

BORDERLINE

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WATER RATES MEETING

The campaign against water rates is to be stepped up on Tuesday April 19th at a public meeting in Clones being organised by the Concerned Residents Against Service Charges (CRASC). Amongst the invited speakers at the meeting will be Matt Larkin, General Secretary of the National Association for Tenants Organisations (NATO), which has been to the forefront of the battle against the controversial charges for local services.

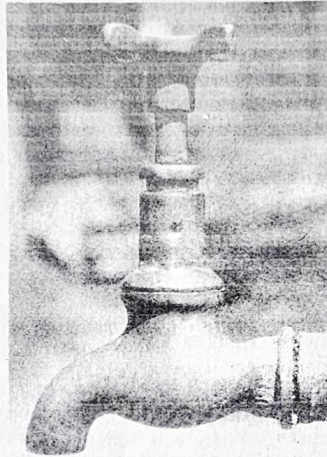
Four months ago, more than 100 local people marched on the estimates meeting of Clones Urban District Council to demand an end to water rates. This was just one indication of the depth of local feeling on the issue. Yet, with a contemptuous disregard for the wishes of the electorate, a majority of councillors backed the reintroduction of the rates for 1988.

In calling a public meeting on April 19th, the committee of the CRASC say that they intend to build a campaign through which people can pressurise their elected councillors to vote against water rates in future. A spokesperson for the committee said:

'The power to do away with these charges is in the hands of the members of the UDC. We must leave them in no doubt what the people of Clones think on this issue.'

MOTION

Meanwhile Monaghan County Councillor, Pat Treanor, has



tabled a motion proposing that a special committee be established to examine alternative methods of local government funding, and that this committee accept proposals and suggestions on the issue from community, trade union and business groups in the county.

WE SAY.....

The events of recent months, from the cover-up of the Stalker report, to the rejection of the Birmingham Six appeal and the summary execution of three Irish people in Gibraltar, have underlined the fact that the British have no concept of justice where Ireland is concerned.

Yet, at this moment a Fermanagh man is in Portlaoise jail facing extradition to the British system of justice. That man is Owen Carron, internationally known as a former MP for Fermanagh/South Tyrone and as election agent for the late Bobby Sands.

It is a national scandal that Owen Carron should have been arrested in the 26 Counties for a clearly political offence which the British have charged him with. All of us should do our utmost to ensure that neither he nor anyone else is extradited.

It has always been the policy of the Thatcher government to attack the poor, the underprivileged and the defenceless. The changes which are being introduced in the Social Security System on April 11th, are a further example of Tory ruthlessness. Again it is the most vulnerable who will suffer - pensioners, the sick etc. In Fermanagh, where over a quarter of the population is dependent on supplementary benefit, the impact of the new measures will be particularly severe. It is vital, therefore, that people secure their full entitlement to benefit now, before it is too late, and that those with additional needs claim them before the April 11th deadline.

Meanwhile, the policy of cutbacks in the South has turned the roads of County Monaghan into obstacle courses for motorists. Cars, vans and lorries are being destroyed by the potholes which are to be found on every road. The junction of the road between Smithboro' and Scotstown (just outside Smithboro') shows just how bad the problem has become. Yet, it appears that council workers aren't being allowed to fix the roads properly and that where potholes are being filled, they are only allowed to deal with one hole in five. So much for the crusade against this scourge which was promised at the Fianna Fail Ard Fheis.

EASTER COMMEMORATION PARADES

FERMANAGH : Assemble Roslea at 2.30 pm

Speaker : Danny Morrison

MONAGHAN : Assemble at O'Hanlon memorial,

Monaghan at 3 pm. Speaker : John Davey

CLONES : Assemble at Roslea Road car park

at 12.30 pm.

For details of local commemorations in your area, contact any seller of AP/RN.

CLAIM BENEFITS NOW!

People in Fermanagh have less than a fortnight to claim Supplementary Benefit or additional social welfare payments, before new measures being introduced by the British government are enforced from April 11th.

