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IRA call the shots

SEE PAGE TWO

A MAJOR opportunity for a point-by-point repudiation of the claim that constitutional methods will work in removing the British presence has been presented to the IRA leadership, who have accepted SDLP leader John Hume's challenge to meet him for talks.

It was Hume who, in trying to dodge a meeting with Sinn Féin and in trying to belittle them as being irrelevant, challenged the IRA to meet him. But, having publicly made that challenge, even if in panic, he had little choice but to go ahead when agreement was forthcoming from the IRA.

And while the IRA acceptance was sent with firmness, resolution and confidence in their position, Hume has admitted that he has nothing new to present in return.

Left with little room for manoeuvre he has, in true opportunist fashion, tried to present himself as a peace-maker. Instead of talks, he claims that he will simply make a

IRA CALL THE SHOTS

speech to the IRA, lecturing them on surrender.

If he was serious, and if peace was his objective, he would have gone about it quietly and without publicity, and he would have approached all the parties involved in the conflict.

DIALOGUE

Talks of this nature are about dialogue, not making speeches, and well John Hume knows it. As an establishment politician he has repeatedly stated that constitutionalism works and that armed force achieves nothing. Let him prepare his arguments to support this case.

He has stated that armed force achieved nothing in the Ireland of the 1920's (which can hardly have pleased his Free State allies). He has tried to hijack the Civil Rights Movement and every other political development within the nationalist community as his own. Let him support his case if he can.

But arguments which might carry

weight in the corridors of Westminster, Leinster House and Strasbourg, are less than useless when put to the leadership of an army which has grown out of the suffering, not of decades, but of centuries.

Hume knows this and that is why he is retreating into the make-believe role of peace-maker; a role which he will undoubtedly try to exploit when he emerges from the talks to announce 'At least I tried'.

Against this the IRA will enter these talks fully aware that without them, and without the resistance which Hume refers to as the 'alienation' of six-county nationalists, the SDLP would be as irrelevant to the British as were their predecessors in the Nationalist Party.

REMINDER

The only reason there are summits and the only reason there are 'initiatives' of one kind or another is because the bombs and bullets of the IRA are a constant reminder to the British that their Irish

problem will not go away.

Commitment and the conviction which has grown out of years of struggle and sacrifice are the hallmarks of the IRA leadership which will face Hume.

They are likely to point out that far from providing a way forward for nationalists, the SDLP is simply prolonging the war by their active support for cross-border collaboration.

Following the talks, Hume will be left in no doubt that Sinn Féin is an independent organisation which makes its own political decisions and that the SDLP, if they want agreement of political matters relevant to the nationalist community, will have to talk to them.

Despite the best efforts of Hume's admirers in the media, one major gain has already been achieved in the break-up of the sham unity which the parties to the Dublin Forum boasted about.

Being in control of the situation, the IRA will not let Hume off the hook which he has unwittingly fashioned for himself.

WAR NEWS...WAR NEWS...WAR NEWS

WIDESPREAD ATTACKS

THE FIRST crown forces fatality of 1985 occurred during one of a series of intensified IRA operations which took place during the last week. Operations in Belfast, Fermanagh, Tyrone and South Armagh left one UDR soldier dead, a second wounded and an RUC man slightly injured.

The UDR soldier was shot dead at 9.40am on Friday morning, February 1st, at Derrylin in County Fermanagh, in an ambush outside St Mary's primary school. Several IRA Volunteers using high-velocity rifles were involved in the attack on the soldier as he sat alone in the school bus which he drove.

IRA intelligence had been monitoring his movements for some time and great care was taken in selecting the ambush point in order to minimise any risk to civilians.

The soldier was killed almost

instantly and immediately following the attack the surrounding area was sealed off by hundreds of Brits, RUC and UDR. Despite this the IRA Volunteers evaded capture and returned safely to base.

STATEMENT

In a statement claiming responsibility for the attack, the South Fermanagh Brigade IRA said:

"This operation was carefully planned and timed so as not to interfere with schoolchildren who the UDR soldier had ar-

ried to collect.

"Those clerics and politicians who have been quick to condemn and criticise the attack should save their condemnation for the Brits and the school boards who allow children to be driven by UDR soldiers, and who involve children in counter-insurgency programmes, under the guise of community relations.

"The IRA in South Fermanagh warns everyone — parents, clergy and school principals — to take note that there will be no hiding-place for members of the crown forces."

BELFAST

Later that same day, IRA Volunteers in West Belfast opened fire on a British army foot-patrol on the Andersonstown

Road. The attack occurred around 2pm when IRA Volunteers opened fire from a house in Riverdale Park North.

In a statement claiming responsibility for the ambush, the Belfast Brigade said:

"An active service unit, armed with automatic weapons, attacked a British army foot-patrol. As the ASU was withdrawing from the area, their vehicle failed to start.

"British troops rushed to the scene of the attack and exchanged shots with the Volunteers, but were unable to prevent them withdrawing safely from the area.

"The RUC reacted to the attack by imposing a mini-curfew in the Riverdale area and have been raiding the district since."

NEWTOWNBUTLER

An RUC man in South Fermanagh narrowly escaped death in the early hours of Sunday morning, February 3rd, during an attack by IRA Volunteers. The ambush, which occurred on the Lisnaskea Road, near Newtownbutler, County Fermanagh, involved several IRA Volunteers using high-velocity weapons who fired at the RUC man as he drove along the road.

The vehicle was hit several times, but the RUC man escaped serious injury and had only to be treated in hospital for cuts caused by flying glass.

CROSSMAGLEN

The British Parachute Regiment was the target for an IRA car-bomb attack in Crossmaglen, South Armagh, on Tuesday, February 5th. The bomb had

been placed in a red Escort car and left in the Rathview Park housing estate off the Castleblaney Road.

In a statement, the 2nd Battalion, South Armagh Brigade IRA, said that around 2pm a four-man patrol of the Paras, based at the barracks in Crossmaglen, was passing the vehicle when an IRA Volunteer detonated the bomb. The Paras narrowly escaped injury, and the car taken by the IRA ensured no civilians were hurt in the ambush.

TYRONE

A few hours later a UDR soldier, who had just left work, was ambushed by IRA Volunteers in Drapersfield, County Tyrone. Two IRA Volunteers had taken over a house in Drapersfield, about three miles from Cookstown. As the soldier drove past they opened fire hitting him in the head. The soldier was rushed to hospital where it was stated that he was not seriously injured.

An exhaustive follow-up search by crown forces found nothing. The IRA Volunteers left the area unhindered.

BESSBROOK

In an earlier attack on January 24th, an IRA ASU from South Down ambushed a UDR major in Bessbrook.

After commandeering a house in the area the previous night, the IRA Volunteers lay in wait for the UDR soldier, opening fire on him with automatic weapons as he drove past.

Although his car was hit several times, the UDR officer escaped injury.



● Brits seal off Riverdale, Belfast, after the IRA ambush

Where, when and with Hume?

BY HILDA MacTHOMAS

ON THURSDAY, January 31st, a debate took place on BBC radio between Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams and SDLP leader John Hume. The purpose of this *Behind the Headlines* programme was to elaborate on a possible interaction between Sinn Féin and the SDLP after next May's local council elections, and also Sinn Féin's influence on the SDLP's policies.

The debate, however, will not be remembered for any of the important points it raised. Towards the end, Gerry Adams told Hume his party would issue an invitation to the SDLP for talks. And it is Hume's somewhat startled answer to that invitation, and the aftermath, which have been making the headlines and provoking the political and media reaction.

During the debate, Hume had been challenged to state his position regarding the British government's refusal to meet Sinn Féin elected representatives. "It is none of the SDLP's business", Hume said, trying to evade the issue. Pressed further, he waffled.

"We talk to anybody that can bring a resolution to this problem, and we talk to British ministers for that reason, just as we talk to anybody else who's involved in the electoral process."

"Either people are entitled to stand for election and be elected and get all the rights of the entire democratic process, or they are not", he added. Fine rhetoric for the benefit of radio listeners. However, Hume's democratic principles were to be tested shortly afterwards when, after an exchange on electoral agreements, Gerry Adams said:

"I have down for our national executive meeting very soon the issue of an invitation from Sinn Féin to the SDLP about pan-nationalist interests. I would like to see some response from Mr Hume perhaps on that."

"Now, here, at this minute?" mumbled Hume, before launching into a tirade about the 'Provisional Republican Movement' and saying:

"As I understand the Provisional Republican Movement, Sinn Féin are subject in all matters to the Army Council... then if I'm to talk to the Provisional Movement I want to talk to the people who are making the decisions."

LUDICROUS

He would tell them violence could not achieve anything. Hume said, adding the ludicrous comment that "violence committed against the Irish people has always brought change, but not violence committed by them". The campaign in the Twenties had "achieved nothing", he declared — a view of which few of his Free State allies would approve.

Pressed again by Gerry Adams on the question of talking to Sinn Féin, Hume was evasive once more, reiterating his intention to speak to the IRA leadership:

"I want to talk to the people who make the decisions in the Republican Movement", he said again, impervious to explanations by Gerry Adams that those who make decisions for Sinn Féin are the Sinn Féin ard comhairle.

But nothing could hide the fact that the media's blue-eyed boy had been caught on the hop by Gerry Adams' invitation, and that he had within ten minutes given the lie to his 'democratic principles' by refusing to meet Sinn Féin.

Hume's response was an attempt by him to avoid the issue of talks with Sinn Féin on the spurious pretext that that party were not the real "decision-makers". However Hume's silly "take-me-to-your-leader" attitude was to have far-reaching consequences.

LEADERSHIP

On Friday, February 1st, the leader-



ship of the IRA, in a statement signed 'P. O'Neill', accepted Hume's request for talks, saying:

"We welcome this opportunity to rebut the disastrous consequences for the nationalist community of the SDLP's stance." For years, the SDLP by its weakness on the British presence, the loyalist veto and Irish reunification, had allowed the Brits to continue trying to enforce internal solutions, the statement said, adding:

"We have plenty to discuss. We are also confident that Mr Hume can take adequate security precautions for the meeting. We await his response and will be in contact."

In an attempt to make some capital out of what had turned out to be a blunder, Hume declared that the IRA statement was an "implicit admission that the leadership of the Provisional IRA were the real leaders of the Republican Movement". He added:

"I would welcome an opportunity to meet them face to face", while stressing again that all he wanted to say was to ask them to stop the 'campaign of violence'.

Unionist reaction was swift and utterly predictable. Hume's apparent willingness to talk to the IRA at the drop of a hat incensed both the DUP and OUP who had been trying independently to get the SDLP to the conference table and, ultimately, back into Stormont.

If Hume goes ahead with this, we call off our offer of talks, the DUP said. And OUP general secretary Frank Millar warned of "substantial and immediate reluctance" in the OUP to any dialogue with the SDLP in those circumstances.

INVITE

Meanwhile on Saturday, February 2nd, the ard comhairle of Sinn Féin decided to invite the SDLP for talks on "the republican analysis of the situation, the SDLP's constitutional nationalist approach, post-Forum political developments, and how best to defend and pursue national interests", particularly within local councils after next May's elections.

"There is no reason to stop Hume meeting us as well", Sinn Féin's director of publicity, Danny Morrison, pointed

out. If he does not, "he will be disenfranchising thousands of nationalists in the North."

The Sinn Féin invitation, however, was immediately dismissed by Hume, as was Sinn Féin. "Mere surrogates", Hume called them.

By Sunday morning, Hume's 'IRA talks' were the front-page story for most Sunday papers.

But while Hume was attempting to build the whole episode into some sort of 'peace initiative', in Dublin those events were being perceived as a breach of the anti-republican alliance which had kept republican spokespersons out of RTE, Sinn Féin councillors out of official delegations and Sinn Féin out of the Forum deliberations.

"No talks should be held with the IRA in advance of their declaring a truce", said Free State deputy-premier Dick Spring. And Finance Minister Alan Dukes commented that he was "personally" against the talks.

The Sunday Tribune spoke of a "feeling" in Free State government circles that Hume had been "manoeuvred" into a position which would jeopardise talks with unionists. But the fact that Free State premier Garret FitzGerald felt he had to go to RTE and read a prepared statement gave a clue to the annoyance and embarrassment caused by Hume to his Free State friends.

CLEAR

FitzGerald was clear — for once. Any meeting between Hume and the IRA would be "broken up" and "members of the Army Council, if identified, would be arrested", he warned, adding that he presumed the twenty-six counties would not be used for such a meeting.

Incidentally, listing his reasons for not talking to the IRA, FitzGerald accused them of having "provoked retaliations which killed 560 Catholics".

The Northern-based group 'Silent Too Long' issued a scathing reply to FitzGerald's spurious claims. Apart from the fact that "almost 750 innocent Catholics have been murdered by loyalists" and close to 200 by the British Army or RUC, "many of the victims were murdered during the two IRA cessations in the early Seventies when there was a dramatic increase in the number of sectarian killings", FitzGerald was told.

And in contrast to the Coalition's condemnation of Hume's offer of talks to the IRA, Flannie Foll leader Charles Haughey expressed "full support" for Hume's "initiative" and wished him well. The Forum partnership looked well and truly broken.

However, it would be naive to explain the difference in FitzGerald's and Haughey's reaction by a lesser or greater degree of 'nationalism' — verbal or otherwise. Haughey in opposition and in government are two different persons.

And FitzGerald's prepared statement had been composed with an eye on the forthcoming Anglo-Irish summit, and before that Monday's meeting between Barry, Hurd and British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe.

British reaction was equally condemnatory. Tory MP Michael Mates declared on Sunday that Hume's initiative had caused the Dublin government unwelcome embarrassment, at a time when efforts were being made to patch up their relationship with the Thatcher government.

British direct-ruler Douglas Hurd expressed the hope that the meeting would not take place, as it would only "give credence to the IRA" as a "valid political force".

FUORE

And all the while, unionist fuore raged on. Unionist spokespersons were having a field day, pointing to Hume as the person responsible for the breakdown of talks.

