

AN
PHOBLACHT
Republican News

IRELAND'S BIGGEST SELLING
POLITICAL WEEKLY



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**MARCH AGAINST
EXTRADITION
AND PRISON
OPPRESSION**

2.30pm Saturday 30th March
PORTLAOISE
County Laois
Prominent speakers



**Lessons learned
from British pits
battle**

See pages
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Resistance and resolve

THE WOMEN republican prisoners in Armagh, in their statement to mark International Women's Day, sent solidarity greetings to their sisters in Ireland and throughout the world who are struggling to free their countries from imperialist domination.

The statement, which was read out at the rally outside Armagh Prison on Sunday, March 10th, spoke of the women "from Nicaragua to Palestine, from Southern Africa to the women's support groups of the mining communities in Britain — our message is the same — we are with you in spirit on this historic day."

"The British occupation of our country," the statement went on, "has

as its consequence reactionary and repressive systems North and South."

TRIBUTE

The women prisoners paid a special tribute to "our sisters engaged in the armed struggle for Irish freedom who daily confront the prospect of death or imprisonment, and to women political activists within the Republican Movement striving for fundamental social change."

In a strongly-worded attack on strip-searching the women prisoners were clear about the reasons for its use. It is, they say, "a vain attempt to break our spirit of resistance and resolve."

"Strip-searching is, to date, the most dehumanising and repugnant tactic used against us by the British prison authorities. Your demonstration of solidarity with us today is encouraging to us all and an incentive to struggle resolutely on until this immoral practice is stopped."

"Sisters, let us today pledge ourselves to strive relentlessly so that we may one day share triumph in our respective struggles. In spirit our support goes with you."



OPINION

Victims of indifference

THE INCREASING attacks on old people living alone in the West and North-West of Ireland are no random robberies by passing strangers. There is clear evidence that a particular group or groups are acting in an organised, well-planned fashion, targeting their victims in advance and launching assaults on the most vulnerable and isolated section of the community.

These old and often infirm people are targets not because they are rich, but because they are poor, old and weak. The generally very small amounts of money they have saved over many years is put by for 'a decent funeral'. And the money is kept at home because the miserly pensions paid by the state are means-tested, and the few pounds in savings of our old people is liable for tax.

The motivation for these robberies is not need but greed, and when the victims are so totally unprotected the crime is all the more reprehensible. There can be no sympathy, no reasons of social deprivation or alienation put forward for the perpetrators of these crimes. These robberies have been, and are, accompanied by an indulgence in pointless acts of gratuitously sadistic torture of old people which have resulted in several deaths and, in one case, homelessness for an elderly brother and sister.

Criminal legislation, as enacted by Dublin politicians, has always been prompted by the needs of the propertied class rather than the needs of the people of little or no property. So it was with the Criminal Justice Act, which was rushed through Leinster House. In stark contrast was the inaction on the heroin epidemic which was affecting the lives of so many working-class communities, and which Leinster House ignored until the people organised to defend themselves and their children.

The state is only really interested in protecting the wealthy. The elderly victims of these attacks can only be protected by their own communities similarly organising to defend them.

The response from the media and Free State politicians has been to call for more gardai and, from some quarters, for the Free State army to be moved in.

The fact is that there is no shortage of gardai in this state. But the Free State's 'security' resources, amounting to hundreds of millions of pounds and countless personnel, are being spent on protecting paratroopers in Crossmaglen. The same paratroopers who beat a local man unconscious, as reported in this paper.

The establishment media thought it important to mention "Northern involvement" in these crimes, insinuating a link with the war in the North. This attempt to smear Northerners, to make pariahs of them, is all the more despicable in face of the absence of any real commitment to action on their part.

If the money and resources spent so willingly to prop up Britain's border were directed into the rural areas where these attacks are happening, and used to create jobs, improve communications, build hospitals and homes, then it would be a significant contribution to the improvement of those communities.

Instead, the state's resources contribute to the breakdown of the fabric of society, both rural and urban.

That breakdown leads inevitably to the increasing vulnerability of our old people.



IRA attacks

IRA VOLUNTEERS, in spite of a massive RUC presence in and around Newry since the devastating mortar attack 11 days ago on February 28th, successfully carried a 20lb device into the centre of the town on Tuesday evening, March 12th.

Having carefully checked the area in advance, the Volunteers moved into Hill Street and placed the 20lb bomb at the offices of Pearl Assurance. Several warnings were given and the area was cleared before the bomb detonated at 5.15pm. The Pearl Assurance offices were devastated and other premises were damaged. Early estimates placed the damage in excess of £100,000.

The day before the Newry attack Volunteers of the IRA's West Tyrone Brigade attacked a member of the RUC, who lives in the village of Killeen, close to Castlederg.

During the night several armed IRA Volunteers approached the house. An engineer carefully placed a sophisticated 10lb bomb in position, below the RUC man's car, and attached it by means of a magnet.

Having succeeded in placing the device, the Volunteers withdrew from the scene.

The following morning the RUC man checked his car, discovered the bomb and called in the British army's explosives experts, who then took five hours to defuse the bomb.



● Workmen clearing up the debris after the IRA bombing in Newry

Beaten unconscious by Paras

BY ROBERT CARLIN

A 23-YEAR-OLD Crossmaglen man has been assaulted three times in the space of two weeks by British Paratroopers, and in the third and most serious attack he was beaten unconscious and left by the roadside.

Fergal Kiernan, from Ardross in the town, was on his way to Cullaville on Wednesday, February 27th, at around 8pm when he was stopped by the Paras at a roadblock. He was ordered out of the car by the Brits, who began beating him with rifles and kicking him.

They were trying to drag him into a field when another car came on the scene. The occupants of the second car stayed with Kiernan until the RUC arrived. Threats were made on Kiernan's life — the Brits told him he would be shot going through a checkpoint or they would cut his throat.

The following night, Kiernan was on his way into town at around 9pm when he was again stopped by the Paras.

"They began to abuse me verbally, and when they ordered me out of the car I refused because of what had happened the night before. They pulled me from the car by the throat

and hair and began punching and kicking me.

"They dragged me to Crossmaglen Barracks and accused me of assaulting members of the patrol. My shirt was torn from my back, a gold chain was pulled from my neck, a radio cassette was damaged and lights and wipers on my car were broken. I also lost money from my pockets while being dragged to the barracks," he said.

On Sunday last, March 10th, Kiernan was again stopped by the Paras near the town, this time on his way home from Mass in Dundalk at around 2.30pm. The car was searched and tapes were taken from the car, destroyed and thrown into a ditch. After ten minutes, Kiernan was allowed to proceed.

STOPPED

About 500 yards further up the road, however, he was again stopped by another patrol and ordered out of the car. As he stepped out, he was kned in the groin. Kiernan got back into the car and refused to move. At this, one of the Brits opened the passenger door and began hitting him on



● FERGAL KIERNAN

the arm with the butt of his rifle, while another began pulling his hair. Kiernan said:

"I began to sound the horn but they opened the bonnet and disconnected it. I then locked the doors of the car, but the driver's side-window was smashed with the butt of a rifle.

"They then pulled me from the car and five or six of them began punching me, and kicking me and hitting me with the butts of their rifles. I covered my face and head with my hands, but after about five minutes I was knocked unconscious."

Kiernan was brought to hospital, but refused to stay overnight. He is now on crutches, is suffering from spinal injuries and has to take painkillers.

The Parachute Regiment is due to leave the South Armagh area in about two weeks.

BY HILDA MacTHOMAS
AND JACK MADDEN

LAST WEEK two members of the Irish Catholic Hierarchy denounced the partition of Ireland and laid the blame for violence in the North on Britain's doorstep.

Those statements caused a predictable furore amongst the British, unionist and Free State politicians. They also surprised many Northern nationalists who are more accustomed to the loud silence of Catholic Church leaders when faced with British injustice, or their one-sided condemnations of nationalist resistance.

It was at a press conference in Boston, USA, on Friday last, March 8th, that Cardinal O'Flaich declared that Irish unity was "inevitable" and that partition is "the crux". As long as partition lasts "you will have an opposing, angry minority" he said, adding a call for a "gradual and orderly" British withdrawal from Ireland. The British presence is "divisive" he pointed out.

Whatever coverage his statements attracted in the USA, Cardinal O'Flaich's remarks were widely reported here in Ireland — including a ludicrous remark he apparently made, that the Catholic population would eventually become a numerical majority in the six counties, and political change would then be certain.

CONDEMNED

Speaking at a gathering of the County Monaghan Association in London on Saturday, March 9th, Bishop Joseph Duffy of Clogher condemned the "unrealistic rhetoric about rooting out violence and terrorism, and the patronising lip-service to differing political persuasions" by the British government.

Bishop Duffy, who, like Cardinal O'Flaich, is a noted historian in his diocese, added that "republican violence is a symptom of partition."

Swift and predictable reactions came from the usual quarters. OUP leader James Molyneux called Cardinal O'Flaich's statements "irresponsible" and "totally wrong". "A great many Catholics actually vote unionist", he claimed. Ex-UDR Major Ken Maginnis of the OUP, was "horrified", while both DUP leader Ian Paisley and his party colleague Ivan Foster called Bishop Duffy an "apologist for the IRA".

The Belfast Telegraph in its editorial on Monday, March 11th, complained that Bishop Duffy "appeared to excuse the excesses of the most fanatical". In a BBC Spotlight programme, Robert McCartney of the OUP accused the Catholic Hierarchy of interfering, referred to "alleged injustices" and, when pressed, admitted he would not share power with nationalists.

ATTACKED

Former Unionist MP and now Viscount Brookeborough, speaking in London, attack-

Clerics condemned



● Members of the Cry of the Oppressed deputation, (left to right) Brieg Brownlee, Fr Des Wilson and Fr Joseph McVeigh, talking to RTE's Kevin O'Kelly at the press conference following the refusal of the bishops' conference to receive the deputation

ed Cardinal O'Flaich for "never condemning the IRA without equivocation", adding that his absence from recent RUC funerals was a "disgrace".

British direct-ruler Douglas Hurd referred to the points raised by Cardinal O'Flaich as "rather old-fashioned". The border is not an issue any more, he informed us. What people are now interested in finding are "ways of making Northern Ireland's society fair and reasonable". Hurd concluded.

Fine Gael backbencher John Kelly told an audience in Dublin that Cardinal O'Flaich's views "seem to be peculiarly unfortunate". They amount to "the expression of a political view, and one calculated to have the worst effect on the Northern majority". Kelly added, forgetting that his own government has, for political advantage, urged the same Cardinal to condemn Sinn Féin voters and, by

implication, give clear approval to the SDLP

FURORE

Despite the furore which their remarks have caused, neither Cardinal O'Flaich nor Bishop Duffy came out in support of the republican position. They simply recognised the historical truth that the British presence is the source of republican resistance in Ireland.

They did not say that that resistance is morally justified, only that it is understandable in the context of the British presence. Both denounced as "evil crimes" the actions of the IRA against crown forces, and they left little doubt that they are very much "constitutional nationalists" who would be prepared to accept "reform" in the six counties for the foreseeable future.

Stripped of their historical analyses of the cause of the conflict in the six coun-

ties, both the Cardinal O'Flaich and Bishop Duffy speeches are a restatement of the Catholic Hierarchy's position since October 1982 when their failure to control the political thinking of a vast section of Northern Catholics was expressed in votes for Sinn Féin candidates in the Assembly elections.

FLURRY

Since then there has been a flurry of activity and statements on the political situation in the North from the six bishops whose dioceses include that part of Ireland. In a calculated decision the Irish Catholic Hierarchy, as a body, decided to leave it to those six bishops to make all future pronouncements on Northern political matters.

This was confirmed by the 'Cry of the Oppressed' deputation which sought, and was refused, a meeting with the Irish Catholic bishops at their episcopal conference in Maynooth on Wednesday, March 13th.

The deputation, which represented priests, nuns and Catholic laity concerned at the Catholic Hierarchy's neglect of the oppressed people presented a document to the bishops which said that far from being on the side of the oppressed, the hierarchy "appears clearly to be on the side of the oppressor".

Following the bishops' refusal to meet them, the deputation, at a subsequent press conference, correctly pointed out that in restricting comment on the six counties to the Northern bishops, the Catholic Hierarchy is playing Britain's "divide and rule" game and isolating Northern nationalists.

STRATEGY

A further drawback in this strategy, which has had major repercussions for oppressed nationalists in the ghettos, is that the structures of the Catholic Church within the six counties are controlled almost exclusively by middle-class and often castle Catholics who do not suffer the full force of British repression.

Hierarchical politics within the six counties reflect the economic and political interests of those same middle-class Catholics. This has been proven time and again in recent years as individual Northern bishops have clearly identified with the SDLP position.

Cardinal O'Flaich's press conference and Bishop Duffy's London speech, far from indicating some new departure, illustrate the anxiety of the hierarchy at the growth of revolutionary politics in nationalist communities — a phenomenon which they refer to as 'nationalist alienation'. How much longer they can ignore the cry of the oppressed and dodge the central issue of the moral position of the British presence, and by extension the moral position of armed British soldiers and RUC members on Irish streets, remains to be seen.

Foreign Minister Peter Barry's speech, at a conference on Central America, in Cork at the weekend.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Barry spoke of his government's "persistent" condemnation of human rights violations in Central America, arguing for the "non-interference by foreign powers in sovereign states" and the "inviolability of frontiers". All very fine and liberal, but as Sinn Féin pointed out in a statement:

"If Mr Barry is so anxious to defend human rights we suggest that in order to show his integrity he starts at home and acts against the persistent abuse of human rights both North and South of Britain's border."

The seemingly endless hypocrisy of the Dublin government continued in Leinster House this week with a shock-horror debate on abuses in the social welfare system. Some people who are working are actually signing on the dole, flabbergasted politicians were told on Wednesday, as the end of their 2½-day week as legislators drew to a close and they prepared to return home to their legal, business, medical and farming interests.

Lip-service liberals

BY JACK MADDEN

THE SHAM LIBERALISM of the Coalition parties was exposed last Friday, March 8th, when the increasingly vocal Fine Gael backbencher, Brendan McGahon from Louth, stated that "a woman's place is in the home".

McGahon's sexist opinion, made on International Women's Day, caused little reaction amongst his party colleagues. The only criticism came from Nuala Fennell, whose position, as Coalition Minister for Women's Affairs, was created by the Coalition government as a form of lip-service to equality.

However, since this ministry was established, women's groups across the political and social spectrum have discovered that, when seeking a meeting with any other Dublin government department, they are invariably "fobbed off" and sent to Nuala Fennell.

This has particularly angered women's groups who have repeatedly sought but failed to get meetings with Health Minister Barry Desmond to explain their opposition to cutbacks in the rapidly dwindling health service and in particular the closure of maternity wards in hospitals.

IMAGE

Trouble at RTE over the appointment of a new Director General dominated political and media comment through the past week. The 'whited sepulchre' image, which the Coalition has tried to project on its motivation for blocking the appointment, was



● BRENDAN MCGAHON



● PETER BARRY

hard to swallow all along. This was especially true when a pious Garret FitzGerald told Leinster House deputies:

"It is of vital importance that RTE be free from political con-

trol, influence or bias — that it be as independent as we can make it."

The contradictions in this statement by FitzGerald paled, however, when compared to his

BY CHARLIE MCFADDEN

A STRIKE by 2,000 members of the National Busworkers Union (NBU) is due to start next Tuesday, March 18th.

