th in support of political status for Irish Republican prisoners and the immediate withdrawal of British troops from the North of Ireland.

The poster is designed in such a way as to suggest the five are members of the IRA.

The poster's headline reads 'Do you know these people?' It goes on: 'On 20 October people marched through the streets of Oxford in support of the IRA (the latter in bold, large letters). Most of us looked on in disgust and amazement and wondered who were these IRA sympathisers.'

Then in large, bold letters: 'Well we thought we would tell you!'

The names, addresses, telephone numbers, union positions, and workplaces of the five then follow under photographs of each of them.

Whoever is behind this poster is spending a lot of money. Thousands were distributed outside the workplace of the five by individuals paid £10 to do the dirty work. The posters were also mailed to every house in the street where the five live.

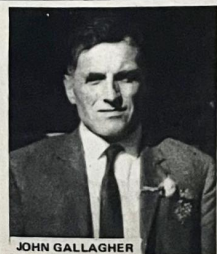
There are a number of obvious suspects with regard to the leaders of this witch-hunt, fascists, Loyalists, even right-wing management outfits.

That four of the five photographs appear to have been taken from a video film of the demonstration may even suggest that a more 'official' state institution could be orchestrating the campaign.

Whoever is responsible, one fact is clear: the more people and the more times the issue of Ireland is raised in the labour movement the less effective any 'greens under the bed' campaign will be.

(Article courtesy of Socialist Challenge.)

Oxford witch-hunt



JOHN GALLAGHER

The late John Gallagher

BY A FRIEND

HIS many friends in the Republican Movement have learned with regret of the death of John Gallagher of Stranagough, Glenties, Co. Donegal, which took place recently.

A native Irish speaker and a life-long Republican John's first contacts with the Movement were made in Scotland, where he had found employment as a farm labourer during the 1930s. By 1939 he had become part of a back-up team whose

task was to support the IRA expeditionary force that bombed Britain during the forties.

He supported the 1956-1962 border campaign and sided with the Provisionals in 1969. During the 1970s he became well-known as a seller of 'An Phoblacht' and 'Republican News'.

He was a frequent visitor to the Bodenstown and Drumboe commemorations and attended a number of Sinn Féin Ard Fheiseanna.

He was seriously injured in a road accident some three years ago and despite lengthy periods of hospitalisation he never fully recovered. In recent months his health was seen to be deteriorating rapidly and his death was not unexpected.

The large attendance to the family burial ground at Fintona was a tribute to the esteem in which he was held.

Sympathy is extended to the bereaved relatives.



H-BLOCK CANDLE

Burn an H-Block candle this Christmas eve!

Produced by the Sinn Féin

POW department

Available from the Art Shop

85 Falls Road, Belfast, Telephone 23214

Price £1 plus postage

GREEN CROSS CHRISTMAS CARDS AND CALENDAR

Calendar 25p (postage extra)
Pack of four cards . . . 40p (postage extra)
Available from Green Cross, 11a Springfield Road, Belfast.

BELFAST RECORD REQUEST

OWING TO the success of last year's 'record request' for the prisoners and their families, this will be repeated at this year's Belfast Sinn Féin Vigil, from December 20th to 22nd.

Requests should be handed in as soon as possible to the Sinn Féin offices at 85a Falls Road, (where the vigil will be) giving details of the prisoner and the record requested.

THANKS

Prisoners' Aid

The London-based Prisoners' Aid Committee would like to thank all their supporters who have given them such valuable aid during the past year.

H-Block

The H-Block appeal fund wish to thank the Republican prisoners in the cages of Long Kesh for their generous donation of £200

The Number Five Club Blessington Street DUBLIN

Now open every Saturday and Sunday
Doors close at 10 p.m.
Proceeds of Sunday functions go to An Cumann Cabhrach

CHRISTMAS PARTY For Portlaoise Prisoners' children No. 5 Blessington Street DUBLIN

3 p.m. Sunday 16th December
Organised by Prisoners' Welfare Action Group

SHERIDAN, BATESON AND LEE ANNUAL COMMEMORATION

2p.m. Sunday 16th December
BALLYMAGUIGAN
Co. Derry

Oration by Christine Elias
Organised by Sheridan, Bateson and Lee
Sinn Féin Cumain.

LARRY GROGAN MASS Irish Mass GIBBSTOWN Co. Meath

9.30a.m. Sunday 30th December
An Irish Mass will be said for the repose of the soul of the recently deceased Republican veteran Larry Grogan. All friends and former comrades in County Meath are invited.

Sympathy

McDONAGH.

Deepest sympathy to Tommy and Mary on the loss of their daughter June on 30th November. May she rest in peace with her brother Thomas. Deeply regretted by Joe, Betty and family.

GROGAN.

At the monthly meeting of Cavan Comhairle Ceantair, Sinn Féin, votes of sympathy were extended to the relatives of Larry Grogan, to Peadar Neary on the death of his father and also to Liam Minnagh on the death of his uncle.

