



**PO Box 2814, Dublin 7.**

DUBLIN SAYS NO TO SECTARIANISM

CHALLENGE SECTARIANISM DON'T CELEBRATE IT

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KILKEEL NEWRY  
NEWTOWNBUTLER ORMEAU RD  
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END SECTARIANISM DON'T ENDORSE IT

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SECTARIANISM

Irish Against Violence Campaign, 100 The Old Bldg, Waterford



# REPUBLICANISM

## The Way Forward

On the 20<sup>th</sup> May this year, a delegation from the INC National Executive attended a conference at the Europa Hotel in Belfast. The conference, entitled "Republicanism – The Way Forward" was chaired by Des Wilson and Bill Rolston.

The aim of the conference was to discuss how a modern democratic republican government might be brought about in Ireland. As Des Wilson put it, "We are hoping that this conference will be a good exchange of views, treating each other with courtesy – however we agree or disagree with each other... We hope that good ideas, new ideas, self-confident ideas will emerge which will give us an opportunity to say how good government can be created by our people for the first time ever in this part of Ireland. It is a magnificent challenge and whatever about present political arrangements – whether we agree with them or not – we are the people who will have to put shape and form and decency on future government in Ireland. We belong to that great tradition stretching from pre-Christian civilisation to the present day."

It is safe to say that every shade of republicanism was represented on the day, however, some were there in an individual capacity as opposed to representing their parties. Others were there simply to justify their positions and castigate others for "not being republican enough". The INC was there to listen. Anyone who wanted to speak was allotted five minutes to do so. INC delegate Cathal McCarthy availed of this opportunity to highlight some of the challenges facing republicanism in Ireland today. In summary, he said "To get to real republicanism is a hard job; it means raising everybody's self-esteem; it means people having a sense of ownership, a sense of responsibility in their own affairs. Look at the rate of participation in elections both for local and government: its pathetic – 50%, 30%, whatever. People just don't think, just don't feel they belong. That's something that's needed in a republic: everybody must feel that they belong and everybody must feel that they matter."

Unfortunately, the conference was poorly attended, but it did serve to highlight the biggest problem facing Irish republicanism today – division. Republicans need to stop pointing the finger at each other and apportion blame where it really belongs – with those who set the pace and agenda for change, namely, the British government. Politics is "the art of the possible" and if we work together, anything is possible. The INC, for its part, will continue to seek to bring together people from all parties and none to work for Freedom, Unity, Justice and Peace.

### A new feature to INC NEWS is "Your Letters".

If you have anything you would like to say or if the newspapers have refused to publish your letters, then send them to us and we will, space permitting, print them. Send your letters to:

Irish National Congress, PO Box 2814, Dublin 7.  
or e-mail us at  
[inc32cne@eircom.net](mailto:inc32cne@eircom.net)

## Your Letters

*(This letter was sent to the Irish Times but not published)*

Sir – In the early nineteen seventies a Unionist group in Co. Tyrone wrote an open letter (which was published in the Irish Times) to the then Taoiseach Jack Lynch. In the course of their letter they stated that they regarded the English, Scots and Welsh as their fellow countrymen, and the people of the twenty-six counties as foreigners, 'just as Spanish and Brazilians are foreigners'.

On that basis, it is clear that the Unionist/Orange elements in the six counties are not - as Bro. W Breen asserts- our 'fellow country men'. They are foreigners – and not particularly interesting ones. If the Orangemen of the twenty six counties profess allegiance to the Head of another state, they would seem to be in breach of the Constitution of this one ('Fidelity to the nation and loyalty to the State are fundamental duties of all citizens' Article 9, sub-section 2).

However well intentioned the decision to permit an Orange march in Dublin is pretty insensitive. Comparisons with a Ku Klux Klan march in Harlem or a bunch of Nazis strutting through Jerusalem are valid.

Yours faithfully,

Finbarr Dowdall  
Glanmire, Co. Cork

A Chara – Just to say thanks for the demonstration at the unveiling of the plaque in Dublin to commemorate the Orange Order. It is lucky that you did protest because it was beginning to look like Mary Freehill et al were brainwashing some into thinking what a nice bunch of people the Orange Order were.

Thanks for coming out so openly in protest, it was the greatest pleasure having people who are not afraid to stand up to these bullies. They are bullies who believe in dividing to conquer. By protesting you let people see the Orange Order for what it really is.

