



THE STARRY PLOUGH

INSIDE!
SPECIAL PULL-OUT PAGE
H Block - the Facts
& Discussion document from
anti-imperialist unity talks

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST PARTY.

15 MONTHS

NAKED IN

CELLS

300 DEMAND POLITICAL STATUS



SEE PAGE 5

The dispute at Ferenka may look extremely complicated with so many side issues that most people, when asked, cannot even tell what the basic reason for it is. This is despite the amount of news coverage and the importance which it assumes for the working class in all parts of the country.

To understand the situation one must first look at the company, Ferenka, and its owners AKZO Ltd., a giant multinational, with years of experience in turning human beings into mere production units trained to grovel at the feet of their masters. If you consider that an overstatement consider the fact that in an area of high unemployment over 2,600 people have left Ferenka in the past five years. That figure tells more than anything else along what lines the factory is run.

The present conflict is a classic example of how management are prepared to provoke a strike for their own ends. The trouble first began when a supervisor approached a machine operator and ordered him to go and scrub the toilets. When the worker pointed out that he was



● The strike-bound Ferenka plant in Limerick.

BY JOHN GILLIGAN our LIMERICK CORRESPONDENT

FERENKA: THE INSIDE STORY

employed as a machinist and that he had no intention of scrubbing out toilets he was suspended by the supervisor. The shop stewards held a meeting with management and were flabbergasted when management upheld the decision, despite a warning by the shop stewards that failure to immediately re-instate the worker would lead to a strike. The strike actually took place and lasted for a few days before management conceded the fact of wrongful suspension and on a promise of no victimisation there was a full resumption of work.

The Personnel Officer has since written to a local paper pointing out that "In an emergency situation a worker may be instructed to help out in the toilets" serving only to illustrate the comic opera which passes for discipline in the factory. The case of 'The emergency in the jacks' as it had become known was over, or so the workers thought.

A week later management suddenly suspended six shop stewards for supporting the suspended worker the previous week, despite the fact that they

had guaranteed no victimisation and had agreed that the initial suspension was wrong.

It was at this time that the management strategy was exposed. An ITGWU Official and four selected shop stewards were meeting to rewrite the company rule book unknown to the other shop stewards. The other shop stewards' known opposition to management meant they would oppose any change for the worse in the rule book and so management engineered their dismissal, and in one fell swoop got rid of most of the leaders of the work force. But management made one basic mistake.

When Philip Byrne, head shop steward, and his five suspended colleagues marched out the gate, shoulder to shoulder with them went 90% of the production staff, determined that no longer would their rights be abused in Ferenka. They also decided to leave the ITGWU which they felt had stabbed them in the back.

The following interview was given to the *Starry Plough* by Philip Byrne.

See page 4

The case of Peter Grimes



● Peter Grimes makes his way into Old Street Court, while his supporters picket outside.

Trade Unionists, Socialists and members of the London IRSP Support Group picketed Old Street Magistrate Court in London on October 15th as the IRSP organiser in Britain, Peter Grimes, was remanded on continuing bail on charges under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The pickets were calling for the abolition of the Act which has been used in this case in a Special Branch conspiracy to disrupt the educational work of the IRSP's support group in Britain.

Peter, a gardener with the local council and Tower Hamlet Borough Council and a shop steward of the Transport, and General Workers Union was charged last August with having "information which might be of material assistance in preventing an act of terrorism connected with Northern Irish Affairs". His arrest was used as an excuse to raid the homes of other members of the London IRSP Support Group and confiscate all files, copies of the Starry Plough, financial and other records. All funds have also been impounded. Grimes himself was released on bail and part of his bail condition was that he was to have no contact with the IRSP.

IRSP INVESTIGATION

An investigation into his arrest (see *Starry Plough* September '77) has revealed startling facts: Peter went to meet a man who called himself Mallon with a view to setting up an IRSP Support Group in Kent where Mallon had been selling copies of the *Starry Plough* and collecting money for the IRSP. Peter returned to London to report on his meeting in Kent. No decision was taken as to the formation of another Support Group. Peter

was arrested and charged at this time. An investigation of Mallon/Driver showed he falsely claimed to have been in the Paratroopers in the North, to have been thrown out of the British Army, to have been jailed in the Army, and that his wife was shot by the British Army.

BRIBERY ATTEMPT

Grimes was previously arrested at the beginning of May '76 and offered bribes to furnish names and addresses of IRSP supporters in Britain. He was threatened with "a lot of trouble" if he did not co-operate.

It has since materialised that Mallon's real name is Driver and that he was used to set up Grimes and the IRSP. Mallon/Driver was arrested for possession of nitroglycerine substances and arms before Peter's arrest and interrogation. But Mallon/Driver has not sought bail nor has he appeared in Court. In a letter to his landlady he hinted that the would be "co-operating with the police to have his sentence reduced.

'CAREFULLY PREPARED CONSPIRACY'

The entire episode has all the hallmarks of a carefully prepared conspiracy to destroy the IRSP London Support Group. The national organiser has been prevented from carrying out his work despite his innocence and the lack of even a conviction; all IRSP material has been confiscated or impounded; members have been harassed. Everything points to Mallon/Driver being the chief 'witness' in a case to tarnish the reputation of the IRSP and jail Grimes for something he was not involved in.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act has resulted in over 3000 people being arrested and numerous deportations and job victimisation. Only a mere 11 have even been charged with any 'terrorist type' offence.

Peter's case has resulted in apprehension in the trade union movement, as witnessed by the trade unionists demonstrating outside the courts: members of Hackney, Stepney and Bethnal Green Trades Councils, East London Branch of the National Union of Teachers and the National Union of Constructive and Allied Trades Technicians.

Abolish ALL ground rents

The Fianna Fail government intends to allow ground rents to continue in Ireland. Their new legislation will only abolish the possibility of any new ground rents being created, whilst forcing 1/4 million householders in Ireland to continue paying ground rents.

Ground Rent is paid by householders for the land their home is built on. Whether they actually own their own home is irrelevant. Ground Rent landlords have acquired the 'right' from the feudal system. It exists nowhere else in Europe.

"AN ABOMINATION" - MINISTER

The previous Minister for Local Government, Jimmy Tully, described ground rents as "an abomination". Few T.D.s. or establishment political parties will defend it in public. However Fianna Fail's latest legislation on ground rents shows their support for its continuation, not surprising when one considers that many of its supporters and members are the faceless landlords acquiring the loot from this legalised theft.

GROUND RENT ROBBERY

Many builders, under other guises, collect ground rents such as McInerneys (Sir Henry Hunt Ltd.), the Gallagher Group, John

Sisk & Son, P. V. Doyle etc. Many insurance companies have bought ground rents from builders over the years, such as the Irish Life Assurance. Numerous local authorities also collect ground rents.

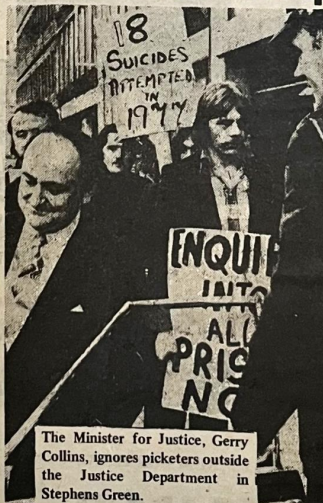
WOULD SAVE £15 MILLION

The abolition of ground rents would save the Irish people almost £15,000,000 per annum. The threatening letter, seven day notice to pay and other forms of victimisation would cease. People would own the land their home was built on.

While it is possible to buy out ground rents most people do not believe it will eventually be abolished or because they have strong convictions on the issue. There is also the fact that one would have to pay almost six times the yearly value, all arrears and legal fees.

If ground rent is wrong, as the proposed legislation inadvertently admits, then existing ground rents must be expropriated. There can be no justification or compensation for its continuation. The few who benefit, many of whom sit in the Dail and Seanad, must be exposed and the campaign against ground rents escalated. There must be no compromise with this relic of exploitative landlordism.

Prisons' group demand inquiry



The Minister for Justice, Gerry Collins, ignores picketers outside the Justice Department in Stephens Green.

Over 100 members of the Prisoners Rights Organisation picketed Leinster House in support of their campaign for an independent public inquiry into the prison system in Ireland. When Justice Minister Gerry Collins refused to accept a petition with 10,223 signatures they were given to Dr. Noel Browne T.D. A picket was placed on the Justice Department in October accompanied by a 24-hour hunger strike by the P.R.O. making the same demands.



The Prisoners Rights Organisation picketing Leinster House.

WE WELCOME NEWS, VIEWS AND COMMENTS

Prisoners Aid Committee News every Month 2p

Irish Prisoners No. 2, 50p plus P & P from: 182 Upr. Street, London N.1

Pamphlets available from IRSP

A State Conspiracy: the story behind the torture and framing of IRSP members in Dublin presently awaiting trial. Price 15p & postage, Illustrated.