Hume is "bringing down the shutters on political progress", OUP leader James Molyneux said. Hume should be interviewed by the RUC immediately after the meeting, declared DUP chief-whip Jim Allister. The only statements of support for Hume came from Haughey, Bishop Edward Daly of Derry and British Labour Party spokesperson Peter Archer.

Despite the controversy, however, Hume was afforded the usual, overgenerous and uncritical media coverage, being allowed to make all sorts of declarations without ever being challenged. In reply to Hurd's criticism, for instance, Hume said that Hurd too had met the IRA in secret in 1978.

That was a lie: the meeting which took place in Ballymurphy in 1978 was between Hurd and two Sinn Féin spokespersons, Gerry Adams and Danny Morrison, with BBC journalists present.

On several occasions Hume also spoke of an IRA 'invitation' to him, while in fact during the radio debate, it was Hume who had ignored Sinn Féin's invitation and instead challenged the IRA to have talks — a challenge which the IRA took up.

Meanwhile over the weekend, the BBC, for instance, operated a black-out on Sinn Féin statements, delaying Gerry Adams' response to Hume's declarations until late on Monday.

TALKS

The controversy is steadily dying down. What will remain is that Hume tried and temporarily succeeded in diverting attention from the question of talks between the SDLP and Sinn Féin.

The average SDLP voter has no qualms about talks with the IRA — nor for that matter about talks with Sinn Féin, and on this point Hume's 'subtle' distinction may well have escaped nationalist voters.

In the Free State, however, Hume is now perceived as having been outmanoeuvred by the IRA. The hitherto 'infallible' nationalist leader has soiled his track record. And Hume can expect more criticism from his Free State allies after the event, since obviously his reading a prepared speech to the IRA, and the IRA's response will show 'Hume the peacemaker' as a fake.

Hume's move might have given the unionists a ready-made excuse to renege on their offers of talks. But for the British government, and in particular for Hurd's attempts to bring the SDLP and the unionists to the conference table to hammer out another internal settlement, the whole thing is a disaster.

And when all is said and done, Hume still has to explain, as Gerry Adams said, "why he refuses to meet Sinn Féin, given that in the Autumn of 1980 Seamus Mallon and John McEvoy met with Danny Morrison and Joe Austin for a series of talks, and never once queried that our representatives were not speaking for an autonomous organization".

The SDLP and Sinn Féin will have to talk anyway, sooner or later, at council level. The matters listed in the Sinn Féin invitation to the SDLP will still be on the agenda.

And whether John Hume likes it or not, Sinn Féin's electoral involvement will continue to exert political pressure on the SDLP and force the SDLP away from their usual compromising line.

Temporary diversion

BY JACK MADDEN

WHILE the proposed IRA/Hume talks had Coalition ministers seething for much of the past week, the controversy helped them, to an extent, by temporarily diverting media attention from last week's budget.

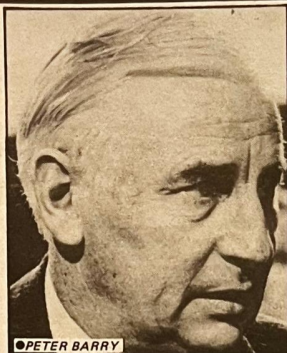
Criticism of the measures introduced in the budget came from every angle — except big business. Trade unionists, youth groups and poverty agencies were united in anger at measures which will mean a decline in the standard of living of underprivileged people in the twenty-six counties.

Not even the juggling of the tax-bands (the main feature of the budget) could hide the fact that only people earning over £38,000 yearly will benefit.

Regardless of all this, the deputy-leader of the Coalition, Dick Spring, announced that his party "subscribes fully" to the budget's provisions, even though he admitted "it is not a socialist budget".

Coming from the leader of the supposedly socialist Labour Party, this was guaranteed to cause further dissension within that party's troubled ranks and, sure enough, within hours, Spring's viewpoint was being publicly attacked by eight members of his party's administrative council.

They said in a statement that the budget would act as a 'spur' to getting Labour out of Coalition, but this 'militancy'

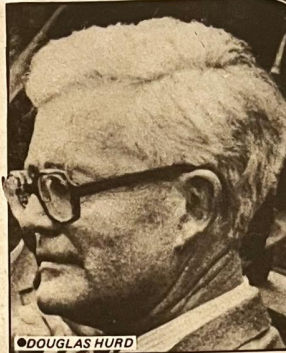


●PETER BARRY

will undoubtedly be rejected by the bulk of a party which seems to have a near-suicidal wish to be wiped out at the polls next time round.

With unemployment increasing to 234,064 (a rise of 8,619 in January) neither Labour nor their Fine Gael partners in Coalition, can expect to be very popular at the moment. After all, this is the highest monthly increase in unemployment since July 1982.

Regardless of their disastrous record in government, however, the Coalition leadership is determined to continue its efforts to rehabilitate its image with the



●DOUGLAS HURD

public. It was revealed in the *Irish Press* of February 1st, that Garret Fitzgerald and his ministers are planning a series of visits to 'marginal' constituencies where they are in extreme danger of losing seats at the next election.

OBNOXIOUS

Over last weekend it was announced by the Coalition Justice Minister, Michael Noonan, that the Criminal Justice Act would come into operation on March 1st. Many of the most obnoxious features of the Act will be delayed, however, pending the introduction of a complaints procedure

and rules governing the treatment of people in Garda custody. Even these cosmetic changes will do nothing to improve an Act which has been denounced consistently by civil liberties and legal bodies.

On Monday of this week, the Coalition Foreign Minister, Peter Barry, met the Northern direct-ruler, Douglas Hurd, for talks about what sort of 'involvement and co-operation' the Dublin government could give Britain in "bringing about certain changes" in the six counties.

All that they revealed after these talks, the first post-Chequers summit meeting of Barry and Hurd, was that another summit is now unlikely before Easter. Further security collaboration, which Hurd described as "a working solid relationship", was discussed as was the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).

Having been briefed by Hurd, Peter Barry returned to Leinster House on Tuesday, where he ridiculously claimed that the IRA is responsible for the 'pressure' being put on the Irish community by the operation of the PTA.

This view, that British injustice would miraculously disappear if the IRA did not exist, came in response to a Fianna Fail motion condemning the PTA. It was pointed out, though, that when in government Fianna Fail had never made a single protest about the operation of the PTA.

But even Fianna Fail rhetoric wasn't enough to persuade the Coalition to confront Britain, and on Wednesday, February 6th, the motion was defeated.

Eileen Flynn judgement reserved

BY BRENDAN KERR

JUDGEMENT has been reserved in the Dublin High Court case of Eileen Flynn, the New Ross, County Wexford, school-teacher who claims she was unfairly dismissed by the Holy Faith Convent School because she is living with a married man, the father of her child.

The case opened on Tuesday, February 5th, with the convent's counsel arguing that Eileen Flynn's work record was also a factor in

her dismissal. However, this was placed in its proper perspective when the former school principal, Sister MacDonagh, admitted that the main subject matter when discussing Eileen Flynn with the regional superior in June 1981 was her private life and that "academic matters were relatively minor".

Sister MacDonagh also told the court that Eileen Flynn had not been told of any specific requirements regarding her private life when she was first employed and that Eileen Flynn had constantly maintained that what she did in her private life was her own business and not that of the school.

'FRESH START'

On April 29th 1982, Sister Power, a general manager for the Holy Faith convents, met with Eileen Flynn and suggested that it would be a 'good idea' if she had a 'fresh start' in a new school. Eileen Flynn replied that she loved the man she was with and could not leave him or the area.



●Eileen Flynn leaving the Four Courts, Dublin, after the hearing

Sister Power met Eileen again on August 6th and then wrote to her, suggesting that it would be in her 'best interests' to resign. If no resignation was forthcoming then she would be dismissed.

On August 13th, three days

before Sister Power's deadline for a reply, Eileen Flynn said that she was not going to resign. She was dismissed on August 22nd 1982.

Justice Costello reserved his judgement on Wednesday, February 6th.

SEVEN YEARS IN SOLITARY

BY SIOBHAN O'MALLEY

MICK MURRAY, from Donnyrne in Dublin, was released on Tuesday, February 5th, after ten years imprisonment in English jails.

To inflict maximum suffering on a man who spent seven of those ten years in solitary confinement, Mick Murray was held in custody until 4pm on the day of his release.

He was notified by the prison authorities in Hull on Saturday, February 2nd, that an exclusion order had been

served on him and that he would be put on the Liverpool to Dublin ferry on the day of his release.

Murray's family and friends were not told what was happening to him, where he was or how he would be travelling, until late on Tuesday. In fact a welcoming committee of his

family and friends spent most of the day waiting in vain at Dublin airport.

He was held in Hull until 4pm, when he was handed over to police who drove him immediately to the Liverpool ferry. He was held in an office at the quayside until he could be put on the boat, but even then was locked in the captain's cabin until the ferry set sail.

Waiting for him when the boat docked in Dublin were his daughter Theresa and her family, and several friends and supporters.

During his ten years incarceration Mick Murray was shifted from prison to prison all over England, and was in nine different prisons in all. He was sentenced to 12 years in 1975 on charges of conspiracy and bombing.

Mick Murray's indomitable spirit and dedication to republicanism has not been quenched by his long years of imprisonment, in spite of the vicious imposition of punishments which meant a total of seven years solitary confinement and the loss of 2½ years remission.



●Mick Murray (left) being welcomed home to Dublin

Crossmaglen coercion

BY ROBERT CARLIN

A YOUNG Crossmaglen man has revealed that he has been a victim of RUC attempts to recruit an informer in the South Armagh town.

Eighteen-year-old Patrick McDonnell, who lives with his widowed mother, four younger brothers and a sister, was first approached by the RUC last September, following an incident in which British soldiers fired shots at a crashed car which, they alleged, had driven through a checkpoint.

Although nobody was found at the scene of the crash, the RUC arrested McDonnell from his home the following morning, claiming that he had been the driver of the car.

Threatening to bring a charge of attempted murder against him, for supposedly trying to drive over a British soldier at the checkpoint, the RUC told McDonnell that he could avoid any charges by working for them.

Terrified, he agreed and was then told to report the movements of local people, and especially

those who frequented a pub near his home. As a further threat they warned that, if he didn't co-operate, he would be implicated in the next IRA attack in the area. The information he collected was to be passed on to one of his RUC interrogators named Dixon.

INTERROGATION

McDonnell was again arrested, around Christmas, and brought by helicopter to Bessbrook Barracks where he was interrogated again. Dixon was present during the interrogation and the demand for information was made again.

After being stopped on a number of occasions since then, both by Dixon and a British army officer who asked if he had any information for them, McDonnell took the wise step of contacting Sinn Féin in Crossmaglen and told them of the mental torture which

he had endured at the hands of the RUC over the last four months.

In a statement commenting on this incident, Jim McAllister, Sinn Féin elected representative for Armagh, said:

"This is the latest in a line of such incidents in South Armagh and Newry, and unfortunately there are other people in the same predicament who are afraid and ashamed to come forward. I appeal to such people to come to Sinn Féin or their local clergy. I am also asking the local clergy to make a statement on this issue and let people know that they are willing to help. People in this predicament should realise that their enemy is the RUC and British army and that the people themselves are the victims."

The IRA in South Armagh urge all those who have been blackmailed and bribed into giving information to the Brits/RUC to come forward and clear their names:

"These people, both in the



● PATRICK McDONNELL

towns and outside, who are well known to us, are once again getting an opportunity to redeem themselves and expose the corrupt practices of the Brits/RUC in their attempts to collect information."

WEST BELFAST

A 27-year-old Falls Road man, arrested and held in Castlereagh Interrogation Centre for 36 hours, was the subject of another RUC recruitment attempt recently.

The man was arrested by the RUC at his home in the Lower Falls in the early hours of Saturday, January 19th, and brought to Castlereagh. They told the man,

who doesn't wish to be named, that they knew he was doing the 'double' — driving a private taxi while signing on as unemployed. They went on to link him with the Brighton bombing, saying that he had been in London with a construction expert around the time of the attack. He was, in fact, in London to buy a black taxi for a friend.

The two detectives went on to quiz him about his fellow employees at a West Belfast taxi depot, and about his previous place of employment.

QUESTIONED

"They questioned me about my friends — they mentioned a lot of names. They asked me did I know xxxxx, who, they said is Danny Morrison's driver. Then they said, 'you're in serious trouble over all this, so I'll put it bluntly — would you assist the police?' They went on to ask me if they called the depot and told me to pick one of them up would I do it. I said no."

The detectives said that the man had been running errands for the IRA in his private taxi and assured him that when he got out they would give him plenty of trouble regarding the PSV and tax on his taxi.

Last week the man was stopped by the RUC who told him they would charge him with failure to wear a seat-belt — something taxi drivers are not required to do — and also said they were reporting him for failure to display his tax disc.

Armagh activists arrested

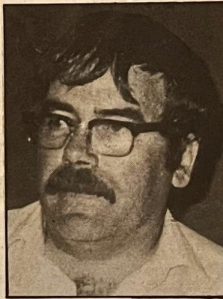
BY ROBERT CARLIN

JIM McALLISTER, Sinn Féin elected representative for South Armagh, was arrested by the RUC in a follow-up operation after a bomb attack on the British army in Crossmaglen.

A large number of paratroopers had flooded the town after the blast, and a number of them accosted McAllister outside the Sinn Féin office. Although McAllister is well known to them, they insisted that he identify himself. McAllister responded to this act of petty harassment by giving his name and address in Irish.

The paratroopers then called McAllister to one side, but he refused to move from where he was standing, telling them that if they wanted to speak to him they would have to come to him.

The confused Brits then called the RUC. When they arrived, an RUC man asked McAllister for his name and address, even though it is inconceivable that a local RUC man would not know exactly who he is. When McAllister again answered in Irish, the RUC man grabbed him by the lapels and told him he was under arrest — "for refusing to speak the Queen's English", as McAllister put it.



● JIM McALLISTER

McAllister was released after roughly an hour. He was told that the relevant authorities would be contacted with a view to prosecution on a charge of obstruction.