Is Mise,

Noirin Allen.  
Tullamore Co. Offaly



Cindy Fogarty and Cathal Óg McCarthy at the Dublin protest. Mary Freehill had a good view of the banner, having to face it during her speech. Let's hope she got the message!



# TIME TO THINK AGAIN

Probably the most unsatisfactory phrase in the English language is "I told you so", yet as we limp from crisis to crisis in the so-called peace process, frequently, I find those weasel words forming in my mouth. I have to say, for sanity's sake, I spit them out unshaped and unspoken. Sadly, however, no matter how successful I have been in preventing the formation of unhelpful phrases I have been unable to prevent my own thoughts drifting back to the time when the Belfast Agreement was being negotiated; particularly the analysis I formed then and where that analysis stands today almost three years later.

I clearly remember remarking, in the context of the debates in the lead up to the referenda, that, for me, the most worrying part of the agreement was not so much the detail of the various conditions of the agreement, but rather, the admission contained in the preamble, stating that the successful implementation of the agreement would depend on the good will of the signatories to the agreement. At the time, I warned that universal goodwill did not exist and unfortunately time has proved me correct. Sadly, at this stage, I cannot accept that there is such a thing as a pro-agreement Unionist – some just hate it less than others! Indeed, those Unionists who claim to be supporters of the agreement have had to be dragged kicking and screaming into the process. As Tom McGurk succinctly put it: "*old habits die very hard and the demands on the unionist psyche have simply been outside either their*

*moral or political experience. In the beginning they reluctantly signed up because they had no alternative, it was the only show in town. But they deeply resented it then and, almost a parliament on, they like it less and less. The reason is that they sense they are in a transitional process whereby the will cease to be freeholders and will instead become shareholders on the same basis as everyone else.*"

Another aspect of the Belfast Agreement that I was very critical of was the incorporation of the unionist veto into its structures. This was achieved by utilising the concept of "consent" as a political fig leaf. I have always believed that if the Unionists have a veto, one thing for sure, they will use it, and boy, have they used it. The unilateral decision to ban Sinn Féin ministers from north-south meetings is just the latest example of the malign use of the unionist veto.

During the debate on the Belfast Agreement and the subsequent referenda, north and south, there was much talk of a balanced constitutional settlement. Well, at the time, I attempted to point out that this was nonsense; that there could be no constitutional balance between a country with a written constitution and one with none. I argued that any constitutional re-arrangement would be fatally flawed because on the one hand any constitutional change sanctioned by the Irish people is final and irrevocable, whereas, on the other hand, the only constitutional restriction on the British government is the latest act of parliament. This fatal flaw came home to roost with a vengeance when Peter Mandelson, in order to save David Trimble's political skin, unilaterally suspended the institutions of the Belfast Agreement. This illegal action was "legitimated" by the passing of an

act in Westminster, which ignored the international obligations of the Belfast Agreement and the wishes of all the parties to the Agreement with the exception of the UUP. Perfidious Albion and the foolish trusting Irish once again!

It seems to me that, at this stage, the majority of Unionists are unable to live with the consequences of the Belfast Agreement and have decided, either consciously or unconsciously, to kill it off. Several years have been wasted trying to find an accommodation with people who cannot cut a deal. It's time to stop the pretence and face reality. Republicans must begin to formulate alternative strategies in order to ensure that peaceful political progress can be maintained.

– Robert Ballagh

(Robert Ballagh is one of Ireland's most prominent artists and is currently working with *Riverdance*. He is a founding member of the INC and was Cathaoirleach from 1989 – 1998)

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## MaryLou Steps Down

Having decided to seek election as a public representative, INC Cathaoirleach MaryLou McDonald has decided to step down as chair while remaining on the National Executive. MaryLou believed that as an independent non-party political organisation the INC's main spokesperson should not be associated with partisan party politics. National Organiser, Cathal Óg McCarthy from Limerick has been selected as the new Cathaoirleach.



## Successful INC picket at British embassy

On Easter Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2000, 84 years to the day that the Men and Women of 1916 declared "*the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible*", the INC protested out-side the British Embassy at the continued usurpation of that right by the British government.

