

# SAOIRSE

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Twelve years ago this month, August 9, 1971, the British Government and its state forces in Northern Ireland, alarmed at the threat to their power precipitated by protestors demanding civil rights for Catholics, gave the go-ahead for British troops to pick up at random and lock away indefinitely whosoever they saw fit. Ciaran Marron, now living at Raglan in the Waikato, was a 15-year-old in Belfast at the time:

**INSIDE: Violence against Armagh women P.O.W.s**



"There was this terrible fear" — Ciaran Marron.

“ That night of the first swoop, August 8-9, we were living in the Clonard area on the Lower Falls. About four o'clock in the morning I woke up hearing noises outside, people shouting. I looked out my window and I could see two British Army foot patrols and a group of people standing round them, shouting at them and calling them all kinds of names.

I got dressed to find out what was going on and just as I got out on the street about 20 young fellows came out throwing bricks and bottles and the soldiers started to retreat. I asked a group of women standing nearby what was going on and they started to cry and carry on and say the soldiers had burst into their homes and taken

their sons and husbands. I thought it was just a normal raiding party.

About an hour later I was hanging round talking about what'd been going on when this car came round with a loud-hailer poking out the window

**At three o'clock on the morning of August 9, 1971, British soldiers began arresting 342 "politically dangerous men". Not a single Loyalist was picked up. One of the 342 was a blind man of 77. Two of the 342 were Protestant — both of them known Republican sympathisers.**

saying, 'Internment — it's official! Internment — it's official!' That's all they said, they never stopped to ex-

plain, they just drove round every street screaming this out and then drove on out of the area. Well I thought, what the hell does that mean? None of my mates knew.

So I raced home and woke up my da' and said to him, there's this car going round screaming about internment and he nearly had a fit, jumped out of bed, got everyone in the house up and explained what it was about, that if you were thought to be suspicious you could be picked up by the soldiers and jailed without any sort of trial. Well the whole house got angry.

I headed out on to the streets again and the crowds were getting bigger and the soldiers attempted to come into the area again with armoured

## A MIDSUMMER MADNESS

12th July is Orangemen's day in Northern Ireland, the day that sectarianism is flaunted openly in the streets of Belfast and all the bigotry and hatred spews forth from dedicated Loyalists to the British Crown onto those unfortunates of the Catholic minority who are unable, for various reasons, to leave town for a few days. On the night of the Eleventh, huge bonfires are lit in the streets and hundreds gather around them to drink and dance and sing, chanting anti-Catholic slogans and arousing deep Loyalist feelings.

The 1983 celebrations were marked as usual by drunken youths going on the rampage and attacking Catholic homes in

predominantly Protestant areas. Several houses were set on fire and much damage was done to shops along the route. Taunting and terrorising the "Taigs" goes on until the early hours of the morning when the crowds disperse to snatch a few hours sleep before final preparations for the Big March. By 10a.m. on the morning of the 12th nearly threehundred Orange Lodges and numerous bands have gathered from all over the North and thousands of Loyalists are lining the streets in excited anticipation for the start of the march. Union Jacks flutter from every Loyalist window and the streets are hung with gay bunting giving the whole city an air of festivity.

To the casual observer it is a day of great jollity and warmth and seems far removed from the troubles that one hears about so often. But to look beneath the surface it doesn't take long to realise that the annual parade of Orangemen to mark King

William's victory over King James at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 is but a militant demonstration of Protestant power and the Orange Order's determination to retain that power at the expense of the democratic rights of one-third of the population of Northern Ireland.

So, it is over for another year and the Catholic Population can sleep a little easier in their beds. But who knows what may happen next year when the whole ghastly business starts up again and the month of July brings nothing but fear and terror into the lives of the Catholic minority of the North. Each year the 12th of July is marked by more violence and vandalism stirred up by the Orange Order and one can only stand by in amazement at the mentality of a Government that allows it to continue.

**P. Mullane  
Auckland.**

## IS E D'FHOCAIL FEIN É / YOUR OWN WORDS

We invite readers to contribute to Saoirse In particular letters to the editor, items of local news and news from Ireland. Write "Editor", P.O. Box 50466, Porirua.

### A Chara,

Please accept my subscription for the year and my congratulations for a provocative and hard-hitting publication. I would like to use this opportunity to appeal to other readers for assistance with my research on the Irish in New Zealand c1840-1921. The Irish contribution to the development of the young colony and the emerging nation was significant and has long been unfairly neglected. The lack of a proper study of their social experience is partly due to the absence of adequate historical material — letters and diaries of immigrants and their children, personal reminiscences of pioneering days, cuttings from old newspapers, membership material of Irish patriotic organizations, old photographs. I would welcome any advice or assistance in my search for such vital data and can assure strict confidentiality in its use. It is surely time that this fascinating chapter in our history was written.

Yours sincerely,  
**Rory Sweetman  
C/o History Department  
Auckland University.**

### A Chara,

I was intrigued by Vincent O'Sullivan's attempt to come to terms with our Irish heritage, or more correctly, the lack of it (N.Z. Listener, March 12, 1983). He has captured well the anglicisation of the older generation of Irish descendants who were at pains to be royalist and loyalist in their sympathies.

The absence of the Irish-New Zealander compared to the Irish-American of the United States says much about our

society. In New Zealand a great homogenizing WASPness has prevailed. The ethnic richness of North America or Australia is lacking, apart from the Polynesian element.

It is no accident that in our ignorance, we make racist jokes about the Irish and the Maori. Our media invariably propounds the British view of Ireland, never apparently, considering it necessary to balance such biased imperialistic material (often merely propaganda) with news and comment from the Republic or republican elements in Northern Ireland.