An earlier threatened NBU strike had been postponed pending a Labour Court decision on pay for CIE workers. When the Labour Court found in favour of the workers and recommended a 7% wage increase, CIE management stepped in and tried to impose new conditions of employment and work practices as part of a package with the pay award.

This attempted blackmail was rejected by the NBU on Tuesday this week. They re-activated their strike call, which will seriously disrupt bus and rail services in the twenty-six counties.

Besides the NBU members, there is speculation that a strike call will also be made by unions representing the 14,000 other CIE workers who are angry and totally dissatisfied with management tactics in making a long-overdue pay-increase conditional on agreement to wider changes within the semi-state company.

February saw the six counties with its highest-ever unemployment figures for that period, with 122,957 people out of work or 21% of the total workforce.

Thatcherite tactics, employed during the miners strike, should be introduced into the twenty-six counties. Coalition leader Garret FitzGerald was advised at a Federated Union of Employees luncheon this week.

Robert Grier, chairperson of the Dublin branch of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators, advocated a change in the whole approach to industrial relations, including a legal obligation on trade unions to hold pre-strike ballots.

This, in his opinion, would serve the interests of ordinary decent trade unionists against manipulation by 'activists'.

Grier's patronising attitude shows his inability to grasp trade union practice. In all cases the demand for strike action comes direct from the shop floor and not from union leadership. If any reform is needed in labour law, it is to remove the bias in favour of capital.

Sixty-five workers at the Castleblaney furniture factory, McElroy Brothers

Bus strike imminent



Ltd, lost their jobs this week, as the firm went into receivership.

Locals maintain that the factory was making a profit, but because the owners were creaming off the profits into their personal bank accounts, money was not being re-invested in the firm.

A statutory minimum wage should be introduced to combat the exploitation of under-paid workers such as cleaners, hairdressers, janitors etc, ICTU president Matt Merrigan stressed last week.

Merrigan, who was speaking at a conference to highlight the problem of slave-wage workers, said that these people were usually non-unionised and that employees often sack workers who attempt to organise a union to improve pay and conditions.

The Free State Department of Labour, the IDA and management are trying to con Talbot workers out of £20,000 in statutory redundancy payments, the Employment Appeals Tribunal was told last week.

In 1981, when the car plant in Whitehall was closing down, the IDA, in what was hailed at the time as a new departure in state intervention, stepped in during union-management negotiations and pledged a new project in the area which would re-employ the 90 workers involved.

The workers gladly accepted this initiative, and so was born the now infamous 'Talbot Deal', part of which was that continuity of employment would be preserved thus avoiding broken service. All of this sounded fine in theory and got the IDA good press which they exploited to the full.

However, the reality has been quite different and no new jobs have been provided.

Last year the workers, fed up with waiting for the pie in the sky jobs, lodged a claim with the Employment Appeals Tribunal, which found in their favour and ruled that they were owed a further £20,000 in severance pay.

But company director Ned Gould immediately appealed this decision in the High Court. This court ruled in favour of the company, claiming the original

tribunal was wrong in law. Judge Barron redirected the claim back to the Employment Appeals Tribunal which met last week and decided to reserve its decision on the case.

The myth that trade unions are responsible for the large number of company closures was rejected by ITGWU president John Carroll at a conference organised by the Commerce and Economics Society at UCG last week. Carroll stated that this was merely a convenient 'catch-cry' to cover up management ineptitude.

His view was backed up by Kevin Kelly, one of the twenty-six counties' most prominent liquidators, who blamed over-stretching of resources, lack of reaction to change, lack of management depth and lack of information, as major reasons for closures.

Five-hundred-and-eighty-four companies went into liquidation and 112 went into receivership in 1984.

A strike by 15 employees of the Hospital Joint Services Board, which supplies hospitals with sterile items and laundry, began on Monday, March 11th. The workers are looking for compensation following the board's decision in October 1982, to do away with early-morning overtime.

The Justice Office of the Major Religious Superiors has called on all Irish stores to stop selling South African goods, in a statement which praised the courage and commitment shown by the Dúnnes anti-apartheid strikers during their 34-week-old dispute.

The statement, issued on behalf of 180 religious orders, denied that they were 'introducing politics' into the business of the stores:

"These stores have already allowed politics to become a part of their business when they offer South African goods for sale."

"Providing an outlet for products from South Africa supports the present political status quo and strengthens the white minority already in power, enabling them to hold on to their political position."

There will be a benefit disco for the Dúnnes strikers in the CIE Hall, Inchicore, on Monday, March 18th. Admission will be £2 (£1 unwaged).

LE DARA MAC DARA

IS MAITH le rialtas Bhaile Átha Cliath go gceapadh muintir na hÉireann gur stát neamhspleách an ceann atá faoina chúram. Tá flaitheas ag an stát seo, a deir siad. Tá a fhios ag Poblachtóirí nach fíor an chaint sin agus ó am go chéile deir muid go mbeadh a mhalairt d'iompar acu dá mbeadh flaitheas i gceist.

Ach ní leor sin don ghnáthduine; agus caithfeas muid a bheith ag smaoineamh faoin ngnáthduine i gcónaí nó caillfidh muid an cluiche.

Níor mhiste do Poblachtóir éigin liosta a bhreacadh des na cúrsaí a chruthaíonn gan amhras ar bith nach bhfuil flaitheas ag stát Bhaile Átha Cliath, gur fostaí de chuid Sasana atá ann. Níor mhiste an liosta sin a bheith i gcló i gcónaí ar bhileog a d'fhéadfaí dháileadh amach ag cruinnithe saide agus ag a leithéidí.

Dáiríre, tá géarghla lena leithéid. Is beag duine ar féidir leis smaoineamh faoi na cúrsaí seo nuair a chuirtear ceist air ag cruinniú poiblí nó muid ag dul ó doras go doras ag lorg tacaíochta sna toghacháin áitiúla.

TÚS

Cuirfidh mise, dá bhrí sin, tús maith leis an liosta agus mé ag tagairt do *British Merchant Shipping Act 1894*. Faoin acht sin is amhlaidh a thagann gach bád agus lorg agus soithcheas sna holláin seo faoi smacht dhílis Shasana.

Ach tháinig athrú ar chúrsaí, a deir tú, nuair a rinneadh stáitín de chuid den tír i 1921, i.e. nuair a bunaíodh an Saorstát. Athrú dá laghad a tháinig, a thaisce. Is amhlaidh a ghlaic an Saorstát leis an acht céanna. Scun scan a shlog siad síar é.

Ach nuair a tharraing De Valera a bhunreacht nua mar dhallamhullóid anuas orainn,

Flaitheas?



● Is féidir le saighdiúirí agus póilíní Shasana dul ar bord long Éireannach ar bith gan chuireadh, gan iarraidh

a leanann tú, caithfidh go ndearna sin an t-athrú? Athrú dá laghad. Níor bhac an stát le hacht ar leith a dhreachtadh faoi loingeas trádála chun go bhféadfaí dearmad a dhéanamh den *British Merchant Shipping Act 1894*, iad ag ligean orthu féin go rabhadar saor agus neamhspleách.

Ós rud é go bhfuil a dhóthanad deanta ag an gComhairleas i mBaile Átha Cliath le loingeas trádála na hÉireann a loit (féach imeachtaí Loingeas Éireann) cén mhaith

a dhéanadh sé do ghnáthmhuintir na hÉireann dá ndéanfaí acht nua a dhreachtadh agus díl a bhunadh air?

GAN CHEAD

Ar a laghad ar bith ní bheadh cead faoin díl ag saighdiúirí agus go póilíní Shasana dul ar bord long Éireannach agus daoine a ghabháil, gan chuireadh gan iarraidh.

Déantar sin coitianta i bhfarraige na

hÉireann agus sna cuanta sa mBreatain. Tugtar faoi ndeara go bhfuil na póilíní an-chúramach ar fad-nuair a theastaíonn uatha dul ar bord long eachtrannach i gcalafort Shasana. Iarrann siad cead ón máistir ar dtús. Sin an díl, mar a bhaineann sé le soithigh eachtrannacha. Más soithigh Éireannacha iad siúlann siad isteach iontu gan chead a lorg uair is mian leo, mar a dhéanann siad agus long Shasana i gceist.

Rud eile fós: Má bhíonn ann trioblóid ag máistir loinge ar bord loinge amuigh ar an bhfarraige lena fhoireann agus má cheap-eann sé gur sháraigh siad an díl téann sé ós comhair cúirte sa mBreatain fiú más long 'Éireannach' atá i gceist. Bhí cás den chineál sin sna seascaidí a bhain leis an *Irish Oak*, más buan mo chuimhne.

Cuireadh an scéal seo i láthair Tony Gregory anuraidh agus hiarraidh air ceist a chur i dTeach Laighean féachaint cén freagra a bhfaightheadh sé.

SONA

Dealraíonn sé nár thuig an tAire go bailleach céard é dáiríre a bhí i gceist, gur chaith sé an cheist i measc na státseirbhíseach, ag iarraidh orthu siúd í a threagairt. Fuair sé 'freagra', ceart go leor, agus d'eisigh sé é sin i bhfoirm scríofa, sa chaoi gur hob sé poiblíocht.

Bhí na státseirbhísh glic. Sheachain siad brí na ceiste (a cuireadh faoin gcaoi a shíúlann póilíní isteach i long Éireannach gan chead, mar a bheadh long Shasana inti). Níor luadh siad an *British Merchant Shipping Act 1894*.

Níor adhmaigh siad nach raibh ann Acht um Loingeas Trádála ag an Saorstát agus gur faoi dhílis Shasana fós atá muid uilig na cúrsaí sin. Baol orthu. Ach d'adhmaigh siad nach raibh sé i gceist ag an gComhairleas. Bhíod ann Loingeas Trádála a dhreachtadh. Achtad sona sásta fanacht faoi dhílis Shasana.

RUC RETALIATION

BY MAEVE ARMSTRONG

FOLLOWING the IRA's devastating blow to the sectarian RUC in a mortar attack in Newry on February 28th — which killed nine RUC personnel — it was predictable that retaliation would be swift and would be sanctioned at the highest level within that force.

Within hours of the attack, three people — one a 17-year-old — were arrested and other arrests of up to 17 people from Newry and South Down have resulted in charges, some specifically related to Newry, being brought against 18 so far.

One of those charged, 31-year-old customs officer Eamon Collins from Barcroft Park, a father of two young children, is, according to republican sources in Newry, being pressurised by the RUC to fabricate evidence against others. Collins was arrested from his home within three hours of the mortar attack and is believed to have undergone intense physical, emotional and psychological pressure during interrogation in Armagh's Gough Barracks.

On Thursday, March 7th, one week after his arrest, the RUC arrived at his home and asked his wife Bernie and their two young babies to accompany them to Gough Barracks. However, when she refused to go voluntarily, she was arrested and taken to her husband that night. After the meeting with her husband, Mrs Collins confirmed that his whole personality had drastically changed.

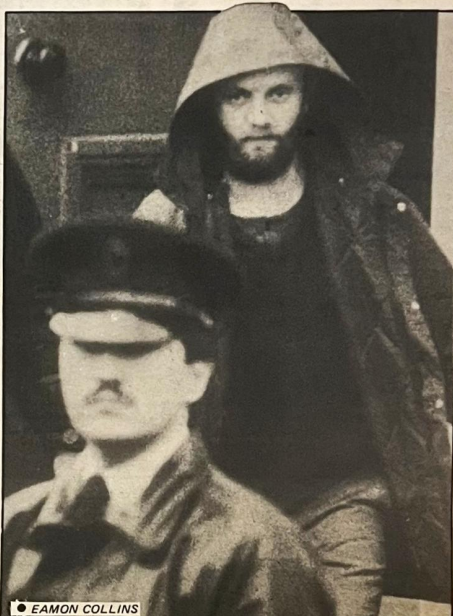
However, Collins was not the

only person to have undergone pressure according to accounts from those released. A solicitor who visited Castlereagh has confirmed that the RUC have reacted with an iron fist by meting out beatings in Gough and Castlereagh in an attempt to secure verbal or written statements under duress. Two men who underwent such heavy-handed tactics, but were released without being charged are John Jones, a father of five from O'Neill Avenue, Newry, and 21-year-old Camlough man Conor Murphy.

On Sunday, March 3rd, John Jones, a well-known local republican, was beaten up by three RUC men who came to arrest him under Section 12. The Jones' home was thoroughly ransacked while the family were placed under room arrest. Jones was then bundled into the back of one of four RUC cars, a carbine was shoved into his ribs and en route to Gough Barracks, in an attempt to unnerv him before his interrogation began, the RUC car slowed down and he was told he was going to be shot while attempting to escape.

THREATS

During five days interrogation



in Gough, numerous threats were made on his life as the RUC attempted to intimidate him into

admitting to the Newry attack. He was struck around the side of the head several times and by

DESPERATION

In another example of the RUC's desperation to secure a 'confession', Conor Murphy, an ex-POW, was arrested on Friday, March 1st, and, within the space of a few hours, had already received two black eyes from his RUC interrogators. Murphy was forced to sit on the floor during several interrogation sessions, often being dragged around by the hair and subjected to numerous threats against his own life and members of his family. He told AP/RN:

"They said they would put a booby-trap under my mother's car and that the next time I was stopped on my own at a checkpoint I would disappear, that I'd end up like the boys in Strabane."

According to Murphy, the RUC also made no secret of the fact that, after Newry, they had been accorded authority to use whatever tactics they needed in order to secure statements. He added:

"They said the gloves were off and they could do what they liked."

What is clear from these accounts is that, in the wake of the mortar attack in Newry, the RUC are vainly attempting to undo some of the political damage and instability caused by the effectiveness of the operation by forcing 'confessions' or 'evidence' out of those arrested, in order to produce scapegoats.

Residents demand refurbishment

BY ROBERT CARLIN

RESIDENTS of the Springhill estate in Ballymurphy have halted the building of 22 new houses by the Housing Executive in protest over the condition of the older houses in the area.

The estate was built ten years ago and in recent years tenants have been plagued by a vast number of faults, including rotten window and door frames, subsidence, damp, inadequate heating and faulty sewage.

A group of about 30 women have occupied the building site from 11am to 1pm for a number of days in a bid to highlight their case. The majority of the workmen have downed tools during the protests, although a few have continued to work.

Marian Goodman, a resident of Springhill, told AP/RN:

"We're sitting like a forgotten slum in the middle of all this redevelopment."

Five years ago, the Housing Executive stated that refurbishment was to be carried out in the Springhill estate. Central heating was installed, houses were insulated and window frames replaced, where necessary. The insulation of the houses was so slipshod that it fell away shortly after it was installed. Workmen stuffed news-

paper into ventilation ducts in an effort to keep out the cold.

In many cases, residents waited five weeks for the plasterers to arrive to finish the job, by that time the insulation in the houses was worse than it had been before. Grants of up to £145 were paid out for redecoration, but any residents who owed that amount or more in rent arrears received nothing.

Refurbishment was carried out arbitrarily and not across the board. Isabella Curley lives at 48 Springhill Avenue. Numbers 40 to 50 had repairs carried out during the refurbishment programme, but number 48 was bypassed. Mrs Curley is a pensioner and the legal guardian of four children. She said:

"I'm sick and tired of listening to promises and lies. I've just been treated like dirt. I'm 14 years here and there's never been anything done to this house that needs to be done."