About 40 republicans attended this picket in support of Irish self-determination and in protest of the British governments unilateral suspension of the institutions set up under the Belfast Agreement. This imperious act demonstrated that the 1998 dual referenda did not amount to an act of self-determination by the Irish people

The event was covered by the Irish Times, Irish Examiner and An Phoblacht.

Cathal McCarthy of the INC National Executive read out the 1916 proclamation to those assembled. Cathaoirleach, MaryLou McDonald then addressed the crowd: "A Chairde today we remember the men and women of 1916. On this the 84th anniversary of the Easter Rising, we salute their courage and vision. That vision was of an Ireland free and independent, of a sovereign Irish people. We owe them much, we remember them, we honour them. But we are here today not only to commemorate those men and women, but to once more commit ourselves to the vision of an independent Ireland, and to the principles of liberty and equality articulated in the 1916 proclamation. The proclamation is a living document, and the desire to establish an independent, united Ireland is alive and well".

MaryLou then handed a letter of protest into the British Embassy.

The organiser of the protest, Cathal Óg McCarthy, was very pleased with turnout, with the media coverage and the support of passing motorists. Cathal Óg also produced two new banners for this picket. One highlighted the continuous history of British bad faith in Anglo Irish relations stretching back to the Treaty of



Cathal McCarthy of the INC National Executive reads the 1916 proclamation at the Easter Monday protest. Nearest the camera is INC founding member and former Cathaoirleach, Robert Ballagh.

Limerick. The other banner depicted the leaders of the 1916 rising standing in front of a copy of the proclamation.

The protest, which started at 12pm and lasted for two hours, was well attended despite the rain. Many in the crowd carried copies of the proclamation and tricolours.

## EASTER RAFFLE WINNERS

The Inc would like to thank its many supporters for their continuous generosity through their sale of raffle tickets. Without this support the work of the INC would be impossible.

The first prize of a portable TV, which was donated by Mairdhia Ní Mhurchú, went to Catherine Adams of Dundalk.

The second prize, an Easter cake was won by Eoin Considine of Newcastle West, while the third prize, a bottle of brandy, went to Peter Flanagan of Ballina.

Once again the INC would like to express its gratitude to all its supporters who raised more than £600 in this latest raffle.

## Donations Needed

**We have no big financial backer to pay our bills. We only survive on the voluntary contributions of our supporters.**

**Please send what you can to:**

**Irish National Congress,**

**P.O. Box 2814, Dublin 7.**

**All contributions will be acknowledged.**



# The Orange Order: Grand Masters in bigotry

**Recent media attempts to rehabilitate the Orange Order as misrepresented liberals or misunderstood pluralists have been a resounding failure.**

All the soft focus media airbrushing or high powered spin doctoring cannot disguise the true nature of this sectarian organisation or its supremacist reason d'être.

The Orange Order was one of a number of sectarian groups that grew out of the conflict in North Armagh in the 1790's. Being founded after what Orangemen call the "Battle of the Diamond" in 1795, in which 40 Catholic "Defenders" were killed and one Protestant "Peep O'Day Boy" wounded.

The Order was soon taken over by the Anglican landed aristocracy and used as a militia to suppress Presbyterian and Catholic members of the United Irishmen in 1797-98.

**Oh croppies ye'd better be  
quiet and still,  
Ye shant have your liberty,  
do what ye will,  
As long as salt water is  
found in the deep,  
Our foot on the neck of the  
croppies we'll keep.**

In 1834, following the act of union of 1801 and Catholic emancipation in 1829, all Protestants were admitted to the Order when it became obvious that the ascendancy needed to widen it's support base to hold on to power. The Orange Order has fought a two hundred year rearguard action against democracy in Ireland by opposing every progressive reform from the repeal of the anti Catholic and anti Dissenter penal laws to the Patten report on the RUC.

Any proposal (whether it be the Act of Union, home rule or power sharing) which they perceived might weaken loyalist hegemonic domination in Ireland was vigorously opposed often with the threat of or actual use of violence. On 28<sup>th</sup> July 1985 the Orange Order stated that if an Anglo Irish office was opened in Belfast, the backlash would 'make 1974 look like a Sunday school picnic'.

Former Grand Master of the Orange Order, Unionist MP, and recent leadership contender, Rev. Martin Smyth, was (like current unionist party leader David Trimble) a prominent member of William Craig's neo fascist Ulster Vanguard movement in 1972. Many Orangemen

took part in their Nuremberg style rally in Ormeau Park that year. Orange parades in Britain have in the past been attended by fascist groups such as the National Front.