It seems that the only New Zealanders who mention that they possess Irish ancestry are the Catholics. The protestants quickly appear to lose their Irishness. I would agree with O'Sullivan that an Irish sub-culture does not exist in New Zealand. However he omits to mention the importance of the Irish in the Catholic Church and their heroic efforts to maintain separate school and welfare systems.

Lastly, it may be of interest to pass on Irish, Catholic views of New Zealand. Today few Irish wish to come to New Zealand they are more welcome in the United States or Australia. Those few who do get here are amused by our sycophancy to Britain and the royal family in particular. They see us as a defacto colony whose very dependence is totally alien to the free Irish spirit.

**Michael Bellam  
Wellington.**

### A Chara,

I am interested in your heading "Sealadaigh Abu". With the help of the Christian Brothers' *New Irish Grammar*, I worked out that "Sealadaigh" is the vocative, singular, masculine of the adjective "Sealadach", which means "temporary" or "provisional". "Abu" of course means "for ever".

Isn't it rather odd to talk about provisional [I.R.A.] for ever? Even ardent supporters of the Provos must hope that they will achieve their objectives, and that there will be no need for them. There is an unfortunate implication here that some would like murder and "legitimate" killing to go on for ever.

**Ted Stewart  
Auckland.**

## FOR SALE

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# INTERMENT!

cars, foot patrols and we beat them back.

Well, about six o'clock the first buses of the morning appeared on the roads and everyone thought, well... and this bus was hi-jacked and shoved across the street as a barrier. The soldiers came back on the attack immediately, firing CS gas and rubber bullets by the dozen. The area was completely covered in gas in about 10 minutes, we were all coughing and choking. Kids were grabbing the canisters of gas and hurling them back, throwing buckets over them. Women came rushing out on to the streets with basins full of vinegar and water that you'd throw over your face — it took the sting out of your eyes, made you feel a bit better.

Although the area was covered in gas and you were choking and that, you couldn't go home, you had to stay there because the soldiers were trying to break into the area. There was a great feeling of togetherness, people were bringing us out tea, food, to keep us going. For all we knew the soldiers were coming back to scoop up more people.

Anyway, the crowds were getting bigger and angrier and angrier and

some factories were burnt down. Then some big food storage centres were attacked and looted and the food was shared out amongst the people. Nobody was allowed to hoard anything, it was all taken back to the area and shared out. For which the people were very grateful!

The fighting went on all day. Everyone was just so angry. And I was beginning to hear in the background this steadily increasing sound of gunfire coming from different areas.

Very few Provos were lifted in the first raids because the Army's intelligence was so bad. The Provos in our area were getting organised, you could see fellows walking up and down the streets with prams with these four-to-five feet long babies in them covered in great, thick blankets. And when the people in our area saw the Provos were on the street ready to defend them they relaxed a bit.

**Of the 342 arrested, 116 were released within 48 hours. Almost everyone had been beaten up. The rest were interned either in the Crumlin Road Prison or on a converted troopship moored at Belfast docks.**

Well the gun battles went on solidly for three days and there was a lot of people killed. At night you'd hear these battles, there'd be tracer bullets flying across the sky, flashes, explosions, nail bombs, blast bombs, heavy machine guns — everything was being let loose.

There was this terrible feeling of fear. Everybody was scared shitless. They didn't know whether this was an all-out war, whether the Army was

going to stand aside and let the Loyalists attack us again or whether the Army would eventually decide to come in at full force and start shooting people in their own houses. It's hard to describe. It was immensely exciting, that whole period, and I was just 15. But there was this tremendous fear, you couldn't sit and eat a meal properly, you were excited and worried the whole time, you were constantly watching the Loyalist boundaries, you were listening to every news bulletins. On the whole you were petrified by what could happen.

If you could imagine it — we were all in a small area unable to move out, there was no movement on the streets, there were just gun battles everywhere and places were burning — you just didn't know for sure what was going on.

That fear, it's indescribable. It gripped you so solidly, it becomes totally your way of life — you live totally in fear, your whole mental attitude, your whole way of communicating with your family changes, you don't communicate, everyone's in their own little world too scared to communicate...

**After four days of open street war between the Republicans of Belfast, Derry and Newry and the British Army, 22 people were dead, 19 of them civilians. 26,000 families commenced a rent and rates strike. Internment had laid bare the reality of Northern Ireland for the world to see.**

# A COSTLY WAR

**GOVERNMENT SPENDING on law and order, including the cost of the RUC, was more than £356.5m last year, according to official figures**

**The provisional total of spending on the police and other aspects of security — but excluding the additional cost of the Army — was £22m more than the figure for 1981/82.**

But the spending was within the Government's cash limit set for the programme.

According to the provisional out-turn of cash limited public spending for 1982/83, released this afternoon, law and order spending was 0.3pc less than the upper figure set by the Government.

**Court**  
In February this year, the Government increased the cash limit by £11.3 million. For this programme, but the additional burden was offset by reducing the cash

blocks allocated for Stormont departmental spending.

The Northern Ireland Court Service cost an estimated £7.8m to run last year, an increase of £528,000 over the figure for the previous financial year.

The document also revealed that spending by Northern Ireland departments on services similar to those in Great Britain, which are covered by cash limits, was £1,849.7m — £126m more than the figure for 1981/82.

Belfast Telegraph July 18.

