

The

**Starry Plough**

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# DAMNED BY THEIR SILENCE!

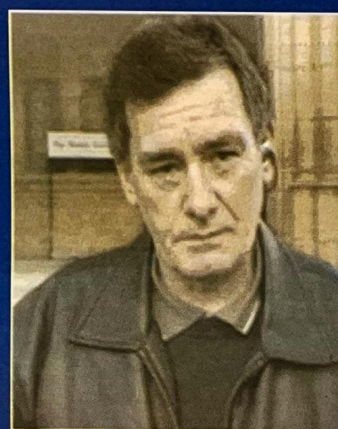
**INLA EXPOSES CHILD SPY, POLICING  
BOARD MEMBERS DIVE FOR COVER**



**Mark Durkan**  
**No comment!**



**Alan McQuillan**  
**"It wasn't me!"**



**Denis Bradley**  
**3 Days to answer!**

**THE VOICE OF IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALISM!**



# Teagmháil

# Contact

The Irish Republican Socialist Party has established Cumainn in all major cities and towns throughout Ireland as well as Republican Socialist Committees in Europe, North America & Canada.

Each IRSP cumainn meets on a weekly basis to activate, educate and organise events locally such as public and political educational meetings, solidarity protests, pickets and demonstrations from community to workplace struggles.

The Irish Republican Socialist Party has active Cumainn, as well as individual members and supporters in the following towns and cities across Ireland, to contact and get involved with the nearest I.R.S.P. Cumainn in your area write to:

## Ireland

**Ardglass:** For further details Email: [irsp@hotmail.com](mailto:irsp@hotmail.com)  
**Armagh:** For further details Email: [irsp@hotmail.com](mailto:irsp@hotmail.com)  
**Belfast:** 392 Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6DH.  
 Tel: 028 90 321024 Fax: 028 90 330786  
**Bray:** For further details Email: [dublinirsp@hotmail.com](mailto:dublinirsp@hotmail.com)  
**Cork:** For further details Email: [irsp@hotmail.com](mailto:irsp@hotmail.com)  
**Derry:** P.O. Box 1981, Derry, BT48 8GX.  
 Email: [derryirsp@hotmail.com](mailto:derryirsp@hotmail.com)  
**Donegal:** For further details Email: [irsp@hotmail.com](mailto:irsp@hotmail.com)  
**Dublin:** 4 Cavendish Row, Dublin 1.  
 Tel/Fax 01 873 56 20 Email: [dublinirsp@hotmail.com](mailto:dublinirsp@hotmail.com)  
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**Limerick:** For further details Email: [irsp@hotmail.com](mailto:irsp@hotmail.com)  
**Newry:** For further details Email: [irsp@hotmail.com](mailto:irsp@hotmail.com)  
**Strabane:** 31 Patrick Street, Strabane, Co Tyrone

## Europe

IRSP has members, supporters and contacts active in many working class campaigns and prisoner solidarity in towns and cities throughout England, Scotland and Wales, and across Europe, write to our International Department for further details on how you can actively participate.

IRSP International Department

Email: [irsp@netwizards.net](mailto:irsp@netwizards.net)

## North America & Canada

Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America & Canada

2057 15th Street, Suite B, San Francisco, CA 94111, North America.  
 Tel/Fax: 415 861 1355 Email: [irsp@netwizards.net](mailto:irsp@netwizards.net)

IRSC has members, supporters and contacts active in working class struggles and prisoner solidarity throughout North America, Canada and Latin America write for further details on how you too can actively participate.

## IRSM Online & Other Links

Official IRSM Website: <http://irsm.org/irsp/>

Prisoner of War Website: <http://irsm.org/irspows/>

IRSM Statements: <http://irsm.org/statements/>

The Starry Plough Online: <http://irsm.org/irsp/starryplough>

Teach Na Failte (Strabane):  
 Ex Republican Socialist POW Support Organisation  
 31 Patrick Street, Strabane, Tyrone  
 Tel/Fax: 028 71 884616

Teach Na Failte (Belfast):  
 392b Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6DH.  
 Tel/Fax: 028 90238321

Solidarity with Turkish Hunger Strikers Committee (Dublin): [www.geocities.com/turkishhungerstrike/](http://www.geocities.com/turkishhungerstrike/)

Free Dessie O'Hare Campaign  
[http://irsm.org/irsp/free\\_dessie/](http://irsm.org/irsp/free_dessie/)

Republican Socialist Archive Project  
 P.O. Box 1981, Derry, BT48 8GX

Justice For Mark Barnsley (Ireland Support Group):  
 c/o P.O. Box 1981, Derry, BT48 8GX.

Celebration of Resistance: [www.hungerstrike.net](http://www.hungerstrike.net)

James Connolly Society: [www.wageslave.org/jcs/](http://www.wageslave.org/jcs/)

Larkspirit: [www.larkspirit.com](http://www.larkspirit.com)

[starry\\_plough@hotmail.com](mailto:starry_plough@hotmail.com)

## Got a Story? Let us know

If you would like to highlight an issue of concern in your area and would like to have it published in the pages of The Starry Plough then get in touch at the address above or contact a local IRSP representative, The Starry Plough is your paper.

For national and international news, or news for your workplace, community or action group then please send your articles, photographs, reports and any other information to The Starry Plough at the following address:

The Starry Plough/An Camhéachta  
 PO BOX 1981  
 DERRY  
 IRELAND  
 BT48 8GX

Deadline for next issue of An Camhéachta is 20th January 2003.



# Eagarphocal

## GIVING POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

The last few weeks have seen more symptoms of the crisis of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement with Stormont once again being suspended. In the South, the referendum saw the victory of the Nice Treaty, with the promise of more problems for the Irish working class.

There is a danger that Republican Socialists end up simply reacting to events. What is important is to have a long term strategic vision that enables us to clearly understand what is to be done. The fundamental task of Republican Socialists is not so much opposing the Good Friday Agreement or the effects of the Nice Treaty, but to give political leadership to the different struggles of the working class that will emerge in the coming weeks, months and years.

This cannot be done without building the party, without forming the vanguard. The working class is compelled by objective circumstances to struggle against various problems: exploitation on building sites, resisting the introduction of water rates, fighting drug dealers, attacks by Loyalists etc. If the working class will certainly engage in those issues, spontaneous actions and reactions to those problems are in themselves not sufficient to transform Irish society. A long term strategy, policies, directions to do so will not emerge spontaneously out of those struggles. This is even more true when one takes into account that there is an uneven level of political consciousness among our people, and that the working class cannot afford to be constantly in struggle 24 hours a day seven days a week.



Ta Power Document to be published in 2003

Political leadership can only come from a political party, whose advanced strategic understanding of the concrete situation enables the working class struggle to move forward. This does not mean that it is a group of intellectuals whose "special knowledge" makes them more clever than other people - on the contrary, it is composed of the section of the working class with the highest level of political consciousness and organic link to the real struggles of the masses that makes it the most politically dynamic part of the working class. This vanguard aims to be a catalyst to the struggle of the people, give it direction and elevate the level of political consciousness among the masses. And it is not enough for one party to proclaim itself "the vanguard of the working class". To be the genuine vanguard, one needs to be recognised as such by the people.

During the coming year, the IRSP will increase its efforts in elevating the level of political consciousness of its members, develop policies and strategies to revolutionise Irish society, and build up its presence within mass struggles. As part of this process, the party will publish the Ta Power document in its entirety. This is not out of some historical curiosity, but as an integral part of the politicisation of our party to help it become the political catalyst and leader of the struggles of the working class, women, immigrants and young people.

## An Camhéachta

The Starry Plough or An Camhéachta

was first established in 1975 as

the national newspaper of the

Irish Republican Socialist Party.

For all correspondence write to:

The Starry Plough/An Camhéachta,  
 P.O. Box 1981 Derry,  
 BT48 8GX, Ireland.

Email: [starry\\_plough@hotmail.com](mailto:starry_plough@hotmail.com)

Website: <http://irsm.org/irsp/starryplough>

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# Starry Plough

## Fighting Fund Appeal

The Starry Plough is the only paper that stands firmly against British rule and the destruction of capitalism in Ireland.

We need your support to enable us to continue the work of building a party that has a regular paper that genuinely represents the interests of the working class. In order for us to do so, we urge you to make a donation to The Starry Plough 'Fighting Fund Appeal'!

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# Asking the Awkward Questions

By Terry Harkin

Over the last few weeks assisting with the IRSP's effort to expose the use, by an unreconstructed RUC, of child informers to spy on their own people. I was struck with the lack of interest expressed by the media, Policing Board and world in general.

Here we were, a legitimate political party with what by any standards was a major story. It had all the elements, sleaze, child abuse, paramilitaries and crooked cops.

The story as we seen it was this, during August of this year an RUC/PSNI patrol picked up a drunk, confused and very frightened 13 year old boy with Learning Difficulties. They arrested him on suspicion of "going equipped to steal a car" and took him to the nearest RUC/PSNI barracks. Once there he was interviewed, illegally without his parents or Social Services being informed. He was threatened that he would be charged with offences if he did not spy on his own community. A community that at that point in time was under daily attack from armed loyalist thugs. The deal was simple, agree to work for the RUC/PSNI observing and reporting back to his handlers on the movements and activities of those volunteers of the Irish National Liberation Army suspected of involvement in the by now 24 hour a day defence of North Belfast or go to prison, or worse. He was a frightened, drunk, wee boy with a mental age of 8, he was in the company of authority figures who abused him and played on his disabilities to induce terror and break him to their will. And they did, he cracked like a dropped plate.

These were the circumstances that led to the boy being released without his parents or any statutory body being informed that he had even been in custody, never mind interviewed. He'd been given the number of an Orange mobile phone to call and a name (Johnny) to ask for when he had information. And, so it was that for the best part of 3 months this disabled child was exploited and exposed to the risk of harm by those allegedly there to protect him. He was on an odyssey that involved secret meetings on far away roads, being driven around Nationalist North Belfast in an RUC/PSNI Landrover, pointing out suspected INLA personnel and eventually giving away the location of a weapon being used by those involved in the defence of his own area. This in turn led to his unmasking by the INLA. It was then that the INLA displayed a degree of empathy for this child that was sadly lacking in the forces of the crown. Instead of the execution the RUC/PSNI would have expected for one of their unmasked agents. The INLA treated the boy humanely, contacted the Church, and the IRSP then referred the family an internationally respected human rights lawyer.

As I said at the start, what a story! Or so you would think. The Irish News was given the exclusive, they talked to the INLA, the IRSP, and the priest the boy and the family. They then buried the story on the inside pages. The Guardian did better, two paragraphs on page 14. The Andytown News said that the INLA were going to start shooting children as informers. Amid the crying of the collective babies, covered in dirty water, sitting on their collective sores bare asses having just been thrown out with the bath water, two papers got it right. Only the Derry News and North Belfast News caught the drift of what the INLA had uncovered and what the IRSP is try-

ing to expose.

This isn't just about one scared wee disabled kid from North Belfast. This is a tactic. If it's in use in North Belfast, it is in use in the West of the city? The East and South, Derry, Armagh, Strabane, Dungannon? Are loyalist children being blackmailed in this way? Take two steps back and look at the big picture, as part of the so-called UK, the RUC/PSNI are trained by MI5 and the FBI. Is this tactic in common use by other agencies of the British government? Are police forces in England, Scotland and Wales using the children of Muslims in Birmingham, Swansea and Glasgow to spy on their communities? What of the Miners in the 80's, the Turks and Kurds, Scots, Welsh and English Republicans, the firemen? Is North Belfast just the tip of the iceberg, a ground zero for something that has ramifications for all political activists and ethnic minorities deemed hostile or subversive by the state?

But for now, all we can be sure of is this one scared child in Belfast. The trail starts with him. The Orange phone number he was given has been removed from Orange's database, that much has been uncovered by the IRSP. It is our understanding that this phone was not a "pay as you go", but rather had an account and as such must have generated a bill. Who paid that bill and, more importantly, who approached Orange to remove the number and who at Orange acted to cover up this act of state sponsored child abuse?

At every meeting the boy was given 80 pounds by his RUC/PSNI handlers. Who signed for this money, who authorised its use and who put it into the boy's hands?

Alan McQuillan, the deputy chief constable of the RUC/PSNI who would, under law, need to approve the use of such a young and "vulnerable" intelligence source has been quick to wash his hands in public over this:

"I would have to authorise something like this and I have not. If an officer has done this it would be a serious breach," or words to that effect.

I've been an Irl all my life and I've never seen a peeler so quick to get his denial in first. Surprisingly he did not say, "I'm confident the PSNI would never do such a thing", he just said, "I didn't do it". A strange thing for a senior RUC/PSNI officer to say about his force, or is it?

Let's take two steps forward and look again just at the North of Ireland. It has been clear for sometime those elements within the RUC/PSNI loyal to the old Ascendancy have been working with people inside the media with a similar agenda to destabilise the Peace Process. The raid on the Sinn Féin office was so media staged that it turned out campier than a Whitehall farce. In the interviews outside Stormont, Hugh Ord would only say that he knew the raid was going to take place. No one in the press pack thought to ask why the warrant was not executed at the same time as the homes of Sinn Féin employees and supporters were raided. Sure any police force in the world would know how to co-ordinate an operation like that.

They came for the press and the press dutifully bayed for the blood of alleged spies. A democratically elected

Assembly was brought down, two peoples were disenfranchised.

Let's face it, the Assembly was a lame duck and a waste of money that would have been better spent in pay raises in the public sector and kidney machines. But, there is an unmissable parallel between these two spy stories. In one, a police force abuses its power and brings down a democratically elected body and the media don't ask questions. In the other, that same force are exposed using a mentally under developed child to spy for them. And still the media don't ask questions.

There is no press pack hounding Ord and McQuillan, the Policing Board took two weeks to get back to the IRSP when they tried to contact them. Questions need to be asked about what happened to this boy and no one seems to want to ask them or even consider the wider ranging implications of what has been uncovered by the INLA. WHY? Are nationalist politicians and newspapers so wedded to this sectarian agreement that they are willing to sacrifice the rights and welfare of this child and who knows how many others on its altar? Are the organs of the state, the BBC and ITN, so toothless that they turn a blind eye while the State and/or Ascendancy blackmail and corrupt the innocent? Of course they are, that's a given. Their only concern is to spoon-feed the population driven and sanitised versions of the truth. A version that cannot be allowed to show that the Agreement has not worked and will not work. How can it work when unionists are still empowered with a built-in veto and the much vaunted reform of the RUC cannot prevent a disabled boy from being abused and debased for low grade intelligence work? The deafening silence that surrounds the October 15th break in at the Bloody Sunday Inquire in London and the fact that English MPs are forced to ask questions as to why the writings of LVF murder victim, journalist Martin O' Hagan have yet to be returned to his family and publisher only serve to add grist to this mill. What has changed? The only thing that I can see that has changed is the unwillingness of the nationalist press to take up any issue that is not rubber stamped by Sinn Féin or the Brits.