Ann Walker, chairperson of the



Springhill Housing Action Group, said:

"The Housing Executive tell us they've no money, but there's money for refurbishment and building everywhere else. They know Springfield is in such a state and it's such a slum that they don't want to spend money on it."

"The sewage pipes in these houses run under the living rooms, and when it's broken and smells they just don't come out — even in the hot weather.

"When we meet the Housing Executive we'll be demanding thorough refurbishment of every

house in Springhill or total demolition."

BAD DESIGN

A Housing Executive spokesman admitted that there were problems arising from the bad design of the houses and their poor environment, but, he said, *"these require long-term solutions and the Housing Executive is considering what these might be"*.

Sinn Fein housing spokesperson, Sean Keenan, said the Housing Executive's record in Springhill was one of broken promises

and shoddy workmanship. He went on:

"The tenants will continue to stop construction work every day until the Housing Executive give a firm commitment on what they are going to do about the state of the older houses and when they are going to do it."

"The people here are not prepared to accept false promises and patchwork jobs. This is just the start of our protest and we are not going to stop until the old houses are completely refurbished."

No bouquets for gardai

BY BRENDAN KERR

DUBLIN'S busy O'Connell Street was blocked for an hour on Saturday afternoon, March 9th, by more than 100 members and supporters of the Inner City Street-Traders Association, in protest at the arrest of 14 street-traders and the seizure of hundreds of pounds' worth of stock.

Amongst those at the protest were Dublin Sinn Féin's Christy Burke and Tony O'Flaherty, Deputy Tony Gregory, Danny Morrison, Sinn Féin elected representative for Mid-Ulster, and Nicky Kelly.

At one stage, when gardai tried to break up the protest by forcing a CIE bus through, Christy Burke and Tony Gregory lay down in its path. Both men had their names taken by gardai and face possible charges.

PERISHABLES

The traders' goods, which were seized in the morning, were perishables (flowers and shamrock) and weren't released until that evening on receipt of £100. When the traders finally got their produce back, after 5pm, the bulk of it was unfit for sale and most of Saturday's shoppers had gone home anyway.

To add insult to injury, the traders were



● Dublin's street-traders, with Christy Burke and Tony Gregory (centre), mount a blockade of O'Connell Street

all fined a further £10 when they appeared in court on Monday morning.

Attacking the heavy-handed tactics of

the gardai, Christy Burke and Tony O'Flaherty said:

"These people are only trying to earn

a living yet they seem to be getting more garda attention than Dublin's heroin pushers."

Residents refuse bribe

REFUSING a last-minute £100 'bribe' offer to the local tenants' association, over 40 residents from Inchicore's St Michael's estate occupied the D'Olier Street offices of the New Dublin Gas Company on Monday, March 11th.

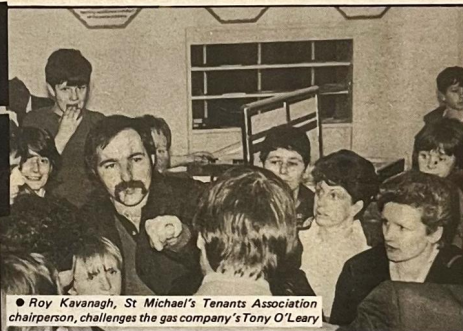
The sit-in was the result of growing anger over the casual indifference shown by the gas company and Dublin Corporation towards people's concern about the dangers posed by the conversion of the estate's central heating system from oil to gas.

Tenants were not even aware that the switch-over was taking place until the heating started to break down. When this occurred, the tenants' association gained an

assurance from the gas company that no further conversions would be carried out until April, when the heating is usually turned off due to seasonal adjustments. The gas company subsequently reneged on the agreement and converted remaining flats "on the sly", as one tenant told AP/RN.

FEARS

Genuine fears have been expressed about the new system's



● Roy Kavanagh, St Michael's Tenants Association chairperson, challenges the gas company's Tony O'Leary

safety, fears which have not been allayed by the Corporation's cancellation two weeks ago of a meeting between themselves, the gas company and the tenants, which was designed to put people's mind at rest.

Complaints from residents of the nearby Balfin estate last week led to the discovery of gas leaks and the St Michael's Tenants' Association decided to

occupy the gas company's offices to make their voices heard.

A bus was hired to take people to the protest, but when the gas company got wind of this they sent a representative, Tony O'Leary, to St Michael's. O'Leary offered a tenants' committee meeting of £100 to 'cover expenses' if they called off the occupation.

The offer was firmly refused and the protest went ahead.

On Wednesday night, March 13th, officials from the New Dublin Gas Company and Dublin Corporation finally appeared at a tenants' meeting to explain their position — but not to everyone's satisfaction.

To try to allay fears about safety, the officials repeatedly quoted a report carried out in 1974 (the Kenny report) after a gas explosion in Ronan Point flats in London, where five people died.

If so much importance was attached to this report, the tenants argued, why couldn't they see it?

"You probably wouldn't be able to understand it," said the Corporation's Mr Miley. "Besides, it's up to the city manager to release it."

"We'll decide whether we can understand it or not," replied tenants' chairperson Roy Kavanagh, "and if we can't, then we'll engage a consultant."

Dublin Corporation's city manager has until Friday evening to furnish St Michael's Estate Tenants' Association with a full copy of the Kenny report, otherwise all further gas company work on the estate will be brought to a halt.

Ballyer budget protest

BY BRENDAN KERR

AS DUBLIN COUNCILLORS met in City Hall on Monday evening, March 11th, to discuss the Bill of Estimates (annual budget), over 50 members and supporters of the Ballyfermot Community Association, including Ballyfermot Sinn Féin, staged an hour-long protest outside against the water rates.

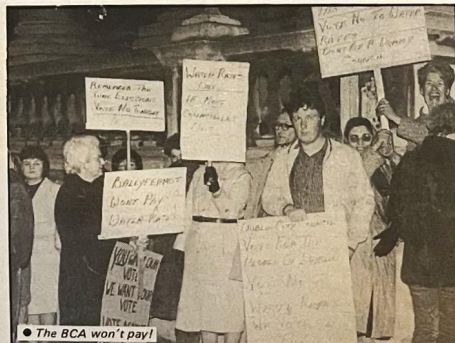
Jimmy Delaney, spokesperson for Ballyfermot Sinn Féin, said:

"Whilst £500 million a year is spent on protecting Britain's border, whilst the rich coin it in because there's no real wealth tax, whilst the big farmers get away without paying a substantial amount of their taxes due to public service cutbacks, and whilst the banks and 'fly-by-night' multinationals screw the twenty-six county economy silly, the Labour/Fine Gael government expects the working class to meekly accept the unjust im-

position of the water rates tax. Our answer is loud and clear: We won't!

"Sinn Féin, together with the BCA, the trade union movement, NATO and ACRA, calls on everyone to resist the local authorities' intimidating threats of legal action against those who refuse, in most cases because they cannot afford it, to pay the water rates charges.

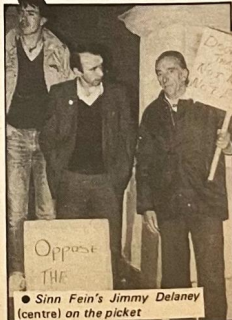
"Sinn Féin once again pledges its support to the campaign against the water rates and in defence of essential services. If any area has its water cut off



● The BCA won't pay!

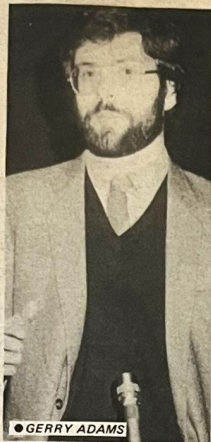
due to non-payment of the charges, then Sinn Féin will see that they are reconnected as soon as physically possible.

"Elected councillors are supposed to serve the people who voted for them, not subject them to further financial hard-



● Sinn Féin's Jimmy Delaney (centre) on the picket

ship and attacks on their living standards. The forthcoming local government elections, in June, will be an ideal time to remind them of that."



Armed struggle debated in Cork

A DEBATE at University College Cork, on the motion 'That this house refuses to condemn the armed struggle in the North of Ireland' drew one of the biggest audiences and keenest debates at the college.

Speaking at the UCC Philosophical Society debate, Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams said that republicans today did not seek to glorify the continuing struggle in the North. They saw it for what it was, a hard and bloody necessity forced upon those seeking Irish independence by a ruthless and mercenary colonial regime.

Northern nationalists had been abandoned, by successive Dublin administrations, to a British and loyalist sectarian regime. Referring to the 'politics of condemnation so beloved by, for example, Peter Barry,' Adams said that such statements were scorned by Northern nationalists living under the reality of British rule.

The 1916 Rising, and the armed struggle which followed it, were not condemned, he said, nor were the fighters of Tom Barry's Flying Column. It was also a fact that Fine Gael ministers heaped praise on Michael Collins, a man hardly noted for his pacifist attitudes.

VICTIMS

"To condemn the armed struggle in the North is to side with the British presence against those who were the victims of the unfinished business of the struggle which was aborted in the 1920s with partition," Adams continued.

The British government listens only to those it is forced to respect, he said, and an example of that was Thatcher's arrogant 'out, out, out' statement, Peter Barry's recent apology, for criticising Thatcher, 'shows how much self-respect he has left'.

"A British withdrawal, amnesty for prisoners and a recognition by the British government of the Irish nation's right to rule itself is the only process which would provide the key for development and lead to a just and peaceful society in Ireland," Adams ended.

The motion, which was proposed by Ulick O'Connor, was narrowly defeated. A motion calling for the repeal of Section 31 was passed unanimously.

Whiterock victory

BY JANE PLUNKETT

THE LOYALIST-DOMINATED Belfast City Council on Monday, March 11th, abandoned their attempts to close the Whiterock Leisure Centre over the flying of the Tricolour, at least for the foreseeable future.

The row had been simmering for several months, during which unsuccessful moves were made by loyalist councillors aimed either at having the centre closed down or persuading the British government to take over responsibility for its running.

During a 90-minute debate at Monday's full council meeting, the Official Unionists failed to get DUP backing for their proposal to call on RUC chief John Hermon to instigate "appropriate action". That amendment was defeated by 20 votes to 11. Afterwards, OUP opposition ensured the heavy defeat of the DUP-backed amendment (proposed by independent unionists) to shut

the Whiterock Leisure Centre in a month's time unless the British government took action.

TACTICAL SPLIT

The meeting thus revealed a deep tactical split within the unionist camp. Official Unionists having evidently realised that the bigoted loyalist campaign against the leisure centre had only strengthened the unity of the local nationalists whose facilities were under threat. Closing the Whiterock centre was "just what Sinn Féin wanted" said the OUP's Alfie Redpath in the course of the debate. It was left to Sinn

Fein Councillor Alex Maskey to point out the undisputed fact that it was loyalists, not Sinn Féin, who had first raised the issue.

Speaking afterwards, Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin's West Belfast MP, said that the council's decision not to proceed as threatened against the Whiterock Leisure Centre "shows the gains which can be made by a united nationalist community asserting its rights against the forces of loyalist sectarianism."

He added: "I congratulate the people of the Whiterock and Upper Springfield area on their stand."



Pickets and protests against strip-searches

DURING the past week, the strip-searching issue has been highlighted at numerous events in Britain and in Ireland.

In London on International Women's Day, March 8th, over 100 women staged a torchlight protest outside Downing Street. Amid chants and singing, hundreds of helium balloons were released bearing the names of the republican prisoners in Armagh Jail.

Also in London, Holloway Jail was picketed last Friday and Sunday. Over the weekend there were protests in Oxford, Glasgow, and Leicester, the Derry video Strip-searching - security or subjugation was shown widely and a number of groups who travelled on the weekend delegation to Armagh held press conferences and public meetings following their return.

In Manchester last Saturday, March 9th, a former prisoner, Pauline Deery, was one of the platform speakers at the National Union of Students conference.

DISCUSSED

That afternoon, she was the main

speaker at a well-attended fringe meeting on strip-searching, where students enthusiastically discussed setting up new anti-strip-searching committees.

In Dublin, the Stop the Strip-Searches Committee held a 24-hour vigil outside the British Embassy from 5pm on Friday, March 8th. Also on Friday, the offices of Co-operation North, the self-styled "first Northern Ireland Embassy," were occupied. About 12 people took part, among them recently-released POW Pauline Deery.

White line pickets were organised all over Dublin on Friday evening, in Bray, Stillorgan, Ringsend, Rathfarnham, the Liberties, Finglas, Ballymun, Drumcondra, North Strand, Cabra and Tallaght.

ACTIVITIES

The protests were continued on Saturday, with a picket outside the GPO in Dublin. These activities marking International Women's Day have given an added impetus to the campaign against strip-searching, and the



• Dublin

many action groups intend to step up their protests.

'A Cry from the Oppressed', a group of priests, nuns and Catholic laity concerned at the inactivity of the Catholic Church Hierarchy in speaking out against strip-searching and other British injustices in the six counties, travelled to the Catholic bishops' conference in Maynooth on Wednesday this week.

They were informed that the bishops had already spoken out against the

policy of strip-searching women in Armagh Jail.

At a press conference in Maynooth on Wednesday afternoon Fr Joe McVeigh, speaking on behalf of the deputation, pointed out that despite the bishops' claim that strip-searching has been scaled down because of their 'pressure' on the Northern Ireland office, the reality is that the decline in the number of strip-searches is a direct consequence of the decline in the number of remand prisoners.

• Belfast

Lessons learned from British pits battle

BY ANNE MACKENZIE

THE British miners' strike was, from the very start, a highly political strike. It was not simply an attempt to win higher wages from a reluctant employer. Rather, it became a confrontation about a fundamental question: should society be organised for the benefit of present and future generations of working people, or should it be organised to make profits for a few multinational capitalists?

On the one hand, Margaret Thatcher and her government plan to ruthlessly reduce the mining industry to a few 'superpits' in the central coalfields. These would be equipped with the latest technology and be highly productive, with few miners and a weakened union, and could then be sold off to multinational mining enterprises.

Pits in the outlying areas, and the communities that depend on them, would be left to die, and the miners and their children would be forced to join the army of at least four million unemployed that Thatcherite policies have already produced.

The miners, for their part, argue that the coal industry should be organised for the benefit both of those who work in it and for the community as a whole and that long-term plans should be made for the careful exploitation of Britain's greatest natural resource. It does not make sense either in social or economic terms to destroy communities, to swell the ranks of the unemployed or to leave viable pits producing high quality coal to rot for lack of investment.

The attack on the miners is part of a long-term strategy, also being implemented in other nationalised industries and in the welfare services, of restructuring the British economy in the interests of multinational capitalism. The miners have recognised, as Arthur Scargill has repeatedly stated, that they are in the frontline of the fight

not just for their own jobs, but for everybody's jobs. In failing to support them, other trade unionists are undermining their own position.

As far back as 1978, right-wing Tory MP Nicholas Ridley drafted a report on Conservative policies for the nationalised industries. This put forward contingency plans for a miners' strike, which included: building up coal stocks, particularly at power stations, introducing dual coal/oil-firing in all power stations, cutting off state benefits to strikers and equipping and preparing a large mobile squad of police to act against violent pickets. "Good non-union drivers", the report said, should be recruited to cross picket lines with police protection.

Organised

WHEN the Tories came to power, these plans were swiftly implemented. They organised their defences and prepared to beat and starve the miners back to work. Coal stocks were tripled, generating stations were switched to more flexible fuel and the policing plans were acted on. Laws were brought in to make mass picketing and secondary picketing illegal and to severely restrict the payment of social security benefits to strikers' families.

