



An Phoblacht

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REPUBLICAN NEWS

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Wednesday, 29 December 1993



MAJOR OBSTACLES TO PEACE

THIS IS THE FACE OF BRITISH RULE IN IRELAND — a British prime minister with the armed wing of his government on a Christmas morale-boosting trip to the troops. Behind the publicity gloss of the visit the real purpose was to congratulate the 30,000-plus garrison with which Britain holds the Six Counties.

We heard no calls for Major to renounce violence. There were no newspaper editorials or pulpit pronouncements asking these men and women of violence to lay down their arms. Their unwanted, unwelcome and futile presence in Ireland was not mentioned. There was no question of Major being challenged on his credentials to talk about peace while he was in charge

of the largest military force in Ireland, the biggest importer of arms, and the clandestine colluders with loyalist death squads.

John Major arrived in the week that British soldiers were acquitted of the murder of Fergal Caraher, gunned down, and his brother wounded, near their home by a military patrol, for the crime of being Irish. Amid British government dismissals of any idea of an amnesty for political prisoners — even in the context of an overall settlement — there were no leading churchmen or 'constitutional' politicians pointing out that for British forces, no matter what their offence, there is a permanent amnesty before and after they injure or kill.

These are the realities with which the nationalist people of the Six Counties have long lived. Yet their will to see a just and lasting peace, and that of freedom loving people everywhere in Ireland, remains undiminished. Gerry Adams said in a seasonal message last week that it was as a result of Sinn Féin initiatives that "the right of the Irish people to national self-determination is now firmly at the centre of the political agenda. The London and Dublin governments have been forced to focus on the issue of peace in Ireland in an unprecedented way." He concluded that "the resilience of the republican struggle, the determination of our people to be free has been the motor for all of this."

News

Barracks wrecked in Tyrone

THE Irish Republican Army suspended all offensive operations in the Six Counties for three days on 24, 25 and 26 December. Immediately following the end of that period, Oglaithe na hÉireann in Tyrone launched an attack which virtually destroyed an RUC barracks.

The Tyrone Brigade gave details of the attack in a statement which said:

"Minutes following the three day suspension of operations, an active service unit (ASU) of our brigade put into place an operation which had been planned immediately prior to the three-day suspension.

"Using a prepared heavy mortar of the Barracks Buster type, the ASU attached it to a Toyota Land Cruiser and drove to the RUC barracks in Fintona, County Tyrone."

The statement went on to say that the barracks commands a view of the main road junction in the centre of the town and has

been in continuous use over the past number of months by British crown forces using unmarked armoured vehicles. The barracks is also employed as a communication centre.

The IRA statement continued:

"Acting on this information, last Monday morning's attack was launched at 12.16am. The mortar was launched from the back of the commandeered Land Cruiser and landed some 15 feet in front of the barracks' main door and behind its reinforced blast walls."

The explosion completely wrecked the front of the building as well as destroying the roof and



● Fintona RUC Barracks — devastated in the IRA mortar attack on Monday 27 December

gutting the inside. Local people reported that the barracks is now out of action.

■ LANDMINE BLAST IN DERRY

Earlier on Sunday, 19 December

WAR NEWS

ber, an ASU from Derry Brigade blew one of a number of British army personnel carriers off the road on the outskirts of Derry.

In their statement responsibility for the Buncrana Road attack the IRA said:

"Our engineers assembled over 450lbs of explosives and placed the large bomb inside a drain on the Derry/Buncrana road. Our Volunteers then waited on one of a number of regular British army mobile patrols.

At approximately 2.30pm, as a two-vehicle British army patrol passed, the mine was detonated. No crown forces' injuries were admitted to after the attack.

■ BRITISH SOLDIER INJURED

A British soldier was injured on Monday, 20 December, when a landmine was detonated by command wire as a mobile patrol passed close by. The explosives had earlier been put into position on Belfast's Suffolk Road, only 400 yards from an RUC barracks, by Volunteers of Belfast Brigade. Armed Volunteers ensured that no civilians were in the vicinity prior to detonating the mine.

■ WIDESPREAD

DISRUPTION IN LONDON

The IRA claimed responsibility for the widespread rail disruption in the third week in December. In their statement, the IRA said that Volunteers under their command "carried out the series of operations over recent days which brought chaos to the rail network in and around the British capital".

All rail traffic into and out of London was brought to a standstill three days running at the start of Christmas week. The operations included incendiary attacks and a coordinated campaign of hoax bomb warnings.

■ GRENADE ATTACK

ON BARRACKS

In an attack on the Springfield Road RUC Barracks on Monday, 27 December, Volunteers of Belfast Brigade lobbed an impact grenade into the base. No reports of crown forces injuries were received following the 11.15pm attack.



● Volunteers of the Irish Republican Army launch a 'Barracks Buster'

'Our struggle has outlasted British offensives' — IRA

In a New Year message, the leadership of the IRA has reiterated that it wants peace and that the British government can bring it about if it has the political will.

THE LEADERSHIP of Oglaithe na hÉireann extends seasonal and fraternal greetings to all its friends, supporters and activists at home and abroad. To our imprisoned comrades and their families and to the families of all our dead, especially those who have lost loved ones over the last year, we extend solidarity. Your courage and commitment in the face of terrible suffering and immense odds inspires and strengthens our determination to face the challenge ahead.

As we face into our 26th year of unbroken struggle, we salute the Volunteer soldiers of Oglaithe na hÉireann and all those who have given us their unwavering support. It is the resilience of the republican struggle which has forced the British to focus on the realities of their futile war in Ireland.

We salute the successes of Sinn Féin and note how their efforts since the mid-1980s have borne fruit and have brought about a situation where all sides have been forced to face in a meaningful way the underlying causes of the conflict and more importantly, how we can move away from continu-

ing conflict and towards a just and lasting peace.

In the early part of 1993, the efforts of the Sinn Féin leadership brought about a situation where a viable framework for a peace process was placed for consideration before the London and Dublin governments. The IRA welcomed this development and indicated that the Irish peace initiative could provide the basis for peace. Events since then have occurred in light of this initiative and must be seen in this context.

As we face 1994, the efforts of our Volunteers and supporters will continue to focus on the need for keeping the question for a resolution of the conflict firmly centre stage.

Our struggle has endured and outlasted one British offensive

after another. It remains solid and instant. The right of the Irish people to national self-determination and the question of lasting peace are inextricably linked.

The British government holds the key to peace. The IRA wants peace. If the political will exists or can be created then there is a real hope that a basis for peace can be established. It is our desire that it should be. The IRA reiterates its determination and the determination of our activists and supporters to see a just and lasting peace established in Ireland. No one should doubt our determination.



News



● British marines at the scene of the murder of Fergal Caraher

Killers walk free

Caraher murder whitewashed

The widow, father and relatives of Fergal Caraher walked out of Belfast High Court in silent protest against presiding Judge Brian Hutton's acquittal of two British marines last week.

Lance Corporal Richard Elkington and Marine Andrew Callaghan, both from 45 Commando, were acquitted on the grounds of "reasonable doubt" of the murder of 21-year-old South Armagh Sinn Féin member Fergal Caraher and the

attempted murder of his brother Michael in December 1990.

Margaret Caraher, widow of Fergal, described herself as being "disappointed" by the judge's decision. She continued:

"We have come to expect nothing more from the legal system in

the North of Ireland. We said three years ago that we wouldn't let this rest and we wouldn't leave any stone unturned and that very much still applies."

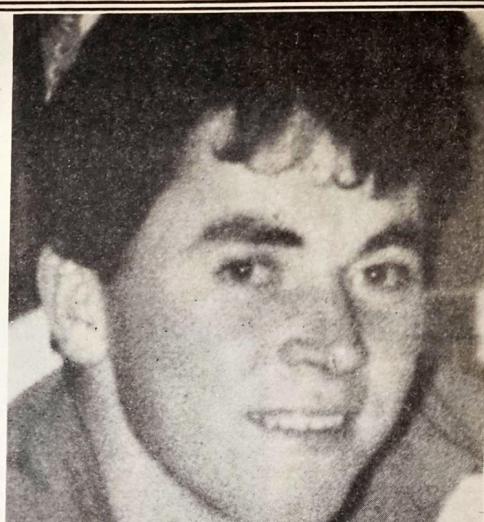
The decision immediately provoked condemnation by nationalist and human rights groups both within Ireland and abroad. Cullyhanna Sinn Féin Councillor Jim McAllister said the people of the area were not surprised but "very angry" at the verdict.

Sinn Féin Chairperson Tom Hartley said the verdict highlighted "in a very clear way the lack of British justice in Ireland and the nature of violence in this state".

"It also points to the contradiction in John Major's denial of amnesty for political prisoners. As with all these cases, there is an automatic amnesty for members of the British crown forces."

The Irish National Congress which co-sponsored the Cullyhanna Inquiry into the shooting, said the verdict was "what we have come to expect".

Michael Ritchie of the Six-County based Campaign for the Administration of Justice, pointed out that the British government's regulations concerning the use of lethal force failed to meet international standards. Commenting on the number of killings by the British crown forces in the Six Counties, Ritchie said that out of more than 350 deaths caused by British crown forces in the last 25 years, only four con-



● Fergal Caraher — the result of the trial highlighted the lack of British justice in Ireland and the nature of violence in the Six-County state

For anyone familiar with the trials of the Casement Accused, in which nationalists faced an array of charges in connection with the deaths of two British soldiers, Judge Hutton's remarks at the Caraher trial only serve to underline the prevailing double standard.

In what can only be described as a convenient attack of selective amnesia, Judge Hutton failed to take into account undisputed evidence that the British army patrol responsible for the shooting had deliberately thwarted forensic investigation by removing spent cartridges from the scene.

In a Catch 22 judgement, Hutton cited nationalist alienation to the sectarian operation of the Six-County statelet as a reason to dismiss the evidence of civilian eyewitnesses. The judge's ruling provides a classic example of how the operation of British justice in Ireland denies nationalist experience and acts as a mechanism of repression.



● Michael Caraher, brother of Fergal, was also shot and wounded by the British army in the same incident



● MARGARET CARAHER

"We will have our freedom" — Adams

In his Christmas and New Year message for 1993 the Sinn Féin President, Gerry Adams said:

"This Christmas and New Year 700 republican prisoners are separated from their families. Their resolve and courage is remarkable and an unfailing source of inspiration. To all our prisoners, particularly those in prisons in Britain I send greetings and solidarity.

"At this time of year we also remember with great sadness all those who have lost their lives

over the past 12 months and send our sympathy to their grieving families and friends. This year saw increased activity by the loyalist death squads, armed by British intelligence and encouraged by hate-mongering unionist politicians.

"The deaths of the last year and, most particularly, those of recent months are all the more tragic and saddening because during this period there has been a real opportunity to establish a real peace process

and to end this tragic conflict.

"This year has seen significant developments in the struggle for a just and democratic settlement. As part of our long-term peace strategy, Sinn Féin undertook a series of political initiatives during the course of 1993 which were to successfully expose the failure of partition, the failures of repression, the marginalisation and the need for a new and imaginative approach which would deal with the political causes of conflict. As a result of these initiatives, the right of the Irish people to

national self-determination is now firmly at the centre of the political agenda. The London and Dublin governments have been forced to focus on the issue of peace in Ireland in an unprecedented way.

"The resilience of the republican struggle, the determination of our people to be free has been the motor for all of this. In 1994 we will face many challenges but we will do so united and stronger than at any time in recent history and more confident than ever that we will have our freedom."



● GERRY ADAMS



An Phoblacht

REPUBLICAN NEWS

29 DECEMBER 1993

A typical decision

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S DECISION to go ahead with its now economically unviable and potentially genocidal Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP) has aroused angry responses from environmental groups and people living throughout Ireland, but particularly on the east coast.

Nuclear fuel from as far afield as Japan will now be transported through the Irish Sea, en route to and from Sellafield, each deadly cargo increasing the chances of an environmental disaster.

Already this year British Nuclear Fuels Ltd has been fined for violating nuclear safety rules although a measure of the seriousness placed by the British on such an offence is that its total fine was a mere £16,757. While Sellafield's appalling safety record does not bode well for THORP, whatever noises British politicians may make about stricter emission controls, the world economic climate is such nowadays that the St£2.8 billion plant is in all probability unviable. There is currently a world glut of plutonium. THORP's biggest customer, Japan, has indicated that it will not want plutonium extracted from the waste it will send. The German Federal Audit Court has said that reprocessing spent fuel is economically unviable.