This has happened before of course, the media manipulation, the covering up of descent, control of perception, control of the population by using their children to spy on them. I wonder were it was?

In closing, and at the risk of being sued by John Grisham, I would like to pose a challenge to those of the nationalist press in Ireland and the middle-left broadsheets of Britain. Close your eyes, imagine the terror of a 13 year old Irish boy with learning difficulties lifted off the street at his most vulnerable, denied his basic human and legal right to be seen by his family or by social services. Alone, scared, with the police all around you, telling you that you're going to prison if you don't sell the defenders of your community for 80 pounds a time. Imagine the fear he then had to live with, the stress the fear of exposure must have generated in his young mind every time he left his home. Then forget that the boy is Irish. Don't see him as Muslim or the son of some Lefty trade unionist. Imagine it's your son. Then open your eyes, take your fingers out of your ass and drag this whole sordid mess out into the public domain where it belongs.

Political parties and the media have generally ignored the fact that the RUC used and abused this child to get information on republicans in North Belfast.

Despite being contacted by the IRSP all the main media groups in the six counties refused to publish details of the story with the exception of some of the smaller local papers such as the Derry News and Andersontown News. And the main political parties fared little better when they were asked to publicise the case.

An IRSP spokesperson also contacted the policing board mouthpiece Denis Bradley and it took him three days to return his call and acknowledge the problem. Still no public statement on the matter though.

The SDLP are also part of the policing boards and have thus far failed to live up to their own promises of holding the RUC to account. This proves that the policing boards are a sham and have no power to hold wrong doers up to scrutiny. Either this or the SDLP feel it is appropriate to recruit young mentally disabled children to spy on working class communities.

Either way Denis Bradley and the SDLP positions on the policing boards are untenable and the time is right for them to step down and withdraw their support for this farce. If they do not they will be giving active credence to the recruitment and abuse that is undoubtedly continuing across the north of vulnerable children.

## Tape Released by INLA of Boy's Spy Role

The INLA have released a tape recording of the 13 year old boy admitting his role in spying for the RUC. In the tape recording the mentally disabled boy who was recruited by the RUC as an informer gives details of how he was recruited, how much he was paid and where he met his handlers.

The RUC has denied that it "officially" recruited the 13-year-old to spy on suspected republican activists. ACC Alan McQuillan immediately denied that he was personally involved in approving the recruitment of the boy, stopping short of a full denial that the boy had actually been recruited.

The claims are being investigated by Nuala O'Loan, the police ombudsman.

On the tape the boy, who has a mental age of eight, admits to the INLA that he was recruited as a police informer.

"I was asked to watch men from the IRA, to keep an eye on them, see what they were up to," he said.

In an emotional voice he tells his interrogators that he was picked up by the police for sniffing glue and thieving, and was taken to a police station where a plain-clothes officer told him that his mother would not be told of the arrest if he agreed to spy on suspects.

The boy says he was asked to watch three named people from the Ardoyne area of North Belfast.

"They said to me, 'You help us and we will help you. We will not tell your mammy that you have been out being a bad boy if you help us watch the men we are after,'" the boy said on the tape. "The plain-clothes man in the police station said he was going to be my new friend and I was to call him Johnny, and he said he wanted to know where these men go and who they are talking to. He gave me a mobile phone number and told me to ring it when I had any information. When I would call the number, I would just say 'it is me' and they would come and collect me in a cop car and Johnny was in the back."

The boy claims he was given three locations from which to call the police, including the Shamrock social club in Ardoyne. He also alleges that he led police to an arms cache.

"My friend told me he had seen (a named man) put stuff there. I called Johnny. He met me with another uniformed policeman. We drove up and down an alleyway in the armoured car. I pointed out where I knew there was stuff buried."

He claims on the tape that he was paid £80 by the police for information on the arms dump.

"Sometimes he would give me £5 for sweets. Other times he would give me £10."

# DAMNED BY THEIR SILENCE!



# FACTORY OCCUPATION ENDS AT RICHARDSONS

**A week long factory occupation at Richardsons IFI plant in Belfast has ended despite a clear outcome over pension payments for workers.**

Workers at Richardsons earlier last month had been informed by IFI bosses, which includes the 26 County administration who has a sizeable stake in the company, that they were being laid off.

The occupation began as workers angered at redundancy payments that would have left them receiving far less than what pensioners in the so-called 'free state' are receiving at present. Protest rallies were held outside the Irish Minister for Finance office in Dublin which were attended by other former workers from two other IFI factories.

In discussions between Richardsons workers who agreed to scap signing any deal with the bosses following talks involving the 26 County administration.

"People here can't believe the attitude displayed towards workers in talks we have had with IFI. We are disgusted at the way in which we have been treated here today" said one worker as talks that included Mary Harney, failed.

One hundred workers began a week long occupation of the factory in order to highlight their plight, families, relatives and supporters who assisted the sit-in with food parcels.

Determined to dig in, calls for similar solidarity actions from Richardsons workers in favour of a better redundancy package from IFI came as the occupation look set to

draw out. In follow up talks worker representatives met again to work out a settlement. Workers holed up at the plant were given assurances from the company liquidator on their ninety-day notice and redundancy payments for all those involved in the dispute.

At the outcome one ex-employee of Richardsons said, "I'm not pleased at all like most of those who have been spat upon by our former employers. I am upset at the fact that there is still an important issue that we're completely resolved.

"We are now left at the end of a successful occupation of our plant however the issue of a 60 per cent shortfall in pension entitlements for all the workers involved. There are many lessons to be learnt in this dispute for every worker who is thrown into such a nightmare and that's we have all got to stand our ground!"



Mary Harney: Anti-worker to the core!

## BRAY ESTATE'S ANTI SOCIAL FAMILIES

Anti-social behavior is now a problem in every housing estate in Ireland, but the approaches made by the different authorities in tackling this is very different. In the north at present the law which is in effect is outdated and has left many asking for the law introduced on the Britain to be brought into effect (ie. the exclusion of anti-social individuals from local authority housing estates). Is this not what republicans have been doing when all other alternatives have been exhausted? Sylvia Hermon MP has been requesting a law which Irish Republicans have been administering for many years.

However in the 26 counties despite anti-social legislation being introduced residents in Bray feel totally abandoned by the Gardai, Bray Urban District Council and most elected representatives with the exception of David Grant a local councillor.

In August of 2001 a group of residents from Ard Na Greine went to the local authority with a litany of offences perpetrated against them by a local resident and her extended family. No solution was put in place and the residents left their meeting with the town clerk totally demoralised. The council stated they could not act without convictions. Now enter Bray Gardai who for five months had been advising residents not to make statements as this may make their situation worse! What they were telling was was they would not act against these people despite local pressure for them to do so!

Many residents were already frightened as they had witnessed first hand this family and others associated with them totally destroy the house next door to them occupied by a young mother and her two year old child. At that time I along with Kathleen Oliver, Chairperson of Ard Na Greine Residents Association spoke to Ms Louise Farrell, Housing Officer with BUDC about the terrifying ordeal Ms Caroline Moorehouse had experienced with her young child as window after window of her home was smashed and her garden and property vandalised. No one in this housing estate ever witnessed any abuse by Caroline Moorehouse and so she was offered a new home as it was agreed it was in the interest of her safety and that of her young child. There was to be no happy ending as the anti-social resident from Ard Na Greine and a member of her

family then broke the windows of Ms Moorehouse's new home on her first night there, forcing her to seek accommodation away from Bray altogether. Despite many statements being given to Bray Gardai and the residents being informed that the DPP had come back with a recommendation that 13 charges be processed for prosecution - not one charge has been filed. The excuse given to the residents was that the Garda concerned went on holiday and forgot to process them before hand. The number of charges abandoned beggar belief to many decent people. All the incidents below were reported to the Gardai:

□ A mother of four received a visit from this resident's father who threatened her in front of her two small children stating that if she ever complained about anything his daughter said to her he would personally cut her throat. **NO CHARGE!**

□ A mother of six who asked this individual's children to move away from her house due to the foul language that this resident's six and eight year olds were using against her two year old child in his own path was greeted by the children's grandfather trying to punch her when she answered her front door. **NO CHARGE!**

□ A widower with four young children had to listen to a torrent of abuse from this resident drunk in the middle of street that he would not own a car except for the fact his wife was in the grave causing great distress to both him and his children. **NO CHARGE!**

□ A seven year old was approached in his own garden by this individual and told his father was a dead man and he and his brothers and sisters would end up in care or be burnt to death. This child wet himself with fear and was distressed for weeks. **AGAIN NO CHARGE!**

□ A single mother of two children was bombarded for months with "Go Home British Soldiers" for one reason and one reason only - she is English. This christian lady and her children have been spat at and jeered by this individual and her family in the name of Republicanism. I personally along with my wife have told this lady that her next door neighbour is not a Republican but a sick individual hiding behind Republican music and I was sorry she was given the impression that this was normal republican behaviour.

The list of offences could go on forever and there does not seem to be any light at the end of the tunnel for the residents in Ard Na Greine as events of the last few months have taken a more serious tone. While Bray Gardai have responded to every call, the residents believe that even

though the ordinary Gardai are professional and sympathetic to their plight their efforts are being thwarted by others above them. If this is the case we ask the question WHY?

With some charges now before the court the residents say that it is only with the bail conditions in place that prohibit these people from entering the area that tension has eased for them. One resident stated that it was great not to be greeted by them drunk on a Friday evening and to be able to get a good night's sleep without their singing and obscenities at all hours. Not a single threat issued from this resident from her property was prosecuted as we were all informed there was nothing that could be done as she was on her own property.

My wife who voiced strong objections to the behaviour of a local drug dealer had been screamed at and threatened by these individuals and despite most incidents being on camera there are no charges. The drug dealer's took great delight in bursting my childrens footballs for the past eight months and sent one of their henchmen to burn my children's playhouse and cut the ropes off their swings. The two families who have been foremost in the campaign against these elements have been living under threat for the last twelve months and events of the past year only serve to warn them of the danger involved.

Earlier this year one resident was threatened by our anti-social resident that her new Ford Mondeo would not look so good when an acid job was done on it. Five months later her car and that of my wife were destroyed with acid. Despite video footage being given to Bray Gardai, no-one has been charged.

Just before Christmas last year a local pensioner arrived home to find his son's car smashed up and once again the perpetrators are believed to be members of our anti-social resident's family. No one has been charged with this destruction of property. Later that same night this quiet, highly respected widower was viciously assaulted and left unconscious in the middle of the street. He was to require ten hours of neuro-surgery to save his life and spent many weeks in hospital. Since then he has suffered many setbacks due to the injuries he sustained in this mindless attack and like most right thinking people are at loss as to why no-one has been charged with this assault.

What, I ask, are people in Bray to do about anti-social behaviour when the authorities won't help? Will it take someone to be murdered first? Why are some families in Bray immune from prosecution?

## GO! MOVE! SHIFT!

Over 17 traveller families under siege in Ennis, County Clare have vowed to 'stay put' as Clare County Council piles on the pressure for them to move on to allow a proposed €120 million technology park to get under way as part of the Shannon Development.

In what has been described as 'a welcomed boost' in the latest stand off for travellers rights, Irish folk singer, Christ Moore turned up in a show of solidarity. After talking to families at the 'illegal' site he told the waiting press "I have always associated with the struggle of travellers. I want to see the situation at first hand to understand what is happening."

The Irish Republican Socialist Party told the Starry Plough "Several families at the site have arrived in the area after being forced out from other locations around Ennis and stress is already affecting the health of many of those families involved.

"This is a situation where you have big business, the rich and powerful, dictating who does and who doesn't have rights in this country.

"This is a time when travellers rights are being eroded away without much being said about it. It is high time we have justice for the travellers, for our class!"

## TILLIE AND HENDERSON BUILDING TO BE TOPPLED?

The world famous Tillie and Henderson Building beside Derry's Craigavon Bridge may finally be facing demolition following 37 arson attacks over the past couple of months. The demolition of this building may suit the current owner property magnet Diljit Rana who has plans to build an hotel on the site. He paid €950,000 for the site in 1999.



A representative of the IRSP in Derry called on Diljit Rana to come clean to the people of Derry on his plans for the site.

The spokesperson also demanded answers from Diljit Rana on why the building was not secured months, if not years, before this latest disaster. "It has been known for some time now that young people have been using this derelict building as somewhere to hang out in. Used aerosols and empty drinks cans and bottles have been piling up for months. There were very serious concerns raised by local residents as to why the building was not secured given Diljit Rana's plans for the site."



# AN POST PAYS UP AFTER DISPUTE!

Just when Postal workers thought that things couldn't get any worse the bosses in An Post attempted to introduce a number of 'new special arrangements' in an effort to clear up a back log of rural mail deliveries.

The Starry Plough managed to speak to one postal worker in Tramore, in the south-east who was one of many asked by their employers An Post to sort out mail from their homes.

He told us: "Yeh, it is totally ridiculous that workers are now being asked to not only work a full days shift but take home

At one stage, the sorting dispute which developed in county Mayo



as post workers held a series of strike-action protest rallies lasting several hours in anger a proposed new arrangements. The dispute itself lasted for three months in all as members of the Irish Postmasters Union around the country came out in support.

It spread to other areas of An Post affecting distribution centres in town such as Athlone, Roscommon, Galway and Longford. In several demonstrations, postal workers demanded better pay. It was estimated that over 1,600 postal workers have been asked to sort out mail in their own homes as part of An Posts plans.

mail and sort it out over the kitchen table.

"Not only are postal workers under paid, we are now asked to work more hours for less wages!"

IPU representatives claimed a victory in talks with management as workers balloted to accept a new pay offer. Pressure was on An Post as workers came out in numbers in fear that they may lose millions leading up to the most profitable time of the year for them. An Post was hit twice as hard in the pocket when sorting offices closed Mondays and Fridays.

# Israeli Flags Taken Down by UDA to Appease Fascist Visitors

The UDA in South Belfast ordered the removal of all pro-Israeli signs and flags from the Village area because they didn't want to offend Nazi groups who were visiting the area recently. The far-right were in town to take part in the loyalist terror group's Remembrance Day commemoration in which they honour their members who were killed by Republicans. The Hitler-worshipping fanatics stayed at loyalist homes in the Village and Whitewell — areas where they have strong ties. Then on Remembrance Sunday they joined other loyalists who went en masse to Roselawn Cemetery to take part in the main commemoration. Like other loyalist hotbeds throughout the city, Israeli flags flew from every other lamp post in the Village.

