



A Republican Journal
Issue 2: March, 2003

FORUM CONTENTS

Analysis

Unionism: a crisis of identity?: James Burke investigates the reasons behind unionist rejection of the Belfast Agreement: **page 3**

Big Brother in your pocket: Paul Fitzgibbon on the repressive potential inherent in modern technology: **page 4**

The Gaeltacht: eighty years of neglect: Paul Maguire discusses the problems facing Ireland's Gaeltacht regions: **page 5**

Feature

The American Connection: Eamonn McBride examines the sordid background to the upcoming McKevitt trial, in which foreign intelligence agents and criminal informants are set to play a central role: **pages 6&7**

Open Forum

Prejudice and discrimination: Portlaoise POW Paddy MacDonagh on the problems faced by Travellers in Irish society: **page 8**

Editorial

The price of US imperialism: the New Republican Forum spells out its opposition to the resurgence of imperialism as a political ideology: **page 9**

International

Venezuela: After the Revolution...: Portlaoise POW Darren Mulholland on the increasingly volatile situation in Venezuela: **page 10**

Iraq: a case for war?: Malcolm Kerins analyses the background to the US government's drive for war in the Middle East: **page 11**

Homelessness amid the wealth

By Jeanette Cullen

Seeing the grim faces we fear the worst. In hushed tones, we are led to a quiet corner and told that the Celtic Tiger has caught pneumonia. It is too early to say but it may even be terminal. Disbelieving gasps are met with the assurance that the experts are doing everything they can. The next 24 months will be crucial, the sages advise soberly. We should pray and remember the good times: the new cars, new houses, designer clothes, designer kids....

Through all the concern and worry being expressed over the declining Irish economy, what has been overlooked is that for a significant section of the population, the Celtic Tiger might as well never have breathed in the first place. This is certainly true in relation to our homeless people. While the Irish government was handing out major tax incentives for developers to build expensive apartments in Dublin for people to buy - not to actually live in - but for investment purposes, hundreds of people in the same city have been left with nowhere to live.

Every night, there are approximately 200 people sleeping rough on the streets of Dublin city. According to the Simon Community, there are more people sleeping rough in Dublin than in Oxford, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham or Nottingham. The same survey found that a third of those sleeping on the streets are under 25 years of age.

Worse still, this figure of 200 represents only the tip of the iceberg. Sleeping rough may be the most visible type of homelessness but according to Focus Ireland, there are, in fact, at any one time, around 2,800 homeless people in and around our capital city.

To meet this, there are only 900 emergency hostel beds, none of which accommodate families. This means that families get split up with the father and any sons over the age of 12 going to the male hostels and mothers and other children going to the female hostels.

Because of the utter failure of statutory bodies to provide adequate appropriate housing in times of crisis, there has been a huge growth in the numbers of families being accommodated in Bed and Breakfast establishments. For example, in 1992, just five households were accommodated in B&Bs; by 1999, the figure was 1,202. The use of B&Bs in this manner is totally unsuitable from a family point of view as there is a complete lack of privacy, there is no place for children to play or study and in many cases, those staying in B&Bs have to leave early in the morning and are not allowed return until the evening. In 1992,

the average stay in B&B emergency accommodation was 18 nights; today it can be anything up to 80 to 100 nights. From the state's point of view, the policy of using B&Bs is not very cost effective. The cost of using B&Bs to house homeless people rose from £600,000 in 1997 to £4.7 million in 1999.

For our youngest homeless people - those under 18 - the best we can seem to provide is the Out of Hours Service whereby a young person who presents themselves to a Garda station after 7pm at night is handed over into the care of a social worker or the Salvation Army Nightlight Service. To cater for this situation, there are only 45 beds in Dublin. This is intended to be only a temporary solution but it is often the case that these beds are being occupied for weeks on end because of the failure by state agencies to provide alternative accommodation.

Another very common type of emergency accommodation, which often remains hidden and unreported, is for people to 'doss' on a friend's sofa, spare bed or floor. It is homeless women who most frequently have to resort to this most unsatisfactory of solutions.

The causes of homelessness are not a secret and are well known to state agencies. The primary factor is poverty. It is a sad reflection on Irish society that after a period of unprecedented prosperity the gap between the haves and the have-nots is widening. The second major cause of homelessness is drug and alcohol dependency, with a high proportion of homeless people suffering from addiction problems of one sort or another. Of course, there are a wide variety of other reasons why people end up on our streets. These include relationship breakdowns, domestic violence, sexual abuse, and rejection by parents. A final major source of homelessness are the people being released from institutions - prisons, hospitals, psychiatric care - who have nowhere to go and for whom the state has provided no aftercare for.

It is said that a society can best be judged not by how many new cars are on the road or by how expensively dressed people are, but by how that society treats its most vulnerable citizens. If this were to be applied to Ireland and its homeless population, Ireland would be shamed before the world. At a time when a plethora of tribunals, caused by the corruption of our political, economic and religious leaders, are costing millions of euro, our treatment of our most vulnerable people should disgrace us all.

Jeanette Cullen is a mediator with
Connolly Inner-City Employment Services
www.iri.net

Unionism: a crisis of identity?

By James Burke

Four years after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, the North is still under British rule. The British army remains ensconced on the hilltops of the border counties, and patrols of nationalist areas continue. The name of the RUC has been changed in order to attract young Catholics into the force, so nationalist areas can be 'policed' more effectively. In the past we saw the UDR rising out of the B-Specials, only to be transformed into the RIR. The names changed, as did the uniforms, but the men in them remained the same. Sinn Fein and the SDLP are so in love with the Agreement that they are literally prepared to do anything to make it work. They could be said to have become more British than the British themselves. After various discussions in London, Dublin and the US, Sinn Fein is now ready to make the final concessions which will let them play a full part in the running of Stormont and the bedding down of this internal British settlement.

When the Agreement was put to the people of the country, North and South, it was done in such a manner as to give the illusion that electorates were voting for the same thing. This slight of hand was then used to imply that the Agreement was the wish of the Irish people as a whole, and the final settlement of the 800 year old conflict between Ireland and Britain. In the South, the people were asked to remove their claim to the Six Counties. Despite the fact that less than 50% of the population voted, the government attempted to make people believe it was in fact a majority who signed away our national territory. In the North, the unionists voted for the Agreement on the grounds that it would guarantee their British citizenship and the North would remain a part of Britain. The nationalists were told it would give them what they aspired to as well. How the one document could reconcile these two diametrical opposed positions was never really explained. Once Sinn Fein agreed to it, many nationalists and republicans voted without thinking the matter through. Everything that has occurred over the past four years has been geared to achieving the maintenance of this Agreement. The North today is as firmly under the control of Britain as it has ever been. There is the added bonus from the British point of view that nationalists and so-called republicans

are prepared to maintain it that way.