Widespread opposition to the proposed changes was voiced at the March meeting of Fermanagh District Council where a motion tabled by Sinn Fein Councillor Hugh O'Neill condemned 'as totally inadequate' the level of funding to the county for the forthcoming year. Councillor O'Neill told the meeting that the allocation of £463,000 is only 54% of the money allocated for single payments in 1986.

Amongst those who will suffer as a result of the new British government measures are pensioners who rely on means-tested benefits. Under the new system they stand to lose up to £5 per week. Those in receipt of child benefit will also lose out, because there is no provision for any increase in such payments. Announcing this to MP's at Westminster, Secretary of State for Social Services, John Moore, said that an increase in child benefit 'would not be the best use of resources at the moment.'

But the change that will have by far the greatest impact is the abolition of the Single Payments System which has been of major help to people on supplementary benefit who need essential items such as a cooker, furniture and certain items of clothing. This system is being replaced by a

Social Fund from which an allocation is given to each local authority. A total of £463,000 has been allocated to Fermanagh, £200,000 of which will be given to claimants in the form of recoverable loans, and the remaining £263,000 by way of community care grants.

SOCIAL FUND

Those who wish to take out a loan from the Social Fund will have to make their application in writing to their local Social Security Office. While a cooker or a bed are considered essential items for the purpose of securing a loan, other house furnishings are not. But the major drawback with such loans is in the method of repayment by way of deductions from their Supplementary Benefit. After April, a married couple over 18 will get £51.45. If they get a loan under the Social Fund they will have to make repayments of between 25% and 30% from their benefit every week if they are to clear their loan which must be repaid within 78 weeks. This means that they will be left with between £36 and £38.60 for day-to-day living while they are repaying the loan.

The Community Care element of the fund is extremely restrictive and basically allows help in only four circumstances :

- getting people out of institutional care
- preventing people entering institutional care
- travelling expenses in particular circumstances (e.g. family crisis)
- easing exceptional pressures on a family

PRESSURES

When they refer to 'exceptional' pressures, the Department of Social Security means what it says and there is no guarantee of help for families in stressful situations. In any event, the decision on whether or not a grant will be made lies in the hands of an official from the Social Security Department. There is no right of appeal to an independent body.

Sinn Fein has strongly criticised the discretionary nature of the new system and has pointed out that if a Social Fund officer, attached to a local office decides that a person cannot meet the repayments due on a loan, then help will be refused, irrespective of need.

One in three people entitled to Supplementary Benefit are not claiming it while three out of every four people receiving benefit are not getting their full entitlement. Urging people to make claims before the April 11th deadline, and to take up any of the single payments they may be entitled to, Sinn Fein has said that anyone in difficulties should contact their local councillor for advice.

RESIDENTS DEMAND HEATING

The residents of Donagh housing estate have formed an association to pressurise the Housing Executive to install a heating system in their homes, similar to that which is currently being put into council-owned bungalows and

old people's dwellings in the village. Donagh estate was built in the early 1970s as a direct result of the pressure exerted by the civil rights campaign. It has 48 dwellings each with an open fireplace in the sittingroom, but with no heating in any other rooms. After years of lobbying by the residents themselves and by elected representatives, including Councillor Hugh O'Neill of Sinn Fein, the Housing Executive agreed to provide a heating system in the ten single-storey dwellings and to extend this at a later date to the remaining 38 two-storey houses 'when funds became available.' Work, due to begin in May 1987, didn't commence until January last when it began in tandem with similar schemes in housing estates in

Roslea, Newtownbutler and Brookeborough.

Now residents are demanding that the scheme be extended to cover two-storey houses and they have rejected the argument that there is any 'lack of finance'. According to Hugh O'Neill, last month's announcement that £50 million is to be slashed off the Housing Executive budget was made 'in almost the same breath that it was announced the RUC would be getting an increased budget of a similar sum'. He added:

'This is a vivid illustration of the British attitude to the Irish. It shows the direct relationship between their willingness to address our social needs and their desire to keep us under the jackboot of military repression.'