OUT! National Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland Report Detailed report of the delegation containing evidence and final report, principally that troops must be withdrawn immediately. Price 30p & postage, Illustrated.

Pour La Liberation Nationale et Republique Socialiste: Documents and texts of the IRSP in French. Price 4 F. Illustrated. Reductions for 10 or more copies in all cases.

SALE OF WORK

The Irish Sovereignty Movement of 24 Belgrave Road, Dublin 6, are holding a sale of work in Liberty Hall on Saturday December 10th next from 12 to 6 p.m.

Why torture is policy

Following the 'honeymoon period' of 1969, when British soldiers first entered Belfast and Derry, British imperialism has been seen to be involved in a campaign to smash the most militant sections of the nationalist community. They attempted military 'solutions' such as the illegal Falls Rd. curfew and the massacre of 14 Civil Rights marchers in Derry in 1972. Inevitably, as this policy resulted in the growth of support for the militant anti-imperialists British imperialism concentrated its attention on the insurgent community. This backfired and their repression and internment policy strengthened the resolve of the nationalist population.

Brigadier Frank Kitson was put in charge of counter-insurgency operations in Belfast. The British Army tried to "make the people vomit out the terrorists" as Kitson put it in his Low Intensity Operations. They used every conceivable means to break the morale of the ghettos: sectarian assassinations, imprisonment, naked oppression and brutality, black propaganda, political assassinations and torture. The viciousness of internment, the torture of Hollywood and Girwood Barracks and the massacre of Bloody Sunday gained Britain world wide notoriety and helped to smash Stormont.

The military solution continues by daily 'house searches' (vandalism), 'screaming' (harassment), 'riot control' (repression), 'interrogation' (torture), shooting 'terrorists' (murdering civilians), and 'briefing the media' (propaganda). Britain is bent on smashing resistance. Of course Britain cannot defeat the 'terrorists', for in eight years of massive military presence they have made 'terrorists' of practically the entire population of the nationalist areas. In the Emergency Provisions Act (1973) they defined political opponents as terrorists.

State torture has three results: it produces information; it acts as a psychological weapon of terror against the community it is being practiced on; it helps to clear a huge backlog of 'unsolved crimes' by pinning them on framed suspects. This helps the administration claim a continuing victory over the enemy as witnessed by the conviction figures which Mason produces every Friday.

The RUC have been ordered by Rees and Mason to take over the counter insurgency interrogations and tortures formally carried out by the British Army in Girwood and Hollywood Barracks. All British Army bases still carry out systematic beatings. Castlereagh in Belfast is the Chief RUC centre for systematic torture. It is apt that torture should occur in a place named after the Orange politician who became foreign minister and of the poet Shelly wrote

"I met murder on the way,
"He wore a mask like Castlereagh"

There can be no doubt that torture is official British policy as nothing on such a scale can continue without the authorities becoming fully aware of it. When Roy Mason, Secretary of State, claims the allegations are propaganda he condones the continuation of torture, that is if he did not order it in the first place. When RUC Chief Constable Newman claims most of the victims have self-inflicted wounds it merely emphasises the repressive role of the RUC and explains why the RUC are totally unacceptable to the nationalist community. (It is interesting to note that the claim of self-inflicted wounds was first made by the Heavy Gang in Dublin following their exposure by the IRSP).



Religious, medical, legal, community and political groups opposed to the Republican and Socialist philosophy even admit that torture takes place. The anti-imperialists have broken through the censorship barrier. The media, eternally hostile to Republicans and Socialists, are always vigilant against what they term 'propaganda', have been forced to admit torture exists at the very least show disquiet at the distinct possibility of what they call 'brutality' existing. Admittedly they falsely portray it as the over-zealousness of a minority within the RUC, although everything points to the contrary.

MEDICAL COLLABORATION

Thousands of suspects have passed through Castlereagh alone. Most of them have been brutalised to some degree, many severely tortured. In this respect it is scandalous that suspects taken to hospitals, such as the Royal

Victoria, the City, Musgrave Park, suffering from the results of torture should be patched up by the medical staff there and allowed to be taken back to Castlereagh for more torture. The hospital administration is thus condoning and assisting torture. This is not entirely unexpected from a hospital that collaborate with the State by allowing themselves to be occupied as a tort, completely in opposition to the Red Cross regulations for hospitals in time of war. General practitioners have refused to visit their patients in Castlereagh and make reports on their injuries.



The methods of torture have become more sophisticated since internment days. There is still 'white noise' (continuous high pitched sound assisting sensory deprivation). Balancing finger-tipped against the wall has been supplemented by squatting, deprivation of food and sleep, assaults on pressure-points of the body as well as savage beatings all continue. Being beaten unconscious, revived and beaten unconscious again is a common occurrence. Being threatened with assassination, falsely set up as an informer, having one's wife, children, relatives and friends threatened are just as common.

TORTURE CONCEPT

The entire concept behind torture is to make someone admit to anything.

As most recent convictions in the North have been based solely on 'confessions', the torture tactic becomes essential for British prestige. Without it their total failure to win even battles (never mind the war) would become apparent to the world and certainly assist demands for their withdrawal.

The fact that torture is to continue as British policy is evident from the opening of a special 'holding' wing in Crumlin Road jail where suspects are interrogated pending their removal to Castlereagh. The only means of impeding this policy is by mass political action on the streets and by a campaign to inform world opinion. The only means of totally defeating it lies in ending ALL aspects of British interference in Ireland.

Seamus Costello Cumann

The Rosemount Cumann of the Irish Republican Socialist Party in Derry has been re-named the Seamus Costello Cumann.

SOLICITORS PROTEST

About 20 solicitors attended a meeting in Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, in early November to discuss detailed evidence of injuries detained by prisoners while in custody. As one solicitor put it "our continued attendance at court serves only to give credibility to a policy of brutality carried out by some police officers who were acting under the direct order of the Secretary of State's office."

A further meeting was held in Belfast on November 9th and attended by over 30 solicitors. Some solicitors felt a boycott should be organised but emphasised that it would have to be total to be effective. Others felt apprehensive about deserting their clients presently before the no-jury courts. It was decided to set up a three-man committee to collate evidence of RUC brutality for the forthcoming Amnesty investigation but the option of boycott is still being considered and will be reviewed in December.

This tardy recognition by some members of the legal profession that torture is a fact of life in the 6 counties is welcome. But until all the lawyers come out and boycott the Juryless Diplock Courts, as they suggested they might, the torture will continue.

Amnesty Probe

Amnesty International sent a team of four to investigate the allegations of torture in the 6 Cos. and the Northern Ireland Office is expected to follow the attitude of the Coalition, by refusing to co-operate.

Amnesty has pointed out the "consistent pattern of the gross violations of the human rights of prisoners" in the 6 Counties since 1971 in communications to the United Nations.



DAILY BRUTALITY IN TURF LODGE

It happens every day. Men, women and children are victims, irrespective of their age, sex or state of health. Complaints to the authorities are met with sneers, harassment, physical beatings, framed charges even murder and assassination threats.

been hit by a rifle butt and as I turned around the same soldier hit me in the face with the same rifle butt. I made a run for it". Monagh luckily escaped. He was x-rayed in the Royal Victoria Hospital where a doctor diagnosed a cracked cheek bone.

FOUND UNCONSCIOUS

Sammy (Hyland) was arrested in his Turf Lodge home at 2.30am and taken away. Later a neighbour told his wife that her husband was lying injured on the pavement. She took him to hospital where he was detained suffering from multiple fractures to both cheek bones and severe body injuries.

HIT CHILD WITH IRON BAR

Mrs. Patricia McHugh from the New Barnsley estate in Belfast heard how her three year old son Tony was hit across the face by a soldier with an iron bar. "One of the children told me that a soldier hit him. I went over to confront the soldier. He admitted he had hit the child but would not tell me with what." Replying to a British Army Officer the soldier said "with an iron bar". The child received stitches to his head in the Royal Victoria Hospital. Mrs. McHugh returned with the child to the British Army Officer who brazenly told the child "The bar bounced off the wall, son, didn't it".

Local people have been patrolling areas to protect their communities from marauding British troops, particularly in Turf Lodge which, in four months of the 45th Commando Regiment tour of duty, saw 496 arrests, 72 people charged, 446 house searches, 40 shooting incidents (by soldiers only) and 308 baton rounds fired (figures from Globe and Laurel - journal of the Royal Marines). This is deliberate British policy, an extension of the Bloody Sunday tactic (although less publicised and emotive) with the same aim of forcing people off the streets. But short of a Warsaw annihilation policy, the ghettos cannot be smashed.

BEATEN UNCONSCIOUS

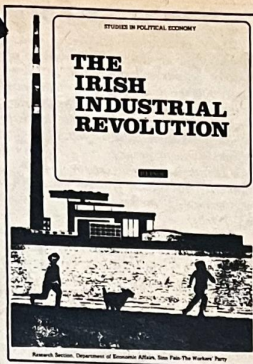
James Unsworth from Turf Lodge Belfast had a similar experience on his way home when he was pounced upon by soldiers who, having checked his identity, insisted he accompany them to a dark secluded field. He refused, grabbed hold of the railings of St. Aidan's School and started shouting for help. "The soldiers then started punching and kicking me with their fists, boots and rifles. I must have passed out." He was taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital where he received eight stitches in different head wounds. He was bruised all over his body, face and sore the touch. He was detained for observation.