The strange thing about the whole issue is that the unionists are the very people who are turning more and more against the Agreement. There is of course the attitude amongst many of them that the old order should be restored. Like the whites in South Africa, they hate to see a 'native' about the place. There has been a struggle between the various factions as to who represents the majority of loyalists. Much of this is geared to the upcoming elections and the question



of who will emerge on top. The DUP seems to sense a victory and have changed their tactics accordingly, even being prepared to sit in the same TV studio as Sinn Fein now. But no matter who wins this contest, will it really change anything in the future? The unionists political parties, like their paramilitary friends, are not driven by any normal political ideals, but are motivated by pure sectarian hatred. For years republicans were forced to explain what their position was in regards to this Unionist 'majority', as if this was the one thing which made the idea of a united Ireland impossible. Since partition was forced on the Irish people in 1922, nationalists have bent over backwards to placate the unionists. When Republicans were denied access to the airwaves, the sectarian spokespersons for these groups were invited to tell the country why they could never accept a united Ireland. So why is it that today, when partition is reinforced as never before, they still refuse to accept the Agreement?

It could be argued that their refusal to work the Agreement stems from two separate factors. The first is a simple desire to extract as many concessions as possible from Sinn Fein. Given Sinn Fein's total commitment to the Agreement, the unionists are in a powerful position to exploit their traditional veto. Sinn Fein can't go backwards, and to move forward, no matter how little, requires further concessions to

unionism. Unionist intransigence, then, is often little more than a carefully calculated, and historically highly successful, negotiating tactic.

The other reason is more fundamental in nature. It stems from a crisis of identity within unionism itself. Today we see members of the DUP attempting to claim that historical figures like Henry Joy McCracken were in fact 'loyalists' who, if alive today, would support the DUP's position. We see attempts by loyalists to manufacture so-called 'Ulster-Scotch', as if they had a language of their own. Silly as these examples might appear, they do throw some light on the confusion within loyalist thinking. While they might have thought themselves British, Britain saw them as being Irish like the rest of us. No matter how loyal they appeared, given the right circumstances they would threaten rebellion if they thought their privileged position might change. They would be disloyal to remain loyal. The unionists of the north realize

more than anyone that their position on the island of Ireland has been sustained by a fraud. Their sense of insecurity comes from the thought that some day, instead of pandering to them, everyone will see how untenable their position really is. Instead of republicans being questioned as to what they would do with these loyalists, loyalists will have to decide what and who they really are. Like John White, many may feel safer in Scotland than in a united Ireland, but there could also be men like Henry Joy McCracken and other figures of 1798 within their midst, who would work towards building a new and democratic Ireland. The Good Friday Agreement has not given them any comfort, nor will it, and anyone who attempts to work it as a final settlement of partition will discover very quickly that it is no such thing. The Unionists realize deep down that they will have to come to terms with who they are and what place they will have in an united Ireland. For too long their leaders have used their sense of insecurity as a tool to control them, and for too long their prejudices have been appeased by parties like the SDLP and Sinn Fein. If the unionists are to have any future peace of mind, it will be by way of their recognizing the fact that they are Irish and belong in a democratic united Ireland. The Good Friday Agreement works against this reality, and is doomed to failure as a result.

Big Brother in your pocket

By Paul Fitzgibbon

If the location of a person is known to pinpoint accuracy and he is killed in cold blood, does this make somebody responsible for his murder? The answer, it seems, is not if you are an employee of the American government.

Recently the US was able to locate a 'suspected terrorist' in a lone jeep driving at speed through the Yemeni desert. The jeep was ambushed and destroyed by an unmanned Predator aircraft carrying Hellfire missiles. The result was a rare success story for the CIA in its 'War on Terror', and it was widely publicised that the operation had been a massive blow to al-Qaeda. The assassination itself was unsurprising as the CIA's allies in Mossad have been using similar tactics for many years, but the method was novel, as was the subsequent publicity. It seems that the American government is now willing to inform the world about the use of technology and surveillance satellites in the fight against 'global terrorism'.

Thousands of miles of sand and barren desert and still a plane with no pilot managed to find its target. The most likely explanation is that the Americans locked on to a transmission from a satellite phone, and tracked their target from there. It is already widely known that the CIA and MI6 monitor every phone call, satellite communication and e-mail, along with many other forms of electronic communication, through the use of their 'Echelon' surveillance network. The fact that these agencies are running voice recognition and textual analysis software across thousands of computer systems on millions of phone calls and e-mails world-wide is not surprising, as they do protect the interests of two of the most despised nations in history. The Americans, it could be said, have a right to be paranoid. Worryingly, however, they are now exporting their paranoia to other countries around the globe.

Using the threat of global terrorism as an excuse, many Western governments are now introducing new domestic surveillance networks and compiling electronic data on all their citizens. The Irish Government is currently drafting a 'Data Retention' Bill which will cover all forms of electronic transaction and communication by every individual in the state. The Bill will give the government and Gardaí access to details of every electronic transaction and communication for up to four years after they have been made. This Bill, it may be suspected, is merely the thin end of the wedge. The

future it heralds is that of a police state where the right to personal privacy no longer exists.

Apart from the question of individual privacy, the Data Retention Bill raises serious practical concerns. Under its provisions, internet companies will be obliged to maintain a record of all e-mails sent, and all websites visited, by each of their individual subscribers. There is no guarantee, and certainly no reason to suspect, that this data will be securely maintained. As a result, businesses will be left more vulnerable to commercial espionage, and individuals open to blackmail and targeting by technocriminals. The potential for abuse by



CCTV cameras: the repressive potential of today's governments in unsurpassed in human history

unscrupulous members of the Gardai is almost unlimited.

Even more serious, however, is the potential for politically motivated abuse. Political persecution by the Dublin government may sound unrealistic to those who, unlike many republicans, have never experienced it at first hand. The antics of the Thatcher government during the miners' strike in the early 1980s, however, should be enough to convince anybody of the lengths a 'democratic' Western government will go to against its own citizens when it feels itself threatened.

