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1. EASTER STATEMENT FROM LEADERSHIP

"The Leadership of the Republican Movement on this the 63rd anniversary of the Easter Rising sends greetings to all involved in the struggle to rid our country of British Rule and set up a Democratic, Socialist Republic based on the 1916 Proclamation.

"We send especial greetings to our imprisoned comrades in jails in Ireland and England, and we proudly congratulate the heroic Blanket-Men who, by their resistance to the crucial "criminalisation" of the struggle in the north, share the front line with active-service Volunteers.

"Greetings also to our many support and solidarity groups throughout the world, particularly those in America, Australia and in Europe. We fully appreciate the importance of your efforts to highlight British terror in Ireland and to aid Irish Resistance to that terror.

"In the last year we have continued to gear our resources and reorganisation into the needs of a long struggle to which we are fully committed. We congratulate our people for mentally readjusting to this strategy. Far from being war-weary, we the oppressed people take comfort from the successes of other oppressed peoples throughout the world, who fought and resisted without rest or compromise until they were victorious.

"Roy Mason who came here with so much confidence and so many boasts departs very soon as a defeated man, and we will grind the next British War-Lord into the ground as we have done with Mason! It matters little who rules at Westminster; they'll

still send their gunmen and tanks and SAS murderers to repress the Irish People. But by a combination of political work, street resistance and uncompromising revolutionary guerilla warfare we will inflict a political defeat on the British Government's will to stay in Ireland. We shall make their occupation of Ireland so costly in terms of moral corruption and political bankruptcy that it will be domestically and internationally unacceptable. And to highlight the question of British Occupation of Ireland we are now quite capable of striking at British targets wherever and whenever they can be found.

"As a socialist movement we are in solidarity with other struggling nations. In the words of Connolly:— 'We mean to be free, and in every enemy of tyranny we recognise a brother, wherever be his birthplace; in every enemy of freedom we also recognise our enemy, though he were as Irish as our hills'.

"In the philosophy of Loyalism is an enemy of Irish Freedom. We are opposed to Loyalism and we are opposed to the setting up of an independent Six-Counties. Loyalists had an independent Six-Counties for over 50 years and practised sectarianism and discrimination. Peace will only come about when Britain stops interfering in our country and when our people can determine their own future. Those that resist the development of a democratic and peaceful Ireland are out to maintain privilege, division and sectarianism and are tools of Imperialism.

"Because we are engaged in a national war of liberation against a colonial power, Britain, we have no intention of going to the proposed Washington "Peace Forum" where she will not be present. The substitute of Loyalist delegates for British Government representatives deliberately projects the war in Ireland as a "Religious Quarrel", and not as a colonial problem in which the British Government and Army has provided succour for Loyalism.

"We are out to break the back of British Rule in Ireland, a process which inevitably involves the disintegration of Loyalism as a racialist, sectarian philosophy.

"Another enemy of freedom which we clearly recognise as our enemy is the Free State Fianna Fail Government. They are opposed to the development of a United Ireland based on the 1916 Proclamation because it

would spell an end to their corrupt, collaborationist party. Traditionally they have exploited the working-class in the 26-Counties by offering, but only paying lip-service to, Irish Unity. Their repression of Republicans, in common with their opposition to the legitimate demands of workers, will intensify in the months ahead as we increasingly expose their hypocrisy and offer the underprivileged and oppressed sections of the community an independent banner around which to rally. As we break British Rule we break Fianna Fail and all other reactionary forces in Ireland.

"We demand a British Declaration of Intent to withdraw, an Amnesty for all political prisoners and recognition of the Irish People's right to self-determination. Backing up those demands will be the muscle of the Republican Movement drawing its support and personnel from the courageous ranks of the oppressed. There will be no capitulation, no respite.

"In the immortal words of Padraig Pearse:—

"WE HAVE THE STRENGTH AND THE PEACE OF MIND OF THOSE WHO NEVER COMPROMISE..."

2. BRITISH LOSSES RISE IN I.R.A. ATTACKS

The Easter commitment of the I.R.A. to make British occupation of Ireland 'so costly that it would become both domestically and internationally unacceptable' was given determination 48 hours following the Easter message, and the fact was made clear that they are capable of striking at British targets 'whenever and wherever they are found'. Four members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary were killed and four injured in a massive explosion in front of their Land Rover and a convoy within yards of the British Army post near Bessbrook, County Armagh. Within seconds of the blast a heavy concentration of British troops and police were on the scene and immediately cordoned off the area but the bomb had been apparently detonated by remote control and no volunteers were captured. Less than 24 hours earlier

a prison officer had been shot dead in the village of Clogher, County Tyrone, and in the two weeks before Easter three British soldiers were shot dead and many injured in a number of separate incidences. The following is a summary of the I.R.A. operations so far this month:

The Operations

I.R.A. active service units in Belfast and Derry attacked British military personnel and bombed several commercial premises in the opening week of April.

