Sinn Féin

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THE SPIRIT OF FREEDOM

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DEMOCRACY THE ONLY SOLUTION

SPEAKING at a meeting of the Six-County Executive of Sinn Féin, West Belfast MP Gerry Adams accused the parties in the present round of bilateral talks, of deliberately misleading the people of both the Six Counties and 26-Counties.

Mr Adams said:

"As we cut through the hype which surrounds Peter Brooke's present round of bilateral talks, and try to find the substance, we are forced to conclude that what is taking place is a game of deceit. When we look back at five years of broken Hillsborough promises, and its failed aim of isolating Sinn Féin; when we look at the hype from Dublin and the SDLP leadership about how Hillsborough would change the activities of British crown forces and penal or judicial systems; when we examine the SDLP claim that it would "lance the Orange boil" — then the Hillsborough process stands exposed as a diversion and a sham.

"Mr. Brooke and his government have nothing to lose from this process. Indeed they have everything to gain. Mr Brooke is the person setting the agenda. His agenda is about consolidating British government interests. Because he appears to be effectively tying in the Dublin and SDLP leadership, these bodies have limited room to manoeuvre. In the same way as their position on Hillsborough limits their ability to criticise its limitations, their acceptance of a British government agenda for talks limits them also. It is they or the unionists, not Peter Brooke, who will be blamed for any breakdown.

One of the effects of Hillsborough is that, at an international level, it permits the British government to absolve itself from responsibility for the conflict in Ireland. So too with all the current hype. The present round of talks may well serve no greater purpose than to placate international opinion and EC opinion, in the run up to 1992, by creating the illusion that the British government is initiating political movement.

Peter Brooke may even be able to spin this process out for some time. In the unlikely event of him securing some return to Stormont, this will be a rather pathetic achievement for Mr Hume and Mr Haughey, 70 years after the undemocratic partition of Ireland and almost 20 years after the popular overthrow of the old Stormont regime. Will this bring justice or democracy or peace? Of course not. And they know this as well as I do.

"In the meantime they are not addressing the real question: when will the British government return to the Irish people as a whole, our right to determine, free from outside interference and partition, the way in which we wish to run this country and shape our own future?"

Mandela's comments welcomed

PRESIDENT of Sinn Féin, Gerry Adams MP, has welcomed Nelson Mandela's call for the British government and the IRA to begin talks without preconditions.

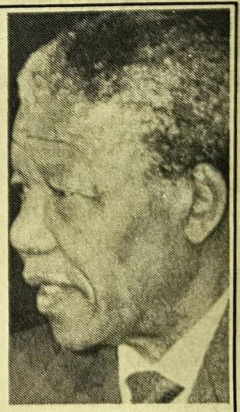
Mr Adams has appealed to the British government for a positive response saying:

"Sinn Féin recognise and our party has consistently stressed the need for dialogue aimed at establishing peace and justice in Ireland.

"As Sinn Féin leader, I am prepared to co-operate with and to engage in talks aimed at initiating and facilitating a peace process.

"I call upon Mrs Thatcher to respond positively to Mr Mandela's call and for Mr Haughey to endorse it and to support a peace process.

"Furthermore, I appeal to Mr Haughey to play an active role in this process."



Nelson Mandela

EDITORIAL

THE MARCHING SEASON

THE LOYALIST marching season is on us again. For the next two months Orangemen will march their way across the length and breadth of the North.

The media image of this annual ritual is of celebration bonfires followed by a family day out in a carnival atmosphere. This sanitised presentation of the 'Traditional Twelfth of July Holiday Celebrations' and the accompanying marches in Derry and elsewhere, is more than a simple distortion of the facts.

It is a direct insult to the countless numbers of nationalist families in Belfast, Derry and scores of small towns and villages who will, before the marching season ends, have been the target for Orange sectarianism and subjected to a terrifying state of siege.

For the hundreds of families in Unity Flats, Short Strand and North Belfast it will have meant watching as Britain's crown forces seal off their areas while Orange bands and marchers pass by within yards of their homes, playing their songs of hate and flaunting their racism.

The 'Kick the Pope' and 'Croppies lie down' message which is central to the whole Twelfth of July marching season, goes a long way to explaining the inherent rottenness of the artificial Six-County statelet which was constructed on a sectarian headcount and has survived for almost 70 years on a life-support system of massive military repression.