RELEASE THE PRISONERS

A call for the release of local prisoners sentenced to life in Portlaoise Jail won the unanimous support of councillors present when the matter was raised at the February meeting of Clones UDC.

The discussion on the lifers' issue arose in response to the British decision to release Ian Thain, a soldier sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of a young nationalist, but who was released after just two years.

In the light of the Thain decision, councillors agreed that compassion should now be shown to the prisoners from the Clones area who were all young men when sentenced to life imprisonment 14 years ago for the killing of Senator Billy Fox. George McDermott, Jim (Junior) McPhillips and Sean McGettigan are in Portlaoise; Sean Kinsella is in Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight, England, while his brother Michael has been in Dunderum Psychiatric Hospital since his mental health broke down more than two years ago.

Meanwhile, in the Six Counties a 'Campaign for Lifers' was launched this month to highlight the plight of hundreds of prisoners who are serving indeterminate sentences (no release dates) in the North's jails. The principle aim of the campaign is to challenge the current review system for Lifers. The Review Boards have gained notoriety for their refusal to recommend any prisoners for release.

DEALS DONE ON UDC CO-OPTION

FIANNA FAIL GAINS VACANT COUNCIL SEAT

There were sharp exchanges at the monthly meeting of Clones Urban District Council on February 29th when it emerged that members of both Fianna Fail and Fine Gael had reneged on earlier commitments to back an independent candidate to fill the seat left vacant a month earlier with the resignation of Councillor Padraig Duffy.

A three-way contest ended when Fianna Fail's John Flanagan took the seat with the support of his three party colleagues on the council and James Mealiff (Ind). The two Fine Gael councillors gave their backing to Jimmy McAviney, who is closely associated with the Fine Gael party. Laurence Sherry, acknowledged by all sides as the only genuine independent seeking co-option, could only get the support of the two Sinn Fein councillors. Councillor Peter Mulligan of Fine Gael confessed to the meeting that it was he who had originally suggested Laurence Sherry for the seat, but added that he had been 'instructed by Dublin' to back Jimmy McAviney instead. And there was disbelief from all sides when Councillor Michael Gunn of Fianna Fail tried to deny that, at the previous meeting of the UDC, he had stated that an independent should fill the seat vacated by Councillor Duffy, himself an independent.

In the end, and despite a plea from Sinn Fein's Peter MacAleer for the other candidates to withdraw in favour of Laurence Sherry, the seat went to Fainna Fail, leaving them in a strong position with four of the nine council seats.

After the meeting, Sinn Fein councillor Fintan MacPhillips said he had been left with the 'definite impression that deals had been done' to secure the seat for Fianna Fail. He added:

'On the one hand we had Jim Mealiff backing Fianna Fail for no apparent reason and, on the other, we had Fine Gael backing a candidate who they knew had no possibility of winning. The likelihood that deals were done before the meeting cannot be ruled out. The people of Clones have a right to know what those deals involve since it is they who are the real losers when underhand dealing begins on the UDC.'



Peter MacAleer

**FOR THE RECORD
FOR THE RECORD
FOR THE RECORD
FOR THE RECORD
FOR THE RECORD**

GARDAI IN SKEA

Eyebrows were raised in surprise at a sinister visit to Lisnaskea of senior garda detective Colm Browne and one of his colleagues. Both men, dressed in casual clothes, arrived in the town on a recent Mart day and went on a pub crawl. It is thought that they weren't so interested in the drink as in the conversations of those around them. It just shows that you can't be too careful these days. Whether at a football match, in a pub or at a cock-fight, loose talk is always dangerous. And speaking of cock-fights, I am reliably informed that one of our garda visitors to Lisnaskea is a well-known enthusiast of that particular pursuit. So be wary.