Sick graffiti glorifying the murder of Palestinians also adorned walls in the area. But come poppy day, it had all strangely disappeared.

An IRSP representative in the area said the UDA's Israeli u-turn proves that loyalists have a "schizophrenic outlook to their supposed political affiliations."

He went on, "This just proves the fact that loyalists are apolitical as a group. Politically bankrupt as they say. They have no political integrity and only exist for power and money within Protestant working class communities."

"If anything highlights a lack of loyalist integrity then this is it," he said. "Incidents such as this and very serious sectarian attacks are continuing and heightening. This is happening whilst the Irish and British governments are going out of their way to appease these extreme and dangerous thugs."

## COMMUNITY SECTOR OUTRAGED!

Voluntary and Community sector organisations throughout the north west downed tools for the day to highlight the growing concerns within the sector

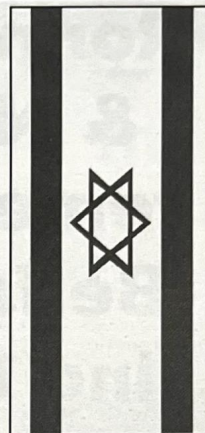
In Derry hundreds of workers took apart in a march and rally at Guildhall square which coincided with a planned meeting between the government and community sector forum held in the city's Verbal Arts Centre.

As the meeting got under way, speaker after speaker told the protesting crowds outside the Guildhall of

the looming crisis within the voluntary and community sectors.

Several members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party in Derry attended, a spokesperson who is one of many affected by the crisis told the Starry Plough "This is a show of how angry the voluntary and community sector is right now."

"There is outrage at the lack funding which in turn means job losses that will hurt deeply our communities and the services that people rely on daily and of course there is the red tape which slows all our work and programmes down due to delays in grant aid from local councils. We are here today to let them know that it is not on!"



# Canadian Auto Workers Hit Out At Bush's War Plans



The Canadian Auto Workers Union issued a call recently for workers to oppose Bush and Blair's war plans on Iraq. This call was adopted by the National Executive Board of the union on 21st November.

The statement read, "Our determination to oppose unjust aggressive wars by the strong against the weak must remain unshaken. President Bush's obsession with Iraq's Saddam Hussein - and the oil fields he controls - is one such example."

The statement went on "Saddam Hussein is a murderer and a dictator that many Iraqis would dearly like to see replaced with a democratic government. However, as miserable as Iraqis are living in Saddam's Iraq, most faced even more terror from the U.S. bombs dropped on them during the Gulf War."

"Even today, the legacy of that war lives on in an elevated rate of cancer from depleted uranium from bombs dropped during the attacks 12 years ago. Above all, Iraqis blame the U.S. for the punishing UN sanctions that have cost the lives of more than one million Iraqis, especially from lack of medical supplies."

"Saddam is a tyrant, without question, but so are many of the other leaders whom Bush welcomes to his hypocritical 'war against evil'. We must be grateful to the UN Security Council for stalling the Bush drive to war by insisting that weapons inspectors return to Iraq."

They called for the settling of the Arab-Israeli conflict which they said is "one of the great sources of tension between the Muslim world and the west."

They call finished by openly describing Bush's war as a form of state terrorism. "The priority is to stand up against the latest version of American imperialism: Bush's insistence that the U.S. has a natural right to intervene unilaterally in any part of the globe for any reason it decides, really a form of state terrorism. The priority is to reconstruct Afghanistan. The priority is to demand that such dubious American allies as Pakistan and Saudi Arabia commit to democracy, women's equality, and the equitable development of their societies."

And the statement concluded by stating "The priority is to treat Muslim immigrants in western countries with the respect due all citizens."

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## OTHER MEMORIAL EVENTS

Apart from the unveiling in the Gransha area of Belfast to mark the deaths of Ronnie Bunting and Noel Little plans are currently under way to mark the deaths of other volunteers killed during the last 30 years.

Assassinated on 5th December 1983 and aged 26, Joe Craven, a volunteer in the Belfast Brigade of the INLA was assassinated by an Ulster Volunteer Force gunman (claimed under the cover name Protestant Action Force) who opened fire from a motorcycle, killing him and wounding his two brothers as they walked home from the Department of Health and Social Services office in Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim.

At his funeral, the priest refused to accompany the coffin to Milltown Cemetery in West Belfast, where the INLA were to provide military honours.

The Royal Ulster Constabulary moved in, trying to prevent the display of a black beret and gloves atop the coffin outside the Craven home, and clashes occurred between the mourners and the RUC. The family refused to bring the coffin out until the security forces moved back. When they finally did move away, the coffin was brought back out, but the RUC immediately moved in again. Two men were arrested in the subsequent scuffle.

The coffin was eventually carried away by mourners with the beret, gloves, and Starry Plough flag on top.

A plaque will be unveiled shortly to Volunteer Craven in the Bawnmore area of North Belfast. Check with your local IRSP representative for details.

## Derry Plaques

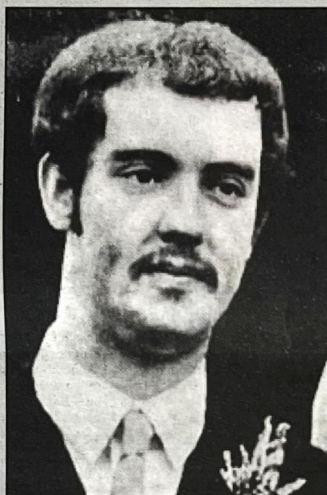
Plans are also at an advanced stage for a plaque in the Bogside area of Derry to INLA Volunteer Colm McNutt who was killed by undercover British soldiers on 12th December 1977. The plaque will be unveiled near the spot where Colm, who was only eighteen years old, was killed. He was ambushed by undercover soldiers as he attempted to hijack a car in the William Street area. Colm was the first member of the IRSM to die as a result of the war situation in the Derry area.

And in February 2003 in the Leafair Park area of Shantallow, Derry, an improvement will be made to the existing memorial to INLA Volunteer Neil McMonagle.

Neil was lured out of a house in the area in which he was babysitting and shot a short distance away. He died at the scene. A friend survived.

After the shooting the RUC swamped the area and refused an ambulance access to the two wounded men for over ten minutes. The SAS man responsible for killing Neil was killed himself in a shoot out in Dunloy, Co Antrim the following year. He had previously been awarded a medal for killing Neil.

# Ronnie Bunting & Noel Little remembered in Belfast unveil- ing ceremony



Ronnie Bunting, left and Noel Little, right, who were murdered by a state sponsored death squad in 1980. Below Bernadette McAliskey delivers speech at unveiling of plaque in their memory.



A plaque was unveiled in a ceremony in Belfast at the beginning of October in memory of two Republican Socialists who were murdered at the hands of a pro Brit death squad in 1980.

Noel Little and Ronnie Bunting were killed during an attack on the Bunting home on 15th October 1980. The attackers came in the middle of the night as both men slept, smashed through the front door and made their way upstairs and entered two separate bedrooms where both men were sleeping. During the attack Ronnie's wife Suzanne was seriously injured when she was shot six times as she tried to protect her husband.

Reports at the time suggested that this was not the work of loyalists as was claimed but, because of the professional manner in which the attack took place, the timing, the fact that there were no arrests and because no getaway car was

ever found led people to surmise that this was in fact the work of the SAS. Those involved in the attack didn't speak during the attack and wore military clothing. Loyalists at the time rarely ventured into nationalist areas to carry out such audacious killings. An attack like this would undoubtedly have been very difficult for loyalists to carry out without some form of assistance from the state forces.

The new plaque, which is located on the former home of Ronnie Bunting, was unveiled by family members of the dead men during the ceremony. Gerard Murray of the Teach na Failte Memorial Committee opened proceedings by thanking those present for turning up. He also claimed that the men were killed on the direct orders of 'British warlord Margaret Thatcher'. After a short speech he then introduced Bernadette McAliskey whose speech is published on the page opposite.

From The Starry Plough: Samhain/November 1980

*"Ronnie Bunting and Noel Little died as they lived - as revolutionary socialist republicans murdered in a conspiracy hatched by the combined military forces of British Imperialism in the Six Counties. The unashamed grief and sense of loss shown in Belfast's Milltown Cemetery last weekend is doubtless mirrored by glowing satisfaction in British militarist and other reactionary circles in these islands."*

*"But in Pearse's historic phrase, they are fools. They understand neither the commitment that drove Ronnie Bunting and Noel Little nor the inspiration that their example - in life as well as death - provides and will continue to provide to countless other Irish men and women."*



Funeral of Bunting and Little

## Teach na Failte Memorial Committee Appeal

Teach Na Failte is a registered charity, which represents the interests of ex-prisoners who at one time or another were associated with the Republican Socialist Movement.

We have established a Memorial Committee with a view to erecting wall plaques in various parts of Belfast in memory of our Anti H-Block activists and their comrades who were killed during the dark days of the Hunger Strike.

This project is an entirely voluntary undertaking by the ex-prisoners themselves and therefore relies totally on donations from home and abroad. With the erection of these plaques, we will be repaying a debt to the lasting memory of the men and women who lost their lives during that heroic period of republicanism.

Teach Na Failte would be really pleased to hear from anybody who can help in any way. Anyone who helps with a donation will receive a laminated copy of a commemoration poster of the hunger strikers themselves. All donations great or small will be welcome. Cheques should be made payable to:

ULSTER BANK,  
1 ANTRIM ROAD,  
BELFAST BT15 2BE

Teach Na Failte No 2 Account,  
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Contact Address in Ireland: International Contact:

Teach Na Failte Committees  
Belfast Memorial Committee  
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Ireland

Irish Republican Socialist  
Committees  
2057 15th Street, Suite B  
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USA  
irsp@netwiz.net



# Speech by Bernadette McAliskey at unveiling of plaque in memory of Ronnie Bunting and Noel Little



Section of the crowd at the unveiling to the new plaque in memory of Noel Little and Ronnie Bunting.

First of all I would like to thank the memorial committee for inviting me here today to the unveiling of a fitting memorial to two fine republican socialists.

Standing watching our slight mishaps, I am reminded that the IRSP was never quite as good at the choreography as the big organisations but they were always sounder on the principles. I think that it is important to remember in the context of Republicanism, which is a very broad church with many different tendencies within it, of the small socialist movement within that.

It has always been much smaller and much more vulnerable than the broad church itself. But its history is as old, as honourable and as brave as that of any other sections of the Republican movement. As I already said before and repeat here today, the IRSP, probably made more mistakes than anybody else, I don't think that even in the days in which I was in it we did not leave any mistake that could be made unmade. But we learnt from our mistakes, and as a small grouping, the IRSP certainly had a higher percentage of good people, of brave people, of incorruptible people, of socialist people than any other organisations within the independence and resistance movement. And for a small organisation per head of its population of members, probably suffered more than any other organisations.

Just listening to Paul speaking of Noel Little, I am reminded of how many comrades went to their grave with the red flag placed on their coffin. I am particularly mindful of Noel and Ronnie at the time of the hunger strike movement and many people here were maybe too young to remember that time.

They were two different characters. As Paul said, my memory of Noel Little is precisely that of a valued critical thinker. Noel had a great mind, and it didn't matter what you said, he could shake it up and state it in six different ways to make sure that you had all aspects of your thinking covered. He was a keen organiser. He was older than Ronnie.

Ronnie was an activist; he was very active in both the political and military movement here in Belfast. In many ways, one was a thinker and the other a doer, but both of them contributed to that very small and dedicated group of socialists within the Republican movement at the crucial time of the hunger strikes.

It is important to remember the contribution that was made by people like them, because when we look

back over history now it is almost forgotten that in terms of organisations and prisoners, the IRSM and the INLA, in comparison with its size within the struggle, contributed volunteers and men sacrificed their lives on that hunger strike. Their personal political ideology and their organisational affiliation are now virtually forgotten. They are just part of the ten hunger strikers. By default, people who never knew them assume them to have been simply members of the broad Republican movement and represented by the Irish Republican Army.

It is important to make that distinction not to be politically sectarian, not to be divisive, but because in the days, years and months that are coming, there will be no Irish Republican Army. We are looking at this point at the final stage of the Peace Process, which is the disbanding of the main organisation of military resistance for over 100 years.

In order to facilitate the development of the Good Friday Agreement and in order to facilitate the setting up of devolved government and local power sharing systems, it was crucially necessary and could not have been done, had the British not been able to enlist within that process the leadership of the broad republican movement, both politically and militarily. But equally in order to maintain the British position, while it was necessary to draw them in to facilitate its creation, the maintenance of those systems and their smooth running mean that they must now be excluded. They were necessary to create devolved administration; they are not necessary to maintain it. It is as simple as that.

Sinn Féin as the leadership of the single biggest organisation in the broad republican movement is now facing two choices. One is to stay in the Assembly by conceding to the demands of the other people who wish to maintain it: disband the Army. It is as simple as that. Not my organisation, not my army, not my choice, not my nightmare. I didn't vote for the Good Friday Agreement and told them this day was coming as early as 1994, as did many other people here. That's their choice. Their other choice is to walk away from government.

I would have preferred to have seen the instinct of the Republican Movement demonstrated when the police invaded Stormont. There was a day when Gerry Kelly would have walked out on his heel and told them where to stick their Assembly. There was a day when Bairbre de Brun would have walked down the steps of Stormont pulling the door behind her and say "When you are serious about democ-

racy, call me back".

That's not to say that they should embark upon taking people back to war, embark in some increase of violence or threat to the public peace. Those are not the choices. The choice, no matter how long they take about it, will simply be to disband, demobilise and demilitarise entirely their organisation, and go as Mr Trimble has said, wholeheartedly into constitutional government and the constitutional running of the state or to walk away from government.

We have always had choices, and maybe part of the distinction of this small grouping and the small number of leftists and socialists, is that we have always known there were choices and have always taken responsibility for the choices that we make. Nobody ever made me do anything. I made my own choices and stood by them, some of them were hard choices, some of them were bad choices, but I took responsibility for them. So did Noel Little, so did Ronnie Bunting. Some of the choices people took led them to their graves.

I remember the time when one after another my colleagues and comrades were brought down, for no reason other than they were part of the National H Block Armagh Committee.

That committee was set up to create mass support for the men and women in prison. It was a very strong committee. Miriam Daly was crucial to it, because of her knowledge of foreign languages. She spent timeless hours translating documents in other languages and circulating them for consumption in Europe before there was email.