In this age of technology it is already a reality that the intelligence agencies of every state are tracking and monitoring anyone who might lean away from the capitalist motivations of their government. The potential for misuse of surveillance equipment such as street CCTV cameras and 3G mobile phones is immense. Governments now have the ability to monitor a person's movements without them ever suspecting a thing. Even in his wildest dreams Stalin couldn't have imagined these possibilities; having the details at their fingertips on massive computer databases makes Orwell's Big Brother a working reality.

Mobile phones are the most widely used surveillance and tracking devices available to global intelligence services today. The

linking of GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) data with the serial number of a mobile phone (standard on all 3G phones) allows accurate information on the location of a person to be constantly recorded, and is a common practice among intelligence agencies all over the world. It is because of the public's favourable attitude towards technological advances that mobile phones have flourished. This attitude may not survive for much longer. The fact that the Israelis have used the mobile phone signals of suspected Palestinian leaders to locate and assassinate them is a reality that few people in the West have truly appreciated. However, the realisation that by using these devices they are leaving themselves open to similar monitoring and surveillance will undoubtedly provoke a backlash among ordinary citizens when it becomes widely known.

The modern world is a dangerous place for dissenters of all kinds. Their personal computer may become a spy in their own living room, monitoring and recording every aspect of their lifestyle for analysis by government or police officials. Their mobile phone may become a tracking or a listening device - a Big Brother in their own pocket - recording their movements

for future examination. Through the use of voice recognition software, satellites and mast signals their location may be pinned down to within inches, their business transactions scrutinized, and their lifestyle choices assessed. They may be blackmailed, intimidated or even assassinated. They will not, however, be allowed to dissent.

The battle over privacy has yet to be fought, and it is merely one aspect of the coming battle to preserve our hard won rights and liberties. The US 'War on Terror' is already causing considerable 'collateral damage', and not only to the innocent civilians of Afghanistan. Unless people are willing to resist the erosion of personal privacy, it will only be a matter of time before we find ourselves living in a global police state. Working class people will suffer most as a result. Unions and worker rights groups will be subject to constant monitoring and harassment. British intelligence agencies such as MI5 have in the past shown themselves only too willing to use blackmail and intimidation to keep the workers in their proper place at the bottom of the pecking order. It would be unrealistic to expect anything different of their Irish counterparts.

The Gaeltacht: eighty years of neglect

By Paul Maguire

On December 6, 1922, the founding fathers of the Irish Free State recommitted themselves to the revival of the Irish language. This restorative ideal reflected the original objectives of the Gaelic League, Sinn Féin and the leaders of the 1916 rebellion. However, as the Free State establishment emerged victorious from the civil war, the ideals of national self-determination and a language revival were abandoned. Thus began a prolonged period of counter-revolution. So, almost eighty-one years after the formation of the Irish Free State, what is the state of the Irish language in Gaeltacht areas throughout Ireland?

A recent investigation into the Irish language has produced some alarming statistics which predict the possible extinction of the language in several Gaeltacht areas. The survey, commissioned by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and carried out by the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, found that only 25% of Gaeltacht households are currently speaking Gaeilge.

Donnacha O hEallaithe, a senior lecturer at the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology and head of the survey, forecast that unless radical policies were introduced the language would fall into further decline over the next decade: *'It is an indictment of successive Irish governments that at the foundation of the Irish state there were 250,000 fluent Irish speakers living in Irish speaking or semi-Irish speaking areas. But the number now is between 20,000 -30,000'*.

The survey found that in Donegal only 8% of the population use Gaelige. While in Galway city Gaeltacht areas the figure has fallen as low as 1%. The survey went on to warn that the language could be *'on the brink of extinction'* in the Gaeltacht areas of County Mayo, Cork, Waterford and Meath, where the number of Irish speaking families who use Gaelige as their first language has slumped to one hundred and fifty three.

A glaring example of this downward spiral was highlighted by the statistics concerning the surrounding area of Knocknacarra in Co. Galway. Over the last five decades its population has risen from a couple of hundred to almost 20,000. However, the Irish speaking population has declined from 100% to little more than 2-3%. Coimisiun na Gaeltachta, the government appointed review group, has pointed out the resulting dangers in very stark terms: *'From an official point of view,*

Ireland is a bilingual country. However, it is clear from the research undertaken by the Coimisiun that bilingualism is under threat in this country. If the criterion for defining Gaeltacht boundaries was that 80% of the community must be Irish speakers, then only 14 of the 154 electoral districts would qualify for Gaeltacht status. If this trend continues, it is only a matter of time before the Gaeltacht as understood historically will cease to exist'. The review group continued: *'even in the strongest areas, the current patterns of bilingualism are yielding to the primacy of English in the life of the community and the use of English is*

'Since the foundation of the state the Dublin government has consistently ignored the people of the Gaeltacht... a senior researcher at the Mayo-Galway Institute has rightly described current government policy as 'a complete and utter disaster''

increasing in these areas'.

Muintearas, the Gaeltacht community development group, believe that the future of the language lies with our children and that it is essential to encourage the use of Irish as a communicative language from when children first enter playschool and while in the family home. Over recent years a similar approach has been adopted with great success in New Zealand. In an attempt to halt the extinction of Maori, the New Zealand government embarked upon a policy whereby Maori was encouraged in playschools and primary schools. The state also provided free evening classes for the nation's parents who also became infused with the newfound spirit of cultural rejuvenation. As a result Maori is beginning to flourish for the first time in decades.

Since the foundation of the state the Dublin Government has consistently ignored the people of the Gaeltacht. Martin O'Cadhain, one of the Gaeltacht's greatest sons, feared the consequences if the Dublin government's indifference to the language and the Gaeltacht went unchallenged. O'Cadhain believed that without its native language, Ireland would be nothing more than 'a little England' devoid of its own distinctive culture. He also believed that if Irish were to die in the Gaeltacht it would spell the end of the language throughout the land. These fears drove O'Cadhain to form Muintir na Gaeltachta (1933-34), Misneach

(1965) and he also went on to advise and encourage a new generation of political activists who formed the Gaeltacht Civil Rights Movement in the late 1960's.

These groups demanded that the Dublin Government implement a concerted policy that would meet the needs of the people of the Gaeltacht while simultaneously preserving the use of Gaeilge. None of these groups rejected modernity or socio-economic progress. They believed that Ireland could be both modern and progressive without abandoning its cultural heritage and traditions. One of their primary demands was that the state fulfill its constitutional obligations

by conducting all state business through Gaeilge in all Gaeltacht areas. Sadly, almost seventy years after the formation of Muintir na Gaeltachta this policy has still to be implemented.