The first IRA operation took place in Belfast's Lenadoon Estate, on Tuesday 3rd April when a Brit foot patrol came under sniper fire. In all seven to eight shots were fired by the IRA active service unit. The IRA later claimed they wounded one of the soldiers.

The next day, Wednesday, another IRA sniper engaged the Brits. This time the attack took place in Belfast's Ballymurphy Estate when a single shot was fired at a Brit foot patrol. In both operations the IRA snipers returned safely to base.

The following day the Belfast Brigade carried out two bombing operations against a factory in North Belfast and an office block in the town centre.

An RUC man was injured during the first bombing attack on the Lombard shirt factory situated on the Limestone Road. A fire followed the bomb blasts.

The second bomb attack was at Somerset Buildings in Hardcastle Street where damage to the ground floor was extensive.

But the operation of the week came on the same day, Thursday 5th when two British soldiers were shot dead in a daring I.R.A. ambush at the entrance of the R.U.C. barracks in Andersonstown, West Belfast. Despite heavy fire from the British military in the barracks and around it the I.R.A. volunteers withdrew safely. This attack was a typically well-prepared and coolly executed I.R.A. operation.

The prelude to the attack began shortly after 11 o'clock in the morning when the IRA commandeered premises on the Glen Road opposite the rear entrance to the heavily-fortified RUC barracks. The Volunteers waited patiently for two hours for their targets to appear.

At 1 o'clock a Brit armoured personnel carrier (a 'pig'), followed a land-rover up to the gateway and an armed patrol began to dismount as the barrack gates opened.

The I.R.A. Volunteers immediately opened fire through the closed upstairs window of the premises they had commandeered. Two Brits were hit. One was killed instantly and the other died shortly afterwards.

Also, on the same night, two 'grill-bombs' (bombs designed to be hung on anti-bomb grills) went off in Belfast and an R.U.C. man was hurt in one of the blasts.

Further bombing operations were carried out on Saturday 7th April. Nine bombs were planted: four in Derry and five in Lambeg near Lisburn.

The targets bombed were two petrol stations and a hardware store in Clarendon Street in Derry City. All the buildings were extensively damaged.

The bomb attack in Limbeg was against the Linen Textile Research Centre, where the bombs exploded damaging the building.

Another Brit Shot

On Wednesday 11th another British soldier died and one received serious bullet wounds in an I.R.A. ambush in the Ballymurphy area of Belfast. The ambush was similar to the one in the previous week in which two Brits were killed. The I.R.A. volunteers in ambush positions fired into the back of a Saracen armoured vehicle. The attack happened just after 3 o'clock in the day as the ten-ton armoured vehicle carrying eight soldiers wound its way through the housing estate. When the vehicle entered Glenalina crescent it was fired upon then it quickly withdrew to the Henry Taggart army fort as the volunteers made safe their escape.

Following the previous Thursday's successful I.R.A. attack outside Andersonstown barracks the Brits had switched from a predominant use of open-backed land-rovers to saracens—a switch in tactics quickly over-come by the I.R.A.

Last July soldiers of the Light Infantry refused for a time to go into Ballymurphy due to the hostility of the local population and the frequency of the I.R.A. attacks.

Following the latest attack the I.R.A. issued the following statement:

"The Irish Republican Army recognising the increasing number of defeats inflicted on the British army now offers disenchanted soldiers safe passage to a neutral country which will give them asylum."

The I.R.A.'s advice to the Brits concluded:

"All that you can look forward to in Ireland is continuing war. We can assure you of that."

On Monday 16th a prison officer, Michael Cassidy, who was attached to Belfast's Crumlin Road Jail, was shot dead as he left a wedding in Augher, County Tyrone. On the same night 14 bombs were planted in a concrete works in Derry and the explosion caused massive damage.

On Tuesday 17th the four R.U.C. men were killed in the Bessbrook ambush. In claiming responsibility for the attack, the I.R.A. said that a half-ton of explosives had been used in

the attack. A statement added: "We again take the opportunity to emphasise the Irish Republican Army's statement on Easter Sunday when they said that there would be no capitulation, no respite, until our war of national liberation is brought to a final conclusion."

The explosives had been planted in a light-blue-coloured Transit van, hijacked in the locality earlier and parked on the Millvale Road, some three miles from Newry and near Bessbrook. As the Land Rover and its unmarked escort drew abreast, the van-bomb was detonated by means of a radio-control device.