The decision to open this global nuclear dustbin, in opposition to the wishes of the vast majority of Irish people, North and South, shows that, for all the flowery language of the Downing Street Declaration, the British government will always put its interests before the wishes of the Irish people. In Ireland as elsewhere, Britain will pursue its own agenda to protect its perceived interests, regardless of others. In this case, those interests are probably primarily geared towards perpetuating Britain's role as a major world power with a strong nuclear capability.

So much for paragraph three of the declaration, which told us that the development of Europe would require new approaches to serve interests common to both parts of the island of Ireland, and to Ireland and Britain as partners in the European Union. Later it talks of moving towards "a new era of understanding" and laying the foundations for "a more peaceful and harmonious future". When the British cabinet took the THORP decision it was in full awareness of the opposition from all sectors of Irish society to the plant.

The General Purposes Committee of Dublin City Council has already voted to join in a court action against the British government by Lancashire County Council and Greenpeace. Irish MEPs have vowed to ask the European Parliament to use its new powers to stall the project in January.

So far the Dublin government has expressed its "deep regret" over the decision. Such a weak-kneed reaction to a decision which affects the lives of so many Irish people is cowardly and deeply insulting to their electors. The THORP plant, which will silently cost the lives and health of vulnerable Irish people for generations to come, demonstrates the ineffectiveness of 'quiet diplomacy' in influencing Britain. Only vigorous political and legal action against the British government will have any real effect. All Irish people, North and South, should work together to achieve this.

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News

British say 'No, No, No'

■ BY NEIL FORDE

declaration is "non-negotiable" and as he said on a brief publicity visit to Belfast on Wednesday, 22 December. "There is a gauntlet down on the table. It is there for Sinn Féin to pick up. The need for fresh negotiation. There is no need for further indecisiveness. There is no need for further clarification."

This was allied to the

British government's fourth declaration, that of threats of a "security crackdown"—ie intensified repression in nationalist areas by the British army and RUC. The leaking of backup security plans began on Sunday, 19 December, the same day that the British government rejected any discussions on amnesty for republican POWs.

Sinn Féin responded by asserting that:

"The issuing of ultimatum by London and Dublin while we are considering their document is most unhelpful. We have been around for too long for this kind of Lloyd Georgian approach. Republicans will not be intimidated."

Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams stated that "Sinn Féin is committed to building a peace process in our country and has been doing so for some time before the governments applied themselves to any of the issues involved."

"There is quite a lot of maneuvering going on at

"THE most badly written declaration in Anglo-Irish history" was how one British government civil servant described the 15 December Downing Street Declaration. For John Major and the British government it was "a clear and simple message".

However, the days since Reynolds and Major stood outside Downing Street have shown that the message is not clear and simple. Indeed, the British government has shown that its interpretation of the declaration depends on just who John Major and his cabinet are addressing. Increasingly, this message has been directed at assuaging the unionist community and threatening republicans.

Major's address to the House of Commons and his televised broadcast to the Six Counties that night, showed a growing divergence from the actual text of the declaration.

Major's message hung around four basic themes. The first was that Britain's reaffirmation of the Brooke-Mayhew "no selfish, strategic or economic interest" would be enough of a "concession" for the announcement by the IRA of a complete cease-fire.

The second was that there

would be a range of unionist reassurances. These included:

no joint authority; no to a united Ireland; no to recognition of

the value of an All-Ireland political and economic structure; no to Britain being a persuader; and, no to any change in the unionist veto.

These points were highlighted by Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams, speaking at a meeting of the party's Ard Chomhairle in Dublin on Wednesday, 22 December.

Adams said: "The difficulties involved in trying to build a peace process on a foundation of confusion and contradictions must be abundantly obvious to everyone".

Adams outlined Major's ever-growing list of rejections of possible changes to the existing British government created and supported status quo.

"Is this what both prime ministers have agreed?" asked Adams. "Is this what both prime ministers understood the Downing Street Declaration to mean. These are some of the issues which highlight the obvious need for clarification".

Major rejected the Sinn Féin president's comments returning to his third theme, that of maintaining that the

Threats rejected as Sinn Féin considers response

THE INITIAL SINN FÉIN RESPONSE to the Major/Reynolds Joint Declaration was delivered by party president Gerry Adams the following day. He said Sinn Féin would consider it in the context of the peace process and seek to establish what part it played in this phase of the process.

"Proper and full consideration requires, of necessity, that these deliberations will take some time and will require clarification from Dublin about aspects of the declaration.

"Mr Reynolds has been fully informed on the Sinn Féin position. Apart from this he knows what is required for a durable peace strategy and everyone knows that the building of a process which will remove the causes of conflict in our country will be a difficult one.

"Sinn Féin's peace strategy took years to evolve. Our dialogue with Irish religious, business, community and political representatives, is a protracted one. One aspect of this, my initiative with John Hume, took months to develop into an agreement. Indeed yesterday's joint declaration was the product of frenzied activity by both governments



● ALBERT REYNOLDS

after we had focussed them on this issue.

"No matter about the type of any particular position there are no quick fixes in this situation. The challenge facing all political leaders is to establish the basis for a lasting peace which brings

an end to all conflict in our country. Sinn Féin is totally committed to this and it remains a personal and political priority for me. It is in this context that we are considering yesterday's declaration," he said.

Other reactions included that of the Irish National Congress whose chairperson said it contained "an alarming concession of the Irish position before real negotiations even begin". Robert Ballagh was referring to the section in the document (paragraph 7) which refers to Articles Two and Three of the 26-County Constitution.

He said: "While the Taoiseach says in the declaration that elements of the Constitution are "deeply resented" by northern unionists, there is however no reference to the Government of Ireland Act and no acknowledgement by the British Prime Minister that it is offensive to Irish nationalists, especially those who make up 44% of the northern population.

"It must accept that Articles Two and Three do not exist in isolation but, in fact, represent just one side of a

News



• John Major at the Kennedy Way Enterprise Centre, West Belfast, during his recent sham publicity visit to the Six Counties to try and garner for the so-called peace declaration

present and it is important if we are to move towards a durable settlement that the core issues are not obscured

in the current frenzy of speculation and rumour."

Adams highlighted the Sinn Féin position in an article

in 19 December's *Sunday Tribune*. Adams wrote that "a real peace process cannot be built without the co-operation

of the British government... There can be no real movement unless London plays a positive role and no matter

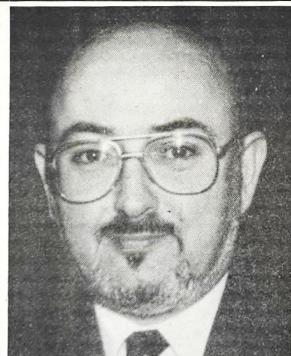
how reasonable or facilitating we are, nothing can move unless Britain joins the persuaders".

constitutional conflict between two sovereign governments. I believe that the only possible fair resolution to this conflict of sovereignty must be through open dialogue. At one time Albert Reynolds was of similar mind, since he frequently insisted that if Articles Two and Three were to be on the table then the Government of Ireland Act would have to be on the table as well. Sadly, it would appear that the Downing Street Declaration does not accept any argument for a constitutional quid pro quo."

Another element of the declaration was the pledge that both governments "make their own arrangements within their own jurisdictions to enable democratic parties to consult together and share in dialogue about the political future.

"The Taoiseach's intention is that these arrangements could include the establishment, in consultation with other parties, of a Forum for Peace and Reconciliation to make recommendations on ways in which agreement and trust between both traditions in Ireland can be promoted and established."

Sinn Féin Councillor Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin welcomed this, adding that Sinn Féin would be pleased to participate in any such forum. He voiced concern however that such a forum was being presented as an end rather



• CAOIMHGHÍN Ó CAOLÁIN



• LUCILITA BREATHNACH

than part of the evolution of a peace process. "Sinn Féin should be there as of right.

We have an electoral mandate and those who vote for Sinn Féin have a right to have their

views represented. No one

should place any preconditions on the right of any sec-



• PAT DOHERTY



• MARTIN MCGUINNESS

tion of the Irish electorate to be represented in dialogue," he said.

The prospect of Sinn Féin involvement in any peace forum has been strongly resisted by Fine Gael and the Progressive Democrats. Even before the declaration was published both parties publicly opposed any dialogue on the political future which would include Sinn Féin. Since the Joint Declaration they have been joined by others in erecting obstacles to

the dialogue.

Dick Spring, speaking in Leinster House, has linked any altering of Section 31 to Sinn Féin's response to the Joint Declaration. Responding angrily to this threat Sinn Féin Vice-President Pat Doherty said the Dublin Foreign Affairs Minister seemed intent on putting further obstacles in the way of the dialogue that his own government has decided necessary for progress. To equate the ending of political censorship with Sinn Féin's response to the joint declaration smacked of blackmail. The Section 31 Order should be repealed because it prevented full, open discussion and debate that was vital if a real peace process was to be achieved.

Also commenting on Spring's remarks Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness said:

"Dick Spring's defence of Section 31 yesterday was most unhelpful. What is he

"The British hold the power to keep the unionists locked in a negative mindset forever, or abandon them to their fate, or persuade them to help them along a road to the agreement with the rest of the people of Ireland."

Addressing the declaration itself, Adams said "the Joint Declaration is the product of frenzied activity by both governments after we had focussed them on this issue".

He asked: "Is the declaration evidence of real political will to build a genuine peace process?"

"Or is it the best that could be put together by two governments conscious of the popularity of the quest for peace but unwilling at this stage to deal in a real way with the core issues?"

British response since has been on the four themes already outlined. Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd claimed that the IRA were "ring fenced" by the declaration. "They can no longer exploit divisions between the British and Irish governments or stir up trouble in the United States".

Indeed the British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd summed up the current British position on 27 December, when he said the IRA can "expect no let-up and no quarter" from the British government. This is not the language of someone interested in a real peace process but of one who sees the present situation in terms of yet another effort to defeat republicans.

afraid of? Are the Irish people not to be permitted their right to information? The refusal of Dublin and London to recognise and acknowledge the rights of Sinn Féin voters is a continued matter of concern. We welcome the proposal by Dublin for a forum and Sinn Féin will be pleased to represent our voters."

In Dublin on 22 December, following the first meeting of the Sinn Féin Ard Chomháire since the Downing Street Declaration, the party announced the setting up of a commission "to oversee the process of nationwide consultations with as wide a range of opinion and individuals as possible".

Speaking after the meeting Sinn Féin General Secretary Lucilta Breathnach said there was clearly a need for detailed clarification of the declaration as could be seen from the remarks of John Major in Belfast.

People placing obstacles to progress were more interested "in some unattainable victory over republicans than in a real peace process. The refusal to talk to Sinn Féin at this crucial time is an extension of censorship and is extremely unhelpful".

Monaghan Councillor Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin said Sinn Féin wanted to enter into a period of dialogue and have consultations within the party and with a wide spectrum of opinion.

Review of '93



• The new year saw a demonstration of people power against Britain's border

JANUARY

As the borders of EC states were opened to unrestricted trade on 1 January 1993, the British-imposed border in Ireland remained firmly closed.

Along that border, from County Derry to County Down, thousands of people gathered on the first day of the year to reopen roads and bridges, demonstrate at British barracks and posts and march through checkpoints. New Year's Day was a demonstration of people power against the militarised border and of the determination of the communities divided by it that they will overcome.

The beginning of the year was marked by a surge in attacks on the nationalist community by loyalist death squads. On 3 January, Patrick Shields and his son Diarmuid were shot dead by the UVF at their home in Pomeroy, County Tyrone. Another son, Davog, was seriously wounded in the attack. Just two days after the killings the British army's GOC in the Six Counties, John Wilsey, defended his forces' running of British agent and UDA intelligence officer Brian Nelson, who was deeply involved in the targeting and murder of nationalist civilians.

Several weeks after Diarmuid Shields' killing, his girlfriend took

her own life because she could not come to terms with his death.

In their first attack of 1993 in Britain, the IRA exploded four small incendiary devices in shops in central London on 6 January.

On 11 January, British Direct Ruler Patrick Mayhew stated that the IRA continued its campaign because they were "driven by their dead and by those behind the wire". He promised that "unless they abandon violence" there would be "more dead, more lives spent behind the wire, and another blighted generation". Responding to Mayhew, the IRA said that his statement was part of the British government's propaganda offensive. "This propaganda offensive is linked to the rise in British-inspired killings of nationalists and the increased open British military effort.

"The IRA has a message for Mayhew. Your policies have failed. We are not fooled and we remain resolute. So long as you persist in the failed policies and the worn-out rhetoric of the past we will face you with determined resistance. Mayhew should abandon his futile strategy and begin the process which will help end this conflict," the statement concluded.

The Times of London reported that the UDA was planning to target

what it called a 'pan-nationalist front' comprising the SDLP, the GAA, the Dublin government, Sinn Féin and the IRA.