Ronnie Bunting was crucial to that because he organised and maintained and contributed to the defence of local people who stood out in the street in the dark campaigning and praying for the prisoners. Noel Little was crucial to it because of his critical mind and organisational ability.

John McMichael, the leader of the UDA, made a public statement on television that he would take the leaders of the National H Block Armagh Committee out. That his men would go into the areas in which we lived and execute that is the word he used - one by one the leaders. And so he did. As Noel Little and Ronnie Bunting were both appointed to take the positions of people who had been killed, they too were killed in their turn.

Not one single loyalist was arrested. John McMichael was never arrested or questioned about

the statement that he made. The slaughter of the leaders of the unarmed, non party political, openly democratic and peaceful organisation known as the National H Block Armagh Committee continued until it suited the British government to arrest Mr Smallwood, Mr Watson, and Mr Graham outside my own door in the belief that I and my husband were already dead.

Ronnie Bunting was shot in front of his wife and his children and his wife Suzanne, good friend colleague and comrade of my own, has in my opinion never been recognised not simply for her loss, but for her attempt to defend the life of Ronnie Bunting and Noel Little with her own life. And she did. And she suffered grievously as a result.

Those things only came to an end when the British government had another agenda. Not because anybody changed their mind, not because the fundamental conditions of this country had changed, not because the needs or principles of the struggle had changed or because the people involved in the struggle had changed. The tactics changed because the British government needed them to change. And many years later, the same remains true.

The end of that hunger strike period came when the British government decided that a better option would be to see since it was clear that there were people in this country who were prepared to die hour by hour, minute by minute, second by second during a period of 75 days, that there were thousands of people who would stand with them, that as they slaughtered their leaders, people simply grew in number, it would be a better tactic to see who could be bought, since it appeared that very few could be intimidated.

We have been embarked from the 1980s until now in separating out those who could be bought, those who could be fooled and those who could be intimidated for the rest. People standing here today are small in number, but there are other people like us. We constitute the soul of socialism in this country; we constitute the spirit of republicanism in this country.

Like Noel, like Ronnie, we constitute the people who can't be bought, who can't be fooled, who can't be intimidated. It's time comrades we organised!



# Tackling The Epidemic Head

## An interview with the Coalition Of Communities Against Drugs

It is estimated that there is currently 14,000 heroin addicts in Dublin City. There are large areas of the capital city of Ireland which have been devastated by this drug epidemic. Heroin abuse has devastated whole communities, divided families, murdered and destroyed thousands of lives. For over a generation this scourge has demoralised the working class communities and caused nothing but misery and pain.

In recent years the greed of the drug barons, who are making millions, has increased, this has led to a number of drug related gangland killings. Greed and power is what the brown and white power offers these young men.

The Starry Plough carried out an interview with Ciaran Perry and Jimmy Mulhall of the Coalition Of Communities Against Drugs which is a Dublin based organisation who for years have and still continue to tackle the Heroin epidemic head on.

"Off we get and cross the road into a dead-end full of two bedroom houses. Down the end of it, there's a brick wall six foot high. So we jumped over that and the first thing we saw is two blocks of red brick flats. "Lovely", I say to myself, "there it is. Fatima".

Fatima Mansions is about eight or nine blocks of flats. Each block is named with a letter of the alphabet, and the block I'm looking for is H Block. I always thought that was funny. Of all the blocks the dealers pick to sell "H" from, they have to pick H Block...

As soon as we get to H Block, we're hit from all angles with people selling gear. It's a bit like a market. Instead of, "Here, I've got lovely shirts here for twenty pound," the dealers shouting, "are ye looking? Here. Here's lovely gear, young fella".

Yogi - The junk yard - voices from an Irish prison.

**Starry Plough:** When was the Coalition of Communities against Drugs established and is there any Community groups or Organisations affiliated to C.O.C.A.D.?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** The Coalition of Communities against Drugs established in the summer of 1996. It is an umbrella organisation of community based anti-drug groups who are concerned about the serious problem of drug abuse in Ireland and who are working to address this life or death issue at local level. This anti drugs movement has been responsible for giving our community enhancement bodies a sense of purpose, and removed much of their fears and apprehensions, allowing them to assert their rights more vigorously. COCAD and it's affiliated groups is made up of a collection of working class people who have organised to confront and expose drug dealers head on, who for years have caused death and devastation which is mainly confined to working class communities. We have over the years organised a vast number of marches against these parasites which culminated with many of them vacating their homes. Over the past six years COCAD has worked consistently to reclaim our Communities from the grip of the pushers where we have worked tirelessly to highlight the activities of

those involved in the drugs trade. We have consistently lobbied to secure a more effective response from the state and its agencies where they would carry out their respective responsibilities and provide and develop treatment, rehabilitation and aftercare facilities for those who have succumbed to drug addiction and to develop and provide facilities and services for young people and to move the drug problem and it's effects up to the top of the political agenda.

**Starry Plough:** No one can argue that your organisation is at the forefront in tackling head on the problems associated with Drug Abuse. This undoubtedly is an important Public Service which involves an input from the Community. Surely this important work is rewarded with an influx of Public funding?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** It is the exact opposite, the only funding we have received to date was £10,000 pounds from the combat poverty agency which we used to research and produce our policy document "Facing the Future" which was published in early 2000. We have met with different Ministers numerous times over the years to discuss certain issues including funding, and while they were civil and helpful, their financial assistance was confined to putting us in the right direction in regards to applying for funding. Other than the combat poverty agency any funding we have applied for has been turned down for a number of reasons including the more common excuse of not reaching the criteria. Our only means of fund-raising is raffles, pigeon auctions, functions, race nights and voluntary donations. This lack of funding for COCAD should be seen in the light of over €50million spent on the Local Drug Task Forces as well as all the rest of the funding that has gone into the "Drugs Industry". Yet, none of this expenditure has seriously impacted on the drugs crisis in the country. Organisations such as COCAD, which challenge the status quo and attempt to mobilise local communities, will always be denied state funding. The state sees such organizations as enemies.

**Starry Plough:** At the Height of the Anti-Drug Campaign your organisation was at the forefront in organising marches against the dealers, where many of them were given an ultimatum of either stop dealing or your out, while this was necessary and some success was achieved, the Irish Republican Socialist Party would see this as a short term measure as the Desperate Addict would always follow the Pusher. Would you agree or disagree with this analysis based on your own experiences?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** We would agree to disagree for the following reasons, for many years certain areas including local authority flat complexes, have been permitted to develop reputations as drug markets, attracting buyers from far and near. If you are a parent who has to raise children in this environment, were on a daily basis you are fearful to allow your children out unaccompanied for fear of them coming into contact with a disregarded needle which would probably be infected with HIV or AIDS, or witnessing desperate addicts injecting themselves on your stairways and landings, terrified your children will be offered drugs, afraid of leaving your home for fear of being robbed, after a short time you, along with your family become prisoners in your own community. Out of fear and frustration anti-drug organisations including COCAD evolved, which gave communities not only the courage to arise from their knees but also the determination to rid their communities of those who had not-

ing to offer but death and devastation. While the removal of these pushers did have a significant effect in reducing supply and demand in the local areas it didn't have a huge impact on the overall situation. We believe in dispersing established drug markets and preventing the emergence of new ones before they can gain a foot hold, so through low level enforcement and a community confrontational approach to dispersing drug dealers it can arrest the socio-economic decline of an area that accompanies the development of a drug market, enhance the public confidence which is necessary for the community to tackle the problem and perhaps more importantly such measures have deterred novice users.

**Starry Plough:** Was there any marches organised by C.O.C.A.D. directed against those involved in the sale and distribution of cannabis which some anti-drug activists consider to be a soft drug or were marches confined to those involved in selling hard drugs e.g. heroin, cocaine, ecstasy and do you believe that all or some drugs should be decriminalised?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** Yes, we marched on Brian Meehan, who was later convicted of the murder of crime journalist Veronica Guerin, he along with John Gilligan sold on hundreds of kilos of cannabis a week to other dealers, but the majority of pushers we marched on were heavily involved in the sale and distribution of heroin, cocaine, ecstasy, but having said that we don't discriminate, if the majority of residents in a community wanted to march against any dealer irrespective of what they were distributing, we support them totally. In regards to decriminalisation, the argument is increasingly being advanced that certain drugs in particular cannabis, should be decriminalised. Some people see little harm in drugs. Maybe there is even one or two who read this article who use them! It is a recreational thing, they say, and harms no one. On the contrary, the drug gangs that ply their trade in working class communities are consciously killing not only the heart of working class communities but also the bodies of our youth. Ireland has the youngest proportion of drug addicts in the world. National drugs policy has to be centrally concerned with reducing drug use and it is not clear how declaring the use of another drug to be socially acceptable would assist in this. It should be noted that cannabis is not an entirely harmless substance as is sometimes presented. Research has established a range of health risks associated with it's use as well as provoking dependency. The vast majority of heroin addicts stated that cannabis was a stepping stone which lead to the use of harder drugs. The fact that certain harmful and addictive substances such as paracetamol and codeine are currently legally available is not an argument for adding cannabis to the list. It should be borne in mind by those advocating the decriminalisation argument that there is still a great deal of work to be done by the scientific community with regards to the effects of long term use.

**Starry Plough:** Is Methadone, which is a heroin substitute commonly used to detox addicts, an adequate long term solution in the treatment of addicts?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** Not everyone agrees with methadone as an adequate mid to long term solution. We believe methadone is used as a callous means of stabilising addicts on a regular intake, and permanently placating them, rather than actually changing their lives or giving them the hope of recovery. We see

methadone as being used as a crime prevention method rather than rehabilitation. If used according to the medical profession, methadone should be used in decreasing doses eventually weaning the addict away from their dependence. However, many addicts are allowed to stabilise on a low intake, leaving them addicted to yet another drug.

Methadone treatment in the long term is extremely problematic. The emphasis has been tragically shifted to a whereby the addict's relationship with the drug dealer is replaced by the Eastern Health Board. Methadone physically and mentally addictions. It includes such side effects as rotten teeth and bones and a sedation of the user, easy to overdose while using methadone with other drugs which many abusers do. The drug rose to prominence in the 1980s with the public health reaction to the growth of AIDS and HIV, and it's use was and is mainly motivated for the purposes of harm reduction - saving businesses and property from robberies, without regard for the reasons driving the addiction.

While, Methadone can be beneficial in many cases, a number of conditions relating to treatment and the use of facilities which render it ineffectual. Not only the active practice of weaning addicts off the drug but the urgent need for local-based, long term community designed to keep young people off drugs, treat those on them and provide aftercare to ensure relapses do not happen. Detoxification in the short term can be successful but can be weaned away from heroin through the use of a low level of methadone in a relatively short period of philosophy of reducing levels over a one-to-two year period is "ridiculous". This rate of progress is too slow and the concentration and immediate dedication needed to such a gruelling task. Boredom, depression, a circle who all abuse drugs and a craving to fill the void is easy to fall back. Without individual, group and family support, adequate training and aftercare services, and ability of real prospects and opportunities, young addicts why they should give up drugs. A more holistic, comprehensive and more integrated approach is the way forward.

**Starry Plough:** Following the murder of Journalist Veronica Guerin and the public outcry her death evoked, the Minister for Justice John O'Donoghue introduced a number of measures in 1997 which he maintained would go a long way in reducing working class communities of a drug scourge caused untold devastation for over a quarter of a century. First of these measures was operation "Dochas", Minister publicly stated would ensure that the Gardaí operate a 24 hour presence in drug dealing blackspots, they would target all known drug pushers. Did Dochas achieve its objectives and prove itself to be a viable weapon in the war against drug dealers?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** Operation Dochas was a propaganda measure which was essentially to prove a camouflage the general public into believing that Gardaí would be on a 24 hour presence in drug-dealing blackspots, yet not a drug pusher was charged.

Within a matter of weeks however, it did not take long

The Irish Republican Socialist Party 6 point policy plan which revolves around a long term anti drug strategy where the emphasis is on adequate preventative measures which are necessary in combating the drug epidemic that has devastated working class communities.

If the Irish Government are sincere about their resolve to implement measures that can have an effect in helping to eradicate the drug epidemic then

we believe it should act to implement some if not all of the following initiatives:

(1) Drug Education and awareness classes should be made compulsory in all primary and secondary schools in addition to all state funded youth and training centres.

(2) A long term strategy of providing detox and treatment clinics with after care facilities for drug addicts

instead of t prison space

(3) The introduction of those caught for those caught distribution

(4) The immediate introduction of those caught for those caught supply class





# Heroin

## and On!

### Against Drugs

crime prevention method rather than the medical philosophy of using decreased doses, away from their dependency. It is intended to stabilise on a regular dose, yet another drug.

ing term is extremely problematic. It is a scenario where the drug dealer is merely a middle man. The Board. Methadone is highly effective. It includes such side effects as a sedation of the user. It is very different from other drugs. Methadone with other drugs has risen to prominence in the treatment of Hepatitis B. It is mainly motivated for the purpose of businesses and property from the reasons driving the rates of

cial in many cases, there are no treatment and the provision of treatment. Not only there is no treatment of the drug but there is an increasing term community projects, of drugs, treat those who are to ensure relapses do not happen can be successful. Addicts through the use of a decreasing short period of time. The over a one-to-two year duration is too slow and negates the dedication necessary for depression, a circle of friends trying to fill the void make it too individual, group and family counselling services, and the availability, young addicts ask for more holistic, compassionate way forward.

murder of Journalist Veronica death evoked, the Minister for a number of measures in would go a long way towards of a drug scourge that has over a quarter of a century, the operation "Dochas", which the Minister that the Garda   would drug dealing blackspots where drug pushers. Did operation and prove itself to be an effective dealers?

was a propaganda inspired to prove a camouflage to fool that Garda   would operate a 24 blackspots, yet not one major

er, it did not take long to notice

that the vast majority of people targeted for 'special attention' by the Garda   at the behest of the state were themselves anti-drug and community activists who continued to work voluntarily in dangerous circumstances to expose those involved in the sale and distribution of heroin. During this period it was not uncommon for anti-drug activists in Dublin particularly, to assemble outside the local Garda barracks calling for the immediate release of anti-drug activists arrested more often than not for protesting against drug pushers. We have logged hundreds of complaints that have been directed at members of the police and special branch ranging from assault, harassment and intimidation of anti-drug and community activists.