For nationalists the Orange marching season is certainly a carnival, not however the carnival of the popular media imagery but a carnival of reaction.

It is a demonstration by loyalists that this is their state, carved out by Britain in its and their interests and in which nationalists have no place other than as second-class citizens.

The marching season is a potent reminder of the undemocratic nature of the northern state and of the discredited role played by Britain in dividing the Irish Nation against itself.

Those who advocate arrangements with unionism, within the context of the Six Counties, are ignoring the reality of the relationships on this island which have been determined by Britain's defence of partition and unionist demands for control of the North.

Orangeism is about denying the Irish nation its right to national self-determination. It is about encouraging the attitudes and forces in our society which prevent the Irish nation from achieving its full potential in a sovereign Irish democracy.

SPRINGVALE: £60 MILLION NEEDED

THE West Belfast MP Gerry Adams has called for the release of £60 million from public funds to ensure the proper development of the old Mackies Foundry for the benefit of the people of West Belfast.

In a detailed submission to the Springvale Development Team which he released at a press conference, the West Belfast MP has called for a comprehensive programme to be prepared in full consultation with local people.

Gerry Adams said:

"With unemployment levels in parts of West Belfast as high as 85%, and the rate for the area as a whole at more than 50%, the need for massive economic regeneration is obvious. When it became clear that the present Mackies site was to become vacant I put forward a number of proposals for the development of the vacated land. I believe that this site can be used to tackle the massive housing and employment shortage in the Mid-Falls area. I further proposed that the Forthriver Valley should be the focus of a major environmental improvement scheme.

"It was against this background, and of intense community campaigning on the issue of economic development in West Belfast that, in April, Stormont Minister Richard Needham unveiled the 'Springvale Initiative'.

"The proper development of this area would of course be most beneficial to the people of the area. Having closely examined this initiative, therefore, I am presenting a number of recommendations to the development team.

"I am calling for:

1. The immediate release of full details of the Springvale scheme so that meaningful consultation between the local community and the development team can begin.

2. £60 million to be made available by the British government for;

a) the provision of 200 houses.

b) the creation of 2,000 manufacturing jobs.

c) the environmental development of the Forthriver.

d) the incorporation of a community aspect into the Springvale plan to facilitate, in particular, the need for youth facilities.

3. The development of training and retraining schemes at Springvale which will direct the unemployed towards real jobs.

4. The scrapping of proposals to build a new link road into Springvale.

"I am making these recommendations in the hope that the Springvale Development, unlike others which have been primarily public relations exercises, actually leads to some concrete improvement in terms of employment, housing and environmental conditions, for the people of West Belfast."

Fair employment survey



Lily Fitzsimmons

COMMENTING on the Fair Employment Commission's (FEC) survey of employment in six local district councils Sinn Féin Councillor Lily Fitzsimmons said:

"The eradication of discrimination and the political pressure and legal provision to achieve that objective must be a priority.

"It is against the achievement of that objective and the timescale within which it is achieved that the effectiveness of current legislation must be judged."

Councillor Fitzsimmons said that:

"Discrimination is clearly visable in the workforce which should by and large reflect, at all levels of the employment structure, the denominational ratios in the community as a whole."

"The British government's refusal, particularly in relation to employment ratios, to set goals and timetables for their achievement is the single greatest indication that the political will to achieve equality of opportunity is absent.

Sectarian bias in car industry

FURTHER EVIDENCE of widespread sectarian discrimination against Catholic workers in the Six Counties has been provided with the publication of the latest report from the British government's own Fair Employment Commission, formerly the Fair Employment Agency. The report shows the motor industry to be rife with sectarian bias.

The report examined the car industry in the Six Counties and found that in those companies examined, there was an aggregate workforce which was 81% Protestant.

Despite pious-sounding reaction to the report's findings from representatives of the car industry, about striving to redress the imbalance, the report itself showed that, as far as future trends are concerned, not much is set to change.

Of the nine companies included in the report employing apprentices, the report found that there were 122 Protestant and only 13 Catholic apprentices.