The British government's propaganda, that it administers the Six Counties according to the normal rule of law in a democratic society, was dealt another major blow in January with the findings of the inquest into the death of IRA Volunteer Séamus McElwaine. The inquest found that he was shot dead as he lay injured, five minutes after he was cut down by fire from undercover British soldiers. The jury found that Séamus McElwaine could have been arrested by the troops who killed him.

On 12 January, Fianna Fáil and Labour agreed to form a coalition government for the 26 Counties. This followed agreement on what the parties called the Programme for Partnership government. The programme was extremely vague in dealing with the most pressing issue facing the country — partition and the resulting conflict with its cost in terms of human life, and economic development and progress. The document did not mention a united Ireland and merely expressed a desire to restart the failed Six-County talks process.

One of the more interesting features of the new administration



• Michael D Higgins, pictured here with Sinn Féin's Larry O'Toole, now has an opportunity to revoke Section 31

was that the new minister with responsibility for broadcasting and therefore for political censorship, was Michael D Higgins, a longtime opponent of Section 31. Higgins promised that he would review the operation of Section 31.

During the third week of January, loyalist death squads shot dead two nationalists in Belfast. Sharon McKenna was helping a Protestant friend when UVF assassins shot her dead. Tony Butler was shot dead by the UDA on 14 January in Agra Street off Belfast's Ormeau Road.

On 27 January, H-Block escaper Paul Anthony Brennan was arrested by the FBI in California. The RUC immediately applied for his extradition.

The IRA again picked up the pace in the British capital towards the end of the month, with bomb attacks on a number of commercial and transport facilities and demonstrated that it could run rings around British security measures.

January drew to a close as it had begun — with death. Martin McNamee from Upperlands, near Strabane, died on Thursday, 28 January when a loyalist booby trap bomb exploded at the house where he was working.

FEBRUARY

February, like the preceding month, opened with further loyalist killings. Eugene Martin was shot dead in a shed at the back of his Ballyronan home in County Derry on 3 February.

Sinn Féin's annual Ard Fheis took place at Dundalk Town Hall on the weekend of 20 and 21 February. Gerry Adams told delegates that the will of Irish republicans to secure a lasting and

peaceful settlement to the conflict in the Six Counties, their desire for freedom, was greater than the British will to remain in Ireland. Adams challenged the British government: "Every British initiative to date has been within the context of partition, a British political agenda and with the unionist veto underwritten.

"A peace process, if it is to be meaningful and genuine, must address the political problem which has been a part of our history for generations. Such a policy shift by the British would meet with a positive response from republicans and usher in a new era.

"What is needed is a strategy for change and peace. This means London adopting a policy aimed at ending partition and which seeks, with Dublin, to achieve this in the shortest possible time consistent with obtaining maximum consent to the process and minimising costs of every kind and recognising the centrality of inclusive dialogue in this process."

A special election court in Belfast Crown Court ruled on 23 February that although the SDLP's Joe Hendron and his agent had broken the law by overspending on electoral expenses by £782 and by making false returns, neither was guilty of corrupt practices. Hendron was therefore allowed to remain MP for the area.

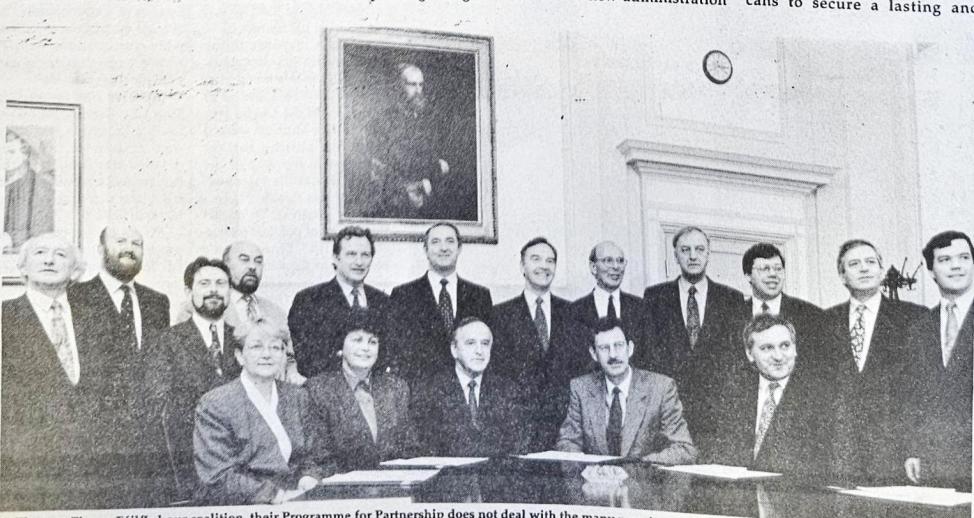
At a meeting with US president Bill Clinton on 24 February, John Major strongly opposed any idea of an American Peace Envoy for the Six Counties.

Throughout the month of February, the economic disaster faced by the entire West of Ireland region was brought sharply into focus by workplace shutdowns, particularly the pull-out by the 1,100 job Digital plant in Galway. Dublin Finance Minister Bertie Ahern unveiled his budget on 24 February, but it did nothing to tackle the problems faced not only in the West, but all over the 26 Counties. Nothing was done to reverse the failed policy of reliance on multinationals for jobs nor to resolve the problem of unemployment figures heading towards 400,000.

At the end of February, it was clear that British forces in the Six Counties were deeply worried at the latest IRA technical development — the Barracks Buster. The new mortar bomb made redundant the massive reinforcement programme which the British carried out to their military bases across the Six Counties during the 1980s.

The IRA in South Armagh staged a military display for journalists, during which Volunteers test-fired the new mortar.

The renewed IRA pressure caused severe financial and logistic problems for British forces in



• The new Fianna Fáil/Labour coalition, their Programme for Partnership does not deal with the many pressing issues facing the country

Review of '93

the Six Counties and resulted in a clawback from the Options for Change Policy — the post Cold War reduction in numbers of the British army.

MARCH

March signalled the end of the honeymoon for the Labour/Fianna Fáil coalition as the economic realities of the unemployment crisis and broken election promises dominated the news.

Volunteer James Kelly and Sinn Féin member Peter Gallagher were among the seven nationalists killed by the British-backed loyalist death squads during March. The Warrington tragedy, Dick Spring's overtures to unionists on Articles Two and Three and Larry O'Toole's Section 31 Supreme Court victory also came during the month.

Digital, Aer Lingus, Greencore all showed the cosy partnership coalition at work. Nearly 800 jobs were lost in the West as Digital announced the movement of operations to Scotland. Two hundred other jobs were also lost with the closure of two engineering firms in Kerry and Carlow.

The Dublin government response was a highly-public display of eleventh hour flights to Digital's US headquarters and the jobs still went. There was no discussion on why IDA funds had been sunk into Digital and whether this policy of funding foreign multinationals was actually worthwhile.

The coalition was too busy with other debacles such as the quick sale of Greencore shares to discuss their policy failures. They needed to fully privatise Greencore, the former sugar company, in order to raise some money to rescue Aer Lingus, so it too could be privatised some time in the future.

There was no sound to be heard from Labour on these issues. Months before, the election advertisements stated that: "Labour will strongly oppose the privatisation of valuable state enterprises." Instead, the party who promised economic justice in November stood back as the Greencore shares were sold to domestic and foreign speculators and Bernie Cahill, Greencore chairperson, whose resignation Dick Spring had demanded when in opposition back in 1991, became executive chairperson.

The only public statements that Dick Spring did get around to in March concerned not the economy or the abandonment of Labour policy but Articles Two and Three. Spring told us at the British-Irish Association in his "first major address on northern policy" that "Articles Two and Three were not cast in bronze" and that the solution lay in accepting that "all we have between us and this goal is our inherited fears and suspicions".

Robert Shaw was gunned down on the outskirts of North Belfast on 15 March. His killers claimed that Shaw had been a member of Sinn Féin. He was not a member of the party, but was killed because he was from a nationalist area.

The last week of March saw a death toll of eight people, beginning with the Warrington tragedy on 20 March. Irish republicans, like everyone else, were deeply shocked and saddened at the death of two young boys. The IRA



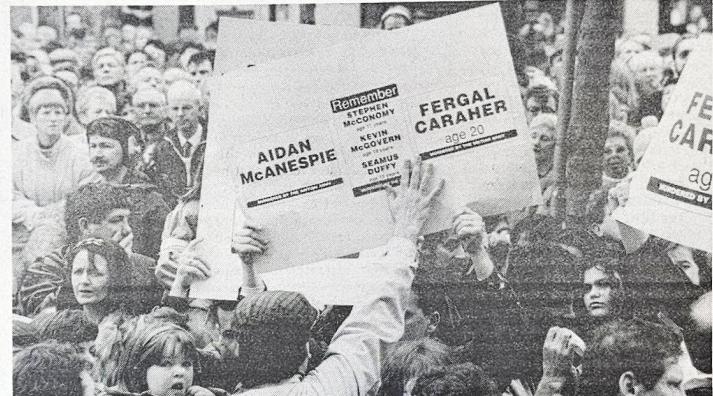
• The body of one of the four workmen (including IRA Volunteer James Kelly) murdered by a pro-British death squad at Castlerock in March

in a statement said that "the failure of the British police to act on the warnings led to tragic consequences, which were not part of our intentions and which all

republicans will profoundly regret".

Four days later, Sinn Féin member Peter Gallagher was killed as he arrived for work at the

Grosvenor Road in Belfast. He was married with seven children and one grandchild. Peter was shot within 400 yards of Grosvenor Road Barracks. The RUC claimed



• Relatives of victims of state sponsored terror at the 'Peace' rally in Dublin on 28 March to highlight the hypocrisy of Peace '93 and other so-called 'peace' organisations



they saw nothing, even though there is a permanent vehicle checkpoint outside the barracks.

The killing came within hours of a bomb attack on the home of North Belfast Councillor Gerard McGuigan. The bombing attempt was only weeks after a grenade and gun attack on his home. McGuigan's application for a personal firearm has since been denied. In the same week, two other nationalists narrowly escaped death, while one young man lost a hand in separate bomb attacks in the New Lodge area.

Later in the week, UDA death squads killed five other nationalists, including Volunteer James Kelly. Four were gunned down at work in Castlerock, County Derry. The attack was preceded by bombings at the home of Sinn Féin Councillor Joe Austin and the homes of two SDLP councillors in Banbridge.

The fifth victim was 19-year-old Damien Walsh, who was gunned down while working at a coal delivery shop in Belfast within 12 hours of the Castlerock killings. A second man also injured in the attack escaped death when the killer's pistol jammed.

One of the few positive events of the month was the victory for Larry O'Toole in the 26-County Supreme Court. O'Toole won a landmark decision when the Supreme Court dismissed RTÉ's appeal against a High Court ruling that the station's blanket ban on broadcasting interviews with members of Sinn Féin was wrong.

APRIL

Nationalists across the Six Counties began April still coming to terms with the loyalist killings of six people in the last week of March. Undeterred, republicans across Ireland played a crucial role in focusing media attention on the need for a genuine solution to the political crisis which would establish the conditions to sustain a lasting peace and end the conflict.

The other main news events of April included the initiation of the Hume/Adams talks and the IRA's

Review of '93



• Gerry Adams and John Hume — it fell to them to take the initiative which would dominate the political agenda for the year

bombing of the heartland of Britain's financial community in London's square mile.

The beginning of April saw a series of mass meetings held on both sides of the border. Relatives for Justice held a major rally on 4 April, one week after the Peace '93 rally in Dublin which saw relatives of the victims of crown forces and loyalist death squads spat on and abused by participants at the Dublin rally.

The Relatives for Justice had been refused permission to address the 28 March rally, but called the Belfast rally to "support peace with justice and to emphasise that the dead of the people of the North, in particular the victims of British forces, must also be remembered".

During this time the loyalist campaign went on unabated with a series of attacks in North Belfast and the Whiterock road. Nationalists narrowly escaped death in each attack.

It fell to Gerry Adams and John Hume to take the initiative which would dominate the political agenda for the year. Meetings between the two party leaders began in Derry on 9 April. The two leaders released a joint statement after their second meeting on Friday, 23 April.

The statement stressed that the two leaders "were not acting as intermediaries" and that "everyone has a solemn duty to change the political climate away from conflict and towards a process of national reconciliation, which sees the peaceful accommodation of the differences between the people of Britain and Ireland and the Irish people themselves".

The statement ruled out an internal settlement as a solution and accepted that the Irish people as a whole have a right to national self-determination.

The two leaders also said that "the exercise of self-determination is a matter for agreement between the people of Ireland. It is the search for that agreement and the means of achieving it on which we will be concentrating".