HIT WITH RIFLE BUTT

In another incident 18-year-old Henry Monagh from Turf Lodge was stopped by eight soldiers who checked his identity. "I suddenly felt a heavy blow on my back. I had

BOOK REVIEW

BY MARY MC CARTHY



The key to an understanding of this document lies in the Foreword, where Eamonn Smullen, Director of Economic Affairs, Sinn Fein, the Workers Party states "the product of our party in history must be the creation of an Irish Industrial (my italics) Revolution". He makes it clear that the national question is incidental to this end. "For us the national question can only be formulated as peace among the divided working class in the two states in Ireland so as to allow a united Irish working class to conduct democratic and militant struggle for the creation of an industrial (my italics) revolution in all Ireland and ultimately the construction of an Irish Workers Republic." Appendix 3 (pgs 148-151) on the Northern economy elaborates further i.e. "the progressive demand is for a recognition of the reality of the northern economy" (page 148). A threefold plan is outlined for building this united working class.

- (i) Support for the ICTU's peace campaign
- (ii) A refusal to allow the British government to withdraw its public sector investment
- (iii) A recognition of the objectively progressive role of foreign investment in strengthening the working class (p. 148)

ECONOMIST SOLUTION

This economist solution denies that British political, economic and military control i.e. British imperialism, caused, perpetuated and now dominates a solution to the national question. According to the I.I.R. analysis a political solution is rendered unnecessary by virtue of the fact that foreign industry will establish the basis for state socialism (page 151). This, not surprisingly, is a circuitous if not obscure procedure. "In an increasing world crisis as the multinationals develop difficulties the only way forward will be to full state control" (page 150).

VIOLENCE

Smullen touches briefly on the question of violence. He describes the British military presence in the North as symbolic rather than substantial. His party categorically reject terror and violence as a means to achieve state power. He does however uphold the right of the workingclass, having achieved state power to protect itself by force against the terror of individualism. In this view, the overthrow of the coercive arm of the capitalist state is to be achieved as obscurely — and as readily — as the achievement of state socialism was i.e. through the good offices of the monopolies. Or perhaps Sinn Fein the Workers Party, in their awe of progressive capitalism hope that in time of crisis these architects of the Irish Industrial Revolution will turn ardent left advocates for an alternative economic solution? The IIR concede a play of force. "We do not envisage withdrawal from the EEC as a prerequisite of our economic plans . . . We will force the EEC to assist in the aim of Full Employment within the territory (my italics) of Ireland." (p. 126). Grim humour indeed.

DENOUNCING SOVEREIGNTY

This declaration of intent is an absolute denunciation of Irish sovereignty. A party claiming allegiance with Connolly would do well to note his first public statement on behalf of the IRSP. "The struggle for Irish Freedom has two aspects. It is national and it is social. The national ideal can never be realised until Ireland stands forth before the world as a nation free and independent. It is social and economic because no matter what the form of government may be, as soon as one class own as private property the land and instruments of labour from which mankind derive their substance, that class will always have it in their power to plunder and enslave the remainder of their fellow creatures."

PRO-IMPERIALIST

The Irish Industrial Revolution is pro-imperialist — a comment which the Research Section will take as a compliment. The justification for this position rests on a 'scientific socialist' re-appraisal of Irish history contained in Part I of the document. "The Road to Underdevelopment 1770-1976" relies on historical distortion, pseudo Marxism and vulgar invective to make its point. The point being that native Irish capitalism, particularly rural capitalism, has always been the greatest enemy of the Irish working class. If this analysis is incorrect and falsely based then the forward planning arising from it — Part 2 'Planning The Industrial Revolution 1976-1986' — must fall. Economic planning can't pass as a vehicle for underhand political goals. It is sufficient here to contrast the IIR's fallacies with facts.

The decline of Irish economic life after the Act of Union is blamed on an avicious and lazy Irish bourgeoisie (page 7). Connolly's understanding that the interests of British Imperialism demanded that Ireland play a peripheral role in the English industrial revolution, supplying and not manufacturing competition, but rather a source of cheap food and a pool of unskilled workers, is distorted to support this claim. FACT: In 1780 a flourishing cotton industry existed in Ireland, with cotton spinning water mills operating in Cork, Slane and Malahide. These mills were often linked with capital intensive fabric printing processes. Drumcondra, Ballsbridge and Rathgar existed as printing villages for linen and were instrumental in developing the sophisticated cylinder printing process. A 12½% tariff was imposed in 1787 to protect this industry. Thedisarming of this protection in 1808-16 and 1823-24 was chiefly responsible for its decimation.

EEC CAUSES UNEMPLOYMENT

Connolly, the IIR suggest, approved the Act of Union and by extension would have welcomed the EEC (page 7). The EEC it is implied creates employment. FACT: members of Sinn Fein active in opposing EEC membership predicted and were proved correct in asserting that the EEC would create massive redundancies in the food processing, confectionary, textiles, clothing, footwear, furniture and car assembly industries.

THE FAMINE

The IIR vacillates between attributing the Great Famine of 1847 to an act of God and blaming the weak and incompetent native bourgeoisie for the emigration of those who did not starve (page 13). FACT: The reliance on potatoes as a stable food resulted from the sale of crops to pay the rent. The excellent yield from potatoes resulted in early marriages and the population explosion in pre-Famine Ireland. This growing population lived on subdivided plots. This system of land tenure proved disastrous because the plots were held on an 11 month lease basis and the tenants had thus no incentive to improve their holdings.

Finally, the Famine was not an inevitable long term prospect (page 13). The discovery and use of Bluestone eradicated the lethal American blight. The IIR glibly asserts that human suffering could have been alleviated by a relaxation of capitalist economics (page 13). FACT: The catastrophic events after 1846 can be firmly laid at the door of British political domination in Irish life. From 1846 onwards the Whig government adhered strictly to the principles of free trade and private enterprise. Russell, the Prime Minister, insisted that employment, not food, be provided, that relief schemes be paid for locally. Penal workhouse regulations left thousands of others without relief.

Nor would the option of employment in industry have alleviated the distress greatly (page 13). FACT: the areas of highest emigration were South-East Ulster and the Northern midlands which had been weaving areas and therefore integrated into the money-crop economy.

This book-review will be concluded in the next issue of the *Starry Plough*

Ferenka: interview

Starry Plough: Since Ferenka first opened it has been reported as being plagued by strikes. Why?

Philip Byrne: Firstly it has been widely reported that there have been 25 strikes there since it opened — this is not so. There have been approximately six. The rest took place during the building of the factory, yet they seem determined to blame us for them, 'though we weren't even there. The other strikes were caused by low wages, bad working conditions and problems relating to working a four-cycle shift.

Starry Plough: What has management done to resolve these problems?

Philip Byrne: Management preferred to hold grudges against people rather than try to solve the problems. Their attitude seems to be very childish in dealing with people.

Starry Plough: What has been your main complaint with the ITGWU?

Philip Byrne: Never getting a straight answer from them.

Starry Plough: The decision to join the M.P.G.W.U. — when was it taken and by whom?

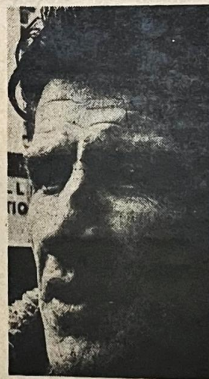
Philip Byrne: At the start of the strike a meeting was held in the Savoy in Limerick at which shop stewards offered the men the choice of an alternative union — 426 out of 450 opted for the MPGWU.

Starry Plough: What can the MPGWU offer you that the ITGWU cannot?

Philip Byrne: The MPGWU has the trust of the men that it will not make any agreements with management behind our backs.

Starry Plough: There are two disputes in Ferenka at the moment, one with management, one inter-union. How will you resolve them?

Philip Byrne: Quite simply — a full return of all workers without



Mr Philip Byrne, chairman of the Shop Stewards' committee

victimisation and representation by the union of their choice.

Starry Plough: Management has been very critical of you personally. Why?

Philip Byrne: Because of my position as chief shop steward and the trust the men have in me.

Starry Plough: It is reported that rules in the factory are very strict. Can you give us an example?

Philip Byrne: Ever since the strike began when our members tried to get their own money out of the Ferenka Savings Club they were asked for their cards. The rules state that money is paid only at Christmas or when workers leave. Management is prepared to sack its workers before they will give them back their own money.

Starry Plough: How do you see the long term situation developing at the factory?

Philip Byrne: All we want is to work with dignity for a living wage — something which we should have a right to.