COCAD is in no way anti police. Members of our organisation sit on their local police forums and we do have dealings with the police in our local areas. At the moment the Garda   are unsavourable to anybody. What we want to see is independent structures on a local and national level that at the very least play a significant role in determining policing priorities and reviewing performance. There also needs to be an urgent reform of the present Garda complaints Board which enjoys little credibility in our communities, the practice of having members of the Garda S  chana investigating complaints against other members of the force needs to be changed. The Garda   currently have enough resources and manpower to seriously tackle the drug problem but unfortunately the political will is not there.

**Starry Plough:** In 1997 Fianna Fail published a position paper titled "A radical approach to drugs and drugs related crime". One of their key assurances, which was later implemented into legislation, was the calling for the imposition of a mandatory 10 year term of imprisonment for anyone convicted of being in possession of controlled drugs with a street value of   10,000 pounds. Was this Fianna Fail inspired initiative supported by C.O.C.A.D. and has it been fully implemented by the Judiciary?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** Yes we fully supported this initiative, it brought about a situation where anti-drug and community activists really believed that the authorities were sincere in their public rhetoric of clamping down on those who sold death and devastation on a daily basis, but unfortunately the vast majority of dealers who have been brought before the courts and who fall into the mandatory 10 year category, only three have been given the mandatory sentence throughout the 26 counties. In Cork, Wexford and more recently Dublin, but even worse is the fact that some have received suspended sentences.

The justice system especially the presiding judge should be held accountable for their failure to fully implement the mandatory ten year term, the lack of consistency in the sentencing of those convicted of importing or distributing significant quantities of drugs remains a major cause of concern, and we will be initiating a campaign around this issue in the very near future.

**Starry Plough:** Tony Felloni a Dublin based heroin dealer who was caught in 1996 on three separate occasions with heroin in excess of a quarter of a million pounds was on each occasion released on bail, he was eventually sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. Due to the public outcry arising out of this affair, in 1996 the Minister of Justice called for a bail referendum to deny those facing serious charges their constitutional right to

bail. Anti-Drug activists campaigned for a no vote on the basis that not only would a restriction in the constitutional right serve to infringe individual civil liberties, but would afford the state further powers of repression that would be used cynically against community and anti-drug activists themselves. Did this analysis prove correct and if so why?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** We believe, that analysis proved correct. As far as anti-drug activists were concerned, the bail referendum was merely a populist, cosmetic exercise with the then Government and the main opposition parties wanting to appear that they were getting tough on crime in the light of an upcoming general election. The Government wanted to use the case of Tony Felloni for changing the bail laws, because they failed to open their eyes to the obvious, that if the prosecution and court system had carried out their respective responsibilities, Felloni would have been sentenced long before he was charged with the second offence. In November 1996 despite the campaign for a 'No' vote the bail referendum was duly passed. The new Fianna Fail/Progressive Democrat coalition which in opposition not only supported but demanded the amendment said it could not implement the legislation, as there was no room in the jails for the extra people that had to be locked up, three years later the amendment finally became law. However, in practical terms, despite state rhetoric to the contrary prior to the referendum, the bail restriction meant for little.

For example, in a three month period towards the end of 1997 in separate seizures, over   3 million pounds of heroin was seized and some twelve people arrested (one of whom was a 72 year old pensioner from St Michael's estate in Inchicore Dublin) and charged as a result. Despite the seriousness of the charges all twelve were released from Garda custody pending direction from the Director of Public Prosecutions. In stark contrast during the same period, three Dublin-based anti-drug activists were denied bail and held in custody for weeks for allegedly threatening their local drug pusher.

In 2002 the same happens regularly, just last week over   1 million of heroin was seized and the individual arrested in connection with the seizure was released pending direction from the DPP and the reason being is because he exploited a loophole in the law which stipulates that all substances have to be analysed to ascertain that it is indeed a class A prohibited substance, so if the individual has no warrants he is released on his own bail, so in essence the bail referendum was not geared against drug dealers but used as a state weapon to be solely used against community, anti-drug and political activists.

**Starry Plough:** In July 1996 the Criminal Assets Bureau came into effect. Did C.O.C.A.D. fully support the setting up of C.A.B., and would it be correct to say that not one penny of the millions of pounds seized by CAB has been re-invested back into the communities from where it originated?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** We supported it totally, it was perhaps the most important weapon introduced by the Minister of Justice. The Criminal Assets Bureau came into effect in July 1996 with the main aim of identifying and confiscating a criminals wealth. The act under which it was established allows CAB to get a high court order to freeze for seven years the actual or suspected assets of a criminal or someone suspected of being one. If the

suspect cannot prove that their wealth was accrued by legitimate means, then it is taken from them and handed over to the state. The onus of proof is on the person targeted by the CAB, and those targeted do not even need to have a criminal conviction. While anti-drugs activists fully supported the establishment of CAB, out of the tens of millions seized in cash and property, not one penny has been redirected back into the deprived communities from where it originated.

**Starry Plough:** The Irish Republican Socialist Party recently drew up a 6 point policy document which revolves around a long term anti drug strategy where the emphasis is on adequate preventative measures which are necessary in combating the drug epidemic that has devastated working class communities. Having read the 6 point policy document would you as members of C.O.C.A.D. support these preventative measures, and does your organisation have a long term strategy?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** We as members of COCAD would support any anti-drug initiatives from whatever quarters which can make a significant contribution to curtailing the spiralling epidemic of drug abuse within our communities. Two years ago we produced a comprehensive policy document entitled "Facing the Future" which outlined a vast number of preventative measures, but unless there is a commitment from the powers that be to tackle head on the problems associated with drug abuse were they implement such proposals, they are not worth the paper they are written on.

What we attempted to do by producing this document was to advance policy positions which we believe will assist in improving the situation in the communities that are represented within COCAD, by and large these are marginalized working class communities that have borne the brunt of recurring epidemics of heroin abuse for over two decades. What we see as being in the broad interest of these communities is what we seek to articulate, this is where we are coming from, others approach the problem from different perspectives.

COCAD Cannot hope to provide any magic answers to the overall problems of drug abuse. We can only contribute to any debate and discussion on the broad issues and would stress the continuous need for broad debate.

**Starry Plough:** In conclusion is there anything you would like to add?

**C.O.C.A.D.:** In conclusion we firmly believe that policy development has to take place within the context of a vision. Our vision is centred on the young people of our communities. We wish to see them growing up in a safe, drug free environment, developing their skills and talents and reaching their full potential as human beings. We wish to see them afforded the same supports and opportunities in life that are taken for granted elsewhere, and in turn contributing to their communities and society in general.

Many Community and Anti-Drug activists in Dublin and beyond believed that the drug-epidemic would have compelled those within the corridors of power to initiate a multi-faceted approach which would tackle the drug epidemic, which would involve an input from both community and statutory bodies. This new approach we hoped would have not only proved capable of targeting those involved in the manufacture and distribution of heroin throughout Ireland, but also capable of addressing the core underlying factors in our society which have for years proved instrumental in leading a section of our youth into a life of crime and drug-abuse. Sadly, more than six years later neither has proved the case. Even the National Drugs Strategy Team has little or no community representation. Despite token measures and rhetoric from the likes of Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and the PDs and individuals such as Pat Byrne the Garda commissioner, working class communities in Dublin and beyond remain plagued by the scourge of drug dealers who sell Addiction, Imprisonment, Misery and Death for profit.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the work carried out by C.O.C.A.D. or would like to receive a copy of their policy document "Facing The Future Please send a stamp addressed envelope to: Coalition Of Communities Against Drugs, Unit 36/37, Maltings Business Park, Marrowbone Lane, Dublin 8 Email: cocad@eircom.net

All Donations big or small would be greatly accepted and appreciated.

instead of the failed strategy of providing extra prison spaces.

(3)The introduction of an attempted murder charge for those caught and actively involved in the sale and distribution of Class A drugs.

(4) The immediate setting up of a drug offenders register for those convicted of possession with intent to supply class A drugs with a street value of 10,000

euro-sterling or more, this register would be based on the same criteria attached to the sex offenders register which stipulates that convicted offenders must notify the authorities of any change of address which can be monitored on a regular basis.

(5)The immediate introduction of legislation that would insure that all monies confiscated by the Criminal Assets Bureau would be invested back into the drug abused communities from where it originated.

This money could be used to promote drug education and awareness programmes.

(6)The introduction of a longterm strategy of targeting deprived, marginalized working class communities which offer our youth little future, where the conditions make them more susceptible to the designs of the heroin dealer. Major investment in housing, education, health and employment needs, must be a priority.



# WORKERS MUST BE PREPARED TO FIGHT!

As is often the case in politics the various governments of the twenty six counties follow the political direction of the United Kingdom, often between ten and twenty years after Westminster have ratified policies for that country.

It would appear that this trend is applicable in the case of privatisation within the transport system of the twenty six counties. The privatisation of public transport in the UK turned out to be a disaster for the majority of service users but, if media reports are to be believed, Mr Seamus Brennan, Free State Minister for Transport, is trying to go down the same route.



The Irish Times headlines on 7.11.2002 read 'Brennan to announce radical overhaul'. The paper went on to say 'radical overhaul of public transport, including the dismantling of CIE and the introduction of competition into the Dublin Bus market' was to be announced in the Dail on the same day, 7.11.2002. The proposals were to be put to a meeting of the Public Transport Forum, 'a body set up under the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF) in Dublin'.

Mr Brennan, it would appear, is hell bent on privatisation. The question must be asked has this man learnt anything from Margaret Thatchers privatisation programme during the 1980s? There were occasions when the entire system virtually collapsed as private operators, particularly on the roads, competed with each other with little or no regard for the health and safety of passengers and employees alike, a legacy continuing to this day on Britain's rail and road network. This is not to mention the job losses involved and erosion of employees pay and conditions as the private companies in true capitalist fashion scrambled, and continue to scramble, for even greater profits. For example many private companies abolished such things as shift pay and unsociable hours allowances. The shift structure was altered in many instances with little or no regard for employees with families simply because the changes were profitable for the firms involved. This of course led to tension in many households with many wives and partners being left alone at home at times which they were not used to and mothers and fathers not being there to entertain their children when they should have been.

Mrs Thatchers privatisation scheme was aimed, among other things, at attacking the ability of organised labour mount a serious fight - back. As the once nationalised industries, bus and rail, were sold off employees of one newly privatised company taking strike action in support of their colleagues employed by another firm was deemed "secondary action" and therefore illegal under the Tories anti-trade union legislation. Before privatisation the same employees were in the employment of the nationalised National Bus Company and British Rail therefore any industrial action mounted by workers in either industry was against the same employer and could not be deemed "secondary". Under privatisation these employees were scattered between different companies. Is this what Mr Brennan is planning for the working class of Ireland? It would certainly appear so.

Dublin Bus, Iarnród Éireann and Bus Éireann are all subsidiaries of CIE which would be disbanded (CIE is the umbrella company for all three and its power would be seriously curtailed if privatisation goes ahead). The Irish Times continues 'Mr Brennan says the move would enable the three to compete with each other, as well as companies in the private sector. In other words "perfect competition" as capitalist economists call it which is far from perfect. This competition would, of course, set company against company and ultimately (as is designed) worker against worker, the latter suiting the capitalist system down to the ground and the former being only a window dressing (as far as the large companies are concerned) of competition as the directors of the larger firms will toast their monopolies over very expensive bottles of champagne and the smaller companies (petty bourgeois) go to the wall and with them their employees. To private companies such issues as health and safety are secondary to the good cause of maximising profits the same applies to the provision of efficient goods and services. These would only be provided so long as a profit is to be made irrespective of peoples needs. As has been said the pay and conditions of staff also suffer when such words as "consolidated" appear regarding pay and calculating such pay, which normally means a lower basic than previous with former allowances and bonuses "consolidated" into the basic pay. This of course often creates the illusion of employees being better off than they were in the days of the nationalised companies, that is until a closer examination of the hourly rate is carried out. The findings, in many instances, discovered that the hourly rate was about the same as previous but this was WITH former shift pay "consolidated" into the basic, and again in many instances, overtime payments were reduced from time and one

half to time and one third for the first so many hours. This was done, of course to maximise profits.

'An Iarnród Éireann spokesman said it had sought an increase of between 9 and 10 percent (the figure was nearer 20% until privatisation was mentioned), which would be only the second increase since 19--' (what exactly 19-- means is somewhat unclear however that is what it said in the Irish Times). The paper continued 'Mr Brennans announcement of such a restructuring will allow the increases to go ahead which would not happen in the absence' of such action within the public transport sector. The general public are being asked to finance, through these increases' a service, which at least partly presently belongs to them technically, which will ultimately be inferior to the one already running (which it must be said is far from perfect due to bad management and lack of government investment in the correct quarters plus low staff moral and poor pay), due to the profit factor, and suffer in much the same way as passengers in Britain are suffering.

The 9-10 percent may well be less than the anticipated increases expected to come from Iarnród Éireann but they are high enough, and lets be honest the previous inflated figure of 20 percent could well have been cooked as often happens in the run up to privatisation to sicken people into believing privatisation to be the only way out for their transport system. For the same reason the lower figure of between 9 and 10 percent is paraded to induce acceptance of privatisation among the populace thus giving government policy an air of respectability and legality among the electorate. It is amazing how such a move, a 50% reduction in increases, can be pulled out of a hat like a white rabbit at the very mention of privatisation, a clear case of capitalist governmental care of the interests of the capitalist class. Under privatisation, as has been proved in the UK, goods and services are only provided under the conditions and provisions of profitability. They have little if anything to do with peoples needs, local or otherwise.

Under the 1987 restructuring when CIE was broken up into three operations (not to be confused with three companies) the company had the role of ensuring that there would be no competition between Iarnród Éireann and Bus Éireann bestowed upon it. Such competition, it was perceived, would be damaging for both. However such a perception has not lasted in the imaginary world of capitalism, based on make believe, because now the intrepid Mr Brennan is determined to introduce such competition which, if other examples in other countries are anything to go by, will result in job losses, breakdowns in health and safety, erosion of pay and conditions of employees and a lot of misery all in the name of profit and competition. Basically everything agreed under the 1987 restructuring and the checks and balances which it provided are being wiped out proving once again the instability of capitalism as far as the working class are concerned.

The Irish Independent 8.11.2002, the day after Mr Brennan had stated his aims, stated 'bus and rail fares to rise by up to 10 percent and Dublin Bus routes will be thrown open to private operators. By 2004 private operators will be allowed to compete for an initial 25% of existing and new routes are likely to be put out to tender by a new transport authority for greater Dublin. The private companies will receive a government subvention (government grant in aid) the current is 233 million euro, where routes are loss making but socially vital'. The figure for this subvention will be far greater than 233 million euro but the question is why could this money not be granted to a state, or semi state, company which are not designed to generate huge profits but merely break even or perhaps make a small profit. They are providers of goods and services and not designed to make huge profits, in other words provision not profit. That said it may be the case that from time to time these companies do make a profit, usually on the run up to privatisation to make them attractive to potential business people out to exploit, but it is not their main object of existence. This money which

private companies can expect to receive in compensation for loss making routes could be given to CIE simply to make them break even.

