www.anphoblacht.com

An Phoblacht

REPUBLICAN NEWS

€1.10
90p

IRA – the people's army
SEE PAGE 4

ARMED STRUGGLE AND THE REPUBLICAN PEACE STRATEGY
SEE PAGE 8

11 years of IRA support for process
SEE PAGE 10

IRA leads the way

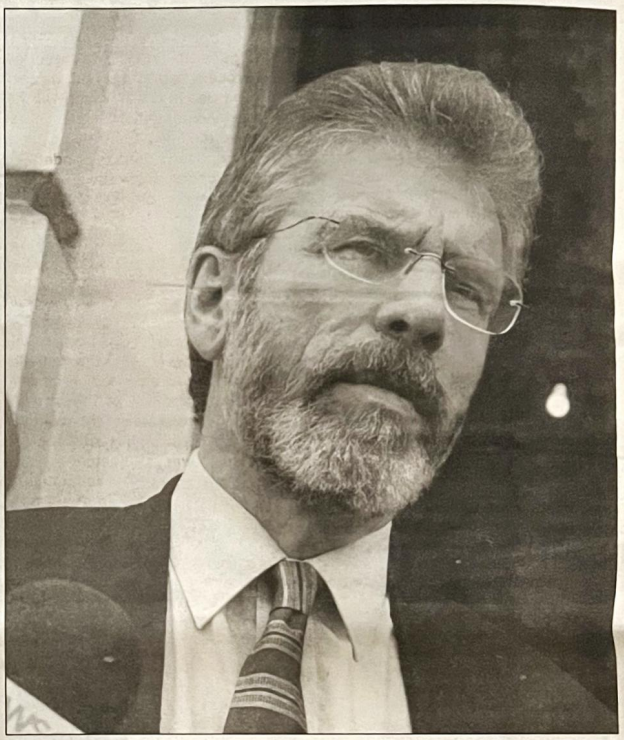
SEE PAGE 3

ISSN 1649-654X
9 771649 654015 30
Sraith Nua Imí 28 Uimhir 29
Déardaoin
28 Lúil 2005

Adams's 6 April appeal to IRA

ON 6 APRIL this year Gerry Adams asked the IRA to "to take courageous initiatives that will achieve your aims by purely political and democratic activity". "The way forward is by building political support for republican and democratic objectives across Ireland and by winning support for these goals internationally," stated Adams in his appeal.

"SEIZE THIS MOMENT... MAKE IRISH FREEDOM A REALITY" – GERRY ADAMS



· Sinn Féin Chief Negotiator Martin McGuinness and the party's North American representative Rita O'Hare at Dublin Airport before departure to the United States on Wednesday, 27 June

As we go to press *An Phoblacht* spoke to Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams on today's historic developments. Mr Adams said:

"Today's decision by the IRA to move into a new peaceful mode is historic and represents a courageous and confident initiative. It is a truly momentous and defining point in the search for a lasting peace with justice. I commend the commitment of those who have taken this decision and I appeal for unity and solidarity among all Irish republicans on the island of Ireland and beyond and for the struggle to be carried forward with new energy and enthusiasm.

"The IRA decision presents an unparalleled challenge and opportunity for every nationalist and republican.

"There is an enormous responsibility on us to seize this moment and to make Irish freedom a reality. I would urge all Irish nationalists and republicans, including those who have shown such commitment over the years as Volunteers of the IRA to put their undoubted talents and energy into building a new Ireland.

"Today's IRA initiative also presents challenges for others.

"It places a clear onus on the British and Irish Governments to fully and faithfully implement the Good Friday Agreement.

"In particular this means an end to pandering to those unionists who are rejectionist and the British Government must urgently address the demilitarisation, equality and human rights agendas.

"It means the Irish Government actively promoting the rights and entitlements of all of its citizens, including those in the North.

"It means that unionists who are for the Good Friday Agreement must end their ambivalence. And it is a direct challenge to the DUP to decide if they want to put the past behind them, and make peace with the rest of the people of this island.

"Today's IRA statement can help revive the Peace Process; it deals with genuine unionist concerns and removes from the leadership of unionism its excuse for non-engagement.

"Republicans will not be surprised that our opponents will continue to try to defeat us. Initiatives by the IRA are unlikely to change, in the short-term, the attitude of those who oppose us whether in London or Dublin or within unionism. We can expect this to continue until we succeed in our endeavours.

"Today's statement by the IRA is clear evidence of the commitment of republicans to the Peace Process. The question now is whether the two governments and the unionists are prepared to take up the challenge of building the necessary next steps to a just and peaceful future.

I am very mindful that today will be an emotional one for many republicans. I am particularly conscious of all those who have suffered in the conflict. I want to extend my solidarity to the families of our patriot dead and to commit myself and our leadership to coninue our efforts to win Irish freedom.

"The road map is clear. Sinn Féin is a party looking forward. We have a vision of a new future, a better future, and we have the spirit and the confidence to work with others to achieve this. Irish republicans and nationalists are now in a new area of struggle. There is a role for everyone in this new situation. Let us move forward together to re-build the Peace Process and deliver Irish unity and independence."

Commenting on the release of Seán Kelly, Gerry Adams said:

"I welcome the release of Seán Kelly. There are other prisoners who continue to be held, including those qualifying prisoners held in Castlerea. Sinn Féin will continue to campaign for their speedy release."

Irish Republican Army orders an end to armed campaign

The following historic statement was issued by Óglaigh na hÉireann, the Irish Republican Army, today, Thursday 28 July 2005.

"The leadership of Óglaigh na hÉireann has formally ordered an end to the armed campaign. This will take effect from 4pm this afternoon.

All IRA units have been ordered to dump arms.

All Volunteers have been instructed to assist the development of purely political and democratic programmes through exclusively peaceful means. Volunteers must not engage in any other activities whatsoever.

The IRA is fully committed to the goals of Irish unity and independence and to building the Republic outlined in the 1916 Proclamation

The IRA leadership has also authorised our representative to engage with the IICD to complete the process to verifiably put its arms beyond use in a way which will further enhance public confidence and to conclude this as quickly as possible. We have invited two independent witnesses, from the Protestant and Catholic churches, to testify to this.

The Army Council took these decisions following an unprecedented internal discussion and consultation process with IRA units and Volunteers.

We appreciate the honest and forthright way in which the consultation process was carried out and the depth and content of the submissions. We are proud of the comradely way in which this truly historic discussion was conducted.

The outcome of our consultations show very strong support among IRA Volunteers for the Sinn Féin peace strategy. There is also widespread concern about the failure of the two governments and the unionists to fully engage in the peace process. This has created real difficulties. The overwhelming majority of people in Ireland fully support this process. They and friends of Irish unity throughout the world want to see the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

Notwithstanding these difficulties our decisions have been taken to advance our republican and democratic objectives, including our goal of a united Ireland. We believe there is now an alternative way to achieve this and to end British rule in our country.

It is the responsibility of all Volunteers to show leadership, determination and courage. We are very mindful of the sacrifices of our patriot dead, those who went to jail, Volunteers, their families and the wider republican base. We reiterate our view that the armed struggle was entirely legitimate.

We are conscious that many people suffered in the conflict. There is a compelling imperative on all sides to build a just and lasting peace.

The issue of the defence of nationalist and republican communities has been raised with us. There is a responsibility on society to ensure that there is no re-occurrence of the pogroms of 1969 and the early 1970s. There is also a universal responsibility to tackle sectarianism in all its forms.

The IRA is fully committed to the goals of Irish unity and independence and to building the Republic outlined in the 1916 Proclamation.

We call for maximum unity and effort by Irish republicans everywhere. We are confident that by working together Irish republicans can achieve our objectives. Every Volunteer is aware of the import of the decisions we have taken and all Óglaigh are compelled to fully comply with these orders.

Our decisions have been taken to advance our republican and democratic objectives, including our goal of a united Ireland. We believe there is now an alternative way to achieve this and to end British rule in our country

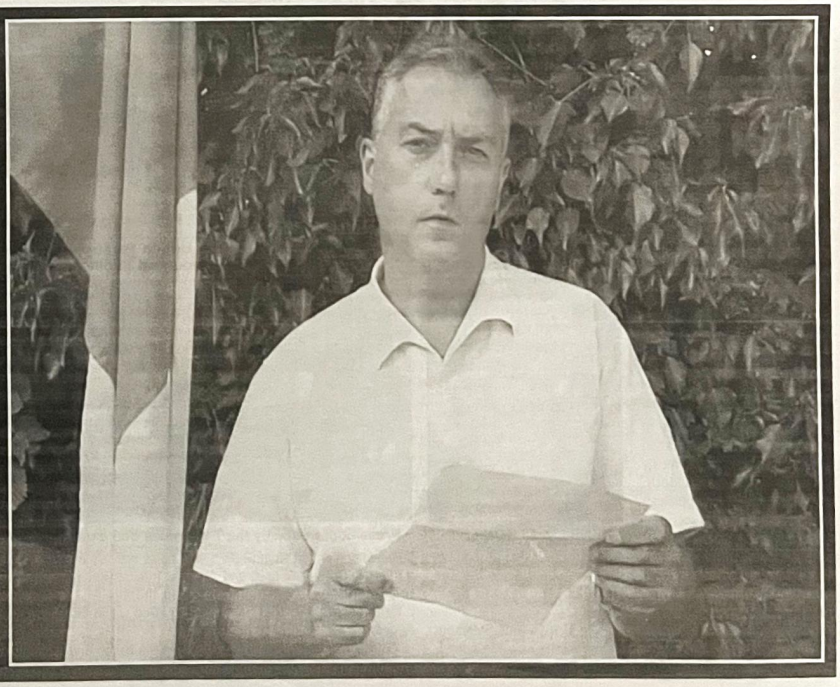
There is now an unprecedented opportunity to utilise the considerable energy and goodwill which there is for the peace process. This comprehensive series of unparalleled initiatives is our contribution to this and to the continued endeavours to bring about independence and unity for the people of Ireland."

HISTORIC STATEMENT READ BY SÉANNA WALSH

THE historic IRA statement was visually recorded and read by Séanna Walsh at the request of the leadership of Óglaigh na hÉireann.

Séanna served over 21 years as a Republican Prisoner of War in both the Cages and the H-Blocks of Long Kesh. He was among the first republicans 'on the blanket' after his arrest in 1976, the year the British Labour Government began its policy of attempting to criminalise IRA prisoners. Séanna was a friend and cellmate of Bobby Sands, the Officer Commanding in the H-Blocks and the first of the Hunger Strikers who died in 1981.

Since his release Séanna Breatnach has played a key role working with Sinn Féin's negotiating team and advancing the republican peace strategy.



IRA - the people's army

IN 1969 nationalists living in several parts of the Six Counties, but particularly in Belfast, were subjected to a pogrom with thousands driven from their homes and entire streets burned to the ground by unionist mobs.

The armed agencies of the Orange one-party state — the RUC and the notorious B-Specials, aided and participated in the pogrom which resulted in the one of biggest movements of population anywhere in Europe since the Second World War.

The events of August 1969 brought long simmering differences within republicanism to a head. The IRA leadership was unable to defend nationalists in the Six Counties. The IRA split and a 'Provisional' Army Council began reorganising.

On 27 June 1970, unionist mobs attacked the area of Short Strand in East Belfast in a determined effort to burn the isolated nationalist district to the ground.

St Matthew's Church was the main landmark in Short Strand and was seen by the loyalists as a prime target. The small nationalist district, cut off from the city centre and West Belfast by the River Lagan, was in great danger.

Short Strand fell within the jurisdiction of the IRA's Third Battalion, Belfast Brigade. A small group of Volunteers under the command of Billy McKee, took up positions in St Matthew's Churchyard and opened fire on the attacking unionists. McKee was wounded in the gun battle and local man Henry McElhone was badly wounded. But Short Strand had been saved by the courageous defence offered up by the IRA Volunteers. The IRA had sent out a message of intent. It had 'arisen from the ashes' of the burned-out nationalist districts and had come to the defence of the community with whatever small amount of weaponry and personnel were to hand.

The Battle for St Matthews marked a turning point in the relationship between the nationalist community and the re-emerging and re-organised IRA. The British Army claim that it would defend beleaguered nationalists was exposed as a lie. The British army were not here to defend nationalists and were clearly seen as a prop to Orange domination. The people now looked to the IRA as defenders of the community — the people's army was reborn.

IRA responds to British aggression

In 1971 the British policy of aggression and confrontation with the nationalist community was pursued with vigour. Support grew for the republican argument that partition and British rule were at the root of the injustice in the Six Counties. The people supported republican demands and support for the IRA itself grew. The people's army responded to British aggression and on 6 February 1971, the first British soldier to be killed on combat duty in Ireland since the Tan war was shot dead in North Belfast.

The British and Stormont Governments saw the combination of continuing civil rights agitation and armed struggle as a threat to British rule itself and responded by introducing internment without trial on 9 August 1971.

Those rounded up included student leaders, councillors, civil rights activists and republicans. Internment was introduced brutally — 22 people being killed within the first four days.

IRA structures and capability were unaffected and support for the organisation increased dramatically. Internment was a complete failure.

In 1972 marches and demonstrations demanding an end to Internment took place across the North. At one such demonstration in Derry on Sunday 30 January 1972, British Paratroopers were sent in to confront the peaceful marchers. They shot and killed 14 people, and wounded 12 others. The British made clear that peaceful political protest was now a potentially fatal activity. Nationalists could be shot on sight in their own streets for demanding justice. The British had declared war on the nationalist population. Support for and recruitment to IRA ranks soared.

IRA Escape from prison ship

Seven internees escaped from the prison ship *Maidstone* in Belfast Lough, 1972 by swimming across Musgrave Channel and hijacking a bus.

Of the 'Magnificent Seven' who escaped, Jim Bryson was re-captured but escaped again, this time from Crumlin Road Courthouse. He was shot and killed in disputed circumstances in 1973 involving British Paratroopers and the Workers' Party-linked 'OIRA'. Tommy Kane was killed in a road accident in July 1976. Tommy Tolan was shot by the so-called OIRA in July 1977.

1972 Truce

On 26 June 1972 the IRA declared a truce and a republican delegation was flown to London on an RAF plane for secret talks with William Whitelaw. The truce broke down when the British Army used troops to prevent nationalist families moving into homes which had been allocated to them in Belfast's Lenadoon Avenue. Gun battles erupted.

Freedom guns

Off the Waterford Coast in March 1973, a 298-tonne ship, the *Claudia* was intercepted carrying rifles, small arms, mines and explosives, destined for the IRA.

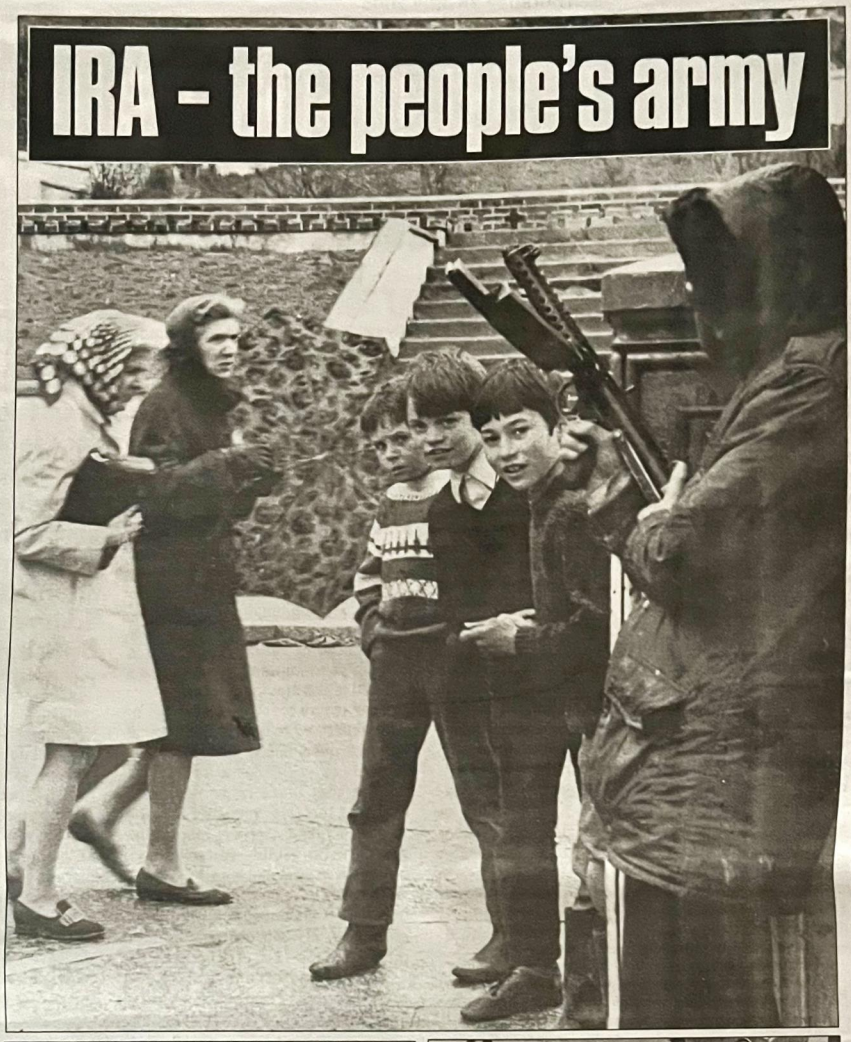
Arrested on board the *Claudia* was IRA leader Joe Cahill. He made a speech from the dock of the court in which he said:

"All my life I have believed passionately in the freedom of my country. I believe it is the God-given right of the people of Ireland to determine their own destinies without foreign interference and, in pursuit of these aims and ideals, it is my proud privilege as a soldier of the Irish Republican Army, just as I believe it is the duty of every Irish person, to serve or assist the IRA, in driving the British occupation forces from our shores.