Clearly, the Dublin government has shamefully neglected both the people of the Gaeltacht and the Irish language. Hence, the present disastrous state of affairs. A senior researcher at the Mayo-Galway Institute has rightly described current govern-

ment policy as *'a complete and utter disaster'*. The Dublin government must urgently address the socio-economic development of Gaeltacht areas and the use of the language throughout the country as a whole. Anything less than this is nothing short of a national scandal.

A concerted attempt to revive the language must involve:

- The continuation of compulsory Irish in education alongside a re-examination of the current syllabi on Junior and Leaving certificate courses.

- The availability of educational and language learning material for all age groups.

- An attempt to make Irish a communicative language from playschool right through to second level education and not just an instructive language on a set syllabus course.

- The continued expansion of TG4, with an emphasis on the production of Gaeilge learning courses for children and adults.

- The continued subsidisation of Gaelscoils.

- The state fulfilling its constitutional obligations by conducting state business through Gaeilge in all Gaeltacht areas.

- The development of a viable long-term strategy that will ensure the socio-economic development of the Gaeltacht.

The American Connection

Eamonn McBride examines the sordid background to the upcoming McKeivitt trial in which foreign intelligence agents and criminal informants will play a central role

In March 1984, during the supergrass trials in Belfast, the General Board of the Presbyterian Church expressed its concern about the lengthy periods for which people were held in custody. The Board passed a resolution drawing attention to 'the very long periods of remand in custody being experienced by many people'.

Noel Saint-Pierre, a Canadian lawyer who visited Northern Ireland in June 1984 as an observer at a supergrass trial, held talks with many people, including the Lord Chief Justice. Before leaving Ireland, Mr. Saint-Pierre said that 'the way people are held for long periods of up to two years amounts to another form of internment'.

At the end of March 2003, Michael McKeivitt begins his 3rd year on remand in Portlaoise Prison. The Special Criminal Court has rescheduled his supergrass trial with another provisional date of June 18th 2003.

In October 2002, the Special Criminal Court ruled, 'The court has no power to make an order that would compel the BSS (MI5) or the FBI to make disclosure. Further the court will not make an order against any party which it is not capable of enforcing'. The Judge was referring to documents which the defence believe would damage the creditability of the supergrass David Rupert.

The Special Criminal Court ruling was appealed in the High Court in December 2002. In January 2003, High Court Judge O'Neill upheld the non-jury Special Criminal Court ruling. The High Court agreed that the Special Criminal Court had no jurisdiction to order external agencies to hand over documentation to the courts in Ireland. The defence has now appealed the ruling to the Supreme Court, which is due to be heard at the end of February 2003.

These court rulings are nothing short of negligence and an infringement to due process. The court has a duty to ensure the right to a fair trial under Article 38.1 of the Constitution and it has a duty to respect that right.

An observer at the hearing in October 2002 stated that the most disturbing issue from the non-jury Special Criminal Court hearing was that it has once again blatantly ignored and disregarded the need for disclosure of vital defence evidence as it has done in many other high profile cases over the past few years.

If this case were to be heard in the U.S. or in England, the prosecution would be ordered to disclose all documents and if privilege was claimed by the prosecution the documents would be disclosed to the trial judge who would then decide if they were relevant to the defence or not.

The decisions of the English Court of appeal which freed the supposed IRA bombers - the Guildford Four, the Maguire Seven and Judith Ward - were based to a large degree on non disclosure or indeed concealment of material by the prosecution and other agencies.

Amnesty International, the U.N. and many other human rights groups have been consistent in their condemnation of the Special Criminal Court and yet it looks like this latest supergrass trial is

going to be another travesty of justice meted out by the non-jury court in its long history of convictions at any cost.

Rupert's handlers

Throughout all the reports of David Rupert's criminal career there is an important factor that has remained unreported to date, that is, the names and details of his handlers, their background and their use of criminal informants.

The names of the corrupt FBI agents behind Rupert's activity in Ireland and the U.S. are well known to Irish Americans especially in the Boston and Chicago areas. One agent in particular became notorious for his use of criminals to infiltrate Irish Republican

groups in an attempt to stitch-up innocent individuals on behalf of FBI/MI5. This FBI agent is Patrick 'Ed' Buckley who started his corrupt activities in the Boston area before moving on to Chicago where he continued his activities by again using criminal informants.

In the Chicago area, FBI Agent Buckley organised a web of criminal informers whom he directed against the Irish-American community. It is also widely known in Chicago that Buckley was on the payroll of the British at the height of MI5's murderous campaign in Ireland.

Buckley used some of the most vulnerable criminals wherever the opportunity arose and he devastated many families by his corrupt activity. One of Buckley's most high profile operations was against an Irish-American couple, Chris and Mary Fogarty.

The attempted stitch-up by Buckley almost resulted in his own career coming to an abrupt end when the Fogartys refused to allow themselves to be stitched-up and fought the allegations

against them vigorously in the courts.

The first attempt against the Fogartys was a murder case in which a young family called Langert were viciously murdered. The murder weapon - a .357 Magnum revolver - belonged to an FBI agent named Lewis who lost his weapon but did not report it missing. Local detectives believed the identity of the murderer to be a young criminal, sixteen year old David Biro. However, FBI agent Buckley took charge of the investigation. He prohibited the local police from investigating Biro; instead he bizarrely claimed that the IRA carried out the murders of the young couple and their child.

Inaccurate information that the IRA was responsible for the murders was fed to the Chicago media via TV anchorwoman Carol Marin. Buckley got Marin to announce on prime-time network TV that the "IRA was linked to Langert murders." When contacted to learn the basis for her 'scoop', Ms Marin said that her source was 'an FBI agent.' When asked how she had met her responsibility to verify it, she said, 'she had not done so but had accepted the uncorroborated word of the FBI'. She never corrected her false news.

Agent Buckley targeted Chris Fogarty as the main suspect in the



Michael McKeivitt - two years awaiting trial

Langert murders. Buckley then inserted into a police investigation report a statement allegedly made by Fogarty outlining details about the murders that only the murderer and the police knew of. However, before Fogarty was arrested for murder, Biro - the original suspect - was caught whilst planning to rob a bank and murder the staff. Biro confessed to the Langert murders thus thwarting Buckley's frame up and saving Chris Fogarty from the certain death penalty.