British reaction to the talks between Adams and Hume was muted. It has now become clear that the British government had already, by April 1993, made renewed contact themselves with Sinn Féin and had sent a document of their position during a March which was answered by a Sinn Féin document in April.

An IRA statement on 15 April emphasised that "The ball is firmly in the court of the British government. The resolution of this conflict requires dialogue which is both inclusive and without pre-conditions... Those who have the power to resolve this conflict will find republicans are people they can do business with."

On 24 April, an IRA bomb in the City of London devastated a quarter of a mile of Britain's financial heartland. One hundred and fifty seven buildings were damaged, 25 will have to be completely rebuilt. Estimates of the costs top £1,000 million.

The IRA, in a statement, called on the "British establishment to seize the opportunity and to take the steps needed for ending its futile and costly war in Ireland. We again emphasise that they should pursue the path of peace or resign themselves to the path of war".

MAY

The start of May saw the brutal killing of Sinn Féin activist, Alan

Lundy, outside the home of party colleague Belfast City Councillor Alex Maskey.

In San Francisco a US judge ordered the handing over of top



• The Opsahl Commission opened on 8 June to accept submissions from all parties with an opinion on how to achieve peace in Ireland



• Sinn Féin proved yet again their strong electoral mandate by increasing their number of seats by eight in the May local elections and increasing its share of the

secret British files relating to the extradition of Long Kesh escaper, Jimmy Smyth. The 12th anniversary of the 1981 Hunger Strike was commemorated in Belfast and London, with large crowds turning out to remember ten brave men.

In Dublin and Monaghan, the 1974 bombings by British agents was marked on the 17th. This followed a British TV documentary which highlighted the role of British intelligence in the bombings which claimed the largest number of lives in a single incident since 1969.

Towards the end of May, British justice was again exposed for the sham it is when six British paratroopers walked out of court after charges of assaulting people in Coalisland were cynically dismissed.

In England, three policemen charged with fabricating evidence against the Guildford Four were also acquitted.

Sinn Féin's excellent performance was the talking point of the local elections in the Six Counties. The party won eight more seats, increased its percentage of the overall vote in the Six Counties to

12.5%, 36% of the nationalist vote. Sinn Féin had the highest first preference total of any party in Belfast and Dungannon.

The families of the three IRA volunteers killed by British undercover soldiers in Gibraltar won their right to have the case heard in the European Court of Human Rights.

JUNE

In an article in AP/RN, Gerry Adams wrote for the first time on his talks with John Hume.

"We represent the anti-unionist electorate of the Six Counties. It is right that we should talk, especially about how to achieve lasting peace. Those who oppose this initiative have clearly revealed the undemocratic nature of their agenda," wrote the Sinn Féin president.

Loyalist death squads claimed more Catholic victims in Comber and Dundonald, County Down. The family homes of Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams and Sinn Féin activist John Smith were attacked by loyalist death squads using guns and grenades on 7 and 8 June.

The Opsahl Commission opened on 8 June with Sinn Féin Councillor and Ard Chomháire member, Pat McGowen putting the party's position on the way forward.

The Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas called on the Dublin government to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners.

The family of Derryman, John Matthews, began a campaign to have their son released, after British police arrested and charged him with various vague offences.

Twenty-Six-County President Mary Robinson was welcomed to West Belfast by community activists and other dignitaries, including Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams.

On 20 June, Sinn Féin Ard Chomháire member Martin McGuinness told thousands of republicans at the annual Bodenstown commemoration that:

Review of '93

"The question is constantly being asked: 'Who will make the first move?' The answer is quite simple and logical. We are all going to have to make the first move... We have striven to create a climate where talks are possible, but it is the British government who refuse to grasp the olive branch..."

"Republicans have no desire to coerce anyone into a united Ireland, but we are stating our total conviction that the unionist veto over the future of the Irish people is undemocratic. Many unionists admit that partition was imposed by threat of violence, is sustained by force and accept that it will inevitably come to an end."

"Each of us gathered here knows that unionist consent will never be given whilst Britain allows the unionists to derogate from a process which has as its ultimate goal the building of a peaceful and agreed Ireland."

"The initiation of such a process requires a clear and unambiguous indication from the British government that it accepts the right of the Irish people to national self-determination and that it intends to make an enthusiastic contribution towards the unification of the Irish people. We are also asking the Dublin government and the SDLP to join with us in urging the British to accept this process."

JULY

In July, DUP Deputy Leader Peter Robinson MP, called for the British airforce to wipe out parts of Dublin and Belfast with aerial bomb attacks. Michael Mates resigned amid controversy over his connections with Asil Nadir and was replaced by John Wheeler.

Loyalist death squads shot and seriously wounded a Sinn Féin election worker outside Antrim town. The processing of the Dublin government's new Public Order Bill began with a debate in Leinster House. Political activists and civil libertarians alike united in opposition to the bill.

The charges against Derryman, John Matthews were dropped and he was freed, but served with an exclusion order banning him from entering England.

In the English parliament, Tory

MPs cheered when John Major defended Lord Tebbit after the latter said on television that the only way Articles Two and Three of the 1937 Constitution would be removed was when bombs began to go off in Dublin.

The UDA launched a series of bomb attacks on the homes of SDLP members. The family home of Sinn Féin councillor for Twinbrook, Annie Armstrong, was riddled with bullets which narrowly missed her two daughters and son.

Amnesty International called for an independent inquiry into the trial and conviction of the Casement Accused.

On Friday, 16 July a Dublin court rejected an appeal against the decision by RTÉ not to carry an advertisement for Gerry Adams' latest book.

As July came to an end, the Sinn Féin advice centre on the New Lodge Road was once again attacked by loyalists.

AUGUST

August was the month which saw Six County nationalists reach a 25 year mark in their struggle for civil and national rights. It was in August 1968 that the first civil rights march from Coalisland to Dungannon took place.

In Belfast, the Nationalists Rights Committee marked the 25th year of struggle by using Belfast City Hall as the venue for the annual anti-internment march on Sunday, 8 August. The City Hall, synonymous with unionist bigotry, domination and sectarianism, was the backdrop against which thousands of nationalist from all over Ireland reclaimed Belfast as 'Our City Also'.

That Belfast hosted two highly acclaimed and successful festivals in the week leading up to the August march, was testament to the resilience, confidence and positive attitude of a people who had suffered much, but remained unbowed.

August had another less savoury anniversary to remember — the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Diplock Court system. Nonjury, one judge courts were added to the already oppressive Six-County 'legal' system.

And if we didn't have that



Part of the Nationalist Rights Committee's anti-internment march to Belfast City Hall to reclaim Belfast as 'Our City Also'

anniversary to remind us of what British justice means in the North, we had the news that the RUC reopened investigations into the Brian Nelson affair. Nelson, an agent for British military intelligence and a UDA intelligence officer, was using British crown forces' 'security files' to target nationalists before his arrest by British policeman, John Stevens. It was the fallout from Nelson's trial and the shock waves that it caused that Stevens was recalled to investigate.

AP/RN described the thousands who marched to Belfast City Hall as a tide the British government couldn't hold back.

On 8 August, hours after the march ended, a loyalist death squad attacked the home of Sinn Féin Councillor Bobby Laverty, killing his eldest son Séan. Séan Laverty was the first of many nationalists to be targeted by pro-British death squads in an attempt to terrify the whole nationalist community. A second victim of sectarian killers to die in August was Séamus Hopkins who was beaten to death. Also from the New Lodge, Hopkins suffered disabling injuries from a previous sectarian beating.

Marie-Therese de Mogollon Dowds, a mother of four children, was the third person killed by loyalists in August. As she answered a knock at her North Belfast home on the 30th she was riddled with bullets through a glass panelled door.

SEPTEMBER

September started where August finished as the deaths squads again set about their sectarian slaughter.

Jim Bell from the Short Strand was shot dead as he loaded his van with ice cream in a factory in East Belfast.

When Michael Edwards and Séan Hughes became the second and third victims of loyalist killers in September, Official Unionist MP John Taylor said "it may be helpful".

Another weapon in the British armoury of terrorism that reared

its ugly head was the saturation house raids carried out by the British army on nationalist homes throughout Belfast.

As the British were admitting to having paid out over £3 million compensation for damage to homes in the financial year '92/93, figures compiled by Sinn Féin revealed an upsurge in house raids. In Beechmount alone, up to ten per cent of homes in the district had been raided in a two month period.

The tenth anniversary of the Great Escape, when 38 republican POWs blasted their way out of Long Kesh, was celebrated in September. September 25 is a date that will live long in the memories of republicans because of an escape that demonstrated the commitment, ingenuity, bravery and determination of republicans to take on the British regime, against all odds. That day will also be remembered by many in the British political establishment, as the escape was a political blow that brought some like Jim Prior to the point of resignation and despair, such was the impact of another successful blow to Britain's occupation of Ireland.

Other firsts for nationalists were successful marches through Bellaghy and Cookstown. Nationalist rights committees in both County Derry and Tyrone organised marches through towns where they have previously been barred.

The message that the Croppies would not lie down was getting through to those who govern the Orange State.



Steve McDonagh at the Brandon Press press conference to highlight RTE's refusal to advertise Gerry Adams' new book *The Street and Other Stories*

Review of '93



• The scene inside the Rising Sun Bar following the UDA death squad attack on Hallowe'en night in which seven people were murdered

OCTOBER

Twenty five years after the Stormont regime sent in the RUC to baton civil rights marchers off the streets of Derry, marchers followed the route from Duke Street to Guildhall Square. At a rally, Eamon McCann told the marchers that it was a lie to say the 1968 march started 'the troubles'. 'What led to violence was the RUC attack on the Civil Rights Movement.'

As to where we are now, Oliver Kearney of the Equality Campaign told a meeting of the Dublin '68 Committee in October: 'Today, 32,000 British frontier combat troops and paramilitary police stand at battle stations. Conflict has raged for 25 years, with every conceivable abuse of human rights and the destruction of the hopes of an entire generation of Irish children.'

'To reinforce the attempts to physically destroy the hopes of nationalists, the British-backed death squads unleashed more terror. In the first fortnight of October they killed Jody Reynolds, Jason McFarlane and Paddy McMahon in separate attacks, throughout Belfast, in which, by their own admission, they said they tried to commit, "mass murder".'

Loyalist gangs opened fire on black taxis and private homes using automatic weapons, while on other occasions they bombed the homes of nationalists, coming close to wiping out whole families.'

An IRA bomb which detonated prematurely under the UDA's

Headquarters on Belfast's Shankill Road, killed nine civilians and an IRA Volunteer.

Martin Moran was shot in the head by loyalists within hours of the explosion and died on Monday 25 October.

Sean Fox, a 72-year-old living on the outskirts of North Belfast,

was the next victim of the death squads. He was shot in his home, where he lived alone, on Monday night, 25 October.

Then on Tuesday morning, 26 October, loyalists drove into a Belfast Council Cleansing Department yard on Kennedy Way in West Belfast. They sprayed the

yard with automatic gunfire, killing two workers and injuring many others.

A UVF gang went into the home of the Cairns family in Bleary near Lurgan, County Armagh and shot dead two brothers, Gerard and Rory Cairns.

Sinn Féin Councillor Brendan



• Twenty five years on nationalists are still demanding their national and civil rights with the same determination and resilience as they did in 1968

Curran commenting on the attack, rubbished the talk about the killings being part of some "tit-for-tat" campaign. He said: "This is part of a coordinated attempt to promote loyalist political objectives by terrorising all nationalists."

Before the nationalist community could recover from the shock of the Cairns killings, a UDA death squad was entering the Rising Sun bar in the quiet Derry village of Greysteel.

It was Hallowe'en and they were callously offering the revellers a "trick or treat". Seven people were shot dead as the assailants sprayed the bar.

In the midst of all this, the British government was signing an order to bar Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams from Britain and announced a proposed tightening of the broadcasting ban introduced five years ago. Adams had been invited by Tony Benn to speak in the British House of Commons to MPs about the peace initiative he and John Hume had undertaken.

Sinn Féin won a significant by-election victory over the SDLP in Derry. The by-election had been called when Sinn Féin's Hugh Brady resigned his seat. Sinn Féin appealed to the SDLP not to run a candidate on the grounds that the seat was legitimately Sinn Féin's and as an election would cost the rate-payers £10,000.

NOVEMBER

Against the backdrop of a week of sectarian killings by loyalist death squads, November opened with attempts by British Prime Minister John Major to dismiss the Irish peace initiative advanced by Gerry Adams and John Hume.

John Major rather glibly informed the British parliament that it would turn his stomach to talk to republicans and he announced the possibility of extending the broadcasting restrictions imposed upon Sinn Féin.