The main points of Mr Brennans charge towards Thatcherism are 1) Increase Bus and rail fares by 10 percent. 2) Abolition of the holding company CIE. 3) Dublin Bus routes to be franchised out to private competition. 4) Bus Éireann, Iarnród Éireann and Dublin Bus to be established as separate state companies. Do not be fooled by the wording 'separate state companies', as this can mean a multitude, it is the thin edge of the wedge towards privatisation as happened similarly in the UK.

Mr Brennan claims that the companies will "not be privatised". He goes on to say "he would demand that the CIE board give increased independence to the bus and rail subsidiaries, prepare to set up independent companies and devolve unspecified central functions to them". In one simple word, understandable to all but the most severely handicapped amongst us, PRIVATISATION.

In the United Kingdom 'privatisation under the first Thatcher government began as a piecemeal process but quickened in pace after the 1983 election' (Contemporary British politics Second Edition Bill Coxall and lynton Robins P. 176).

This was of course the thin edge of the wedge as many former nationalised companies such as the National Bus Company were sold off to private concerns often underpriced. many other former nationalised companies were sold off cheap and for example the National Audit Office criticised the government over the sale of British Steel which was underpriced by between £100 and £250 million' (ibid). Is this perhaps what Mr Brennan has in store for Ireland?

Elderly and disabled people could also suffer if this mad scheme goes ahead because their free travel passes, to many a lifeline to the outside world, may not be valid on the privatised transport system. presently these passes are valid on CIE transport only, which at the moment is the greater part of the countries transport network, they are not valid on private modes of transport. What has Mr Brennan got to offer these people? or will he say that social welfare is not his department and pass it over to another semi-retarded cretin passing themselves off as a minister to sort out? It would appear that nobody has given these poor disadvantaged groups in society a second thought in this already proven ludicrous scheme of Mr Brennans.

The trade unions must prepare a plan of action for this, what will turn out to be, first round of privatisation. It is true that the trade unions have already threatened 'withdrawal from the Public Transport Forum in response to Brennans pledge that up to a quarter of all Dublin Bus routes would be in private hands by 2004. All very well but it will take much more radical action than a threat to withdraw from some meaningless body to mount serious resistance to Brennans onslaught. The Irish Congress of Trade unions (ICTU) should learn from the passive actions of the British TUC (Trades Union Congress) regarding privatisation and form a council of war. The ICTU are not hampered by anti trade union legislation, as was the case in Britain, (and even if they were they should ignore it as the TUC should have done) so their are less tied. Contingency plans for strike action in key sectors, with a view to a general indefinite stoppage, should be drawn up immediately.

Shop stewards should be collectively making plans for unofficial strike action in the event of another sell out by the trade union leadership. This coming battle will not be won through mere withdrawal from meaningless bodies. Concrete industrial action is needed with the shop stewards and rank and file committees at the helm. A frontal offensive by the capitalist class, and their government, needs solid defences in order to repel it. This done these defences themselves go on the offensive against the robber baron capitalist system.



# SAY NO TO THEIR WATER CHARGES

Fresh and clear water is necessary for the general well-being of the entire population. Republican Socialists believe that it is immoral that a natural resource essential to life should be treated as a commercial commodity to provide vast sums of money for shareholders and large salaries for chief executives. If things are going that road, it is a matter of time before they make us pay oxygen rates!

People should remember that a great deal of money has been spent over the years on developing the Water Service. Huge amounts were invested in reservoirs, for example. Much of the money came from the citizens of Belfast, because the Belfast Corporation was responsible for providing the service. Ratepayers and taxpayers built the Water Service, and it would be completely wrong to sell it off to enable others to profit. Besides this, the IRSP advance a number of reasons why the party opposes water rates.

The first reason is that water rates are going to make that essential resource very expensive for ordinary people. Experience in England and Wales shows that since the privatisation of the water industry, bills have increased by nearly 60%. This is going to be a significant financial burden for working class people. Those most affected are the low wage earners, the unemployed, the pensioners and the disabled.

If water has to be paid for, some people will inevitably not be able to afford to pay their water rates. What do the various water companies across the water do in this case? In many cases they have responded very savagely by disconnecting supplies. In some cases, council tenants who have been disconnected face the threat of eviction. What will happen if people are unable to pay their water charges? What will happen if the water is turned off? Think for example of a mother with a family to cater for - no washing, no cooking, no cleaning, no toilet, no sanitation, and the resulting health hazards. Can we afford them to go without water because they have not paid their bills, while some fat cats sit high, saturated with financial gain from water reserves?

There is also the question of the effect on people's health. A safe and reliable water supply is central to good public health. If you have to pay for every drop of water you consume, obviously you will want to use as little as possible. In other parts of the United Kingdom many people, to save money, have resorted to reducing the number of times they flush the toilet or have a bath or shower. This will result in a public health hazard, especially when one examines the relationship between disconnection and increasing outbreaks of certain types of dysentery. Aside from this is also the fact that water companies have more "flexible" standards for drinking water and have a lobby arguing for relaxed standards in the field of odour, taste, colour, lead and aluminium level.

Water rates are clearly a class issue. Who would be hit hardest by water rates? The working class, first of all. Those people who are less well off would be the first to suffer. They could not afford to pay water rates and would be disconnected. In other privatised areas there is already evidence that people wash less, drink less water, wash clothes less, and generally use less water for hygienic purposes. With increased water costs following privatisation, this could become a health problem. And since Northern Ireland has a disproportionate number of people below the poverty line, the financial aspects of privatisation are likely to be more repressive here. Who benefits? You have only to read the press to realise that it is the chief executives and other officials of the water companies - the fat cats, as they are called.

They put profits before people. Republican Socialist will struggle for the interests of the working class against those of profit.

## The IRSP believes that:

- ☒ Water is such a vital utility to the people of Ireland that it must remain in public ownership
- ☒ Any attempts to introduce water rates should be resisted
- ☒ In the event of water rates being introduced, a campaign of resistance against cuts, etc be developed
- ☒ We call parties that call themselves socialist to make an explicit statement of intent that they will not pursue the introduction of water rates should they be part of the next government.

## HARRASMENT CAMPAIGN INTENSIFIES

The former partner of an IRSP member in Strabane has accused the RUC of waging a campaign of intimidation and harassment against her.

The woman contacted a local paper after three weeks of continual visits to her home looking for her former partner - who does not live with her, a fact police are well aware of.

She said: "It all started three weeks ago when they came to my home looking for him.

"They searched the house and basically turned it upside down.

"I told them that he does not live with me but two days later they arrived again looking for him, and on two separate occasions later, the first time at 11.30pm and 1.30am.

"The police have told me that they will keep calling until he goes to see them at the barracks, even though they know he doesn't live here."

An RUC spokesman said "As yet he has not been located. The ideal solution would be for this man, who is aware that police are looking for him, to come forward and assist with the inquiry.

They sinisterly added "Alternatively, the police would appreciate any information from his family that would lead to his arrest."

According to the local woman, police have not only called to her home in the past few weeks but they have driven around the house sometimes six and seven times a day.

"At night, they sit outside the house and shine lights into the house, including a spotlight.

"I have a five year old son with my former partner and he is petrified. If he sees a landrover at all he comes into the house running."

The woman has stressed that police do have the current address of her former partner.

She added: "But it seems that this is an attempt at emotional blackmail because I have his child. The CID man told me to tell him that they are looking for him and they will continue to call to my house until he goes to the barracks.

"In the past week, they have begun to stop me in the car, have made hand gestures at me and they also laugh at me. I have been stopped three times in the past week.

"They have not called to where he lives since the raids three weeks ago but they continue to call to my home. They know he doesn't live with me so why do they keep calling back, what more do they want?"

The Irish Republican Socialist

Party in Strabane has hit out at the unreformed RUC for its "continued campaign of harassment" against a number of its party members.

In a statement to the Starry Plough the IRSP Cumann in Strabane said: "Over a period of several months, the RUC/PSNI has been engaged in systematic arrests and house raids directed at leading members of the party.

"One member in particular, Andy Connolly, has been the subject of blatant harassment and intimidation.

"His former partner has had her home raided on numerous occasions despite the fact that the RUC/PSNI are well aware of his address.

"They continue to raid her home, terrifying her and her young son.

"Clifford Best (RUC commander in Strabane), who is fond of courting publicity, would do well to remember that whatever gloss he may put on cosmetic changes to the RUC that actions on the ground prove to the nationalist community that nothing has changed.

"It is our belief that Special Branch is behind these intimidatory actions, what does that say about the accountability of this force within a force?"

## COMMUNITY SECTOR OUTRAGED

Voluntary and Community sector organisations throughout the north west downed tools for the day to highlight the growing concerns within the sector

In Derry hundreds of workers took part in a march and rally at Guildhall square which coincided with a planned meeting between the government and community sector forum held in the city's Verbal Arts Centre.

As the meeting got under way, speaker after speaker told the protesting crowds outside the Guildhall of the looming crisis within the voluntary and community sectors.

Several members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party in Derry attended, a spokesperson who is one of many affected by the crisis told the Starry Plough "This is a show of how angry the voluntary and community sector is right now.

"There is outrage at the lack funding which in turn means job losses that will hurt deeply our communities and the services that people rely on daily and of course there is the red tape which slows all our work and programmes down due to delays in grant aid from local councils. We are here today to let them know that it is not only

## This is Republican Socialism!

The Irish Republican Socialist Party is an organisation created by and for working class people, to aid working class liberation in Ireland and internationally with others who share that common goal. The IRSP stands in the tradition of James Connolly, seeking an end to all forms of exploitation and the creation of a 32 county socialist republic, with the working class collectively owning the means of production, distribution, and exchange, as well as democratically administering society.

### Socialism

The socialism we embrace is the kind that liberates, not enslaves. The class struggle is a society that functions to meet human needs, not the need for profit. Our socialism is a means of liberating our class from all forms of oppression, whether economic, political, religious, cultural or social. It is a socialism that envisions our class controlling their own destinies and that of the nation as a whole.

### National Liberation

The struggle for national liberation cannot be separated from the class struggle. Any attempt to isolate one from the other will result in failure. It is meaningless to speak of a free nation, if the overwhelming majority remain oppressed, and national sovereignty is lost through multinational corporate control of the economy just as much as by partition. At the same time, someone who refuses to challenge British imperialism in Ireland cannot claim to be fighting for socialism and the continuation of partition props up the divisions in the working class of Ireland that hold us back from our own liberation. We have no choice in whether or not we wish to consider the interconnection of the national and class questions, reality forces us to do so.

We define the national liberation struggle as that struggle which seeks to force a British military withdrawal from the occupied six counties. The destruction of the pro-British loyalist armed forces. The withdrawal of British political influence from all parts of Ireland. The ending the partition of the island of Ireland and the overturning of both the partitionist governments presently administering political affairs of Ireland. The gaining of collective economic control of the nation's resources by the nation as a whole and the eradication of any control or influence exercised by foreign capitalists over any aspect of the Irish economy. The recognition of a separate Irish cultural identity and the establishment of revolutionary 32-county socialist republic.

We aim to build a strong alliance in Irish society of our class in towns and cities, agricultural workers in the countryside, unemployed workers, working class refugees, linked as a movement internationally with other like-minded liberation struggles.

We firmly stand-by the struggle for a republic. On that we are inflexible, but our struggle for the republic is a means to an end. For us, the national liberation struggle is but an aspect of the struggle for socialism.

### Loyalism & Nationalism

We distinguish between loyalism and Protestantism. We recognise the right of everyone to their own religious beliefs, provided they do not use these beliefs to oppress others. We have no quarrel with Protestant workers and welcome them to join us in struggle. However, we stand totally opposed to the political

ideology of loyalism. Loyalism is a reactionary, sectarian and imperialist ideology, with which we can make no compromise. We recognise that nationalism in the context of the Irish struggle is progressive, but we also recognise that nationalism can play a reactionary role. The national chauvinism of the Tories, National Front, etc. is counter-revolutionary and anathema to socialists. The nationalism of an oppressed country is vastly different from such reactionary jingoism. We support all struggles against imperialism throughout the world.

### Class mobilisation

Only by mobilising our class north and south - Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter - can the goal of national liberation and socialism be achieved. Workers have distinct interests as a class, ultimately opposed to any other class. We must join together as a class to win control of society.

### For a fighting union

As republican socialists, we take lesson from battles that have gone before us, in the community and in the workplace. We must re-educate our unions and organise the unorganised. We remain committed to the revolutionary industrial unionism of Larkin and Connolly. As republican socialists we see the creation of a fighting rank and file trade union movement as something that still holds potential and we support the building of a revolutionary shop stewards' movement.

### Equality

Our class faces daily, relentless assaults inflicted on us from many quarters and a constant onslaught of attempts to divide us. The IRSP oppose and fight against all forms of inequality and oppression, including that of women, travellers, lesbians, gays or other sexual minorities, refugees, Africans, Asians, and any other oppressed sector of the working class. We oppose racism, Zionism, sexism, homophobia, national chauvinism, and anything else which divides our class. We support reproductive rights and unlimited access to contraception, including a woman's right to choose abortion. We are opposed to religious sectarianism and seek the complete separation of church and state and a secular society.

### Our Earth

The increasing destruction of our environment is due to mismanagement of industrialisation and the inevitable product of a system, which puts profit before all else, that is, capitalism. The IRSP is committed to sustainable and renewable energy sources, preservation of the ecology and biodiversity of our planet, with protection of all species and the promotion of a healthy environment for all people and animal life.

### Revolution not Reform

The IRSP believe that the present class system cannot be reformed out of existence. There exists no parliamentary road to socialism and the liberation of our class. We need to build an organised working class movement with the politics capable of leading the fight against capitalism. Our class are entitled to control over all the wealth of society and to obtain it through any means necessary.

If you agree with us, then we urge you to join the Irish Republican Socialist Party and help build a movement that can accomplish these aims and objectives. Be part of the Irish revolution!



TURKEY

# SAD MILESTONE REACHED IN TURKISH DEATH FAST

Now over 100 deaths in ongoing struggle



Sad news reaches the Starry Plough of the 100th and 101st deaths in the ongoing struggle inside and outside Turkey's prisons against the introduction of the F-Type prison and the enforced isolation of prisoners.