The British government has thrown every available weapon into the battle: public money, the police, the law, the media, 'divide-and-rule' tactics. Under this onslaught, tens of thousands of miners and their communities have been politicised to an extent not seen in Britain since before World War Two. Many swear that they will never see the state through the same eyes again.

The government's plan to develop a few pits and leave the rest to die meant that 'divide-and-rule' was an obvious tactic. The



● A policeman in full riot gear savagely assaults a defenceless miner — an all-too-familiar scene throughout the strike

● Scabs stopped

strike started with miners at threatened pits coming out. The NUM leadership's decision to transform this into a national strike without a ballot was to provide a propaganda weapon for the government.

But, as the striking miners pointed out, "Why should we allow people in safe jobs to vote away the jobs of other people?" The Tory Party and the Coal Board worked behind the scenes to set up scabs' committees. Business tycoons poured in money and some of Thatcher's advisers assisted in planning the 'back-to-work' campaign and designing advertising material for it. Using the so-called working miners as cover, Tory lawyers initiated a succession of legal actions against the NUM.

Public money

IN pursuit of its objective, the British government has poured huge amounts of public money down the drain. It paid £1.5 million to buy veteran union-breaker Ian MacGregor from an American merchant bank to make him the 'axeman', first of British Steel and then of the Coal Board. By the end of the miners' strike, over £3,000 million had been spent — much of it on importing coal and oil for the power stations — in order to achieve an annual saving of £250 million.

As with the occupation of the six counties, which costs British taxpayers some £1,500 million per year, and of the Falklands/Malvinas, which costs more than £1,000 million annually, it is the long-term interests of the establishment that are treated as a priority.

At the same time, the government moved to cut off funds to the miners and their families. Although the National Union of Mineworkers was not paying strike pay, the 1980 Employment Act 'deemed' that strikers were receiving £16 per week from their union and their social security benefits were reduced by that amount. So two adults with two school-age children were receiving just £24.75 a week. Single men got nothing. Also, legal action by the National Working Miners' Committee succeeded in freezing the £6.8 million assets of the NUM, which

meant that funds for financing flying pickets ran out.

While financial hardship was the main factor forcing miners back to work, it paradoxically also helped to produce the most remarkable feature of the strike: the unprecedented mobilisation of women. Women in mining communities have traditionally been confined to the home, but over the last twelve months thousands have de-

'The e

BY JANE PLUNKETT

ONE CONSEQUENCE of the strike has been the educated presence of small groups of people from mining communities on delegations to national of the six counties. Last weekend, miners' Yorkshire and Lancashire visited the six counties part in the International Women's Day protest at Armagh Jail. During their stay, several of us spoke to AP/RN about the strike, and how it affected their lives.

Before the strike began, Janet Macrae, aged 30, from Rotherham, was "just a miner's wife".

"My life consisted more or less of getting the baby up for school, shopping, waiting for paydays. The highlight of a week was getting a wage and spending it. I wasn't interested in politics and I always thought the police were there to help us."

Mother-of-five Margaret Shukla (44), also from Yorkshire, was also a housewife. She became involved virtually full-time in the strike.

"At first, the women just made up food parcels and dinners. But as things went on we decided we didn't want to stay in the kitchen. We started going to meetings with the men and then we went on pickets."

"I think women being in-

voled made a lot of difference. We learned the union and we needed fighting force started, a lot of saying 'wish they to work'. But a went on, we'd ha if they had."

Early on in Janet Macrae's was severely bea who broke a bon He needed 20 sti wounds and was for four days. He with alleged 'br peace' and subse fined £450.

BRUTAL

The women d erous other exam

brutality that th nessed, includi and blackmail, about the aftern mer when a large



● Miners' wives from Kent stage a demonstration in Leicestershire to raise support for the striking miners in March of last year



Scabs stopped at Cwm colliery, Wales

ing flying pickets... was the main... to produce the... of women. Wo... have tradit... home, but over... usands have de

gone to prison and suffered degrading strip-searches.

Policing

THE massive and sophisticated policing operation against the strike has brought many in the mining communities to see the British state in

a different light. In effect, Britain's local police forces have been welded into a national force through the National Reporting Centre, a co-ordinating body based at Scotland Yard. Aided by a computer, this arranged the deployment of police around the country — it arranged 220,000 assignments in the first ten weeks of the

strike alone, from a pool of 13,500 men.

The police operate in squads of 23 officers known as 'police support units', which have received riot training which includes the 'snatch squad' technique as developed in the six counties.

Suddenly, villages where relations with the local 'bobby' had generally been friendly, found themselves besieged by vast numbers of often brutal police. The use of police cordons round Nottinghamshire, of road blocks, and of riot shields provoked many comparisons by miners and their supporters with the situation in the six counties.

Many hundreds have been arrested, and extraordinary bail conditions have been imposed, preventing strikers from picketing anywhere in the country or attending demonstrations or addressing meetings.

the enemy within'

IE PLUNKETT

the strike has been the unpicked groups of people from British delegations to nationalist areas weekend, miners' wives from visited the six counties to take Women's Day protest outside stay, several of the women strike, and how it has chang-

involved made a lot of difference. We learned more about the union and why the strike needed fighting for. When it started, a lot of women were saying 'wish they'd go back to work'. But as the strike went on, we'd have gone mad if they had."

Early on in the strike, Janet Macreadie's husband Jim was severely beaten by police, who broke a bone in his back. He needed 20 stitches to head wounds and was in hospital for four days. He was charged with alleged 'breach of the peace' and subsequently was fined £450.

BRUTALITY

The women describe numerous other examples of police brutality that they had witnessed, including intimidation and blackmail. They talked about the afternoon last summer when a large force of pol-



• (Left to right) Margaret Shukla, Nicola Boyle and Janet Macreadie, three miners' wives, visiting the North as part of a delegation for International Women's Day

ice sealed off the Yorkshire village of Armthorpe, chased pickets through the streets and smashed down doors in pursuit of them. "That evening", recalls Margaret Shukla, "there was a curfew. Anyone seen wearing miners' badges was arrested."

Such incidents changed their attitudes both to the British police and to the media. They also began to

draw parallels with the situation in the six counties and with struggles in other counties. A miner from Margaret Shukla's area was one of a fact-finding delegation of ten miners who visited Belfast last August and took part in the internment march at which John Downes was killed by an RUC plastic bullet.

"I realise myself now, if

this is happening to the miners, what is happening in the North of Ireland? And all over? That's why we like to go to meetings, so we can learn. Because we don't get told these things," said Margaret Shukla, and Janet Macreadie added:

"The strike has made me more aware of what other people are going through, because we've had a bit of it.

And if the strike had carried on much longer, we were next in line.

"They've said they're not going to use plastic bullets in England, so why have they trained the police to use them? Thatcher's told so many lies, nobody believes her about those plastic bullets."

STRUGGLE

In future, the women say, they will be continuing their own struggle and also will campaign on strip-searching and other issues. According to Janet Macreadie:

"No way will any of us women go back to the life we had, though at the time it was alright. Most of the miners' wives plan to keep their groups going.

"Every one of us can fight now, whereas 12 months ago we were housewives. Before the strike began, I saw things on the television news and thought 'that's awful', but that was it. Now if we don't like something we're going to try our best to get it altered. And if it means coming to Belfast — or anywhere — we'll do it, because we want first-hand experience.

"We want to know the facts that the people who are involved tell us, not what the news says, because all that's biased.

"The strike's ended, but our fight isn't, not by a long way. We've not been defeated. Last July, Thatcher called us 'the enemy within'. Well, she's still got the enemy within and we're proud of it."

Media

MINERS' anger has been compounded by the media coverage, which gave massive coverage of picket line violence but said nothing about police brutality. Where as everyone in Britain has heard of the taxi-driver who was accidentally killed, few have heard of the two pickets who died, Davy Jones and Joe Green.

Throughout, television and the press have behaved — as they do in Ireland — like agents of the British government, trying to persuade the strikers back to work, attacking Arthur Scargill and failing to present the reasons for the dispute. "I don't know anyone who buys the Sun newspaper any more," said one miner.

As a result of their treatment by government, police and media, and indeed the shameful behaviour of Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock, who failed to support the strike, many in the mining communities have come to see British politics in a new light. They are developing a new solidarity with Britain's black communities, who have given a lot of support.

The reaction of many to the Brighton bomb was 'Pity they bloody missed'. There is the beginning of an understanding about Britain's role in Ireland, which, hopefully, can now be developed.

mála poist

ALL letters should be addressed to: The Editor, An Phoblacht/Republican News, 31/53 Falls Road, Belfast, or 44 Parnell 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.

EUROPEAN UNION

• PADDY HACKETT

Blanket protest

A Chara,
Unknown to many people, we still have one POW on the blanket protest. He is Paddy Hackett who is currently in the hospital wing of Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight.

The reason for his being in the hospital wing is that Paddy was injured in a premature explosion in March 1976 while on active service in England.

His injuries were horrific. He lost his left leg from mid-thigh and his right hand and also lost a considerable part of his intestines. Apart from never receiving the correct treatment, he was tortured while in hospital after his accident by Special Branch detectives. To this day, he has been singled out for the most inhuman treatment.

He started his blanket protest on December 31st 1979 and maintains it to this day.

While in Wakefield Prison, his bedding was removed every day at 7am and not returned until 7pm. He was left with only a hand-towel, even when the weather was bitterly cold. Even the ordinary prisoners couldn't believe it when they saw him exercising in a cage, clad only in a blanket!

His resolve must be the staunchest ever witnessed and commands the greatest respect of all his comrades in English prisons and at home.

POW Department.



Fundamental difference

A Chara,
Unionist politicians have claimed that because the three members of the Irish Republican Army murdered in Strabane were armed that their 'security forces' were entitled to 'execute' them.

However, there is a fundamental difference between armed members of the IRA and their 'security forces' which they ignore. Members of the IRA are heroic Irish patriots in their own land fighting a war of liberation, while members of their 'security forces' are hirelings of an alien regime of occupation, who are waging a war of brutal suppression to maintain Britain's colonial establishment and deny us our right to sovereignty, justice and peace.

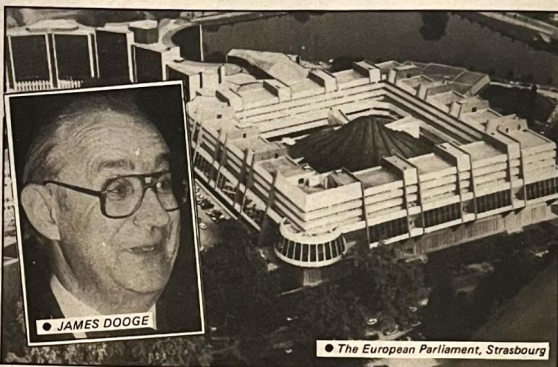
This is a distinction of paramount importance, which the lackeys in Leinster House,

A Chara,
To date, there has been little public debate on the implications for this country of the Dooge-Spinelli proposals for a European political union which are now being considered in EEC circles.

This contrasts with the position in Denmark, where we understand that public opinion is overwhelmingly opposed to the schemes currently being concerted by small groups of politicians and supra-national 'experts' behind closed doors. There has been no popular demand for a European union either in Ireland or any other EEC country. May we ask for space in your paper to draw attention to some of its dangers?

The interim report of the Dooge Committee was leaked in Denmark last November and was subsequently officially published. Its main recommendation is that the EEC states should call an inter-governmental conference to draft a treaty of European political union to extend the existing EEC into quite new areas. The final report of the Dooge Committee is to be presented to the next EEC 'summit' at the end of the month and it is intended to make it the principal item on the agenda for the EEC's June 'summit'.

The union scheme, and if Professor Dooge and Garret Fitzgerald have their way, the twenty-six counties could be committed, within a few months, to participating in drawing up a new European treaty which would have the effect, if implemented, of giving an irreversible blow to state independence and neu-



• JAMES DOOGE

• The European Parliament, Strasbourg

trality as this state still possesses.

The Dooge Committee and the related Spinelli report, which has already been sent to the Leinster House for debate from the European 'parliament', proposes the phasing out of the veto which each EEC member state has at present on any matter it considers to be of vital national importance. Once that happens, the last vestige of state sovereignty and independence is abandoned and we would henceforth have to obey the majority wishes of the other EEC states in many crucial areas of public policy.

The European union now being proposed would have the most serious consequences for Irish employment and our economy. It should alarm all trade unionists and business interests concerned with indigenous Irish development.

It proposes a drastic reduction in the ability of an EEC member state to pursue economic, budgetary, monetary and industrialisation policies in the interests of its own citizens. There is passing reference to the promotion of solidarity between EEC states through encouraging the convergence of living standards between the richer and poorer areas.

But, as we all know, the gap between rich and poor areas of the EEC has widened, not narrowed, over the past decade. There is absolutely no reason for thinking that the further centralisation of the EEC, as Dooge proposes, would reverse this trend. It would, most likely, do the opposite.

The Dooge Committee says that the proposed European union should deal with 'security' and aim to co-ordinate the foreign policy of the EEC states — all of them except the twenty-six counties are NATO members. It was a full-time political co-operation

secretariat for this purpose, as well as EEC ambassadors in UN organisations and in countries where only a few EEC states are represented. The interim report then goes on to say:

"The objective of European political co-operation must remain the systematic formulation and implementation of a common external policy. Similarly in the case of defence, although the aim of European union is indeed the cohesiveness and solidarity of the countries of Europe within the larger framework of the Atlantic Alliance, it will only be possible to achieve that in a series of stages..."

We ask your readers, could anything be plainer than that? Some members of the public may be reassured to hear that Professor Dooge entered a reservation on this particular section on behalf of the twenty-six counties, as the Danish representatives on the com-

mittee did also. But it is surely significant that Professor Dooge — unlike his Danish colleagues — enters no reservation on chapter 1 of the report where it is stated that the European union should deal with "security", without qualifying adjectives. The Danes, on the other hand, say it should confine itself to "the political and economic aspects of security", which is supposed to be the official Irish position on European political co-operation!

Should we not be disturbed by this comprehensive commitment to European security-military aspects implied — which Professor Dooge shows himself willing to make on our behalf — though surely not without consulting Garret Fitzgerald who nominated him to the committee which has made him its chairman?

It will be interesting to see whether this passage survives in the final report when it comes out later this month. But its stark recognition that, in the eyes of eight of the ten participants, "the aim of European union" is to strengthen solidarity within NATO surely gives the game away as to the essential political purpose of the whole enterprise.

In conclusion, may we point out that there is no legal obligation whatever on the twenty-six counties under the EEC treaties to support or participate in this scheme for European union. And it is not impermissible for certain EEC circles, without any popular demand or democratic mandate, to seek to turn the EEC into something quite different from the body which the Irish people agreed to join in 1973?

We hope that the points made in this letter will alert your readers to the dangers of this proposed European union scheme. May we urge those concerned about these dangers to write to their public representatives about the matter, stressing that it is not in our interest to support European union and urging that they should oppose the Dooge proposals and press the Coalition to do likewise.

Anthony Coughlan,
Michael O'Leigh,
Irish Sovereignty
Movement,
24 Belgrave Road,
Dublin 6.