KEY:  
An Phoblacht/Republican News (AP/RN)  
Irish Post (I/P)  
Troops Out (T/O)

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27th August, and 22 September

An Evening Of  
**IRISH REBEL MUSIC**  
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Appearing:  
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# PROVISIONALS PROGRESS

**T**HE RESULTS OF the Westminster elections in the North represent a major victory for Provisional Sinn Fein, a victory with important consequences for political developments in the North, the South and Britain for some time to come.

The 103,000 people who voted SF this time did so after fourteen years of gruesome violence, violence of which they are heartily sick and which they want to see brought to an end by a permanent political solution.

They realise that the SDLP cannot now deliver that solution. The conventional politicians were given their chance to prove that constitutional politics work; they tried power-sharing; they tried rational debate; they tried pleading and begging with the unionists and the British, and even a spot of bootlicking.

The hunger strikes changed all that. When the British Government preferred to let ten Irish political prisoners die on hunger strike rather than grant them the right to wear their own trousers, people began to see that the SDLP would never get anything but contempt from the British.

The Republican Movement offered a more attractive alternative, a New Departure reminiscent of the Official IRA's programme of the early '70s. The strategy of the ballot paper in one hand and the armalite in the other offered an extra lever to be used against the Brits if they proved too obtuse in the political arena.

The programme was not just "Brits Out" but a radical socialistic (if somewhat naive) platform tackling unemployment, rotten housing and low living standards.

IRISH SOCIALIST, JULY, 1983

## ULSTER

The Sinn Fein activists who two years ago were stoking up the fires created by the hunger strike are assiduously attending tenants' association meetings and calling on the local housing officer armed with files.

The entry into semi-conventional politics and the dropping of the old hard-line abstentionism is the latest stage in the 'Armalite in one hand and ballot paper in the other' strategy announced by Danny Morrison, now an Assembly man in Mid Ulster, at the party's 1981 annual conference.

Another factor in their large vote was the strong political organisation SF has built up on the ground, especially since the Assembly elections.

### SHIFTED

The fact that they have mobilised large numbers of committed young people to engage in the hard graft of day-to-day political work means that the balance of Republican activity has shifted from the military to the political.

All these factors establish that the SF vote is solid and deep-rooted. It is not ephemeral, nor was it won in an emotional atmosphere. Over the next two years they will consolidate and expand that base with the objective of winning more popular support than the SDLP in the local elections due in 1985.

It is this prospect which terrifies the Dublin government and which sends a melancholy James Prior to bed every night with the immortal words of Reggie Maudling on his lips—"What a bloody awful country".

The immediate consequence of the SF vote in the South is a further body blow to the FitzGerald wing of Fine Gael.

FitzGerald wants the SDLP to participate in the N.I. Assembly

John Hume would probably like to also. The Provo vote makes that an impossibility. The Assembly was already dead — it will then be buried.

FitzGerald also wants to "improve Anglo-Irish relations".

The successes in the Ulster Assembly elections last year, when they picked up five seats and a third of the potential Catholic vote, convinced them that in time they could overtake the SDLP as the biggest Catholic party in Northern Ireland, and thereby present themselves to the British, the Republic, the Americans and the world as the authentic voice of nationalist aspirations in Ulster.

The SDLP competes against them with no money and a run-down organisation. In the

Thatcher will not talk seriously with him as long as he "interferes in the internal affairs of the UK". But in order to prevent the Provos from gaining further ground, he has to support the SDLP and the Forum which will challenge Britain's right to occupy the north.

The real beneficiary of the Provo vote is Fianna Fáil. Haughey can legitimately point to the results to prove that there can be no internal solution in the North and that the nationalist parties (Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, SDLP and Labour Party) must wrest real concessions from the British on withdrawing the guarantee to unionism, for if they fail the Provos are poised to grab the reins.

Also the spin-off effects in the south of SF successes in the North will be reaped by FF in the form of more votes. Although the Provos may soon be in the driving seat north of the border, the policy of abstention (which doesn't matter much in the North) plus their failure to seriously organise around political issues in the South, effectively hands over leadership of the struggle at a national level to Fianna Fáil.

As for the impact on British politics, it is quite clear that the Tory government intends to do nothing, absolutely nothing, about the North. In her purge of the "wets", Thatcher sacked Francis Pym, promoted Willie Whitelaw out of harm's way and emasculated the others in one way or other. But the greatest punishment of all was reserved for James Prior.

He was sent back to sink even further into the mire of Irish politics and to mourn for the next four years over the corpse of his own creation, the N.I. Assembly.

If there is any progress it will take place within the British Labour Movement. Perhaps these results will persuade British Labour leaders that the approach of Roy Mason, Merlyn Rees and Don Concannon is disastrous. The Irish question is one that cannot be solved by throwing money at it.

## Adams Kept Out

**NZPA-Reuter London**  
The Government yesterday blocked plans by Mr Gerry Adams, the headline Northern Ireland Republican elected to the British Parliament last month, to visit Irish guerrillas in British jails.

Mr Adams, the vice-president of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Irish Republican Army, wanted to visit IRA prisoners on the British mainland to discuss his demands that they should be transferred to Northern Ireland jails.

But yesterday the Home Secretary, Mr Brittan, banned him from mainland prisons.

A ministry statement said: "The Home Secretary has decided that it would be wrong to allow Mr Adams to visit because he is a member of an organisation which openly espouses the use of violence for political ends."



Gerry Adams

ghettos they suffer the handicap of their constitutionalism, where Sinn Fein, unashamedly 'rebels, Republicans and revolutionaries,' can score easy successes, such as the recent incident in Belfast when they warned electricity workers not to cut off defaulters' supplies. The electricity men wisely desisted.