Under the so-called Ulsterisation policy of the British government, the R.U.C. has increasingly been replacing the British army in patrol duties in strongly Republican areas—both rural and urban. Initially, these patrols were carried out under British army protection. The I.R.A. described the R.U.C. this week as "the torture section of the British war machine".

The I.R.A. also claimed responsibility for the fourteen bomb attacks on the Derry cement works the previous night. The premises were extensively damaged.

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No legal action is to be taken against the British soldiers responsible for the shooting dead of Mr. James Taylor in a controversial incident in September last year, the R.U.C. have told the dead man's mother.

Mr. Taylor, who was married with two children, was shot in the back as he returned with some friends to their vehicles after a duck-shooting expedition in Co. Tyrone. The soldiers are believed to have been an undercover SAS unit.

3. REPUBLICAN LEADER DEFIES BRITISH EXPULSION ORDER

The 63rd anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland was marked by commemorations in many parts of the country over the holiday weekend. The Sinn Fein president, Ruairi O Bradaigh defied a three-year-old British expulsion order from the occupied counties. He addressed the huge crowd assembled in Belfast to commemorate the military rising in Dublin in 1916. It was the annual commemoration organised by the Republican Movement and thousands marched from Beechmount on the Falls Road to Milltown cemetery, where Mr. O Bradaigh got a tremendous reception from the crowd as he addressed them from the platform.

He risked a jail sentence of up to five years if caught, not to speak of torture at the hands of his captors, but he was spirited away after the commemoration as quickly as he came.

The last time the Sinn Fein president was in Belfast, he was arrested, served with an expulsion order, driven to the border by the R.U.C. and told he would be jailed if he came back.

At the Republican plot in Milltown Cemetery, Mr. O Bradaigh said:

"The past year since Easter 1978 has been the consolidation of the struggle against British Imperialism in Ireland. The courage of the men in the H-Blocks and the women in Armagh in their third year of continual protest for the restoration of Prisoner of War status under the most horrifying conditions, testifies to the great moral strength and fibre of the Republican Movement today, as something unequalled in any previous generation.

The English ruling class attempt to criminalise not just 10 years but 810 years of Irish struggle, has failed in the face of the dedication of 440 Irishmen and women.

The English-inspired counter-revolution of 1922, overthrew the First and Second Dail, by bloody civil war in the South, and by murder and pogrom in the North. A six-county colonial statelet and a twenty-six county neo-colonial state were England's alternative to the Republic of Pearse and Connolly.

Against this counter-revolutionary situation and for the ideals of Easter week and the First Dail, fought the men and women of 1922 and 1923, of 1939 and 1940 and 1942, of 1956 to 1962, and most heroically of all the men and women of the last ten years.

Supreme Sacrifice

More than one hundred of them from this world renowned city of Belfast have made the supreme sacrifice in carrying the war to the enemy and rest here alongside the Fenians and I.R.B. men, among the volunteers of Oglaiha na h-Eireann.

The continual resistance of the mass of the people to English rule has brought hugh numbers on to the streets last summer and autumn to mark the tenth anniversary of the present active struggle.

The splendid people, without whom no struggle is possible, have made their mark over and over again.

The many telling blows delivered to the enemy since last Easter indicate clearly the strength of the physical resistance. We are eternally proud of our freedom-fighters, they have won the admiration of oppressed peoples the world over.

This year of 1979 marks the centenary of the births of Padraig Pearse, the first President of the Provisional Government of the All-Ireland

Republic, and of Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, martyred following 74 days of hunger strike in an English prison.

Pearse prophesied all the phases of the struggle since 1916, including the present, when he declared at O'Donovan Rossa's graveside that "Ireland unfree shall never be at peace". MacSwiney forecast the ordeals and the victories of the hunger-strikers and of the H-Block and Armagh protesters when he wrote in regard to the use of moral force and the right of individual resistance to tyranny: "Not all the legions of all the armies and earth can conquer the will of one man, and that one man shall prevail".

Social Revolution

This year is also the centenary of the foundation in the West of Ireland of the Land League which in its struggle against feudalism and landlordism began a social revolution which has yet to be completed.

We are asked in 1979 to turn back the tide of history and send representatives to the British parliament at Westminster. The last time the Irish people voted as a unit in 1918 they repudiated Westminster with all its works and pomps—and Westminster's calm to govern in Ireland.

The Republican Movement today also repudiates Westminster and its puppets, the twenty-six county Free State, and the late unlamented Stormont. They offer no way forward to the Irish people in their struggle for freedom, justice and peace.