RTE, the twenty-six county state forces and judiciary all choose to ignore for their own nefarious reasons. The awful result of this is that after 800 years of crime, the British can still rely on Irishmen to preserve their dominion over us — "Garret Fitzgerald and I".

Ireland is in misery, and unfree to this day, because power is in the clutches of craven slaves and traitors.

Young Irish men and women awake and try to redeem your nation which opportunistic politicians have so shamefully repressed, squandered and betrayed on you.

P. Saunderson,
Dun Laoghaire,
County Dublin.

will appreciate that the hardships will continue for some considerable time after we reluctantly return to work.

Therefore we, as delegates, sincerely thank everyone who has been involved in helping our cause. You have been an inspiration to each and every striking miner in South Wales.

Thank you all very much.
Neville Williams,
Wayne Pedrick,
John Williams,
Eddie David,
South Wales NUM.

Comdt Tom Kelleher

A Chara,
The death of Commandant Tom Kelleher has seen the passing of a modern day Cu Chulainn. Those who knew him were enriched by his outstanding qualities of courage, chivalry, gentlemanliness and great humour.

Next to his native West Cork no place was dearer to him than County Kerry and, had he lived a little longer, he would have proudly attended the unveiling of the Ballyseedy Monument last weekend.

Although Tom would have turned 90 this year, his re-



• COMMANDANT TOM KELLEHER

publicanism and determination were as strong and pure as when he was a young man in command of No 5 section of the famous IRA West Cork Flying Column. He took a prominent part in many battles that are still household names like Crossbarry, Upton and Rossbarry. When the ill-fated truce of 1921 led to the tragic so-called 'Civil War', Tom held firm with the IRA in defence of the Republic and fought every bit as gallantly as before.

In many long hours of yarning with Tom over the years, one thing always shone through — his lack of bitterness against his military foes, both British and Irish Free

Staters. His great magnanimity, however, was equalled by his contempt for cowards and bullies, unscrupulous politicians, shonens West Brits, crawling-thumps, cant and hypocrisy.

I was deeply privileged to have had Tom as a friend for over 20 years and was honoured last year when he was a sponsor for me as the Sinn Féin candidate in the EEC elections. A measure of his generosity was that the £1,000 prize he won in the Kerry draw was presented to us at Christmas to defray outstanding election expenses.

He took pleasure in escorting friends and in his commanding voice declared:

"When I was a young lad in West Cork, I shot a lot of you fellows and if I had a rifle here today I'd do the same."

Such was the character of Commandant Tom Kelleher. He had pledged his life to secure justice and dignity for his people in a free Ireland and would accept 'no other law'.

To his sorrowing wife Sheila, daughter Maire, sons Tom, Cathal and Sean, I wish to express the deepest condolences of my family, the political prisoners and no doubt the unthought nationally minded people throughout Ireland.

Ar dheis De go raibh a anam uasal.

Richard Beal,
Killybegs,
County Kerry.

DESPERATE ATTEMPTS by the IRA to recruit a Scottish man with the breeding of a Rob Roy were thwarted when the man, 47-year-old Alexander Mulholland, was remanded in custody this week on a string of serious charges.

Last Saturday night, March 9th, the RUC were called out to Victoria Street in Belfast after receiving complaints that a drunk was causing a nuisance. When they attempted to arrest him a crowd of passersby intervened on the Scot's behalf.

He punched an RUC man and jumped into the patrol car where a submachine-gun had been left. He drove off and about 1½ hours later and 50 miles away, another RUC mobile patrol spotted the car parked at the side of the Loughgall Road near Portadown with a puncture.

Where was Rob? Hiding behind a ditch with his RUC submachine-gun. Did he use it?

Yes, several times, until two constables dived for cover into a hedge. A third RUC man, the driver, thinking it was the gunfight at the OK Corral, left the car in a hurry to join his colleagues.

It was now three against one.

Did Mr Roy surrender?

Like hell he did. He left the enemy to repair his puncture and drove off in their car. By now the RUC were fairly peeved and running short of patrol cars. Half-an-hour later a third patrol caught up with the Scot near Richill. The Tartan Terrorist slammed on the brakes and they crashed into the Rover, wrecking the two vehicles and forcing the Scot off the road. Injured and consciousness still firing, he was at last detained.

His entitlement to Green Cross is being considered.

IN JANUARY the wife of a striking miner from Cortonwood NUM (where the strike started) was interviewed on ITV's *News at One*. She spoke in favour of the strike and the determination of the miners to stay out. During the interview she mentioned

her address.

A few days later the following letter arrived at her house, addressed to 'The Thing with Blonde Hair'. It was from a Para in South Armagh. The postmark was Belfast.

Company (C)
2 Para
B.F.P.O. 803
28 Jan. 85

Think. We have just witnessed one of the most gruelling sights any Paratrooper could wish to witness, no not the sight of a friend shot blown-up or mutilated not the sight of a friend shot in the head by an innocent civilian burnt or shot in the head by a terrorist's bullet, something worse than that. YOU!! sitting there on NEWS AT ONE you made nearly 100 of us Para's throw up, we are pretty limited to our leisure time and when we put the TV on and see your fat ugly face and when we see you rabbiting on about a lost cause that's the hardest of war veterans losses there cool, to make as far away, not in distance but reality, as we are in Crossmaglen we still feel much hatred for the likes of you, the striking miners are BLIND and STUPID following an IDIOT, in the form of SCARGILL. YOU HAVE NO CHANCE DO!! written on behalf of the 2nd BN the Parachute Regt.

FIFTEEN years ago a republican arrested in the Falls area of Belfast with eight rounds of ammunition was sentenced to eight years imprisonment - one year for each round.

Since then, sentences for republicans have increased if anything. Loyalists, on the other hand, continue to get slaps on the wrist for 'illegalities' and in their defence they come out with tales that would make Hans Christian Andersen blush.

Suspended sentences were handed out a week ago to two Craigavon brothers, Joseph and Melvin Abraham, who admitted stealing eight SLR magazines and 250 bullets from their local Territorial Army centre, where both worked, last July. Of course, they were 'leaned' upon by a 'UVF godfather' and the poor souls had to drink over a dozen cans of beer to pluck up the courage for the night-time raid.

"50 another month has passed, one in which thankfully, not one member of the RUC or RUCR has lost a life."

Hardly had the ink

dried on this premature editorial in the February edition of the *Police Beat* magazine than nine RUC men were killed in Newry on February 28th.

The same magazine is sponsored by a wide variety of advertisements. That inserted by the Co-operative Funeral Service, 334 Ravenhill Road, East Belfast, is quite understandable but support for the magazine from the Omagh-based nationalist weekly *Ulster Herald* on page 46 is inexplicable.

Just last week in an editorial the *Herald* on the one hand complained about the IRA attack in Newry but on

The Liam Óg column

Rob Roy rides again

the other hand warned that "pressure is coming from the British and the loyalists to bolster up the Northern state..."

Seems like in the *Herald* offices, this pressure is working.

OVERHEARD in a Dublin pub recently, a novel version of the well-known Kevin Barry ballad: "Another mortar for old Ireland..."



AN article in the latest issue of *Banktalk*, the internal paper of the Bank of Ireland, won't please well-known Ardee businessman Alan Clancy.

In a banner headline the article declares, 'Don't keep cash at home... Let the Bank do the worrying'.

GOOD NEWS for the RUC.

They have recently been granted a sizeable increase in their retail allowances of up to £2,111 a year and entitlements to reimbursement of removal costs. Women constables who wear stockings have had their allowance increased from £22 to £25, back-dated to October 25th 1984, and language enthusiasts will be allowed up to £1,370 per annum if they learn a Slavic language, presumably to interrogate all those Czechoslovakian IRA hit-men.

Motor-vehicle allowances have also been revised. Essential users will be allowed lump sums of up to £477, depending on the size of the car, and mileage allowances of almost 21p for the first 11,000 miles.

Would any six-county domiciled, speeding Slav, wearing black tights and in the process of moving house, please contact the IRA through their nearest clergyman to have his or her name removed from the target list, please?

THE former Tory Trade and Industry Secretary, Cecil Parkinson, has gone through secretaries faster than Norman Tebbit went through floors in the Grand Hotel.

Last week Cecil had the satirical magazine *Private Eye* banned because it alleged he was having an affair with his latest secretary, Angela Mathew. Parkinson resigned from the Cabinet in 1983 when *Private Eye* revealed that he had ditched his former secretary, Sara Keays, who was pregnant by him.

Unlike Parkinson, Northern direct-ruler Douglas Hurd ditched his wife to marry his secretary, who is presently expecting the first child of the marriage.

Moves have been afoot for some time to restore the 53-year-old macho man to Thatcher's Cabinet and

allow Norman Tebbit to become chairperson of the Conservative Party.

Tory chiefs do not consider the prime minister Mrs Thatcher to be in any danger of coming under the roving eye of Parkinson. Whether or not the Cabinet secretary, Sir Robert Armstrong, is safe remains to be seen.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL

David Jones of the British Ministry of Defence has landed a handy number as deputy-director of Oxfam with an income in the region of £20,000 a year.

There is considerable anger from Oxfam workers, as the appointment of a man with a strong military background is a travesty of the charity's Quaker and pacifist tradition.

CYCLISTS in Sion Mills, County Tyrone, can pedal safely around the town for the next 12 months at least, following the ban from driving on UDR man George Black.

Black, while in a drunken condition, hit a cyclist in the town last September, putting him halfway through the windscreen. He and a passenger were consideredate enough to stop and help the dazed victim to the side of the road and told him to remain at the scene while they went for the RUC.

He waited, and waited, and waited and they were a long time coming back. In fact, they haven't come yet. However, Black was arrested shortly afterwards and in a Strabane court last week he was fined £120 and lost his licence for a year.

NAKED FORCE has taken

on a new meaning, if we are to believe an article in the London *Times* on February 22nd, a day after the Tyrone IRA shot and killed an RUC sergeant near Killylea in County Armagh.

Providing more 'shock, horror' than usual, the report from Richard Ford in Belfast informed us that the RUC man was killed "when two naked gunmen opened up with automatic weapons". The mind boggles!

BALLS are in short supply in Monaghan Garda Barracks these days, according to a notice pinned near the pool table in the barracks' recreation room, which reads:

"Will whoever took the black ball please return it as we have no more."

Could it be the same light-fingered garda who has been dropping his/her hand into the nearby cigarette machine and forgetting to pay for their nicotine supplies?

As with the balls, the cigarette machine is there no longer. The company which installed it, in the hope that it would relieve the gardai of some of the contents of their big wage-packets, cut its losses and removed it this week, since the money collected never seemed to tally with the number of cigarettes which had gone.

HOME and personal security is also high on the list of priorities amongst Tallaght, County Dublin, gardai.

Their concern goes further than the local barracks, however, as they have begun a 'social clinic' each Thursday in the Killinarden Resource Centre to deal with the 'problems' of local residents.

Britain's counter-insurgency expert, Brigadier Frank Kitson, would have called it 'low-level intelligence gathering', otherwise known as 'community policing'.

NOTES
© CORMAC



tv

REVIEWS

Distorted documentary

BY AINE MARTIN

NEWS-REPORTING was the subject of this week's Television on UTV on Tuesday night. The basic line in the programme is that TV reporting goes for shocking images rather than any kind of analysis of the pictures - that the TV reports expose rather than explain.

This is no doubt a valid criticism of TV reporting but some of the conclusions reached on this line of thinking were surprising, not to say rubbish. For instance, they argued that because US presenter Walter Cronkite had done a series of personalised reports on the Vietnam War and concluded that the war could not be won, this was enough to change US opinion and force American withdrawal. The casualties coming home each day, surely a very important consideration, were ignored. US President Johnson said if he'd lost Cronkite's support he'd lost 'middle America', so he didn't stand for re-election.

However, the programme was guilty of the gross distortion it accused TV news coverage of - the fact that the US marines didn't pull out for almost another decade was unmentioned. The Watergate scandal of President Nixon's term of office was a story told by the newspapers which didn't become subject to the scrutiny of TV until the Congressional hearings into the affair. The TV producers will ignore any story that isn't good television and blow out of all proportion any small story that has dramatic, action-packed pictures. The greatest failure of this programme was its refusal to face the manipulation and censorship which governments exercise over this most powerful of media, and although that may be another night's work, I don't think it will be faced.

There was a little bit of whingeing about the Falklands/Malvinas adventure (which changed from a 'crisis' to a 'war' as soon as the Argentines sur-

rendered) and more about the news blackout during Reagan's invasion of Grenada - the US newsmen as much more vociferous than their British counterparts.

Ireland was ignored almost totally, there were no complaints about censorship here. And why should there be - after all, the media plays an active part in creating the distorted image of Ireland we see on our TV screens.

Oíche Dé Máirt d'fhéach Iris 85 clár Gaeilge de chuid RTE (an rud is annamh is iontach!) ar fhábanna agus ar fhorbairt Tamlacht, Condae Bhaile Átha Cliath, le mion-scruid ar an sciol Ghaeilach ata sa mbailé sin, Sciol Santain.

De réir na muinteoirí, níl ach 5% de na tuismitheoirí ag labhairt na Gaeilge sa bhaile ach fós tá an teanga go fóra ag na hógáin. Agus tá cuid de na tuismitheoirí ag foghlaim na Gaeilge chomh maith, ionas go bhféadfaid siad Gaeilge a labhairt lena bpáistí nuair a thagann na páistí abhaile ón sciol.



Summary execution of a Viet Cong suspect by a Saigon police chief

Níl móran ar fáil ag na hógáinigh insan baile nua seo ach cé gur briseadh an méid sin geall de chuid rialtas Theach Laghean agus de chuid comhairle chondae Bhaile Átha Cliath, tá spiorad na ndaoine go léidir fós - sin an deá-scál, sin agus go bhfuil sciol Ghaeilach nua ag oscailt ansin sa bhFómhar.

"Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they're not out to get you." Okay, so you've heard it a thousand times before, but Friday's screening of the 20/20 Vision programme, *MIS's Official Secrets*, on Channel 4, proved that we paranoids aren't always looking over our shoulders for nothing.

The bulk of British Intelligence's work is not the

glamorous world of James Bond-style confrontations but the constant surveillance, bugging and computerised filing of data on the political activities of 'subversives'.

The term 'subversive' covers a wide range of people, from militant trade unionists and left-wing political groups to CND activists and members of the National Council for Civil Liberties.

The tapping of trade unionists' phones is an everyday occurrence and Arthur Scargill sometimes punctuates his conversations by hurling abuse down the line to those listening in.

The role of British Intelligence in the North was also briefly touched on when Anne McHardy, a former *Guardian* correspondent, described how

she had a row with her husband on the phone but said nothing to anyone about it until a rather drunk Northern Ireland Office head of information, the late Thomas Roberts, raised the matter. When McHardy questioned him on how he knew about the row, Roberts replied:

"Oh, I know all about you. We like to control journalists like you. We've had you followed all over."

Needless to say, the Free State's intelligence service takes its lead and collaborates closely with its British counterpart.

There's always someone watching me, watching you. As they used to say in *Hill Street Blues*: "Let's be careful out there."

film

Weird!

BY EDDIE STACK

"IF WE ATE what we listened to, we'd all be dead," said the man who stood in front of me at the queue for *Repo Man*. I repeat his words here not for any great wisdom that they may hold but because they tell you quite a lot about the type of person who is going to see *Repo Man*, the motion picture. Yes, I know.