SLIPPY FINGERS

Two days after Aiden McAnespie was gunned down by a British soldier at Aghnacloy checkpoint, motorists driving between Lisnaskea and Derrylin had a narrow escape when a member of an RUC patrol manning a vehicle checkpoint discharged several shots. This incident underlines the danger posed to the general public by professional gunmen who appear to think that the safety catch on their weapon is only an ornament.

SICK GRAFITTI

Following the example of their superiors who openly gloated over the deaths of the three young Irish people gunned down in Gibraltar, it was hardly surprising that British forces based in Ireland should adopt a similarly callous attitude towards those tragic deaths. At Kilturk checkpoint on the Clones/Newtown butler road, soldiers used stones on a background of sand to write:

SAS 3 IRA 0

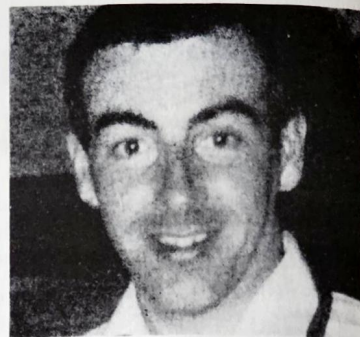
Shoot to Kill

Have a nice day

A black glove with three fingers pointing upwards was carefully placed alongside this graffiti, which was seen by hundreds of people who passed through this checkpoint, including many Monaghan supporters on their way to a football match in Omagh.

ARRESTED IN LONDON

Hugo Reavey, a native of Clones, was arrested by police in London on March 3rd. He hadn't committed any offence nor had he ever been in trouble with the law before. Yet for the next six days he was to personally experience the nightmare that is the Prevention of Terrorism Act. His is an experience that has been shared by tens of thousands of Irish people for more than 13 years. The victims of this racist law are not only those directly targetted like Hugo, but the families and friends who suffer the shock and are left wondering if they will ever see their loved ones again. In this exclusive interview, Hugo Reavey, outlines what happened to him in the hope that it will help to prepare others who may be lifted under the PTA in the future.



When and why did you go to London?

I went a year ago, in March '87, because I was tired of being unemployed and I wanted to further my education. Initially I worked on the building sites, like most Irish people, and then I got a job with the Department of Health and Social Security as a clerical officer. I went to night classes twice a week to study for my A-levels. With A-levels it would have been possible to get a grant to go to University College London or to the London School of Economics.

What were the circumstances of your arrest?

I was walking to work at about twenty past nine, sauntering along with a friend. The next thing I was surrounded by plain-clothes policemen. There were six or seven in front of me and I don't know how many behind. I was searched and told I was being arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. In the confusion my friend had just walked off. To this day I don't know whether they arrested him or questioned him later.

How did you react to your arrest?

Well, I must have been fairly calm because I asked the arresting policeman to show identification, which he did. I was then thrown into a car and handcuffed. It was a strange feeling since I had never been arrested before and I knew I had done nothing wrong.

Did you know where you were being taken?

I knew we were heading for Paddington because I saw a signpost three quarters of a mile away. When we got there a ramp went down, steel gates opened and we drove into the actual perimeter of Paddington Green Station. We then drove on into a garage and another steel door closed behind us. I was let out of the car then but they didn't uncuff me until they had me into the actual station. Everything seemed to be designed to make an arrested person, such as myself, feel vulnerable and isolated.

What happened in the station?

Since I wasn't aware of my rights, I asked for the custody sergeant. He came down and told me I had very few rights, so I asked to see a copy of the PTA. He showed me sections of it but would not let me read it by myself. He said I wasn't entitled to do so. I was asked my name and address, which I answered. After that I decided not to answer any more questions.

Were you becoming more afraid?

Yes, they asked to take my fingerprints and then they took swabs off my hands. At that stage I began to worry and the Birmingham Six started to come into my mind. It was a Special Branchman who was taking the swabs and I thought that maybe it should be a trained technician with some experience. They started to take photographs after that. Then they took all my clothes off me and gave me what seemed like a paper boiler suit. I asked to see a solicitor and for a phonecall but they told me I was being held incommunicado for 48 hours and that I wasn't entitled to see anybody. Needless to say, I wasn't aware if they were telling me the truth and so, during that first 48 hours, I consistently asked to see a solicitor. They were intent on giving me as few rights as possible and making me aware of how few rights I had.