DISRUPT

Another RUC attempt to disrupt republican political activities in South

Armagh occurred last week, when an advice worker at Sinn Féin's Camlough office was held for nearly three days in Castlereagh Interrogation Centre.

Eithne McAteer (24) was arrested early last Tuesday, January 29th, from her home in Newry's Derrybeg estate and taken first to Gough Barracks, Armagh, and then to Belfast, where her RUC interrogators repeatedly demanded information on Sinn Féin activists in South Armagh.

She was also subjected to continual verbal abuse, much of it sexist, from RUC Special Branch personnel, who patronisingly advised her to "get married" and stop working in the advice centre.

Making threats that she would be continually re-arrested and that she would "not be getting out next time", the RUC told McAteer they would put her in Armagh Jail "for five or ten years".

INTIMIDATION

In a further unsuccessful attempt at intimidation, the RUC stated they they would "meet" her at 12.30 on Monday afternoon on the Camlough Road near her home.

McAteer was finally freed at 9.15pm on Thursday, January 31st. Contrary to the procedures laid down in the aftermath of the British government-commissioned Bennett report,



● Sinn Féin advice worker Eithne McAteer at work in the Camlough office

during her time in Castlereagh she had been denied access to her solicitor, who had that morning been falsely informed by the RUC that she had already been released.

When Eithne McAteer subsequently checked items confiscated during the raid on her home (items which in-

cluded religious relics, personal letters, posters and back issues of *AP/RN*) she discovered evidence of a crude RUC frame-up attempt, several unknown names and addresses having been written into an old notebook belonging to her younger sister.

Assassination set-up

BY ROBERT CARLIN

SINN FEIN'S Owen Carron has denied a claim by the DUP's Ivan Foster that he is "officer commanding" the IRA in County Fermanagh.

Foster had made the accusation, protected by the spurious 'privilege' of the Stormont Assembly, during a debate there on Tuesday, February 5th. He claimed he had found documents proving that Carron was O/C of the IRA in Fermanagh. The NIO, said Foster, had moved to

stop the RUC from arresting Carron over the documents.

Rejecting the allegation of the Third Force commander, Carron said:

"I absolutely refute the allegations. They are the height of nonsense. Obviously Mr Foster would like to see me dead and he

is trying to set me up for assassination by the Third Force."

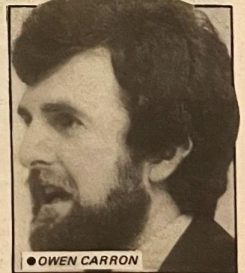
He added that even if Mr Foster were to make allegations outside the Assembly, he could not expect justice from the loyalist courts.

Foster went on to say during his speech that not enough men were on special surveillance duty on the day of the IRA's shooting of a UDR man. He made the strange claim that more men should be assigned to "special

surveillance duty guarding off-duty UDR men. Who, one wonders, would then watch the watchers?

Presumably Foster envisages a time when the efforts of the UDR will be devoted entirely to the surveillance of their off-duty comrades.

The information which led to Foster's allegations is believed to have come from RUC Superintendent Basil Elliot of Lisnakea, who has been the source



● OWEN CARRON

of a series of 'inspired' leaks to Foster in the past.

Border body-blow

BY BRENDAN KERR

THE BORDER TOWN of Dundalk is reeling from yet another industrial body-blow following the announcement that the Clarks footwear factory is to close.

The County Louth town already has an unemployment rate of 24% - the highest in the twenty-six counties - and 370 more workers will now be joining the 3,500 presently on the dole.

This announcement follows hard on the heels of the Labour/Fine Gael budget's 10% VAT rate on adult footwear and will see the traditional shoemaking industry workforce in Dundalk dwindle to 200 from what was 2,000 at one stage.

The closure, which has been blamed on the flooding of the footwear market by cheap imports - 60% from Britain and most of the rest from Italy, Spain and Portugal - has been attacked by Sinn Féin County and Urban District Councillor Fra Browne, who accused the Clarks management and the Dublin government of conning the workforce.

Fra Browne told AP/RN: "In spite of their previous denials, management and the IDA have been negotiating with Dublin government departments about the factory's future.

"Since June 1983, Dundalk Industrial Council has been calling on Industry Minister John Bruton for a meeting to discuss our devastating unemployment problem. We're still waiting for a meeting!

"The 'knock-on' effects of the loss to the local economy of £60,000 wages every week will be catastrophic."

The ITGWU has rejected the Cork Gas Company's deadline of February 21st for the acceptance of 85 redundancies among the 190-strong workforce.

ITGWU spokesperson Seamus Connolly said:

"These redundancies are not necessary, and if we were to allow them, the service to consumers would deteriorate even further."

NEETU craftsmen at Drogheda's Oil & Cake Mills have placed pickets in pursuit of a settlement of 23rd and 24th pay-round increases.

There have been no pay rises since December 1983 and, although production workers are passing the pickets, the ATGWU and ITGWU are implementing



● The head office of Clarks Shoes in Dundalk

an overtime ban in support of the dispute.

Labour Court talks aimed at resolving the dispute at Winstanley's footwear factory in Dublin's Liberties (see last week's AP/RN) broke down late on Friday night and the workforce have reoccupied the plant. The sit-in had been suspended to allow talks to go ahead.

Just as they were leaving the production line for their Christmas holidays, workers at the Litex Jeans factory in Killee, County Clare, were told by management not to bother returning after the break as the factory was closing down. Most of the 30 workers are women.

Workers at Storage Technology, Jamestown Road, Finglas, Dublin, are still fighting to save over 300 jobs at the plant.

The Dublin Council of Trade Unions

has raised almost £100,000 for the striking British miners.

More than 70 workers are to lose their jobs at the Lovell & Christmas pork factory at Ahoghill, County Antrim.

Redundancy notice has been served by the Irish Sugar Company in Carlow on 20 of its craftsmen.

The Brigidine Sisters religious order has called on Dunnes Stores to respect the conscientious objections of its workers to handling produce from racist South Africa and to allow the 13 anti-apartheid strikers at the Henry Street, Dublin, branch to return to work.

Dublin Sinn Féin trade unionists raised over £100 for the 30-week-old strike at a benefit social last Saturday.

A pay settlement to end the 18-week-old strike at Lee Strand Creamery has

been rejected pending the reinstatement of four workers who were sacked for 'picket-line activities'.

Members of the ITGWU have served strike notice on the Hospital Joint Services Board, which supplies hospitals with sterile items and laundry, which expires next Monday, February 11th.

The dispute is over compensation for lost overtime earnings.

There will be more redundancies in Carlow in the near future, this time at Thomas Thompson & Son Ltd where four workers are to lose their jobs.

Six other workers who are being laid off 'temporarily' have been told that they will be re-employed in March.

Spratt's Lucas, dog-food producers in Dublin's Allingham Street, will close down its manufacturing operation next month, putting 34 workers on the dole.

RUC KIDNAPPING CONDEMNED

BY SEAMUS BOYLE

THE RUC this week arrested a 19-year-old County Tyrone man at Hydebank Young Offenders Detention Centre, and took him away, causing considerable distress to the young man's family, who knew nothing of his whereabouts.

Paul Quinn, from Ashfield Gardens, Fintona, County Tyrone, has been arrested at least seven times within the last nine weeks by the RUC. About ten days ago, he was again arrested, brought to Omagh Barracks and told that if he became a paid RUC spy, the outstanding amount he owed in a fine (almost £200) would be settled by the RUC.

Among those he was asked to spy on was Omagh man Dominic Darcy, whose home was subsequently raided by the RUC. Quinn sensibly refused to get involved with the RUC and several days after being

released, he was arrested at his home on Wednesday, January 30th, and was detained in Hydebank Young Offenders Centre to serve a 14-day sentence over non-payment of the fine. His home was later thoroughly searched.

On Tuesday, February 5th, he was taken out of Hydebank, arrested by the RUC under Section 12 of the PTA, a seven-day order, and is now undergoing interrogation in Gough Barracks, Armagh.

MORRISON

The RUC's actions have been described as "nothing short of kidnapping" by Sinn Féin elected representative Danny Morrison, who said in a statement:

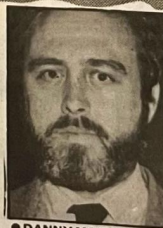
"The Quinn family have complained that the RUC are trying to intimidate Paul into becoming an informer. The methods used by the RUC in this case, which break even their own laws, again utterly disprove their claim to have community support.

"Anyone who is arrested by the RUC and whom they attempt to blackmail should contact Sinn Féin or their solicitor and should make a full and public statement to protect themselves."

The home of Dominic Darcy at Tattyreagh, Omagh, County Tyrone, was raided by a large force of RUC at around 6am last Friday, February 1st.

CHILDREN

Darcy's four children, whose ages range from six to 13, were ordered out of bed and were put under house arrest in another



● DANNY MORRISON

room. Much to the children's embarrassment, they had to get dressed in front of these gun-toting strangers, and were even followed into the bathroom.

Personal papers belonging to Dominic Darcy were also scrutinised by the RUC raiding party, who broke the runners on a wardrobe and damaged the family's electric cooker.

The raid has been condemned by local Sinn Féin representative Gerry McMenamin, who was called to the house during the raid. He said:

"The RUC had no reason or pretext for the raid, which lasted until 9.50am. I have no doubt that this heavy search is part of a long, ongoing vendetta against Dominic Darcy because of his republican leanings."

On the same morning as the Darcy raid, two other nationalist homes in nearby Fintona were also searched for several hours.

Unionists defend UDR

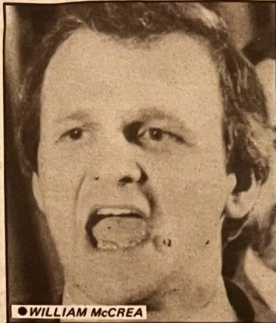
BY EAMON TRACY

UNIONIST POLITICIANS, as well as the commander of the UDR, rallied to the defence of the regiment in the face of several weeks of increasing criticism of its role and acceptability.

The recent conviction of one soldier for the murder of Sinn Féin election worker Peter Corrigan, the shooting dead of a West Belfast joy-rider, and the charging on Friday afternoon, February 1st, of another UDR soldier with the kidnapping of the 37-year-old wife of an Armagh car dealer, have all once again drawn attention to the criminal nature of the UDR.

DUP MP William McCrea and Official Unionist Fraser Agnew both praised the UDR, while Sammy Wilson, DUP press officer, struck the right note for nationalists when he claimed that the same tactic was being employed against the UDR "which led to the destruction of the 'B' Specials — a campaign of discrediting the mainstay of our security forces".

The commander of the UDR, Brig-

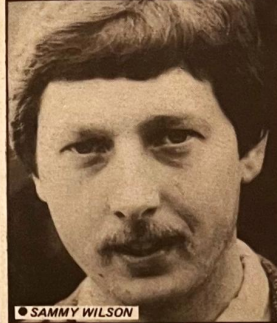


● WILLIAM MCCREA

adier Roger Preston, also jumped to the defence of his regiment in an RTE interview on Sunday, February 3rd, when he defended its record.

PHASED OUT

The Labour Party spokesperson on the North, Peter Archer, added fuel to the



● SAMMY WILSON

controversy when he told a meeting of the Labour Party in Birmingham that the UDR should be phased out. Archer's concern, however, was not with resolving the fundamental issue of the British presence, and the sectarianism and divisions that presence creates, but with finding means to win support from the

SDLP and Free State political parties for an internal six counties solution.

Owen Carron, Sinn Féin elected representative for Fermanagh/South Tyrone, described talk of phasing out the UDR as a "cosmetic exercise". He said:

"Last November, a group of British politicians and academics, under the chairmanship of Lord Kilbrandon, proposed that the UDR be phased out and replaced by an expanded RUC.

"In 1970, the Brits phased out the 'B' Specials, an exclusively Protestant force, and replaced it with the UDR, another exclusively Protestant force.

"Now 15 years on, with the reputation of the UDR as infamous as that of its predecessor, the Brits appear once again to be thinking of a cosmetic change. An expanded RUC is, after all, an expanded Protestant force.

"The reality for nationalists in the six counties is that irrespective of the name of the force, its uniform or badge, all such forces are crown forces with only one objective, the maintenance of the British presence and the domination of unionism."

SECTARIAN COUNCIL MOVES

BY JANE PLUNKETT

ATTEMPTS by the loyalist majority on Belfast City Council to disenfranchise thousands of nationalist voters are set to continue, despite Monday's High Court ruling that the council had acted beyond its powers in suspending indefinitely People's Democracy Councillor John McNulty.

McNulty had been excluded from council meetings since last December when, during a debate on the Whitelock leisure centre, he referred to the Union Jack's historical title of 'the butcher's apron', and later refused to apologise.

More significant than this flimsy pretext, however, the incident coincided with DUP calls for councils throughout the North to "ostracise" Sinn Féin elected representatives in advance of the expected influx of republican councillors after next May's elections.

In that context, the McNulty affair could have provided an important precedent for further loyalist efforts to silence anti-imperialist elected representatives.

IN PROTEST

Over the past month, Sinn Féin's two Belfast councillors withdrew from a number of council meetings in protest at the ban on McNulty. The SDLP split on the issue and failed to take a consistent principled stand in defence of nationalist voters' rights.

At Monday night's council meeting, loyalist anger at the High

Court setback was loud and strident.

Sandy Row DUP Councillor Eric Smyth attempted to shout down McNulty as the latter spoke on a housing motion. Smyth was eventually removed from the chamber, shouting "I leave with my friends, the RUC".

DISENFRANCHISE

A second loyalist move to disenfranchise nationalists who have the temerity to vote for republican candidates is also afoot, spearheaded by the DUP, which will be petitioning the British government to require councillors to take an oath denouncing violence.

Commenting on this DUP scheme, Belfast Sinn Féin Councillor Sean McKnight stated:

"This latest attempt to isolate



● Belfast City Hall where the city council's meetings are held

Sinn Féin within the council chambers is a blatantly hypocritical propaganda ploy, emanating as it does from a party which has worked closely with the UDA, UVF and Red Hand Commandos, and which has repeatedly called for increased RUC 'shoot-to-kill' operations, the reintroduction of hanging and, in general, intensified repression against Northern nationalists."