By the end of the month, British hypocrisy would be exposed with the revelation that talks had occurred between the British and

Review of '93



• John Major and Albert Reynolds — the political fallout from their Joint Declaration dominated what remained of December

republicans. Meanwhile, massive public support within Ireland, Britain and internationally, swung behind the Irish peace initiative. At the Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis there was strong support voiced in favour of the Hume/Adams proposals.

"IRA Wants Peace" ran the AP/RN front page headline of 25 November. In an interview, the IRA dismissed the notion of an IRA defeat or surrender and called for a negotiated settlement.

As two British soldiers went on trial for the murder of South Armagh man Fergal Caraher, a British soldier shot and seriously wounded a County Tyrone woman in similar circumstances.

The loyalist campaign of sectarian killings continued with the shooting dead of nationalist father of five Sean Hagan on 25 November.

DECEMBER

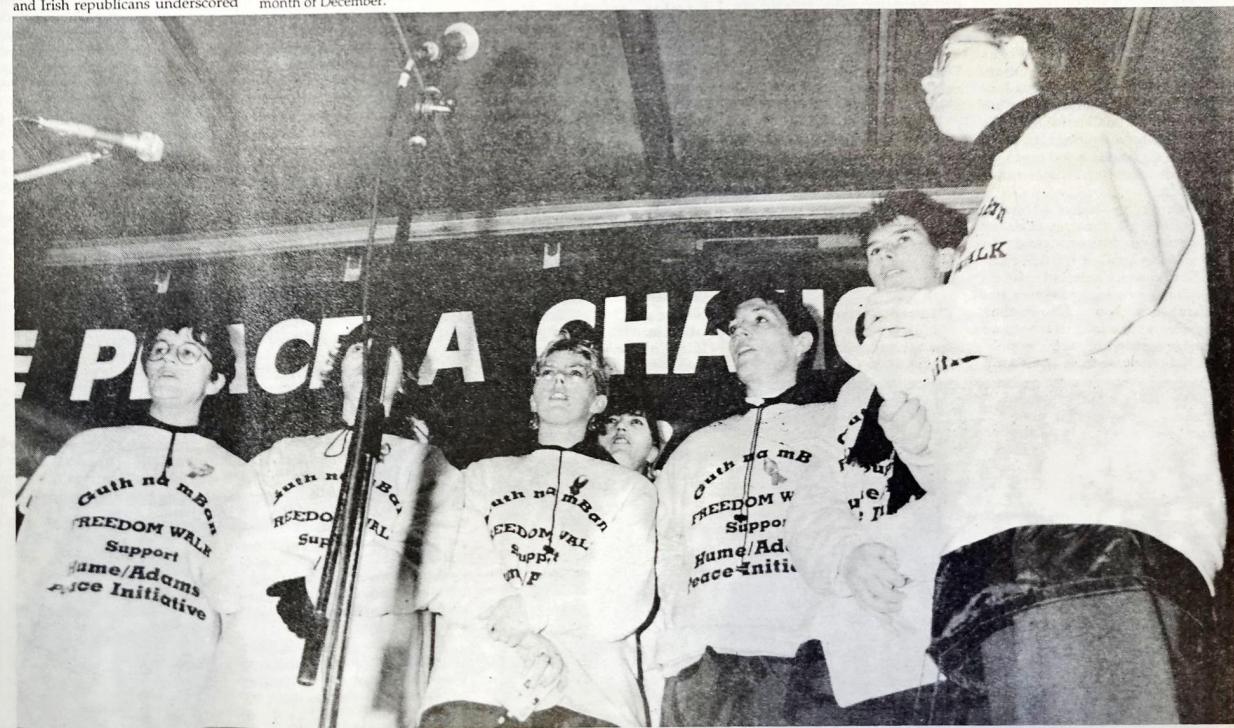
Exposure of sustained contact between the British government and Irish republicans underscored

British hypocrisy in their continuing intransigence over the Hume/Adams peace initiative. Six-County Direct Ruler Patrick Mayhew admitted that there were 20 "errors" in documentation of the British government's recorded contact with republicans.

On the eve of the summit between John Major and Albert Reynolds, women taking part in a Freedom Walk from Derry, through Belfast, South Armagh and Dundalk arrived in Dublin. A rally at the GPO, Dublin, in support of the peace initiative heard calls for the Dublin government to listen to the voice of Irish opinion at home and abroad.

An RUC officer, who is charged with the murder of County Tyrone agricultural student, Kevin McGovern, was accused by the prosecution of offering "fabricated evidence".

On 15 December Albert Reynolds and John Major made their Joint Declaration. Political fallout from, and response to, this declaration dominated what remained of the month of December.



• Members of Guth na mBÁIN, who walked from Derry to Dublin in support of the Hume/Adams initiative

A full review of IRA operations during 1993 will be carried in next week's AP/RN.

Nuacht

Bliain mhór don Ghaeilge

Bhí 1993 in a bhliain chéad chomórtha de Chonradh na Gaeilge agus is é príomhscéala na bliana ó thaobh na teanga de na gur fhágair ríaltas Bhaile Atha Cliath faoi dheireadh thiar i ndiaidh blianta fada de mhoilleadóireacht go bhfuil Teilifís na Gaeilge le toiseach go hoifigiúil i mí Eanáir 1995.

Is de thoradh ar blianta d'agóidí agus feachtasóireacht ag éileamh Teilifís Gaeilge agus blianta de ghealltanais de ríaltas leanúnacha nár comhlíonadh atá an cineadh dearfach d'fheadar againn. I mí na Samhna i ndiaidh míonna de thuairimfachtaí faoin stáisiún a mbheadh ann, d'ámbach sé ann ar chor ar bith, fógraíodh go raibh an stáisiún le teacht ar an saol.

Beidh Teilifís na Gaeilge (TnA) ag craoladh trí uaire in aghaidh an lae ag an tús. Beidh an stáisiún lonnaíteach i nGaeilge Chonamara ach beidh sé ag freastal ar Gaeilge uilig na tire agus chan ar an Ghaeltacht amháin.

Sítear go mbíodh 250 post cruthaítear i nTnA. Beidh foireann sheasmhánach an stáisiún fén beag, ach beidh postanna de dhéantóirí chlár neamhspleách a bhéas ag soláthar dhá dtrían de na cláir dos tseirbhís ú. Tionfadh bhradh ar dhrámafocht Gaeilge fos-ta mar beidh ardú ar an t-eáleamh d'aisteoir agus drámaíu.

Ní bheidh an stáisiún ar fáil ach ag 60% de mhuintir na 26 Chontae ar dtús go ndeirtear go bhfuil fadhbanna teicniúla fós le sár. Táthair ag tuar áfach go mbíodh an fáil ar fáil ag muintir muintir na 26 Chontae roimh 1998.

Ach ní bheidh teacht ar bith an TnA g sna Sé Chontae murándéanaí ríaltas na Breataine comhriéalteach éigin leis na h-údarásach craolacháin sna 26 Chontae. Cuireadh ní b'mh dúla sa cheist nár mar a bhí in am ar bith eile le tamall de bhlianta anuas. Ach thaispeáin na pobalbhreitheanna taclocht láidir de teangeal agus do stáisiún nua d'ainneoin na bhfadhbanna uilig a mbíonn lean bunú.

Chuir an Feachtas Náisiúnta Teilifís fáilte mhór romh TnA mar a chuir na heagrasí Gaeilge ar fad.

D'aontaigh na grúpaí Gaeilge uilig go mbéadh an stáisiún ó ina thadhbh mór ag clanna a bhí ag lóigí an a bpáistí le Gaeilge lasmuigh den Ghéalta agus do dháltaí Gaeilseoláin nach raibh aon Gaeilge agus do teacht acu. Mar sin creditear go mbéidh an bhéim ag TnA ag an tús ar chláracha do pháistí agus do dhéagóirí.

Thosaigh Ráidíó Fáilte ag craoladh ar an 1 Eanáir go neamhdleathacha as Cultúrlann Mhac Adaim O Fiach i mBéal

Seo súil siar ag cuid de na príomhimeachtaí i saol na Gaeilge le linn 1993 ag Oisín O Murchú.

Feirtear. Níor bhí é seo an chéad iarracht chun seirbhís raidió Gaeilge a sholáthar sa chathair ach ba é an iarracht ba chuijmíthí agus ba dhionghbáil riamh cur chuige.

Thosaigh Raidió Fáilte ag craoladh sé uair a chloig sa lá le meascán de cheol agus de chraic. Bhí an iarracht ar fad deonach ach d'éirigh leis an fhoireann cur le lion na gclár go dtí go raibh an stáisiún ag craoladh 14 uaire in aghaidh an lae.

Lean Raidió Fáilte ag tabhairt díshláin den stáit le sé mhí agus i mí Meithimh fuair an stáisiún ceadúnas craoláit mhí-h-amháin 6 na húdarásach craoláit sa Bhríotain ag an choinfoll go n-éireofaí as an craoladh mhí-dleathach.

Chraol Raidió Fáilte ansin go dtí 4 iúil — an chéadúin i stáin na Sé Chontae a chraol stáisiún raidió Gaeilge go deاثach.

Ina dhiaidh sin d'imirgh an stáisiún den aer mar a ghéillidh sé ag eagraíthe iarrachtaí nua ag lorg ceadúnas iomlán i Choimisiún do Raidió Neamhspleáche sa Bhríotain. Idir an lá inniu tá sé beartaithe cur i stéach faoi choinne ceadúnas eile miosa leis an abhar a choinseáil i mbéal an phobail. Mura n-éiríonn leis an iarracht chun ceadúnas a fháil is cosúil go raibh Raidió Fáilte i mbun craoláit aris go neamhdleathach.

Ní mBéal Feirste amháin a bhí i nStáit a déanamh maidir le craoladh Gaeilge ar an ráidí.

I mBaile Atha Cliath tháinig Raidió na Life ar an aer san fhómar, an chéad stáisiún Gaeilge de chuid na cathrach riamh.

Tá seachtrá d'fhoireann seasmhagh ag an stáisiún agus tá obair eile acu ar scímeanna FAS. Ach cosúil le fointíar Gaeilge in áit ar bith tá an stáisiún ag brath cuid mhór a gúide deonacha a thugann a gúide ama saor in aisce ag cur cláir i láthair.

Tá cláir chúrsáid reatha á gcur i láthair ag Raidió na Life mar aon le meascán de cheol agus craic. Baineann siad úsáid as an tseirbhís nuachtas Gaeilge atá a chur ar fáil ag 98 FM do stáisiún neamhspleáche a fud na 26 Chontae.

Leis an laghad Gaeilge atá le cluinstín ar na stáisiún raidió neamhspleácha tá súil ag Raidió



● Raidió na Life ag craoladh ar 102FM na Life go lionfachidh siad an bearna seo do mhuintir na cathrach ar a laghad.

Lean meath an pháipéir Domhnaigh Gaeilge Anois le linn na bliana. Thainig an páipéar faoi scruitíú le linn an t-samhraidh nua ar aardafodh ceistíanna faoin dóigh a bhí an páipéar ag caitheamh an deontais a fhagaíonn sé 6 ríaltas na 26 Chontae.

Tá sé soiléir go bhfuil fadhbánan airgeadasa de shórt amháin nó de shórt eile ag an pháipéar agus nach bhfuil díolachán aige gur fiú trácht a thuilleadh. Tá an easpa ábhar nuachtaí ann ina scannal agus is ait gur féidir le'n eagraítheoir leibhéal an insfeisíochta seachtaíntí 6 Roinn na Gaeltachta a chaomhnú.

Tá an cruth atá ar Anois ina bhábor mór díomáid ag Gaeil uilig na tire agus tá súil ag cág go ndéanfachar rud éigin le feabhas a chur ar an scéalaírthe seo. Bhí díomáid in ndán fosta don pháipéar laethúil Gaeilge LA. Le blianta beaga agus rinne foireann an pháipéar an dúiarracht leis an páipéar a thabhairt amach go laethúil cé nach raibh a chiorbheagan achmaintí acu.

Ach an earrach bhí ar LA éirí as an iarracht páipéar laethúil Gaeilge a chomháid sa tsíúil. Fadhbánair aigid agus scáipeacháin na rudai is mó a chloigh orthu.

Cuireadh eagar nua ar an pháipéar áfach agus tá sé ag teacht amach go rialta uair a tsachtaíne le heagrán 20 laethanta. Tá meascán maith de nuacht, tuairimfach, craic agus coláintíte ag an leagan seachtaíntí 6 bhun go barr nádaíbhaile filleadh ar pháipéar laethúil sa todhcháin.