Incredibly, Agent Buckley made another attempt at framing the Fogartys. This involved another of Buckley's informants - John Tuttle - an ex-con from a Boston family of petty criminals. Buckley paid Tuttle according to the nature of his reports about republicans; the more sensational the more pay. Tuttle attended a meeting in Chicago of the Irish Freedom Committee wearing a wiretap. During the meeting he was noticed to be acting strangely and was challenged by IFC members including Chris and Mary Fogarty. With his cover blown, armed FBI agents who had been monitoring the meeting from across the street entered the meeting and removed Tuttle.

The following morning Chris and Mary Fogarty along with two other IFC members were arrested and charged with plotting to purchase weapons for the IRA. Part of the evidence produced against the four was a tape recording. Buckley claimed it was a recording of the meeting that Tuttle had been taping before he had been challenged by the IFC members. However, at trial, a laboratory sound engineer proved the tape was a fraud and that it had been doctored. The case collapsed.

Dave Rupert

Of all of Buckley's agents provocateurs, Dave Rupert's record is by far the lengthiest and most sordid. He is a four-time bankrupt who has hundreds of creditors, none of whom got a single penny back. But Rupert's lifetime of criminal activity was never so rewarding as it has been since becoming an abettor of MI5/FBI crimes. At a recent preliminary court hearing in Dublin it was disclosed that Rupert has been promised a 'resettlement payment' of \$3million from the FBI and an undisclosed amount from MI5 (believed to be in the region of £2.5million) on completion of his testimony against Michael McKevitt. In addition to this, an outstanding IRS debt of almost \$1million was reduced and settled for \$25,000 in November 2001. It was revealed that this self-confessed criminal had been deployed to the Republic of Ireland by the FBI and MI5 without the knowledge of the Irish authorities.

During his deployment, Rupert and his wife Maureen (who also was paid for services by MI5) spied on Republicans in the north west of Ireland. Rupert, acting under the instructions of MI5, targeted senior Irish Republicans in the Donegal/Derry area. He was encouraged by his handlers to offer the use of his house and car to Republicans. Furthermore, he was supplied with intelligence information to pass on for the purposes of encouraging bomb attacks. According to reports, Rupert was involved in an attempted car bomb destined for 'Derry or Omagh' fourteen weeks before the August 1998 tragedy. This information was in the hands of his MI5 handlers. The bomb, which Rupert reported to his handlers at that time, was never located.

Rupert was in Ireland at the time of the Omagh bombing and

immediately after the bomb attack he was summoned to England by MI5 to ensure that he did not come to the attention of the Gardai.

Rupert stayed in London for a few days being debriefed by MI5 who gave him and his wife a large sum of money and tickets to the US and Grand Cayman to where he travelled in early September 1998. It is reported that Rupert invested some of his payments in the name of his stepdaughter Dorothy Hertzell.

While Rupert was in London being debriefed by MI5 he received a communication from one of his FBI handlers, which stated 'best regards to Maureen on our latest successful mission'. Rupert's main FBI handler at that time was agent Patrick 'Ed' Buckley.

MI5's crimes in Ireland are nearly identical repetitions of the crimes against the Fogartys in Chicago. In both jurisdictions FBI agent Buckley headed MI5's 'dirty tricks' gang. In both jurisdictions, Buckley's gang was involved in massacres attributed to persons pre-targeted by MI5. In Ireland it was Omagh with Dave Rupert, in Chicago it was the Langert massacre with FBI agent Lewis and the missing .357 magnum. In both jurisdictions, MI5/FBI perpetrated their crimes against Irish republican support-

ers. In both, MI5/FBI used accomplices with criminal records. In both, MI5/FBI furthered their crimes by feeding disinformation to news media to misinform the public, demonising their targeted victims. In both, the state illegally withheld discovery documents vital to the defence - (they were in fact eventually released in the Fogarty case, which resulted in the tape fraud being uncovered.)

After giving testimony in Dublin's Special Criminal Court, David Rupert will be rewarded, pardoned for his past crimes and sent to an undisclosed country with a new identity. He will also be provided with a forged passport, spurious birth certificates and false national insurance numbers, all of which would be criminal offences if committed by anyone else. So clearly there is no end to the criminal entanglement between David Rupert and the security services.



Dave Rupert - FBI informer with a murky past

Media leaks

Prior to and since his arrest, disinformation has been systematically leaked to the media by MI5 to condition the public and to discredit Michael McKevitt and his family.

On August 17th 1998 a decision was taken by the editor of the Daily Mail (mouthpiece for MI5) to name Michael McKevitt as one of the people behind the Omagh bombing. To date Michael McKevitt has never been arrested or even questioned in connection with that bombing. While the media are entitled to report on all matters of national and international interest, they cannot and should not be allowed to act as judge and jury.

In the mid 1970's, the media acted as judge and jury in their reporting of six innocent men arrested and wrongly convicted for the Birmingham bombing. In 1999, English lawyer Sally Clark was wrongly convicted for the murder of her two children. Once again the media played a part in her wrongful conviction only to find that documents, which were withheld from her defence during the trial, helped quash her conviction on appeal in 2003. The same thing should not be let happen again.

Prejudice and discrimination

By Paddy MacDonagh

*"The single most discriminated against ethnic group is the Travelling people."
(European Report, 1992)*

Growing up or living as a Traveller in Ireland today does not come without its problems. Prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping and scapegoating are problems that Travellers are faced with on a daily basis. This reality is documented in one of many surveys carried out by the Irish Traveller Movement: "8 out of 10 Travellers refused in a pub...5 out of 10 Travellers asked to leave a shop...3 out of 10 Travellers asked to leave a hairdressers...2 out of 10 asked to leave a laundry...Almost all Travellers who have tried to book a hotel have experienced problems." Prejudgment is a tool used by mainstream society to define Travellers even though it is based mainly on hearsay. Travellers are viewed as dirty, parasites, or thieves who should be shunned. These assumptions are made by individuals who do not have all the facts, and in many cases refuse to change their minds even when confronted with evidence to the contrary.

Discrimination against the Travelling community by mainstream society is fueled mainly through stereotyping. The perception or stereotypical view of Travellers is that they are bad and violent, and are always causing trouble. Media and news reports add fuel to this type of view. An example of this is when Travellers hold a wedding that ends with a fight - it is reported through all media outlets both national and local. This type of reporting leads to discrimination and does nothing to ease the fears of mainstream society about Travellers. It only succeeds in creating panic amongst mainstream society that labels all Travellers as troublemakers. It also makes me wonder what is the motive for reporting an isolated incident at a Travellers wedding when fights take place every weekend in pubs and nightclubs all around the country and become little more than local gossip?