IRSP FIRST INVOLVED AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IN IRELAND

The following press release was issued by the IRSP to the national media. Only a few lines were carried by the Irish Times.

The Ard Comhairle of the Irish Republican Socialist Party reject the Committee of Inquiry recently established by Gerry Collins, Minister for Justice, as being impartial or that it can deal adequately with the whole Garda brutality issue.

IRSP FIRST EXPOSED TORTURE

The IRSP have consistently called for a public impartial inquiry to deal with the whole matter. This has also been supported by Amnesty International in its submissions to the present government. However, following the IRSP expose of brutality, torture and false imprisonment in April-May 1976, Amnesty International wrote to Liam Cosgrave requesting "a full independent investigation" although this was never initiated. This followed IRSP claims that besides the Garda brutality there existed a state conspiracy to destroy the IRSP as a political party. The IRSP have substantial evidence to back up this claim, a fact that has been practically ignored by the media.

GARVEY TO RESIGN

The Committee set up by Collins will not investigate the legitimacy of the claims of brutality nor the existence of a state conspiracy to destroy a legitimate registered political party. Its only function is to provide safeguards against possible ill-treatment in the future. The man who has always been responsible for prosecuting the Gardaí if they were involved in brutality, but who has consistently failed to do so, has been left in charge of this function. Obviously this is unsatisfactory. While the IRSP has information Commissioner Garvey is seriously considering resigning before December the IRSP is not interested in helping to provide political patsies or fall guys.

COVER-UP

There is an urgent need for an impartial public inquiry and depending on the results, the prosecution of all Gardaí involved in brutality as well as their political masters who supported the brutality by direct instructions. This whole issue is building up to Watgate proportions with as obvious a cover-up.

For the future, it must be accepted in law that statements signed in the absence of solicitors will be inadmissible as evidence in the courts. There must also be a re-opening of all cases where brutality is alleged, where statements were accepted by the courts and where Gardaí accused of brutality now were then involved.

Continued on page 5

political prisoners backed by international law

Little publicity has been given to the continuous protests throughout the Six Counties over the issue of political status. It is not widely known outside the 6 Cos. that prisoners in Long Kesh's with the outside world. In some cases prisoners have been forced to endure this treatment for more than a year. Why? Because they are demanding political status while the Northern Ireland Office and the British government, contrary to the Geneva Convention, are determined to force them to accept criminal status.

THE FACTS

The following are some of the conditions they have been forced to endure:

1. No clothes or bedding allowed in the cells and, in many cases, the removal of blankets, forcing prisoners to remain naked until the evening when the mattress and bedding are returned till the following morning;
2. No exercise in fresh air.
3. Solitary confinement

Furthermore they believe that with the eventual inevitable withdrawal of British interests they should be granted an amnesty as is common the world over in such an event. Accepting the criminal label could effect such an amnesty.

The Geneva Convention, which outlaws various methods of war and stipulates the rights of captured soldiers, has had two new clauses added to it. Britain and Ireland have refused to sign this declaration which states that captured guerrillas in a conflict are entitled to prisoner of war status.

All of those imprisoned in the H-Block have been jailed for what Britain calls 'terrorist-type offences'. Such 'offences' are only carried out by politically motivated people — guerrillas. We are not saying, by any means, that everyone in the H-Block — or any other prison in Ireland — are guilty of the 'crimes' attributed to them. What we are saying is that Britain has accused them of political motivation, of guerrilla involvement and has sentenced them in special political courts. Britain must therefore grant them political status or prisoner of war status, whichever is applicable. This has the force of International Law.

We urge you, our readers, to spread this page amongst your friends so that the horror of the H-Block becomes known. Bombard the media, your organisations, politicians and the British government with your opposition. Support demonstrations on political status. Stand by the Geneva Convention and the rights of man. Send donations to groups fighting the political status campaign, such as the non-party political Relatives Action Committee. You can help in some way.

THE BACKGROUND

Following a prolonged hunger strike for political status by prisoners in Crumlin Road Jail in 1972, the Northern Secretary of State, William Whitelaw, introduced Special Category Status. The prisoners and the risen nationalist population took this as being tantamount to granting political status, thinking that calling it another name was face-saving by the British government.

However they were conned. Whitelaw had introduced special category status because of what he called 'the special circumstances prevailing'. This in effect meant that once the British government felt that the 'special circumstances' had changed, it left them free to end special category status. This change was announced in early 1976.

CRIMINAL STATUS

Anyone convicted after March 1st, 1976, was to be refused Special Category Status although they would be convicted, in most cases, of crimes which were the same as those committed by prisoners granted special category status. It was not until the 14th of September that the first political prisoner was convicted of 'crimes' committed after March 1st and sent to the much publicised new H-Block in Long Kesh. Propaganda from the Northern Ireland office pointed to the latest modern design of the H-Block, each cell costing £10,000 and oil-fired central heating. But by March 1977 there was a complete news blackout in the H-Block which has remained in force until today.

HORROR REVEALED

Since Ciaran Nugent, the first political prisoner brought into the H-Block 14 months ago, defiantly said: "They will have to nail the prison gear on my back before I will wear it" and that he would not accept the label of criminal, he has been joined by close to 300 others. Some of them IRSP political prisoners such as Connelly Brady who has been 'on the blanket' now for a year. As they refuse to wear prison clothes they are victimised, brutalised and harassed.

HORROR OF H-BLOCK

4. No newspapers, letters, food parcels or visits, ensuring no contact with the outside world so that there is little information getting in or out.
5. Daily beatings, harassment and victimisation.
6. No religious services.

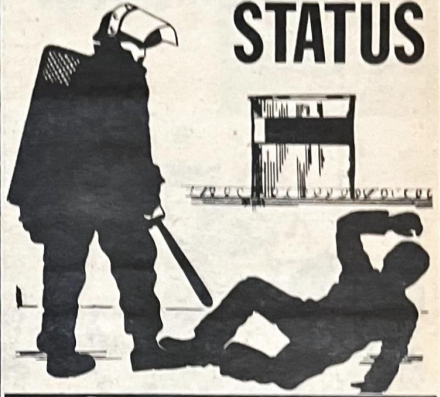
Not only anti-imperialist groups but medical, legal and religious groups are among the many protesting at this bestiality. Among them are people like Fr. Faul who is a well known pacifist and is on record as having condemned anti-imperialists on numerous occasions.

WHY BRITAIN WON'T RELENT

Britain's opposition to granting political status, or prisoner of war status, is because to do so would admit the existence of a war for national liberation. Britain is trying hard to crush the world that no such struggle exists, that it is only criminals who oppose Britain.

Even those opposed to anti-imperialist groups have to admit that they are struggling for political aims, irrespective of whether they agree with those aims or not. It is because of this struggle for political aims that such prisoners would rather die than accept the label of anti-social criminals.

DEFEND POLITICAL STATUS



IRSP IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST PARTY
LAUPER GARDINER ST. DUBLIN 1. PHONE 44177

'brother beyond recognition'

Brandywell Estate Derry

A Chara,

On Tuesday 1/11/77 I visited my brother Tony O'Hara who is serving a five year sentence in H-Block, Long Kesh. This was the first visit he had taken in 7 months, as he is one of the very many republican socialist prisoners on the blanket protesting in the H-Block.

When I walked into the cubicle, at first I did not recognise my brother for he had changed beyond recognition from the last time I saw him. He has lost at least two stone in weight, his eyesight has deteriorated and all his skin has broken out in sores. His lips are full of hacks. In fact, his general physical condition was very weak, this being due to the

total lack of fresh air and a normal diet.

While I am deeply worried about my brother's physical state I am even more worried by his state of mind as he was shaking all through the half hour visit and, at times, stared at me as if dazed.

I should point out that the only reason my brother took the visit was to let people know some of the facts about the treatment the Republican Socialist prisoners are being subjected to in the H-Block and also to reiterate that he and his comrades are more determined than ever to keep protesting at the British government's attempts to criminalise Irish Republican Prisoners of War.