You were put into a cell then. How did things develop from there?

I was just lying on a bed, looking at tiles and wondering what was going on outside. Every time a door slammed I thought, are they coming for me this time? I knew nothing about what was going on and this led to a feeling of total isolation.

Do you believe that 'isolation' was being used as the interrogation weapon?

Yes, because even when my solicitor was allowed in and I got access to newspapers, these were censored. Until I got back to Ireland I didn't know who else was arrested. This was part of a definite policy to keep me unaware of what was going on, to keep me feeling alone and isolated. When you feel like that all sorts of scenarios go around in your mind, such as being framed or being set up as an informer. Yet all along, and even with these things playing in my mind, I knew I hadn't done anything.

What were the actual interrogation sessions like?

When the solicitor was eventually allowed in, everything was above board and according to the rules. But what they would do would be to come along into my cell at night and talk about deals. It was impossible to sleep for any length of time because they kept coming to the cell. Again they were trying to wear me down psychologically, trying to make me feel scared. And I was scared. At one stage, one of them said:

'What's wrong, are you afraid we're going to beat you up?'

I replied:

'Yes, I am!'

And he said:

'We don't have to beat people up here anymore. There's no blood splattered against the walls here. We have people working at other levels.'

By 'other levels' I took him to mean MI5. Again, I was left to think of the sort of things MI5 are capable of doing. They appear to be outside the law and this heightened my fear of being framed.

What line did your questioning take?

They would ask me simple and apparently innocent questions, about a map I had of Central London, travel tickets which gave me access to buses and tubes, whether I had studied electronics as part of my studies as an Engineering student in Trinity College Dublin, if my getting a job on a building site was an attempt to keep a low profile. At the beginning I had decided to remain silent and, when these questions were being asked, I was glad I had done so. If the answers to such questions were added together and put before an English jury there wouldn't be much chance of a fair trial. After all, an Irish person, working in London, arrested under the PTA and facing charges is hardly likely to get sympathy or justice. In fact I was too scared to answer questions in case they'd string innocuous things together and put a case against me. They also asked me about my friends and I was terrified that they'd try to frame them as well. If they can do it in the case of the Birmingham six they can do it again.

What other pressure did you come under?

They kept talking about 'deals'. At one stage, the night before I was informed of my exclusion order, a branchman burst into my cell and said:

'Hugo, there's a deal being made. Do you want in on it?'

I replied:

'I'm innocent, I don't have to make any deals.'

And he said:

'Listen Hugo, I know you came over here to get an education but it's out of my hands. Listen, your man's being taken away and I don't know what they're going to do with him. They'll make up things that haven't happened. They'll make up things about you, all to give more bodies, to get more time off their sentence. I know you've done nothing, but this is going to happen. Do you want to make a deal?'

Of course the only thing I had to make a deal with was an act of imagination, that I make up something that would implicate somebody else. Again, it's the whole psychological thing. Maybe other people would have made up something but I just kept it in my mind that I had done nothing and that if I kept quiet, I'd get out in the end.

How did you react to news of your exclusion order?

Initially I was relieved to know I was getting out, but since I've arrived back I have begun to feel really bitter. I'm left with no home, no job, no prospect of an education because I can't afford it, and not even having the option to emigrate because an exclusion order is hardly a good reference. Yet I did nothing, wasn't questioned at any stage about any specific offence, and was given no explanation why I was excluded.

Has it been difficult to recover from your ordeal?

The day after my release I went walking through Dublin and I had this feeling of paranoia all the time. I'd go into shops where people would be standing behind me and I'd get so claustrophobic that I'd have to leave. I felt people were breathing down my neck and that they were looking at me in the street. One person bumped into me and my legs just went. My immediate thoughts were, 'Oh, not again! Surely I'm not going to be arrested again.' It will take a while to get over the whole experience. I've no doubt about that.