With the newspapers desperately trying to increase their declining sales with shock-horror-outrage stories of joyriders and deathmobiles, *Repo Man* might, on the surface, interest those interested in car theft, pillage and chases.

However, despite the fact that *Repo Man* deals with the illegal repossession of automobiles, it has as much to do with car theft as the *Book of Kells* had with being a frog. *Repo Man* is a weird film and one that has attracted rave reviews at that. As it's also a movie that puts forward a

social view that gets you very much on its side, it's such a pity that it really isn't very good.

Our story begins in a Californian suburb where the highway meets that great conurbation of sprawling asphalt that is Los Angeles. A beat-up Marino car is motoring at breakneck speed, swerving unsteadily as it goes. It is driven by a cramped, hunched-up weirdo with black shadings on one side of his spectacles, a hofeful of sweat under his armpits and hair that looks like an aircraft carrier for files.

PULLED

Sure enough, he is pulled up by a speed cop and by the type of speed cop that gets off his bike slowly and strolls up to your car even more slowly in an attempt to make you really worried by the fact that he has flagged down your auto.

The cop looks in on the weirdo and smelling a rat (and probably a lot more) decides to look into the trunk of the car. As he does, however, a blazing light envelops him and the cop vanishes just like those poor suckers in *The Day After*.

All that's left of him are his two boots which burn quietly in the wind as the



Emilio Estevez, son of Martin Sheen, gives a shining performance as Otto the repo man

weirdo drives the auto away. Weird, right?

OTTO

From the weirdo's auto we now come to Otto.

Otto is more clean cut than the weirdo but as a dropped-out college kid, his mind is probably in a bigger mess. He works in a store for some pocket-money but ends up telling the store manager he can go and... em... go away. Otto will not take the advice of his spotted bespectacled brother who sings odds to the American Way of Life. "Gee," he tells Otto, "You

should have kept your job in the store. Within two years you could make assistant manager!"

Otto, however, decides to ask his parents for the money they promised him to go to Europe. But the money is gone, donated by the parents to a right-wing bible-thumper. You see, Otto's parents are the type of people who... well... who sing hymns together.

Otto heads into town and is tricked into repossessing a car by a Repo man. Back at the Repo compound, Otto is

drafted onto the Repo team where he discovers a world of rival Repo teams, a new girlfriend who is awaiting the arrival of aliens from outer space, a vicious woman with a steel hand who wants to track down the aliens, not to mention the car with the gamma-ray boot and the gaga crazy driver.

And we still haven't mentioned the mohican haired punkette who robs off-lences of their bottles marked simply 'drink' or her skinhead boyfriend who, when shot robbing an off-lence, falls to the floor with the dramatic words,

"Society is to blame".

Repo Man is off-beat, but it also has pretensions to slap off American capitalisms in quite an open manner for an American flick. As the general mayhem ensues, we see television sets full of either bible-thumpers or bodies being dragged around the streets of El Salvador.

In the shops the products are straight out of 1984: simply boxes of cornflakes marked 'cornflakes' or food marked 'food'.

Every car has one of those silly little fir trees on the windscreen that are supposed to keep it pong-free. And every car has a crucifix which the Repo man automatically throws out the window.

All this is interesting stuff but the problem with *Repo Man* is none of it really makes much sense in the end.

The plot goes haywire with all the Repo teams chasing the car with the gamma-ray boot and moves from savage satire to general defiance. You just sit around waiting for the jokes, which - when they come - are very funny but which sadly are a bit too scarce for all-round hilarity.

If you are in an odd mood however, and are prepared to shell out £3.75 to satisfy it, then *Repo Man* is the film for you.

sport

Talent on wheels

BY COLM O'ROURKE

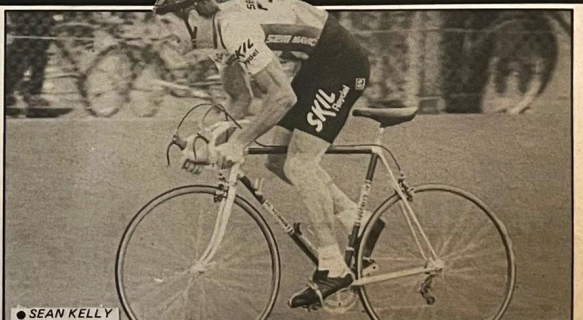
LAST WEEKEND saw another great coup for Irish cycling with Sean Kelly and Stephen Roche keeping the flag flying by coming first and second in the Paris-Nice road race. Following the previous weekend's display by Marcus O'Sullivan, it is clear that there is remarkable sporting talent in this small island.

Back at home there were National Hurling League ties with two quarter-finals being played. In the first, Limerick outclassed a spirited Dublin side, Limerick forwards, McCarthy, Kelly and FitzGibbon took their scores with style and, although the Dubs played a lot better in the second half, they did not match a Limerick team which appears to be set on taking the title.

In defence, Limerick's Leonard Enright had a sound game, but slipped up once, allowing Dublin to score one of the best goals I've seen in a long time - a real rasper scored by Danny Fitzgerald. Another potential goal-scoring effort, this time by Dublin's Vinnie Holden, was thwarted when Limerick goalkeeper Tommy Quade pulled off a magnificent save.

The Clare-Kilkenny match was a much closer affair with the 'Cats' making their, by now customary, second-half comeback. In the first half the Clare hurlers were scoring points from all angles. If their standard is so high this early in the year then roll on the championship.

In the end, however, it was Kilkenny who narrowly missed victory when substitute John Lawlor failed to score a sitter in the dying minutes. The end result, a draw, has led to considerable controversy within the GAA as no extra time was played. As we go to press there is speculation that a re-match might not be



SEAN KELLY

allowed and that both teams will be disqualified from the competition.

As predicted last week, Down footballers defeated Roscommon and now join

three other Ulster teams in the final stages of the National Football League. Armagh face Down and Tyrone play Monaghan in the semi-finals. I'll stick my neck out and go for

a Tyrone/Down final, with Tyrone winning.

That should be worth a few free pints in Coalisland the next time I go down that way.

video

REVIEWS

Same as it ever was

BY JACK MADDEN

THE FARCICAL system of British justice in the six counties has been exposed in a video released this week by the Dublin-based Blade Productions theatre company.

Same As It Ever Was is the title of this half-hour satirical look at British repression in Ireland. Music from Talking Heads takes on a new meaning with improvised lyrics performed by Donal Lunny and Jack Lynch in the opening scene.

A fictional British army house raid and RUC interrogation is interspersed with the actual film-footage of repression — the Falls Curfew, the RUC riot in Derry on October 5th 1968, British soldiers beating civilians. But, as Northern nationalists would be aware, even the fiction is based on real-life experience.

The scene moves to a courtroom-cum-television studio where the judge is a stereo speaker with a wig on top. A prisoner, Jim Mc Se, sits in the dock while 'evidence' is presented as in the *This Is Your Life* programme.

His teacher, RUC interrogator and a British army officer are interviewed by a presenter and we learn that after years of arrests, internment and interrogations they have absolutely no evidence against Mc Se.

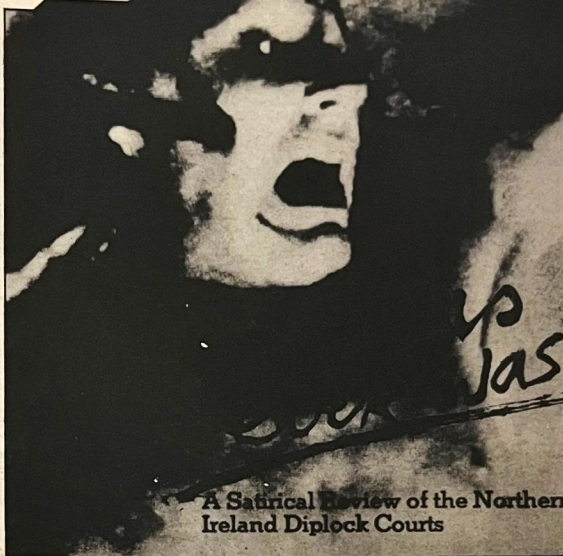
leabhar

We are then introduced to the only 'evidence' — a paid-performer who enters the courtroom and to the music of Elvis Presley's *Heartbreak Hotel*, explains how he was bought with threats and inducements to 'finger' Mc Se. As his song ends, there is a silence of guilt and fear.

The scene switches to a newsroom where we learn that, on the perjurer's 'evidence', Mc Se is sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment while in an adjoining courtroom a UDA member is given a suspended five-year sentence for possession of guns — the judge accepts that he has turned over a new leaf by joining the church choir.

Moving Hearts' *No Time for Love* and a series of photographs taken by freelance photographer Derek Spiers at the internment anniversary demonstration in Belfast last August, when John Downes was shot dead, with more photographs of earlier plastic bullet victims, end this video.

Satire and the stark reality of life in the six counties, which this video combines, demonstrate the absolute farce that is termed 'justice' in the



A Satirical Review of the Northern Ireland Diplock Courts

North today. This is a worthwhile venture by Blade Productions who have approached their subject with an energy

and imagination which a straightforward documentary could never do.

Copies of *Same As It Ever*

Was are available from Blade Productions, 2nd Floor, 3 Belvedere Place, Dublin 1, phone 787801.

Cíathán Ciarraioch

LE IOMHAR Mag AOIDH

SEO leabhar iontach suimiúil fá Ghaelacht Bhaile na Sceille i gCondae Chiarraí. Rugadh an t-údar ar an bhaile sin sa bhliain 1906 agus chaith sé tamall san Oileán Uí roimh an dara cogadh mór. Tá tuairim agus dtean caibidl sa leabhar ar abhair mar: 'An Óige', 'Iascaireacht', 'Ceardaíocht' agus srl. agus ag déireadh an leabhair tá liosta de sheanfhocail agus nathanna dá coitianta ar an bhaile.

Bhí an t-údar ina ghasúr scoile nuair a thosaigh an chéad cogadh domhanda agus bhíodh sé amuigh ag iascaireacht i mbeag beag rannha lena athair. Is iomaí bád a cuir-eadh go grinnall na farraige ar

an chósta sin ag na tíortha a bhí ag troid agus is iomaí éadail is tháinig i dtír ó na báid chéanna.

Seo mar a chuireann an t-údar síos air:

"Tháinig gach saghas raice go Baile na Sceille ar an uair sin. Chocra féin báid bheatha agus corpr as complacht an lin-

éar Lusitania ag teacht i dtír. Óiche Lee Coille 1916. Tháinig ceithre chéad barraille óna paraifín isteach go Tráigh Bheag Phraisce i mBuaile Uí Chóill."

SPÉIS

Sa cheibidil 'Ceardaíocht' chuir mé spéis mhór sa chun-tas fán líon. Bhíodh sé mar ghnás ag na daoine an líon a thás agus nuair a bhí sé réidh acu i scioból thigheadh an siostáir agus dhéanadh sé an líon réidh fá choinne na mban.

Dhéanadh na mná an líon a shíomh agus a fhíodóir, eacht sna tigheanna. Bhí mé féin ariamh den bhardúl nár



bhain an líon ach le Leath Cuinn. Tá cur síos ar leighesanna

a bhíodh ag na daoine agus seo mar chuireann an t-údar síos ar leighes amháin nach mbeadh dúil agam féin ann:

"Bhí cag gé go maith don té go mbeadh goiríní agus naoscóideacha air — é a bhaillú faid a bheadh sé úr agus na géanna a bheadh ag iníor ar pháirc úrghlaist... Tá mé cinnte do go raibh na seandaoine seo ag baint úsáide as penicillín agus go raibh sé le fáil go fuiriseach i gceac an ghandail".

Is spéisiúil na cuntais ar mhuintir na háite a imíodh mar spailpín, agus ar na tairm tairm, Bhí lucht Chólaiste na Tríonóide mar thairm tairm ar chiud den cheantar. Bhain mé sult as an leabhar seo agus is tiú go mór a léamh.

Cíathán na Sceille le Michael Ua Ciara. Foilsithe ag Coscinn, Baile Átha Cliath. Luach £2.50.

music

Festive weekend

BY PHIL TONER

FOR FANS of folk and traditional music, Dublin is very much the place to be over Paddy's weekend. Christy Moore makes a welcome return to the boards at the Olympia on March 17th and 18th, backed up by fine groups of musicians.

But the main event this weekend is, undoubtedly, the Dublin Irish Music Festival which runs from Thursday, March 14th to Monday, March 18th. This festival features a wide variety of acts and it is worth taking a close look at the programme of events.

This is the third year of the festival which seems to be getting better and better as the years go by. One of the big successes last year was the bringing together of a large group of women traditional musicians and singers. This led to the formation of the group Macalla which have brought out an excellent album since then. Macalla are performing at

the opening of this year's festival on Thursday night at the Mansion House. Feminism in action, with full bar facilities!

On Friday, the main event is a concert in Liberty Hall featuring the Figgy Duff Band, Mary Bergin, Any Old Time and Fionnuisce. The Figgy Duff Band are from Newfoundland in Canada and should provide an interesting mixture of Irish traditional and Newfoundland music. Fionnuisce is a young Dublin band who provide lots of fun on stage. They are well worth going early to hear.

FIRST-CLASS

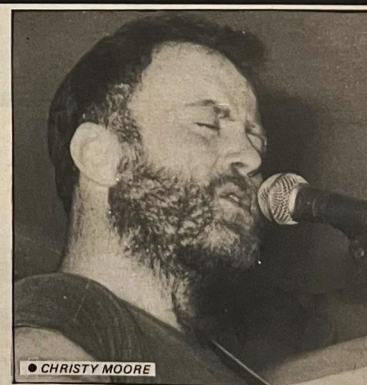
Another concert at the

Mansion House on Saturday includes the music of Dolores, Sarah and Rita Keane, John Faulkner, Sean MacDonncha, Blasket Sound, Tara and Dermot Diamond and more. This should prove a first-class event, affording people the rare opportunity to see and hear Sarah and Rita Keane (Dolores' aunts), by now legendary in traditional singing circles.

On Monday night, the grand finale takes place in an unlikely venue — the National Concert Hall — where the bill includes Kinvara, Dick Gaughan, Seamus and Manus Maguire, Jackie Daly, Gary O'Brien, Charlie Lennon, Liam O'Flinn and Arty McGlynn.

Dick Gaughan is getting extensive airplay at the moment with his new single — an interesting interpretation of Joe South's *Games People Play*.

Tickets for this gig match



CHRISTY MOORE

the opulent surroundings, ranging from £4 to £6.50, and can be obtained at the Concert Hall. If you can afford it on the night, why not go along?

Space doesn't allow mention of a host of other events

which are to take place during the festival. There are workshops, seminars and rakes of other gigs all of which are advertised in the Festival Programme which is sure to include something, somewhere, to interest you.