The Orange Order has also a long association with Loyalist paramilitaries. "Kick the Pope" bands connected with loyalist paramilitary groups frequently attend Orange marches. Groups calling themselves the Orange Volunteers have existed in the early 1970's and late 1990's, while there were arms finds in Orange halls in 1974 and an army file of 300 names was found in 1999.

The nature of the membership oath of the Order which seeks to ensure that there is no genetic contamination of the loyalist bloodline reminds on more of the white South African Brotherhood or the American Ku Klux Klan than of civil and religious liberties.

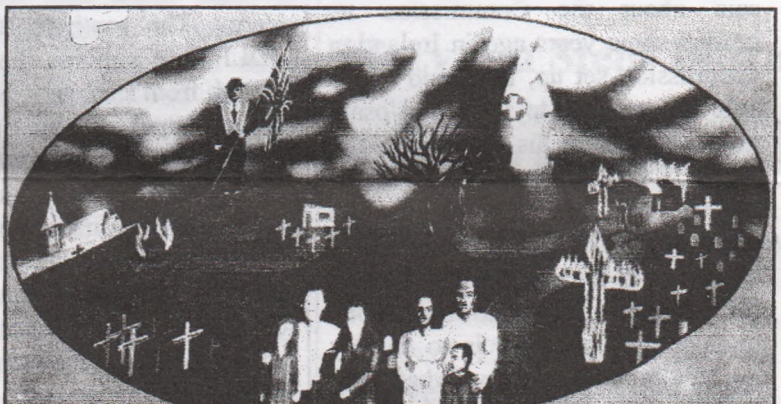
The words of former Unionist Prime Minister and Orange Order member James Craig in 1934 seem to bear this out when he said "we have the Orange Order, the Black Brethren and the B Specials and they constitute all the fascism that Ulster wants."

The sight of tens of thousands of northern Catholics fleeing across the border every 11th of July to escape the annual orgy of pyromania, bigotry and alcoholism which passes for "Orange Culture" remind one more of krystalnacht than "the biggest folk festival in Europe."

The history of the Orange Order has been a shameful litany of intimidation and supremacy. Toleration of intolerance is not pluralism, it is cowardice and if the violence and division this island has endured for centuries is ever to be overcome, bigotry must be challenged and exposed at every opportunity.

— **Paul McGuill**

(Paul McGuill is a library assistant and has been an INC activist since 1994. He was INC Cathaoirleach from 1999 – 2000 and is currently the Secretary of the INC.)



## THE BIGOTED HILL BILLIES

The Grand Master and The Grand Dragon stand atop their respective hills, occupying a position of superiority that they believe is their God given right. The paths down the hills are witness to scenes of destruction and violence that often accompanies our two Hill Billies when they go "walking". At the bottom of the hill are two families who can readily identify with each other's plight. Because of their religious and racial differences, they have been deemed unfit to share the hilltop. The T\*\*GS and the N\*\*\*\*RS must stay in their place so that the Hill Billies can preserve their "culture" and "heritage" indefinitely. It is an integral part of their way of life.



# The Trouble With Trimble

The peace process in the northeast reached yet another crisis when Mr. Trimble took one more step to demolish it while remaining leader of a party, which voted to save it. Mr. Trimble's real purpose in all his promising and reneging, in all the manoeuvring and gainsaying, is clear from his statement quoted in the New York Times (Sunday October 29<sup>th</sup>):



*"We must not allow ourselves to be talked out of this present opportunity to nail the IRA once and for all. Successive British governments failed to disband or disarm the IRA. We however have boxed the IRA into a tactical, moral and political cul-de-sac."*

This statement reminded some of us of what Professor Upsahl said about the Commission he headed some years ago in Ireland, a commission set up, they told us, to help bring peace to Ireland. Upsahl however said in his home country, Norway, that the real purpose of the Upsahl Commission was to put pressure on the SDLP. The Upsahl Commission and the Peace Process, for British Unionists have one purpose only and that is to destroy by stealth and trickery what they could not destroy by arms, namely the increasing population opposed to their tyrannical regime

Neither the Unionists nor the British government have shown any commitment to a peace process, they have shown commitment to a process of deleting all change from any programme put forward by governments, other political parties

or even elements within their own parties. When we remember that 43% of the Protestant vote has been given to Paisley and most of the rest to the Ulster Unionist Party which promises change and then reneges on its promises, we realise that some power must reside somewhere within the Unionist community which is not amenable to democratic processes. We have seen what happened recently to the UDP and the PUP in Belfast. Their most modest challenge to traditional unionist leadership was destroyed by a bloody feud which is still going on and will continue, we know, until the last vestiges of their challenge are gone or so weakened that they will be glad to settle for physical safety rather than political change. Such is the price for trying to displace traditional unionist leadership.