The death fasters prolong their deaths by taking vitamin supplements and salted and sugared water. This is why a lot of the deaths in this struggle occurred after such a long time compared to the 1981 hunger strikers in Ireland who lasted between 46 and 73 days. The death fasters in Turkey typically last hundreds of days before their bodies succumb to inevitable death. The Death Fast activist Zeliha Erturk died in Sisli Etfal Hospital (Istanbul). She had continued her Death Fast

action opposing isolation in the F-Type prisons for 551 days. Zeliha Erturk was put in Kartal Special Type Prison following the now notorious attacks of December 19-22, 2000, in which the state stormed various prisons and burned some down with prisoners still inside. 26 prisoners lost their lives in what the state called "Operation Return to Life!"

Zeliha Erturk started the Death Fast action on June 3, 2001 as part of the 5th Team and became the 100th person to lose her life.

Feridun Yucel Batu became the 101st victim at the Izmir Ataturk Teaching and Research Hospital after being transferred from the F-Type prison at Izmir Kiriklar as he neared his death.

The IRSP were at the forefront of the solidarity campaign in Ireland and internationally in support of the Death Fasters but this campaign has waned somewhat in recent times. The IRSP website went black in response to the two recent deaths.

Turkey's new government has pledged to eradicate torture and improve human rights as part of its bid to join the European Union. Despite this pledge four death fasters have died since they gained power. It is just as you were in Turkey as far as the prisoners are concerned. We will not be holding our collective breath waiting for the reforms as they have already pledged their air strips to the US in the event of war on Iraq. No change!

## GOING OFF THE RAILS

Irish Rail workers around the country have begun discussion following news that Irish Rail bosses intend to close a number of lines between Rosslare and Wexford, Waterford and Limrick Junction along with several other lines.

Irish Rail has also admitted that they intend to approve cuts between several major freight services in the country as part of their new cuts cutting plans which may lead to the loss of up to 600 jobs in all.

News hit Irish Rail workers at a crisis meeting between union representatives and Irish Rail bosses back at the beginning of November.

It's now said the NBRU members in all of the areas affected by planned cuts are now in the process of balloting its members for industrial action.

A spokesperson for the Irish Republican Socialist Party in Cork commented that "Workers are incensed at the lack of real dialogue between unions and management in Irish Rail as it has come as a massive shock at the extent of possible job losses in each of the areas concerned."

"The anger now felt shows there will indeed be a high possibility of widespread strike action at that fact that so many workers will be dumped onto the scrap heap."

"Within the next number of weeks and months ahead, the rich of this country, the fat cats that control the purse strings, who cream off the fruits of our labour, will once again receive a back lash from the workers."

"From the undervalued public service workers such as fire fighters and nurses, we also have bus drivers, rail workers and other workers from cleaners to those who form part of the Education sector."

"This is a battle in which the bosses will fall to win as the strength of workers unity against poverty pay is now unstoppable."

## FIAT WORKERS THREATEN TO JUMP FROM FACTORY ROOF



Workers from Fiat car plants in Rome have threatened to jump from the factory roof in protest at the current bosses plans to "downsize" the workers.

In effect downsizing means hundreds of workers' livelihoods put at risk by throwing them out of a job!

## BOMB DISCOVERED AT JOHN WHITE'S HOME

A blast incendiary type device was recently discovered at the home of former UDA mouthpiece John White.

The leading loyalist has in the past claimed that he made his fortune from selling prison handicrafts! He blamed the UDA in South-East Antrim and called on them to disband.

The following day a UDA leader in that area had a bomb placed in his car. Renegade loyalists were blamed amid rising tensions.

# LUNDY'S DAY PARADE CAUSES VIOLENCE IN DERRY

Innocent people were injured when the RUC baton charged a crowd of people who were observing the annual apprentice boys parade in Derry.

Among those injured was a member of the IRSP who was protecting a woman who fell during the unprovoked charge by the RUC on Orchard Street. He was hit on the shoulder as he bent down to help the elderly lady get up from the

ground when she fell.

Garvan O'Doherty the local businessman who has massive commercial interests in Derry city center was heckled by the crowd of nationalists when he came to the crowd with an RUC commander to appeal for calm, even though there was anger following the RUC charge. The crowd vented their anger on O'Doherty for what they seen as his capitulation to

loyalists.

An IRSP spokesperson slated business leaders for being allowed to become involved in the negotiations in the first place. She said, "What right have these people got to tell the working class people of Derry what they should do and when they should do it. They are involved to protect their own commercial interests and nothing more!"



RUC baton charge nationalists

# Catholics fail to apply to join unreformable RUC



Catholics in the North have voted with their feet in the latest recruitment drive by the discredited RUC. Just twenty six Catholics compared to over 250 "non-Catholics" applied for clerical positions with the force.

These figures come as it has been revealed that the RUC are running informers as young as thirteen years old inside nationalist communities and putting their lives in danger.

An IRSP spokesperson told the Starry Plough that the party believed that the figures were proof that nationalists were not being brainwashed by propagan-

da from the British government and the SDLP on the new "reformed force."

"These figures prove that the nationalist community do not want some form of reshaped RUC in their areas. Our people have had at least thirty years of being at the wrong end of the RUC and they do not want another thirty years."

He went on, "Even the Patten recommendations will not be enough to convince people of the merits of this force. This force and its ethos of protecting the British state will never have the support of people from within nationalist working class areas."

## PHONE COMPANIES STOPPED IN THEIR TRACKS

A hole dug beside the Present Link road in Derry was filled with angry residents instead of a mobile phone mast in the latest in a long line of incidents involving mobile communications companies.

Residents were angered at the clandestine nature of the installation beside their homes when they awoke one morning to find a hole in the ground and the finishing touches being made to the foundations of a mobile phone mast. Later the contractor involved had to leave the area without finishing the job he had started because of the residents actions which prevented the erection of the mast.





Eleven Breton nationalists will be tried in connection with a number of bombings in Brittany since 1993. The bombing targets included income tax offices, a court building at Rennes and the McDonald's restaurant at Quevert.

A number of prisoners already held for almost two and a half years are among those charged and it begs the question why if the French government had evidence linking these individuals to the Armée Révolutionnaire Bretonne (ARB), did it take so long to validate that evidence. A number of those charged are associated with Emgann, the republican socialist organisation active in the struggle for Breton independence. Some are being tried for alleged criminal complicity with a terrorist organisation, while others will be arraigned before a higher court on more serious offences.

In the shadow of the American 'war on terrorism' a number of nations have sought to shred the civil rights of their citizens, especially those from groups long oppressed by the state. Both Spain and France have been among those attempting to use the American declared 'war' to provide cover for stepped up repression of members of nationalist movements active in their countries.

Hugo Chavez, the anti-imperialist President of Venezuela has thwarted another attempted coup. During the first days of October, a combined action involving media hostile to the government, the Venezuelan Workers Central (a union organization linked to International Confederation of Free Union Organizations), and the employers organization Fedecamaras seemed to be prepared for another coup attempt. During the previous week, when Chavez was traveling in Europe made claims that the President would not be coming back.

The general strike which was called (the third called by the Workers Central and Fedecamaras in ten months) was nicknamed the Paro Cínico or "Cynical Strike" by the people of Venezuela. In reality, it was less of a strike and more a lockout. Then, on October 22, a group of 15 officials involved in the April 11 coup called for civil disobedience and called upon the soldiers, sub officers, cadets, second rank officials, officers and admirals to join the action against the government.

As on April 11, the coup failed. The Paro Civico failed to win the support of the other unions, which declared that "the country is not on strike, but standing on its own feet." The chiefs of the Armed Forces refused to support the coup. Minister of Defense, retired general José Luis Prieto, stated during a TV and radio broadcast that "denying a legal, legitimate and sovereign government is placing oneself out of the circle of constitutional order and that may result in penal responsibilities that we would all regret." General Raúl Badvel, main Chavez's supporter in the Armed Forces in repelling the April 11 coup, said he was alert to any movement made by troops or headquarters. Even César Gaviria, Secretary General of the Organization of American States, criticized the coup attempt.

Elsewhere in Latin America, Lúcio Gutierrez, who led the demonstrations by the country's Indian populace, in January 2000, won the first round of elections in Ecuador. Gutierrez heads a coalition which includes the January 21 Patriotic Society and the Pachakutik Multinational Union Movement. Gutierrez received 21% of the ballots, beating out millionaire Álvaro Noboa of the National Action Institutional Renewal Party. Other results included 16% for Leon Roldós Aguilera of the Socialist Party, and 15% for ex-president Rodrigo Borja of the Democratic Left. Both Borja and Roldós have since participated in discussions with Gutierrez to create a broad center-left alliance.

In Brazil, Workers' Party candidate Luis Ignácio Lula da Silva won 61% of the vote in the October 27 presidential runoff election, defeating José Serra of the governing Brazilian Social Democracy Party. Throughout Latin America a broad challenge to the neo-liberalism of many of the regimes there is taking place, but the situation remains uncertain and American attempts at subversion can be relied upon to be a factor in future developments.

The rival Kurdish organizations, the Kurdish Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan held a meeting to form a National Assembly in the city of Arbil, in northern Iraq, on October 4th. The organisations are seeking to propose a federal Iraqi state divided between Kurds and Arabs if Saddam Hussein's regime is overthrown by U.S. and British attacks.

Iraq's population of 22 million includes nearly 4.4 million Kurds. In 1991, when Kurds rebelled against the Iraqi government after the Gulf War, only to have the U.S. government leave them to be slaughtered. Since then, the thousands were killed by the Iraqi army and a million and a half Kurds fled the country. Since then, the Iraqi Kurds have established an autonomous region in northern Iraq. Within this region, Iraqi Kurds are able to study in the Kurdish language and a Kurdish-language media is thriving. But, the U.S. government has stated that if Saddam is overthrown, the Kurdish autonomous region must rejoin Iraq. The U.S. has been staunchly opposed to an independent Kurdistan and has not even shown an interest in seeking the support of the 30,000 Kurdish troops in acting as a ground force against the Iraqi regime in case of war.

The Kurdish groups in Iraq have been cautious in their position towards the U.S. in its recent sword-waving against the Iraqi government, remembering all too well what price they paid the last time the U.S. went to war with Baghdad. While we in the IRSP oppose the current war mongering of the U.S. and British governments against Iraq and call for an end to economic sanctions against the Iraqi people, we fully support the struggle of the Kurdish people in Turkey, Iraq, and elsewhere to obtain an independent Kurdistan.

# INSANE OFFICIAL



Two years ago George W. Bush lost the popular vote for U.S. President and then blatantly stole the election in the Electoral College, with the help of his governor brother disenfranchising thousands of African-American voters in Florida and his father's appointees to the Supreme Court handing him the office.

Almost immediately thereafter and continuing today, the stock markets started tumbling at a pace unequalled for decades, even before the World Trade Center attacks of September 2001. Then revelations of massive corporate corruption hit the news, including energy companies having defrauded California out of billions of dollars through illegal practices, after secret consultation with the White House. The markets fell further—the Dow Jones Index has lost nearly one-third of its value in the past two years, while the NASDAQ has lost almost three-quarters of its value in the same period.

With the falling stocks came the decimation of the retirement dreams of many American workers. Traditional pension plans have all but vanished in the U.S., giving way to 401K investment accounts, partially funded by employers. These are generally mutual fund accounts, which fell with the markets, leaving many with the financial support they'd relied on for retirement badly depleted.

Add to this that the sympathy and support gained from virtually the entire world after the September 2001 attacks has been almost entirely squandered, through bloody reprisal in Afghanistan that still failed in their objective, followed by war preparations against Iraq on the thinnest of justifications. In fact, American allies such as France are now speaking openly of the U.S. being a source of fear and world instability.

So, what did American voters do in the recent elections? They gave Republicans control of the Senate and increased their margin of control in the lower house—thereby ensuring that the party of falling markets and belligerent foreign policy, tax cuts for the rich and soaring national deficits, attacks on civil rights and coddling of corporate criminals now control all three branches of the Federal government.

Actually it isn't accurate to say that the American electorate did this. The American electorate didn't make any decision. It is estimated that there are 200,929,000 Americans eligible to vote, but only 141,850,558 are registered to vote. Of these, only about 39% voted in the election—roughly 56 million—or just a little over a quarter of those eligible to vote.

This can be viewed as American workers 'voting with their feet', that is, many American workers have concluded that bourgeois democracy is a sham and that the choice of bad and worse simply doesn't merit the effort of going to the ballot box. But, sadly the low level of class consciousness among American workers provides little chance of this dissatisfaction with electoral politics translating into a revolutionary impulse within the U.S. working class.

So, for now, class war rages in America, but it is a war of the capitalist class upon the workers, and the streets could well run red from the carnage yet to come.

The present attack on the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) began when President Clinton commissioned a study on 'modernising' the ports. When the contract covering the 10,500 members of the ILWU expired in July 2002, the union agreed to accept new technology in a deal, despite the loss of 600 clerks' jobs and sought extension of union jurisdiction over any new jobs in exchange. The PMA, however, wouldn't take yes for an answer. Instead, they locked out the ILWU workers.

President Bush, in an unprecedented step, invoked the Taft-Hartley Act, which is usually used against strikes and had never before been used in a lockout. Under the terms of the act, the Dockers were forced back to work for an 80-day "cooling-off" period that expires December 26. The action ended a 10-day lockout by employers and provided the opportunity for a federal judge to ban any work stoppage on the docks during that period. The Justice Department sent the ILWU a letter on October 25th threatening legal action in response to the PMA alleging that the ILWU was carrying out a work slowdown, two weeks after resuming work.

Miniac's rise in the PMA was backed by Stevedoring Services of America (SSA), one of the world's biggest port operators, who were previously involved, with the Australian government in the 1990s, in an effort to crush the Dockers' union there. SSA is also pressuring Bangladesh to build a new private terminal to replace the government-owned port and its unionized workforce, with the American ambassador having publicly intervened to support the company's efforts.

In the U.S., the PMA are seeking legislation to put the Dockers under the Railway Labor Act, which according to an editorial in the Journal of Commerce recently, "essentially eliminates the ability of a union to use the threat of a strike to gain the upper hand in contract negotiations."