In mise le meas,
PATSY O'HARA

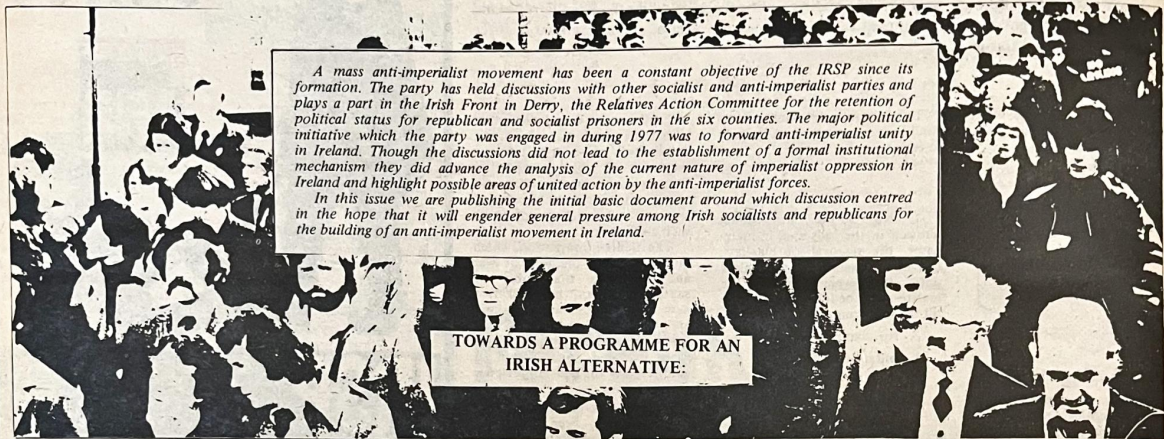
Due to the situation in the H-Blocks communication with prisoners is extremely difficult. The following list of IRSP political prisoners has been compiled by information smuggled out of the H-Block and research carried out by the Republican Socialist Prisoners' Defence Committee.

| NAME | Years | Location |
|---------------------|----------|------------------------|
| J. Nixon | 14 years | Armagh |
| B. Collins | 12 years | Belfast |
| T. McCardle | 12 years | Belfast |
| Tommy McGinn | 4 years | Belfast |
| T. O'Hara | 5 years | Brandywell, Derry |
| John O'Neill | 14 years | Armagh |
| Peter O'Neill | 14 years | Armagh |
| Anthony Kieran Toal | 4 years | Armagh |
| Malachy Trainor | 14 years | Armagh |
| Connolly Brady | 6 years | Craggan, Derry |
| J. Cassidy | 12 years | Bogside, Derry |
| M. Devine | 12 years | Craggan, Derry |
| P. Duddy | 3 years | Shantallow, Derry City |
| Billy Gorman | 2 years | New Lodge, Belfast |
| 'Ta' Powers | 12 years | Markets, Belfast |
| Mickey Fergusson | 13 years | Andersonstown, Belfast |
| P. Kelly | | Westrock, Belfast. |

17 IRSP men in H-Block

THE BROAD FRONT

for anti-imperialist unity



A mass anti-imperialist movement has been a constant objective of the IRSP since its formation. The party has held discussions with other socialist and anti-imperialist parties and plays a part in the Irish Front in Derry, the Relatives Action Committee for the retention of political status for republican and socialist prisoners in the six counties. The major political initiative which the party was engaged in during 1977 was to forward anti-imperialist unity in Ireland. Though the discussions did not lead to the establishment of a formal institutional mechanism they did advance the analysis of the current nature of imperialist oppression in Ireland and highlight possible areas of united action by the anti-imperialist forces.

In this issue we are publishing the initial basic document around which discussion centred in the hope that it will engender general pressure among Irish socialists and republicans for the building of an anti-imperialist movement in Ireland.

TOWARDS A PROGRAMME FOR AN IRISH ALTERNATIVE:

1. The imposed political settlement which appeared to give partial stability to Ireland since the 1920s has broken down. Its failure is apparent in:

- the exceptional severity of Ireland's economic crises North and South;
- the collapse and disintegration of all semblance of political cohesion in the six counties, where the continuing violent conflict is an expression of that breakdown;
- the increasingly extensive repressive legislation which both governmental authorities are employing to combat the crisis symptoms, and the consequent setting aside of all normal codes for the protection of civil liberties.

2. The root of the crisis, in both its economic and political aspects, lies in the denial to all the Irish people of self-determination. This denial of the ability and the material means, to take full control of their own affairs, and direct their economic and political life in their own interests, arises primarily from the partition system.

3. The London government, having repeatedly failed to find new means to rule the six county area through assemblies and conventions, seeks to obscure the fundamental nature of the breakdown of its system by depicting the conflict in terms of gangsterism, religious warfare, IRA violence, etc. and by resorting to direct rule by force and by intensified institutional violence.

4. The Dublin government, establishment politicians and spokesmen who also fear any acknowledgement of the total breakdown of the system that would radically disturb the status quo, echo the official British interpretation of the troubles, apply limitations of British oppressive legislative measures, and co-operate physically with the armed forces which help to maintain British authority in the North.

To excuse their behaviour and conceal their lack of any national policy, the same Irish politicians and spokesmen are engaged in a conscious, determined and concerted campaign of political indoctrination designed to persuade the Irish people that all their national objectives, cultural aspirations, and hopes for complete political and economic freedom are no longer valid.

5. While the denigration and demoting of Irish aspirations towards national unity and self-determination is represented as modern, progressive and outward looking, it is, in fact, part of a reactionary political policy implying a reversion to total economic and political dependence on imperialism under local client administrations, accompanied by intensified exploitation and impoverishment of the Irish people.

The assault on Irish culture and all forms of expression of national identity is part and parcel of the more general assault on Irish economic independence, leading directly to a depression of living standards and widespread unemployment. Above all, the problems of neo-colonial exploitation which Ireland faces, such as the sellout of natural resources, the dominance of the multi-nationals over Irish industry, and the under development of the home market, cannot be tackled without attaining the means to tackle them, by achieving full national sovereignty.

THEREFORE:

- The urgency of the situation calls for a vigorous and united response to proclaim a national alternative to the defeatist policies and the prevailing cynicism engendered by the anti-national forces who dominate the Dublin Establishment; to put the interests of Ireland's people, North and South, in the forefront; and to proclaim that peace, prosperity and reconciliation can be achieved only by the united effort of all anti-imperialist groups and individuals who seek that real economic and political independence for which the first essential step is the ending of British interference in Irish affairs,
- While anti-imperialist parties and groups may legitimately differ on interpretations of particular aspects of the prevailing crisis, and in their approach to short-term objectives and immediate tactics, the overwhelming unanimity existing in the general objective for attaining national self-determination, taken together with the seriousness of the present political crisis, makes fragmentation an obstacle to progress.
- The overriding demand dictated by the realities of the present situation, is for the widest possible expression of the united voice of the Irish people in favour of the orderly withdrawal of British imperial control over Irish affairs, and for the removal of the British political presence in the six-county area within an acceptable, set time limit.
- The primacy of this principal demand is such, that it needs to be raised to the level of a national campaign.
- The shape of any new Irish arrangement to follow the withdrawal of British power from the six counties, is a matter to be decided solely by the Irish people, who will themselves ensure protection of the rights of minority interests, and it should be free from all conditions or provisos laid down by the departing power.
- There can be no true independent status for any future Irish democracy without provision for the sovereign control by the Irish people over all aspects of their economic, political and cultural affairs, including the right to neutrality.
- The repressive legislation now in force both North and South as part of the attempts of the government systems to stabilise a position which has irretrievably broken down, must be opposed in any co-ordinated effort undertaken by those seeking to implement a national alternative.
- No lasting settlement, or true reconciliation, among the Irish people is possible without recognition of the fact that all those men and women who are now imprisoned as a result of the social and political upheavals, are in fact victims of the crisis arising from British interference in Irish affairs. The demand for amnesty is, therefore, an inseparable part of the campaign to secure real peace with freedom.
- In the meantime, recognising the primacy of the principal objectives full support must be given to all efforts to secure the alleviation of the conditions of political prisoners pending their release.

Costello Commemorations

NEW YORK

During his recent tour of the USA, Joe Stagg of the Irish Civil Rights Association, spoke at a meeting of Irish Americans in the Irish Institute, Times Square, New York, which was held to pay tribute to the late Seamus Costello. George Harrison, co-ordinator of the tour, referred to Seamus Costello as "a separatist and a socialist of unflinching principles who never compromised with those who would betray their country."

Speaking to the meeting Joe Stagg said "I had only come to know Seamus personally since I became involved with the Civil Rights Movement in Ireland. In all of that time I found him

to be a true friend . . . of the cause of the rights of man. Often at great inconvenience to himself he spoke at Civil Rights public meetings, never refusing and never making a political platform for his own party out of the occasion. I last introduced him to 7,000 people in O'Connell Street, Dublin on the issue of hunger striking prisoners . . . Seamus Costello was killed by someone who hated truth, because more than anything else, Seamus Costello loved truth . . . his qualities of precision of thought and leadership were obvious to anyone who met him even once . . ."

The meeting stood in silent tribute to Seamus Costello for two minutes.

LONG KESH

IRSP prisoners in Long Kesh held a parade in memory of Seamus Costello in the IRSP

TRIBUTE TO A COMRADE

The wind it blew cold that October as I watched the sad cortege depart
And I knew the bright sunshine of spring time
ne'er could ease the dead chill in my heart,
As I slowly came down from that chapel
I went o so slow to his grave
For us, this great lover of mankind,
I was always, his life time he gave.

His brilliance shone forth like the morning
As he rose up to champion the weak
And our fallers in this island dungeon
covered when Costello dared all to speak.
For his was the voice of the worker
and Justice for all was his creed
and he told us "Arise in your greatness
and conquer their world full of greed.
Not before no hate can divide us
When you fight for the Flag of the Free
Not murder or armies defeat us when
we strike out for Man's Liberty.