The main strength of opposition to change still remains with the religious bodies. Clergy control most of unionist politics, the DUP being a clerical party, the UUP afraid to move hand or foot without the consent of the religiously led Orange Order and fundamentalist clergy. The southern state and the SDLP have policies of separation of church from state rule, Sinn Féin has been attacked by all church leaderships, but while this separation by Nationalist / Republican has been achieved over many years, British / Unionist politics are still governed by the religious lobbies. Until this changes, political change and economic development are practically impossible.

One of the good things Trimble has suggested is to stop the religious societies controlling his UUP. He wanted by this to reach a position where he could move politics forward towards political co-operation while still preserving the power of the Orange Order to disrupt ordinary Catholic life and economic progress. It is a difficult

strategy and what happened in the Waterfront Hall, Belfast, at the end of October was a phase in the working out of that strategy. His UUP finds it necessary to oppose what is seen as Catholic economic and political power while at the same time maximising the ability of favoured Protestants to benefit from increasing economic prosperity. Once one accepts this model much of what might otherwise be inexplicable in Trimble's tactics becomes clear.

If the IRA were to disband tomorrow and all the guns and explosives given up and surrender given, the Unionists would still not be satisfied. They are simply a party without possibility of satisfaction. For them the awful things they see in the IRA, or Sinn Féin, or the SDLP are talked about not with a view to entice these to change but rather as a weapon to help the Unionists to greater power. So no positive response to their present demands is going to make their future demands less. The Peace Process will probably go trundling on but if it does not, democrats in Ireland would be extremely foolish ever again to enter into negotiations with British Unionists on any basis except one – the When and How of British handing over of power to the elected representatives of the whole people of Ireland as the only rational way to run the politics of all of us.

– Des Wilson

(Des Wilson is a Catholic priest working in West Belfast. He was a curate from 1966 to 1975, when he resigned from his clerical position because he disagreed with his superiors about the use of church resources in the 6 counties. He then helped found an adult education centre within the local community. In the last 20 years he has been awarded several international peace prizes. He is a founding member of the INC)



# POOR TURN OUT FOR BELFAST INTERNMENT RALLY

In August, INC members from Dublin, Limerick and Cork travelled to Belfast to take part in the annual Internment Anniversary Rally. This event marks the introduction of internment in Belfast, on August 9<sup>th</sup> 1971. 14 people were murdered by the British Army during the Belfast round-ups, which were targeted solely at the Nationalist population.

INC members remember attending this event when Nationalists first broke the ban on City Hall demonstrations in 1993. Back then you had to run the gauntlet of hissing RUC men and stone throwing loyalists. Over the years, the RUC have pulled further and further back and the event has become a peaceful and uplifting experience. INC members were looking forward to being part of the 20,000 strong crowd that annually attend the march to City Hall.

I had been in Belfast all week, enjoying the festivities of Féile an Phobail. Over the course of the week I had been asked by a variety of people, including one prominent Sinn Féin member, if I would be going to the rally at City Hall. "Of course", I said, "I wouldn't miss it". The night before the rally, at a gig in Ardoyne, Bik McFarlen announced to the audience that he would be finishing up early as he wanted to be up in time for the march to City Hall. As far as everyone was concerned we were going to City Hall. During the week I had been looking out for posters that might list the assembly points. I didn't see any, so I assumed that it would be the same as last year.

On Sunday morning I waited to hear the band warming up in Lenadoon – not a peep. I grew anxious, so I rang around and was assured that there was a march to City Hall. Then I spotted it, on the front page of An Phoblacht in condensed letters, "29<sup>th</sup> annual Internment anniversary rally", crammed above a giant "DISBAND THE RUC". The next line read "assemble Dunville park – 2pm". As it eventually turned out, there was a smaller than usual march and one would have been forgiven for thinking that it was sponsored by the INC. With four banners, we were the largest and only visible National organisation. The next most visible group was the Troops Out Movement from England, with 3 banners.