"If I am guilty of any crime, it is that I did not succeed in getting the contents of the *Claudia* into the hands of the freedom fighters in this country. And I believe that national treachery was committed off Helvick when the Free State forces conspired with our British enemies to deprive our freedom fighters of the weapons of war."

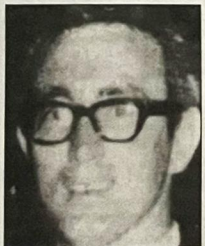
Helicopter escape

Also in 1973 in Mountjoy Jail in Dublin, a hijacked helicopter



• An internment round up

• British Paratroopers shot and killed 14 people, and wounded 12 others on Bloody Sunday



• HENRY McELHONE

• Press conference by the 7 internees that escaped from the prison ship *Maidstone*

landed in the prison yard. Three well-known IRA Volunteers – JB O'Hagan, Séamus Twomey and Kevin Mallon jumped on board and escaped.

A ballad celebrating the escape rose to number one in the Irish popular music charts.

Talking of the escape some years later JB O'Hagan said: "We landed at the old Baldoyle Racecourse. We thanked the pilot for the lift and headed off to the roadway and our car, then approaching. It was only later, we three sitting back with a cup of tea in our hands, that we fully appreciated the achievement. It was a real spectacular. However, all credit is due to those on the outside who planned and carried out the escape. They were the real heroes."

Michael Gaughan

IRA Volunteer Michael Gaughan from Ballina in County Mayo, died as a result of the brutal practice of force-feeding after 67 days on hunger strike in an English jail in March 1974. Force-feeding had been ended in Ireland itself following the death of republican prisoner Thomas Ashe in the same circumstances in 1917.

Escaping and burning Long Kesh

Long Kesh, outside Belfast was the site of a huge British internment camp. Opening it was one of the first responses by the British state to the uprising of the nationalist population in the Six Counties. Consisting of Nissan huts, and in later years the site of the infamous H-Blocks, it was home for thousands of republican prisoners over the decades.

After a series of protests in Long Kesh over brutality by warders, assaults by British soldiers on prisoners, and the quality of food, republican prisoners set fire to the camp on 15 October 1974 burning it to the ground.

On 16 October British helicopters dropped CS gas into the camp, then charged in firing rubber bullets. Prisoners courageously resisted the final assault by British troops but many were very badly beaten.

Internees in the ruins of Gage 5 began digging a tunnel which ran for 65 yards and on 6 November 1974, 33 prisoners broke out of Long Kesh, 29 being re-captured within a few yards. During this escape 24-year-old Hugh Coney was shot dead by a British soldier.

In March 1975, Long Kesh prisoners being tried for attempting to escape, broke out of Newry Courthouse. Ten got away.

Portlaoise Jail

Following the dramatic IRA helicopter escape from Mountjoy Jail, 120 republican POWs were transferred to a maximum security, fortress-type prison at Portlaoise in the midlands. This was where most IRA Volunteers and other republicans, captured in the 26 Counties, were incarcerated during the course of the struggle over the next three decades. It was the site of a number of protests, including several hunger strikes, by prisoners over treatment and conditions.

• IRA leader Joe Cahill (wearing cap)

• The hijacked helicopter that landed in Mountjoy prison yard

• (clockwise) IRA Volunteers Hugh Coney, Michael Gaughan and Frank Stagg

In a cool and brilliantly planned IRA operation in August 1974, 19 republican prisoners escaped from Portlaoise, despite being fired on by troops. In a further unsuccessful escape attempt on St Patrick's night 1975, Dublin IRA Volunteer Tom Smith was shot dead by troops inside the jail. There were violent scenes at Tom's funeral in Glasnevin Cemetery when riot-clad Gardaí baton charged mourners.

Demonstrations supporting IRA prisoners on hunger strike at Portlaoise in 1977, took place across the country and at one particular demonstration in April, protestors were assaulted by Gardaí.

Ceasefire 1975

On 11 February 1975, the IRA began an indefinite ceasefire. While the IRA recruited and trained, there was a fall-off in regular military operations and negative developments such as armed confrontations with the OIRA and loyalist gangs resulted in the deaths of Volunteers.

In the absence of other effective forms of political struggle, and in the face of a refined British political and military strategy, this ceasefire was subsequently seen to mark a step backwards for Oglaigh na hÉireann. The ceasefire ended before the year was out and IRA attacks against British forces in the North resumed.

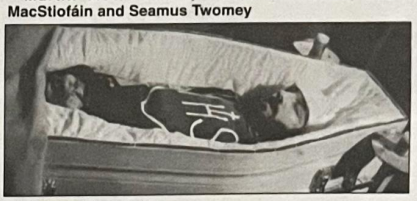
British strategy refined

The British Labour Government's strategy in relation to Ireland entitled 'The Way Ahead' consisted of a policy of 'criminalisation, Ulsterisation and normalisation'.

Any person charged in the Six Counties with a politically-motivated offence after 1 March 1976 was to be denied political status and treated like a criminal – forced to wear a prison uniform, do prison work and accept the authority of the administration as being supreme. It was an attempt to criminalise the IRA and divorce the guerrilla army from the people.

It involved a huge propaganda effort and the use of the media to relay the new message in new British terms. The IRA was increasingly referred to in British propaganda as 'criminals' 'mafia' and 'godfathers of violence'.

• Martin McGuinness, Daithí O'Connell, Seán MacStíofáin and Seamus Twomey



• Volunteer Tom Smith

• THE BRIXTON BRIGADE – Hugh Doherty, Joe O'Connell, Eddie Butler and Harry Duggan

Under Ulsterisation, the primacy of the RUC was emphasised and the UDR replaced the British Army in a number of areas. This allowed the British the advantage of presenting the republican struggle as an internal, sectarian problem. It also meant that casualties would be increasingly borne by the locally-recruited RUC and UDR instead of soldiers from Britain whose deaths directly affected British public opinion and turned sentiment against the occupation of Ireland.

The thrust of this new military strategy would be supplemented by an injection of capital, new housing programmes and the building of leisure centres, which was meant to emphasise that 'normality' was returning.

26-County collaboration

In the 26 Counties, the Fine Gael/Labour Coalition Government of 1973-'77, fully supported the new British strategy. It was determined to smash IRA structures in the South and suppress all public support for nationalist resistance in the North. It's means were to so overhaul the IRA, courts, the state security services, the media and even the culture of the state itself, so that no public expressions of support or sympathy would be tolerated, not only with the IRA, but with the idea of republicanism itself.

It introduced the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act, and declared a State of Emergency which led to the resignation of the President and eventually contributed to the defeat of the coalition in 1977.

A Garda 'Heavy Gang' was unleashed on republicans and there were countless incidents of brutality against political activists in Garda barracks. The amount of frame-ups increased leading to cases such as the Sallins mail train case.

Collaboration with British counter-insurgency strategy became the hallmark of Dublin Governments of both hues in subsequent years. This was true of both Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil-led administrations, and Labour Party Ministers over the years, such as Conor Cruise O'Brien and Proinsias de Rossa, were among the most rabid anti-republican voices in Leinster House.

The Brixton Brigade

Following a gun-attack on a Belgravia restaurant frequented by members of London's society elite, police chased and cornered a four-strong IRA Active Service Unit in a flat in Balcombe Street.

After a six-day siege the IRA unit, one of the most successful and effective to have operated in Britain gave themselves up. They were Joe O'Connell from Ennis, County Clare, Eddie Butler from Castleconnell, County Limerick, Harry Duggan, Feakle, County Clare and Hugh Doherty from Glasgow and Donegal.

At their trial in January 1977 three of the Volunteers announced that it was they who had bombed two English pubs in October 1974 frequented by British soldiers in Guildford and Woolich for which four innocent people had been framed and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Joe O'Connell ended his speech from the dock of a British court with these words:

"We admitted to no 'crimes' and to no 'guilt' for the real crimes and guilt are those of British imperialism committed against our people. The war against imperialism is a just war and it will go on, for true peace can only come about when a nation is free from oppression and injustice.

"Whether we are imprisoned or not is irrelevant for our whole nation is the prisoner of British imperialism. The British people who choose to ignore this or to swallow the lies of the British gutter press are responsible for the actions of their government unless they stand out against them.

"As Volunteers in the Irish Republican Army we have fought to free our oppressed nation from its bondage to British imperialism of which this court is an integral part."

Frank Stagg

On 12 February 1976 IRA Volunteer Frank Stagg from Mayo died on hunger strike in England's Wakefield Prison. As his body was being returned to Ireland it was hijacked in mid air and brought to Shannon Airport on the orders of the Fine Gael/Labour Coalition Government who carried out the interment amid tight security. Frank's coffin was buried below four feet of concrete and Garda patrols kept round-the-clock watch on the cemetery to prevent the dead man's last wishes being honoured.

However, on the night of 5 November, in torrential rain, the IRA broke open the concrete tomb, exhumed the remains and re-interred Frank Stagg alongside the grave of his IRA comrade and fellow Mayo man Michael Gaughan in Leigue Cemetery, Ballina.

British Ambassador ambushed in Dublin

On 21 July 1976, the IRA executed the British Ambassador to the 26 Counties, Christopher Ewart Biggs. As he travelled by car to the British Embassy in South Dublin, accompanied by a civil servant from Stormont and the Permanent Under-Secretary a the Northern Ireland Office, Brian Cubbon, a culvert bomb was detonated.

The IRA claimed that Ewart Biggs was a senior figure in British Military Intelligence and was attached to Century House, the base of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service (SIS).

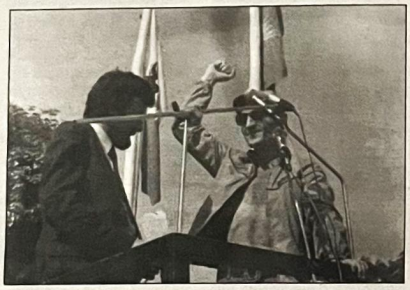
Torture fails to break IRA

In the late 1970s the 'Conveyor belt' system swung into full gear. The British Government, despite assurances given earlier to the European Court of Human Rights, once again gave the clearance for brutality and ill-treatment to be used in interrogation centres in an attempt to break the IRA and its support base.

The Conveyor belt system comprised of seven-day period interrogations in RUC detention centres by specially trained interrogators in Omagh, Gough, Strand Road and Castlereagh. Detainees were beaten and forced into signing self-incriminating statements. These statements were then largely accepted by the Orange judiciary who agreed to the lowering in the standard of proof. Those convicted were then transferred to the H-Blocks where they were stripped and again beaten in an attempt to criminalise them the and thus criminalise the republican cause.

The Amnesty International mission in 1977 was denied

• Aftermath of Narrow Waer attack 1979 (below) Crumlin Road Jail escapee paul 'Dingus' magee makes a dramatic appearance at Bodenstown, while 'on the run' In 1981



vital doctors' reports but was still able to show that while the Strasbourg Court was examining the 1971 and 1972 torture allegations against Britain, which the European Commission had confirmed, the beatings were still going on.

British Labour MP Roy Mason was the British direct ruler during the period of torture of detainees. Every Monday morning he presided over security meetings in Stormont Castle which afterwards issued statistics boasting about the rate of arrests.

In 1978 Mason claimed he was "squeezing the IRA like toothpaste". He left Ireland in 1979 and from then on lived in fear of his life in a fortress in Barnsley, England, with round-the-clock police protection.

The Long War

In the late 1970s Oglaigh hÉireann reorganised itself internally to counter the new challenges posed to its campaign of resistance by the Conveyor belt system and the new British strategy of Ulsterisation, criminalisation and normalisation.

The British had clearly settled in for the long term. The IRA had to respond and it did, gearing itself now for a long war of attrition against the British forces. This was summarised in an exclusive *Republican News* interview in November 1978 with a member of the IRA leadership.

The IRA spokesperson explained how the organisation "undertook a massive re-organisation of the movement" in which the old locally-based pyramid structure was replaced with a new cell system.

The IRA spokesperson also spoke of the costs inflicted on IRA Volunteers: "We have to suffer imprisonment, torture, being constantly on the run, isolated from our families. Then our friends and comrades are being killed and many of us constantly run the risk of summary execution."

The intent and capability of the IRA re-organisation was clearly shown on 14 November 1978. In a 45-minute period the IRA launched bomb attacks on Dungannon, Omagh, Cookstown, Enniskillen, Derry and Belfast, two weeks after an IRA spokesperson told *Republican News* that "we are committed to and more importantly geared to a long war".

British propaganda shattered as IRA intercepts intelligence document

In a scoop which shattered the thrust of the British Government's criminalisation propaganda, the IRA intercepted and published a secret assessment of the guerrilla organisation prepared by the commander of British Land Forces in the Six Counties, Brigadier James Glover. Entitled Document 37 — that was the number of the copy that was seized — it said:

"Our evidence of the calibre of rank-and-file terrorists does not support the view that they are merely mindless hooligans, drawn from the unemployed and unemployable.

"PIRA is essentially a working-class organisation based in the ghetto areas of the cities and in the poorer rural areas. Thus, if members of the middle class and graduates become more deeply involved they have to forfeit their lifestyle."

Brigadier Glover continued:

"The Provisional leadership is deeply committed to a long campaign of attrition. The Provisional IRA has the dedication and the sinews of war to raise violence intermittently to at least the level of early 1978, certainly for the foreseeable future."

The overall conclusion of the document was the most damaging one to the public British contention that they could defeat the IRA's armed struggle. It said:

"The Provisionals' campaign of violence is likely to continue while the British remain in Northern Ireland... we see little prospect of political development of a kind which would seriously undermine the Provisionals' position."

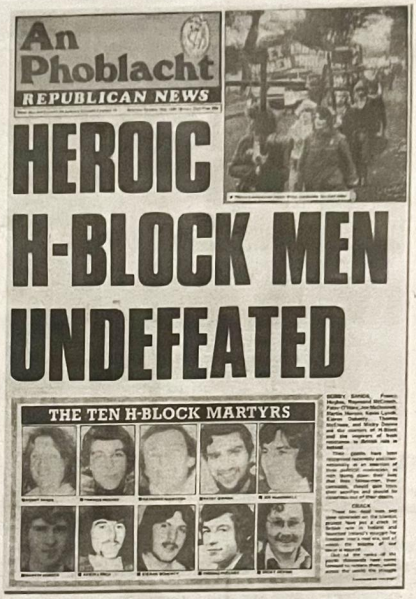
IRA inflicts biggest blow to British since 1921

In a major military operation which shook the British establishment Lord Louis Mountbatten, former Chief of the United Kingdom Defence Staff and cousin of the British Queen, was killed in a remote-control bomb attack on board his yacht off Mullaghmore, County Sligo.

Just Four hours later the most successful IRA attack against British forces in 58 years took place at Narrow Water Castle, close to Warrenpoint in South Down. A full rifle platoon of British Paratroopers — 18 British soldiers in all — was wiped out in a single ambush laid, according to a British Army spokesperson "with enormous skill".

European attacks

During 1980 an IRA Active Service Unit ambushed Colonel Mark Coe, a staff officer at the British Corps Headquarters in Bieleffeld, West Germany. In claiming responsibility the IRA also claimed responsibility for bombings against British Army NATO bases In 1978 and 1979; an explosion in Brussels which injured four British Army bandsmen in August 1979; and the execution of Sir Richard Sykes, British Ambassador to the Hague in March 1979.



Sykes had carried out the investigation into the execution of Ewart biggs in Dublin in 1976. The IRA claimed that Sykes, like Biggs, was connected to Britain's secret intelligence services.

Attacks against British military targets on mainland Europe were to be recurring features of the IRA's armed struggle in the 1980s and again in the 1990s.

Hunger Strikers destroy criminalisation policy

In 1980, in an attempt to reach a settlement of the protest for political status, the IRA unilaterally called off its armed campaign against prison warders. Catholic Cardinal Tomás O Fiaich and Bishop Edward Daly entered into prison talks with British Direct Ruler Humphrey Atkins. When these failed a hunger strike began in the H-Blocks and ended shortly before Christmas, without loss of life, when the British promised the introduction of a more liberal prison regime.

The British quickly reneged on these promises, refused prisoners access to their own clothes, and set the ground for the historic second Hunger Strike. The Hunger Strike saw the deaths of seven IRA Volunteers and three members of the INLA. The leader of the Hunger Strike, IRA Volunteer Bobby Sands was elected MP for Fermanagh/South Tyrone as he lay dying in the H-Blocks.

The Hunger Strike led to a huge mass movement on the streets of Ireland North and South in support of the prisoners demands. There was increased recruitment to the IRA all over Ireland and masses of people joined Sinn Féin. Sinn Féin's increasing radicalisation and development as a political party was given a massive boost and the organisation was catapulted into developing a serious electoral strategy. The Hunger Strike was headline news all over the world and the event further internationalised the Irish republican struggle.

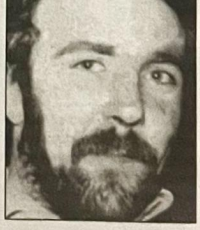
The heroic H-Block Hunger Strikers through their supreme sacrifice utterly destroyed Britain's policy of criminalisation.

Crumlin Road Jail escape

During the historic year of 1981 eight IRA Volunteers shot their way to freedom out of Crumlin Road Jail in Belfast.