And his voice it came back from the coffin
As I shouldered it close to my cheek
"Go on - ever onward my comrades
'til we build up that Nation we seek
and no power in this world here can stop you
The assassin has failed, can't you see,
Remember as you bury my body
My spirit as always is free
and I stride along there beside you
as you march on to man's destiny.
And remember I was happy to trade it
My life for your liberty.

It was cold when we buried that hero
many's the heart-cried with pain
we knew as we buried Seamus Costello
we'd not see his likes e'er again
but his words seemed to ring in the morning
as we slowly departed his grave,
"Remember you were born to be free men
not quailing, not lacking, not slave,
and my work in this life was an honour
to take up my struggle with pride.
Doing that, this cold day is beaten
and I, Seamus Costello, have not died.

J.G.

DERRY CITY

A memorial meeting to the memory of Seamus Costello was held in the Bogside Inn Derry City on November 2nd last and was addressed by the External Secretary of the Irish Front and members of the IRSP Comhairle Ceannair. Also in attendance were representatives from various political and community organisations, including the Independence Party, Irish Front, Political Prisoners Action Committee, Provisional Sinn Fein and two visiting members of the Troops Out Movement from London. An outline of the political philosophy and contribution of Seamus Costello to Irish politics were given at the meeting as well

as the policies and aims of the IRSP. The meeting ended by a lone piper of the Pearse Brothers Memorial Pipe Band playing a lament.

LONDON

Speaking at the London meeting, held in Camden Centre, Gerry Lawless, officially representing the Troops Out Movement, traced the development of Seamus Costello's career through the 1960's and described his role in politicising the Republican Movement and swinging it to the Left. He continued "No individual Irish revolutionary, since Connolly, had so successfully combined the qualities of politician, trade unionist and military leadership . . . The most important single contribution of Seamus Costello was his unwavering commitment to anti-imperialist unity".



who himself paid the supreme sacrifice.
"When ever death may surprise us let it be welcome provided that this our battle cry may reach some receptive ear and that other hands may reach out and pick up weapons to intone our funeral dirge with the staccato of machine-gun fire and new cries of battle and victory"
And when we hear this quotation we must not treat it as a trendy phrase-mongering but sincerely - we must ensure that it is a guide to action. Always remember that much greater things depend on the successful conclusion of our struggle.

THE VERY FATE of all our people rests in this fight. This is why it is so important to be engaged in this conflict with British Imperialism; this is why we are imprisoned by the imperialists and finally this is why it is so important to be willing to die in order that our people should be free. Tíocfaidh ár lá (Our day will come)



French comrades picket the Irish Embassy in Paris following the assassination of Seamus Costello, blaming the British and Irish Secret Services for imprisonment, torture and assassinations.

Photograph courtesy of VIOLLAZ

THE STARRY PLOUGH SPECIAL ISSUE

Seamus Costello: revolutionary. Assassinated, Dublin, Oct. 5th 1977.

I OWE MY ALLEGIANCE TO THE WORKING CLASS

Available at 10p: includes biography and funeral oration and photos. Postage extra.

Irish Republican Socialist Party

Dance and Social

The Tudor Room, West County Inn, Ennis
FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 1978

Michael White & Country Fever

FRANCING BY: BAE EXPRESSES LTD. (LONDON)

Tickets available from:
P. Kennelly, 26 Corrovin Green, Ennis, J. Gilligan, 143 O'Malley Pk. Limerick, S. Makowski, 16 Traderee Court, Shannon, T. Quinn, 4 Thomand Place, Nenagh, or the IRSP National Head Office.

Corsica

Two Corsican groups have written to the IRSP expressing their sympathy and solidarity in relation to the assassination of Seamus Costello: they are the Corsican Party for Socialism (Partitu Corsu Pe'u Socialismu) and the Corsican National Liberation Front (Fronte di Liberazione Nazionale Corsu). The groups are involved in political and armed resistance to French imperialism in their own country.

Portlaoise

My deepest sympathies to the family, relatives and friends of Seamus Costello who will always remain an inspiration to me - Aiden Cahill, Political Prison, Portlaoise.

Toronto

The following letter was sent to Maelsiua Costello recently:
We the undersigned, all from Bray and now living in Toronto, wish to tender our most sincere sympathy to you, on your recent and most unexpected, very sad bereavement.

Jerry & Kathleen Whelan,
Jimmy & Pearl Doran
Jim & Ita Barrett
Eugene & Peg Fahily
Jerry & Annette Brady
Chris & Kathleen Nicals
Joe & Mary Rawson
Bill & Kay Whelan

Nenagh

The Nenagh Cumann IRSP wishes to express their deepest sympathy with Mrs. Costello, children, mother, brothers, sisters and family in law on the brutal murder of Seamus who we will remember with pride "As dear as is the holy Grot, where cedar forests wave, in that twice blessed and glorious spot, the Irish martyr's grave -"

BEHIND THE WIRE

Daily harassment during 'legalised internment'

A letter smuggled out of the remand wing of Crumlin Road Jail tells of the appalling conditions prisoners are forced to endure. The remand prison system is meant to repress what are innocent men i.e. not yet convicted even under corrupt Northern Ireland law. All prisoners in this prison wing are awaiting trial. Many will have the charges against them eventually dropped before their trial although they will have spent a year, or longer in jail. The remand system is used as a form of internment and is part of the counter insurgency tactic showing that the state is consciously dealing with insurrection, not crime.

WING SEARCHES

These happen every four weeks. Every cell is systematically searched and wrecked. Personal property, clothes, books, papers and magazines are removed from the cells. Prisoners are refused permission to go to the toilet and have to slop out into a bucket. The wing is saturated with prison officers to ensure the prisoners make no complaints about their cells. Any complaints are met with beatings and punishment. The prison officers use sheer weight of numbers to intimidate men.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

For almost all ailments the prison doctor orders three to five days lock up. This is designed, not as a way of curing men but of ensuring the prisoners won't go back to the doctor again. "He is a very ignorant, aggressive type of man" according to the smuggled letter.

PRISON OFFICERS

When a prison officer is killed by anti-imperialist forces the prisoners are all locked up until after the funeral, "as a mark of respect" according to the prison officers. However only a couple of weeks ago two prison officers from Limavady were killed by

a train and no lock-up followed. Obviously then the lock-up is meant as another form of repression.

LOCK-UPS

During a lock up period prisoners are granted no request whatsoever: no visits, no food parcels, no mail, no slopping out, brush mopping or disinfecting cells. Food is rationed. Cells are constantly visited by prison officers in raids. The prisoners are threatened and beaten. Various property is removed from the cells, particularly radios to assist the solitary confinement. This is what the prisoners have to endure at the whim of prison officers and can last up to four successive days.

Prisoners are also refused permission and facilities to wash, even before visits. The only time a wash is allowed is before a court appearance. If these are the conditions for remand prisoners one can only shudder at what it must be like for prisoners once they are sentenced and in particular the heroic prisoners "on the blanket" bearing the full attention of the prison authorities in the attempt to force them to accept criminal status.

There is a prima facie case here for an international investigation.



New prisoners' group formed

The Republican Socialist Prisoners' Defence Committee was established at a meeting in the Ard Scoil, Belfast on Sunday 2 July 1977.

Its objectives are to:

1. Provide for such aspects of the defence and welfare of Irish Republican Socialist prisoners as are not covered by any existing organisation.
2. To enquire into the circumstances surrounding the arrest, interrogation, charging, sentencing and holding of the prisoners.
3. To keep records on the prisoners and make the information about them available to all genuine enquiries.
4. To mobilise national and international opinion behind their demands for a general amnesty and, pending that, for treatment as political prisoners.
5. To collect and administer funds which will enable the committee to fulfill its objectives.

The secretary is: *Rita Higgins*, and she can be contacted at 83 Andersonstown Rd. Belfast, Telephone No. 614270

Mason has forgotten what he said in 1974

Cage 13
Longkesh
Lisburn
22/10/77

equivalent of which is only found in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Steve Biko died after interrogation in a detention centre just as Danny McCooey died on his release from Castlereagh, from injuries received during his stay there.

A Chara,

Hypocrisy, both concealed and blatant is the hallmark of many present-day public representatives none more so than Roy Mason, the present Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. By the public image he portrays the ordinary gullible person would be led to believe that he was a very sincere type of character, which in reality is not the case. In fact he is most devious and most adaptable figure in politics today, judging by a speech he made in Westminster on April 25th, 1974 in which he outlined the economic and social cost of the war in N.I. stating that "It just cannot go on, deep seated hatreds are germinating in young breasts. Soon all the young men of Ulster will be filled with hate, hatred against their own kinsmen as well as our own forces" - and going on to call for "an end to Britain's military policeman's role in the world."

Since that speech the same man has gone in a directly opposite course and has done nothing to relieve that hatred or to prevent it's germination. Instead he has been responsible for the building of more prisons to incarcerate those same young people who he pretended to be so concerned about in 1974, while allowing the social ills he talked about in that same speech to go on unabated.