Bhí Comrádh an Chéid ag Comrádh na Gaeilge i mbílanna agus bliain cheart céilírtha a bhí ann le himeachtaí 6 bhun go barr nádaí.

Fuar na h-iameachtaí uilig a bhean leis an chomórachtuid mhór poiblíochta, an chuid is mó de fabhrach. Labhráid rúnaí an Chonartha, Seán Mac Mathúna, ag Slíogadh Shinn Féin i mbílanna ar an Daingean ar stáir agus obair an lán inniu na h-eagraíochta.

D'fhoiligh uachtaráin an Chonartha Prionsias Mac Aonghusa agus bliain cheart céilírtha a bhí ann le himeachtaí 6 bhun go barr nádaí.

Ach bhí seo ina bliain dúshláin ag an Chonradh fosta. Ní shéanfadh duine ar bith tionchar an Chonartha ar stáir na tire le 100 bliana anuas agus an ról a d'imir sé i gcur chun tosaigh na teanga.

Ach san am céanna thíos ag comóracht ceistíanna faoi ról an

Chonartha sa lá inniu. Bhí páirt ag an Chonradh in achan mhórfeachas Gaeilge ach tá imní ar roinnt Gaeilgeoirí go bhfuil an Comrádh anois roghairt leis an ríaltas le h-eífeacht cheart a bheith ait mar ghrúpa chearta Gaeilge.

Thar rud ar bith eile tá meath leanúnach na Gaeltachta ag cur buartha ar Gaeilge agus nil amhras ar bith ann nach raibh an Comrádh nó grúpa ar bith eile 'abála móran a dhéanamh leis an mheath seo a moillíú nó a stopadh. Tá gníomhaíochta phráinnach de dhíth idir ríaltas láir agus áitiúil, grúpaí pobail agus grúpaí teanga má tá an teanga le mairistín mar gnáth theanga cumarsáide in áit ar bith a tár.

Chróchotháin comóracht an chéid san Sé Chontae le h-óicíadair tairiúil i mBéal Feirste nuair a tionlachadh an chéad imeacht Gaeilge riambil i Halla na Cathrach. Lean an taispeantás ealaíne Oileán le cúpla lá agus bhí ofche craic agus ceoil ar chuid den imeacht. Tá an cosúl ar labhairt na Gaeilge i bhfeidhm sa chomhairle go fóill ach tá muinín ag Gaeil ar an cathair go sárófar an polasáid seo amach anseo.

Chuaigh an fás i nGaeilgeo-claofach ar aghaidh i mbílanna agus osclaofach roinnt Gaeilseoláin eile ó thuaidh agus ó deasas i mí Mheáin Fómhair. Tá na Gaeilseoláin anois ar an roinn is mó fáis sa chórás oideachais ar fad.

Ach go fóill tá ar thuismitheoirí troid leis na ríana oideachais i mBaile Atha Cliath agus i mBéal Feirste. Tá an t-aon mheánscoil Gaeilge sna Sé Chontae, Méascónail Feirste, ag troid ag long aitheantaí go fóill cé go bhfuil breis is 60 dalta ag freastal ar an scóil agus go bhfuil éileamh cruthaithe ann do oideachas Gaeilge sa chathair.

I mBaile Atha Cliath tá tuismitheoirí Choláistí de h-íde i dTáinbhlaigh ag troid leis an Roinn Oideachais chun foirgneamh chui a bheith tóigthe. Bhí forbairt eile i gCorcaigh le hoscaillt an chéad Ghaeilscíoc idirchreidhmeach agus tá na tuistí an scóil ag long aitheantaí oifigíilí don scóil.



● PROINSIAS Mac AONGHUSA



● An slua ag Slíogadh Shinn Féin sa Daingean, Contae Chiarraí

News

WE REALISE THINGS ARE NOT THE BEST AT THE MOMENT, BUT IF YOU COULD JUST CONSUME MORE GOODS AND SERVICES WE COULD GET OUT OF THIS MESS!



Outrage over plan for VAT on food

■ BY NEIL FORDE

THESE ARE OUTRAGE over Dublin government plans to put VAT on food. The plans which have been recommended to the Fianna Fáil/Labour cabinet by a government committee would increase the price of food and worsen hardship for those on low income. The VAT plan — which could be implemented in the budget, comes from European Union demands for so-called tax harmonisation.

News of the VAT plan came in a week when "exceptional economic growth" growing tax receipts, especially from the corporate sector, falling inflation and lower government debt repayments added up to a massive wave of self-congratulation for the Dublin government.

We were told that the Dublin government have, at the year's end, "room to manoeuvre" in planning next year's budget. So in keeping with the EU monetarist dogma they are to "put in place a medium term economic strategy".

This involves "increasing exports, generating growth and developing jobs". The only change from last year's policy is that the government has finally recognised its manifest inability to create jobs so in future it will only "develop them".

However, not so frivilous is the coalition government's plan for tax reform. On face value the promise of the gradual withdrawal of the one per cent levy and the widening of the 27% PAYE tax band to remove the low paid completely from the tax net seems a positive move.

However, there are a range of

hidden clawbacks lurking in the government's tax armoury.

Primary among these is the proposal to introduce VAT on food. Already over the past years the Dublin government has introduced VAT on fuel, on electricity and on phone charges.

For low-income families food and fuel make up the dominant share of their budget. Families on low incomes or on welfare spend a larger share of their total income on food, clothing and fuel than those on higher incomes. Therefore any VAT on food is going to hit those who the government claims are buffered by the tax reform proposals.

At the very best those on low incomes will find that they are no better off despite the PAYE reform. The VAT on food will claw back the benefits of any changes on income tax. Worse still if the Department of Finance decides to phase in any PAYE tax changes low income families could find themselves worse off.

The 750,000 plus people dependent on welfare will be worse off no matter what. They will not benefit from any PAYE tax changes, instead they will be

dragged silently further into the tax net.

Most damning about the proposed VAT additions is that the real motivation behind their implementation is the EU Commission. The Dublin government is obliged to 'harmonise' its tax regime on goods and services in line with EU directives. This is one of the basic requirements of the Single Market.

The Dublin government judged their economic record for the year a success solely because spending and inflation were within the Maastricht criteria. There are no EU employment targets for member states or EU-set welfare levels. However, there are VAT targets and this is where government policy is directed.

It was also announced that the two-year-old corporation tax is set to generate £900 million this year, which would almost cover the state's spending on unemployment. The fact that this tax was never collected until the last two years is a complete indictment of Dublin government taxation policy. Nineteen ninety four is set to be yet another year of taxing the poor and subsidising the rich.

Responding to the VAT plan Sinn Féin's Dublin candidate in next June's EC election Larry O'Toole said:

"As predicted by those who campaigned against the Maastricht Treaty, including Sinn Féin, European Union is going to mean tax on food. This is what the Labour and Fianna Fáil government that promised sweeping change and a fair deal for the unemployed and low paid has brought us now. Any proposal to tax the food in our mouths must be opposed or the disadvantaged are going to be pushed further into poverty."

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An Glór Gafa



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IN BRIEF...

IBRG rejects declaration

The Irish in Britain Representation Group has rejected the London/Dublin Downing Street Declaration, saying that it is "too limited to provide the necessary framework for peace in Ireland".

The group said that the document "should be viewed as a preliminary document in the exploration of positions" but added that it is "full of contradictions and double speak". The IBRG particularly rejected the "central tenet of the document on the question of the unionist veto".

"We note many positive and progressive ideas which, taken on their own, could lead towards peace, but whose value is destroyed by being within the context of the unionist veto," the group said.

The IBRG reaffirmed its own stance: "Our position remains that the Irish people as a whole have the right to self-determination, and the right to choose their own future without any outside interference from Britain. Allowing the unionists a veto over progress is like giving the White South Africans a veto over any progress in South Africa. No minority should ever be given such power that they can halt progress, and more so when it is backed by a foreign army of occupation."

Mystery border death

Mystery surrounds the death of an off-duty Royal Irish Regiment soldier found shot dead on the outskirts of Monaghan town earlier this month. Initial reports said that RIR Lance Corporal William Curry, from Dungannon, County Tyrone, had been arrested for drunk driving in the North on Friday night, 17 December. According to the official version of events, he was taken into military custody, but later left without permission, taking with him a personal issue semi-automatic pistol. He was found dead by a garage employee at 8.30am on Saturday in Monaghan, shot with the same weapon.

Official sources passed off the incident as a suicide but a subsequent post mortem revealed that the entry wound was in Curry's stomach. He was also found in a crouched position hunkered down with his back to the side of a building.

Some local people have strong suspicions about the official suicide story. They point out that a trained soldier would not commit suicide by shooting himself in the stomach, which could lead to an agonizing and drawn out death.

They also point to a number of suspicious circumstances which suggest that the man may have been on a mission to kill somebody else. A man at work in the garage heard the shot go off as soon as he switched on the lights in the building.

Sources also say that no car was found by gardaí, which begs the question as to how the soldier reached Monaghan. Local people say they heard a motorbike driving away from the scene shortly after the shot went off.

Monaghan service charge victory

Sinn Féin is this month celebrating in Monaghan after its two councillors prevented the imposition of service charges in Monaghan town. When Councillors Pádraigín Úi Mhurchadha and Owen Smyth found out that the council had plans to introduce a £40 per house sewerage charge to balance the book of estimates they were outraged, both at the charge and the lack of opposition to it from within the council. They decided to pass on the information to several local residents' associations who had a right to know about this impending form of double taxation. They in turn wrote a letter of protest to the local paper and secured an interview on *Northern Sound*, the local radio station, to put their case.

The resulting public outcry caused enough panic within the ranks of the Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael councillors that they adjourned the first meeting scheduled to discuss the charges. The second meeting was also adjourned and, earlier this month, Councillor Owen Smyth, who is also a member of the Estimates Committee, faced down councillors on that committee who were hoping to introduce a scaled down service charge. The committee dropped the whole idea and left Sinn Féin secure in the knowledge that it had saved every household in the town a £40 surcharge.

"The council found the money to balance the estimates in the end," said Councillor Úi Mhurchú. "If we had let them get away with introducing this charge it would have been just the tip of the iceberg for future service charges in the town."



• PÁDRAIGÍN ÚI MHURCHADHA

• OWEN SMYTH

Notices

Tribute to Billy Shannon

THE DEATH OCCURRED on 6 December of Belfast republican Billy Shannon. Active in the cause of freedom throughout his life, he was laid to rest on 8 December. The following is the graveside tribute to Billy, given by Dickie Glenholmes.

On behalf of all of us here today and the Republican Movement, I offer our deepest sympathy to the Shannon family and especially to Annie, who has had the double burden of having to bury her own brother, Sean, who was so tragically assassinated just a few weeks ago.

I would offer the sympathy of all those prisoners who cannot be here today and on whose behalf Billy worked so hard. Billy himself is in so many ways an example of the strength and durability of the struggle for Irish freedom. He joined Fianna Eireann in the 1930s. He soon progressed into 'G' Company Oglaih na hEireann, which served the Whiterock, St James and Beechmount area, where he

would live out the rest of his 72 years.

When captured with ammunition in the early 1940s, Billy was sentenced to five years penal servitude, which he served in 'A' wing Crumlin Road Jail.

Throughout this period he took part in the 'naked' or 'sheet' protest — little did he realise then that he would be protesting against the infamous blanket protest 40 years later. Billy Shannon on his release, along with many others, formed the Ex-Prisoners Association, as a means of keeping republicans together after the prison years. He was to remain with the Felons Association since its inception as an active member and until very recently as the bar manager.

From Cyprus Street to the club rooms in Hectors, Milltown and St Laurences Hall, throughout all of his years Billy was a cííl enthusiast, a keen GAA fan and a very strong republican indeed.

We hear today of all those who were engaged in the Civil Rights Movement — Billy Shannon was a stalwart, albeit quiet, of that movement, never missing any of the milestone protest meetings in Derry, Coalisland and elsewhere — whether rallying in Duke Street, Dunville Park or on Long Kesh, Billy never missed a protest.

Billy was interned on 9 August 1971 and was ill-treated in the infamous Girdwood Barracks before being once again incarcerated in Crumlin Road Jail and Long Kesh, where he was to remain for two years.

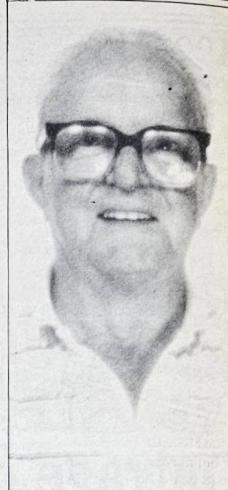
On his release, Billy once again returned to his involvement with

the Felons Club and more importantly, he worked tirelessly for Green Cross and Prisoners' Welfare. In fact, as testimony to his dedication, it was just one week ago when he made his last payment to the prisoners' families. Billy and Annie were together for almost half a century and saw through the good times and the bad times raising their own sons and daughters among a wide family circle, many of whom saw the insides of British prisons in Ireland. The Shannon family — Billy and Annie — have come to be an institution within the wider republican family.