Seven of the Volunteers were in on charges connected with the IRA's M-60 team — so-called for their deployment of an M60 Machine gun in ambushes against the British Army, and were charged with killing an RUC member and a captain of the British Army's notorious SAS. The eighth Volunteer, Pete Ryan from County Tyrone was charged with killing a UDR soldier and an RUC reservist.

Of the eight escapers, seven were arrested within a year. Six were sentenced in the 26 Counties under the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act for the escape and upon expiration of their sentences five of the men faced extradition charges; another escaper Joe Doherty escaped to the United States where he was detained and later extradited. Pete Ryan was killed on active service with the IRA in 1991, while Paul 'Dingus' Magee was arrested in the 1990s while on IRA active service in Britain.



• Euge Toman, Seán Burns and Gervaise McKerr

Shoot-To-Kill

In 1982 six nationalists were summarily executed by crown forces in County Armagh in the space of a month. All of those killed were unarmed. Three of them were IRA Volunteers in Lurgan, two were members of the INLA and the sixth was a 17-year-old nationalist youth

Such was the public outrage that three RUC men were charged in connection with the murders of Eugene Toman, Seán Burns and Gervaise McKerr in Lurgan. The three were acquitted in 1984 by Lord Justice Gibson who said that the three RUC officers were "absolutely blameless" and he commended them "for their courage and determination in bringing the three deceased men to justice, to the final court of justice."

Gibson's remarks demonstrated for many people that the 'shoot-to-kill' policy was sanctioned at the highest level.

In April 1987 Gibson was killed in an IRA landmine as he crossed the border at Killeen.

The IRA's greatest escape

In the most daring ever IRA prison escape, 38 Volunteers broke out of the H-Blocks of Long Kesh, 'the most secure jail in Europe'. It was a huge blow to the British and a major morale boost for IRA Volunteers and republicans throughout the country, particularly coming as it did just two years after the Hunger Strike deaths.

Armed IRA Volunteers took control of H-7, arrested the warders, some of whose uniforms they used, hijacked a food lorry and bluffed their way through a number of security gates before they were discovered and had to fight their way out of the rest of the camp.

Escaper Kirean Fleming from Derry drowned in the Bannagh River between Fermanagh and Donegal after a shoot-out with the SAS when his comrade Antoine Mac Giolla Bhrighde from Magherafelt and an SAS officer were shot dead in December 1984.

Escaper Séamus McElwaine from County Monaghan was executed by the SAS in Fermanagh in April 1986.

Larry Marley, who played a major part in planning the escape, but who stayed behind in the H-Blocks, was assassi-

nated in his North Belfast home by unionist paramilitaries a year after his release.

Escaper Pádraig McKearney was shot dead along with seven comrades and a civilian by the SAS at Loughgall in May 1987.

Escaper Gerry McDonnell was subsequently arrested in Britain on active service and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Escapers Robert Russell and Paul Kane were arrested in the 26 Counties and extradited into the hands of the British. Brendan 'Bik' McFarlane and Gerry Kelly, later to become a Sinn Féin MLA for North Belfast, were captured on active service in Amsterdam in January 1986 and extradited back to the North.

Escapers Dermot Finucane and Séamus Clarke were imprisoned in Portlaoise. On their release both were successful in defeating attempts to extradite them back to the Six Counties.

In February 1988 IRA Volunteers Brendan Burns and Brendan Moley who had provided military back-up for the escapers, died in a premature explosion in South Armagh.

Marita Ann

The *Marita Ann*, carrying a cargo of weapons destined for the IRA, was intercepted by the 26-County Navy off the Kerry coast in late September 1984.

At least two of the five men arrested on board, Martin Ferris, later to become Sinn Féin TD for Kerry North, and Gavin Mortimer, were beaten by their captors. They were handcuffed to the deck of the naval vessel which brought them to shore and, despite high tides and rough seas, both men were kept in this position throughout the 20-hour journey.

Brighton bombing

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Tory cabinet was the target of a 100lb IRA bomb, which ripped through the Grand Hotel, Brighton, England, in the early hours of Friday 12 October 1984. The explosion killed four people in, or associated with, the Tory leadership.

The explosion blew out the facade of the four top floors in one section of the hotel, while internally the top rooms crashed down more than seven floors into the basement. Thatcher's bedroom, which she had vacated just minutes before the blast, was wrecked by falling masonry.

In a statement claiming responsibility for the attack, the IRA said: *"Mrs Thatcher will now realise that Britain cannot occupy our country, torture our prisoners, and shoot our people on their own streets and get away with it.*

"Today we were unlucky, but remember we only have to be luck once — you will have to be lucky always.

"Give Ireland peace and there will be no war."

Blasting the barracks

In an attack that shattered RUC morale and inflicted the highest level of fatalities on the RUC in any single incident since the foundation of the sectarian paramilitary force, the IRA fired a number of mortars at the barracks in Newry on 28 February 1985. The attack, a combined operation by the IRA's South Down and South Armagh Brigades, killed nine RUC members.

Following the Newry attack, the RUC Police Authority announced a massive £20 million investment by the British Government in the construction of new barracks, the renovation of older barracks and the general improvement of resources.

In response IRA active service units launched a huge wave of attacks on barracks across the North. In a 12 month-period 44 attacks had been mounted against crown forces' installations. In the following years many barracks and British bases were completely destroyed while others were extensively damaged.

In a strategy of further isolating the enemy, the IRA also issued warnings to builders and contractors working for the RUC saying that they were assisting the British military presence. A number of contractors and builders were subsequently executed for failing to heed the warnings.

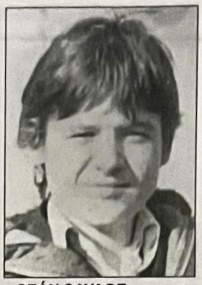
• Brit checkpoint looking for the H-Block escapees

• Aftermath of Brighton bomb 1984

• The scene in Loughall after eight active service Volunteers were executed by the SAS

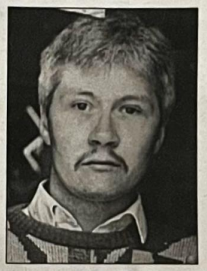
Loughgall

In the worst single blow suffered by the IRA since the Civil War, eight active service Volunteers were executed on Friday 8 May 1987 by the SAS during an attack on a British



• SEÁN SAVAGE

• MAIRÉAD FARRELL



• DAN McCANN

Army/RUC Barracks at Loughgall, County Armagh.

IRA funerals attacked

Between 1983 and 1987 over 25 republican funerals were systematically attacked by the RUC as a matter of deliberate British policy.

The objective was to drive mourners off the streets so that later Britain could claim dwindling support and sympathy for the IRA and the republican struggle as evidenced by the small numbers attending the funerals of fallen Volunteers.

But the exact opposite happened. More and more people came out to defend the remains of IRA freedom fighters, and the RUC was exposed as being as brutal and sectarian as ever.

The courage of the nationalist people and damaging international news coverage eventually forced the British Government to order the RUC to adopt a less publicly aggressive policy.

British casualties reach new high in 1988

In 1988 fatalities for British soldiers, excluding the locally recruited UDR, stood at 25, the highest annual figure since 1979.

In carefully planned attacks using the powerful plastic explosive Semtex, six British soldiers were killed in a minibus in Lisburn in June 1988 and a further eight soldiers were killed when their coach was blown up by a roadside bomb in August at Ballygawley.

• RUC attack funeral of IRA Volunteer Larry Marley

Gibraltar

In 1988 in the British colony of Gibraltar three unarmed IRA Volunteers, Mairéad Farrell (former prisoners OC at Armagh Jail and a former Hunger Striker), Seán Savage and Dan McCann, were assassinated by undercover British SAS soldiers.

Huge crowds lined their funeral route from Dublin to Belfast. Just outside their native city of Belfast the RUC hijacked the hearses containing their remains and diverted them away from thousands of sympathisers who had gathered in Andersonstown in the early hours of the morning.

At their interment in Milltown Cemetery a mercenary unionist assassin attacked mourners with hand grenades and pistols, killing three and injuring over six men, women and children.

At the funeral of IRA Volunteer Caoimhghín Mac Brádaigh, one of the three killed in Milltown, two armed and plain-clothed British soldiers drove into the cortege at high speed causing scenes of panic once again.

After the soldiers opened fire, the crowd captured and beat the two soldiers before the IRA intervened and shot them.

The slayings of three IRA Volunteers in Gibraltar was meant to dissuade other republicans from leaving Ireland and confronting British forces abroad. It failed.

Within weeks of the Gibraltar assassinations the IRA struck against British soldiers in Holland and West Germany, killing three and wounding four others.

By August the IRA had returned to England and at Inglis Barracks on the edge of Margaret Thatcher's Finchley constituency, a British soldier was killed and several others seriously injured in a massive explosion.

RUC top brass ambushed

Two senior RUC detectives, Chief Superintendent Harry Breen and Bob Buchanan were killed in an IRA ambush as they drove back across the border from a secret meeting with Gardaí in Dundalk. The IRA seized secret documents after the ambush.

In the previous year Breen had been privy to the premeditated SAS ambush of the eight Volunteers at Loughgall and had triumphantly posed for the press with the captured IRA weapons.

A sustained campaign

By the lates 1980s the IRA's armed struggle had developed into a number of identifiable strategies. Bomb attacks on commercial targets, mortar attacks on the crown forces and their bases across the Six Counties, a range of attacks in Britain and Europe and in the early 1990s in a successful use of weaponry in ongoing sniper attacks against the crown forces.

Bombing Britain

IRA attacks on prestige commercial targets in Britain in the 1990s left the British Government with costs running into billions of pounds sterling, with massive bombs at the Baltic Exchange and Bishopsgate causing severe financial damage to London's position as an international financial services location.

These large-scale bomb attacks in the heart of the British capital also grabbed international headlines on a virtually unprecedented scale and destroyed British efforts to contain and localise the armed struggle.

When the historic IRA cessation called in 1994 broke down two years later, the IRA returned to Britain and the biggest-ever IRA bomb was detonated at London's Canary Wharf in February 1996. The bomb caused massive devastation, inflicted huge financial costs on the British Government and the city of London and grabbed international news headlines. And most important of all the Canary Wharf bomb was subsequently viewed by analysts and commentators as a major factor in refocussing British Government attention on the Irish Peace Process and injecting new political momentum, eventually leading to the restoration of the IRA cessation in July1997.

An Phoblacht

REPUBLICAN NEWS

58 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Tel: 8733611/8733839. Fax: 8733074
535 Falls Road, Belfast BT 11 9AA. Tel: 600279. Fax: 600207
e mail: aprn@eircom.net
website: http:www.anphoblacht.com

The task ahead — push forward to freedom

THE MOMENTOUS announcement from the IRA represents a truly historic moment for Irish republicanism. The word 'historic' has been much misused during the Peace Process but this week's development surely is historic indeed. It needs to be seen not just in the context of the current state of the Irish Peace Process. It should be regarded with a longer view, encompassing the long-term strategy of Irish republicans to bring about Irish re-unification and a democratic socialist republic.

For many republicans this will be an extremely difficult departure to come to terms with. It represents a further decisive step away from that phase of the struggle which was dominated by the armed conflict in the Six Counties and by the armed struggle of the IRA. As the features in this week's *An Phoblacht* make clear, the IRA during that phase of conflict was a people's army, the militant expression of the desire for freedom. But it was the British Government that created the conditions for conflict, making it necessary in 1969 for another generation of Irish people to take up arms. For years the armed conflict seemed intractable. The British Government and its allies could not crush the IRA or the will of the nationalist population to be free.

It was Irish republicans and nationalists who charted the way out of armed conflict. The catalyst was the Sinn Féin peace strategy and that was made possible by the IRA cessation of military operations of 1994. The British Government and unionism initially doggedly refused to embrace the Peace Process. It took until 1997 for real negotiations to begin. The result was the Good Friday Agreement, a document that fell short of republican objectives. But as Gerry Adams stated when the short-lived Executive was established, republicans see the Good Friday Agreement as a means of moving towards our objective of Irish unity and independence.

Our focus now must be on the task ahead and that means accelerating the push towards our republican objectives. We must:

- **Demand the immediate restoration of the institutions established by the Good Friday Agreement, including the inclusive Executive and the All-Ireland structures, and the fulfilment by the British Government, the unionists and the Irish Government of all their obligations under the Agreement.**
- **Build Sinn Féin in every community in Ireland, continuing and accelerating the growth which has seen the party increase its political strength, which includes electoral strength, massively since 1994.**
- **Continue to weaken the union with Britain, maximise broad-based national and international support for Irish re-unification and implement practical steps towards All-Ireland integration.**
- **Campaign effectively on the Peace Process and on the range of social and economic issues, providing radical and relevant political leadership to the Irish people.**
- **Renew our determination to complete the struggle for Irish freedom and to build a 32-County democratic socialist republic.**

ARMED STRUGGLE AND THE REPUBLICAN PEACE STRATEGY

SINCE 1994 the central focus of the Irish Republican Army has been to advance the republican peace strategy, to enhance the Peace Process and by these means to move towards the objective of Irish unity and independence. The relatively brief resumption of armed struggle in 1996/'97 was like previous phases of armed struggle in microcosm. It came about after a period during which intense efforts by Irish republicans to advance by peaceful means were thwarted by unionism and by the British Government with the object of isolating and defeating republicans. These attempts to defeat republicanism failed then as they failed throughout the conflict since 1969.

BY ***MICHEÁL Mac DONNCHA***

It was a measure of the courage of republicans and their ability to take calculated risks that the IRA cessation was resumed and that in the succeeding years the IRA took further initiatives to advance the peace process. Did that change the objectives of our opponents? Certainly not. They sought and still seek to lower expectations, to sow demoralisation and to disorganise Irish republicanism which has never been better organised or better supported than it is today. And our objectives have not changed either. We are more determined than ever — because nearer now than ever to our goal — to achieve the re-unification of Ireland, the end of the Union with Britain and the establishment of the Republic.

The unprecedented strength of Sinn Féin has been achieved largely in the past decade of the Peace Process. That process represents the implementation of a republican strategy to reclaim from the real warmongers in Ireland — the British Government and its allies — the concept of peace and to fight the political battle for Irish national self-determination on a wider field. It was republicans who had to force the British Government to end its futile military campaign in Ireland.

Every phase of armed struggle, arguably since the United Irish Movement of the 1790s, has had the same basic objective — separation from Britain and the establishment of an Irish Republic. Every phase has also come after a period when the Irish people sought by peaceful means to establish their national rights in the face of a violent imperial power. The United Irishmen began as a constitutional movement but were met with vicious repression. Young Ireland asserted the right to resist in arms after four decades of O'Connellite politics had left the Irish people disarmed, demoralised and unable to physically prevent the export of food while hundreds of thousands of people starved during the Great Hunger.

The Fenians were a response to that Holocaust and to the futility of appeals to the Imperial Parliament.

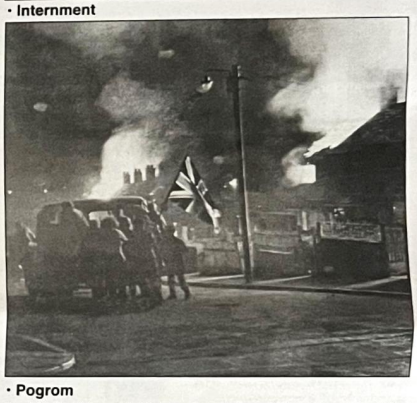
After three and a half decades of Irish Parliamentarianism at Westminster the concept of Home Rule was whittled down to the weakest form of devolution, then snatched away from the majority of Irish people by a Tory/Unionist alliance that conspired to partition Ireland by violent means. This brought together the forces that made the 1916 Rising and founded the Irish Republican Army. Britain had an opportunity to join a peace process in 1919 when the Irish people elected the First Dáil Éireann and declared their independence. But the British Government's response was to ban the Dáil and Sinn Féin and to make an escalation of war inevitable.

The biggest losers in the

• A generation of nationalist youth saw the modest demands of the Civil Rights Movement denied

• Peaceful agitation in the 1960s met with a violent response from the Orange state

• Internment



• Pogrom

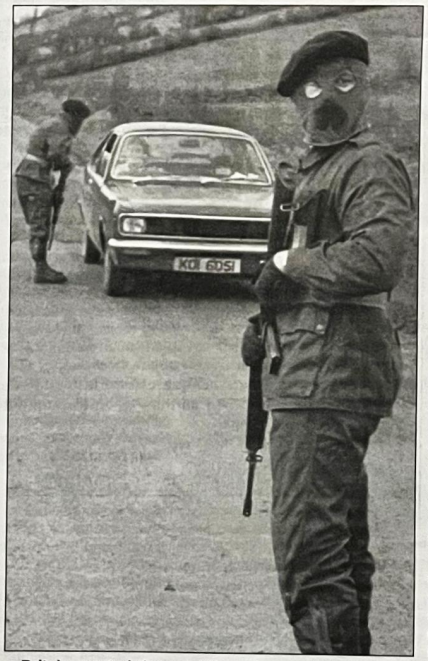
1921 'settlement' were of course nationalists in the Six Counties. They bore the brunt of what James Connolly predicted would happen if Ireland was partitioned — a carnival of reaction North and South. Yet the IRA was at its weakest in the North and, while a faithful few maintained heroic resistance, it was not until the 1960s that nationalists began to emerge from the shadows and demand their civil and national rights in a concerted and effective manner.

This phase of peaceful agitation in the 1960s was met with the violent response from the Orange state and the British Government, the response that began the armed conflict which continued intensely from 1969 to 1994. Britain created the conditions for republican armed struggle in the Six Counties. A generation of nationalist youth had seen the modest demands of the Civil Rights Movement denied and peaceful demonstrators met with armed force. That generation saw pogroms, British Army occupation, internment without trial and Bloody Sunday.