HIS SOLUTION IS TORTURE

His solution is to open and sanction more torture centres like the notorious Castlereagh, the

We have all seen pictures of injuries received at Castlereagh, these do not differ greatly from recently publicised photographs of injuries to the native Zimbabweans at the hands of Smith's police force. It is hypocritical for the British to protest about such occurrences in Africa when they do likewise in Ireland. Lord Carver could be better employed nearer home.

Mason's remedy for the basic causes of our troubles, partition and occupation, has again been to imprison those who no longer accept it and to let the whole evil linger on indefinitely.

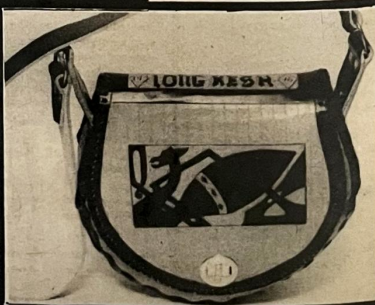
ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF DECEIT

Another example of Roy Mason's deceit surfaced in recent weeks when he created the impression, that while on a recent tour of America, he had negotiated a £30 million investment for Derry. In fact Dupont had revealed their investment and expansion to their Derry plant a few weeks previously, long before Mason's tour of America.

Where has his concern shown in 1974 gone? Anything he states can only be treated with the contempt it deserves and just cannot be believed, that is if one examines his past quotations.

Is Mize,

SEAMUS GREW
Republican Socialist P.O.W.



support the prisoners

You can support IRSP members and supporters incarcerated in Long Kesh and other prisons, North and South, by financial contributions, buying crafts and spreading the word of conditions in the prisons.

Crafts available include:

- LEATHER WALLETS £4
- LEATHER PURSES £5
- LEATHER BELTS £6
- LEATHER HANDBAGS £20
- WOODEN PLAQUES £3
- HAND CARVED HARPS £25

Post and packaging not included. All contributions should be sent by postal order or money order, to: THE PRISONERS' DEPENDENTS FUND 34 Upper Gardiner Street or THE REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST PRISONERS' DEFENCE COMMITTEE c/o 83 Andersonstown Rd., Belfast. Under no circumstances should cash be sent through the post

Paris blanket demo

by R.O.C.

"We want to make H Block, Long Kesh, a spot on the world map that everybody will know about", said five Irish mothers from Derry and Belfast, as they arrived in Paris to seek support for their sons, and all other Irish political prisoners fighting for political status.

Indeed, it was the first time in eight years, the French media were able to have a broad news coverage on Ireland, while not relying on the British propaganda machine, but rather the first hand accounts of the situation. On September 19th at a well attended press conference held in Paris, the women explained the conditions their sons were forced to endure in Magilligan and Long Kesh camps, making crystal-clear the legitimacy of the claims for political and prisoner-of-war status and explaining why they ought to be supported by the French public.

"You've heard what the Peace People had to say, last year, that is British policy on Ireland; now you're given a chance of hearing the other side, that is how the working-class Republican ghettos of the North are the subject of constant harassment, intimidation torture, killings and imprisonment" they said to the press.

The Press Conference gave an opportunity, as well, of launching in France, an Irish Political

Prisoners Defence Committee (Comite de Defense des Prisonniers Politiques Irlandais) which has decided to organise pressure on the British and Irish governments to force them into granting a general amnesty for all Irish Political Prisoners, and in the meantime support for the demands of political status, transfer from Britain to Ireland for Irish prisoners who wish, inquiries on the conditions of the life of prisoners, etc.

PROMINENT SUPPORT

This Defence Committee has been formed by members of the French Comite Irlandais, and various prominent people, two of whom gave their support to the Irish prisoners during the press conference: Mr. W. Ziwiw, solicitor and spokesman of the Movement for Judiciary Action (MAJ), who attended the Murrays Trial as an observer last year, and the Protestant minister Madame Dora Valayer, well-known in France for her work



• Photograph by Voulaz

for prisoners. The newly-formed committee will also launch a petition campaign and, at the end of the year, organise a tour of ex-prisoners all over France.

The day after the conference the new prisoners defence committee helped organise a successful "blanket protest". On the famous Champs Elysees Avenue, in front of the British

Airways offices, the five Irish mothers, wearing nothing but blankets, held placards in French explaining the situation of their sons and of all prisoners; a large banner "Political Status for the Irish Prisoners-of-War" was spread out behind them and the whole scene attracted hundreds of passers-by, not to mention numerous press photographers, journalists . . . and a couple of

political police, one of whom was overheard saying "God, they're really courageous and they must be frozen" . . .

As they had come, they vanished into their van to drive straight to another country in Europe, their next stop in their tour to put Irish political prisoners under the spotlight and gain new friends for the cause of Irish Freedom.

Oslo, Norway

A Chara,

The following resolution was passed unanimously by the Norwegian Students Society:

"The Peace Women" in Northern Ireland, Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan, have got the Nobel Peace Prize. In a lot of countries there have been demonstrations outside Norwegian Embassies and Consulates.

During the gigantic money collection campaign for the 'Peoples Peace Prize' last autumn, it was impossible for the progressive people to get their voices heard in the bourgeois press, and large sections of the population were hoodwinked. This time it is more difficult to keep the opposition away. They now realise, more and more, that the 'peace movement' has gone politically bankrupt, and that it is not possible to keep alive artificially a movement which has got no support among the people of Northern Ireland.

POLITICAL PRIZE

Strong economic forces have stood behind the campaign for the Nobel Peace Prize to the 'peace people' in Northern Ireland. That the Nobel Committee has given into pressure of this kind should not surprise anybody, as Nobel Prize winners Williams and Corrigan quite logically fall into the succession of pro-imperialists and warmongers who have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in the past few years.

During the Anti-EEC campaign it was awarded to the fanatic exponent of EEC imperialism, Willie Brandt; in 1973 during the American terror bombing campaign of Vietnam, it was awarded to the exponent of US imperialism, Henry Kissinger; in 1974, it was awarded to the exponent of Japanese militarism in the post-war period, Eisaku Sato.

MOUTH PIECES

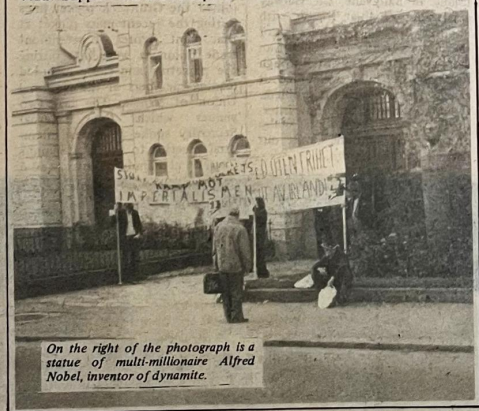
These people have all had in common that they were the true mouthpieces of capitalism in their own countries. It is the same capitalist forces that are interested in turning back to the status quo

Norwegian Peace Prize Protest

Members of the Norwegian Ireland Support Committee demonstrated outside the Nobel Institute in Oslo just after the announcement was made that Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan got the prize. Slogans read: Support the Irish People's

struggle against imperialism! No peace without freedom: England out of Ireland; and No peace prize to the hirelings of imperialism:

More extensive protests are being arranged for the award ceremony on December 10th.



On the right of the photograph is a statue of multi-millionaire Alfred Nobel, inventor of dynamite.

in Northern Ireland and in breaking down the resistance of the people there. If they succeed in this, it will mean that British imperialism wins the battle of Ireland. It will mean that conditions there become as they were before the civil rights demonstrations started in 1968 with an extreme suppression of the working class.

Northern Ireland has the lowest wage level and the highest percentage of unemployment in

Europe and it was an El Dorado for capitalists all over the world before the 'unrest' started. After the 'peace movement' began to get publicity there was a significant boom in foreign investments. On their long travels abroad, the 'peace women' themselves even made hard efforts to get English, West German and American big business to invest in Northern Ireland. At the same time they admit that they have already used a lot of the

money they got from the 'Peace People's Prize' last year for granting loans to factory owners threatened with closures because of unrest among the employees. They also say they plan to raise their own industry and in this way they themselves become speculators on the employment market.

COLLABORATION

Instead of leading the attention towards the reasons for the social injustices in Northern Ireland, Williams and Corrigan have done everything, they could to back up the political system and the institutions there, recognised as the main reasons for the conflict. They have encouraged Northern Irish youth to enlist in the hated Gestapo police, the RUC, which has been notorious for their terrorist methods against civilians and for their recruitment among fascist elements in the N.I. community. Furthermore they condemned the just armed struggle which the Irish liberation movement is waging.

On the other hand they have refused to react when British soldiers have been found guilty of plundering homes, maltreating women and children, torturing prisoners and murdering civilians. The Irish people are in their full right to regard the work of the 'peace women' the same as the major part of the Norwegian people regard the work of the quislings during World War II. Their reunion with the English queen - the very symbol of foreign rule and suppression - while Irish youths were being shot in the streets by the Crown's soldiers, was only an outer manifestation of the policy the 'peace people' have been pursuing all the time.