93% PROTESTANT

Individual findings also show that in some of the major companies, levels of discrimination reach proportions of 90% and over. The North's biggest company, Charles Hurst Ltd, for example, employs a workforce which is 93% Protestant.

Reacting to the findings, Sinn Féin Councillor Alex Maskey said:

"This report, along with all the other similar reports by both the Fair Employment Commission and its fore-runner, the Fair Employment Agency, is indicative of how ineffective the British government's anti-discrimination legislation has been.

"It is clear that they have neither the will nor the inclination to confront discrimination or create the conditions for equality of opportunity. What is needed is affirmative action measures, with realistic time limits, to produce the required result, that is, a workforce which represents the religious breakdown of the community itself."

20th anniversary of Falls Curfew

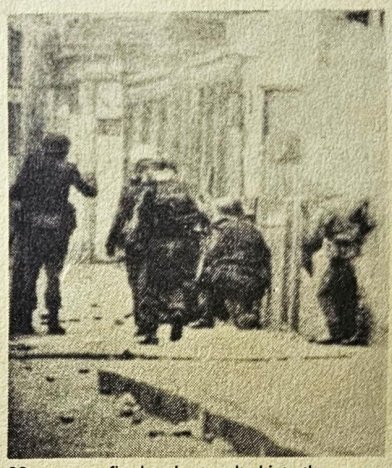
THE CURFEW on the Lower Falls on July 3rd 1970 marked the end of attempts by the establishment to pass the British occupation army as any kind of peacekeeping, neutral force. On that Friday evening British army chief Ian Freeland's "honeymoon period" ended in an orgy of death and destruction as his troops rampaged and shot their way through narrow streets of small terraced houses.

The local loyalists' wishes had been adhered to by the newly elected Tory government at Westminister. They needed a morale booster to replace their loyalist pride, dented and bruised in the previous few weeks by "croppies" who had refused to lie down. Orange marches had been directed through and past republican areas as before but they were now protected by the British army as well as the RUC. Army reaction from the Republican people was dealt with ruthlessly.

On June 27th there were serious clashes at Ballymurphy and the Lower Springfield Road. Later that same day Orange mobs returning from a parade began to gather near St Matthew's Church on Newtownards Road. There was no RUC or British army presence as the loyalists began to attack the church and nearby streets. But the people of the Short Strand were able and ready to defend themselves. At the end of a bloody night of attacks at least seven loyalists had been killed. One man, Henry McIlhone, died in the defence of his people that night in Short Strand. The Lower Falls Curfew was the pound of 'Fenian flesh' that had to be exacted to appease the Stormont loyalist monolith.

The area curfewed comprised of approximately 50 streets bordered by Falls Road, Albert Street, Cullingtree Road and Grosvenor Road. The operation began with a raid on a house in Balkan Street. Locals who had gathered near the scene objected to the heavy numbers of troops involved. As they left the area after several hours someone threw a rock at the British soldiers.

This was the trigger for an invasion of the whole area by thousands of troops who had obviously been standing by. Thousands of canisters of



CS gas were fired and catapulted into the narrow streets. Anyone seen on the streets after the curfew had been declared at ten o'clock was liable to be arrested but more likely to be shot as in the case of Patrick Elliman (62) from Marchioness Street and Zbegrew Uglik a young Londoner of Polish extraction who had been in Belfast doing some freelance journalism. Both had been shot by British troops for contravening the curfew.

Another two men were killed earlier in the evening outside the curfew areas. Charles O'Neil (36) from Linden Street was run over by an army Saracen on the Falls Road at Omar Street. William Burns (54) was shot dead on his own door-step a 57 Falls Road.

Throughout Friday night, Saturday and Satur day night, the destruction continued. Every hous in the area was raided, the people brutalised many arrested and their property destroyed.

The republican women in other areas o Belfast hearing of the death and destruction goin on in the curfewed area and aware of the poten tial for further murders in the deserted streets banded together and marched on the Lower Falls They marched through British army barricades o Sunday, July 5th 1970, to break the Lower Fall Curfew. Their bravery and actions without dout saved the people imprisoned in the area from fu ther suffering or death.

Prionsabail na Gaeilge fógartha i mBaile Andarsan

BHAGAIR Gaeilgeoirí Bhéal Fheirste go dtroidfí go dúthrachtach ar son cearta teanga, nuair a seoladh Prionsabail na Gaeilge — cairt cearta teanga — ag comhdháil i mBéal Feirste Dé Sathairn seo caite.