We are also asked to send representatives to the EEC to assist neo-imperialists exploitation of our own people, of the oppressed peoples, and of the working class within Western Europe, and of the peoples of the Third World.

Imperialism of EEC

We reject the EEC as an instrument of the new imperialism within Europe itself and we espouse the cause of the nations oppressed, like ourselves, the Bretons, the Basques, the Catalans, the Corsicans, and so forth as well as the cause of the ordinary people the world over.

We stand by the oppressed and struggling peoples, against the power-blocs, East and West, and the modern updated imperialism of the EEC which contradicts the 1916 Proclamation, the political Bible of our Movement.

The Republican Movement of today wishes to put into effect the teachings of Pearse, Connolly, MacSwiney and the First Dail.

It does not seek just to remove the British structures and British presence from Ireland, in its rejection of both a so-called independent six-county state and such a state linked federally, or confederally with the present neo-colonialist twenty-six county state.

It seeks to dismantle both states and replace them with an entirely New Ireland—a Democratic Socialist Republic with decentralised political power, at the lowest possible level with the local communities, workers control in industry and popular ownership of our natural resources in the interests of the Irish people, instead of their robbery by the Multi-National companies and the EEC.

Republicans do not wish, in the words of the great Algerian anti-imperialist writer, Franz Fanon "to replace one crushing of man by another crushing of man—we wish to discover the man behind the colonialist who is at once its agent and its victim".

In other words Republicans seek to break the present imperialist power structure in Ireland so that both those who are its victims and those who are its agents can be liberated. Those who collaborate with and benefit from imperialism cannot liberate themselves. Those who suffer under it, in freeing themselves, and breaking the system, liberate both.

The present struggle contains within it a vital ingredient. This is so for many reasons, not least, its total involvement with the people.

But it is distinguished from all the struggles of previous times in one essential aspect.

No one phase of struggle has gone on for so long, it is not simply the exhausting effort of a single generation, for within the present struggle the turn-over of the generations has already taken place. A new generation is setting the pace now. That is the greatest possible acquisition of strength to a revolutionary movement—and the surest guarantee of victory.

Following Ruairi O Bradaigh's address, an Easter Statement from the Republican leadership was read by a young volunteer wearing combat uniform—as was done at each commemoration throughout the country. The Statement attacked the outgoing British Secretary to the North, Roy Mason, the philosophy of loyalty and the government in Dublin. It predicted a continuing lengthy struggle for national liberation.

4. NATION-WIDE EASTER COMMEMORATIONS

There were Easter Sunday commemorations of the 1916 Rising at many venues throughout Ireland—covering the thirty two counties.

Several thousand took part in the Cork commemoration which was addressed by Daithi O Conaill, Secretary of Sinn Fein. A parade led by the Cork

Volunteer pipe band left the National Monument in the Grand Parade at 3.00 p.m. and proceeded to the Republican Plot at St. Finbarr's cemetery.

Units of Cumann na mBan (Women's Branch), Na Fianna Eireann (Youth) and Oglagh na h-Eireann (I.R.A.) took part in the parade along with a large contingent of the general public.

Peader Beecher, Chairman, District Council, Sinn Fein, presided at the ceremonies in the Republican Plot.

The Easter statement from the Leadership of the Movement was read, wreaths were laid by various branches of the Movement and the Fianna rendered the usual honours.

On the course of his oration Daithí O Conaill said:

"It is appropriate today that a special wreath should be placed on the grave of Traolach Mac Suibhne to mark the centenary of his birth.

"Few people have made such a mark on Republicanism as MacSwiney did. His definition of freedom and his dedication to its cause are as relevant now as they were in his day. The heroic struggle of the men in H-Blocks, Long Kesh, is in the true tradition of MacSwiney. His long drawn out agony roused the conscience of the world in the 1920's just as the unique stand of the men in H-Block gains greater support every day.

"The struggle for P.O.W. status is but one element of the greater struggle for freedom. It is possible that a Tory government will assume office in England within the next few weeks and we can expect an intensification of the present reign of terror by British forces. Such terror will be met by increased resistance; the Irish Republican Army have stated and demonstrated clearly their capacity and ability to strike hard at the forces of the Crown.

"British imperialism, no matter where it is to be found, can no longer feel secure from the attacks of Irish resistance. With ten years active experience behind it, the I.R.A. continues to strike with greater effect on the tentacles of British imperialism".