And finally, what are your thoughts on the role played by the authorities in the 26 counties?

When I got back home I heard that the government had 'expressed concern'. After the experience I went through I felt that an expression of concern wasn't strong enough. I felt that more pressure could have been brought to bear on the British government to secure my release. After all I was an Irish citizen in a foreign country. Apart from the government an Irish Embassy Official was allowed to visit me after 48 hours. What the official was doing was conveying information from my family to myself and returning messages. Later on, I found that those supposedly private messages somehow got to the Special Branch and that they were using those messages against me in interrogation. And then there were the gardai in Ireland. While the government was expressing concern, the garda Special Branch were visiting and questioning friends of mine and obviously were passing on whatever information they could to their British counterparts.

FARMING - WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS



Drainage problems, coupled with the overwintering of livestock on land, have caused severe damage to farms in the region.

The small farmers of this region have received very few real benefits since joining the EEC, despite the promise of the early years. Today, farmers who work an average of 70 hours a week have to survive on the lowest incomes in Europe. Indeed during the very bad years of 1985/86, incomes averaged a mere £3,900 per farm.

Although there is a need to diversify, farmers will continue to rely on the traditional grass-based enterprises for the immediate future. Dairying, suckling drystock and increasingly sheep, have been the main source of income on small farms. But these areas have been weakened by increased competition from abroad while the pig-breeding sector which was once a good source of income to the small farmer, has been decimated over the past ten years.

For historic reasons small farmers have inherited the poorer land in this region. The soil is mainly of a heavy clay type, difficult to drain or till for crops. This limits its use to grass production. Although grants were introduced to help farmers improve their holdings, most small farms were, for many years, considered unviable and, therefore, ineligible for grant aid from EEC funds.

Inadequate or non-existent drainage coupled with the over-wintering of livestock on land, because of the lack of wintering facilities, has caused severe damage to the land. It means a 50% reduction in grass production the following season, a poor return on fertilizer, low stocking rates, low milk yields and a shorter grass year. And, in wet years undrained land is also incapable of carrying silage making machinery.

When grant aid did eventually become available to small farmers, the payments were too slow and uncertain for farmers to make full use of them. Nor were the grants maintained long enough, therefore forcing farmers to spend large sums of money over a short period.

QUOTAS

Quotas were introduced in 1984, creating a state of uncertainty and confusion in the milk industry. Many small farmers feel they are being forced out and the figures support what they say. The numbers of those involved in farming have dropped by 50% since EEC entry in 1974. Of those who remain there are many who face large bills for over-production of milk. Present quotas are totally inadequate to provide a living on small family farms and it is clear that those with less than 200,000 litres of milk per year should not be penalised for overproduction. Smaller suckling and drystock units are at a great disadvantage compared to larger units because of the need to sell young cattle each year at low weights to create cash flow. Headage payments need to be raised to help the beef-breeding herd numbers on these farms and there is also a need for the introduction of grants to small farmers for more cattle-housing, silage making facilities and other development projects, including land drainage.

In the long term it is essential that low-interest loans should be made available from the EEC to finance development operations over a longer period. Only in this way will we be able to secure the future viability of our small family farms.

THE ROSLEA MARTYRS

As this year's Easter commemoration for County Fermanagh is being held in Roslea, Borderline looks at the story of the Roslea Martyrs whose memories are commemorated along with all of the republican dead of the county from the United Irishman to the late IRA Volunteer, Seamus McElwain, whose second anniversary is on April 26th.

The United Irishman were organised in the Roslea area and in the adjoining district of County Monaghan by Captain Thompson, a Protestant from the townland of Derrylea, Scotstown, who had joined the republican society while living in Belfast for a time. Under his direction pikes were made and raids for arms organised. Thompson had an ex-soldier, David Kelly, to train recruits at their training centre in Derryard, outside Roslea.