The ILWU is the most Left-wing union in America. It has a long history of solidarity with other labour struggles, at home and abroad. ILWU workers refused to touch cargo on ships sailing from the Liverpool docks during the long Liverpool Dockers' struggle. They refused to handle South African cargo during the anti-Apartheid struggle. They regularly support campaigns such as the release of Mumia Abu Jamal and Leonard Peltier. In 1981 the ILWU shut down the docks in solidarity with the INLA and IRA hunger strikers. They have a history of militancy that includes leading the historic San Francisco General Strike. It is the duty of all socialist and trade union activists to come to their aid against this attack by the combined forces of the employers and the U.S. government. We in the IRSP applaud the proud history and continuing militancy of the ILWU and join in demanding:

## Hands Off the ILWU!



# Republican Socialist Merchandise

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LITREACHA DEARGA

# RED LETTERS

Starry Plough Readers Views

## THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL!

A Chara,

Thank you for the latest issue of the Starry Plough.

The extra copies ordered from the previous issue was stocked in the corner shop and have sold well, so I would like to request more.

It is vital that all members and supporters help assist the voice of republican socialism and ensure that it becomes more widely available in the areas where they work and live to create debate, a republican socialists alternative to the sectarianism that is nationalism and unionism.

Think global, act local!

In solidarity  
AM  
Co. Armagh

## Solidarity Greetings from Portlaoise



Comrades & Friends,

We would like to wish Dennis Thompson and John Creed our comrades who have been recently released from Portlaoise Gaol all the best in the future, we would also like to express our support and solidarity with our comrades families.

We would also like to extend our support and solidarity to our comrades in Strabane and North Belfast who are in a constant state of alert because of antagonistic forces, to our comrades in the newly formed Memorial Committee, everyone in Teach Na Failte.

To everyone who contributes to the running and distribution of The Starry Plough, our comrades in the Irish Republican Socialist Party, everyone involved in the Republican Socialist Movement overseas and to all the staff and volunteers of the Irish National Liberation Army.

Finally comrades, let us remember with pride all those who have died for the struggle for national liberation and socialism.

Dessie O'Hare O/C and Declan Duffy ADJ  
Irish Republican Socialist Prisoners of War,  
INLA Wing,  
Portlaoise Gaol.

## PUT PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT!

Comrades,  
Multinational corporate greed has won out as 400 Irish glass workers in Dublin fell the sting of losing their livelihoods. Once again it is the capitalist mantra of 'profit over people'. After respectful negotiations by the workers to make concessions to save their jobs the multinational parent company pulls the plug anyhow. A slap in the face for the workers who sought accommodation. A peaceful workers 'sit in' to receive a fair and rightfully earned severance package failed to sway the bosses from trying to cheat and stop the workers aims.

Where is the cry of outrage? This should be the rallying cry and wake up call for the Irish working class to unite and fight for their rights and justice.

No amount of concessions or negotiations was to save the workers as they were just pawns in the new global economy of profit takers. The bosses had bought a new plant in Italy where more profits could be had for the few at the expense of many. This is the same parent company that shut a union shop in England only to resurface as a non-union shop later.

Who has been made to answer?

S O'L  
Canton,  
Ohio, North America.

## CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEBATE

This is your page to create debate about the issues that affect the Working Class both at home and internationally. If you would like to contribute please send all correspondence to:

LITREACHA DEARGA  
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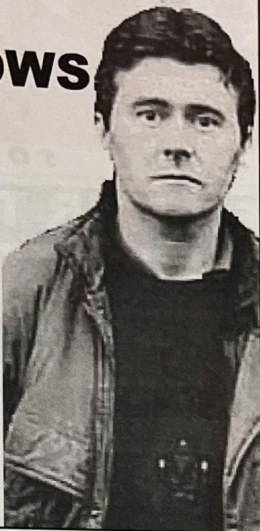
# CONDITIONS IMPROVE FOR RSPOWS

The IRSP are welcoming news that INLA POWs previously held in Portlaoise have been moved to Castlereagh Open Prison in County Roscommon. The INLA have also maintained a landing in Portlaoise.

Willie Gallagher, speaking on behalf of the IRSP prisoners' department welcomed the move.

He also confirmed that Dessie O'Hare, right, will be beginning a pre-release programme in 2003 with his eventual release being 2004. "This is years later than the date that Dessie should have been released and it is disappointing to say the least. But at least there is now light at the end of the tunnel for Dessie."

We at the Starry Plough wish our imprisoned comrades in Portlaoise, Castlereagh and Maghaberry the very best wishes in the new year and let's hope it's not long before all our comrades are free.



## IRSP CONDEMNS TABLOID STORY

The International Department of the IRSP commented on the vilification of a republican socialist activist in the United States by a British tabloid published in Ireland, calling it "a disgusting example of the depths to which the British media can sink." The British tabloid, The People, published alleged partially nude photographs of an American republican socialist activist, who they associated with the 'Real' I.R.A., along with a mixture of fiction-based slanders and personal information about the young woman which potentially exposed her and her child to risk. "The article published by The People about a North American republican socialist activist serves as a disgusting example of the depth to which the British media can sink in its attempt to demonise all those who support the struggle for national liberation and socialism in Ireland," said IRSP International Department spokesperson Peadar Baile. "It is our understanding that without permission from the person who took the photographs, The People—a pitiful slander sheet which exemplifies the reason that 'tabloid press' is a term of denision—published pictures of a female republican socialist activist. The tabloid included the photos with an article composed of invented quotes, lies, slanders, and just sufficient real information to place a young woman and her child in harm's way. We in the IRSP condemn this article and the periodical which published it for continuing the sort of demonisation of Irish activists, in Ireland and abroad, that harkens back to the racist cartoons of Punch more than a century ago. "The article does not diminish the person it attacked, but only serves to demonstrate the lack of credi-

bility and utter lack of integrity of the publication, it's pseudonym using author, and anyone who contributed to the farce. Irish republicans and republican socialists are serious activists, who do not concern themselves with the private concerns of other activists and are disgusted by the adolescent focus on invented sex scandals that are published instead of important news. We know this activist and respect her contribution to the ongoing struggle in Ireland. "The real news in the occupied six counties of Ireland at this time is the story of how the RUC/PSNI coerced a very frightened 13 year old boy with learning difficulties into spying on the Irish National Liberation Army for them, without his parents knowledge and at great potential risk to himself. Like many British publications, however, The People had no time to pursue that story. They were too busy gleaning over nude pictures of Irish activists. "This same periodical last year ran another tawdry piece on another republican socialist activist in the United States, focusing chiefly on her sexuality in a piece rife with homophobic sensationalism. Again, our view of this activist's contribution remains undiminished in our perspective." In closing, the spokesperson said, "Perhaps if the editors of this tabloid could get their minds out of the gutter, they could focus on the important issues confronting the working people of the six counties."

**Note:** Since the original story another has appeared that makes allegations that DM Gould is an FBI informer. The IRSP views these stories as nothing more than baseless slander and gives them no credence whatsoever.

## Cuimhneam

Fallen Volunteers and political activists remembered

Members of the Republican Socialist Movement whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Comrade Mickey Montgomery, IRSP	Died	1 Dec 1984	Co. Derry
Vol. Joe Craven	Assassinated	5 Dec 1983	Co. Antrim
Vol. Colm McNutt	Killed in Action	12 Dec 1977	Co. Derry
Vol. Roddy Carroll	RUC Shoot-to-Kill	12 Dec 1982	Co. Armagh
Vol. Seamus Grew	RUC Shoot-to-Kill	12 Dec 1982	Co. Armagh
Vol. Ronnie Trainor	Assassinated	15 Dec 1975	Co. Armagh
Vol. John O'Reilly	Assassinated	20 Jan 1987	Co. Antrim
Vol. Thomas "Ta" Power	Assassinated	20 Jan 1987	Co. Antrim
Vol. Gino Gallagher	Assassinated	30 Jan 1996	Co. Antrim

The staff and volunteers of the Irish National Liberation Army remember with pride our comrades whose anniversaries occur at this time.

"When the freedom of our country and class has been won, let us guard it well, remembering it was paid for in the blood of those now dead. The building of the revolutionary party is the only tribute befitting our comrades."

The Ard Comhairle and Membership of the Irish Republican Socialist Party remember at this time our comrades who died in the struggle for a Socialist Republic.

"When the freedom of our country and class has been won, let us guard it well, remembering it was paid for in the blood of those now dead. The building of the revolutionary party is the only tribute befitting our comrades."

Republican Socialist POWs in Maghaberry, Portlaoise and Magilligan remember with pride the volunteers of the Irish National Liberation Army who gave their lives in the struggle for Socialism.

"Whenever death may supplant us, let it be welcome, provided that this, our battle cry, may reach some receptive ear and that other hands reach out to pick up our weapons, to continue our funeral dirge with the staccato of machine gun fire and new cries of battle and victory ever onward, Venceremos"

### Insertions

If you would like to place an notice into Cuimhneam then please contact the Starry Plough office with details as soon as possible before you want it to appear. Our contact details are on page 2. Family notices are especially welcome.

The Starry Plough  
Newspaper of the Irish Republican Socialist Party

## WANTED

### Paper Sellers

in all areas!

If you can help with distribution and sales of Ireland's most thought provoking political newspaper then please get in touch and let us know.

The Starry Plough is expanding and growing throughout Ireland and abroad but we need more people to help us to get the Republican Socialist message out to areas where we don't have a presence.

Our contact details are on Page 2.

Camchéachta

## DIALANN

### December 2002

**US Embassy Demonstration**  
Saturday 7th December  
Assemble @ 2pm  
Central Bank Plaza, Dublin  
(Bring Banners & Flags)

**No War But the Class War!**  
**Demonstration**  
Saturday 7th December  
Assemble @ 2pm  
Art College Square, Belfast  
(Bring Banners & Flags)

**Vol. Joe Craven**  
**Plaque Unveiling**  
**Bawnmore Estate, Belfast**

(Check with local IRSP personnel for details of this event)

**Vol. Colm McNutt**  
**Plaque Unveiling**  
Junction of William St and Rossville St, Bogside, Derry

(Check with local IRSP personnel for details of this event)

**Vol. Neil McMonagle**  
**Plaque Unveiling**  
Saturday 1st February  
Assemble @ 2pm  
Leafair Park, Derry  
(These details are subject to

## DIARY

change so check with IRSP representatives beforehand)

### Bloody Sunday Weekend

Friday 31st January & Saturday 1st February

Two days of discussion and debate on many topics held in Derry with the culmination being the annual Bloody Sunday Commemoration March.  
(For details email: derryirsp@hotmail.com)

**Bloody Sunday March & Rally**  
Sunday 2nd February  
Assemble @ 2pm  
Creagan Shops, Creagan, Derry

If you would like to place an advert for events such as demonstrations, protests, commemorations, socials etc happening in your part of the country then contact the Starry Plough office with details before the next deadline.

## y faner goch

for a free socialist wales

Publication of Cymru Goch, Welsh Republican Socialists

Subscription details from:

mv.jones@virgin.net



An

The STARRY Plough

Camchéachta



Pairtí Poblachtacht Soisialach na h-Éireann

FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION AND SOCIALISM!

IMPRISONED PARIS 7 DENIED FAIR TRIAL

# SPANISH STATE TERROR ESCALATES!

**FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER 11th REPRESSION  
INTENSIFIES AGAINST POLITICAL PARTIES IN SPAIN**

The fascist Spanish State has launched an offensive against all organisations that make up the anti-fascist resistance and working class Movement. The most shocking and public side of this State terrorism is the attacks upon all fronts of the Basque National Liberation Movement and against communists and other anti-fas-

cists. All these repressive measures which the Spanish state has been orchestrating are part of the privatisation economic politics, 'free trades', the increase in the number of working people in work 'accidents', job instability, unemployment, etc. The regime is attempting to corner off all those who show their anger against the capitalist

system and it's State. The latest imprisonment of members from political prisoners' solidarity groups is also an attempt to crush solidarity with the victims of reprisals, workers on strike or any others that have been arrested or tortured.

Details are emerging of an horrific kidnapping in Madrid of Carmen López Anguita, a former political prisoner and member of the prisoners support group AFAPP (Association of Families of Political Prisoners).

When leaving her flat in late November Carmen was attacked from behind by a team of masked men and bundled into the side door of a van and driven off. She was brutally kidnapped by the Spanish state and now faces charges of belonging to a militant group. Carmen is a dedicated political activist who has spent TWENTY years in prison already and has endured countless protest actions, including numerous hunger strikes.

This petit lady is well known to Republican Socialists in Ireland. In

August 2001, during the Celebration of Resistance Weekend in Derry held to commemorate the 1981 hunger strike, she spoke at a public meeting to highlight the need for greater solidarity between groups who have political prisoners as members and put forward the proposal from AFAPP for the formation of International Red Aid, an international prisoners support group.

She also spoke of her own harrowing experiences in the prisons of Spain. Anyone who listened to her could not fail to have been both impressed and inspired by her courage and commitment to the politics of international solidarity and socialism.

While in Derry she helped to put up posters calling for the release of

Francisco Brotons who was then Spain's longest serving Political prisoner, having spent in excess of twenty three years behind bars. He was a leader of GRAPO.

These posters were put up around the Brandywell stadium in time for the imminent arrival of the Real Madrid soccer team who were in town for a friendly match with Derry City.

She went out of her way to lay flowers on the graves of Republican Socialists across the north, in Derry, Dungiven and at the National IRSM monument in Milltown Cemetery in Belfast.

An IRSP spokesperson said the whole organisation was saddened by the attack on the political party PCE(r) (Communist

Party of Spain Reconstituted) of which the kidnapping of Carmen was only a small part. In further raids at least nine other party activists were arrested. There is now evidence emerging that methods of torture were used during so called interrogation sessions.

The IRSP spokesperson saluted the bravery and commitment of Carmen and her comrades and lent the IRSP's support to calls for the release of the political activists in Spain. "These raids are just a part of the political repression that is ongoing in Spain. Anyone from a supporter of a prisoners group to political activist is under threat from the state in this latest crackdown."

We have already seen the forced closure of the offices of Harre Batasuna in the Basque country. Five members of

PCE(r) and two GRAPO members are currently imprisoned in France on dubious extradition warrants. They have been waiting now for two years and there is still no sign of a hearing. They are planning a hungerstrike to force movement in their case. They have become known as the Paris 7. We urge our readers to support our imprisoned comrades in Spain and France and we send greetings of Solidarity to them during this difficult time.

**Victory to the Working Class  
in Spain and Ireland!**



The Irish Republican Socialist Party believes that more support is needed for Political Prisoners of War.

Each day more political activists are detained & tortured repeatedly by so-called 'democratic' European Countries as their fascist terror spirals. We must highlight that repression and fight against it. We urge all Republican Socialists to fully support the right for political status at home and abroad!

Left: The Paris 7



**THE VOICE OF IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALISM!**