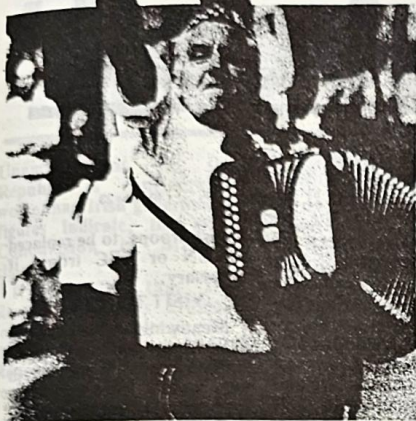
The SDLP's greatest problem has been its failure to extract any power, or exercise any tangible influence over, the British Government in recent years. The deepening green-

ness of the party has opened it up to a new range of gibes from Sinn Fein, who delight in presenting it as a wet bunch of Johnny Come Latelies who have only recently arrived at the conclusion that they have always held: that the North cannot work; that the Border is the problem.

If Sinn Fein continue at their present rate of political hyper-activeness it is conceivable that they could soak up the bulk of the working-class Catholic vote.

THE OBSERVER

# IRELAND UNFREE



## Carnival of hatred

IN THE North of Ireland, 12 July saw the ritualistic celebration of King William's victory over James II in 1690, with Ulster Loyalists taking to the streets at nineteen separate venues.

The emphasis in the press is on the carnival atmosphere of the demonstration — as though it were a spectacular festival enjoyed by the entire population of the six counties. Nothing could be further from the truth. The '12th' celebrations are a time for reaffirmation of Unionist superiority, discrimination and bigotry.

The major theme at this year's 'celebration' was capital punishment. Ian Paisley, Martin Smith and Harold McCusker, to mention but a few, informed their audiences that they would be voting for the restoration of hanging. In typically 'old testament' style the Rev. Martin Smith said: 'I will be voting for the availability of capital punishment as one of the penalties God has given in his word for the punishment of evildoers.'

Prior to the marches on 12 July the traditional lighting of bonfires took place at which effigies of the Pope are still burned to resounding chants of 'The Sash My Father Wore' — all very non-sectarian stuff!

Realising that the decision on capital punishment might go against them, a mob of Loyalists attacked an isolated Catholic house in a Protestant estate in the Co. Down town of Ballinahinch. The *Guardian* in all its liberal wisdom practically laid the blame at the door of those being attacked for possibly being related to an alleged IRA member. There is nothing unusual about this — anti-Unionists have suffered such attacks for years and it is because of them that Catholics migrated to West Belfast for safety in 1969 and 1970.

One interesting fact is that during this incident there were no arrests, and after the mob moved on to a small Catholic estate where the police did prevent them from burning down all the Catholic homes (God bless 'em!) four people who were arrested were later released without being charged.

During the later demonstrations the police allowed an Orange band to march into the same estate, obviously intimidating the residents who had come close to having their houses gutted the night before. Anti-Unionist demonstrations are banned totally from entering the city centre of Belfast without reason.

# Britain

THE WEEK of clashes between youth and police in Derry, Northern Ireland's second city, has further demonstrated the failure of the Tories' attempts to subdue the nationalist population of the North through repression.

Tony Benn has called for the question of British withdrawal to be placed at the centre of public debate. This should provoke a necessary discussion on the alternative policy that the labour movement must develop if it is to pursue its aim of a united Ireland.

Benn's statement came after a week where security forces in the North suffered their worst casualties this year and reactionary Loyalist mobs forced Catholic families from their homes in Donemana near Derry after last week's sectarian Orange parades.

## Advances

The Tories' response will combine a stepping up of repression with new advances to the Southern Irish government to achieve joint collaboration on security and new political initiatives. Southern Irish Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald and Margaret Thatcher are due to hold talks at the end of the year to this end.

In the North Sinn Fein have continued to make political gains for their message of immediate British withdrawal. These developments have had their impact on the labour movement.

Resolutions to his year's Labour Party conference from Brent East, Islington North, Oxford East, Birmingham Erdington and others call for a dialogue between the Labour Party and Sinn Fein, and for a break by the Parliamentary Labour Party from its traditional bi-partisan support for the government's policies in the North.

## Clarify

Some resolutions like that of Hackney North also call for the Labour Party to clarify that it will not abide by the principle that the British government should accept the unionist veto on its policies for the North.

Kensington CLP has also put forward a resolution on Ireland. Their delegate to the Labour

Party conference this year is Tony Benn, who is therefore likely to play a prominent role in the conference debate on the topic.

Benn's article in the *Guardian* applauds those who have so courageously advocated British withdrawal against charges that they supported terrorism.

His own five point plan for withdrawal calls for

- The setting of a date for withdrawal 'two or three years ahead'
- A United Nations peace-keeping force to replace British troops
- A tripartite agreement between the British government, the South and 'a new Northern Ireland government'
- An amnesty for prisoners
- Financial aid to the new government from Britain.

But Benn's policy is thoroughly deficient. The call for withdrawal after a period of 'two or three' years concedes the right of British troops to be there in the first place. Opponents of his plan will reasonably ask why two or three years. Why not five or ten?

Secondly, the proposal for a new Northern Ireland government would inevitably, given the artificially drawn boundaries of the North, mean a Loyalist government with no interest in dissolving those borders in the cause of a united Ireland.