Tiorbhrithe do chuimhne an Chairdineil Ui Fhiaich, iarrann na Prionsabail go mbeadh oideachas Gaeilge ar fáil ó cheart, go mbunófaí stáisiún teilifíse agus raidió Gaeilge, go bpléfeadh an stát i nGaeilge le Gaeilgeoirí agus go dtabharfaí cúnamh do na healaíona Gaeilge ar chomhchéim leis na healaíona Béarla. Maíonn na seacht bprionsabbail leis gur comhair deireadh a chur leis an chosc ar an Ghaeilge i bpriosúin na Sé Chontae agus i gComhairle Bhéal Feirste, agus go ndeanfaí an dlí a choscann sráidainmneacha Gaeilge a aisghairm.

Thar cheann Chumann na Gaeilge a d'eagraigh an ocáid, dúirt Diarmuid Mac an tSionnaigh gur "céim beag ar aistear fada agóidíochta" do chearta Gaeilge a bhí sa chomhdháil. "Amach anseo aithneofar na nóchaidí mar an tréimhse inar dhúirt pobal Gaeilge na Sé Chontae nach raibh said sásta glacadh le stádas den dara grád a thuilleadh."



Pádraig O Maolchraoibhe

Thug Pádraig O Maolchraoibhe, iar-chathaoir leach ar Scoil Pobal Feirste agus comhairleoir Lios na gCearrbhach faoi na húdaráis ó Thuaidh fosta. "Tá oiread cearta dlite againn agus atá ag lucht an Bhéarla nó ní aon pobal beag daoine i laindeáil anseo anuraidh sinn. Is Éireannaigh sinn inár dtír féin agus táimid ag labhairt teang a tháinig chun an oileáin seo 1,500 bliain roim an Bhéarla. Lena chois is teanga náisiúnt 600,000 náisiúntóir ó Thuaidh i an Ghaeilge." Dá leis nach raibh sa chaint faoi "mheas ar an d thraidisiún" ach "ráiméis" fad is "tá an Ghaeilg á brú faoi chois."

Second murder attempt on Sean Keenan

SINN FEIN ACTIVIST Sean Keenan was shot on Thursday, June 7th, in his West Belfast home as a pro-British death squad tried unsuccessfully to sledgehammer their way through the fortified back door. The UFF later claimed responsibility.

Forty-year-old Keenan had just arrived home after 11pm and was sitting watching television in his home in Riverdale Park South, when, at just three minutes to midnight, he heard banging at the back of the house. Keenan said: "Nothing registered with me as to what was actually happening."

The assailants attempted to break down the door four times, unaware that it was reinforced. Keenan, who was sitting underneath the living-room window, dived across the floor to try to get out of the room when the venetian blind fell down off the back door. Eight pistol shots were then fired, one hitting Keenan in the left buttock as he lay crouched beside the living-room door. Keenan managed to make his way into the kitchen where his wife had been preparing a late supper. The gunmen then made their way back to their car which was parked on the hard-shoulder of the M1, overlooking Keenan's house.

One of Keenan's neighbours gave a statement to the RUC about the shooting but refused to sign it until they included in it the fact that one of the gunmen was hurt and blood was discovered at the back door and on the glass. The RUC were also told that the getaway car had been seen on the hard shoulder of the motorway to which they replied "We think we know the car". The car, a red Vauxhall Cavalier, was earlier hijacked from a house in Raleigh Street, in the Shankill area, and was found burnt-out at Malvern Way after the shooting.



Sean Keenan

The assassination attempt on Keenan occurred on the same day that Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams lost his claim for compensation for injuries received when he and Keenan were shot at the rear of the City Hall in 1984.

List of attacks

THE SHOOTING of Sean Keenan is only the latest incident in a sustained campaign by pro-British death-squads designed to terrorise and eliminate Sinn Féin activists.

The campaign is, of course, a fully integrated part of British strategy which has created an atmosphere where republicans, Sinn Féin activists with public profiles in particular, are vilified, censored, excluded and set up as 'fair game' for loyalist killers.

Below we carry a list of such attacks since Sinn Féin's electoral intervention in the mid-'80s.