Oideachas faoi ionsaí

LE CIÁN MAC AOIDH

TÁ RÁITEAS ÉISITHE ag Cumann Náisiúnta Múinteoirí Éireann (INTO) ag cur in iúl chomh buartha is atá siad faoin chontúirt go ndruifí scoileanna in Iarthar Bhéal Feirste as siocair gearraidh siar atá fógraithe ag an Roinn Oideachais sna Sé Chontae.

Nuair a poiblíodh an plean, Dé Mairt, 5ú Feabhra, dúirt urlabhraí an INTO láithreach go seafadh siad in aghaidh beartas na roinne le scoileanna, go háirithe i mBéal Feirste, a chóimheas.

Tá tugtha le fios ag an Roinn Oideachais do roinnt scoileanna go gcaithfidh siad suas go naonúr oide a chur chun bealaigh roimh an chéad scoilbhliain eile i Mí Meán Fomhair. San iomlán caillfear 96 post i mbunscoileanna agus i meánscoileanna i mBéal Feirste.

IONMÁ

Le blianta beaga anuas tá an leghdú i líon na bpáistí ag cur crua ar neart scoileanna sna ceantair náisiúnacha.

ach anois tá cúrsaí éirithe chomh hola sin is go bhfuil lomra in bháis ar thriúr meánscoil — scoil buachaillí sa Charraig Bhán agus dha scoil cállíní i gceantar na bhFáil.

De réir na roinne tá titim an-mhór i ndiaidh theacht ar líon na ndátaí sna meánscoileanna — titim a bhí le sonrú roimhe seo sna bunscoileanna. Dar leis an INTO, áfach, is ionann na gearraidh-siar seo agus ionsaí eile ar chóras oideachais atá faoi léigear ag rialtas na Breataine cheana féin.

FIGIÚRÍ

I Mí Eanáir gach bliain caithfidh gach scoil líon na bpáistí don chéad scoilbhliain eile a mheas agus na figiúirí a chur ar aghaidh chuig an Roinn



Oideachais. Bíonn an méid múinteoir atá an roinn sásta a shólaíodh do gach scoil bunaithe ar na figiúirí sin.

Deir saineolaithe oideachais nach féidir le múinteoirí a bheith ag dúil le seon bhisú i nuimhreacha na bpáistí

go dtí ar a leghad 1990. Tá míle múinteoir cáilithe dífhosaithe sna Sé Chontae cheana féin.

IT IS well nigh impossible to outline the hostile attitude which the Catholic Church, and its hierarchy in particular, has adopted towards Irish republicanism, from 1798 to the present day, without at the same time explaining the internal and external forces which have motivated it.

In the late eighteenth century, Ireland was emerging from an age of persecution which had, since the Protestant Reformation, the Williamite Wars and the introduction of the Penal Laws a century earlier, branded it a crime to preach or practise the religion of most Irish people.

That persecution had been prompted less on grounds of hostility towards the Catholic religion than by the very real economic interests which the Protestant colonists had won after successive plantations, and the very real fear the British had of Jacobite plots (i.e. efforts by the dispossessed Catholic Church and their wealthy laity in Ireland and England, with the support of Catholic France, to restore the Stuart dynasty to the throne of England).

As the Jacobite threat faded in the late eighteenth century and as the political, social and economic ascendancy of Protestantism was, by then, secured, there was no longer a need for blatantly anti-Catholic legislation.

Gradually the Penal Laws were repealed and the Catholic clergy who had, for a century, been 'on the run' and receiving their education abroad, were now able to preach openly and receive ordination in Ireland.

The Royal College of St Patrick's at Maynooth, County Kildare, was founded and incorporated by law in June 1795. It was opened to clerical students the following October. Initially, the college received a parliamentary grant of £8,000, which was increased to £10,000 in February 1798. Official attitudes had, undoubtedly, altered, due in no small part to the Catholic Church's stated hostility to the French Revolution.

LOYALTY

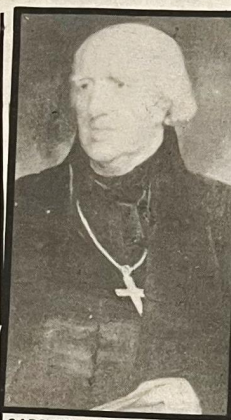
A further factor was the unquestionable loyalty which the Hierarchy demonstrated in its recruitment of bishops, a loyalty restated at a synod on September 14th 1808, when they resolved:

"That the Roman Catholic prelates pledge themselves to adhere to the rules by which they have been hitherto guided, viz., to recommend to his Holiness (for appointment as bishops) only such persons as are of impeccable loyalty."

As a defender of the existing social order which was also rigidly hierarchical in structure, the Catholic Church could safely be regarded not as a threat, but as an increasingly sound investment by the British. Both shared the same interest in opposing the principles of liberty and equality enshrined in the revolutions which had taken place in America and France and for which republicans were preparing to fight.

At the outbreak of the United Irish Rebellion in 1798, therefore, the Catholic Church in Ireland had obvious (if inexcusable) ideological and practical reasons for opposing it.

In his history of this period, John Mitchel commented that "from the autumn of 1797 the Roman Catholics, first in the North, and afterwards successively throughout the kingdom, published addresses and resolutions expressive of their horror of the principles of the United Irishmen, and pledging themselves to be loyal and zealous in the defence



● ARCHBISHOP TROY

and support of the King and Constitution".

CONTROL

These addresses were orchestrated by the Catholic Hierarchy (particularly Archbishop Troy of Dublin) and most clergy who were quick to use the pulpit as a means of political control. A pastoral instruction issued to his "beloved flock" and, in particular, to the "lower order (sic) of the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the Diocese of Cork", by Bishop Moylan, on April 26th 1798, is an example of this.

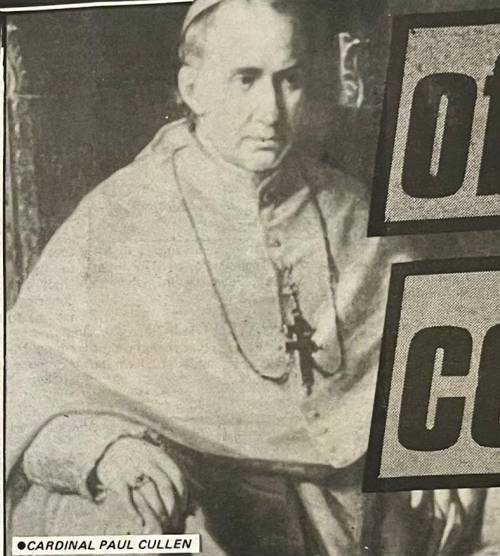
Describing the United Irishmen as "wicked incendiaries... miscreants who inveigle" the people of Ireland "into the paths of infamy and ruin" Moylan urged the people of Cork to be passive in recognition of the "advantages" which British rule bestowed on them. He added:

"These advantages should excite and call forth our gratitude, and this gratitude we should evince by a steady attachment to the constitution and unshaken loyalty to our gracious Sovereign — a Sovereign who has done more for the Roman Catholic Body, and indeed the Kingdom in general, than any of his predecessors."

Even in Wexford (indeed, especially in Wexford) the heart of rebellion in the southern counties, the Catholic Church was almost universally hostile to the United Irishmen.

From many parishes throughout the county, priests organised declarations similar to the one sent from the parish of Killenerin and signed by Fr John Synnot PP, which said:

"We, the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the parish of Killenerin in the Barony of Gorey, and County of Wexford, do think it our duty to come forward at this crisis of internal disturbance, thus publicly to declare our unalterable attachment to his sacred Majesty, King George the Third, and we do hereby declare, and in the most solemn manner pledge ourselves to support, with our lives, fortunes and influences, His Majesty's happy government, established amongst us, deter-



● CARDINAL PAUL CULLEN

mined as we are to escort ourselves for the suppression of rebellion and sedition."

ATTACHMENT

One further address deserves to be quoted since it was signed by, amongst others, 29 doctors of divinity including Rev Peter Flood DD, president of the Royal College of St Patrick's at Maynooth, on May 30th 1798. Again, declaring their "firm attachment" to the throne and constitution "under which we have the happiness to live", these clerics began by recognising that they still suffered "restrictions" but then said:

"We reject with indignation any idea of removing the restrictions, under which we still labour, by means of foreign invasion, or any other step inconsistent with the known laws of the land. We prefer, without hesitation, our present state to any alteration thus obtained."

This then was the stated attitude of the overwhelming majority of the Catholic clergy in 1798. Indeed a number of priests, including Fr Thomas Barry of Mallow in County Cork, acted as informers for the British. After the insurrection, Fr Barry drew a yearly pension of £100 from the British government as a reward. But he too was acting on the instructions of his superiors who, like Archbishop Troy, believed it a priest's duty to inform the authorities of imminent attacks by the United Irishmen where they knew of them.

When the rebellion was put down, a number of contemporary accounts were written by Protestant and virulently anti-Catholic commentators, the best known being Richard Musgrave. They used the role of the few priests who did support the United Irishmen to imply that the Catholic Church as a body had done so.

VINDICATE

But Musgrave was quickly answered by Bishop Caulfield of Wexford, who, in a letter sent to vindicate himself and the Roman Catholic clergy of the county from the charge of complicity in the rebellion of 1798, said:

"I have good cause to know, and to declare to the world, that if popish or parish priests of the County of Wexford had possessed that degree of authority or influence attributed to them, there would have been no rebellion in that county, or if they retained or obtained such influence after the rebellion broke out, then respective flocks would have laid down their arms and returned to their respective homes, and to their allegiance to their King and government..."

And in a second edition of this letter of 'vindication' he pointed out how, during the rebellion, the "Catholic prelates and clergy" had been "jealously exhorting" the people to be obedient "to that much-revered monarch, under whose gracious auspices a sanctuary of education (Maynooth) was opened for them in the bosom of that beloved country, from which the hard policy of preceding times excluded them."

The fear of the Catholic Hierarchy that they might be banished once again is obviously implied, if not stated, throughout these statements. But Bishop Caulfield's letter is interesting also in that it acknowledges, then as now, that many Irish people will not have their policies dictated to them from the pulpit.

Despite attempts by anti-Catholic commentators to discredit the Catholic Church in the eyes of the British government, and despite the fondly-believed mythology of many Irish nationalists that exceptions like Fr Murphy



of Kilcormack were representative of clergy, any serious examination of the role of the Catholic Hierarchy and most clergy in the 1798 Rebellion will show that they not only opposed it, but that they supported the "legitimacy" of British rule with a total and sickening servility.

ADDRESS

Nor did the attitude change after the Act of Union (which the Catholic Hierarchy supported) as is illustrated in the text of an address delivered to the Catholics of Cloyne and Ross (and read in the Irish from the altars so that the 'lower orders' might understand) by Bishop Coppinger in late August 1803.

Referring to the rebellion of that month which had been led by Robert Emmet, Bishop Coppinger said:

"The most inattentive among us cannot be struck with the fate of these insatiable people who, of these insatiable people who have suffered (allowed) themselves to be deceived by the empty sound of Gallic liberty and Gallic equality, the treacherous passwords employed by hell ap-

ON FRIDAY, February 1st, the Catholic Bishop of Kilmore, Dr Francis McKiernan, condemned the IRA attack in Derrylin, County Fermanagh, earlier that day in which a UDR soldier was shot dead. He was joined in his condemnation by two Catholic priests in Derrylin parish.

Earlier this month the Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor, Cahal Daly, urged nationalists to support 'constitutional methods' to achieve justice.

These are but two recent examples of the sustained hostility which many Catholic prelates and clergy have directed against the Republican Movement over the past fifteen years.

In this article, Jack Madden examines the historical basis of this hostility over the century between 1798 and 1898, revealing that political, social and economic factors, as much as any supposedly moral opposition to violence, have motivated it.

In referring to the Catholic Church, this article does not include the laity, nor even all priests and religious, many of whom have stood by their people against the institutional violence which has forced rebellion in Ireland over the centuries.

the remainder of his life in exile in America.

Cardinal Paul Cullen, who represented both the moral and political conservatism of the new era, and its authoritarianism, refused to allow the body of the dead rebel into Dublin's Marlboro' Street Cathedral where it was to lie in state.

As the remains were removed instead to the Mechanic's Institute, a Dublin priest, Fr Lavelle, not only circulated copies of a letter denouncing Cardinal Cullen's decision, but also delivered the oration at the funeral of Bellew McManus on November 10th.

From that day on, Fr Lavelle was to prove the single most formidable opponent in the career of Cardinal Cullen who, in a letter dated November 16th 1861, wrote:

"Some lunatic decided to bring the remains home to arouse a revolutionary spirit, and a committee of Protestants, Catholics and people of no religion was formed... There was a large funeral, mostly artisans and mechanics; the clergy and Catholics of standing abstained".

And, in a further letter dated November 29th, he asked how he could have acted differently given that the funeral "was intended as a declaration in favour of the rebellion of 1848" and had he allowed it would he not be "thus giving sanction to revolutionary principles which are destroying religion everywhere they prevail?"

ATTACK

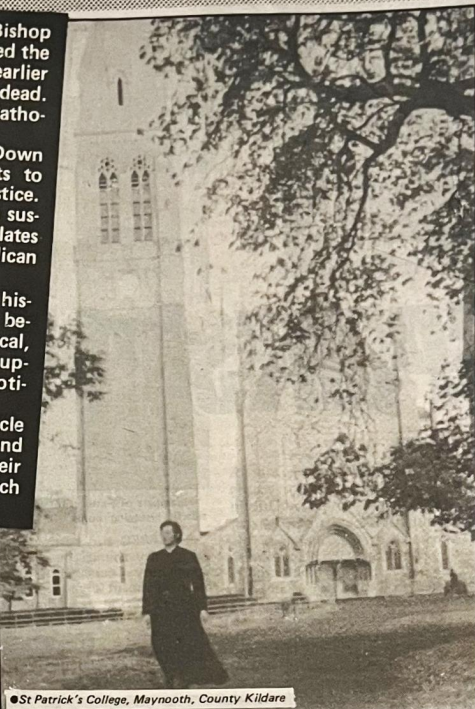
Nor was the infamous dictum of Bishop Moriarty of Kerry that "Hell is not hot enough, nor eternity long enough to punish such miscreants" the only attack launched against the Fenians by a cleric. Virtually all of the Catholic Hierarchy and most of the clergy united in condemnation of what Cardinal Cullen called "a compound of folly and wickedness, wearing the mask of patriotism to make dupes of the unwary... the work of a few fanatics, wicked enough to jeopardise others in order to promote their own selfish views..."