It is often forgotten that Sinn Féin was banned outright in the Six Counties between 1956 and 1974. Armed resistance was the only path that most republicans saw open to them after the Civil Rights Movement was shot off the streets. That resistance was fuelled by repression from a British state that first of all believed that it could militarily defeat the IRA and later hoped that it could totally isolate and criminalise it while institutionalising repression and keeping the Six Counties as a permanent training ground for the British Army. These British strategies failed but they ensured that the long war continued.

Republicans recognised that they could not militarily defeat the British Army. But they believed that the armed struggle would be a key component — and for many the key component — in the political effort to force the British to disengage.

The abject failure of successive Dublin Governments to represent Irish national interests also contributed to the political conditions in which armed struggle was waged. The Dublin Government had imposed broadcasting censorship of the political expression of republicanism. While it did not ban Sinn Féin outright, it attempted to close down the organisation and harassed its members continuously. Meanwhile its relationship with the repressive British Government grew ever closer.



• Britain created the conditions for republican armed struggle

In such a situation appeals by Dublin Government Ministers to northern nationalists to adopt 'peaceful, constitutional methods' were laughable.

Such appeals made no impact on republicans. Conditions on the ground in the North did, as did internal debate and strategic thinking about the way forward. Thinking 'outside the box' was required. A key to this was recognition of the fact that armed struggle was not a principle but a tactic to be used strategically.

The challenge was to create a bridge between almost total dependence on armed struggle and a political struggle with broad support organised in a political party that had the potential to grow on an All-Ireland basis. And all of this was in the context of a prolonged conflict, with no end in sight and with a moral obligation to explore all means to bring about a peaceful resolution. The British could be in no doubt about the IRA's ability to carry on its armed struggle indefinitely. The world had been shown that it could not be defeated. But a military and political stalemate still meant that the status quo remained. Therefore it was those who wanted change most — Irish republicans — who had to revisit their strategy and open up a new front in the fight for Irish freedom.

That new front was the republican peace strategy. Britain's bluff, and that of the Dublin Government, was called. If the British and the Unionists really wanted peace let them talk to Sinn Féin. If the Dublin Government really wanted to pursue Irish unity by peaceful means let them do so. Both governments were found wanting. But republicans had opened up a new political front and had broken the political logjam.

The 1994 IRA cessation was an essential requirement of that strategy. It allowed swathes of new public support to come to Irish republicanism while confronting the British and Dublin Governments with the contradictions of their own policies.

This week's historic statement from the IRA is the next logical step in the republican peace strategy. This step has been taken from a position of strength. Irish republicanism is strong and confident. The Union with Britain has never been weaker. Sinn Féin is leading nationalism in the Six Counties by a mile, has never had such support in the 26 Counties, has never been so well organised on an All-Ireland basis and has never been so focussed on its short, medium and long-term objectives and on how to achieve them.

The IRA's armed struggle has fulfiled its historic task. Across the bridgehead it created, republicans will march to freedom.

11 years of IRA support for process

ROBBIE SMYTH picks out the crucial events of the last 11 years highlighting the IRA's commitment to the Peace Process.

Cessation

IN AUGUST 1994, the IRA announced a complete cessation of military operations: *"Recognising the potential of the current situation and in order to enhance the democratic process and underlying our definitive commitment to its success, the leadership of the IRA have decided that as of midnight, August 31, there will be a complete cessation of military operations."*

The IRA leadership said that they, saluted and commended *"our Volunteers, other activists, our supporters and the political prisoners who have sustained the struggle against all odds for the past 25 years. Your courage, determination and sacrifice have demonstrated that the freedom and the desire for peace based on a just and lasting settlement cannot be crushed. We remember all those who have died for Irish freedom and we reiterate our commitment to our republican objectives. Our struggle has seen many gains and advances made by nationalists and for the democratic position."*

The IRA also said that: *"We believe that an opportunity to secure a just and lasting settlement has been created. We are therefore entering into a new situation in a spirit of determination and confidence, determined that the injustices which created this conflict will be removed and confident in the strength and justice of our struggle to achieve this."*

An Phoblacht
REPUBLICAN NEWS
SEIZE THE MOMENT FOR PEACE
Historic announcement from Oglaigh na hÉireann

Breakdown

The 1994 IRA cessation statement ends with an emphasis on what had to happen next. The statement says that, a solution to the conflict in Ireland *"will only be found as a result of inclusive negotiations. Others, not the least the British Government have a duty to face up to their responsibilities. It is our desire to significantly contribute to the creation of a climate which will encourage this. We urge everyone to approach this new situation with energy, determination and patience."*

Unfortunately in the weeks and months after the August 1994 cessation the British Government stalled and dithered. Dependent on the Ulster Unionists for votes at Westminster and unwilling to begin all party talks the Peace Process foundered and on 9 February 1996 the IRA announced with regret the ending of its cessation of military operations

The statement clearly highlighted where the blockage in the Peace Process lay. It said that: *"The cessation presented an historic challenge for everyone and the IRA commends the leaderships of nationalist Ireland at home and abroad. They rose to the challenge. The British Prime Minister did not.*

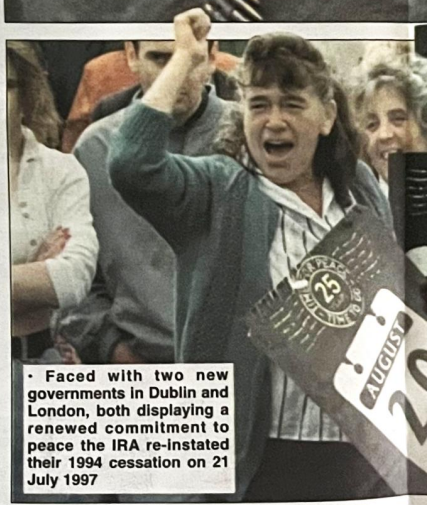
"Instead of embracing the peace process, the British government acted in bad faith with Mr Major and the Unionist leaders squandering this unprecedented opportunity to resolve the conflict.

"Time and again, over the last 18 months, selfish party political and sectional interests in the London parliament have been placed before the rights of the people of Ireland."

Restart

Faced with two new governments in Dublin and London, both displaying a renewed commitment to peace the IRA reinstated their 1994 cessation on 21 July 1997.

The IRA statement said: *"After 17 months of cessation in which the British Government and the unionists blocked any possibility of real or inclusive negotiations, we reluctantly abandoned the cessation.*



• Faced with two new governments in Dublin and London, both displaying a renewed commitment to peace the IRA re-instated their 1994 cessation on 21 July 1997

"The IRA is committed to ending British rule in Ireland. It is the root cause of divisions and conflict in our country. We want a permanent peace and therefore we are prepared to enhance the search for a democratic peace settlement through real and inclusive negotiations."

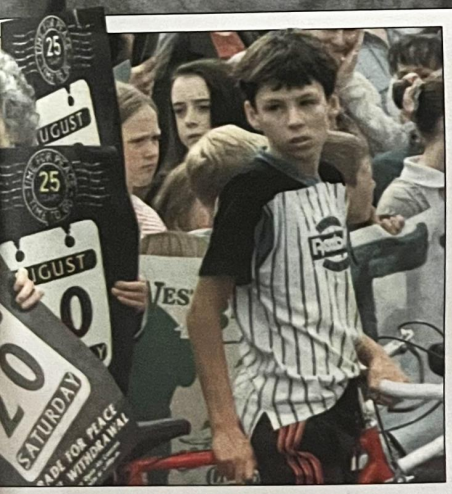
Good Friday Agreement

On Thursday 30 April 1998 an IRA statement made clear its annoyance with the fudging of the core issues in the Good Friday Agreement: *"Viewed against our Republican objectives or any democratic analysis, this document clearly falls short of presenting a solid basis for a lasting settlement."*

The IRA did state that, *"the Good Friday document does mark a significant development. But whether or not this heralds a transformation of the situation is dependent totally on the will of the British Government.*

"Accordingly, we will carefully monitor the situation. There appears to be yet another attempt to resurrect the decommissioning issue as an obstacle to progress."

On this topic the IRA said that: *"This issue, as with any other matter affecting the IRA, its functions and objectives, is a*



matter only for the IRA, to be decided upon and pronounced upon by us. We are mindful of our responsibilities and of the need for continued vigilance during these challenging times."

In August 1998 the IRA again re-affirmed their April position.

Stalemate 1999

Despite inaugural meetings of the Assembly, and the beginning of prisoner releases there was by the summer of 1999, more than a year after the Good Friday Agreement, still no substantial progress on its comprehensive implementation. An IRA statement on 21 July summed up the level of frustration within that organisation.

The IRA said that: *"The argument that the present political process can deliver real and meaningful change has been significantly undermined by the course of events over the past 15 months.*

"This culminated in the failure last week to establish the political institutions set out in the Good Friday agreement."

"The agreement has failed to deliver tangible progress and its potential for doing so has substantially diminished in recent months."

The IRA questioned the *"credibility and motivation of unionist leaders who signed up to the agreement"* saying that, *"They have repeatedly reneged on the commitments they made in signing the agreement and successfully blocked the implementation of its institutional aspects"* and that: *"There is irrefutable evidence that the unionist political leadership remains, at this time, opposed to a democratic peace settlement".*

The IRA also said that, *"the primary responsibility for the developing political crisis rests squarely with the British Government. They have once again demonstrated a lack of political will to confront the unionist veto."*

Movement

November 1999 finally a new deal agreed with the British and Dublin Governments that would all start the full implementation of the Agreement.

On 17 November 1999, the IRA responded saying that it was *"willing to further enhance the Peace Process and consequently, following the establishment of the institutions agreed on Good Friday last year, the IRA leadership will appoint a representative to enter into discussions with Gen John de Chastelain and the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning."*

By the end of November the Ulster Unionist Council had agreed to the new deal but put a February 2000 deadline on decommissioning, which was not in the agreement made between all the parties to start the executive and all-Ireland institutions.

Despite this the IRA still announced in early December that their representatives had met with General de Chastelain.

Mandelson's suspension

Faced with a unionist deadline for decommissioning by the end of February and a refusal to recognise the courageous steps taken by the IRA in engaging with the IICD, Northern Secretary Peter Mandelson turned the democratic process on its head by suspending the Assembly and restarting direct rule.

Faced with such unilateral provocation and acquiescence with the unionist veto the IRA announced on 14 February its disengagement from the de Chastelain commission, even though the IRA had finally agreed *"the context in which the IRA will initiate a comprehensive process to put arms beyond use, in a manner as to ensure maximum public confidence".*

May 2000

By May 2000 new progress culminated in an agreement to restart the Executive and Assembly, now two years in mothballs.

The IRA responded positively on 6 May: *"The leadership of the IRA is committed to a just and lasting peace. We have sustained that commitment despite the abuse of the Peace Process by those who persist with the aim of defeating the IRA and Irish republicans."*

"Republicans believe that the British Government claim to a part of Ireland, its denial of national self-determination to the people of the island of Ireland, the partition of our country and the maintenance of social and economic inequality in the Six Counties are the root causes of conflict."

The statement also dealt comprehensively with the issue of arms saying that, *"the IRA leadership will initiate a process that will completely and verifiably put IRA arms beyond use. We will do it in such a way as to avoid risk to the public and misappropriation by others and ensure maximum public confidence."*

"We will resume contact with the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning and enter into further discussions with the commission on the basis of the IRA leadership's commitment to resolving the issue of arms."

The context of putting arms beyond use was clearly defined in the IRA statement that said: *"We look to the two governments and especially the British Government to fulfil their commitments under the Good Friday agreement and the joint statement. To facilitate the speedy and full implementation of the Good Friday agreement and the government's measures, our arms are silent and secure. There is no threat to the peace process from the IRA."*

"In this context, the IRA leadership has agreed to put in place within weeks a confidence-building measure to confirm that our weapons remain secure. The contents of a number of our arms dumps will be inspected by agreed third parties who will report that they have done so to the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning. The dumps will be re-inspected regularly to ensure that the weapons have remained silent."

Arms monitoring

In June 2000 the IRA announces its re-engagement with de Chastlelain and allows inspection of arms dumps, in October 2000 the dumps are inspected again.

On 6 December 2000, the IRA again made clear the context in which arms would be put beyond use. In a statement they said: *"The leadership of Oglaigh na hÉireann want to reiterate our commitment to the resolution of the issue of arms and our view that this is a necessary step in a genuine Peace Process.*

The statement also said that putting arms beyond use *"cannot and will not happen on terms dictated by the British government or the unionists. A British military/securocrat agenda will not work and should have no part in a genuine Peace Process."*

The commitments made by the British Government but not yet honoured were: *"The implementation of Patten, to progressively take all the necessary steps to demilitarise the situation, to deal with matters relating to human rights, equality and justice, to resolve issues which remain outstanding at this stage in the development of the Peace Process."*

"The IRA re-established contact with the IICD and put in place a confidence-building measure which entailed the inspection of a number of our arms dumps by agreed third parties."

The statement also highlighted the IRA's annoyance at *"attempts by the leadership of the Ulster Unionists, to set more preconditions on political progress".* This they said *"has only served to compound the impasse".* Adding that: *"The IRA has honoured its commitments and will continue to do so."*

2001

Talks drag on, as unionists attempt to set yet more preconditions on political progress all enabled by the British Government. In June Blair called Westminster elections which sees Sinn Féin win two new Westminster seats becoming the largest nationalist party in the Six Counties.

In March a third inspection of IRA dumps is carried out. In May and June IRA statements re-affirm their ongoing talks with the IICD and that: *"We reiterate our view that the resolution of the issue of arms is a necessary step in a genuine Peace Process."*

(continued on page 12)

(continued from page 11)

On 20 June an IRA spokesperson tells journalists that the IRA had honoured its commitments but that the British Government had reneged *"on two major points in this agreement, policing and demilitarisation"*.

On 8 August an IRA statement showed yet again that when an impasse had been reached it was the IRA who showed initiative. The statement said that an *"IRA representative has met with the IICD eight times"* and, *"as a result of these discussions we can confirm that the IRA leadership has agreed a scheme with the IICD which will put IRA arms completely and verifiably beyond use"*.

The statement also said: *"We note the ongoing attempts in some quarters to prevent progress. They should not be permitted to succeed."*

Arms beyond use

On 23 October 2001 the IRA moved unilaterally to give impetus to the Peace Process and put arms beyond use. In a move welcomed round the world the IRA said it was committed to *"republican objectives and to the establishment of a united Ireland based on justice, equality and freedom"*.

The context of putting arms beyond use was an important element to the IRA statement in which they said: *"In August 1994, against a background of lengthy and intensive discussions involving the two governments and others, the leadership of the IRA called a complete cessation of military operations in order to create the dynamic for a Peace Process."*

"'Decommissioning' was no part of that. There was no ambiguity about this."

"Unfortunately there are those within the British establishment and the leadership of unionism who are fundamentally opposed to change. At every opportunity they have used the issue of arms as an excuse to undermine and frustrate progress.

"It is for this reason that decommissioning was introduced to the process by the British Government. It has been used since to prevent the changes that a lasting peace requires.

"In order to overcome this and to encourage the changes necessary for a lasting peace, the leadership of Oglaigh na hÉireann (IRA) has taken a number of substantial initiatives."

"These include our engagement with the IICD (Independent International Commission on Decommissioning) and the inspection of a number of arms dumps by the two international inspectors, Cyril Ramaphosa and Martti Ahtisaari.

"No one should doubt the difficulties these initiatives cause for us, our Volunteers and our supporters.

"The political process is now on the point of collapse.

"Such a collapse would certainly, and eventually, put the overall Peace Process in jeopardy.

"There is a responsibility upon everyone seriously committed to a just peace to do our best to avoid this.

"Therefore, in order to save the Peace Process, we have implemented the scheme agreed with the IICD in August.

"Our motivation is clear. This unprecedented move is to save the Peace Process and to persuade others of our genuine intentions."

2002

There was slow movement on the many aspects of the Agreement including the issues of, a bill of rights and all Ireland co-operation.

However the IRA took on 8 April 2002 another initiative to put arms beyond use following detailed discussions between the IRA and the IICD.

The IRA said: *"This initiative is unilateral at a time when there are those who are not fulfilling their obligations. It could be argued that the IRA should not take such an initiative, but it is precisely because of this that an initiative has been undertaken, so the Peace Process can be stabilised, sustained and strengthened. We fully appreciate the difficulties this causes for republicans, however the IRA is a highly disciplined and committed organisation."*

Once again the IRA said: *"We remain committed to achieving our republican objectives. However, the securing of a democratic peace settlement is not solely a task for Irish republicans and we are mindful of the primary obligation of the British Government and of the Unionist leadership.*

Persecution
A HOLY CROSS MOTHER SPEAKS OUT
An Phoblacht
REPUBLICAN NEWS
Seize the Time
IRA liberates peace process
SEE INSIDE PAGES FOR DETAILS

"This process can work if there is the political will to make it succeed, the IRA has once again demonstrated that will."

Unionist shutdown

Despite positive initiatives by the IRA in 2002, Unionist and British lack of commitment to real democracy was being exposed.

Unionists had been threatening to withdraw from the Assembly but Northern Secretary John Reid spared them the need when he unilaterally suspended the institutions.

This left the IRA with no options other than to withdraw from the IICD, a decision they announced in *An Phoblacht* on 31 October 2002

The statement said that: *"Recent events show that the leadership of unionism have set their faces against political change at this time.*

"There is also a real threat to the Peace Process from the British establishment and its agencies, as well as the loyalist murder gangs."