Irish people would like to think they are not prejudicial or do not practice discrimination; in general they probably are not and do not. However, when it comes to Travellers availing of a hotel for a wedding

or going into a pub for a drink, prejudice and discrimination go hand in hand. Hotel and pub owners practice both, as Travellers are refused entry or access based on hearsay or the behaviour of certain individuals within the Travelling community. Therefore, discriminatory actions are practiced as a result of prejudice - without explanation, let it be good, bad, right or wrong - and Travellers are turned away. I am not saying all hotel and pub owners are prejudicial and practice discrimination against Travellers. On the contrary there are pubs that serve Travellers on a regular basis. There are also

precedes them. They have been stereotyped as 'deviant' and 'troublemakers', labeled like a box of cornflakes. Therefore, like any individual or society experiencing difficult times we always look for someone or somewhere to place the blame. Travellers are the perfect scapegoats, the easy targets.

There are many research surveys confirming the fact that discrimination against Travellers is very real indeed. One survey carried out in 1999 clearly illustrates the problems faced by Travellers. Travellers are widely acknowledged as one of the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in Irish society. Travellers fare poorly on every indicator used to measure disadvantage: unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, health status, infant mortality, life expectancy, illiteracy, formal education and training levels, access to decision making and political representation, gender equality, access to credit, accommodation and living conditions: it is not surprising, therefore, that the Economic and Social Research Institute conclude "The circumstance of the Irish Travelling People are intolerable. No humane or decent society, once made aware of such circumstances, could permit them to persist." (Citizen Traveller, 1999)

Like all sections of society in contemporary Ireland, one does not have to travel far to find troublemakers. Some of the crimes carried out in Ireland like theft or fraud are done by large corporate companies and government officials - you just have to look at the number of tribunals that are taking place at the taxpayers expense. But to discriminate, stereotype and prejudge a section of the Irish people based on the superficial actions of individuals within that community is a sad reflection on contemporary Irish society.

**Paddy MacDonagh is a republican
POW in Portlaoise Gaol**

Open Forum welcomes
articles on issues of
national or international
interest.

The views expressed on
this page are not
necessarily those of the
editorial board.

Discrimination - the reality

Travellers experience more than double the normal rate of still births

Infant mortality rates are three times higher than the national rate

Traveller men live on average 10 years less than settled men

Traveller women live on average 12 years less than settled women

Source: Sheehan, E. (2000) *Travellers: Citizens of Ireland*

pubs and hotels who would serve Travellers but are under pressure not to serve them from existing customers who fear Travellers without being able to give a genuine reason why they fear them, other than hearsay. The same applies to people who reject the thought of a Travellers camp or halting site near where they live. They will protest or sign petitions to keep Travellers out simply because they do not want to lose the friendship of their neighbours or to be seen as sympathetic to Travellers.

Scapegoating is also a problem that Travellers are faced with. When Travellers move into an area, be it urban or rural, there are always people who will use the fact that Travellers living in the area have caused or added to their social problems. For example: the price of my house has fallen...Travellers living in the area...the crime rate is very high...Travellers living in the area...I can't find a job...Travellers living in the area, etc., etc.

Travellers are a nomadic people and do express different cultural traits than mainstream society. Therefore, when mainstream society is faced with what they perceive as different from their own norms and values, they automatically become anxious and nervous of the unknown and, therefore, convince themselves that someone who expresses difference has to be bad. The negative effect of these fears felt by the mainstream society results in prejudice, ethnocentrism and discrimination, mostly based on hearsay. The scapegoating of Travellers is easy and simple because their reputation

FORUM MAGAZINE

The price of US imperialism

On the back page of this magazine is the New Republican Forum's manifesto. It outlines - in a very general way - what we believe the guiding principles should be for a new Republican movement. It is our fervent hope that through discussion and debate in this magazine (and elsewhere) we can transform these general principles into specific and practical proposals that will help us achieve our aims and objectives.

Inherent in our Republican philosophy is the belief that it is through making common cause with ordinary people around the world, who are also on the receiving end of occupation or other forms of oppression, that we can help advance our own cause here in Ireland.

A central element of this is to oppose imperialism in all its forms, wherever and under whatever guise it appears. Therefore we oppose American imperialism. This does not make us anti-American. It only makes us anti-imperialist. The two should not be confused.

American military, political, cultural and economic imperialism is without doubt the most pervasive the world has ever seen. It is omnipotent. American military personnel are stationed in over one hundred and fifty countries worldwide. American corporations dominate the banking, pharmaceutical, telecommunications, IT, oil and gas, software, insurance and general retail sectors. Overall, the United States with around 5 percent of the world's population accounts for about 50 percent of the world's wealth. American political leaders feel comfortable riding roughshod over international law whether it is reneging on international treaties aimed at protecting the environment or fighting wars without UN approval. The American-dominated World Bank and IMF can - through the use of Structural Adjustment Programmes - dictate terms of the most abject slavery to poor countries. Put simply, the United States is the single biggest threat to international peace and development.

Clearly, we in Ireland experience the American empire on a more benign level. Irish people are not being slaughtered by American soldiers; nor are they dying in their thousands as a result of US imposed economic sanctions. In fact, American companies directly employ around 89,000 people in the 26 counties and thousands more in the six counties. Culturally, Irish people watch and enjoy American TV programmes and films, listen to American music, eat at American-owned restaurants and wear American clothes.

For very many other countries however, American imperialism

is far more devastating. Since the end of the second-world war, the list of countries that have been invaded - either directly or by proxy - by the United States is almost endless and includes Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Korea, Afghanistan, and now Iraq. The numbers of those killed - several million - is so large that it is hard to imagine that each one represents a man, woman or child slaughtered because of the insatiable greed of the American political and economic elite.

That only a small section of American society is responsible for

all this carnage and misery is an important fact to acknowledge. Most Americans have nothing to do with the imperialist policies of their government and receive no benefit from it. The richest 1 percent of the US population has more wealth than the entire bottom 95 percent. So when we talk of a common cause with people around the world, we must include the ordinary people of America and other imperialist countries who have as little say as us in how their governments act.