The Derry March

Armed volunteers marched in Derry in a parade in which many thousands took part. There was also a number of international visitors who were very impressed with the discipline of the I.R.A. and their open defiance in face of the occupation forces. Sinn Fein executive member, Richard Behal gave the oration stating that it was thought that there would never be greater men than the Fenian prisoners. But there is now admiration the length and breadth of this country for the heroic deeds, sufferings and sacrifices of this imprisoned generation. Whatever is said of the Fenians, at least as prisoners they had no option. But today, our imprisoned men and women could choose an easier way if they wished.

Richard Behal recollected the events of the past year. He recalled the two cold-blooded SAS murders of Derry volunteers, and spoke of the international disgrace Britain faced over the use of torture in Castle-reagh, Strand Road, and many other R.U.C. barracks, which was condemned by both Amnesty International and the Bennett Report. He then pointed out that the O Briain Report condemned the Southern regime for its use of torture against Republicans.

He said: "Roy Mason is continually frustrated and exhausted as he tries, day by day, to explain away the continued resurgence of a very active I.R.A. No matter how vicious, low and immoral the repression Britain uses against the I.R.A., the POWs or the community as a whole, the past years proves once again that the Brits can never defeat the risen people".

He then looked up at the helicopters hovering low overhead, and said, "If there are any spies here today in the audience, let them bring the message back to their masters: the Irish people are no more defeated than are our brothers and sisters in struggle for their freedom across the face of the earth. Can the R.U.C. and their lackeys possibly forget the fate of the Shah's Secret Police, the Savak, who have been put up against the wall and given their just deserts". The crowd responded with cheers of delight. He recalled the special meaning given to this year by the Diamond Jubilee of the first Dail, which ratified Ireland's freedom after an all-Ireland election in 1918. He said this was the last democratic election in Ireland. All others North and South since have been based around undemocratic institutions.

In conclusion, Richard Behal's message was clear: "It is a long, hard struggle, and already you, the people, have adjusted magnificently to this fact. There will be no compromise. We are out for the Republic proclaimed in 1916 and will accept no substitutes".

5. EASTER MESSAGE FROM THE PRISONERS

There were many Easter messages from the prisoners-of-war in Irish and English jails, too many to be individually commented upon. However the following compiled statement on behalf of the prisoners was read at all Republican commemorations on Easter Sunday:

"We, the captured Volunteers of Oglagh na h-Eireann (Irish Republican Army) wish to be associated with you in spirit at your commemoration in Milltown Cemetery and send greetings to our friends and comrades wherever they may be . . . We salute the revolutionary soldiers of Oglagh na h-Eireann at present engaged in war against the ancient enemy. Their valour is an inspiration to us all. Supported by the national-

ist population, freedom-loving people, and other liberation movements, they have shown that they have the determination and capacity to strike where and when they deem fit at any point on the globe.

"We would like to acknowledge the unselfish and tireless work being carried out on our behalf by the members of Green Cross, Irish Republican Prisoners Welfare and Relatives Action Committee, and we remember with love and pride those very many of our gallant comrades who have fallen in this long war. We re-dedicate ourselves to the Socialist Republic they died for and we reaffirm our faith in the Leadership of Oglagh na h-Eireann. Let us dedicate ourselves in the future to greater efforts, for the monster of British Imperialism is reeling in the face of the massive resistance of the Risen People. Let us trample it into the soil that it has stained with the blood of so many Irish patriots.

On to the Socialist Republic!

Signed, THE REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR".

6. SPECIAL BRANCH HARASS DELEGATES

With the European Political Prisoners Conference, organised by Sinn Fein, being held in Dublin at Liberty Hall this weekend, many delegates have been arriving from the continent.

Some of the delegates have received the usual warm welcome from the Free State Special Branch. One delegate was held for an hour in Store Street whilst they interrogated him, asking for names and addresses of people in Sinn Fein. Other delegates were stopped and questioned at the airport and they are all being constantly watched, wherever they go in Dublin.

This shows the fear of the Free Staters that knowledge of conditions of interrogation and imprisonment in the 26 counties and in the occupied north will become universal.

Two Basque journalists and a photographer have arrived in Dublin to cover the European Prisoners Conference. On arrival they were interviewed by an AP/RN reporter.

They told him that it was their first time in Ireland and that they have great interest in what is happening here. They spoke of the similarities between the struggle for self-determination in Ireland and the struggle of the Basque people. One journalist Angel Amigo of Hordago Publishing said: "We have one hundred prisoners, seventy from ETA military and thirty from ETA political wings, but it does not compare with your thousands of prisoners. But we have a similar fight, to free the small nations of Europe."

They also will be covering in depth the whole struggle of the people in the occupied six counties, and hope to widen the knowledge of the peoples of Europe on the situation here.

A full report on the Conference will appear in our issue next week.