Thirdly, the proposal for a United Nations peace-keeping force in this context would be to learn nothing of the lessons of the Lebanon where such a force was completely ineffective in preventing the terrible consequences of the Israeli invasion, or worse the reactionary role that such troops have played in countries like Cyprus, the Congo and Korea.

Debate grows in labour movement

# Withdrawal: New Liberal call

1P July 23

Calls for the re-unification of Ireland and for the withdrawal of British troops from the country could emerge this year for the first time from the annual assembly of the Liberal Party, writes RAY BURKE.

The calls are contained in a resolution tabled by the Young Liberals and included on the agenda for the week-long assembly, which takes place this year at Harrogate, Yorkshire, from September 19 to 24. The motion has the support of several of the party's seventeen Westminster MPs and is believed to have a good chance of being adopted by the assembly.

## PREVIOUSLY DEFEATED

Among the MPs known to back the resolution and to be keen to speak for it at the assembly are

David Alton (Liverpool Mossley Hill), Simon Hughes (Stormont Assembly and general elections).

Six calls are contained in the Young Liberals' resolution, (Bermondsey) and Michael Meadowcroft (the new member for Leeds West). Those planning to speak against the motion, however, are expected to include Alan Beith, the Berwick-on-Tweed MP who is the party's acting leader in the absence of David Steel.

The resolution is the only one of five submitted by the Young Liberals to be included on the agenda for the assembly. Similar calls for British withdrawal from Ireland were last made at a Liberal assembly in 1979, but the motion was defeated by a majority of about two to one. However, opinion on the conflict

in the North of Ireland is said to be slowly changing within the party in the wake of the H Blocks hunger strikes and the recent

which begins by noting the failure of successive British governments to end the violence in the North. The calls are for: (i) re-unification of Ireland; (ii) a strong defence of human rights in Northern Ireland and opposition to all violence; (iii) a vigorous defence of free speech in Northern Ireland by the parliamentary Liberal Party; (iv) full and open media coverage of the Northern Ireland issue; (v) the government and the parliamentary Liberal party to speak to the elected representatives of all parties; (vi) the phased withdrawal of

British troops, to be replaced by UN or EEC troops if necessary.

## VISIT TO NORTH

Meanwhile, the Young Liberals are planning a fact-finding visit to the North next month, when they hope to meet representatives of all political parties, including Sinn Fein. About twenty party members will make the trip, from August 18 to 21. They will visit Belfast and Crossmaglen and they will be accompanied throughout the tour by a Channel 4 television crew from the young people's weekly current affairs programme Ear to the Ground.

# prerequisite of peace'



British withdrawal from Ireland "immediately and unconditionally" is the basis of a new policy statement on the North drawn up by the Irish in Britain Representation Group at a day-long conference in London writes RAY BURKE.

The statement says that the conflict in the North affects the civil liberties and political rights of Irish people living in Britain and that efforts to solve it should be made a priority for all Irish people in this country whose lives are "underscored and structured by Britain's relationship to Ireland".

## 'END REPRESSION'

Other points in the statement, agreed with near unanimity by delegates from branches throughout the country, called for the repeal of "repressive

measures that deny human and political rights to Irish people" and an end to censorship and the Loyalist veto. The statement also expressed disquiet about the treatment of Irish political prisoners in British and Irish jails and called for an end to the use of plastic bullets and for self-determination for the Irish people.

Before the debate, delegates heard strong speeches from the organisation's president and chairman, respectively John Martin and Jim King.

John Martin, who founded the organisation, almost two years ago, urged delegates to avoid becoming too political. But he added: "I can't imagine the IBRG ever failing to speak out when required and as required on the national question."

Affirming that the IBRG is not a political organisation, he went on: "The IBRG is a community

organisation that seeks to represent the Irish in Britain in all aspects of community life — culture, social activities, welfare, sport and politics. By politics we mean the supporting of the ideal of a united Ireland."

Manchester-based chairman Jim King said that the North of Ireland was "arguably the most important issue facing the peoples of these islands at this time" and "an integral part of the concerns of the IBRG".

He went on: "Any organisation which is seriously and honestly concerned with the welfare of the Irish in Britain must address itself as a matter of high priority to the conflict in Ireland as this conflict frequently has direct consequences for those of us who are settled on this side of the Irish channel."

He called on delegates to demand "the ending of British involvement in Ireland as an absolute prerequisite to peace and a lasting solution".

## FORUM SUBMISSION

Referring to the Dublin-based New Ireland Forum, he urged his organisation to make a submission. The Forum, he said, was not above criticism, but "if the blueprint for a united Ireland that emerges spells out that the majority of the Irish people desire to see a clear separation of Church and state and a guarantee of minority rights, then it may succeed in removing one excuse for opposing a united Ireland which is frequently given gratuitous credence".

# Jobs crisis: 'the reality'

## Sinn Fein success

Unemployment in the Republic is considerably worse than Irish government figures indicate, the EEC Commission in Brussels claims.

It estimates that the Republic now has 210,000 jobless. This compares with the 189,000 shown on the Republic's unemployment register.

Meanwhile, economists at Queen's University, Belfast, have predicted that another 30,000 people in Northern Ireland will join the dole queues over the next four years — to bring the area's jobless total to 143,000.

five is jobless in the North. The Queen's forecast is for one in four to be unemployed.

Speaking on RTE radio on Sunday, the Taoiseach, Dr. Garret Fitzgerald, said that between 5,000 and 10,000 jobs may be lost because of recent excessive private sector pay settlements.