Which brings us back to Ireland. Seemingly, we are faced with a dilemma. We rely for tens of thousands of jobs on American companies. Thus, or so the argument goes, if we react negatively to American foreign policy, these companies may pull out and locate to more 'friendly' countries. But we should not forget that over the past few years numerous American companies have pulled out of Ireland for reasons that had nothing to do with our attitude to American foreign policy. Therefore, does anybody really believe that even if we support the US government, Intel or any of the other multi-nationals who are currently in Ireland will stay if they think they can get a better deal elsewhere? Playing employees in one country against employees in other countries is a favoured tactic of multi-nationals as it inevitably leads to a downward spiral in labour costs as each country, desperate for jobs, is willing to offer cheaper and cheaper labour with accompanying minimal corporation taxes, poor job security and anti-union policies.

This leaves us with the Faustian pact the Irish government is making with the American government. The Irish government will turn a blind eye (or even aid in the case of Shannon airport) to mass murder in the hope - and that is all it is - that a few companies will come into Ireland and stay longer than their IDA grant lasts. Are we really such an economically and morally bankrupt nation as this?

Forum Magazine can be emailed at:

post_irij2000@yahoo.co.uk

Venezuela: After the Revolution...

By Darren Mulholland

After the Revolution comes the Terror. So goes the warning cry of the reactionary, and history, since the French Revolution, would seem to provide ample evidence to support his case. A *selective* reading of history, that is. There have of course been numerous revolutions characterized by moderate and restrained behavior on the part of the revolutionaries, the Paris Commune of 1871 being a particularly famous example. There is, it must be said, an excellent reason why such democratic outbursts have failed to register on the popular consciousness. Two words typically characterize these revolutions - 'short' and 'failed'. History tells us that the firing squad has often been the revolutionary's only reward for moderation.

The predicament of Hugo Chavez, embattled president of the Latin American republic of Venezuela, is an interesting case in point. To those who rely on the mainstream media for their information, the situation in Venezuela will sound depressingly familiar: ex-army officer turned Latin American president holds out against repeated general strikes and massive protests. A brutal police force is turned loose, and unarmed demonstrators are shot down in cold blood.

The reality behind the media image is somewhat different. Chavez is in fact an elected head of state, a committed left-wing democrat in a multi-party democracy, and a remarkably moderate leader considering his precarious situation. Drawing his support from the country's impoverished majority, he is opposed by a vicious alliance of the wealthy upper and middle classes, a coalition of reactionary elements backed by the US government. Despite repeated right-wing assassination and coup attempts, however, Chavez has refused to clamp down on the country's opposition parties. Tellingly, the overwhelming majority of those killed in the recent demonstrations have been Chavez supporters shot by the Caracas metropolitan police - a notoriously brutal force controlled, until December, by Chavez's political opponents.

Some background information is necessary if this situation is to be understood. An ostensibly democratic country since the 1950s, Venezuela was until recently a 'two-party state', with power alternating between two equally corrupt political factions. Despite its rich natural resources, including immense oil reserves, up to 85% of the population lived in poverty, many in the vast shantytowns that still surround the capital, Caracas.

As a junior army officer in the 1980s, Chavez spent ten years building an under-

ground revolutionary movement. In 1992 he led a failed coup against the 'neo-liberal' government of Carlos Andrés Pérez, spending two years in prison after he and his supporters were forced to surrender. On his release Chavez turned to constitutional politics, with considerably more success, and in 1998 the 'Chavistas' came to power in a series of landslide election victories.

Once in power, Chavez instituted a 'Bolivarian Revolution', putting in place a radical programme of land and tax reform,



Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez

and increasing spending on education, health and public housing projects. He also oversaw the democratization of Venezuelan society, introducing one of Latin America's most democratic constitutions, and encouraging direct popular participation in the political process. Chavez brought a new independence to Venezuelan foreign policy, too, strengthening the country's links with Cuba, and questioning the motivation and conduct of the US government's 'War on Drugs' in the region.

A backlash was inevitable, and Chavez soon found himself facing a powerful coalition of political enemies. The country's privately owned media united behind his opponents, describing his government as a 'murderous, totalitarian, and terrorist regime' intent on introducing 'castro-communism' to Venezuela. A series of 'general strikes' followed, limited almost exclusively to the managerial classes, and the process culminated in a coup attempt in April 2002. In a scenario familiar to students of Latin American history, Chavez was kidnapped by right-wing elements of the army and Pedro Carmona, chairman of the country's Chamber of Commerce, installed as president. Carmona immediately dissolved parliament and suspended the constitution. CIA involvement was suspected, with the US government quick to welcome the coup

as 'a blow for democracy'.

US hopes were to be dashed, however, as massive demonstrations followed. An army revolt sealed the coup's fate, and within 48 hours Chavez had been restored to power. Bush's National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice marked his return by expressing her hope that he had 'learned his lesson' from the experience.

Incredibly, Chavez failed to move decisively against his opponents in the aftermath of the coup attempt. He merely reaffirmed his commitment to democracy and pressed ahead with the reforms. Instead of being summarily executed, the plotters were handed over to the country's judicial system for prosecution, an arena in which they can expect a sympathetic hearing.

As a result, the situation in Venezuela has worsened significantly in recent months. Interpreting Chavez's clemency as weakness, the opposition has only intensified its activity. Oil production, the mainstay of the Venezuelan economy, has been paralyzed by a series of managerial strikes, and the media continues to broadcast overt opposition propaganda. With the country now mired in a financial crisis, Chavez's popularity is plummeting. A second coup, widely anticipated, may well be more successful than the first.

The spectre surely haunting Chavez at this moment is the ghost of Salvador Allende, the left-wing president of Chile overthrown by a CIA-backed coup in 1973. Like Chavez, Allende was a committed democrat who refused to take decisive action against a violent and reactionary opposition. He died defending the presidential palace from his own army, and Chile suffered over two decades of fascist rule under the notorious General Pinochet.

A comparison with the 'Castro model' is illuminating. Fidel Castro, who overthrew Cuba's brutal Batista dictatorship in 1959, did not hesitate to defend the Cuban revolution from its internal enemies. Several hundred members of the Batista regime were tried and executed in the immediate aftermath of the revolution - a carefully controlled display of ruthlessness which ensured the subsequent stability of the revolutionary government.

The situation in Venezuela remains fluid, and Chavez has proved himself surprisingly resilient, so it may still be too early to write him off. His failure to act decisively in the aftermath of the attempted coup was a bad mistake, but recovery is not impossible. His options are limited, but a realistic advisor may yet remind Chavez that there is no shortage of walls in Venezuela. If he wishes to remain in power, he would do well to begin using at least one of them.

Iraq: a case for war?