Just as in 1798 and today, we find the 'godfather' theory being used to absolve the 'mindless masses' of being able to form their own views. And Cardinal Cullen introduced another tactic of the Hierarchy when he decreed on October 10th 1865:

"All who join in such societies are excommunicated, and cannot be absolved as long as they continue to be connected with them."

Excommunicated or not, Fenianism grew to the extent that, in 1869, the Bishop of Birmingham beavalled in a letter:

"I am in hot water. For two years past there has been a Fenian conspir-



●St Patrick's College, Maynooth, County Kildare

acy in this place to alienate the Irish people from me. Various schemes have been tried... It is doing great mischief in alienating the poor flock from its shepherd. I must put out a pastoral, both strong and striking, warning the poor people against these wolves, and that, of course, will bring more heat."

DENOUNCING

Other bishops were, however, more careful than the paranoid Bishop of Birmingham in denouncing Fenianism. On March 23rd 1867, for instance, The Nation newspaper published an address by Archbishop Leahy who, like Bishop Cahal Daly today, recognised that injustice did exist, but asked the people to "trust that the growing liberality of the statesmen of England, and the sense of justice as well as the sympathies of the English people" would redress their grievances.

And in a vein remarkably similar to that used by Bishop Daly recently, he continued:

"Let us seek a redress of our grievances, not by an appeal to arms... but by the peaceable constitutional means which all good men can approve, and which deserve the benison of heaven."

Even constitutionalism could warrant the occasional belt of a crozier, however, as was demonstrated by the Catholic Bishop of Derry in January 1871 when he denounced the Home Rule movement of Isaac Butt.

Property rights were equally defended by the Hierarchy and the agrarian agitation of the Land League was attacked by Archbishop McCabe repeatedly. And it would be impossible here to detail the tirade of abuse levelled against Charles Stuart Parnell after the Kitty O'Shea controversy and his subsequent death. But through this, as through the condemnation of Fenianism, the mass of poor Irish people were still prepared to differ from their pastors in their political views.

FULL CIRCLE

By 1898, even sections of the Catholic Hierarchy could applaud the United Irishmen, and it is at this point that the first full circle was completed, the point at which the deeds of yesterday's heroes could be safely excused while at the same time warning against those same methods being used in the context of the here and now.

On February 21st 1898, Bishop Glancy of Elphin delivered a Lenten pastoral in which he stated:

"We are celebrating the centennial commemoration of those men who, driven to rebellion by the unrelenting

tyranny of the government of the time, sacrificed their lives in a hopeless struggle for liberty; and their example, intelligible and perhaps justifiable in the circumstances in which they were placed, will be cited to inspire others, who can have no similar justification, to an imitation of their conduct..."

"Let us remind you then... that all oath-bound secret societies are anathematised by the Church, and that their members incur the penalty of excommunication..."

"Instead, let us command to you the open methods of constitutional action, which alone have proved successful in the past, or can advance our national interest in the future."

That the mythology which surrounds the role of the Catholic Church in 1798 was already widely believed a century later was demonstrated in the media. The Irish News, for example, devoted an editorial on May 24th 1898, to the 1798 centenary commemoration in Keady, County Armagh. It said:

"Not the least appropriate element in a most successful commemoration was the presence of several of the patriotic clergy of the district, a proof if such were wanting, that today, as in '98, the Irish priest is to be found shoulder to shoulder with his people in many good and patriotic causes."

TIRADE

But not all clergy were so prepared to change their spots. One of these was the Jesuit priest, Father Hayden, who launched a tirade from the pulpit against "those who were openly showing their sympathy with adultery (Parnell) and suicide (Wolfe Tone) and other crime." They were, he added, "taking their choice on the side of the devil".

By the end of the nineteenth century, the basis upon which the Catholic Church, and its hierarchy in particular, would view the revolutionary period ahead, was already firmly laid — support for the status quo, and, where grievances existed, support for reform by constitutional methods only. These, plus support for the rights of property, were to be the 'principles' upon which each situation would be judged.

That some bishops and priests differed from these official attitudes, continued to be the case, and it is a tribute to these individuals that they have stood by the oppressed despite the censure of their superiors. Their contribution and indeed an analysis of the role of the Catholic Church from 1916 onwards is another day's work.

ency
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mnation



●Hand-to-hand fighting in Wexford during the 1798 Rebellion

ainst the altar, the throne and the peace of society."

Besides the restoration of the Catholic Church, the repeal of the Penal Laws had allowed the emergence of the Catholic professional class which was personified in Daniel O'Connell. Although monarchist, they craved the political and economic advantages which the Act of Union had denied them.

With the passage of Catholic Emancipation, the Hierarchy became a mirror image of that class, its interests and its demands, but the Catholic Church did not, as yet, reflect Irish Catholic society as a whole.

That was to change radically in the wake of the Great Famine when the huge and generally anti-authoritarian labouring and small farmer population was virtually wiped out.

As pressure on land diminished, larger farmers were able to increase their holdings, and their influence, as an emerging middle class. With their counterparts in the towns, they formed a morally-conservative bulwark in Irish society. Politically, they ranged from

nationalist in the countryside to monarchist in the towns.

While the Hierarchy still largely reflected the upper-middle and professional Catholics, the diocesan clergy was recruited from the new middle class. The sons and daughters of the working class still found a niche within the structure of the Church but this was mainly within the missionary orders of priests and nuns.

DIVERGENCE

The divergence between militant republicanism and constitutional nationalism which emerged in Irish society was, naturally, seen in the Catholic Church, where priests more readily distanced themselves from the political pronouncements of their superiors than had been the case in the past.

Controversy was inevitable, therefore, and it came in October 1861 when the remains of Terence Bellew McManus were brought to Cork harbour. Bellew McManus, a Liverpool merchant, had joined the 1848 Rebellion, was deported to a penal colony from which he escaped and spent

GARDA SPOIL- SPORTS

BY SIOBHAN O'MALLEY

AN EFFORT by residents of Tallaght to provide some facilities for young people has been destroyed by Dublin County Council, backed up by gardai.

At 6am on Wednesday morning, February 6th, county council workers removed two temporary dressing-rooms from a football pitch in Fettercairn estate, Tallaght, County Dublin. The two containers were bought by the committee of the Fettercairn Schoolboy Football Club (FSFC), and the Fettercairn AFC, to replace dressing-rooms which were burned down last October.



● Members of Fettercairn soccer club, including chairperson John Noonan (far right), pictured outside the changing rooms

The FSFC had been negotiating with the county council through the Tallaght Community Council, and were told that no replacement dressing-rooms would be provided for at least four years. They bought two containers from CIE, costing £600, raising the money locally and with help from the local AFC Seniors.

When a crane and a lorry arrived in the early hours of Wednesday morning, local

residents spontaneously came out to prevent the removal of the containers. They blocked the road to stop the lorry leaving, but were attacked by a large force of at least 20 gardai who hurled people across the road.

BRUISES

There were many women and children in the crowd of protestors, and several

received bumps, bruises and cuts. One local man had to get hospital treatment for an injured shoulder.

The committee of the FSFC visited the county council offices in Parnell Square, Dublin, later on Wednesday and met with Donal O'Neill, principal officer of the Parks and Environment Department. "The action of the county council in removing the temporary dressing-rooms is even more incomprehensible after this meeting," said Paddy Bligh, PRO for FSFC.

The delegation were told that the council "agreed with areas providing their own facilities" but that "on a point of principle" the containers had to be removed.

The delegation, which also included Willie Lynch, secretary of the club, Fran Buckley, treasurer, and John Noonan, chairperson, were assured that the containers will be replaced within seven days, after consultation with the committee.

UNNECESSARY

The whole incident, says the committee, was an example of unnecessary bureaucratic heavy-handedness and could have been avoided if there had been open communication between them, the Tallaght Community Council and the county council.

Tallaght Sinn Féin, in a statement issued on Wednesday afternoon, said:

"Sinn Féin supports the people of Fettercairn in their action in providing their own facilities and congratulates the Fettercairn Schoolboy Football Club on their work for the young people of the area. We condemn the brutal tactics of the gardai, in particular the assault by male gardai on women engaged in peaceful protest."



PORTLAOISE PROTESTS

BY SIOBHAN O'MALLEY

AN EXCELLENT RESPONSE to the campaign on behalf of the prisoners in Portlaoise has been reported from Dungan-

non. The recently-formed committee of the Portlaoise Prisoners Relatives Action Committee in the town collected signatures on the petition and displayed a miniature of the visiting-box in Irish Street, Dunganon, during the week before Christmas, and all local leaders in the community were canvassed on the prisoners' behalf.

The process was repeated in Coalisland, where a demonstration was held in the town square at New Year. Mrs Bell, a member of the Dunganon committee, spoke at a meeting in Bellaghy on January 21st and outlined the conditions in the prisons and distributed leaflets.

Twelve people were arrested after the blocking of Lifford Bridge on January 7th. The protest, in support of the Portlaoise prisoners' demands, was part of a vigorous campaign in Donegal. After the blocking of the bridge, the protestors marched to the local garda barracks.

The twelve, only two of whom appeared in court, have been fined £150 each, with seven days to pay, or two months imprisonment.

PICKET

The following day, January 8th, a white-line picket was held on Lifford Bridge and leaflets have been distributed all over the area. Fine Gael deputy Paddy Harte's house was picketed on Thursday, January 10th, with 30 people loudly demanding support for the prisoners' demands.

Lifford Bridge was again blocked on Friday, January 25th, by over 100 people, followed by a march on the garda barracks and the Free State army camp and on Monday 28th, a picket was held outside the premises where Donegal County Council were meeting. Leaflets were distributed and a model of the prison visiting-box shown.

The Dúndalk branch of the Portlaoise Prisoners Relatives Action Committee held the first of many planned

protests, to highlight conditions in the prison, on Saturday, January 26th. A large crowd of relatives, friends and supporters of the prisoners and their demands demonstrated at the post office in Clanbrassil Street in Dúndalk with placards. Leaflets were distributed to passersby.

Four members of the Dublin PPRAC ran onto the pitch at half-time during the Free State/Italy soccer match at Dalymount Park in Dublin on Tuesday, February 5th. They carried a banner demanding an end to brutality in Portlaoise Prison, and managed to evade the gardai for several minutes before being forcibly ejected from the grounds.

STATEMENT

Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin MP for West Belfast, issued a statement on Wednesday, February 6th, commenting on the intervention of Terry Waite, the aide to the Archbishop of Canterbury in England, in the case of British prisoners in Libya.

"I would like to congratulate Terry Waite on his successful securing of the release of four British prisoners from Libya."

"Perhaps Mr Waite would now consider turning his attention to the plight of Irish prisoners in jails in Britain."

"At present there are 49 Irish prisoners in British jails who are seeking repatriation to prisons in the six counties."

"Repatriation would end the hardship at present being experienced by the families of these prisoners, who have to travel from Ireland. Obviously, due to expense, the prisoners receive visits very infrequently, therefore, for humanitarian reasons, they are justified in seeking repatriation."

"As you are probably aware, British prisoners, convicted here, have been invariably transferred to Britain to be closer to their families. Surely, the same grounds apply to Irish prisoners in Britain."



Youth jobs attacked

THE TRANSFER of the £7.25 million collected last year through the youth employment levy, to help fund the seriously underfinanced education sector in the twenty-six counties, has been condemned by Fianna Éireann (Republican Youth).

Although money raised from Irish workers under the 1% levy was intended to create jobs, the Coalition has now said that it will use the cash in its Department of Education. This can only be to put a gloss on the savage cutbacks which it has made in education spending in recent years.

But as youth unemployment soars, from 67,000 last year to 72,000 now, the Coalition's transfer of funds will mean a 10% cutback in the finance allocated to youth training and job creation.

HIDING

Such schemes, which are used as a source of cheap labour and as a means of hiding the real unemployment figures, are not being phased out, however. In fact the Coalition, under its

'National' Plan, intends to extend such schemes to older unemployed people, again as a means of concealing the true level of unemployment.

In a statement condemning the recent transfer of resources, Fianna Éireann says:

"This is just one more measure in a budget which will mean increased unemployment and decreased living standards for those who can least afford it."

"It is, however, no surprise, coming from a government whose plan for economic 'progress' has made 50,000 more people unemployed than when they took office in 1982. That plan depends, at least in part, on 21,000 mainly young people emigrating over the next three years. With 13,000 emigrating annually as it is, they must be confident of reaching their quota."

mála poist

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, An Phoblacht/Republican News, 31/53 Falls Road, Dublin, or 44 Parson's Square, Dublin. Letters should be written as clearly as possible, preferably on one side of paper only. Names and addresses should always be included, even when not for publication.

Disturbing incidents

A Chara,
Some disturbing incidents concerning the RUC and British army have been reported by residents to the Afionad (Advice Centre), Falls Road. Sinn Féin feel it is important that these incidents are brought to light, in order that people will be cautious in any future dealings with these crown forces.

The first incident reported occurred on Friday, January 18th, about 4 o'clock in the Clonard area, when many children were returning from school. As one resident put it, "women and children were subjected to a Russian roulette-style game". Soldiers on either side of the street pointed their rifles at one another and cocked them repeatedly. These antics clearly showed a typical lack of regard for women and children.