The reality of the unemployment crisis and of the measures needed to deal with it have still not been grasped by most people, he said. Because of the growth in population, about 20,000 young people were coming onto the jobs market each year. He called for "a

corporate sense of concern" with regard to unemployment and said that radical steps will have to be taken — such as work-sharing, shorter working hours and reduced overtime for workers already in employment.

He said that up to 30,000 jobs had latterly been lost because Irish goods are over-priced.

"I am not going to preside over a situation where, year after year, more and more young people are kept out of work or thrown on the dust heap because of the selfishness of the rest of the community", he said.

There was uproar in Belfast City Hall recently when newly-elected Sinn Fein councillor Alex Maskey rose to make his first speech.

Alex Maskey is the first Sinn Fein councillor to enter the City Hall, a bastion of Unionism, for more than 60 years.

With Unionist Councillors practically foaming at the mouth, stamping their feet and bawling their heads off, Alex Maskey proceeded with his maiden speech.

He promised that he would 'work in harmony with all shades of political opinion represented here, as long as it is in the interests of the people who elected me'.

Sinn Fein won 49 per cent of the vote, to the SDLP's 33 per cent, workers' Party 10 per cent, Alliance 2 per cent with an overall turnout of 45 per cent, which is considered high for a by-election so soon after the general election.

IP July 16

## Award for Irish poet

The Irish poet Richard Murphy is the winner of this year's American-Irish Foundation Literary Award which is worth 10,000 dollars.

The American-Irish Foundation was set up in 1963 on the initiative of Presidents de Valera and Kennedy. Previous recipients of the annual award include Brian Friel, Seamus Heaney, Austin Clarke and Padraic Colum.

IP July 16

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## WORK IN IRELAND

If you are a tertiary student and have considered undertaking a working holiday to Ireland, then Student Travel can help you achieve this. Student Travel, in co-operation with its Irish counterpart (USIT) operates a work exchange programme to Ireland each year. Under the programme, a tertiary student can travel to Ireland and take up temporary employment in that country for up to four months. The exchange operates on a year round basis, so you can enter Ireland anytime during the year.

Student Travel also operates in conjunction with USIT, the 'Encounter Ireland' Programme, which is a month long educational programme. Under this programme, students stay in Ireland on a home stay study and travel programme basis.

If you are interested in either 'Work in Ireland' or the 'Encounter Ireland' Programme, or any other travel arrangements, then contact Student Travel at telephone 399191 Auckland; or telephone 850561 Wellington; or write to us at PO Box 9744, Courtenay Place, Wellington.

## PRESSURE TO FREE NICKY KELLY GROWS

Efforts continue to be made to persuade the Irish Government to release Nicky Kelly who, on June 7, ended his hunger strike after 38 days.

He did so after the Minister for Justice, Michael Neoman, indicated that it was open to him to take civil action against the Gardaí who is alleged to have beaten him before signing a confession admitting participation in the 1979 Sallins train robbery. If that action is successful, it would provide an impetus for fresh consideration of the case, the Minister indicated.

Nicky Kelly was urged by family, friends and political associates to avail himself of the opportunity being provided. He was assured that his campaign had won widespread national and international attention and that to continue would provide no further benefit. Following the ending of the hunger strike, 133 Irish barristers and solicitors signed a petition calling for his release.

# WAR ON WOMEN

DEGRADATION & HUMILIATION IN THE  
NAME OF "SECURITY".



## BECAUSE WE ARE WOMEN BECAUSE WE ARE IRISH

Lorraine Nicholl, 24, was remanded to Armagh Women's Prison last August and after two days' constant interrogation 'confessed' to possessing a length of bell-wire in the hope that she would then be granted bail and be reunited with her 2-year-old son. During her stay — her bail application being twice refused — repression in the prison escalated until in November strip-searches were introduced. Each time a woman left or entered the prison she was stripped naked and her vaginal and anal passages searched. Lorraine had weekly court remand appearances and so was regularly subjected to the degradation of a physical search. In the hope of securing her bail application Lorraine kept silent during these searches until one time when she was menstruating, and she resisted. 11 officers then physically stripped her.

"Two of the male officers twisted her arms behind her back. One sat on her legs and another female sat on her stomach. The rest dragged her clothes off, and when this process was completed, stood around her as she lay naked and shivering on the floor. Her body hurt all over, but the physical pain was less intense than the feelings of humiliation and helplessness that swept over her as she lay there, feeling the eyes upon her and conscious of the smiles on their faces. She cried later in her cell."

For resisting, Lorraine got five days lock-up; women are given solitary punishment for such trivialities as sitting on a window-sill. She was again forcibly stripped before a board of visitors and was not freed until January 31st.

The imprisonment of women in Armagh is part of the continuum of women's struggle for liberation in Northern Ireland. They are there because of their belief that the liberation of women in Ireland is dependent on that country's liberation from its occupying forces. Their fight is not only against the oppression of a country but against a system which for centuries has made them "slaves of slaves" (James Connolly). In Armagh Prison they struggle to claim both a cultural and an individual dignity, a dignity long denied them.

For centuries women have been an active part of their country's fight for dignity, but it wasn't until the late 19th century that they began to grow together as women. From the 8th to 12th centuries women had by right many of those freedoms which in later times (and still today) they were having to fight for: abortion was widely accepted as a method of birth control; divorce was available on grounds as broad as hatred; laws protected women who were victims of male violence (if that violence occurred within marriage a woman was granted divorce with financial compensation for injury and her husband was fined for assault).

Invasions by the Anglo-Normans in the 12th Century and English colonisation during the 16th and 17th centuries brought about a decline in women's sexual freedom and institutionalised an oppression which debilitated Irish women and imprisoned them within their homes and their bodies. Not until the forming of the Suffrage Movement in 1876 did women organise on their own behalf.