The IRA said that their 1997 cessation remains intact, and they remained *"committed to the search for a just and lasting peace"*.

The IRA said that: *"We have also outlined how, in our view, the full implementation by the two governments of their commitments could provide a political context with the potential to remove the causes of conflict".*

"Despite this, the British Government says that the responsibility for this present crisis and its resolution lies with us and there is an effort to impose unacceptable and untenable ultimatums on the IRA. At the same time the British Government, by its own admission, has not kept its commitments.

"The IRA therefore, has suspended contact with the IICD."

2003, "An opportunity not to be wasted"

On 17 October 2002 Tony Blair in what he described as a significant speech outlined a series of new demands on republicans claiming that we had now reached a "fork in the road".

Despite this provocation and the support of the British Government for an Independent Monitoring Commission which was not part of the Good Friday Agreement, Sinn Féin kept the talks process going.

In April 2003 the IRA published a statement of their position on the talks and the impasse in the Peace Process.

In their statement on 13 April the organisation said that it *"committed to supporting every effort to make conflict a thing of the past. To this end the IRA leadership has previously authorised a series of unprecedented initiatives to enhance the search for a lasting peace.*

"On occasions these have been undervalued or dismissed. Despite this, we are persisting in our endeavours. The initiatives outlined in this statement involve further substantive and additional contributions by the IRA.

"Both governments — and unionists and republicans alike — have now an opportunity which cannot and should not be wasted."

Breaching protocol

Despite the actions of the IRA in making clear their public commitments the British Government chose to deliberately fudge the IRA position. At the same time their conditional commitment to democracy was exposed when they postponed the 2003 Assembly Elections which should have been held in May 2003. It was against this background that the IRA released another long statement outlining their commitments and the purpose of the 13 April statement.

The IRA said that its previous statement and the commitments contained in it was *"dependent on agreement involving the two governments, the UUP and Sinn Féin".*

"With regard to putting arms beyond use our representative met, several times, with the IICD. In order, in particular, to facilitate the UUP and to enhance the process to achieve agreement we made preparations for a quantity of munitions to be put beyond use.

"In the event of agreement we were prepared to act immediately and our preparations were at an advanced stage.

"Regrettably the two governments and the UUP rejected our statement and our initiatives."

Democracy denied

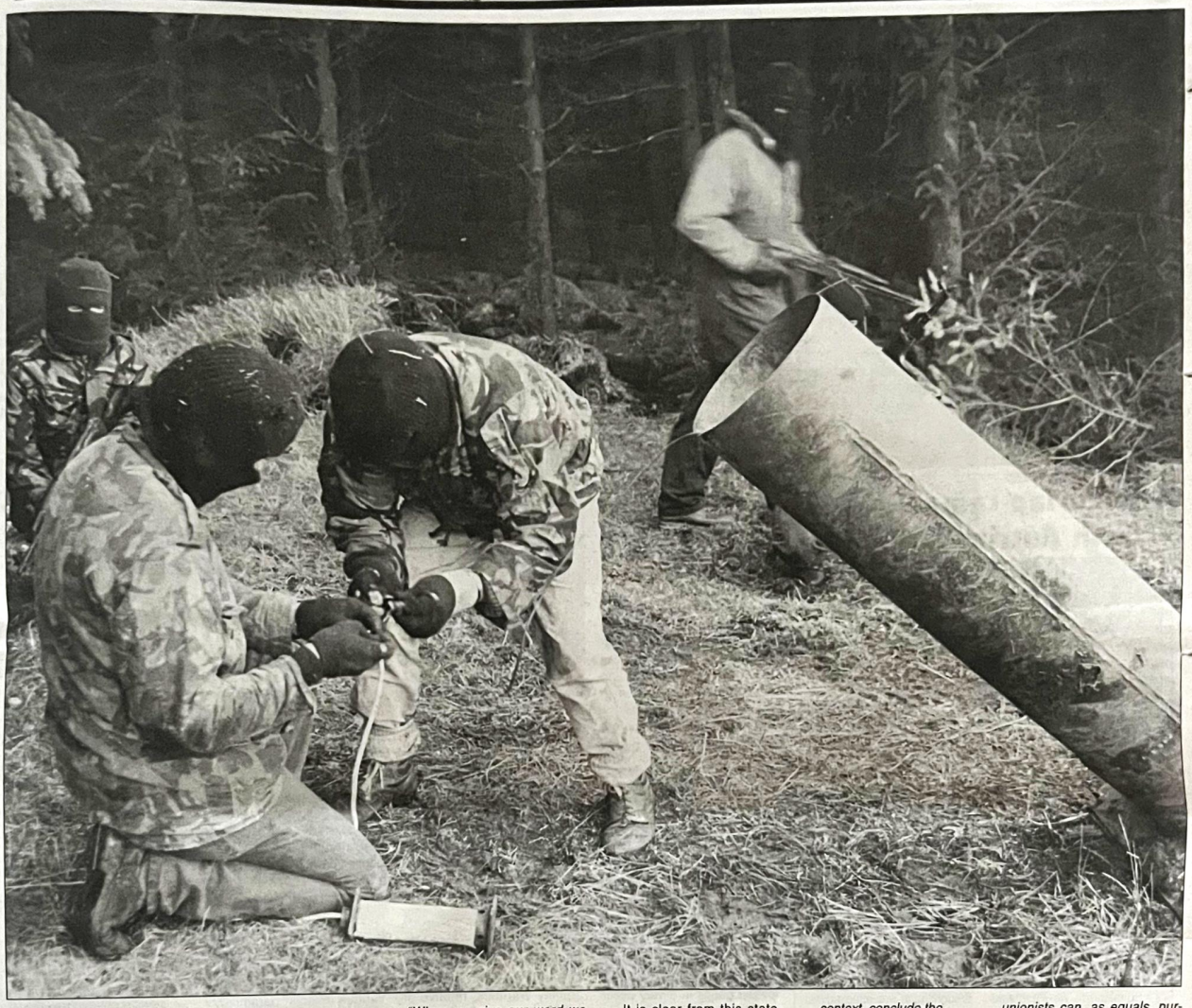
With the Peace Process in crisis, Assembly elections cancelled, 2003 could have been a year for a complete collapse in the Peace Process. Sinn Féin kept the pressure on the two governments and the unionists to return to the talks. The IRA remained resolute and disciplined despite the provocation of deliberate misrepresentation and heightened loyalists attacks on nationalist homes.

Throughout the early autumn talks continued and on 21 October it seemed that a new deal had been brokered with the two governments and the UUP.

Third act of putting arms beyond use

Once again the IRA agreed to re-initiate contact with the IICD and agree to a further act of putting arms beyond use. In its statement the IRA said it was committed to resolving the issue of arms: *"In line with our stated position, we have authorised our representative to meet with the IICD with a view to proceeding with the implementation of a process to put arms beyond use at the earliest opportunity.*

"We have also authorised a further act of putting arms



beyond use. This will be verified under the agreed scheme."

The IRA act of putting arms beyond use was done, the British Government set a date for the delayed Assembly elections, but the UUP backtracked at the last minute and refused to sign up to the new agreement.

In a November statement the IRA responded to the UUP duplicity:

"After protracted and detailed discussions, the leadership of the IRA recently made decisions to take initiatives with the objective of facilitating political progress.

"These decisions were made after the UUP and the two governments had agreed to make their contributions as part of an agreed sequence. We had sight of their stated positions and they had sight of ours.

"Our initiatives, in line with our stated position, related to our commitment to resolve the issue of arms and our view of remarks made by Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams. It was part of an agreement and an agreed sequence which involved:

- *The announcement of an election*
- *A statement by Gerry Adams*
- *A statement from the IRA leadership*
- *An act of putting arms beyond use*
- *A report by the IICD*
- *A statement by David Trimble*
- *A joint statement by the two governments*

As part of this we:

- *Met with the IICD with a view to implementing a process to put arms beyond use at the earliest opportunity*
- *We, in line with that, carried out a further act of putting arms beyond use under the agreed scheme. This involved the largest amount of arms to date*

"The political process these initiatives were designed to facilitate has been halted without a credible explanation from those who stopped it.

"The leadership of the IRA honoured our commitments. Others have not fulfiled theirs. This is totally unacceptable. "When we give our word we keep it. We expect others to do the same. Until they do so there can be little prospect of progress on the issues they profess concern about."

2004, "We will not submit to a process of humiliation"

September 2004 saw talks in Leeds Castle and yet another initiative from the IRA. This time however it was the DUP and UUP representing unionism for the first time ever at all party talks. An Agreement was reached but the DUP like the UUP a year earlier pulled away at the last moment, fulfiling republicans fears that they had only engaged in talks as method of buying time before the 2005 Westminster elections.

Again there were breaches of protocol with leaks of alleged positions of the IRA on the talks. Below we print in full the IRA position and commitments as of 9 December 2004 which have not changed since.

It is clear from this statement that the IRA was prepared to move in an unprecedented way to liberate the Peace Process and in a way that deals with the genuine concerns of all reasonable people.

The IRA statement said:

"More than ten years ago, an IRA cessation publicly heralded the onset of the Irish Peace Process. Since then, the IRA has, time and again, demonstrated its commitment to sustaining and developing that process through a series of very significant and substantive initiatives.

In the context of the work to conclude a comprehensive agreement, the leadership of Óglaigh na hÉireann decided:

- *to support a comprehensive agreement by moving into a new mode which reflects our determination to see the transition to a totally peaceful society;*
- *all IRA Volunteers be given specific instructions not to engage in any activity which might thereby endanger that new agreement;*
- *the IRA leadership also decided that we will, in this context, conclude the process to completely and verifiably put all our arms beyond use;*
- *we instructed our representative to agree with the IICD the completion of this process, speedily, and if possible by the end of December;*
- *to further enhance public confidence we agreed to the presence of two clergymen as observers during this process.*

"The IRA leadership decided to contribute in this way to a comprehensive agreement to resolve all outstanding issues, including those of concern within unionism. For his part, Ian Paisley demanded that our contribution be photographed, and reduced to an act of humiliation.

"This was never possible. Knowing this, he made this demand publicly as the excuse for his rejection of an overall agreement to create a political context with the potential to remove the causes of conflict. As the IRA leadership has said before, this is a context in which Irish republicans and unionists can, as equals, pursue our respective political objectives peacefully.

"We restate our commitment to the Peace Process. But we will not submit to a process of humiliation.

"We commend our Volunteers and the wider republican base for their patience and discipline in these testing times. Our commitment, like theirs, to our republican objectives is undiminished.

"We thank those who have made genuine contributions to the efforts to find solutions to ongoing problems. While acknowledging these efforts, we reiterate our view that progress cannot be made by pandering to the demands of those who are against change.

"The search for a just and lasting peace is a challenging one. The IRA leadership has risen to that challenge. The British Government and the leaders of unionism must do likewise."

P O'Neill,
Irish Republican Publicity Bureau,
Dublin.

LOYALISTS INDULGED BY ORANGE COURTS

A LEADING Belfast loyalist has been released on bail for the seventh time in seven months.

William 'Spud' Murphy is a close friend of ousted East Belfast UDA leader Jim Gray. He was released to appear at Belfast Magistrates Court on 26 July to face two counts of possession of cocaine, one count of possession of cocaine with intent to supply and one count of possession of cannabis.

This will be the eighth time Murphy will face the charges having walked free from court on his previous seven appearances.

Murphy is one of many senior loyalists to have been granted bail in recent months despite facing serious charges.

UDA boss William 'Mo' Courtney, accused of murder, is out on bail as is Laurence 'Duffer' Kincaid, accused of possessing Class A drugs with intent to supply.

In 2003 North Belfast Brigadier Andre Shourki was granted bail while facing charges of possessing a gun with intent to endanger life, while his brother Ihab was also granted bail while facing murder charges.

Sectarian campaign in North Antrim continues

• Ballymena's main Catholic Church, All Saints was attacked with paint bombs

UNIONIST paramilitaries have continued their sectarian pogrom against the nationalist population of North Antrim. The past week witnessed a series of attacks on Catholic churches in Ballymena and two nationalist-owned pubs in the early hours of Tuesday 26 July.

Speaking to *An Phoblacht* Sinn Féin MLA Philip McGuigan hit out at a local PSNI commander who linked the attacks in Ballymena, Martinstown and Rasharkin to a proposed parade, through the predominately nationalist part of Ballymena on 9 August. The parade by a local flute band commemorates United Irishman William Orr.

In the latest attacks white and blue paint was thrown at Crebilly Church on the outskirts of the town, while Ballymena's main Catholic Church, All Saints was attacked with paint bombs.

The previous day the Church of Our Lady at Harryville, the scene of a loyalist picket in the 1990s, was daubed with anti-Catholic slogans. Some of the slogans included reference to the proposed August parade, such as 'No IRA marches'.

Around the same time unionist petrol bombers threw a device through the front window of the Glensway Tavern, a nationalist-owned public house in Martinstown, setting the lounge alight and causing serious damage to the building.

Also, the remains of two petrol bombs were found outside a bar in Raskarkin.

Since the middle of July, four nationalist-owned pubs in the area have been targeted by unionist paramilitaries. The Diamond Bar in Ahoghill was attacked two Sundays ago and the Halfway House near Broughshane was attacked last Wednesday night.

McGuigan slammed the PSNI who claim the attacks are originating from the proposal by the flute band to hold a commemoration in the town.

"PSNI Chief Steve Martin is conveniently ignoring the history of sectarian attacks against the nationalist community carried out by unionist paramilitaries in North Antrim and his comments are only giving succour to sectarian violence."

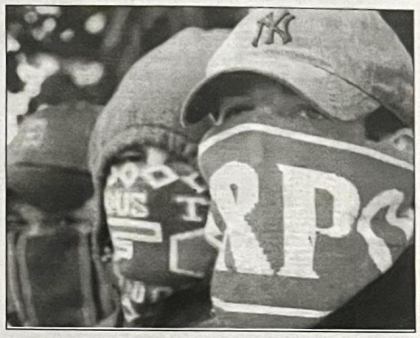
The North Antrim MLA said he had been contacted by a number of local people who are angry at Martin's comments and accused him, "of ignoring the fact that the sectarian violence has all to do with the irrational hatred of Catholics and nationalists in Ballymena".

"Martin has intentionally ignored the facts that for the past 30 years Catholics in Ballymena and the surrounding areas have been on the receiving end of brutal sectarian attacks orchestrated by unionist paramilitaries."

McGuigan called on nationalist to be very vigilant in the coming weeks.

UNIONIST PARAMILITARY FEUD ESCALATES

THE FEUD AMONGST unionist paramilitary gangs intensified this week. Belfast witnessed numerous bombings and shootings, while hundreds of UVF and UDA members invaded an East Belfast housing estate. The invasion of the Garnerville Estate in East Belfast on Sunday 24 July was apparently aimed at driving out up to six LVF members using it as a base for drug-dealing.



The expulsions, which took place directly opposite the PSNI Training Centre at Garnerville, saw the area occupied by over 300 masked unionist paramilitaries, some of whom were said to be armed and wearing bullet-proof vests. Scores of PSNI members and British soldiers stood by looking on.

Amid reports that the UVF and UDA have resurrected the Combined Loyalist Military Command (CLMC), excluding the LVF, their joint action in Garnerville is seen as underlining the UVF threat to wipe out the LVF. A senior UVF figure told journalists there will be no end to the feud until the rival faction has been "crushed".

News that the UDA is backing the UVF in its purge is a demonstration of unionist paramilitary unity not seen since they announced 'ceasefires" in October 1994.

Reacting to the situation in the Garnerville Estate Sinn Féin's Gerry Kelly said: "The situation in Garnerville is collusion between the PSNI and loyalist gangs in a very public way.

"The sight of hundreds of masked loyalists on the streets, intimidating families, side by side with the British Army and PSNI and within

• GERRY KELLY

yards of the PSNI Training Centre obviously has an impact on confidence in the wider Peace Process," stressed Kelly.

After they took over the area the loyalists maintained their presence right through Monday the 25th and into Tuesday. Despite the heavy PSNI and British Army presence they roamed the streets unhindered.

At least six families were threatened out of the estate. One of those forced out is Tommy Warnock, relative of LVF drug dealer Stephen Warnock, shot dead by the UVF in 2003. His home, protected by bullet-proof windows, lay empty as UVF and UDA gangs stood nearby to prevent his return. The LVF's so-called commander in North Down has also moved out of the Hollywood area.

British soldiers patrolled the alleyways while senior PSNI member in short-sleeved shirts negotiated with UVF members at the estate to allow a removal lorry recover the possessions of those who fled.

The ongoing loyalist feud has already claimed the lives of North Belfast men Jameson Lockhart and Craig McCausland, who were gunned down by the UVF.

Sinn Féin MLA Alex Maskey accused the unionist political establishment of tolerating sectarian murder gangs: "For decades the unionist political establishment has turned a blind eye to the activities of the various unionist paramilitary gangs. This attitude has been repeated again throughout this latest feud as night after night attacks have taken place across North and East Belfast with minimal comment from either unionist party."

While loyalist tensions remain high in East Belfast it is understood that concerns are rising in North Belfast as some LVF men who fled East Belfast have re-grouped in the Ballysillan area. The LVF is being blamed for an arson attack on the offices of Sunningdale taxis in Ballysillan in the early hours of Monday 25 July. The office was extensively damaged in the attack.

A number of hours later a couple and their son had a lucky escape when a blast bomb was thrown at their home in the Ballygomartin area of North Belfast.