The second incident reported concerned the RUC, who were contacted by a worried parent in the Clonard area, whose young child had been missing for a number of hours. The RUC acted immediately, swamping the area under the pretence of searching for the missing child, quite obviously using the incident to gather information on residents. The child was eventually found, but not by the RUC, who were more concerned to stop and 'P' check passers-by.

Sinn Féin once again ask people to take note of these incidents, to report any future incidents and most importantly to be careful if you ever have any dealings with the RUC or British army.

Mairéad Ní Daithí,
OCP Sinn Féin,
Ceantar Bun Na bhFáil,
Beal Feirste.

Tory 'democracy'

A Chara,
Employees in Irish banks in Britain are into their third month of a pay dispute with their employers. They have been offered 5% which has been rejected twice by ballot voting. The banks are now threatening to use the British anti-trade union laws to force another ballot. It seems as if Tory 'democracy' is catching on: if a ballot goes against you then you call for another, until you get the required result.

During the pit strike the miners' leaders were attacked by the Coal Board and the government for not calling a national ballot, 'this is our democratic way', they bleated, but when the pit deputies voted to strike by a massive majority, the minister concerned, Peter Walker, called for a further ballot, as did that lover of democracy, the Daily Express, which said the vote was illegal anyway.



OBJECTIVES

A Chara,

The debate on 'Objectives' has, in recent weeks, contained a number of letters that distort the political positions of the Socialist Workers Movement. I would like to reply to these criticisms on behalf of the SWM.

We are accused of not recognising the distinction between the nationalism of the oppressed and the nationalism of the oppressor. This is pure nonsense. Every revolutionary socialist organisation makes this distinction. The SWM has always been on the same side as those who fight imperialism in Ireland — whatever differences we have with the nationalist leadership of the struggle.

Now the problem with this is that nationalist politics have proved themselves singularly incapable of solving the national question in Ireland. The reason is simple. Not all classes in Ireland have an interest in seeing the border destroyed. The Irish capitalist class have no longer any fundamental conflict of interest with British imperialism. Only Irish workers have an interest in and the power to lead the struggle against imperialism. But republicanism, by appealing to all the Irish people, refuses to recognise this reality. Despite its left turn, it holds to the possibility of an all-class alliance to defeat imperialism.

In the past, the prospect of an all-class alliance meant that republicans went along with de Valera's slogan that

'Labour must Wait' — even to the extent of establishing republican courts to 'discipline' the landless and workers who had taken over their factories. The result of the political defeat of the workers movement by nationalist ideas was the establishment of the miserable little state that is the twenty-six counties.

Today, we are again told that the struggle for socialism has to be postponed until the border has first been removed. And again we have to say that British imperialism will not be defeated in Ireland until the mass of Irish workers have organised themselves for the task. Once mobilised for that fight, they are not simply going to apply the brakes and rest at the stage of a capitalist Eire Nua. That is why rather than downgrading the

national question in Ireland, the SWM stands with Connolly when he argued: "The Irish working class must emancipate itself and in emancipating itself it must, perforce, free its country."

The second point our critics accuse us of is internationalism. Of that we plead guilty. However, contrary to Philip Ferguson's claim, we have never said "you cannot have a revolution in Ireland until international capitalism is destroyed". This is the usual caricature. The fact is that we believe in fighting for a workers' republic in Ireland whatever the conditions on an international scale.

Another aspect of our internationalism is our close fraternal links with revolutionary socialist organisations in other countries — the Socialist Workers Party in Britain being one. Philip Ferguson makes the preposterous charge that "they have completely capitulated to the pressure of British imperialism". The SWP is well able to defend its own record.

We have argued that there have been major changes in the Southern economy over the last two decades. Namely, there has been a shift away from dependence on British investment towards mainly American capital; that the South's economy has become more integrated into the world economy; that, in the process, both the Irish ruling class and the Irish working class have been strengthened.

We have never argued that this means that Irish socialists should downgrade the national question — only that it is fought in different conditions to the past. The Irish ruling class have even less reason to oppose Britain than they did in the past; the Irish working class even more reason to take on the struggle against the border on the basis of socialist rather than purely republican politics.

Kieran Allen,
SWM,
Dublin.



British miners collect in Dublin for their strike fund

Austin Rover car workers were on strike for two weeks last year over a pay claim, they came to that decision at a mass meeting. The unions are now being taken to court because management claim that the vote was illegal.

The Republican Movement

once, so restrictions at voting booths were introduced.

This is the democracy that Thatcher defends! If things aren't going your way then change the rules. Rule Britannia, Britannia Waives the Rules!

Liam Dollan,
Glasgow.

Portlaoise attacks

A Chara,

In a recent address to the annual dinner of the St Patrick's Institution Social Club in Dublin, Mr Oliver J. Flanagan, Leinster House deputy for Laois/Offaly, stated that he must defend the integrity of prison officers who "have been the subjects of unwarranted attacks by various individuals and organisations", whose aim it was, he said, to smear prison officers.

I would like to refer Mr Flanagan to the last annual conference of the POA where members openly stated that their superior prison officers had ordered them to beat up prisoners in Portlaoise on October 30th 1983. To quote from one delegate to the conference:

"If Hitler wanted generals



OLIVER J. FLANAGAN

he would find plenty in Portlaoise today. After the war the Nazis said they were only doing their duty. That is what the administration in Portlaoise is saying today."

Perhaps Mr Flanagan could re-consider exactly who it is that is regularly subjected to unwarranted attacks?

Marie Kehoe,
Cabra,
Dublin.

An Gaeilge

A Chara,

Blionn a lán le léitheantais seo mar gheall ar an 'Irish Dimension' — ó bhéal polaitoiriú ó thuaidh is ó dheas. Áit amháin, áfach, nach nathnóir an rud mar sin, ná an campa gáibhinn seo. Bhuel, táimid in áit iargúta anseo — nach bhfuil?

Um Nollag, agus na cártaí beannachta ó sáolach chug na cinn Poblachtánacha, cuireadh bac ar cártaí a foilsíodh ag an Bhunscoil Ghaelach (as Gaeilge a bhí siad ar ndóigh). An leithscéal oifigiúil ná nach nglactar le hábhar (cártaí, litreacha, leabhair srl.) i dtéan-gacha lasachta.

Mar dúirt mé — is áit iargúta é Lios na Gcearrbhach agus tá seans ann nár chuala bárdas an phríosún fós go bhfuil an scoil cheanna ag fáil deontas airgid ón stát.

B'fhidir dá gcuirf cogar ghlas seirbhíoch éigean in Oifig Thuaisceart Éireann bheadh réiteach ar an scéal. See, táimid féinnte go mbeoís do na bardaí anseo go bhfuil aithne mhath acu ar thoir-eann na Bunscoil Gaeilge agus go bhfuil sé soiléir nach daoine ó na tíortha thar lear iad. Go deimhin ní siad ach deich míle i gcéin.

Lorcán Mac Eoin,
Na Blianta-H,
An Chéil Fhada.

Half the problem

A Chara,

I would like to take issue with the letter from Marc O'Leachain (AP/RN January 24th).

It is people like him with his reactionary green purist views that would keep Sinn Féin a backward political party. He goes on about a "thirty-two county Irish-speaking and culturally aware Ireland being the answer to all our problems".

Can I ask Marc O'Leachain how this alone would benefit the people who support the Republican Movement i.e. the working class, from the tyranny of the capitalist system?

It is about time people like him woke up to the fact that there is a powerful mafia of big farmers and businessmen running this country — for their own self-interest, these are the people who decide what income tax they will or won't pay to the Free State government, which has not got the guts to either make them pay up, or confiscate some — or better still all — of their cash or land. Only an Ireland free of the scourge of private enterprise can achieve the results for which so many of our members have laid down their lives.

The Brits are only half the problem, private enterprise and the big farmers are the other, and no amount of culture will make them change their ways, and a thirty-two county socialist republic can do that.

Colm O'Reilly,
Stillorgan,
Dublin.

Gallagher in hospital

EDDIE GALLAGHER, who has been on hunger-strike since January 6th, was moved from Portlaoise to the Curragh Military Hospital last week.

Another prisoner, Pascal Holmes (who, like Gallagher, comes from Donegal), joined Gallagher on hunger-strike on January 13th. The two men are demanding 52 open visits per year, an end to strip-searching and improved medical facilities. They also want the length of time served on life sentences to be regularised and parity with other prisoners on the granting of parole.

Gallagher is serving a 20-year sentence imposed by the Special Court in 1976 and Holmes was sentenced to eight years in 1982.

Section 31 protest



ABOUT 20 members of Tallaght Sinn Féin picketed in the Priory grounds, Tallaght village, on Thursday night, January 31st, where RTE's *Today Tonight* was doing a live programme on the previous day's Budget and reactions of groups and individuals in the area to it.

The protest was against Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act, which prohibits Sinn Féin members from speaking on RTE radio or television.

A statement was issued by John Noonan, community worker and Sinn Féin local election candidate for the area. He said:

"Because RTE goes along with Section 31 our members are denied the right to have their views heard."

"As many of the people whom Sinn Féin represents in Tallaght fall into the bracket of those worst hit by the Budget, we feel that the views of a significant number of Tallaght people are being denied by this piece of undemocratic legislation."

New advice centre



DUBLIN NORTH-EAST Sinn Féin's mobile advice centre is now in operation at the Northside Shopping Centre every Saturday from 11am to 2pm.

Sinn Féin personnel will be available to help people with any problems they may have with social welfare benefits, unemployment, PAYE/PRSI, water rates, housing, maintenance, drug abuse etc.

THE American Indian Movement (AIM) delegation completed its tour of Ireland on Tuesday this week, after a series of meetings and concerts North and South of the border.

On Thursday and Friday last week, the delegation completed its tour of the North with visits to republican prisoners in Long Kesh and Armagh jails. In Armagh they met Mary McArdle and Anne Moore, while in Long Kesh Finbarr McKenna and Eugene McCormack impressed their visitors with an in-depth knowledge of the history and present-day predicament of the American Indian.

Moving to Dublin on Sunday, the delegation went to the Garden of Remembrance where Amos Owens, spiritual leader of the Dakota nation, conducted the wedding ceremony of Bob Kelly and Lisa Brandenburg.

One member of the delegation, Yvonne Swan, addressed a public meeting on Sunday evening, as well as doing a radio interview which was transmitted on RTE's *Women Today* on Monday.

AWARENESS

At a press conference in Dublin's Clarence Hotel, on Monday, the AIM delegation described their Irish visit as "a fact-finding tour, to create a cultural and educational awareness of one another's struggle for freedom and to deepen our understanding of the Irish people's centuries-old struggle for freedom and self-determination".

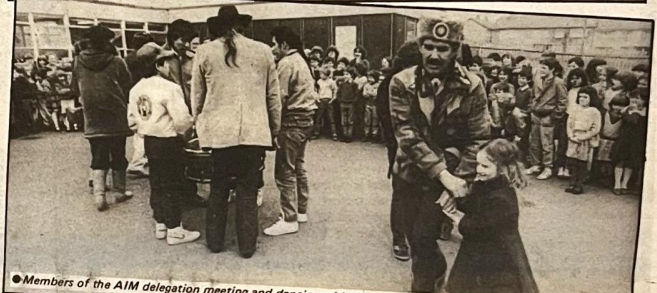
Asked whether he condemned violence, the leader of the delegation, Clyde Bellacourt, replied that he condemned the violence of British terrorism on Irish soil.

As a further expression of the cultural exchange which was a highlight of this visit, the AIM delegation visited the all-Irish speaking Scoil Santain in Tallaght, where they spoke to and played music for the teachers and pupils who joined them in dancing.

Later that evening, the delegation participated in a concert at Culturilann na h-Eireann in Monkstown. There, 250 people listened to the American Indian music, and to contributions from well-known Dublin folk artists.

The delegation left early on Tuesday, having re-affirmed their readiness to maintain contact between the AIM and the Republican Movement.

PRISON VISITS BY AMERICAN INDIANS



●Members of the AIM delegation meeting and dancing with the children of Scoil Santain, Tallaght



LEICESTER RALLY

OVER 1,000 people attended a rally in Leicester, England, on Sunday, February 3rd, to mark the 13th anniversary of Derry's Bloody Sunday.

However, a planned march through the mainly black Highfields area of the city, where the organisers anticipated strong support, had been banned two days earlier on the pretext of threatened counter-marches by British fascist groupings.

During the rally, messages of support were read from individual Labour Party branches and from Leicester Trades Council, which condemned the ban as yet another attempt to maintain silence on

Britain's occupation of Ireland. Similar messages were received from striking Leicestershire miners, and from the Nottingham TUC.

Speaking at the indoor rally, Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn drew parallels between crown forces repression in the six counties and police tactics against the striking miners in Britain.

The other main speaker was Sinn Féin Councillor Sean McKnight, who, placing British repression in Ireland, including Bloody Sunday, in the con-

text of exploitation worldwide, stressed the need for unity among all peoples struggling against imperialist domination.

STRUGGLES

McKnight referred to the struggles of black and Asian people in Britain and to the American Indians who, historically, he pointed out, were in some cases oppressed by people who had left Ireland to escape repression themselves.

Other speakers at the rally included several representatives of black and Asian groups.

Afterwards, the crowd marched

to Leicester Jail where they held a picket in support of Irish political prisoners, joining with others gathered to support striking miners also held in the prison.

Throughout, the British police maintained a heavy presence, though there was little evidence of the threatened massive National Front presence in the city. Earlier in the day, at a motorway service station near London, a large force of police stood by as the windows of three coaches bound for the rally were smashed by fascists, 17 of whom were eventually arrested.

Fascists and frogspawn

BY AINE MARTIN

"THE POLICY of the British government over the past 16 years and, indeed, over the past 50 to 60 years has been the reunification of Ireland." Bet you didn't know that, eh?

Have we all been fooled as to the real reason for the massive numbers of Brits and the arming to the teeth of the loyalist RUC and UDR?

Enoch Powell, racist bigot and Official Unionist MP, hasn't been fooled. On Tuesday night he was being quizzed by an audience of young people on BBC's *Open to Question* programme when he came out with the above statement — and he kept a straight face!