In the Winter of 1796 and the Spring of 1797, many arms raids were carried out in the district and the surrounding areas. It was as a result of one of these raids that three Roslea United Irishmen were hanged in front of Enniskillen jail in October 1797. They were Patrick Smyth (26) from Mullaghbrady, Brian MacMahon (27) from Drumahave and John Connolly (20) from Pottiaigh.

Crowds of people journeyed from Roslea to at-

tend the trial and executions of the three men. When the bodies were cut down they were received by the Roslea people who formed a procession to carry their coffins along the long, narrow and hilly road across Carnmore to Roslea. As the procession passed along this road crowds of bystanders joined it, and before it reached Carnmore the cortege was a mile in length. It is said that the night was so calm that not one of the candles in the procession was blown out. The sight presented to those who kept a vigil on distant hills as the funeral wended its way over the mountains and down the valleys leading to Roslea, was a most impressive one, and local tradition retains a vivid recollection of it.

Also buried in Roslea is a United Irishman called Traynor, a tailor by trade who came from Cornoon which is now part of Bruscaragh townland. He was killed while carrying out an arms raid on

a house in Gortindarragh which was used as a barracks by the Yeomanry.

The graves of Traynor, MacMahon and Connolly are located together to the left of the entrance to the cemetery. Smith is buried in a family plot within the same area. Another grave in the same locality is that of the McGinn family of Stonebridge, the maternal grandparents of the 1916 leader, James Connolly. Mary McGinn was Connolly's mother.

Down the years from 1798, regular commemorations have been made to the graves of the Roslea Martyrs. Perhaps the biggest was in 1898 when thousands visited the graves during the centenary of the 1798 Rebellion. That commemoration was organised by the Roslea '98 Club. In October 1949 a monument was erected in the graveyard to the memory of the Martyrs. The following ballad was written as a tribute by the late James MacMahon of Cornacrieve:

THE MARTYRS OF ROSLEA

There's a hallowed spot in Ireland, in the shadow of Slievebeagh.

In the County of Fermanagh, in the churchyard of Roslea,

Where the graves of three United men, may their souls shine bright in Heaven.

Bear witness to the tyrants' wrath in Seventeen-Ninety-Seven.

MacMahon, Smith and Connolly adhered to a noble cause,

To deal a stroke at the foreign yoke and smash the Penal Laws.

But treachery, that cancered weed, gave the Yeomen full detail.

And they were taken from their beds and lodged in the County jail.

The agents of oppression sought, by every ruse and wile,

To extract information from them in dungeons vile.

They promised them their freedom, if their comrades they'd betray,

But they gave their lives before they'd give their countrymen away.

Their trial was a masterpiece of cunning and deceit,

And publicly they murdered them in Enniskillen street.

But the Blessed Virgin Mary succours those who bear a cross,

And tendered consolation to all who mourned their loss.

Their lifeless bodies taken down and laid upon their biers,

While faithful comrades knelt around, in prayer and silent tears.

Their remains were borne twenty miles o'er the mountains of Slievebeagh,

And laid to rest by candlelight in the churchyard of Roslea.

The weeping willow drooped its leaves, the tree bowed its head,

And nature fashioned floral wreaths o'er Ireland's martyred dead.

All ye who pass on your way to Mass, will you bow your head in prayer

For the souls of three United men whose bones are mouldering there.

**FOR THE RECORD
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SMEAR TACTICS

A recent act of childish vandalism was exploited by the garda authorities and by sections of the media to smear republicans in Clones.

Following an incident in which windows were broken and slogans were daubed on the walls of the local Church of Ireland, an unattributed statement appeared in the local and national media which created the impression that the attack was the work of republican activists in the area.

Any such suggestion was emphatically denied by Sinn Fein councillor Pat Treanor, who said that the incident was obviously the work of young children. Adding that sectarianism has no part to play in republican politics, he urged the young people involved to desist from such activities in future.