- March 14th, 1984. Gerry Adams, Sean Keenan and Joe Keenan were shot in a sectarian murder bid in Belfast city centre.
- September 6th, 1985. Councillor Mickey Hasson survived a murder bid at his home when the assassin's gun twice failed to fire.
- May 22nd, 1987. Councillor Alex Maskey was shot and seriously wounded in his Andersonstown home.
- February 9th, 1988. Assassination bid on Councillor John Davey as he left his home in south Derry for a council meeting.
- March 22nd, 1988. Councillor Brendan Curran survived a murder bid when a booby-trap grenade was attached to his gatepost.
- November 24th, 1988. Phelim McNally, brother of Sinn Féin Councillor Francie McNally, was killed by a pro-British death-squad in his brother's home.
- January 6th, 1989. Sinn Féin election worker Johnny Rush was shot at his Stewartstown home. He managed to flee from the house despite being injured.
- January 7th, 1989. Hooded gunmen arrived at the Short Strand home of Sinn Féin representative Joe O'Donnell in what was clearly a murder bid. Fortunately he had just left.
- February 7th, 1989. Councillor John Davey was assassinated after he was stopped at what he thought was a crown forces checkpoint in the lane of his home at Gulladuff, County Derry.
- February 17th, 1989. Sinn Féin election worker Paddy Shanahan survived a murder bid outside his home in Castlederg.

URGENT ACTION NEEDED ON DEBT

LOWER FALLS Sinn Féin's Councillor Fra McCann has welcomed the recent decision of the British government to scrap the punitive Payment of Debt Act.

Councillor McCann however expressed concern at the likely legislation which would replace the act when it ceases to function in November and he has urged voluntary agencies and political parties "throughout the north to begin campaigning now to ensure that the new legislation does not create the hardship and poverty of the old".

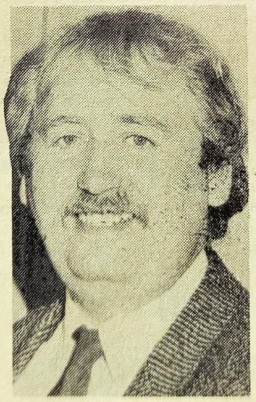
Councillor McCann said:

"The decision of the British government to scrap the Payment of Debt Act is to be welcomed. Since its enactment in 1971, to counter the rent and rates strike following the introduction of internment, the PDA has been widely used to recover money by direct deduction from a person's wage or social security payments.

"The act was broad in its scope and devastating in its ruthlessness. Thousands of individuals and families, most of whom were already finding it difficult to make ends meet, discovered that their insufficient income was being further eroded as a result of debt being recovered directly from their wages or benefits.

"Report after report, official and unofficial, revealed the extent to which poverty was being increased through the implementation of this act. Coupled with the high levels of unemployment, part-time workers, low paid jobs and changes in the social security system in April 1988, this combination of factors has ensured that in the North the problem of debt continues to worsen.

"Many individuals and families now face a growing problem of multiple debt, that is, owing money to more than one creditor. A report by the Citizens Advice Bureau in June 1989 revealed that 80% of its clients "had incurred multiple debts and 29% owed debts to four or more creditors".



Fra McCann

"The existing public debt policy is clearly inadequate and oppressive. Scrapping the PDA will not resolve the problem. Already the British government has increased its ability to deduct outstanding debt from benefits through social security legislation. This policy ensures that creditors receive money while claimants are left with financial resources, in many instances, well below the poverty line.

"There is a real danger therefore, that the scrapping of the PDA may be accompanied by the introduction of new legislation incorporating the worst aspects of the old law.

"Sinn Féin is demanding a new strategy to deal with public debt. Such a strategy must include legislative and policy measures which recognise that low income is a fundamental cause of debt.

"In addition the powers now available to deduct money from benefit payments should be reduced. A debt counselling service is urgently required and more resources are needed for education and to assist existing advice agencies like CAB.

"While these and other measures would help reduce some of the poverty and much of the distress presently caused by debt and debt collection there can be no doubt that on their own they cannot resolve this difficult issue. At the root of the problem is the economic conditions under which the majority of people are forced to live."

Join Sinn Féin

Name.....

Address.....

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