It is believed the bomb attack was meant for the home of a senior UDA figure who lives nearby.

Loyalist sources say the latest attacks by the LVF are in retaliation for the Garnerville expulsions and two shootings, last week, in East Belfast which were the work of the UVF.

NEWS in brief

Orange Volunteers behind attacks

TWO HOUSES were attacked in the small County Antrim village of Stoneyford in the early hours of Friday morning 22 July. Stoneyford has been at the centre of a campaign by unionist paramilitaries intent on driving nationalists from their homes. Both attacks took place in the Stonebridge Meadows housing development which came to prominence earlier this month when loyalists and Orangemen failed in their efforts to march into the predominantly nationalist cul-de-sac on their way to an Eleventh night bonfire in the village.

An Phoblacht has been told that the assailants, a gang of up to five loyalists, are linked to the Orange Volunteers. The group, which has links to both the LVF and UDA, have been involved in a number of sectarian killings in recent years including that of 22 year old student Ciarán Heffron in 1998. Although the LVF claimed responsibility for the killing, which was carried out in nearby Crumlin, the claim was bogus.

One loyalist, who is the main instigator of the sectarian campaign of intimidation in Stoneyford, is said to be the leader of the Orange Volunteers and was questioned by the RUC about the Heffron killing but was released without charge.

In the Friday morning attacks windows were smashed in both houses while one also was targeted by paint bombs. Damage was caused o the owners cars.

Leila Khaled refused visa

FORMER Palestinian activist Leila Khaled was due to give a lecture at West Belfast's *Féile An Phobail* on Tuesday 2 August in St Mary's University College.

However *Féile* organisers this week confirmed that the British Embassy in Jordan refused Leila Khaled's request for a visitor's visa to attend the *Féile* event *Palestine Today — The Peace Process and Hopes for the Future.*

Féile along with a number of other organisations and cross community bodies who hope to meet with her during her visit are lobbying the British Government to have the decision changed. They say the purpose of Leila Khaled's visit is to "discuss the peace process in the Middle East and to enable her to learn about conflict resolution here in the north of Ireland. Féile are hopeful this situation will be resolved satisfactorily in the coming days."

Republicans warned

THREE REPUBLICANS, were visited by the PSNI in the past number of days to be warned that they were under threat from unionist paramilitaries.

The PSNI first arrived at the homes of two men in Dunloy, County Antrim on Thursday 21 July and told them that their details were in the hands of unionist paramilitaries.

The visit came just hours after the PSNI raided premises in the nearby town of Ballymoney, which is predominantly unionist, and arrested three men.

One of the men was told his car registration and movements were being recorded by the loyalists.

On Monday 25 July the PSNI arrived at the home of veteran republican Martin Meehan to tell him they received a threat warning that Meehan, "and others will be executed for continuous attacks on loyalist homes in North and West Belfast".

Although the threat was signed on behalf of a unionist paramilitary group the PSNI refused to disclose any other information to the Sinn Féin representative.

Meehan who has received numerous threats to his life dismissed the threats saying, "This is another attempt by loyalist thugs, who have been involved in numerous attacks on Catholics, to distract from their own activities".

Embracing cultural diversity

Féile An Phobail

AT AN ELEVENTH Night bonfire in North Belfast unionist paramilitaries parade before the crowd. Masked and wearing the customary paramilitary dress, the group brandishes weaponry while marching behind a UVF flag. In the background the flames leap and the dark sky is illuminated orange. There is debris on the ground and smoke in the air.

BY LAURA FRIEL

On the eve of the 12th, the ritualised burning of Catholic, Irish or nationalist effigies accompanied by an armed show of strength at a traditional Orange bonfire is rigorously defended as an expression of Protestant and unionist culture and heritage.

This symbolic expression of antagonism is unpleasant enough but worse still it is accompanied by increasing violence and hostility against the northern nationalist community throughout the Orange marching season that now stretches from Easter until the end of August.

This year has witnessed bomb attacks on nationalist homes and a serious arson attack that could have resulted in fatalities. Catholic churches have been attacked and in Harryville Mass-goers were prevented from attending services.

In recent years the heightened tension that accompanies the Orange marching season has not only generated sectarian attacks against the nationalist community, it has also precipitated internecine violence between rival unionist paramilitary groups.

This week we have seen gangs of hooded UVF paramilitaries take to the streets in east Belfast to ensure that families with connections to the LVF who fled the area are unable to return to their homes. Since the 12th unionist paramilitary feuding has left two dead and one seriously injured.

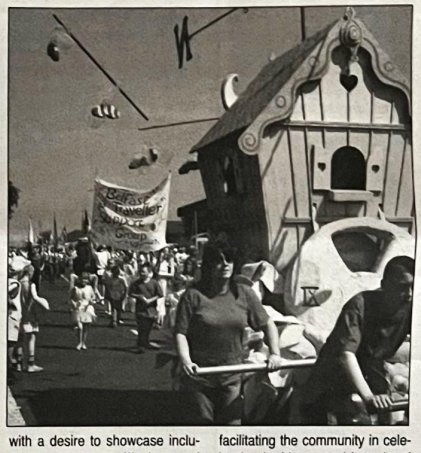
All this stands in stark contrast to the creative way in which Belfast's nationalists have chosen to give cultural expression to their humanity and vision. *Féile an Phobail* emerged out of dark days for northern nationalists in general and the people of West Belfast in particular. The spring of 1988 had been particularly tough.

As an apex of struggle against British occupation, West Belfast had been demonised for many years but the tragic events that followed the SAS killing of three unarmed IRA Volunteers in Gibraltar in March 1988 brought it to fever pitch. As a response to the damaging and negative portrayal of the community, Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams in his capacity as West Belfast's MP together with local community groups decided to organise a festival.

Its origins were humble but the vision and talent of local people have ensured that the West Belfast Festival has developed into a vibrant international event that involves tens of thousands of participants and visitors every year. The opening carnival parade routinely attracts over 50,000 people and, as anyone who has ever tried to get tickets at the last minute will testify, the week of activities are equally well attended.

As a positive counter-culture to the hardship and tragedies endured by this community for decades, fun and entertainment are high on the list of the festival's objectives. Music, as diverse as Irish traditional to Afro-Cuban, from the Celtic Tenors to the Beat and the Gangsters, provides the backdrop to the kind of inclusive atmosphere which imbues the festival as a whole. There's lectures for the serious-minded and a comedy night for those who are just looking for a good laugh.

But this isn't pacification. History and politics are neither abandoned nor forgotten but rather celebrated and explored in an atmosphere of progressive engagement. Discussion and debates have included lectures by leading international academics, journalists and documentary makers, including British middle eastern correspondent Robert Fisk, American satirist Michael Moore and political theorist Noam Chomsky. They have also featured meaningful engagement between leading nationalist, republican and unionist politicians.



"We have come a long way since 1988 when *Féile* was established from humble roots with a desire to showcase inclusiveness, reconciliation and peace whilst at the same time facilitating the community in celebrating its history and its cultural identity," says Seán Paul O Hare, Director of *Féile an Phobail*.

"It is in all our interests that the political stalemate in the North ends. There is still great deprivation and inequality within our society and additionally, the blight of racism. There is also the struggle across the world for justice and equality and against oppression and exploitation. Not surprisingly then, these concerns are reflected in the festival.

"So come and sample our international night of music, international food fare and join us as we 'race against racism', and debate all the current issues at West Belfast Talks Back. But above all, enjoy yourself," says Seán.

Meanwhile Derry Féile is to host young Palestinian actors from the Yafa Cultural Centre in Nablus on the West Bank. Children from the Balata refugee camp will perform A'edoon (We will return) which retells the story of Nakba, the Disaster, when in 1948 750,000 Palestinians were forced to flee by Israelis from their home never to return. This is the first time that the play will be performed outside the occupied territories by young people who have never experienced life beyond a refugee camp.

After years of conflict in which local communities were forced to rely solely on their own resources and abilities, the way in which West Belfast chose to celebrate could have so easily have collapsed into parochialism. It didn't, opting instead to embrace diversity and change.

And underpinning that determination was the traditional republican vision of uniting Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter and its inclusive ethos of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Once a year West Belfast play host to the world community, celebrating aspects of its music, art, history and knowledge and through this mechanism the local community embraces its own sense of itself.

Unionists have repeatedly accused Irish republicans of wishing to impose a mono-culture. It's a curious allegation given the exclusive nature of the Orange Order and its rigorous anti-Catholic rules and regulations. Orangemen might regard it as their right to parade through nationalist areas but it's not in the spirit of engagement with but domination of the local community.

The Orange Order hasn't simply emerged as a de facto exclusively Protestant organisation. It was *specifically organised and has been specifically maintained as an expression of racial and religious supremacism. It's ethos* is inward looking and anachronistic. It's about rooting out dissidents rather than embracing change and diversity.

Curiously the Eleventh Night bonfire in which those images of unionist paramilitary display were captured in North Belfast was one of a number of bonfires to attract state funding while the future of two festivals in nationalist North Belfast hang in the balance.

The New Lodge Festival and Ardoyne Fleadh Cheoil have been running for over a decade and despite numerous attempts to secure proper funding the financing remains precarious.

"We were promised three years ago that festival funding would be sorted out and that committees would have a proper avenue in accessing funding. This has yet to happen", said Irene Sherry, New Lodge Festival coordinator.

Delays by the funding decision-making bodies, have left this year's festivals in North Belfast in crisis. "In two weeks time the festivals begin and there is no sign of money", says Irene.

Kevin McVeagh of the Ardoyne festival committee said the British Government and its departments were making procedures harder than necessary. "They are moving the goalposts every year and then wait until that last moment to make a decision."

Céad SF 100
Sinn Féin 1905—2005

2005 Sinn Féin National Draw

TOTAL PRIZE FUND OF €31,000

Notice to all SF cumainn

Tickets for the 2005 National Draw have being distributed.

Should you not receive your allocation, contact Treasa Quinn, National Finance Department, 58 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. (01) 8735546 or Margaret Adams, 51-55 Falls Road, Belfast, (028) 90 235333

YOU CAN ENTER THE DRAW, ALSO BY CREDIT CARD JUST FILL OUT THIS FORM, AND FORWARD IT TO:
Sinn Féin, National Finance Committee, first floor, 58 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

Please enter amount accompanying this ticket form €/£stg .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Tel: .....

CREDIT CARD NUMBER:

_____ _____ _____ _____

Expiry Date: Month _____ Year _____

YOUR TICKET NUMBER WILL BE FORWARDED TO YOU

AER LINGUS DIRTY TRICKS

HARASSMENT EXPOSED IN STATE COMPANY

BY
ROBBIE SMYTH

• Aer Lingus chairperson, John Sharman

THIS WEEK last year, Aer Lingus management announced its latest plan to get over 1,300 redundancies at the state-owned airline. A year later a leaked memo has exposed the dirty tricks Aer Lingus management were considering at the time to push the redundancies through.

A Human Resources memo proposed changing worker shift patterns, tapping superintendents to tell them there was no future for them at the airline, reducing overtime, changing the company uniform to yellow jump suits, making pilots do menial tasks and even telling workers they were relocating the head office.

The 12 "push factors" are detailed in the box accompanying the article and yesterday Aer Lingus Chairperson John Sharman told the Oireachtas Transport Committee that the secret memo written in a time of high pressure for the airline's HR department was "never embraced or approved" by senior management. It was a discussion document.

We don't who wrote it or who it was written for, who commissioned it, we don't know the answer to that simple question of why someone felt the need to sit and write a document that had within it proposals that are technically illegal. What was happening in Aer Lingus that someone in the HR department could sit and write proposals that were designed to harass workers?

None of these issues were answered in the transport hearings this week. What is clear is that there was in Aer Lingus at the very least a questionable work culture. Worse still is the fact that the very workers whose efforts and productivity had saved the company were now being undermined in this way.

SIPTU's National Industry Secretary Michael Halpenny told the hearing that the "push factors" had been acted upon. He told the committee the old adage that 'if it looks, talks and acts like a duck, then it is one".

Sinn Féin's transport spokesperson Seán Crowe told *An Phoblacht* that the leaked memo "shone a light on the reality of how industrial relations are practiced in a state company". It was he said "deplorable that Aer Lingus workers who had done so much to turn the company around were being treated in this way".

It is clear that there is a culture of secrecy and cover up in Aer Lingus. With a new chief executive set to take over in August Aer Lingus needs an industrial relations makeover. It also raises the issue of how the HR departments in Aer Rianta, An Post, the ESB and other state run companies are operated, are there any more push factor memos doing the rounds there?

AER LINGUS 'PUSH FACTORS'

'Environmental Push Factors' contained in July 2004 Aer Lingus human resources document

1. "Tap on the shoulder" of all relevant superintendents.
2. Management of underperformance – performance improvement plans.
3. Attendance management.
4. Adverse changes in work/shift patterns.
5. Lack of availability of IWSL [in week special leave].
6. Working contracted hours.
7. Change in uniform.
8. Significantly reduced overtime.
9. Assignment to Resource Centre. [pilots were to be transferred to a resource centre to perform menial tasks].
10. No transport.
11. Closure/reduction of bases.
12. Head Office relocation.

Seán Kelly released

ARDOYNE republican Seán Kelly was released from Magahberry Jail on Wednesday night 27 July.

Sinn Féin Assembly member for North Belfast Gerry Kelly and party colleague Councillor Caral Ní Chuilín met Kelly on his release (right).

Gerry Kelly said: "Seán Kelly should never have been arrested in the first place.

"It would be my wish that the Sentence Review Commission resolve this situation as a matter of urgency and allow Seán and his family to get on with their lives."

The latest dramatic development comes as the campaign to have Seán Kelly released for good has gained momentum on the streets.There was a large demonstration at Dundonald House, East Belfast on Friday 22 July.

Campaigners targeted the headquarters of the Northern Ireland Prison Service (below right), after it was revealed it played a role in Kelly's re-arrest.

Addressing the demonstration, which saw Dundonald House closed down, Sinn Féin North Belfast MLA Kathy Stanton said: "At a recent meeting of the Policing Board the PSNI attempted to distance themselves from the internment of Seán Kelly. They indicated the involvement of the Prison Service in this unjustifiable act.

"Was the Prison Service involved?" asked Stanton, "if so why? We are demanding answers to those questions".

The SDLP has come under fire from Free Seán Kelly campaigners after its refusal, on Thursday 21 July, to back a Sinn Féin motion tabled at Derry City Council calling for Kelly's release.

Opposing the motion SDLP Council leader Pat Ramsey said British Direct Ruler Peter Hain, should release Kelly again under license if there is nothing to justify his detention.

The SDLP refusal to support the call for Kelly's immediate release, was described as, "an act of political cowardice", by Sinn Féin's Raymond McCartney.

"Pat Ramsey is more comfortable in calling on the British Secretary of State to prove Seán Kelly did something wrong rather than call for his release".

The previous day, Thursday 21 July, campaigners in the Lagan Valley area on the outskirts of West Belfast organised a day of events. At the Dairy Farm Shopping Centre the local Free Seán Kelly Campaign, in conjunction with Coiste na n-Iarchimí, held an anti-internment exhibition in which they drew the comparison between the internment of hundreds of republicans in the 1970s and the imprisonment without trial of Seán Kelly.

During the two hours that the exhibition was running dozens of shoppers signed a petition calling for Kelly's release while activists handed out leaflets outlining the details of Kelly's false arrest.

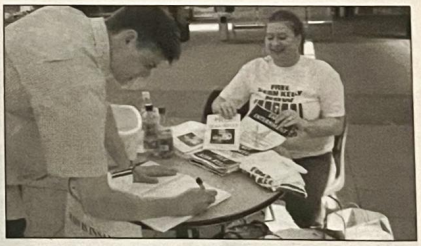
Speaking to *An Phoblacht* Sinn Féin Councillor Veronica Willis said: "In the 1970s men and women from all over the North were being interned. Today, over 30 years on, the same thing is happening to Seán Kelly. Sinn Féin and the Lagan Valley POWs demand his immediate release."

During rush hour, a white-line picket was held on the busy Stewartstown Road.

Sinn Féin's Michael Ferguson urged republicans across Ireland to hold local protests as it, "allows local people to express their anger and disgust at the internment without trial of Seán Kelly".

Later that night a public meeting was held in the Beckett's Entertainment Complex in Twinbrook. Former internees Davy Hall and Angela Nelson addressed the audience and spoke of their experiences of being held without trial and without the chance to examine the accusations that were levelled by RUC Special Branch against detainees. Seán Kelly's partner Geraldine and his mother Ann attended the meeting.

Meanwhile in Derry on Friday 22 July the Belfast man's partner and their three children Shannon, Clíodhna and Seán attended the unveiling of a mural on the Free Derry Wall (left). Derry campaigners launched a Green Ribbon appeal and asked people to wear the ribbon in support of the calls for Kelly's immediate release.



• Shoppers signed a petition calling for Seán Kelly's release

• Former republican POW Gerard Magee from Antrim displaying *An Phoblacht* and supporting the call for Seán Kelly's release

• Seán Kelly's partner Geraldine and their three children Shannon, Clíodhna and Seán at unveiling of mural at back of Free Derry Wall.

DUBLIN

MOUNTMELLICK

Campaign grows across Ireland

ROSSPORT CAMPAIGN

THE PAST WEEK has seen enormous and growing support for the Rossport 5. In a majority of Irish counties, Sinn Féin activists have turned out in great numbers, to picket oil distribution centres, Shell and Statoil petrol stations and to spread awareness with leaflets, petition signing and white line-pickets. Everywhere they have been warmly welcomed and supported.