Both are an enduring testimony to the integrity of this struggle and an indictment of this state and British rule in our country.

We all know that Billy will be missed by his family and in particular by Annie. Our sympathy is with you all and indeed, Billy will be missed by all of us who knew him.

I measc laochra na nGael
go raibh a anam dílis.



• Veteran republican Billy Shannon

BEANNACHTAI NA NOLLAG to all our friends and comrades imprisoned in many lands. Go mbeidh bua go luath agaibh. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all who helped us over this last few weeks especially the girls in the committee!! Your generosity and comradeship will never be forgotten. From Maureen, Tony and family.

BURKE, Mickey; McGURK, Aidan (Portlaoise). Best wishes for the New Year. From Tommy, Tricia and Cathal.

DRAINE, Séamus (Crumlin Road). Special greetings for the New Year. From mum, Geraldine and Martin, Moneyglass; How's it going? All the best for the New Year. From Patricia, Gerald, Sorcha and Patrick, Killea; Sincere New Year greetings and good luck. From Mary, John, Barry and all at the Three Islands.

ECCLES, Tommy (Portlaoise). Best wishes for the New Year. From Roisin and all her family.

FRYERS, Rob (Belmarsh). New Years greetings to Rob and all POWs everywhere. From Phil, Gaby and Claran.

GALLAGHER, Barney (Long Kesh). Best wishes for the New Year. From Tommy, Tricia and Cathal.

KANE, Pamela (Limerick). Wishing you a very happy New Year. Pam. Le grá mór, Marty.

KELLY, Séan (Crumlin Road). All the best for the New Year. Séan. Take good care. Tiocfaidh ar lá. From Paddy F, Peter C, Hatchet, Ta, Harry, Conor.

MADDEN, Séamus (Long Kesh). New Years greetings to all of you. From the Drains family.

MAGUIRE, Harry (Long Kesh). New Years greetings Harry, all the best for '94. Love from aunt Nora, uncle Tommy, Nora, Gerry, F.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS to all the POWs in Portlaoise Jail. Wishing you all a very happy and sober

Beannachtaí na hAthbhliana

Sharon, Paul and Pearse. XXX.

MAGUIRE, Tomas (Long Kesh). New Years greetings Tomas, all the best for '94. Love from Nora, Gerry, Connioadh, Caolán and Cúchulainn. XXX; Lots of love from mum and dad. XXX; Love from Pearse, Niamh, Sharon and Paul. XXX;

MAILEY, Stephen (Long Kesh). New Years greetings Stephen. Miss you lots. Love Rosaleen, Cira, Clodagh, Stephen and Dominic. XXX; From Alison and Paddy; Alex, Pauline and kids; Lots of love from mum. XXX.

MCARTNEY, Harry (Long Kesh). New Year greetings. With love, Gillian; To daddy, with love from Deborah and Séan xxx; New Year greetings son. With love from mum and dad, Ann and Paul, Rosemary and Bambi, Marguerite, Jean and Paul; Greetings uncle Harry, with love from all your nephews and nieces; Best wishes from all your aunts and uncles, Armagh, Belfast, Tyrone and England.

MCCLAFFERTY, Eddie (Long Kesh). New Years greetings Eddie. Miss you lots. Love from Alison, Niall, Aislingh, Stacey, Edward and Séana. XXX; New Years greetings son. Love you lots from mum and dad. XXX; From Angie and Jackie. XXX.

MCWILLIAMS, Ta; MCSTAIN, James; LARKIN, Stephen (Crumlin Road). Wishing you all sincere best wishes for the year ahead. Go néirí a t-ádh leat. From Conor, Harry, Ta, Hatchet, Peter C, Paddy F.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS to all the POWs in Portlaoise Jail. Wishing you all a very happy and sober

New Year. Stick the cotton wool in and you won't have to listen to Bear. Thinking of you all, Christine and family. Dundalk.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS to Paul McGlinchey, Peter Bateson, Enda O'Kane, Rory Craig, Laurence O'Neill, Declan McLaren, Bodie O'Kane and Jonathan McCann and all who are incarcerated in Long Kesh, Crumlin Road, Maghaberry and all jails at home and abroad.

Thinking of you always. From Cookie, Peter, Benny, Dave, Jodie, Hugh, Martin, John, Billy, Pee-wee, Colm, Oggie, Dennis (fat), Hugie and all from the South Derry area. Hope next year you will all have your freedom. Tiocfaidh ar lá.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS to Rory, Paul, Laurence Declan, Johnny, Bodie, Enda and Peter. From GB and Baldy.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS to Tarcac Connolly, Ailish Carroll, Gregory Carroll, Niall Carroll, John A Heaney, Paddy Fox and Dermot Quinn. From Siobhan Patterson, Armagh.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS to Tarac Connolly, Ailish Carroll, Niall Carroll, Gregory Carroll, Paddy Fox, John A Heaney and Dermot Quinn. From the McCartney family, Armagh.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS to all republican POWs at home and abroad and to all the friends and helpers of Green Cross. Wishing you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

NEW YEARS GREETINGS and good wishes to all Irish POWs at home and abroad. From County Derry and South Antrim Sinn Féin Comháile Ceantair.

NEW YEARS GREETINGS and solidarity to POWs everywhere. From the POW Department, Dublin.

NEW YEARS GREETINGS and solidarity to Séan Enda O'Kane, Séamus Mullan and all republican POWs. From the McCusker/McCullum/O'Hagan Sinn Féin Cumann, Swatragh.

NEW YEARS GREETINGS to all Irish POWs at home and abroad. From the Séamus Steele Sinn Féin Cumann, South Derry.

NEW YEARS GREETINGS to all our POWs and friends all around the world, especially Brendy Mullivena, Patrick Kane, Louis Irvine, Anto Murray, John Pickering, Bob by Storey, Alex Murphy, H Maguire, Tom McVeigh, Sid Walsh, Jim Thomas, Pat and Séan McCotter and Liam in England, Danny Kelly, Jim O'Carroll, Gary Keraery and Fergal McGuire. From Tony, Rosaleen and John.

NEW YEARS GREETINGS to Enda. Lots of love from Yvonne and Bernard; From Padraig, Mary, Dean and Emma; From Adrian, Martina and Conor; From Eilish and Paddy; From daddy, mammy, Gabriel, Fiona and Monica; From Kevin.

NEW YEARS GREETINGS to Rory Craig and all his comrades imprisoned at home and abroad. All the best for the New Year. With love from father Willie, mother Mona and sister Meave. XXX; From uncle Laurence; From Kevin.

NEW YEARS GREETINGS to Séamus Madden, Martin Molloy and Gerard McGee. From Bob and Eileen McNeill.

NEW YEARS GREETINGS to

Imeachtaí

ANTI-EXTRADITION MEETING: Meets 7pm every Tuesday, Anti-

Extradition Office, 29 Mountjoy Square, DUBLIN

ANTI-EXTRADITION PICKET: Picket and leafletting. 2-3pm,

every Saturday, GPO, O'Connell Street, DUBLIN

BALLYMURPHY SEVEN PICKET: 1-3pm, every Saturday,

O'Connell Bridge, DUBLIN

FUNCTION: New Year's Eve Party. Friday, 31 December. Widow

Scallan's, Pearse Street, DUBLIN. Admission £5. Ticket only, available from 44 Parnell Square. Organised by the POW Department

InDíl Chuimhne

CARAHAN, Fergal; DEVLIN, Eugene; McCABE, Jack; McDARD, James; SHEEHY, Patrick. In proud and loving memory of Volunteers Eugene Devlin (died 27 December 1972) Jack McCabe (died 27 December 1971) James McDaid (died 29 December 1972) Patrick Sheehy

(died 2 January 1991) and Sinn Féin member Fergal Caragher (died 30 December 1990). "It's a noble thing to die for your country. It's a useful thing to make your country's enemies die. If you cannot nobly be at least useful" — George Plant. Proudly remembered by their friends and comrades in the Republican Movement.

CAREY, Malachy (1st Ann). In proud and loving memory of Malachy Carey, who was killed on 12 December 1992. Always remembered by Matthew Dwyer. CAREY, Malachy (1st Ann). In proud and loving memory of a friend and comrade Malachy Carey, who was killed on 12 December 1992. Always remembered with love and pride by

Columb, Kay and sons. CAREY, Malachy (1st Ann). In proud and loving memory of Malachy Carey, who was murdered by the UVF on 12 December 1992. Proudly remembered by Cork Sinn Féin.

HURL, Madge (1st Ann). In loving memory of my wife Madge, who died on 31 December 1993. Sadly missed by John and family.

Comhbhrón

O'NEILL. Deepest sympathy is extended to Lily O'Neill on the death of her mother. From the Markievicz Cumann Sinn Féin.

PORTER. Deepest sympathy is extended to Jim and Danni and all the Porter family on the death of their mother recently. RIP. From the Fullerton/ McLaugh-

lin/O'Hagan Sinn Féin Cumann, Buncrana.

Beannachtaí

O'DONNELL. Happy birthday for 21st Christopher (Portlaoise). Lots of love daddy. From Barry and Tighearn and Mariane, Bronagh and Catherine and your ever loving Christine.

1993 was a big year politically, when republicans succeeded in putting a real peace process on the agenda for much of the year, but there was a lot more going on besides.

The year opened, for instance, with news that the judge in the trial of former East German leader Erich Honecker had been dismissed, for requesting an autograph from the accused. It ended on the home front in similarly bizarre fashion. A tired and emotional Jim McDaid, Donegal Fianna

Faill TD, was bundled out of a well-known city-centre hotel by Yasser Arafat's minders. McDaid had attempted to impress Arafat by holding onto his fork while simultaneously shaking hands with the PLO leader and subsequent events were really quite understandable from a bodyguard's point of view — although Jim's party colleagues did object to the vigorous manner in which he was escorted away from a bemused Arafat.

But moving back to January, in Britain, Swindon Crown Court heard how two RAF members conspired to torch a huge hangar which contained all the parachutes for the British forces' airborne services, an action described in court with typical British understatement as "morale-sapping".

In February two police officers sparked a massive security alert outside Britain's top security interrogation facility at Paddington Green, when they left a blue transit van (similar to the type used in IRA blockbuster bombings) outside the building.

In March the hapless plods at Paddington Green would strike again by giving a woman the keys to the place along with her own possessions when releasing her. The people of Bournemouth were angered to hear in February that their insurance premiums had increased by ten per cent to cover the cost of potentially massive claims like the previous year's City of London bomb. Little did they know that it would be money well spent come April.

Also in March, Labour Party TD Michael Bell told former Sticky and Blueshirt 'guru' Eoghan Harris that he could "kiss my arse".

April was also the month of Bishopsgate, but we're not ones to gloat on this page. No Siree, one billion, one bomb it may have been but there's no point in going on and on and on about it. Indeed, as I was just saying to the Mayor of the City of London the other day, (OK, that's enough — Ed.)

In April South African police opened fire on a stolen vehicle only to discover afterwards that it had already been recovered and was being driven by one of their own. Oops!

And 35 elite Special Boat Service Commandos (Motto — By Land and Sea) had to be rescued by the British Coastguard when their landing craft broke down off the Dorset coast.

OK, in May British justice was vindicated yet again when three police officers, accused of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice by fitting up the Guildford Four, were acquitted. Six-County 'Security Minister' Michael Mates, one of a batch of Tory MPs whose attitudes towards Ireland would lead Tim Pat Coogan to describe them in December as "pointy-headed little gits", got his fingers burned because of his close association with the absconded tycoon, Asil Nadir. He would be forced to resign in June.

In June the Special Branch proved their vigilance in defending Dublin justice minister Máire Geoghegan Quinn by pistol-whipping an actor hired to play the part of a crook to launch Crime Prevention Week in Galway. Meanwhile, the Garda anti-racketeering squad, set up in a blaze of publicity alleging IRA involvement in all sorts of fictional extortion and protection rackets, was itself disbanded in ignominious circumstances. A senior officer described its members as "lazy" and allegations and counter allegations over a missing video recorder caused further discord amongst the undercover ranks.

In July the City of London police sealed off 18 streets into the area in a cosmetic exercise. The ring would enter folklore as the ring of rubber, after the traffic cones which were supposed to protect it.