Imeachtaí

BALLAD SESSION

Music by Dan Paddy Andy
8pm to 11pm Friday, 15th March
Derby House Hotel
KILDARE
County Kildare
Tallie £2.50
Organised by Sinn Féin

SPRIGGS MONUMENT

UNVEILING

Assemble 3pm Saturday
16th March
High House
Blarney Street
CORK

WELCOME HOME NIGHT
FOR RAYMOND WATSON
8.30pm Saturday 16th March
Ashley Arms
DUNDALK
Tallie £2

Organised by Louth Sinn Féin

BALLAD SESSION

& BUFFET

Guest speaker: Danny Morrison
8pm Saturday 16th March
Castle Inn
Christchurch Place
DUBLIN
Tallie £10
Bar extension
Organised by Dublin
North-East Sinn Féin

VOL TOM SMITH

COMMEMORATION

(10th Anniversary)

Assemble 11.45am

Sunday 17th March

Berkeley Road Church

DUBLIN

All cumann to attend

with banners

SOCIAL & IRISH NIGHT
Featuring the Northern Stars
10pm Sunday 17th March
Crossroads Inn
MILLTOWN
County Cavan
Bar extension
Tallie £2.50
Organised by Sinn Féin

BALLAD SESSION

Featuring Shilleagh

10pm-1.30am Sunday 17th March

High House

EMVALE

County Monaghan

Tallie £2.50

Organised by Sinn Féin

SOCIAL

Sunday 17th March

Tower Bar

CLONES

County Monaghan

Tallie £3

BALLAD SESSION

(In aid of the POW Department)

8pm Monday 18th March

Eccles Lounge

DUBLIN

Tallie £1

DUNNES STRIKERS

BENEFIT DISCO

8pm to 11.45pm

Monday 18th March

CIE Hall

Inchicore Square

DUBLIN

Tallie £2 (unwaged £1)

Organised by the strike committee

ANTI-APARTHEID

MONTH OF ACTION

LECTURE: INTERNATIONAL

STRUGGLE AGAINST

APARTHEID

Speaker: E. S. Reddy

(Asst Gen. Secretary United

Nations)

8.15pm Tuesday 19th March

Mansion House

DUBLIN

SHARPEVILLE MASSACRE

COMMEMORATION

(25th anniversary)

1.30pm Thursday 21st March

Merrion Square

DUBLIN

CONCERT

(Featuring Ann and

Francie Brolly)

9pm Saturday 23rd March

Urbshehanny Hall

SCOTSTOWN

County Monaghan

Tallie £2

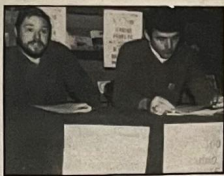
Belfast Gaelic radio

BY CIAN MAC AOIDH

IRISH will be well and truly in the air on St Patrick's Day when 12 hours of programmes in Gaelige will be broadcast on Belfast's first ever Irish language radio station, Raidio Feirste. Plans for RF300 — the byline for the new station — were revealed at a public launch and press reception on Tuesday, March 12th.

Gearóid O Cearraire, editor of the daily Irish newspaper *Lá*, told the press and invited guests, including local MP Gerry Adams, who was the only elected representative to attend, that the station would be run by language activists. He said Raidio na Gaeltachta had also started as a pirate radio before winning the support of the broadcasting powers.

"We hope the relevant authorities will not close down Raidio Feirste but realise instead that we are providing



● Gearóid O Cearraire and Liam O Maolchluiche — confident of running Belfast's first Irish language radio station, RF300

a service beneficial to the whole community," he said. "We accept that technically we are breaking the law but the real offenders are the broadcasting chiefs who ignore the needs of Irish speakers."

He went on to say that the staff of *Lá* were confident of running RF300 on a daily basis after St Patrick's Day.

RF300

Liam O Maolchluiche, chairperson of the Sean Mac Diarmada branch of the Gaelic League, read a prepared statement at the launch.

"RF300 is designed to promote the

Irish language in a constructive manner, while at the same time increasing the pressure on the broadcasting authorities to provide a proper service for Irish speakers.

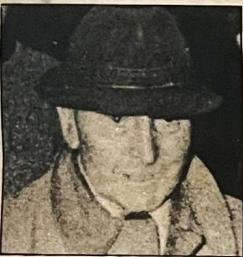
"The issue of Irish broadcasting has been largely ignored by the BBC and UTV, despite the fact that the North is now experiencing an unprecedented boom in the Irish cultural revival.

"In Scotland the BBC and IBA provide over 18 hours of Gaelic radio and television programmes per week. In October 1984 the BBC announced plans to inject £2 million into Gaelic broadcasting. In Wales over 50 hours of radio and 30 hours of television are broadcast by the BBC and IBA who co-operate to produce Welsh programmes.

"Nevertheless, in the North (where the percentage of Irish speakers in the general population is greater than the percentage of Gaelic speakers in Scotland) UTV and Downtown Radio broadcast no Irish at all. The BBC has yet to produce an Irish television programme and total radio broadcasting in 1985 will be less than 12 hours.

"RF300 will be run in a totally open manner from the Ard Scoil, Divis Street, Belfast."

Death of Luke Ward



LUKE WARD of Castleblakeney, Ballinasloe, County Galway, died suddenly at his home on Tuesday, March 5th.

A veteran republican activist and campaigner, Luke was a familiar figure at rallies, demonstrations and commemorations all over Ireland. No distance was too far for him to travel in spite of his age, and he had planned to support the rally at Armagh Prison on Sunday, March 10th.

The large crowd at his funeral in Caltra was a testimony to the affection and respect he inspired. Luke was a great lover of Irish

traditional music and the local branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann were at his funeral to pay a final tribute.

A guard of honour accompanied the Tricolour-draped coffin to the graveside. An oration was delivered by former president of Sinn Féin Ruairí Ó Bradaigh, in which he praised Luke's stamina and unwavering loyalty to the republican cause.

George Plant remembered

A LARGE GATHERING attended a graveside commemoration to George Plant organised by South Tipperary comhairle centair in St Johnstown Cemetery, Fethard, last Sunday, March 10th.

IRA Volunteer George Plant was executed by a Free State firing squad on March 5th 1942 in Portlaoise Prison. In December 1941, charges against him — for the killing of a Wexford man believed at the time to have been an informer — were withdrawn when two of his co-accused revealed that they had been tortured into making incriminating statements.

The Fianna Fáil administration of the day, in contravention of European law, issued an emergency powers order and transferred the case to the special military court to try him again on the same offence. He was convicted and shot.

Last Sunday republicans, under the glare of three car-loads of Special Branch detectives, marched from Coolbawn Crossroads behind a five-person

colour party and the Castletyons Pipe Band from Cork, to the Protestant cemetery.

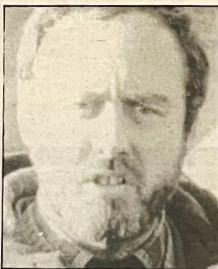
Finbar Kissane chaired the proceedings and on the platform were Elizabeth Plant, sister of the executed Volunteer, and the two sisters of the late Ned Carrigan, a well-known IRA veteran.

ORATION

Sinn Féin representative for Mid-Ulster, Danny Morrison, gave the oration.

He attacked the RTE ban on Sinn Féin as an insult to the intelligence of people in the twenty-six counties and said it was a lie for the Dublin government to accuse the IRA of being out to overthrow and destabilise the Free State.

Carrick-on-Suir Sinn Féin Coun-



● DANNY MORRISON

cillor Eddie Doherty laid a wreath on behalf of the Republican Movement and the commemoration ended with the playing of the national anthem.

Coiste Cuimhneachain na Poblachta

REPUBLICAN COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE

Applications for speakers at Easter commemorations should be made as soon as possible to:

An Runai,
Coiste Cuimhneachain na Poblachta,
44 Cearnóg Pharnell,
BAC 1.

Easter Lilies
available from:
Mrs Peg King,
29 All Saints Park,
Raheny,
Dublin 5.
Price: £15 per 1,000

Honour Ireland's
dead —
wear an
Easter Lily

WORLD VIEW

European elections

THE EXTREME RIGHT-WING National Front received an estimated 8% of the vote in the Canton (departmental) elections in France last Sunday, March 10th, only 2% short of the 10% needed for 'national recognition'.

Other right-wing parties received 16% of the vote, whilst the centre-right Gaullists (the Giscardian UDF) scored over 30%. The combined vote of the Socialists and Communists came to 39%, with the small left-wing parties polling 2%.

Although the Socialists and Communists polled better than they expected, the increase in the extreme right-wing vote will spell trouble for President Mitterand, if the National Front decide to swing in behind the Gaullists and the UDF for next Sunday's second round. If the National Front do decide on this strategy, the right as a whole in France could take over half of the 36 departmental councils now run by the left-wing coalition.

GERMANY

In Germany, it was bad news for the Green Party as a revived Social Democratic Party (SPD) stole a march on them during elections in Saarland, West Berlin and Hessen.

The Social Democrats campaigned on environmental and anti-nuclear issues, normally the preserve of the Greens, and managed to woo away

a considerable number of Green votes. The Greens, who won 15 seats in West Berlin but none in Saarland, accused the SPD of 'political opportunism'. The SPD are now poised to mount a strong challenge to the centre-right coalition of Chancellor Kohl.

GREECE

In Greece, Andreas Papandreu premier of the ruling Socialist Party (PASOK), has refused to support President Constantine Karamanlis in this week's Greek presidential election. PASOK have nominated Christos Sartzetakis, a member of PASOK — Karamanlis is a Conservative.

This marks Greece's continuing movement away from its traditional ties with Western Europe. Later, the US was asked to remove its bases from Greek soil, and the Greek government is constantly reviewing its membership of NATO. Also, the Greek premier made an official visit to Moscow, where he was accorded a welcome normally reserved for leaders of East European countries.

Turkey

IN DECEMBER 1984 ten members of the Turkish Peoples Liberation Front were sentenced to death by a military court in Istanbul. They join another 30 who are awaiting execution and 400 others who are appealing against death sentences.

Most of Turkey is under martial law or is in a state of emergency and has been since the coup in 1980. The Turkish economy under the junta has reached crisis point, with nearly 3,000 workers being sacked every month. As the people's discontent intensifies, so too does the regime's repression. For example, at the end of 1984, 197 people went on trial for 'crimes against the state', ten were sentenced to death, 25 to life imprisonment (life means life), and 71 received sentences of up to 23 years.

During the period October-December 1984, the Turkish junta arrested 2,000 'left-wing extremists' — 'six of them dead'. In January of this year, 23 members of various left-wing organisations were arrested and charged with distributing pamphlets, leaflets and posters, a 'crime' which carries a severe sentence.

In February, ten mothers of political prisoners went on trial for laying wreaths on Atatürk's monument in Istanbul. The wreaths carried inscriptions calling for an amnesty for political prisoners and an end to torture. The junta described the mothers' silent protest as a "public demonstration without official permission". The state is demanding three years imprisonment for this 'crime'.

Meanwhile, European countries are propping up this reactionary regime with supplies of money and weapons — Norway is delivering 12 FS fighters, whilst West Germany is supplying a 130 million Deutschmark financial-aid package this year.

Bolivia

MANY THOUSANDS of workers responded last Saturday, March 9th, to a general strike call against the repressive economic policies of the Bolivian government.

The government declared the strike illegal, and has called it a "sinister terrorist plot". The rate of inflation is running at nearly 3,000%, one of the highest in the world, and is causing enormous hardship for workers and peasants.

The leader of the Bolivian Workers' Confederation, Juan Lechin Oquendo, accused the Bolivian administration of "submerging Bolivia in hunger, desperation and misery".

This is the second general strike this year, the first being in January when workers held over 220 company executives hostage in a dramatic demand for wage rises. The company executives were held at 34 factories in La Paz and Santa Cruz. The Bolivian Red Cross mediated between the government and the workers, but the factory owners refused to negotiate unless the workers freed the executives. Government troops and police stormed a number of factories and many workers were arrested.

In the run-up to last Saturday's general strike, 50,000 marched in Bolivia's capital city, La Paz, on the previous Tuesday. In a sensational protest, the 15,000-strong miners contingent detonated sticks of dynamite on the route up to and outside the presidential palace.

Bolivia has had a civilian administration since 1982, but appear poised to return to military rule as the crisis deepens.

Ballyseedy commemoration

SEVERAL hundred republicans gathered in Kerry on Sunday, March 10th, to march to the unveiling of the completed Ballyseedy memorial. Led by a colour party, the parade included members of Fianna Éireann and Cumann na mBan and was accompanied by the Gil O'Brien Band from Tralee.

The chairperson of the Ballyseedy Memorial Committee, Gerry Savage, commenced the proceedings, welcoming the large crowd and paying tribute to the people of Kerry who had remained faithful to the ideals for which the men of the IRA's Kerry No. 1 Brigade had died. He also thanked all those who had contributed to the completion of the memorial, in particular the Ballyseedy Memorial Committee in New York.

After a decade of the Rosary was recited, *The Last Post* was sounded and several wreaths were laid. Seoirse de Ris, son of the late John Joe Rice, Sinn Féin TD for Kerry from 1957 to 1961, then spoke about what happened at Ballyseedy.

"This naked act of terrorism,



terrorism of the state, belies their moralising on the efforts of present-day republicans in their continuing struggle to force a British withdrawal," he said.

ORATION

The oration was given by Sinn Féin national organiser Caoimhín Ó Caoláin, who spoke of the "republicans in Kerry in every generation, who decade after decade have kept the flame of resistance alive".

He went on to speak of successive Free State governments who have used "internment, execution, forced emigration and alley-way murders in their efforts to break our resolve to resist British imperialism in our country".

O'Caoláin ended by likening the deaths of the three Volunteers in Strabane with the deaths at Ballyseedy, and he called for support for the anti-extradition rally in Portlaoise on March 30th.

exclusively against the nationalist minority, gave the North's Minister of Home Affairs draconian powers to restrict and suspend civil liberties.

It conferred wide powers of arrest without warrant, search and questioning, on the RUC and 'B' Specials as agents of the minister. The minister also had power to detain and intern without trial, hang, flog, prohibit coroners' inquests and to make regulations, each with the force of a new law, without consulting the parliament in Stormont.

Many regulations were issued during the following decades. In 1933 a regulation was made making it an offence to refuse to answer incriminating questions and in 1940 a regulation requiring everybody over the age of 14 to carry identity cards was issued.

VORSTER

It was little wonder that Vorster, the South African Minister for Justice, introducing a new coercion bill in April 1963, commented that he "would be willing to exchange all the legislation of that sort for one clause of the Northern Ireland Special Powers Act".

The power to intern without trial was frequently used. Internment was introduced from 1922 to 1924, 1938 to 1946, 1956 to 1962 and again in 1971.

Although the repeal of the Special Powers Act was one of the demands of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, it was not until 1972, following the fall of Stormont, that it was finally repealed. It was replaced in July 1973 by equally oppressive legislation, the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act (the EPA), which is still in force.

The Special Powers Act was introduced in the Belfast parliament on March 15th 1922.

DRACONIAN

The Act, directed and used almost



Eoin: Agus cad eile a dúirt sé? — And what else did he say?
Máire: Bhí sé an-spéisiúil. — It was very interesting.
Eoin: Má bhí sé ag caint mar gheall orm is cinnte go raibh sé spéisiúil. — If he was talking about me it's certain that it was interesting.
Máire: Luagh sé bean. — He mentioned a woman.
Eoin: Ní raibín, mo bhean cháile an ea? — Ní raibín, my wife is it?

COMHGHANN

COLLINS, Johnny. (8th Anniversary). In loving memory of my dear brother Johnny Collins who died on March 15th 1977. RIP, St Patrick, pray for him. Always remembered by his brother Mickie, sister-in-law Maureen and nephews and nieces.
KEENAN, Colm. **MCILLAN, Eugene.** (13th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vols Colm Keenan and Eugene McIllan, Derry Brigade, Óglagh na hÉireann, who were killed on active service on March 14th 1972. *Deo go raibh a n-anamacha.* Always remembered by their friends and comrades in the Derry Brigade.