DAY OF ACTION

The Shell to Sea day of action, on Friday 15 July saw activities in support of the Rossport men in Wexford, Waterford, Clifden, Tuam, Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Galway City, Kilkenny, Athlone, Wicklow, Drogheda, Dundalk, Cork, Mountmellick in County Laois, and Ballaghdereen in Roscommon. In Belfast activists picketed the Shell Distribution Depot. On the Navan Road in Meath, Manorhamilton in Leitrim, in Limerick, and on the Sallins Road in Kildare, in Mayo itself, there was petition signing. A protest in Westport was attended by a large number of people. "

Sinn Féin TD Martin Ferris, congratulated the hundreds of Sinn Féin activists who joined and organised protests across the country. He said they made a significant contribution to the Shell to Sea campaign, in making people across the country aware of the outrageous shenanigans of Shell in collusion with the Fianna Fail/PD Government.

Ferris went on to say: "Ninety-five percent of the people of this country are entirely opposed to the unjust imprisonment of these five small-holders from Mayo. It is outrageous that they are sent to prison for defending their right to live in safety, and their right to ownership of their lands, in face of a multinational corporate giant. The Government and judiciary have done nothing to defend these rights, only to perpetrate a scurrilous give-away of what is ours – the hydrocarbon resources in the Irish seas."

DUBLIN PROTEST

In Dublin last Friday, over 20 Statoil stations were closed down by a broad range of activists, with a huge input from Sinn Féin who led or took part in almost all these simultaneous pickets to mark the day. People from many different parties took part as well as many individuals, independents and groups. Without exception picketers were met with loud support, from passing drivers, and passers by.

WATERFORD

The protests at Statoil were so widespread that Statoil Head Office sent guidelines to its franchise holders, on how to deal with the picketers. One Statoil station manager jumped the gun and arranged tea and biscuits for activists, who were largely drawn from Sinn Féin's new cumann in Kildare, chaired by Christin McAuley.

The manager undertook to call up Statoil, to tell the Company how much business had been lost and request that Statoil take action to disassociate itself from Shell. The action has been taken to Norway where a paper of record has brought the issue to public attention. Sinn Féin MEPs have appealed to the Norwegian Government, in a letter which points out that Statoil is "part of a development (in Mayo) that would not be acceptable in Norway itself on environmental or safety grounds and that Statoil is to benefit from revenue and licensing terms that would not be permitted under Norway's own regulatory system."

MANAGING OUR FUTURE

Earlier in the week a large number of campaigners protested at the McGill Summer School in Glenties, County Donegal, where Minister Dempsey was speaking on *Managing the Future*.

Local Sinn Féin Councillor, Pearse Doherty, called on the Minister to suspend the current call for applications for new frontier licences, pending a review of the legislation and current terms and conditions under which licences are given.

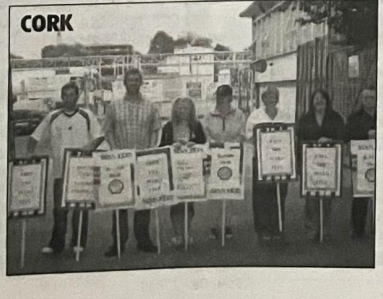
DUBLIN DEMONSTRATION

On Saturday the people of Mayo brought their campaign to Dublin city. Several thousand protestors joined the demonstration through O'Connell Street, led by the families of the Rossport 5. Chaired by Jerry Cowley, Independent TD from Mayo, each of the families sincerely thanked all those who were supporting the Shell to Sea campaign. Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams, Party spokesperson on Agriculture, Martin Ferris TD and Arthur Morgan TD attended.

Representatives from a wide number of interests and groups spoke, including the ICMSA, the ICSA, a representative from the Teachers' Union, ASTI, and even an ex-director of Statoil, the Resources Protection Campaign, a cross-party group which looks to defend national resources, and the SIPTU Offshore Committee.

The long list of supporters is further evidence of the widespread support for the Shell to Sea campaign.

Maura Harrington, spokesperson for Shell to Sea, gave a powerful address outside the GPO. Saying: "What happened here first at the GPO is being continued on today." She spoke of accusations that the Shell to Sea campaign is being hijacked by some political parties, "what concerns us is the absence of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and Labour. Where is Enda, where is Pat today?" She went on: "I'll be dammed if Ray Burke, and now Bertie, are going to continue to deny us what is ours, the gas."


CORK

ROSSPORT 5 RETURNED TO JAIL

THE Five Rossport men, whose imprisonment has brought to the attention of every community in Ireland, the corrupt giveaway of our national resources to the multinational corporations Shell, Marathon and the Norwegian state owned Statoil, were sent back to jail on Monday by the President of the High Court, Mr Justice Finnegan.

The five Mayo men were imprisoned, a month ago, on foot of an injunction, granted to Shell by the High Court, which it now appears was illegally given to Shell.

Shell sought to order those injuncted to desist from obstructing the construction and installation of the pipeline, across their lands. But it appears, and Shell have accepted, that construction and installation of the pipeline was and is illegal and cannot proceed because it does not have the necessary consents from the Minister for Marine and Natural Resources. The Minister has ordered two reports to be prepared, and pending these, has ordered that work including fencing cease on the site.

Furthermore, the Minister has written to Andrew Pyle, CEO of Shell, with an inquiry as to why Shell has acted outside of consents, in construction in the forest at the back of Bellinaboy.

In the court on Monday Justice Finnegan asserted that he did not consider that he had been misled by Shell, and that he would not hear of any case to strike out the injunction, because the five Mayo men in prison remained in contempt of the original injunction.

Barrister John Rodgers, Senior Counsel and ex-Attorney General, acting for two of the defendants, Brid McGarry, who is not jailed, and Brendan Philbin, pointed out that "this brought the law into disrepute."

Rodgers said Shell was in breach of its undertaking and asked the judge "did this not require some explanation to the court?". The Judge replied that he might seek this in his own good time, but at present what was required was one step only - that the prisoners purge their contempt.

Mark Garavan, on behalf of the 5 imprisoned men, and a spokesperson for Shell to Sea Campaign, read out a prepared statement following the court hearing. It said:

"The freedom the Rossport 5 require is the freedom and obligation all citizens have, the freedom to use all peaceful means to protect themselves and their neighbours."

"We are in prison because we intend to protect out lives, our families and our neighbours from potential disaster. We cannot agree to a proposal that proposes to ban us from continuing to protect our lives by opposing the Shell works. In light of recent developments, Shell's word is hardly legal tender."

Mark added following the court proceedings that "this does not involve an apology. It involves giving an undertaking not to protest against Shell's activities on the ground in Mayo, and this is something the men cannot do, given the risk posed to them, their families and neighbours by this high-pressure pipeline."

Imeachtaí

• COMEDY SHOW: *Comhlámh and Le Chéile, Artists in Ireland Against Racism are pleased to invite you to another Stand Up! Against Racism — A hilarious night out!* Featuring: Tommy Tiernan, David O'Doherty, Barry Murphy, Reuben, Maeve Higgins, Karl Spain, Comedy Improv and special guests, with music by the Revolution Crew. 8pm Friday 29 July, Vicar Street, **DUBLIN**

• MEMORIAL LECTURE: West Belfast Economic Forum presents the 13th Annual Frank Cahill Lecture. 7pm Monday 1 August, Conway Mill, **BELFAST**, County Antrim. Theme: *Women in Struggle, Women in Leadership* Maryam Rajavi President Elect, National Council of Resistance of Iran

• PLAY: *Stepping Out of Line*, true story of Patrick Shanahan. 8pm Thursday 11 August, Ardhowen Theatre, **ENNISKILLEN**, County Fermanagh. Tickets are £8 and concession £6. Box Office number for Bookings is 028 66325440

• IRISH NIGHT: Featuring Sons of Erin. 11pm Saturday 6 August, GAA Centre, **AGHYARAN**, County Tyrone

• REPUBLICAN COMMEMORATION: 90th anniversary of O'Donovan Rossa's Burial. Assemble 2.30pm Saturday 13 August, Garden of Remembrance and march to Glasnevin Cemetery, **DUBLIN** for commemorative events. Speaker: Martina Anderson (Derry). Function afterwards in aid of An Cumann Cabhrach. Featuring the renowned Spirit of Freedom. Doors open 6pm, The Long Bar, Bohemian Football Club, Dalymount Park, Phibsboro. Details 087-2877054. Raffle and admission includes food. Táille €10

• FUNDRAISING FUNCTION: Featuring Derek Wartfield. Friday 26 August, Shelling Hotel, **DUBLIN**. Proceeds to new Seán Russell monument in Fairview Park. Tickets from 087-2282033

• SUMMER SCHOOL: 17th Desmond Greaves Summer School A weekend of political thought and discussion from Friday to Sunday, 26-28 August 2005, at the Irish Labour History Society premises, Beggars Bush, Haddington Road., Dublin 4; Friday August 26 at 7.30pm: *The Prospects for the Left in Ireland.* Eugene McCartan, General Secretary, Communist Party of Ireland. Chair: Robert Ballagh; Saturday August 27 at 2.30pm: Desmond Greaves as an historian. Mary Cullen and Brian Hanley will evaluate Desmond Greaves's historical writings and his contribution as an historian. Mary Cullen is an historian and research associate at St Patrick's College Maynooth, and TCD. Dr Brian Hanley is a Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Modern History, NUI, Maynooth, and author of *The IRA 1926-36* and other books. Chair: Kevin McCorry; Sunday August 28 at 11am: *The Politics of the Peace Process.* Owen Bennett will examine the current position of the Northern Peace Process and the views of its supporters and critics, and will consider its relevance for the future of Irish republicanism. Chair: Finian McGrath TD. Sunday August 28 at 2.30pm: A forum on C Desmond Greaves — personal reminiscences by some who knew him. Gerard Curran, who has been a member of the Connolly Association since 1952 and is former Literary Editor of the Irish Democrat, London, which Greaves edited from 1948 to 1988; Helga Mac Liam, Dublin, with whose family Greaves used often stay when visiting Ireland; Bernard Morgan, long-time member of the Connolly Association, Liverpool, Greaves's native city; Seán Redmond, Dublin trade union official and General Secretary of the Connolly Association in the 1960s; Chair: Anthony Coughlan, Desmond Greaves's Literary Executor. Full School €15; Individual sessions €5; Unwaged half-price; Enquiries to Frank Keoghan, School Director, at 25 Shanowen Crescent, Dublin 9; Tel.: 00-353-1-842307

DRAW RESULTS

BLANCHARDSTOWN SF LOTTO

21 July: Winning nos 15,16,20. 5 x €15 consolation prizes: Pauline, Thomas Gleeson; Colm Hazlett; Ken Kavanagh; Martin McLaughlin. Jackpot €160.

STH MON SF MEMBERS WEEKLY DRAW

Winning numbers: 3,15,19,20. No Jackpot winner. 5 x €20 winners: Noel Campbell, Corbane. Kate McGranaghan, Monaghan. Anna Fitzpatrick, Inniskeen. Cliodhna Kindlon, Coolderry. John Kirk, Blackstaff. Next weeks jackpot: €2,600

STH MON SF MEMBERS WEEKLY DRAW

Winning nos: 5,6,7,24. No Jackpot winner. 5 x €20 winners: Peter McDonald, Dunard. May Cunningham, Donaghmoyne. David Percy, Navan. Caoimhe Cooney, Baileboro. Lynn Gallagher, Carrickmacross. Next weeks jackpot: €2,700

JOIN Sinn Féin

SINN FÉIN is dedicated to forcing a British withdrawal from the occupied Six Counties, the reunification of our country and the establishment of a 32-County democratic socialist republic.

If you would like to join Sinn Féin fill in the form and send it to:

Sinn Féin, 44 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

Name .....

.....

Address .....

.....

.....

Tel/Email ..... Age .....

In Dil Chuimhne

July 25th 1988: Vol Brendan **DAVIDSON**, Belfast Brigade, 3rd Battalion; July 27th 1977: Vol Tommy **TOLAN** , Belfast Brigade, 2nd Battalion; July 28th 1972: Vol Séamus **CASSIDY**, Belfast Brigade, 3rd Battalion; July 31st 1972: Vol Séamus **BRADLEY**, Derry Brigade. "Life springs from death and from the graves of dead patriot men and women spring living nations." — PH Pearse. Remembered now and always by their many friends and comrades in the Republican Movement.

DAVIDSON, Brendan (17th Ann). In proud and loving memory of our friend Volunteer Brendan (Big Ruby) Davidson, who was murdered by a pro-British death squad on 25 July 1988. "The fools, the fools they have left us our Fenian dead. Ireland unfree shall never be at peace." — PH Pearse. Always remembered by Séamus and Josie Flynn, Greencastle, County Antrim.

DOHERTY, Kieran (24th Ann). In proud and loving memory of Volunteer Kieran Doherty TD who died on Hunger Strike on 2 August 1981. "Ireland unfree shall never be at peace." - PH Pearse. Always remembered by Séamus Finucane and family.

LYNCH, Kevin (24th Ann). In proud and loving memory of Volunteer Kevin Lynch, who died on Hunger Strike on 2 August 1981. "Our revenge will be the laughter of our children." — Bobby Sands. Always remembered by Séamus Finucane and family.

McDONNELL, Joseph (24th Ann). In proud and loving memory of Volunteer Joe McDonnell, who died on Hunger Strike on 8 July 1981. Not just today but everyday in silence we remember. Always remembered by Séamus Finucane and family.

TOLAN, Tommy (28th Ann). In proud and loving memory of my dear husband Volunteer Tommy (Todler) Tolan, who died on 27 July1977. Quietly today your memory is kept no need for words I'll never forget, Mary Queen of the Gail pray for him. Always remembered by his wife Maureen.

TOLAN, Tommy (28th Ann). In proud and loving memory of my dear brother Volunteer Tommy (Todler) Tolan, who died on 27 July1977. Always remembered by his brother Paddy, Margaret and kids.

TOLAN, Tommy (28th Ann). In proud and loving memory of my dear uncle Volunteer Tommy (Todler) Tolan, who died on 27 July1977. Always remembered by his nephew Tony, Jackie and kids

TOLAN, Tommy (28th Ann). In proud and loving memory of my dear uncle Volunteer Tommy (Todler) Tolan, who died on 27 July1977. Always remembered by his nephew Chucker, Suzanne and kids.

TOLAN, Tommy (28th Ann). In proud and loving memory of my dear uncle Volunteer Tommy (Todler) Tolan, who died on 27 July1977. Always remembered by his nephew Patrick, Kim and kids.

TOLAN, Tommy (28th Ann). In proud and loving memory of my dear uncle Volunteer Tommy (Todler) Tolan, who died on 27 July1977. Always remembered by his niece Liz and John.

TOLAN, Tommy (28th Ann). In loving memory of our brother in law Volunteer Tommy (Todler) Tolan who died 27th July 1977. Mary Queen of the Gael pray for him. Fondly remembered by Danny, Kate, Theresa and McGuinness family circle.

TOLAN, Tommy (28th Ann). In proud and loving memory of Volunteer Tommy Tolan, murdered on 27 July 1977, by so-called Irishmen, namely the Workers' Party. Sadly missed by his brother Hilary, Jean and nephews Robert and Neil. Gone but not forgotten.

Comhbhrón

BOLGER. To Tony Bolger and family on their recent bereavement. From the Charlie McGlade SF Cumann, Drimnagh; From Catherine and Ian McBride.

BYRNE. Deepest sympathy is extended to Hughie and Caroline on the death of Hughie's Brother Denis from Brendan Mansfield Dungarvan.

BYRNE. Deepest sympathy is extended to Hughie and Caroline on the death of Hughie's Brother Denis from Joe McDonnell/Denis Crotty Cumann Dungarvan and O Reagain/McElwee Cumann An Rhinn.

BYRNE. Deepest sympathy is extended to Hughie and Caroline on the death of Hughie's Brother Denis from Waterford Comhairle Ceantair.

BURKE. Sympathy to the family of Paddy Burke, who died recently. Remembered fondly by Séamus and Mary McLaughin in Ardoyne. We pray for the repose of his soul.

CROWE. Deepest sympathy to the Crowe family on their recent bereavement. From the Charlie McGlade SF Cumann, Drimnagh; From Catherine and Ian McBride; From Aisling and Aengus O Snodaigh.

STEWART. Deepest sympathy is extended to the Stewart family on the recent death of their mother Elizabeth, Ashling Park, Dundalk. From the members of Worthington Watters/Gerry Halpenny SF Cumann, Dundalk; From Louth SF Comhairle Ceantair.

Beannachtaí

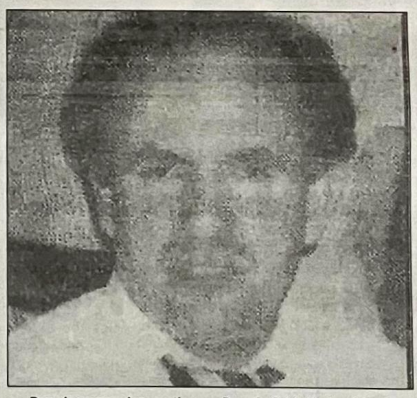
BIRTHDAY GREETINGS and best wishes to Niall Binéad, Portlaoise Jail. From all in the Charlie mcGlade SF Cumann, Drimnagh; From Lightbulb.

THE Republican POWs, Castlerea, would like to thank all those who organised and participated in the recent bike run to Castlerea Prison.

Fógraí bháis

DAN JOE MURPHY – STAUNCH NORTH KERRY REPUBLICAN

THE Republican Movement in North Kerry lost one of its staunchest members earlier this year, when Dan Joe Murphy of Kilmorna, died on 16 March after a short illness.