By Malcolm Kerins

The United States claims that the most important justification for war against Iraq is Saddam Hussein's alleged development of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. The Bush administration, through spokespersons like Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, has alleged collusion between the Baghdad regime and al-Qaeda, the fear being that Iraq will provide Osama bin Laden's group with a biological or chemical weapon to use against an American target.

The truth is probably somewhat different, considering the attitude of successive administrations in Washington to Saddam's weapons programmes in the past. The most likely war aim of the US is the destruction of Saddam Hussein's regime and its replacement with a new puppet government, more willing to provide the US with control over the second largest oil reserves in the world.

It was back in the early 1980s that Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programmes were first brought on line, at a time when the US considered Iraq to be an important ally in the fight against the spread of Islamic fundamentalism. One of the people who proposed and implemented this 'friendly' policy towards Iraq was Donald Rumsfeld. Rumsfeld first met Saddam in December of 1983, in his role as 'special presidential envoy' to Baghdad. This was at a time when Iraq had developed and used chemical weapons against Iranian targets.

Throughout the 1980s Iraq fought a bloody and bitter war with Iran, and despite the fact that Saddam Hussein actually started the conflict, the US threw their full might behind the Iraqi regime. The Regan and Bush (Senior) administrations applied the now infamous 'domino theory' to the Middle East. This foresaw the overrunning of key US allies like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and even Jordan. This scenario was enough to turn Saddam Hussein into an important strategic ally.

It was in the summer of 1982, with a successful Iranian offensive underway, that Washington began to become concerned about the outcome of the conflict. The decision was then taken by Ronald Regan's administration to provide Iraq with numerous items that had both a military and a civilian application, including poisonous chemicals and deadly biological agents such as anthrax and bubonic plague. It has long been Washington's policy to support or install 'friendly dictators'. From the Middle East to Central America, the US government has applied one simple dictum: 'He

may be a sonofabitch, but at least he's our sonofabitch'. This policy has allowed Saddam to, literally, get away with mass murder. While he gassed Iranian soldiers, and later the people of Kurdistan, the West stood idly by, even giving covert support to his actions. Right up until July 1990, Iraq was given favourable status by the US. It was only the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait that finally proved that America's monster was out of control. But even this



action by Saddam didn't bring about his demise, as he was still perceived by the West as a bulwark against fundamentalism.

So for twelve years Saddam was 'contained' by the United Nations. Vast amounts of his arsenal were destroyed in the aftermath of the Gulf war, and Saddam's army became a shadow of its former self. But the situation drastically changed after September 11, when President George Bush Junior declared that 'the doctrine of containment just doesn't hold any water with me'. The reason for this change of heart probably lies with the fact that the US 'War on Terror' has been far from successful. The people of America have seen drastic changes in their standard of living, eroded human rights, troops stationed at airports, and security alerts declared daily, and this despite the fact that a war was fought in Afghanistan to destroy Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network. What the Bush administration needs to consolidate support at home is a quick victory and Saddam has conveniently provided himself as the soft target.

America has tried hard to justify its coming war with Iraq, and while it is feasible that Saddam does still have some weapons of mass destruction, what hasn't been proved is a link between Iraq and al-Qaeda. While a relationship between the two could be theoretically possible, it's probably not very likely. In fact, in a recent tape record-

ing purporting to come from Osama bin Laden, he called on the Iraqi people to carry out suicide attacks 'against the enemies of Islam'. He also stated that it was irrelevant whether the 'socialist' Baghdad regime fell or not, so long as the people resisted the American invasion; hardly the words of an ally.

Lets suppose for a moment that the charges leveled against Iraq are correct and that chemical and biological weapons are present. Why hasn't he used them? Probably because there is a deterrent effect as a result of the United Nations containment policy. Saddam knows that, in the current political climate, there would be some retaliation against his government. But if American policy is to destroy the regime then this deterrent effect is nullified. If Iraq is attacked, would these weapons not be used as a last resort, or could a weapon not be given to bin Laden's group? It's a risk the Americans are prepared to take. Because of instability in Saudi Arabia, the future of oil production there might not be guaranteed and so the U.S. needs to acquire it's own reserves, namely those of Iraq. The plan is simple: topple Saddam, install a new government which will probably and conveniently invite the U.S. army to garrison the oil fields, and the problem is solved.

One of the results of American aggression against Iraq can be seen in North Korea, which was named along with Iraq and Iran as being part of an 'axis of evil'. The comparison between the two situations is very informative. There is no question of a U.S. war against North Korea, even though it's probably the bigger threat. Why is this? Simply because North Korea is too strong and has the capability to land a nuclear weapon on the west coast of America. In short, the cost of victory would be too high. The message this sends to other nations, who may fall foul of the new imperial power, is stark. Develop weapons of mass destruction as quickly as possible to create a deterrent against American interference.

The irony is that a war supposedly fought to destroy weapons of mass destruction could very well promote further nuclear proliferation as nations scramble to defend themselves. Looking back over George Bush's presidency it will be seen that he has done more than most to foster conflict and division. The world he wants to make safe is a far more dangerous place than that left by his predecessors, and they weren't renowned for their pacifism.

The New Republican Forum

The New Republican Forum is a coalition of political and community activists, founded to challenge the political status quo in Ireland by providing a radical Republican alternative to the mainstream political establishment.

The New Republican Forum:

- Stands for the reunification of Ireland and opposes all aspects of British interference in Irish affairs.
- Opposes the Belfast Agreement, which subverts the Irish people's inalienable right to self-determination.
- Stands for the creation of a just society in Ireland, based on principles of equality, social justice and genuine democracy, underpinned by a comprehensive charter of inalienable human rights.
- Supports the promotion and development of Irish culture.
- Opposes the resurgence of imperialism as a political ideology, led by the United States, its allies and client regimes.
- Supports all oppressed peoples struggling for national liberation.
- Opposes any attempt by the Dublin government to aid or assist any Western military alliance.

Our aims are:

- To establish a credible Republican opposition to British rule in Ireland.
- To critically reassess and analyse the history of the Republican struggle in Ireland, and by so doing, chart a course for the future of the Republican movement.
- To establish, support and coordinate the activities of Republican, community-based and other progressive organisations, forging a basis for a new national movement.
- To liaise with other progressive forces, nationally and internationally, including anti-capitalist groups, trade unionists and environmental movements, along with national liberation movements worldwide, to further the cause of anti-imperialism.
- To establish a range of independent media outlets providing Irish people with alternative sources of information on political and social issues.

Forum Magazine produced by:

The New Republican Forum

e-mail: post_iri2000@yahoo.co.uk

Forum Online: www.iri2000.net