Powell is a man who prides himself on being accused of consistency and honesty. But he was glibly denying a lot of his racist beliefs that night. He began to lecture the young people on how they'd got him wrong, he was really a nice fellow. He was pedantically informing a young

woman, who had accused him of pursuing racist policies while a member of the British government, that she should make sure to check her sources, when she displayed her source — his own book.

But, of course, this statement was taken out of context, Powell said. Of course.

Women's rights aren't a great favourite of Enoch Powell either. He thinks women don't fit into the system of government because the system was designed by men. Why, he himself knew a woman, a parliamentary secretary he remembered with affection, who said she never felt comfortable at Westminster. What more proof does one need?

Human beings have not, he



ENOCH POWELL

says, sufficiently evolved as yet to have women running the affairs of state. Maybe in another million years?

...

On Saturday night, for no known reason, I found myself watching the *Late Late Show* on RTE1.

Soon I was slumped in my armchair, so mesmerised by the level of inanity being spewed out by all and sundry that I was unable to stir myself to switch it off.

Suddenly, I was jerked out of my stupor on hearing Gaybo introduce 'the Gillespie sisters'. "What's this?" I thought. "Has Uncle Gay gone mad? Has he decided to make his own individual stand against Section 31?" But no, it wasn't Ann and Eileen, but Carmel and Vera, two country-and-western crooners who proceeded to assault my ears with their new



GAY BYRNE

song entitled *Waterford, my home*.

Their feeble attempt to mimic all the worst C & W 'singers', who do a terrible injustice to their home towns by trying to immortalise them in song, was made even more unbearable by their revelation that in younger days they had abandoned the music circuit in England because they were very young and 'very green, being from Ireland'.

With this type of mentality, who needs John Junor?

What with this, the artist who spoke of the sensuality of frogspawn, a 'very deep' discussion concerning the universe and reality which passed totally beneath my comprehension, and having to endure tone-deaf members of the audience 'singing' their greetings to friends and relations, the programme was so bad that, in terms of TV disasters, it defies description.

The only good news to come from the *Late Late* this week was that Gaybo may be leaving these shores, hopefully never to darken them again, if he's offered enough money by the Yanks.

Well, at least somebody wants him.

...

Better, by far, than Gaybo, was the BBC2 programme *Time Watch* on Wednesday, January 30th. This weekly programme examines various features of British history, and last week it looked at the origins of the Special Branch, or the Special Irish Branch (SIB) to be precise.

Time Watch revealed that the SIB was established as a counter-measure to the Fenian Movement in England which was causing severe headaches — with the help of explosives — to Britain's rulers, in the nineteenth century.

Far from bowing to this specialist attention, the Fenians reacted to the SIB by blowing up their headquarters. But the story didn't end there, as *Time Watch* explained. No, indeed. Because the dastardly Fenians had planted a bomb in the public toilet which ran under the SIB headquarters, wasn't it reasonable to suspect that the same might happen in Westminster where Irish people were employed, at that time, in repairing the 'common' loo?

And then again, doesn't this raise all sorts of interesting notions about where the verbal diarrhoea in that establishment began!

film

Once upon a time

BY EDDIE STACK

WELL, here's one that nearly got away. I had been put off going to see *Once upon a time in America*, wrongly as it turned out, by other people's reviews. 'Violent, bloodthirsty rubbish', they cried, 'sexist, misogynist muck', they whined, 'overlong and over the top', they whined. Can a film be all of these and still be a classic? *Once upon a time in America* suggests that it can.

What may do a lot to put some people off is that this particular gangster epic is directed by Sergio Leone, a man who made his reputation directing the spaghetti *Fistful of Dollars* movies. These were called 'spaghetti' movies because the actors in Italy, rather than looking for money for their talents, settled for spaghetti.

Their cheapness ensured that we saw quite a lot of spaghetti movies in the late Sixties where a host of fat, stubble-faced, slobbering Italian actors attempted to speak English while trying to shoot Clint Eastwood. This particular genre of movies also brought us the zoom-close-up: one moment we would see the tiny silhouette of a man riding his horse over the range, within a split-second the camera had zoomed in to reveal a fly crawling into his nose. Yes, Sergio Leone has a lot to answer for.

I must also mention that *Once upon a time in America* has two rape scenes that will please only those wretches who go to the cinema for titillation. The fact that the rapes are supposed to show us the dark side of people we might otherwise have some sympathy for, does not, I think justify their inclusion.

So before I start handing out the laurels, the only thing left to warn you about is the deadly slow place of the film's first half-hour. Wall-

paper doesn't yellow any slower than this.

GANGSTERS

Once upon a time in America is set in three periods of American history, but primarily in the gangster-filled days of the early Thirties with its drug smuggling, prostitution... Al Capone bootlegging and gang warfare (for today leave out Al Capone).

Of the three periods, we begin in the future with Noodles (played by Robert De Niro) wandering around his past, choked, resigned, silent. The film then steps up a gear and we are in the New York docklands of his youth where he hangs out with his gang, all joined together by the bond that comes from being Jewish, being neighbours and being broke.

Within the gang, Noodles has a special relationship with Max and they vow to stick together forever even though we can see the differences between the two straight away (Max has a head full of ambitious schemes; Noodles goes for safer, hence less lucrative, targets).

To complicate things further, Noodles has a crush on the local beauty, an aspiring dancer with ideas well above the station of a humble bar manager's daughter. She further impresses Noodles that he had better get a big slice of the goodies that come with the American Way of Life if he is to have any chance with her.



Max (James Woods) becomes involved in gangland warfare

His ambition spurred on by a mixture of love and randiness, Noodles works hard to make his gang the most prosperous around. Of course, that means conflict with other hoodlums and it is after sav- ing himself from one of them that Noodles kills a policeman. Despite his teenage visage, he gets ten years in the slammer.

CAPERS

When Noodles is released (i.e. the second period of the film) he is met by Max who, snappily dressed, shows how the gang has not been idle in his absence. In fact they are, for one thing, the proud owners of a fleet of hearse, one of which is decorated by the advertising slogan 'Why live when we can bury you for \$49.50'.

The gang then gets back to its good old bad old ways with a number of capers that can be described as successful by their standards. However, Max is starting to have even wilder ideas, including one which calls for knocking off the heavily-guarded Federal Reserve.

Noodles doesn't know how to put this ridiculous idea out of his head, so he enlists the help of Max's girlfriend to come up with a scheme which should put Max in jail for 18 months until he had got the Federal Re-

serve caper out of his system. Unfortunately, however, Noodles' scheme goes badly wrong and Max is killed.

Shattered (we think) Noodles goes to the railway station deposit box where the gang have stashed all their loot over the years. It is, however, full of nothing but old newspapers. Devastated, Noodles takes off for the wilderness where he spends the next thirty years of his life. That is, until a mysterious note brings him home.

By recounting the plot I may give the impression that *Once upon a time in America* is a straightforward film; it is nothing of the sort. The film cuts back and forth between the periods in Noodles' life in a way that leaves nearly everything on screen open to two or three interpretations. Does Noodles' girlfriend love him or somebody else? Was Noodles really devastated by Max's death or not? Is Noodles, ostensibly the slowest intellect of the two friends, really as dumb as he appears?

CORRUPT

Once upon a time in America is about becoming. It shows how kids become gangsters in a society that rewards crime, shows their corrupt drive to the top of the tree and shows how respectable they can look when



A familiar scene — both on screen and off

they get there. This is no innocent liberal film which pretends that all the bad guys are now pushing up the daisies. No, this one says they're all up their alive and kicking.

Noodles begins by peeping at his girlfriend through a keyhole as she strips out of her clothes, ten years later he brutally rapes her. As a gangster who clings to the underbelly of capitalism's rat-race, the director Sergio Leone, seems to be saying that Noodles is just another capitalist poodle venting his anger on a girl who won't become his possession.

It is capitalism's brutalising influence on the Italian Jewish community that is Leone's theme in this picture and he doesn't flinch from showing the audience every grizzly aspect of it.

At almost three-and-a-half hours long, *Once upon a time in America* takes a toll on its audience and, despite its flaws, I'd consider it some sort of masterpiece which takes its theme and audience seriously under the disguise of the shoot-em-up gangster movie.

The final scene, where Noodles grins fatefully at the camera, is one of the most eerie I have ever seen and is open to at least half-a-dozen interpretations. Go and work it all out for yourself.

Imeachtaí

MINI-CHOLÁISTE GAEILGE
(Stúirteoir: Domhnall Ó Lubhlaí)

10am to 5pm Satharn 9u Feabhra
An Sean-Mhuileann
59a Conway
BEAL FEIRISTE
Eaglaith na h-Éire
(Le tuille oíles d'fhéin, déan
teagmháil le Shinn Fáin
aitiúil)

VOLS FITZSIMMONS/
HANLON
COMM-MORATION
(Wreath-lay ceremony)
12 noon Sunday 7th February
Downpatrick
County Down

FRANK STAGG
COMMEMORATION
1.30pm Sunday 10th February
Wakefield Prison
Love Lane
WAKEFIELD
England
Organised by Republican POW
Campaign Committee

CORK/KERRY/WATERFORD
SINN FEIN
COMHAIRLE LIMISTEAR
MEETING
2.30pm Sunday 10th February
Ballypheane Community Centre
CORK

STOP THE STRIP-SEARCHES
IN ARMAGH VIDEO
4pm Sunday 10th February
Divis Community Centre
BELFAST

MAYO LOCAL GOVERNMENT
ELECTION CONVENTION
Sunday 10th February
Welcome Inn Hotel
CASTLEBAR
County Mayo
All Mayo republicans
must attend

PICKET AGAINST
STRIP-SEARCHES
AND PAID-PERJURERS
10-12am Monday 11th February
Crumlin Road Courthouse
BELFAST
Organised by the Stop the
Strip-Searches in Armagh
Committee and People Against
Paid-Perjurers

SINN FEIN
TRADE UNION GROUP
MEETING
8pm Tuesday 12th February
5 Blessington Street
DUBLIN
Everyone welcome

DINNER DANCE
Guest Speaker
8pm Friday 15th February
Rod and Reel Hotel
CAHIRVEEN
County Kerry

CABARET SHOW
Featuring Joe Diamond
8pm Friday 15th February
The Lewins
BALLYFERMOT
Táille £1
Organised by Sinn Féin

SOCIAL
(Music by the Ferryman)
8.30pm Saturday 16th February
Hogan Stand
Clanbrassil Street
DUNDALK
Táille £1
Organised by Dundalk Portlaoise
Relatives Action Committee

PORTLAOISE PRISONERS
RELATIVES ACTION
COMMITTEE MEETING
3pm Sunday 17th February
5 Blessington Street
DUBLIN
Relatives, representatives of
action groups and prisoners
friends are asked to attend

TRALEE SINN FEIN
ADVICE CENTRE
Open 1am to 6pm
Monday to Saturday
2 Moydervall
TRALEE
County Kerry
Phone: Tralee 24339

Deaths of Dinny and Mary Duggan

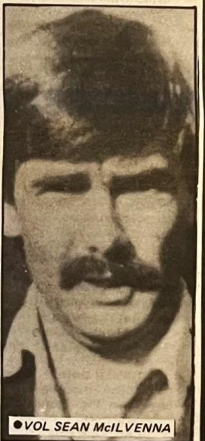
THE DEATHS occurred within hours of each other of Dinny and Mary Duggan on Monday, February 4th, and they were buried together in Crugh Cemetery, County Dublin, on Wednesday.

Age in the Republican Movement since the age of 17, Mrs. Dinny Duggan spent 10 years in prison in England, having been convicted, on St Patrick's Day 1940, of bombings in Manchester and other cities.

The Duggan home was always open to republicans and both Dinny and Mary were involved in the restoration of Kilmainham Jail. Dinny was also an active trade unionist, a member of the Bricklayers Union.

The two Tricolour-draped coffins were taken from Harold's Cross Church in Dublin to Crugh Cemetery on Wednesday, February 6th.

Tributes were paid at the graveside by Joe Cahill, joint-treasurer of Sinn Féin, and by a member of the Bricklayers Union. Among the mourners were several of Dinny's comrades from the '40s.



●VOL SEAN MCILVENNA

Sean McIlvenna

A very successful memorial benefit in aid of the family of Vol Sean McIlvenna, who was killed in action on December 17th 1984, was held on Friday, January 25th, in the Ashley Arms, Dundalk.

In a moving address to the very large gathering, Joe Cahill paid tribute to Sean's courage, determination and dedication to the republican struggle.

If everyone who believes in the cause of Irish freedom strove for it with the determination which Sean McIlvenna showed, then the day of victory would come much sooner, Cahill said. He added that Sean would never ask anyone to do what he would not do himself.

The organisers of this function would like to thank everyone who made it a tribute befitting a man who was liked and admired by all who knew him.

Campaign against sectarianism



●MARTIN GALVIN

A COMPREHENSIVE campaign to tackle sectarian discrimination in the six counties was proposed at a press conference in New York on Monday, February 4th.

New York city Comptroller Harrison J. Goldin, who organised the conference, attacked the sectarian discrimination in employment by American-owned subsidiaries in the North of Ireland and is to issue a report on the systematic pattern of discrimination in these firms. The report will also point out the inadequacies of the Fair Employment Act of 1976.

Goldin's proposal is that the 250 million dollars in shares held in some 15 American firms with subsidiaries in the North should be used to pressure these companies, and the British government, to end sectarian employment practices.

The campaign would organise support for shareholders' resolutions which endorsed anti-discrimination principles and call

upon other municipalities to oppose sectarianism and publicly pressure the British government on the issue. Goldin likened the measures to be taken to the campaign against apartheid in South Africa.

The press conference was attended by representatives from many Irish-American organisations including Irish Northern Aid and the Emerald Societies of various New York public departments, such as the police and fire departments, whose pension funds are invested in some of these companies.

BASIC

Martin Galvin, national publicity director of Irish Northern Aid, said at the press conference:

"Sectarianism is basic to

British colonial rule in Ireland. Goldin's initiative recognises that sectarian discrimination is pervasive and that it is right for Americans to involve themselves in combating this aspect of British rule.