In the 1880s the Ladies' Land League agitated for land reform, and in 1900 the Daughters of Erin joined the move to promote all things Gaelic with the final goal of absolute independence for Ireland. In 1914 Cumann na mBan (Irish Women's Army) formed as an auxiliary to the Volunteers (later the IRA). These last two were formed because the main organisations did not admit women. However, while large numbers of women were attracted to the Nationalist movement and joined Cumann na mBan the question of women's rights was always subordinate to the national question. After the Civil War and partition, women's organisations and the 'women's question' were submerged. It wasn't until the late 1960s with the re-emergence of the anti-imperialist struggle in the north that a new impulse was given to the women's struggle.

While men have always had the option of taking an active part in the armed resistance, women have been confined by convention and imposed necessity to the care of children and the running of homes. It was natural, then, that large-scale agitation by women should first be centred on the conditions that impoverished and endangered them and their children, and on the conditions that imperilled their employment housing conditions, lack of nursery schools, play areas and rising child mortality were daily manifestations of the oppression that infiltrated their lives and their homes. They formed Tenants Associations, joined with Protestant women, and confronted male councils and landlords. For many of these women such action caused strain in their marriages and a process of change through which they began to realise their own rights and dignity. They had also to help husbands learn to isolate themselves from the traditional male role which was actually a contradiction of what was really happening in Derry: while women, in many homes, were the sole breadwinner, the man still held and expected to hold the power.

With the growth and spread of feminist organisations in the 1970s, women began to organise more specifically to discover and assert their own energies, an energy that for many years had been subject. In deciding to align that energy to the Republican Movement women have seen that. "In taking on the visible presence of the British Army we've taken on the more invisible oppression that is very much part of our oppression!" (Mary Nellis Relatives' Action Committee). Over the last ten years women and girls in the Catholic communities have participated in every area of struggle, organising campaigns against internment and imprisonment, suggesting the demand of political status, and joining IRA battalions to take up arms against the British forces. However, although there has been a general re-emergence of women's political activity, the question of women has remained marginal to Irish politics. In part the reason for this lies in the very nature of the political organisations, in part the history and political ideology of the movement for national independence:— Republicanism has its historical roots in the peasant and nationalist struggles of the 18th century and in Catholicism. The Catholic Church's long history of persecution has made it a powerful representation of national oppression. Consequently its conception of women as wife and mother has maintained a stronghold in the Republican Movement. It can be only from an understanding of Ireland's specific history of colonisation and imperialist domination, and through the struggle for national liberation can the struggle for Irish women begin. For as long as Ireland remains a dependent and deformed country, women's position will also be defined by that dependence.

In 1969 when Mary Nellis returned home from hospital after a 9-week stay and the birth of her eighth child, she found the British Army installed and many of her neighbours packing. "I remember sitting at home with my little daughter — it was my first daughter, too, and my bag packed and ready to flee . . . There was the recognition that the lid had blown off the pot. In some ways it was a relief because we were off our knees at last."

"If people want to talk about violence, what about the violence that reduces people to less than human beings, that destroys the spirit of a people, that takes away their dignity."

Women in Ireland are fighting to stay off their knees. Women 'outside' are having to combat bad housing conditions, living on social security, harassment from army and RUC, raising children alone, and visiting relatives in prison. Women in Armagh are subjected to indiscriminate strip-searches, regardless of age or physical condition, solitary confinement, withdrawal of privileges (visits, letters and packages), daily abuse and humiliation. They are constantly watched for signs of weakness, hugs and tears are a privilege those of us on the 'outside' can share — the women of Armagh must support each other in a silence that hides their vulnerability.

The sexual harassment, the day-to-day humiliation suffered by the women in Armagh is the next progression in a system which holds Republican women doubly oppressed. Forced strip-searches and physical invasion of women's bodies is the next natural progression in system which holds all women everywhere in a position of inferiority and subordination. The degradation "accorded" the Armagh women affects us

all! Their commitment to their own struggle for liberation and for the liberation of their country, and their personal strength evidenced in their daily confrontations with oppression must challenge all of us who sit in positions of relative privilege; must not only challenge us but be for us a source of power and inspiration.

Northern Ireland has long been used as a practice ground for Britain's increasingly repressive government. In England and Wales, under the provisions of the proposed Police Bill, strip searches and internal probing of anus, vagina and penis will be legalised. The escalation of violence and repression must be stopped before it reaches its natural conclusion: the obliteration of all rights. Women, for centuries the practice-ground for repression, must stand together and refuse to be used. Women in N.Z. must join their voices to the silent cries of the imprisoned women in Ireland.

A 'Stop-The-Strip Search' campaign has been set up by Women's Groups in England and Ireland and has now been taken up by the NZ H-Block and Armagh Committee.

A petition is being circulated and will be sent to support the Irish campaign. Please add your protest by contacting your local Committee.