We got a rise out of Birmingham police when they sealed



• JIM McDUID



The First Year



• The South Armagh entrant — Winner of the Signpost of the Year Award '93

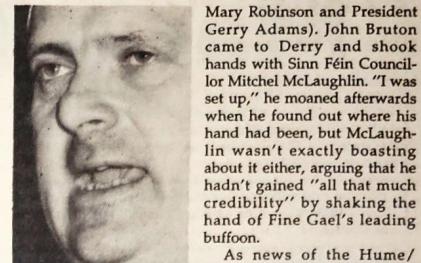
off part of the city centre because some Irish holidaymakers had planted a suspicious loaf of brown bread on the back seat of their car.

In August a DUP Councillor Billy Baxter, in Crumlin Road on charges of procuring funds for a loyalist death squad, was released on parole for three hours to attend a meeting so that he would not lose his council seat. When asked by a reporter if he was on a loyalist paramilitary wing of the prison, Baxter replied: "Yes, because I'm a DUP member."

In September, South Belfast Workers' Party candidate Paddy Lynn complained that the IRA had taken over thousands of cars and houses in the Markets area. Six days later one of his election workers was remanded in custody on three separate charges of hijacking taxis. Ouch!

In Sweden scientists were rejoicing after an experiment in which a chimpanzee who threw darts to choose his investments made more money in a month on the stock exchange than five exchange experts.

There was also the Second Great Handshake of the year (the First Great Handshake was of course President



• Fine Gael's leading buffoon found 92 per cent support for a British withdrawal.

In October Dublin foreign affairs minister and socialist leader Dick Spring proved that his brand of socialism is champagne-based, when he rejected the government's usual hotel in New York for a \$650-a-night luxury suite at the Waldorf Astoria on Park Avenue.

November was dominated by the Hume/Adams initiative, but there was some light relief also, like when John Bruton and Paddy Cooney attended a meeting of Fine Gael's Longford, Roscommon and Westmeath constituency organisations. The leaders were stunned to hear a proposal from the floor that in future Fine Gael should transfer votes to the only party that never did them any harm... Sinn Féin.

British police continued their policy of destroying any unattended package in the land, which in Didsbury led to the premature extinction of two kittens, abandoned in a sealed box on the steps of the local cop shop.



• A champagne socialist



• John and Albert — in search of peace?

December saw the Dublin and London governments' Joint Declaration, to which we republicans have yet to give our definitive answer, but there is a great story doing the rounds here about one politically uninvolved individual in Donegal who is hoping fervently for a quick settlement. You see, he has a shotgun at home which he plans to hand in so as to collect a war pension.

The highlight of the month was the Third Great Handshake of the year, and infinitely the best, when Dublin Sinn Féin Councillor Christy Burke approached Ian Paisley outside Dublin Castle and welcomed him to the capital.



• Sinn Féin Councillor Christy Burke welcomes the Six Counties' leading fascist to Dublin

Review of '93

Mar a Dúirt Siad i '93

The idea that at the close of the 20th Century we find it necessary to convene in the land of Swift and Burke, of Joyce and Beckett to address such fundamental matters as human rights and intellectual freedom that we are discussing here is a terrible indictment. — Carl Bernstein at the Let In the Light conference in Dublin in January.

I have the most difficult job in Ireland. I am Sinn Féin's Director of Publicity. — Rita O'Hare at the Let In the Light conference.

There would have been no murder of anybody if it hadn't been for the bloody riot organised by those very nationalists, and I think that has to be said. — Soon to be former Six-County Security Minister Michael Mates on Bloody Sunday.

Articles Two and Three are not cast in bronze. The Irish Constitution for that matter is not cast in bronze. — Dublin Foreign Affairs Minister Dick Spring, February.

The government will, as I said in December, warmly, solemnly and steadfastly uphold Northern Ireland's status. We are not indifferent. We are not neutral. — British Direct Ruler Patrick Mayhew, March.

You cannot expect people to sit down and talk with those who from time to time reinforce their arguments with bombs and bullets. — Patrick Mayhew, March.

We're all here today for peace, but you're bringing politics into it. — 'Peace' demonstrator outside the GPO, when relatives of nationalist victims were spat upon by a section of the crowd.

The business of isolating one's enemies is not always the best. Hopefully these contacts will be useful. — Tory MP and joint chair of the London/Dublin Interparliamentary Body, Peter Temple-Morris, referring in April to recent meetings with republicans.

Those who have power to resolve this conflict will find republicans are people they can do business with. — IRA spokesperson on talks with the British government.

The leadership of the IRA repeats its call for the British establishment to seize the opportunity and to take the steps needed for ending its futile and costly war in Ireland. We again emphasise that they should pursue the path to peace or resign themselves to the path of war. — IRA statement after the massive Bishopsgate bomb on 24 April.

I think there's no doubt about it, the bombing campaign by the IRA has probably achieved its objective of creating absolute mayhem. I think that the real danger is that it could well drive international business away from London, drive it to financial centres such as Paris and Frankfurt. — Neil MacKinnon, Chief Economist at Citibank after the 24 April explosion.

Business as usual (Even if 20,000 workers have no offices left). — Sun headline after the Bishopsgate bomb.

Whether people like it or not the loyalist paramilitaries started their terror campaign as a result of the failure of the British government to defend the law-abiding people in this country. — DUP MP Willie McCrea in May.

If the British government were to announce next week that they were going to get out of Ireland, and they set a time limit on it, then you have a basis for starting a process of reconciliation, starting constitutional negotiations and getting immediately as a reward an IRA ceasefire. — Sinn Féin Ard Chomhairle member Mitchel McLaughlin.

Belfast is our city as well as the unionists' city. The City Hall is also our City Hall. — Gerry Adams after Sinn Féin's local election success in Belfast in May.

By refusing to demonise West Belfast and Gerry Adams, she has pointed to the need to widen the base of political dialogue. — Columnist John Cooney on Mary Robinson's historic visit to West Belfast in June.

We believe that state terrorism must be met with an unambiguous response. — British UN representative, justifying Clinton's bombing of Iraq's capital Baghdad in June.

He will go down in Wales like a rat sandwich. — Plaid Cymru MP Ieuan Evans on the appointment of English Tory MP John Redwood as the new Welsh direct ruler.

Nobody's dead. Everybody's dead at the end of this opera. — Opera-going Patrick Mayhew commenting on a bun-

gled UVF operation which resulted in the death of one of their members at a Belfast Orange parade on 26 June.

I feel very strongly now about the PTA. I hadn't appreciated its finer details before. But when it comes to putting innocent people in prison, the British establishment is definitely an equal opportunities employer — as long as you are from a working-class background and preferably an ethnic minority, you are fair game. — PTA victim John Matthews home in Derry after being excluded from Britain in July.

The only thing that will take Articles Two and Three out of the Irish Constitution is when the bombs will start to blow in Dublin as they have in Belfast. — Lord Norman Tebbit speaking the House of Commons on 20 July.

It wouldn't be the first time in [British] Commonwealth history that Whitehall held such talks. — Former British Prime Minister Edward Heath advocating talks with Sinn Féin.

It is a depressingly familiar development, with the life and death issues of Northern Ireland being made secondary once again to the political survival of Britain's petty party leaders. — Irish Press editorial on Major's Maastricht deal with the Official Unionists in July.

The problem with a ring of rubber is that it can rebound on you. — Intelligence source on the cordon around the City of London.

Mr Cook is to investigate journalism what Christmas is to turkeys. — Gerry Adams on the Cook Report's hatchet job on Ard Chomhairle member Martin McGuinness in August.

In a perverse way this is something which may be helpful because they [Catholics] are now beginning to appreciate more clearly the fear that has existed within the Protestant community for the past 20 years. — Official Unionist MP John Taylor on the loyalist death squads campaign of sectarian killings at the beginning of September.

As you travel home to the safety of your home in the South tonight, spare a thought and a prayer for the people of the North who will lie awake, fearfully anticipating the ghastly splintering of wood in the middle of the night which will mean that, yes, it's finally their turn to die. — Reporter Anne Cadwallader on the sectarian murder gangs, September.

I told him it wasn't Protestants who had shot my son, it was the UDA. But I don't even blame those who pulled the trigger; I blame those who demonise Sinn Féin as a party and justify these murders. — Sinn Féin Councillor Bobby Laverty whose son Séan was killed by a sectarian death squad the previous month.

No one should find our visit here threatening, or meddling, or interventionist. If people want peace they have to be for talks. — Former US Congress member Bruce Morrison during a visit to Belfast in September of an American group, For A New Irish Agenda.

Generally the people who the loyalist paramilitaries are targeting are active members of the organisations which support the IRA bombing and killing campaign, such as members of Sinn Féin. — Official Unionist MP John Taylor, September.

...the IRA at play... — DUP Councillor Sammy Wilson on the GAA.

For these prisoners to have taken control of their Block, H-7, from which 38 prisoners escaped in a matter of, I think it was 20 minutes, was absolutely staggering, and for anybody to have achieved that must regard it as a matter for congratulations. — Sir James Hennessy, head of the inquiry into the 1983 escape from Long Kesh, on its tenth anniversary, September.

Our discussions, aimed at the creation of a peace process which would involve all parties, have made considerable progress. — Joint statement of John Hume and Gerry Adams, 25 September.

The Hume/Adams bombshell, not to put a tooth in it, could change the course of Irish history if it succeeds. — Geraldine Kennedy in the *Irish Times*.

Pan-nationalism in action. — DUP Deputy Leader Peter Robinson on the Hume/Adams Initiative, September.

One of the most hopeful developments in recent history. — Mary Holland in the *Observer*, September.

The process is not about getting Sinn Féin a place at the conference table. Sinn Féin will have a place at the conference table. We are only at the beginning and I am committed to it. We have the possibility of moving the situation forward. People in this country want peace. — Gerry Adams in September.

They could enhance the prospect of a real peace process by immediately ending censorship. Peace will not suddenly break out. It will have to be worked for by everyone. — Sinn Féin Councillor Alex Maskey calling on the two governments to end state censorship, October.

The leadership of Oglaithe na hÉireann welcomes this initiative. — IRA statement, October.

The Hume/Adams talks are the only thing holding out any possibility of ending the conflict. For that reason they deserve the backing of us all. It would seem that this stage of the talks has come to an end. Let's hope that both the British and Irish governments have the imagination to grasp what is being offered and respond positively. — Andersonstown News editorial, October.

Once you get your first Fenian blood it is easy after that. — UDA killer known in the press as 'Mad Dog' in October.

I do not like it. I would not do it myself. — Margaret Thatcher on the Hume/Adams Initiative.

We reiterate our policy of not allowing ourselves to be dragged down the cul-de-sac of sectarian warfare. Today's operation was targeted specifically on those directly involved with the loyalist death squads. It went tragically wrong. — IRA statement following the Shankill bombing on October 24.

He wasn't sectarian minded. He was a republican. — Friend of IRA Volunteer Thomas Begley.

It would turn my stomach. — John Major on talking to republicans, while rejecting the Hume/Adams initiative.

The two governments now have taken the ball. They have got to run with it. They have had the ball for 25 years to bring about a solution to this problem. Now if they fumble it this time they are going to look mighty foolish in the face of the type of courageous approach which was taken both by Hume and Adams, to try to get an end to violence in the North of Ireland. — Séamus Mallon in November.

I say that political censorship undermines the democratic process. I say that political censorship inhibits genuine public participation in the decision-making process. I say that political censorship breeds ignorance. — Labour TD Declan Bree.

Articles Two and Three are not the cause of violence. The IRA are not the cause of violence. Neither is Mr Adams or Mr Paisley, but us, the blundering, bungling British. Get rid of us and you may have peace. — Observer columnist Richard Ingrams.

I don't think that we're likely to get a lasting solution there if we don't involve all the parties at the end of the day in the talks process. That's my view. — Albert Reynolds.

They have lied to their own parliament, to James Molyneaux and to the Irish and British people about the existence and nature of their contact with Sinn Féin. — Gerry Adams after revelations of Sinn Féin's line of communication with the British government, November.

The text he read is counterfeit. No such communication was ever sent. — Martin McGuinness responding to the release of forged British documents alleging that the IRA had said the conflict was over.

If even half of what the republicans claim is correct, an appalling vista is revealed: ministers lied, passed information on the Irish government to terrorists, and have published concocted documents. — Journalist David McKittrick, in December.

Violence comes from both communities and indeed from the security forces in Northern Ireland. — Albert Reynolds.

Sinn Féin will not be intimidated by any threats from the British government nor will we be diverted by a 'carrot and stick' approach... republicans are approaching the coming year positively and Sinn Féin will seek to move the peace strategy forward in 1994. — Gerry Adams, December.