One columnist in the *Andersonstown News* later wrote that he "didn't see one banner from a Sinn Féin cumann or a campaigning group in the North. There were no youth organisations calling for the decommissioning of the RUC, no banners demanding the dismantling of Divis Tower, no fiery standards calling for an end to discrimination in employment or even some decent economic investment in the developing areas of Belfast. No floats mocking the worst Secretary of State since Roy Mason and nary a sign of the traditional anti-internment flag with its poignant barbed wire on a white background."

The columnist offered by way of an explanation that "some political guru decided that this year the internment rally would take place in Dunville Park rather than the city centre. No doubt, there's some convoluted Machiavellian logic behind that

decision which will probably be revealed to the plebs in five years time. But for this companero, that's a step backwards."

I must say, I have to agree. The turnout in Dunville was a dismal eight hundred. Next year is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary and it should be marked appropriately or not at all!

— Cathal Óg McCarthy

(Cathal Óg McCarthy is a sign-painter / decorator and has been an INC activist for the past 7 years. He was National Organiser from 1998 – 2000 and is currently acting Cathaoirleach of the INC)

**August 2000: INC members are among the 800 who turned out in Dunville Park to mark the anniversary of the introduction of Internment in Belfast.**



Diarmuid McCarthy and Jack McGarry in Dunville Park



Tony Beaufort and Tom Copper on the road to Dunville



MaryLou McDonald and Margaret Kelly at the march



**January 2000: INC members PaJo Mackey and Tom Cooper were part of the 30,000 strong that attended the Bloody Sunday commemoration in Derry.**





# Unconstitutional Issues

*Issues* magazine, the Dublin based publication, successor to *The Big Issues*, has decided to change its misguided policy of carrying recruitment advertising for foreign armed forces, following protests from Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin TD and from the Irish National Congress.

In several of its editions, *Issues* had carried full one-page colour adverts for the Royal Air Force, advertising positions for military police personnel and even "Weapons Technicians"; and this from a magazine that eulogised about the evils of the global arms trade. Completed RAF application forms were to be sent to the infamous Palace Barracks near Belfast, where many internees were sadistically tortured in 1971. The INC National Executive was perplexed; given the important role that *Issues* magazine plays in Irish society with regard to refugees and other marginalised groups. Many of the refugees that live in Ireland are here as a result of wars of aggression, some of which have both directly and indirectly involved the RAF. The National Executive was also concerned that this could have been the start of a recruitment drive in the 26 Co.'s by British forces and was determined to get it stopped.

In a letter to the editor of *Issues*, the INC warned that it would organise a boycott against the magazine if it persisted in carrying adverts for foreign armed forces: **"Members will be asked to donate £1 to the seller and refuse the magazine."**

The letter went on to point out the unconstitutional nature of such adverts: "We understand that this is the first time since the foundation of the state that any publication based in the Republic of Ireland has directly carried advertisements for the British armed forces. This would seem to run contrary to the spirit and letter of the Irish Constitution, of which Article 9.2 states: **"Fidelity to the nation and loyalty to the state are the fundamental**

## • The offending material carried by *Issues* magazine

political duties of all citizens." We would particularly like to draw your attention to Article 15.6.2: **"No military or armed force, other than a military or armed force raised by the Oireachtas, shall be raised or maintained for any purpose whatsoever"**. Indeed, to help raise recruits for any armed force other than our own *Defence Forces* is also at odds with this states policy of neutrality."

The letter also stated that "Given the appalling record of British forces in Ireland from 1969 onwards, we find your policy unacceptable." and that the INC found it "incomprehensible that a Dublin based publication, written and produced by Irish people, could so openly advertise for the armed forces of a foreign power that perpetrated such acts against their own people."

The INC calls upon its members in the 26 Co.'s to be vigilant in this matter. If you see any 26 Co.'s publication, newspaper or magazine producing similar material, please notify us immediately.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE INC, FILL IN THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO: IRISH NATIONAL CONGRESS, PO Box 2814, Dublin 7.**

**MEMBERSHIP FEE £10 WAGED / £5 UNWAGED**



**Name.....**

**Address.....**

**e-mail.....**