"By documenting the level of sectarian discrimination and applying measures used against South Africa, Goldin will make more Americans aware of the injustices inflicted upon Irish nationalists under British rule and make it more difficult for American companies to subsidise Britain's sectarian system in the North of Ireland.

"Irish Northern Aid is happy to stand with Comptroller Goldin in his initiative because we regard it as another positive step, not only towards ending British sectarianism but also towards the dismantling of British colonial rule under which sectarian discrimination is inherent."

Day parade, because he had talks with loyalists in Belfast, have been firmly denied.

The national director of publicity for Irish Northern Aid, Martin Galvin, has issued a statement saying that they welcomed the opening of dialogue with loyalists and congratulated King for going to Belfast and for the work he had done there.

King had made his position clear, had affirmed his own opposition to British rule but "recognised that loyalists were also cynically manipulated by the British". This was the position espoused by Irish Northern Aid, who, believed that the true interests of all the people of Ireland would be served by a thirty-two county Irish nation, the statement ended.



●PETER KING

Noraid rumour denied

NEWS REPORTS that Irish Northern Aid were considering withdrawing their support from New York lawyer Peter King for Grand Marshal in New York's St Patrick's



Champions of peace

THE NOMINATION of US President Ronald Reagan for the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize is perhaps appropriate given that in his lifetime, A. B. Nobel, after whom the prize is named, amassed a vast fortune through the manufacture and distribution of explosives.

No recognition as champions of peace has been given to two of America's leading black singers and civil rights activists, Harry Belafonte and the late Paul Robeson, however.

Indeed, Belafonte was arrested last Friday, February 1st, while picketing the South African embassy in Washington, a picket which was begun by last year's winner of the peace prize, Bishop Desmond Tutu.

Under US legislation, nearly 1,000 people have been arrested while picketing the South African embassy since November 21st last.

FBI FILES

Also last week it was revealed that lawyers acting for Paul Robeson, who died in 1976, have filed a lawsuit against the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to force them to release files which they have on Robeson.

The Robeson family is claiming that the deceased singer and actor had been disabled by the FBI and British MI5 because of his outspoken support for socialism while on world-wide tours during the Fifties and Sixties.

According to the family, the FBI planned a "drug-induced breakdown" which forced Robeson to live as a recluse from 1964 until his death in 1976.

Withdrawal from EEC

GREENLAND ended its membership of the EEC last Thursday, January 31st, three years after the population of the country voted for withdrawal in a referendum.

Although no longer a member of the EEC, Greenland still retains the right of free access to European markets. Besides this, its economy will benefit financially to the tune of £100 million over the next five years, as payment by the EEC for the right to fish in Greenland waters.

This is the first case of a country withdrawing from the EEC. The administration of Greenland with its 50,000 people will, however, continue to operate under the home rule system of government ceded to it by Denmark, which claims territorial jurisdiction over the huge North Atlantic island.



●ALAN DUKÉS

Buisead Dukes

LE TOMÁS O SE

BHI caint ar bhuisead Alan Dukés le seachtainní anuas. Cheapfadh duine ag éisteach leis an goaint go léir go raibh seans ann go ndeanfai maithes ann do phobal na hÉireann.

Cheapfadh duine flu go raibh speis ag Dukés: gurachas na mbocht. Taispeannann sin go léir an doigh gur feidir le lucht an rialtais dullamag a chur ar dhaoine.

● I dtosach báire is gá a thuiscint nárbh é seo, buisead Dukés, an t-ionann buisead i mbilana. Bíonn buisead nua againn achan lú den tseachtain. Bíonn pingin eile ar seo agus dhá phingin ar síúd i dtreo is nach féidir a bheith cinnte cá mhéad a bheid ar earras ar bith.

Tailí bus agus traenach, tailí leictreachais agus ghaís ag árd gan stad. Má doireann tu an focail 'guat' le duine na laetheanta seo bí ullamh chun gearáin agus mallachtaí a chlois, mar tá an praghas ímthe i dtigh deabhaíl ar fad.

Nuair a shuinn Dukés agus an rialtas síos mar sin cad iad na tuairimí agus na rialacha go mbíonn orthu freastal orthu. I dtús báire is cóir a thuiscint go gceidann an rialtas sa chóras caipitlach. Is ionann an córas caipitlach agus aicme amháin den bpobal a bheith ag déanamh sochair as riachtanaí na beatha na coda eile againn.

Faigheann an rialtas tacaíocht airgid ós na caipitligh mar bhfuilochas ar sin. Mar an gcéanna le Fianna Fáil ar ndóigh. Níl sé i gceist ag ceachtar den dá rogha rialtais atá ann an córas sin a athrú.

Ina dhiaidh sin, ansin teastaíonn uathu a chur in iúl don goid eile againn go bhfuil slad chun ar leas

a dhéanamh. In ainneoin sin is fíor go mbéidh formhór mór an phobail níos boichte ag deirleadh na bilana seo ná mar a bhí slad ag a tús.

Ní gá duit a bheith i do ollamh matamaitice chun teacht ar fhírinne an ráitis sin. Ní gá ach an meidid beag i dtseacht iteach an duine a chur i gcomparáid le sfórúid na bpraghasanna.

Ar ndóigh beidh ualach níos lú le hiompar ag na salbhí de bharr fálú an ráta cánach dós na salbhí. Ach sin go díreach nádúr an chórais caipitlach: na salbhí ag éirí níos salbhe agus na boicht ag éirí níos boichte.

Má tú tú dífhosaithe, má tú tú bocht, má tú tú breoite ní duitse Éire na linne seo. Coinnígh súil san airdeall mar is cinnte go mbéidh lonnaithe níos mó ná anamh ort.

Né gáil, ní glac le h-éadóchas, ná tabhair aghaidh thar leas. Seas agus troid, mar tosaíonn Éire Nua leas.

...the last word...

Lurking about

AN UNINTENTIONALLY amusing set of articles appeared a fortnight ago in the *Irish Times*, written by sycophantic journalist Ed Moloney. It lionised an undercover RUC unit known as the Bessbrook Support Unit, which was the forerunner of the E4A 'shoot-to-kill' squad.

Set up in April 1979 on the orders of Kenneth Newman and surviving for a year, the unit was supposed to establish an RUC presence in the South Armagh area, which was (and still is) under IRA control. The unit was supposed to be made up of super-fit, super-macho tough guys and only 28 members were chosen from 100 volunteers. Due to 'natural wastage' another five members joined later.

Moloney enthused about the toughness of the physical and psychological training of the BSU. The training was on a par with that of the Brits' Parachute Regiment (most of the BSU were ex-Brits). Some members were trained for surveillance and the unit operated undercover at all times.

★ ★ ★

Two operations which the BSU carried out are detailed by Moloney which we can take to be typical.

One was 'Operation Fix-it' which involved a huge area of South Armagh being cleared by hundreds of crown forces so that an observation post could be set up by the BSU. This well-chosen post was not visible from any dwellings and because of bad weather and 'odd light' the BSU members couldn't even make out the registration numbers of cars. This operation — which lasted for a grand total of 12 hours — was judged to be a success.

'Operation Stop It' (where do they get the names?) took place on the night of August 8/9th and involved six BSU men venturing out on a 'lurk/foot-patrol'. [A 'lurk', Moloney explains, is where they take cover in a field and observe the surroundings]. After a few hours 'lurking' about in the dark, the unit was picked up by their colleagues in disguised vehicles. This carry-on was described as a 'qualified success'. 'Success', in RUC parlance, apparently means that you don't get yourself killed.

The BSU were given special weapons and special undercover vehicles, often dressing up in IRA uniforms and running around pretending they were guerrillas. But they were discouraged from engaging in shooting confrontations with the IRA, not surprisingly. However, they did stumble across an active service unit planting a landmine once. After an exchange of shots, the IRA returned safely to base.

★ ★ ★

Much of the BSU's success(!) was due to the fear and trepidation the unit's name struck in the hearts and minds of its enemies, Moloney assured us. This seems somewhat strange as he had earlier told us that the unit's name and existence was kept a closely-guarded secret!

Obviously the Brits thought that its endeavours should be encouraged because on Christmas Eve 1979 the Thatchers came over to congratulate them on managing to stay alive.

After keeping them waiting for half an hour in the cold and rain, the tin-pot Iron Lady arrived by helicopter (how else?) and strode towards them purposefully, pausing only to glare over her shoulder at husband Denis (wearing a Sherlock Holmes disguise) who had just fallen down the helicopter steps.

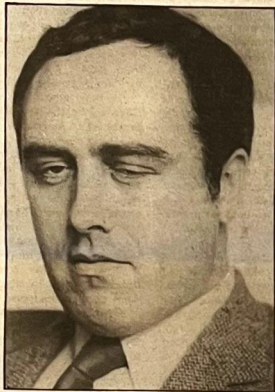
★ ★ ★

And what successes were the BSU to be congratulated for? These well-trained, well-armed super-doooper RUC men, Moloney assures us, 'took the strain well'. And indeed they did. Two had to be retired due to nervous breakdowns; only three had to be transferred due to drink problems; only 20 members were injured in IRA bomb explosions, car accidents and self-inflicted wounds (one shot himself in the foot with a shotgun).

No BSU member was ever killed by the IRA, Moloney boasts. Sounds like they might have spent more of their time in drying-out clinics, lunatic asylums or in hospital than in any active capacity in South Armagh.

Remember, the unit only ever had 33 members altogether. With a 75.5% casualty rate being classified as a success, I wonder if they'd recognise a failure staring them in the face?

★ ★ ★



Personal vanity should have no place in the revolutionary conscience. However, even the staunchest of republicans seem to succumb to it.

Danny Morrison, Sinn Fein elected representative for Mid-Ulster and head of Sinn Fein's publicity department, was caught in *APRN's* Dublin office last week, removing unflattering photographs of himself from our comprehensive photo files.

His weak excuse was that he was 'bringing the files up to date'. Here is one that he missed, however.

★ ★ ★

Over a dozen uniformed loyalist paramilitaries who were practising manoeuvres on North Down's Craigantlet Hills last week were released after a short per-

iod in RUC custody when they explained that they were looking for mushrooms and rare species of heather and were not practising how to kill Taigs.

★ ★ ★

While Sinn Fein activists are known to use every opportunity to promote our policies, Tom Hartley, Sinn Fein's joint general secretary, seems to have broken new ground with his latest appearance. Or is this just another example of double-jobbing?



● From the *Tyrone Constitution*, February 1st

★ ★ ★

The UDA have claimed that they stole the plaque erected to plastic-bullet victim John Downes outside Sinn Fein's Connolly House in West Belfast.

The plaque, indeed, was stolen. Not surprisingly, it happened shortly after crown forces saturated the Kennedy Way area following the UDR shooting of joyrider Paul Kelly on January 29th.

Republicans must be quaking in their boots at other UDA claims that two of their 'search and destroy' squads threw paint over a Castlewellan mural and were photographed beside the republican memorial in Crossmaglen.

However, on a serious note, it suits the RUC to have the UDA projected as buffoons who only require kid-glove treatment.

★ ★ ★

Bad timing is the only explanation behind the bungled kidnapping last week in Armagh by a UDR man and his associates. The charge against Ian Clarke is that he 'stole and unlawfully carried away Catherine Bernadette Speers against her will'.

Clarke was allegedly inspired by the atrocious TV series *The Price*, currently on Channel 4 and RTE, about the fictitious abduction of a wealthy business-

man's wife in County Wicklow.

However, Mrs Speers escaped from her captors just two days before the next episode of *The Price* was to describe how to go about collecting the ransom demand!

★ ★ ★

That kidnapping caused the hurried re-arrangement of a tour of South Armagh by a group of British MPs on January 28th.

They were scheduled to visit Drumadd Barracks but the trip was cancelled purportedly because it had been 'leaked to the *Provos*'. The real reason was that the MPs did not want the embarrassment of their visit being linked with yet another transgression by a member of the UDR.

★ ★ ★

Massive cutbacks in spending in the Free State Health Services have meant closed wards, nurses on the dole and severe restrictions in essential medical services to the sick.

Can it be true that in these hard economic times the Mater Hospital in Dublin had £15,000 to spare to spend on silver-plated crested cutlery for the exclusive use of their consultants during their tea breaks?

A case of silver spoons but no scalpels?

★ ★ ★

Galway Regional Hospital are also most solicitous about the creature comforts of their seven consultants.

More economic considerations did not affect the decision of the Western Health Board to spend £200 on a combination lock on toilets at the hospital. These toilets are for the exclusive use of the consultants and the combination is known only to them, and presumably to the cleaners.

Meanwhile the urgently needed maternity wing in the hospital remains closed for lack of funds.

★ ★ ★

Belfast coroner James Elliott has described the suicide of a UDR soldier last October as one of the most baffling cases he's ever come across.

Corporal Alexander Young (34) was found still clutching his pistol after shooting himself through the head at the UDR base in Belfast's Malone Road.

Considering the high suicide rate amongst members of the UDR and RUC, perhaps you're wondering why the coroner was baffled. Well, you see, before making his exit from this world, Young had been drinking with his mates, 'was jovial and had no worries or anxieties'.

Baffling it may be, but there'll be quite a few less-anxious people in West Belfast now that Corporal Young is no longer with us.

★ ★ ★

Going back through the files, I see that 33-year-old SAS Sergeant Raymond Abbotts was killed by a ricochet from another SAS man's gun at the regimental base in Heggerford on January 17th.

I believe it's what the Brits call an 'own goal'.

★ ★ ★

Poor Brid Rogers will have to look for a new party piece, now that her story about 'Guess what happened to me at the last election?' has come unstuck.

As a leading member of the SDLP in North Armagh, Brid has been using every social gathering to tell the story of how a nasty Sinn Fein person tried to deny her a vote in next May's Northern local elections on the grounds that, since she came from Donegal, she wasn't entitled to one.

This yarn, which was published in a Sunday paper recently, was discounted in a letter to the same paper by the real culprit — a fellow Donegal native who has no connection with Sinn Fein.

Ah well, you can't win 'em all!