MISSING MONEY

Hugo Reavey has discovered that £100 has gone missing from the Barclay's bank account he had in London. Both his bank-link card and the number for the machine were in his flat when it too was ransacked by police. No prizes for guessing who he believes is responsible for the unauthorised withdrawal.

COMMUNITY FOR JUSTICE

Clones was the venue for a meeting last week of the Community for Justice, a group of religious and lay people from throughout the Six Counties who believe that a British withdrawal from Ireland is an essential first step if peace is to be achieved.

Amongst the proposals discussed by delegates was a plan to invite future religious and human rights visitors to Ireland and a fact-finding tour of the Six Counties. It was felt that this, and the dissemination of regular information bulletins, are the only means whereby the isolation of oppressed nationalists can be overcome.

IF YOU HAVE A TOWNLAND NAME - USE IT

Persistent attempts by British government departments to do away with townland names have united people of different political persuasions in Fermanagh who recognise the importance of such names as part of local culture. For years Fermanagh District Council have doggedly resisted all attempts to replace townland names with usually artificial road names and numbers. Indeed, one of the few responsibilities of a district council is control over addresses and it is through this control that the council has refused to allow the post office to introduce the new system, which has already been enforced in other counties.

Different government agencies have tried to covertly use the numbers system in the last few years, amongst them the electoral office. In the 1987 blue register, for instance, a portion of the Roslea ward had this system allotted to it, and there are grounds to believe that similar treatment was intended for other wards at a later date, a plan which had to be dropped when word of it was leaked.

The planning department is another body which sometimes uses the road numbers and people using this dep-

artment are often gulled into using their number address in the mistaken belief that this will assist or, at any rate, speed up the processing of their applications.

The planning department is another Officials from both the post office and the electoral office have lobbied meetings of Fermanagh District Council to try and win support for the new system, their argument being on grounds of increased efficiency, speed and distinction of people of the same name living in the same townland. Yet despite this pressure and the persistent use of the numbered addresses by the rates department, all members of the council are adamant that townland names be kept.

They recognise that if townland names are dropped, they will soon be forgotten. With them a part of our history and culture will also be lost. And, from a nationalist perspective the only beneficiaries of the new system, besides the various government departments, would be the crown forces. For them, each and every person would fit neatly onto a computer programme in the same way as a car registration number.

And there is the added fact that townland names have a beauty all of their own with which numbers could never compare. Corrafad, Altamartin and Eshnasilloge and other townlands in the Cooneen area have been replaced by names such as Grogey Road, or the insulting Teagueshill Road. Indeed, Cooneen unfortunately appears to have adopted the numbered addresses more than elsewhere, even though that area has many of the more beautiful townland names. And who will argue that the replacement of Drumroo and Baltreagh by Rabbit Burrow Road and Royal Oak Road respectively, is progress? As for Annachullion, Bunnablaneybane, Corranny, Drumacritten and Eshnadarragh..... the list is endless, of names which tell the story of the area they refer to.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that, after a rash of numbered addresses were used last year, the council corresponded with the post office, sought legal advice and stated its position. It remains to be seen whether the wishes and the authority of Fermanagh District Council will be respected in future.

SCOTSTOWN DANGER ROAD



A plan by a group of young Scotstown people to counter the danger posed to pedestrians on a local stretch of road, has still not been implemented by Monaghan County Council, despite an earlier promise that at least part of the scheme would be implemented.

Recognising the obvious danger posed to people walking between Scotstown and the chapel and sports complex at Urbleshanney, members of Scotstown Foróige built up a case to have a footpath and lighting provided along Chapel Road. Their first step was to conduct a survey of those using the roadway.

Armed with the results of this survey, the youth group sent a delegation to a meeting of Monaghan County Council where they got a sympathetic hearing.....but no action! Eventually, the council did announce that it would construct a footpath when the finance became available, but it ruled out any possibility of providing street lighting.

Under the present cutbacks being imposed by the Fianna Fail government, it appears now that even the promised footpath is unlikely to be constructed unless pressure is maintained by the local community.