Dan Joe was born on 9 October 1958 and was a lifelong republican. Like so many others from North Kerry, Dan Joe emigrated in his 20s to seek work in England, but returned home after a short time to help out on the family farm. He was particularly active in his local area, tirelessly raising funds for republican prisoners' dependents. He was also a reliable and consistent worker for Sinn Féin in the Duagh and Kilmorna areas as the party built its electoral base in North Kerry both in local and national elections. Of course, this hard work was rewarded with the election of Martin Ferris as Sinn Féin TD for North Kerry, an event that Dan Joe often referred to as one of the happiest days of his life, since he bore great regard for Martin Ferris, a respect that was amply reciprocated. The breakdown of the electoral returns strongly suggest that Dan Joe contributed greatly to that electoral victory, since the Duagh and Kilmorna areas returned a strong republican mandate.

Dan Joe was also particularly successful in drawing in others in his area to work with the Republican Movement, swelling the ranks of Sinn Féin's election team with electoral helpers, drawn into political activity through the strength of his political convictions as well as his popularity and respect in the area. Dan Joe worked in the forestry for many years, where he was very much at home with nature, the hare, the pheasant, the hen harrier, snipe and lark, were his constant companions, as well as his much loved dog Coillte.

Dan Joe was very active in Duagh GAA Club with whom he played, and he was also a winning selector with recent minor and under-21 teams. He had also recently become manager of the Duagh junior team. Dan followed Kerry teams on many journeys to Croke Park, and also travelled regularly to Fleadhanna Cheoil, as he was a great lover of traditional Irish music. Arising from his active involvement with the Sullivan/Enright Cumann in Listowel Dan Joe attended as a delegate to many Sinn Féin Ard Fheis as well as being a regular participant in the annual Wolfe Tone commemorations in Bodenstown.

Large crowds attended his funeral, an apt testimony to his popularity and high esteem in his local community. His coffin was draped with the Tricolour. At the funeral mass in Duagh, three things symbolic of the three pillars central to Dan Joes life were brought to the altar, a traditional Irish musical instrument, a football, and a framed photograph of the H-Block Martyrs.

His loss to the Republican Movement in North Kerry is inestimable, but his steady, and consistent political work in his locality has ensured that an active band of people in his area is now politically active. Dan Joe Murphy sowed the Republican seed in many a local mind, through activities such as mobilising local people for the republican commemorations held regularly in North Kerry, most notably that to the martyrs of Gortaglanna near his native Duagh.

We think of him as living in the hearts of those he touched, for nothing loved is ever lost. Grieve not for him. Speak not a word of sorrow. Although his eyes saw not his country's glory, the service of his day shall make our tomorrow.

Céad SF 100

Sinn Féin 1905—2005

LET'S CELEBRATE

BY **Caitríona Ruane**
Director, Céad Bliain

MEMORY is a powerful thing. There are certain memories that will stay with me for the rest of my life and they come into my mind when I least expect them. All it takes is something small to trigger them off, but they are powerful. They tap into some deep emotion hidden away at the back of my mind.

Like the time I was part of the march to free the Birmingham Six, running through the streets of Dublin with thousands of people with a candle in my hand chanting "they are innocent".

Or on 19 July in Managua, Nicaragua in 1984 with hundreds of thousands of the poorest people in that country celebrating the work that the Sandinista Government was trying to do to eradicate poverty and injustice. Or in South Africa in a stadium when Nelson Mandela addressed the crowd during and election rally in 1994. I remember spontaneously dancing down Castle Street in Belfast with Cruncher O'Neill at the first St Patrick's Carnival parade in Belfast, when over 90,000 people came out on the streets along with the sunshine. And I was so proud to be part of the Anti-Iraq war march with my husband and children with people from every corner of this island. These are memories which I treasure and when they come to me they come in colour. They are part of what make life great.

If I analyse why these events have remained with me it is because they are in technicolour, it is because I was one of the grains of sand that made up something amazing, something so important that 'the little people' came together and said 'enough is enough'. What also made them different is that there was a creative element to them. There were colourful banners (many homemade), witty posters and slogans (again homemade), the people at the rally wanted their village, or

homeland, or pueblo or shantytown to be there and to be represented.

Republicans have a very important date and a very important rally coming up — it is a rally to commemorate 100 years of Sinn Féin. On Saturday September 24 the Céad Bliain Committee want every man, woman and child who are proud to be an Irish republican to come to Dublin, by bus, by car, by train, by bicycle, hitching, walking if necessary. We want every cumann in Ireland to be part of this. Get making your banner now, and get your townland, village on the historical map. We want every Sinn Féin elected representative in Ireland to be in Dublin that day to lead off this event. We want ex-political prisoners from all over Ireland and the organisations they are working with to join us. We want you to get your thinking caps on and dress up. Dress up as James Connolly, the pikemen and women, Michael Davitt, Countess Markievicz, Bobby Sands, sporting heroes of the last century, writers, whoever you admire or feel has made their mark. It is the day before the All Ireland Final in Croke Park — why not make a weekend of it.

We have a lot to celebrate, we have a lot to commemorate — over the past 100 years we have seen some of the most dynamic movements in Ireland. We have seen the heroic bravery of the men and women of 1916, the strength of the internees throughout the century, the power of the Civil Rights Movement, the suffragettes, the Hunger Strikers, the growth of the Irish Language Movement.

We have also seen Sinn Féin go from strength to strength and it is now the fastest growing and only All-Ireland party in the country and we are only just beginning — you ain't seen nothing yet! What makes it an exciting movement is that it is made up of people from all walks of life, urban and rural, young and old, people who want to see change on this island.

On September 24 we have an opportunity to stand together proud and strong, celebrating our past and looking forward with confidence to our future. We are living in historic times, our goals have not changed, we are building, block by block, an Ireland of equals, an Independent United Ireland.

Come and join us and make this a great event, a carnival atmosphere, get making your banners and posters and costumes. Start practising your street performing skills and bígí linn i mBaile Átha Cliath.

MEET AT 2pm ON SEPTEMBER 24
AT ROTUNDA, FINISHING ON STAGE WITH CEOL AGUS CRAIC

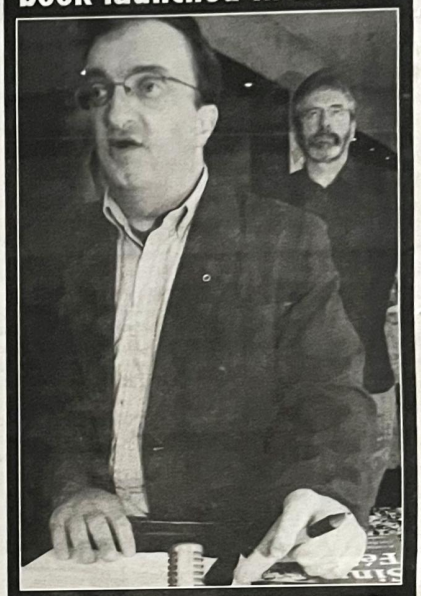
Céad SF 100
Sinn Féin 1905—2005

Be able to say to your grandchildren that you were part of the rally to celebrate 100 years of Sinn Féin and what a great day it was.

We are currently compiling a list of Sinn Féin cumainn and groups that are taking part.

Contact Carol Jackson the National Administrator of the Céad Bliain Committee on 07871647756 or e-mail Carol on carol_jackson_144@hotmail.co.uk

Major new Sinn Féin book launched in Dublin



• Dublin republican Micheál Mac Donncha and Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams

A MAJOR new book on 100 years of Sinn Féin was launched in Dublin on Monday 25 July. Around 100 people attended the launch in the Irish Film Institute which was addressed by the book's editor, Dublin republican Micheál Mac Donncha and Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams.

Sinn Féin: A Century of Struggle is the showcase production of the Sinn Féin Céad Bliain commemorations. The book tells the Sinn Féin story in the words of Irish republicans themselves.

The book covers the ten decades of Sinn Féin's existence from its foundation in 1905 and is lavishly illustrated with period photographs and contains primary documents such as the the *Foundation Charter, 1916 Proclamation, The Democratic Programme of 1919*, other important documents and historical speeches by republicans throughout history.

While not a strictly narrative historical account of Sinn Féin or of republicanism, the book is without doubt an extremely valuable collection of first-hand primary sources on the history of Sinn Féin.

Micheál Mac Donncha told those in attendance that with this book "History has been reclaimed from the academics as it never solely belonged to them in the first place." He pointed out "the revisionists haven't gone away you know", and referred to the erecting of an offensive monument in West Cork to Francis Drake, a butcher of Irish people, slave-trader and pirate. It was a disgrrace that this man was now officially remembered like he was a "happy member of the Cork Yacht Club sipping gin in his blazer with Eoghan Harris".

Gerry Adams said it was important that republicans tell history from their own perpective and that this book is an important step in doing that. On the same issue both Mac Donncha and Adams stressed the key role of republican newspapers in the struggle and the continuing importance of *An Phoblacht*. Adams urged people to read, buy and sell *An Phoblacht*, the only republican paper to have been published every week without fail for the past three deacades.

Following the speeches, both men signed copies of the book.

• *Sinn Féin, A Century of Struggle* is available book is available at the Sinn Féin bookshop in 44 Parnell Square and sells for 30/£20.

THIS BOOK IS AVAILABLE FROM
www.sinnfeinbookshop.com
44 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Tel: (01) 8726100
SHOP OPENING HOURS: 10.30 - 5.30 Monday to Saturday

H-Block memories

ARTHUR MORGAN, Sinn Féin TD for Louth and party spokesperson on enterprise and employment, recently made a return visit to the H-Blocks of Long Kesh. Morgan was a political prisoner in the H-Blocks from 1977 to 1984, following his arrest by the British Army aboard a boat in Carlingford Lough.

This week Arthur Morgan writes of the powerful memories generated by his return to Long Kesh.

IT WAS at a homelessness conference in Brussels that it all began. Fra McCann and myself, housing spokespersons for Sinn Féin on both sides of the border, were in attendance at the request of Mary Lou McDonald MEP. Now, place any two republican ex-POWs together and inevitably the conversation will include a section on time in jail. And so it came to pass. The Blocks, in our case. "I can arrange visits," said Fra. "Excellent" says I. "When can we visit?"

It took Fra several weeks, but fair play to him, he was as good as his word, and we duly arrived at the infamous H-Blocks on the morning of Wednesday 20 July. Fra was even on time which, in itself, was something of historical note.

Our team included Caoilfhionn Ní Dhonnabháin, my boss in Leinster House, Wendy Lyon and Shannonbrooke Murphy of the Leinster House team, Olive Sharkey who is my boss in Louth, and Marion, my wife and overall boss.

Never let it be said that I don't know my place. John Blackmore, an ex-POW was also in attendance.

We arrived at the H-Blocks and gathered in the car park. Several minutes later our guide arrived. He was quite unusual for a civil servant. For a start, he was quite pleasant and secondly, he had a first name that suggested he might follow Gaelic football.

We piled in to the ubiquitous ford van, similar to those which ferried thousands of visitors to meet their imprisoned loved ones in the H-Blocks over many years through the height of resistance to Britain's occupation of Ireland.

First stop was the administration Block. Quite bleak at first sight, it is probably the only two-storey building on the 100-plus acre site at Long Kesh. Boy, when I think of how many of us would have given our right arm to get into this nerve-centre of control in its hey-day.

Anyway, here it was, lying open to the elements and bereft of the technological wizardry which helped the Brits keep some semblance of containment in the prisoner-of-war camp. Empty shelves, which once housed dozens of TV monitors, scrutinising virtually the entire camp, looked miserable.

In we went and, after some mild introduction, we moved to where we all wanted to see — the wards where the Hunger Strikers were housed, many of them for their final days.

Ward Eight is where Bobby Sands died. We shuffled in, very respectfully and in silence, to stand by the bare bed in the centre of the otherwise empty room. The silence lasted for several moments, before someone asked if this was the actual bed once occupied by Bobby. Unlikely. However, we reflected on those painful, agonising moments that each of the Hunger Strikers, their families and comrades endured during those most historic days.

After some time, we moved quietly down the hospital wing, looking into each of those small rooms and wondering how on earth they endured it. This was lump-in-the-throat time, big time. The empty medication trolley lying in the centre of the wing looked ghostly, and the peeling paint on the walls made it look like this was part of the dirty protest area, which of course it was not. Simply a case of time catching up.

Thoughts of the sadness and tragedy of those times, mixed with the progress and potential of these times. Mind racing. God it would take a book to hold all these thoughts.

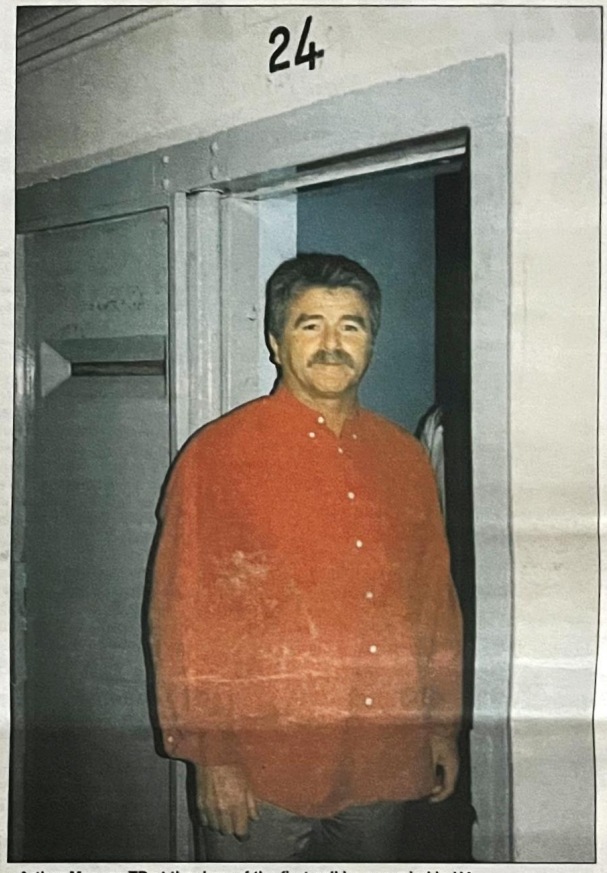
After nearly half an hour, we slowly move on to our next stop, H-Block 4.

The visit should really call to H-Block 6 but, because of the killing of Billy Wright there, the scene remains sealed off. So on to H-4.

This was most interesting for me, because here is where we — the 'Provo Navy', were deposited after being sentenced by a Diplock court in November 1978.

Memories came flooding back. Now I was walking through the open gate in the company of friends. In '78 we were driven through in a blacked-out prison van and being greeted by the sound of banging chamber pots on cell doors by the blanketmen.

Most memorable, for me, was the repugnant smell as soon as we entered the Block on that November night. Disinfecting agents mixed with the obvious odour of the dirty protest. And then there was the welcoming party — a gang of screws, handpicked to ensure we understood how things would be. After some roughing-up, we were sent to A-Wing, where Peter Dullaghan from Dundalk and myself were shoved in to cell 24 and the door slammed heavily behind us.



• Arthur Morgan TD at the door of the first cell he occupied in H4

On this occasion, we wandered freely down the wing and inspected cell 24 — just for old times sake. The cell was even smaller than I remembered. A bit like going back to your first school and marvelling at the tiny seats, perhaps.

I recounted one of the more interesting experiences at this cell — the forced washing in late December '78. Prisoners were dragged from their cells, beaten, propped in a chair and hair and beards shaved, 'scraped off' might be more accurate, before being washed with scrubbing brushes and held under water in a bath.

Some blanketmen were really brutalised in this process. I recall Tom McElwee and Kieran Doherty were hospitalised after they lashed out at screws who were beating the younger prisoners particularly badly. Everyone from that time has a story to tell.

Anyway, these wings were now quiet and deserted. Fra McCann regaled the visitors with numerous stories, ranging from his days on the *Maidstone* prison ship, to the internment camp and the burning of the Kesh. I knew Fra was a fair big age — he has certainly been about a very long time. We finished our visit with a walk around some of the infamous 'cages', where both internees and POWs were held at a time when Britain accepted our POW status.

The Hospital Block, together with H-6 and one of the cages is to be retained. Rightly so. This jail resonates with the same sense of history as Kilmainham in Dublin, where the leaders of the 1916 Rebellion were imprisoned and executed. It is also yet another monument to the failure of successive British, and Dublin, Governments to resolve Ireland's independence issue, once and for all.

Hopefully, our generation will ensure that there are no more Long Kesh camps.

• NEWS • HISTORY
• FEATURES • WORLD VIEW
• SPORT • HUMOUR
• REVIEWS • IRISH LANGUAGE

Subscribe to AN PHOBLACHT today

ap 28/07/2005

AN PHOBLACHT
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Ireland	€65
England, Scotland, Wales	Stg£55
Europe Surface	€100/Stg£70
Europe Airmail	€160/Stg£110
USA	US$150
Canada	Can$180
Australia	Aus$190
Elsewhere	Stg£110/US$150

To: An Phoblacht/Republican News, 58 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

I enclose cheque, postal order, etc for €/£: .....

1 year __ 6 mths __ (length of subscription)

Please debit my credit card for €/£: .....

1 year __ 6 mths __ (length of subscription)

Card No: __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __

Exp. Date: Month ..... Year .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

Telephone/E-mail: .....

Published by AN PHOBLACHT/REPUBLICAN NEWS, 58 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Tel: 8733611/8733839, Fax 8733074: and 535 Falls Road Belfast BT11 9AA Phone 600279; Fax 600207 Printed by AP/RN Print