Peace in N.I. can never be achieved by toadying to imperialism and arranging common prayer meetings but by getting rid of the suppression of the Irish working class. This can only be obtained by removing the main cause of this suppression, namely the British occupying power from Irish earth.

The Norwegian Students Society (DNS) gathered on the meeting of 15/10/77 strongly condemns the granting of the

Nobel Peace Prize to Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan and expresses its strong support for the Irish people in their just fight against British imperialism. At the same time we want to express our full support for the Liberation Movement in its struggle for a free, united and Socialist Ireland.

IRSP & AMNESTY

From page 4

It has been widely accepted that the 7 day detention contributed to the torture and it must be immediately repealed. The con of allowing it to lapse so that it can be introduced at the whim of the government must be exposed as indeed it was when it was used to detain two Derry mourners following the funeral of Seamus Costello, despite the fact that the 7 day detention was about to run out a week from the date of their arrest. A point not given much media coverage, although pointed out by the IRSP and Amnesty International, is the fact that the Offences Against the State Act, which allows for two days detention, contributed to the torture of IRSP men and initiated the first call for an inquiry by Amnesty International. This Act must also be repealed. Collins' claim that he is not ruling out a full public impartial inquiry rings hollow when one considers that Cooney said the same, although to this day Cooney claims there is no need for any inquiry.

IRSP TOUR FRANCE

A member of the IRSP has left for a tour of French cities on the issue of political prisoners. He is also representing the Republican Socialist Prisoners Defence Committee. The tour has been organised by the editorial board of *Ireland Libre* (Free Ireland), a monthly newspaper devoted entirely to Irish affairs which is due out soon. It is named after a paper produced by Maude Gonne in the beginning of the century. A member of Provisional Sinn Fein is also participating in the tour.



The itinerant question

No one can claim that the itinerant question is a simple problem to solve. The real issue lies in the attitude of the state and its free enterprise philosophy which is reflected through the community. This has led once again to confrontations in Galway, where an itinerant family came under siege when they moved into their council house and were threatened, blocked and their families assaulted.

The right to a home is being denied not only itinerants

but thousands of working class families. The state, being dependent on capitalist economics leaves construction mainly to private enterprise and encourages and subsidises extravagant house building by the middle class. Private enterprise is more interested in office block building and other such construction with a high profit margin. Not only is working class housing thus neglected but the activity of private enterprise artificially inflates the price of land and consequently house building for the public by such bodies as local government. Even if a local authority is willing to provide housing by compulsory land purchase, conversion of neglected buildings and the use of direct labour schemes from pools of local unemployed (which is rarely the case), they still face the problems of huge interests on loans that have to be acquired to pay for land because of insufficient allocation of funds by the state. Local authorities are often seen assisting speculation by granting planning permission to schemes initiated by fly by night profiteers.

IRSP HOUSING POLICY

It is for this reason that the IRSP seeks to implement the immediate nationalisation of all building land, and the establishment of a National Construction Authority to build all houses and schools etc. on a non profit basis with the use of local labour. We believe all local authorities should be empowered to compulsorily purchase, without compensation, all habitable buildings which have been kept vacant for a period of at least six months for reasons of speculation. The building industry itself must also be nationalised. The nationalisation of the banks, again without

compensation, is essential to allow the government to provide interest free finance for national construction and to terminate all interest charges presently due from local authorities.

EDUCATION ESSENTIAL ELEMENT

This still leaves the itinerant problem which exists due to the failure of the state to tackle the problem except in half hearted attempts to occasionally house a few. These inevitably lead to confrontations with a relatively underprivileged population who in many cases are worried about the fall in the value of their holdings or the upward mobility of their families. The entire question of education is fundamental to the itinerant problem.

PRE-PLANNING NEEDED

It is obviously a mistake to integrate the itinerant population into housing estates on an immediate basis without any pre-planning and a national education programme. Proper sanitary sites in the interim are essential as is an intensive education programme, and the idea of a temporary itinerant village is worth considering despite the obvious risk of curtailing integration.

However with a state paying little interest to educating the non-itinerant population it seems highly unlikely that it will seriously tackle the itinerant housing problem. Their lack of interest in housing the people means that many homeless families will continue to see itinerants as 'depriving' them of a home.

There can be no doubt that laying siege to the Morgan family in Ballyvane, Co. Galway and assaulting their friends with impunity before the gardai is not the answer. While the call for an enquiry made to Galway Borough Council is to be welcomed it cannot in itself solve the problem. It is a national problem, inter-related with education, false property pretensions and our entire capitalist system.

Irish front

IRISH FRONT CROSS-CHANNEL TOUR

The External Affairs Secretary of the Irish Front has returned to Derry after completing a three week tour of meetings, which covered many cities in Britain. In his report to the Central Committee of the Front, details of the tour were presented, as well as other factors relating to the Front's policy of 'internationalisation', at a time when Britain is endeavouring to 'Ulsterise' the present conflict.

SIXTY MEETINGS HELD

The first meetings began on Friday October 7, and the average number of meetings held daily was three. These usually took the form of a university meeting in the forenoon, a polytechnic meeting in the afternoon, and a public meeting held in the local town hall of each city visited in the evening. In all there were over sixty meetings, including informal sessions with prominent members of the British Labour and Trade Union Movement. The meetings were heavily stewarded owing to threats from fascists, and a large section of stewards came from the Black communities, as did many in the audiences, some of whom came from former colonies of the British Empire. At least twelve ex-British soldiers spoke from the floor after hearing the External Secretary speak and voiced their support for the Irish Front's four demands, as well as giving details of army torture and harassment against the nationalist community, and all considered the war in Ireland to be one of self-determination and supported the call for troops out now.

OVER 11,000 ATTENDED

The External Secretary visited the London School of Economics Manchester University and the Polytechnic, Leeds University, Birmingham Polytechnic, the University of Kent at Canterbury, Thames Polytechnic, North East London Polytechnic, the University of London, Brentford, Acton, Lancaster University, Preston Polytechnic, Liverpool University and Polytechnic, Enfield Polytechnic, and many other venues. He also took part in two anti-fascist demonstrations held at Stockport, and Brick Lane East London. In addition he joined the Grunwick picket lines during the recent mass picket at that plant. Scores of prominent trade unionists were met during the picketing and these included leading members of the National Union of Miners. The last two venues which the External Secretary spoke at were a memorial meeting to the late Seamus Costello at Camden Centre, and a

- AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS
- PROVISIONAL REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT
- IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST PARTY
- IRISH NATIONAL PARTY
- MAGILIGAN PRISONERS' WELFARE COMMITTEE
- POLITICAL PRISONERS' ACTION COMMITTEE
- PRISONERS' DEPENDANTS' FUND

conference organised by the Trade Union Committee Against the Prevention of Terrorism Act held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London. In all, the attendance record at the meetings totalled 11,500 and a great deal of literature was distributed relating to the policies of the Irish Front and other aspects of the Irish situation.

The main points covered by the speaker was an historical background to the present unrest, the plight of the prisoners on the 'blanket'; the case of Shane Parry O'Doherty and others demanding repatriation to Ireland; the continuing tortures at Castlereagh, Strand Road, and other RUC holding centres, as well as the need for opposition in Britain to the Labour-Unionist 'pact' which the Orange Tories hope will bring about an increase in representation at Westminster from 12 to 20 seats.

Commenting on the tour the External Secretary said, "It was highly successful, but physically and mentally exhausting. The English people are not to blame for their ignorance of Irish affairs because the media is strictly controlled, and only speaker after speaker like this can get across the Irish side of the argument, which will never hear on our radio. I see on the telly, or read in the papers. That's why it was so successful, and there's no doubt in my mind that we have a lot of sympathy in England which must be organised so that it can express itself politically."

This was the Irish Front's second tour of England during the year, and in recent weeks the external Secretary and PRO (both members of the IRSP) addressed meetings in Scotland's major cities.

JOIN THE IRSP

ANTRIM, FERMAGH,
TYRONE, DOWN &
ARMAGH: Contact national headquarters, Dublin.

CARLOW: Contact Michael Aherne, 7 Royal Oak Road, Muine Bheag.

DUBLIN/WICKLOW: Contact national headquarters, 34 Upr. Gardiner Street, Dublin 2. Tel: 721175.

The aim of the I.R.S.P. is to establish a 32 County Democratic Socialist Republic with the working class in control of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

I want to join

teastaíonn ballasáocht uain

Aim (Name)

Seoladh (Address)

CO. DERRY: Contact IRSP, 8 Chamberlain Street, Derry City.

ENGLAND: Contact London Support Group, Box 6, 182 Upper Street, London N.1.

ENNIS: Contact Patrick Kennelley, 26 Corrovin Green.

LIMERICK: Contact John Gilligin, 143 O'Malley Park.

SHANNÓN: Contact Stella Makowski, 16 Traderee Court.