KEENAN, Colm. **MCILLAN, Eugene.** (13th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vols Colm Keenan and Eugene McIllan, Derry Brigade, Óglagh na hÉireann, who died on active service on March 14th 1972. I measc laochra na hÉireann go raibh siad. Always remembered by Derry Sinn Féin.

KEENAN, Colm. (13th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of our dear son and brother Vol Colm Keenan, Óglagh na hÉireann, who was shot dead on active service on March 14th 1972. "If our deeds have not been sufficient to win freedom then our children will win it by better deeds." Always remembered by his loving father and brother Seamus.

KEENAN, Colm. (13th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of my dear brother Vol Colm Keenan who was killed on active service on March 14th 1972. Mary, Queen of the Gael, pray for him. "My heart conceals so many things that words can never say, but the pain of losing my dear brother will never go away." Always loved and missed by his sister Róisín and family.

KEENAN, Colm. (13th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol Colm Keenan, Derry Brigade, Óglagh na hÉireann, who died on active service on March 14th 1972. Mary, Queen of the Gael, pray for him.

"The dust of some is Irish earth, among their own they rest, and the same land that gave them birth has caught them in her breast, and we will pray that from their clay, full many a race will start, of true men like you, Colm, to act as brave a part." Always remembered by Nora, Cyril and family.

KEENAN, Colm. (13th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vol Colm Keenan, Óglagh na hÉireann, who was killed on active service on March 14th 1972. Mary, Queen of the Gael, pray for him. "Lay him away on the hillside, along with the brave and the bold, inscribe his name in the roll of fame, in letters of purest gold." Always remembered by Sean, Marion and family.

MCCAGHEY, James Francis. (9th Anniversary). In loving memory of our dear son and brother James Francis McCaghey who was murdered on March 17th 1976. Always remembered by his loving parents, brothers and sisters.

MCDONALD, Patrick. **MURRAY, Kevin.** (11th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vols Patrick McDonald and Kevin Murray, Tyrone Brigade, Óglagh na hÉireann, who died on active service on March 15th 1974. I measc laochra na hÉireann go raibh siad. Always remembered by their friends and comrades in the Tyrone Brigade.

MCDONALD, Patrick. **MURRAY, Kevin.** (11th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Vols Patrick McDonald and Kevin Murray who died on March 15th 1974. Always remembered by the McCaghey family, Woodhouse Crescent.

CUIMHNI BREITHLAIE

BURNS, Sean. In loving memory of Sean Burns who was murdered on November 11th 1982 and whose body was buried on March 18th 1983. Always remembered by the Toman family and Colette.

Comhbharón

BRESLIN, DEVINE. The Cleary/O'Callaghan Sinn Féin cumann, Limerick, extends sincere sympathy to the families Vols Charlie Breslin, David Devine and Michael Devine who were killed on active service on February 23rd. While Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace.

BRESLIN, DEVINE. The Eamon Dufferty Sinn Féin cumann, Strabane, extends sincere sympathy to the families, friends and comrades of Vols Charlie Breslin, Michael Devine and David Devine who were brutally murdered by the SAS on Saturday, February 23rd. Lay them away on the hillside, along with the brave and the bold.

BRESLIN, DEVINE. Deepest sympathy is extended to the families, friends and comrades of Vols Charlie Breslin, Mickey 'Bunt' Devine and David Devine, Óglagh na hÉireann, who were murdered by the SAS on Saturday, February 23rd. Thuig sé a

bheatha chun go mbeadh Éire saor. From Aodhan Harkin, Strabane.

BRESLIN, DEVINE. Sincere sympathy is extended to the families and comrades of Vol Charlie Breslin, Michael Devine and David Devine who were brutally murdered by the British army on February 23rd. From their friend Damian 'Stim' Harkin, Strabane.

BRESLIN, DEVINE. Sincere sympathy is extended to the families and comrades of Vols Charlie Breslin, Michael Devine and David Devine who were murdered by the SAS on February 23rd. RIP. From the Harkin family, Strabane.

BURNS, Deep and heartfelt sympathy is extended to the family, friends and comrades of our comrade Sean Burns who died suddenly on February 28th. I measc laochra na hÉireann go raibh a n-anam. From the republican POWs in the H-Blocks, Long Kesh.

SHIVERS. Deepest sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Pat Shivers. An Irish Republican. From John McGuffin and his other friends in San Francisco.



Beannachtaí

CRAWFORD, Geraldine. (Armagh). Best wishes on your birthday, Geraldine. Love from Mother.

CRAWFORD, Geraldine. (Armagh). Wishing you very happy birthday, Geraldine. From your brothers and sisters.

CRAWFORD, Geraldine. (Armagh). Happy birthday, Auntie Geraldine. From all your nieces, nephews and great-nephews.

CRAWFORD, Geraldine. (Armagh). Happy birthday, Geraldine. From Josie and the McCullough family.

CRAWFORD, Geraldine. (Armagh). Best wishes on your birthday, Geraldine. From Róisín and Dominic.

CRAWFORD, Geraldine. (Armagh). Happy birthday, Geraldine. Danny and I wish you lots of pints for you. Don't forget, you're not getting older — you're getting better! UTP. Best wishes from Danny and Jackie, USA.

CURNEEN, Jack. (Portlaoise). The Sinn Féin POW department, Dublin, wishes you a very happy birthday, Jack.

CURNEEN, Jack. (Portlaoise). Love and best wishes on your birthday. Thinking of you always. All our love. From the Curneen and McGee families.

CURNEEN, Jack. (Portlaoise). Birthday greetings and best wishes, Jack. See you soon. From Jobie and Nora.

DOHERTY, Hugh. **O'CONNELL, Joe.** (Parkhurst). Thanks for the painting, Hugh. I'll have to cheer for Tír Éire now! Best wishes to Harry and all the lads for St Patrick's Day and Easter. We'll drown the shamrock for you! From Thomas, Noreen, Páras and Tom.

DOUGLAS, David. (Portlaoise). Happy birthday, 'Dot'. Best wishes from the Rose of Finglas.

DOUGLAS, David. (Portlaoise). Birthday greetings, Dath. All the best from the Doherty family, Finglas.

DONNELLY, Vince. **HACKETT, Patrick.** **HOLMES, Paul.** (England). St. Patrick's Day greetings to all POWs in England and Ireland, especially to the women in Armagh and Limerick and to Vince Donnelly, Patrick Hackett and Paul Holmes. UTP.

DUGGAN, Harry. (Parkhurst). Best wishes on St Patrick's Day. Regards from Joe and Martina.

FANNING, Eugene. (Portlaoise). Happy birthday, Eugene. We'll drink a few for you in the GP. God bless. From the Markey family.

FANNING, Eugene. (Portlaoise). Happy birthday, Eugene. Or should I say ha? The best fuckin' fucker in the jail. Ask your mother Eddie if he would agree. Best wishes on your 25th (ha! ha! ha!). From the Rooster.

GAVIN, Jimmy. (Portlaoise). Best wishes for St Patrick's Day and Easter, Jimmy. Keep up your heart. Regards to all the lads there with you. Tíocfaidh arís. UTP. From Ted.

GAVIN, Jimmy. (Portlaoise). Greetings to Jimmy Gavin and all the lovely fellas in there with you. Love and kisses to all. From the callin' in London.

GAVIN, Jimmy. (Portlaoise). Greetings to Jimmy Gavin, a true and dear friend. Thinking of you. UTP. From Pat and all here in New York.

GAVIN, Jimmy. (Portlaoise). Greetings to Jimmy Gavin and all the POWs in Portlaoise for St Patrick's Day. From Tresa.

MCKEE, Michael. (Portlaoise). Happy birthday, Beaky. I love and miss you very much, all my love, from your ever-loving wife Patricia.

MCKEE, Michael. (Portlaoise). Happy birthday, Daddy. We love you. All our love from Mary, David, Patricia and Michael Anthony. xxx

O'SULLIVAN, John. (Portlaoise). Birthday greetings to you, John. Regards to all the lads there with you. Eleanor, Catriona and John Junior.



REMEMBERING THE PAST Special Powers Act

BY PETER O'ROURKE

THE SPECIAL POWERS ACT, one of the most oppressive pieces of legislation ever enacted, was extensively used for fifty years by the North's loyalist regime.

In the Spring of 1972, the Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act Northern Ireland 1922, commonly known as the Special Powers Act, was introduced by the North's Minister of Home Affairs, Sir Richard Dawson Bates. Originally introduced as a temporary measure to replace the extremely

harsh Restoration of Order in Ireland Act 1920, this draconian legislation was re-enacted annually until 1928, then for a period of five years, and in 1933 it was made permanent.

DRACONIAN

The Act, directed and used almost

COMHRA

Máire: Bhí mé thíos i dteach Phádraig a'fús agus bhí sé ag caint mar gheall ortas. — I was down in Pádraig's house last night and he was talking about you.

Eoin: Cad a bhí le rá aige? — What did he have to say?

Máire: Dúirt sé liom mar gheall ar na laethanta nuair a bhíodh an bheirt ag obair le chéile. — He told me about the days when the two of you worked together.

Eoin: Tá bílanta fada imithe ó bhíomar ag obair le chéile. Long years have gone past since we worked together.

Máire: B'shin a dúirt sé. — That's what he said.

Links forged at Armagh protest

BY JANE PLUNKETT

REFLECTING growing public opposition to the strip-searching of women prisoners in Armagh Jail, last Sunday's International Women's Day protest outside the jail was one of the biggest in recent years. It was notable for a strong women's contingent from Britain which included representatives from several black women's groups and from miners support groups.

Around 120 women made the journey from Britain to Belfast and on Saturday they attended workshops in Belfast organised by the local Stop the Strip-Searches committee.

The topics covered during sessions in the Whiterock Community Centre included poverty, culture, housing, women's centres and women's health.

The visitors also heard former Armagh prisoners and plastic-bullet victims describe their experiences of British state repression.

During the plenary session, members of the Sheffield Black Women's Group explained that they had come as an organised contingent to bring back first-hand experience of the six counties to the black community in their area, and in order to make more concrete the links which exist between their oppression and that of Irish women. Their views were clearly shared by delegates from other groups.

ENCOUNTERS

Northern nationalists, of course, have few opportunities for such encounters (not least because of the Prevention of Terrorism Act) and after Saturday's all too brief discussions, several said they looked forward to more extensive discussion with future delegations, so as to learn more about other women's struggles.

The atmosphere of international solidarity was continued at a social on Saturday (where British miners' wives who sang their picket-line songs received a standing ovation) and at Sunday afternoon's demonstration in solidarity with the republican prisoners in Armagh Jail, which, as in previous years, was the high point of the weekend's events.

The 700-plus crowd which gathered outside the jail included notably large contingents from Dublin and Duncannon. In the bright sunshine, men, women and children shouted greetings to the incarcerated women until they were hoarse.

The RUC, as usual, had detailed coaches, cars and minibuses at roadblocks on the outskirts of Armagh. At the jail, however, their numbers were smaller than at last November's protest, a reduction no doubt due to the large delegation from Britain.

After the chanting at last stopped, the demonstrators, already gathered in close to the jail, listened as the International Women's Day statement from the Armagh republican prisoners was read by former Armagh POW Breige Brownlee.

DEGRADING

Maura McCrory, who chaired the proceedings on behalf of Belfast Stop the Strip-Searches Campaign, then introduced North Belfast woman Pauline McKinney, who was strip-searched a



total of 225 times on her way to and from the Christopher Black show-trial. Pauline McKinney stressed the need to intensify lobbying and campaigning against this "degrading practice", concluding:

"They're trying to take the privacy of our bodies away from us now, and we must make sure they'll never do it."

These arguments were continued by Madge McArdle — whose daughter Mary is a remand prisoner. In the course of a moving speech, she strongly refuted Northern Ireland Office claims that strip-searching is necessary for 'security' reasons or carried out with 'sensitivity'.

Former POW Sile Darragh, who is head of Sinn Féin's Foreign Affairs Department, emphasised the importance of the Armagh women's struggle for the liberation of Irish women as a whole. Observing that the major obstacles and archaic social ideas encountered by Irish women

mean that every reform achieved is a "major step", she continued:

"Without the participation of women the national liberation struggle is lost, and without that struggle Irish women are lost, for only through the overthrow of a divisive, oppressive government and state can we be free. We cannot be liberated women in an enslaved country. It is our duty to liberate it."

SOLIDARITY

Maura McCrory then read out some of the many solidarity greetings received. They included messages from British Labour Party branches and women's sections, Labour Women for Ireland, Labour MP Jo Richardson and MEPs Christine Crawley and Richard Balfe, Outwrite Women's Newspaper, Arab Women's Group, National Organisation of Chilean Women in Exile, Indian Workers' Association, Caribbean Labour Solidarity, and other black groups

based in Britain, PAC Women's Section, British-Cuba Resource Centre, the IBRG, Union of Students in Ireland (USI), London Irish Women's Centre, Campaign for a Free Ireland, Cumann na Gael, Leeds Rape Crisis Centre, Sheffield Women's Aid, and Manchester War on Want Women's Group. From the USA came greetings from Women Against Imperialism (San Francisco), Palestinian Solidarity Committee (Chicago), Illinois Anti-Apartheid Group and Noraid.

The rally continued with several speeches from representatives of groups in the delegation from Britain, all of which met an enthusiastic response from the large crowd.

SWAPO

First, Tarin Borkenshire brought solidarity greetings from the SWAPO Women's Solidarity Campaign and from the Namibia Support Committee. She told a story which she said would be "very familiar" to her listeners — that of a Namibian woman who was sentenced to seven years imprisonment for saying at a rally that Namibians should give shelter to their freedom fighters. Her youngest child, born in prison, died from malnutrition at the age of two. Tarin Borkenshire concluded:

"Namibian women, like our sisters in this jail, are not defeated yet and never will be."

Determination to fight on "until we win" was also expressed by Nicola Boyle, wife of a sacked striking miner. In the course of a militant speech she stated:

"What we have been through in the last year is nothing to what has happened in Ireland. People in England only know what the British government want them to know."

(Nicola Boyle's husband and his three brothers were this week sentenced to 28 days in prison as a result of picketing.)

There was a warm reception too for Ann Godfrey, of the London Armagh Women's Group, who condemned strip-searching as "organised sexual harassment" and pointed out that mere reduction in the frequency of strip-searching would be unacceptable "because the threat of a search is in itself intolerable". The practice of strip-searching must be abandoned totally, she stressed.

SUPPORT

The growing support for the anti-strip-searching campaign within Irish trade unions was then outlined by Maeve Foreman of Dublin Sinn Féin. Next to speak was a Chilean exile who now lives in Britain. She said that in visiting the six counties for the first time she had seen the familiar poverty and intimidation of her own country, "and most important of all, the courage of a people fighting for freedom".

The last solidarity speaker was a woman from the Sheffield Black Women's Group, who referred to "our shared history of colonisation" and added:

"The PTA is very much a parallel with the Immigration Act, which has made criminals of so many black men and women in Britain."

"We will spread the word and we realise that the most effective way that we can support you is to understand that our struggle is very much like yours," she added, amid loud cheering.

To conclude the rally, the demonstrators then yelled solidarity greetings to each Armagh POW in turn, before reluctantly dispersing homewards.



● Maura McCrory



● Pauline McKinney



● Madge McArdle



● Sile Darragh



● Margaret Shukla

● Ann Godfrey

● Tarin Borkenshire

● Breige Brownlee