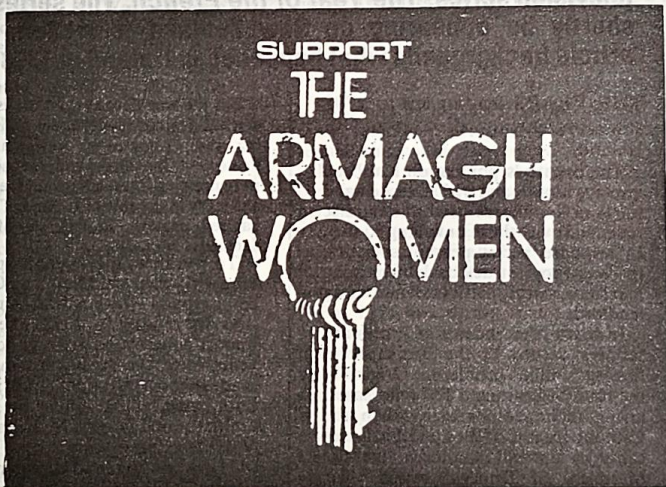
**Catherine Campbell**

## YWCA NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR WOMEN ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN

DATE: 2nd — 4th September  
PLACE: Victoria University Wellington  
COST: Employed women \$20.  
Unemployed women \$10.

A variety of workshops, womens entertainment and a fair. Includes a workshop on *Women at War*, referring specifically to the plight of Irish republican women prisoners in British jails.

Registration forms are available from:  
National YWCA, PO Box 9513,  
WELLINGTON  
Local YWCA's  
Libraries  
Citizens Advice Bureau's  
Unemployed Workers Union  
Universities.



## CARDS FOR SALE

- 'Support the Armagh Woman' (as above) 50c each
- 'Smash H-Block' 40c each
- 'The Rising in the North' 40c each

Send your order and payment to  
P.O. Box 50466, Porirua.



# The Irish Rising of 1798

1798 is a famous year in Irish history. The events of that year, when Irish peasants and sections of the middle class were aided by the French Jacobins in rising against British colonial rule, have been dramatised into a six-part television series, *The Year of the French*. The series will shortly be appearing on New Zealand television. This article backgrounds what happened in Ireland in 1798 . . .

THE YEARS leading up to 1798 saw increasing discontent in Ireland.

The country's population had been growing rapidly and with it the demand for land. Landlords used this to raise rents and evict those unwilling to pay. In response, secret peasant societies, the Whiteboys, struck back by burning mansions, seizing cattle and murdering landlords.

In Ulster, descendants of Protestant farmers, settled by the British, were finding similar problems. Originally they had been granted 100 year leases, giving them more security than the Catholic peasants. But as the leases came to an end landlords like the Marquess of Donegal raised their rents.

Many Protestant farmers were forced to emigrate to America. Those remaining had, like their Catholic counterparts, to pay compulsory tithes to the hated Anglican Church.

For a century Ireland had been ruled as a colony by a British governor. Around him was a totally British civil service and an Anglo-Irish Protestant aristocracy.

The country's goods were kept out of Britain by import controls, its industry underdeveloped and its parliament restricted to a powerless talking shop.

## Allies

The successful rebellion of the American colonies against the British in 1776 rocked their rule in Ireland. Stripped of the British garrison, an Irish volunteer army was formed to defend Ireland from America's French allies.

But the volunteers began to display a marked degree of independence. Following the example of America these Protestant landlords and businessmen were pressing Britain to grant free trade and a say in the rule of Ireland. They organised protests in support of these demands.

To win them they were prepared to ally with their middle class Catholic counterparts. Britain was in no position to refuse. In 1778, they lifted import controls on Irish goods. Four years later the Irish parliament was made theoretically equal to Britain's—both being 'united' under the crown.

But the middle class leadership of the Volunteers grew scared.

Unrest on the land threatened their property. What frightened them more, however, was news from France.

The news of the French revolution in 1789 was welcomed throughout Ireland.

As the Irish socialist Connolly explained: 'The Protestant workers saw in it a revolution of a great Catholic nation and hence wavered in the belief, so insidiously instilled in them, that Catholics were willing slaves of despotism; and Catholics saw in it a great manifestation of popular power, a revolution of the people against the aristocracy.'

The fall of the Bastille was celebrated with a Volunteer parade through Belfast. News of the French king's execution was greeted in the city with fireworks. In 1791 a group of Protestants met there to found the United Irishmen.

Among the leaders were Wolfe Tone, a young Dublin lawyer and Henry Joy McCracken, a Belfast

industrialist.

Proclaiming the need for an Irish republic and for the rights of man, the United Irishmen spread quickly throughout Ireland.

## Fleet

Terrified by these events, the landlords and businessmen who led the Volunteers agreed in 1793 to disband that force. The United Irishmen were banned. To all this the Catholic church and Catholic landlords gave full support.

Wolfe Tone reacted angrily stating: 'If the men of property will not help us they must fall. We will free ourselves by the aid of ... men of no property.'

But things weren't that simple. Tone was sent to France to get help for a rising by the United Irishmen. But when the French fleet was unable to land in 1796, many of the organisation's leaders argued for a rising with or without French help.

Others argued that would threaten property by inciting the peasantry. Tone himself argued not for revolution but for 'a fuller and open war'.

But by the beginning of 1798 unrest was growing. Another French invasion was being prepared.

Meanwhile in County Armagh landlords found a new ally. Orange Boys were formed by a local publican in 1793. Their answer to rising rents was an attempt to drive Catholics out of the country. In response Catholic peasants formed a body known as the Defenders.

Very soon the Orange Boys, or Lodge as they became known, gained the support of both the landlords and the British army as a counter to the United Irishmen.

## Gallows

The Presbyterian leadership of the United Irishmen thus became allies of the Defenders.

But the very organisation of the United Irishmen was a source of weakness. The aim was military conspiracy and each area was entrusted to a few capable men. It took the recruitment of just a few informers for the key organisers to be arrested.

By the spring of 1798 the British knew they were planning a rising. Their leadership was arrested. Despite widespread support the movement was now leaderless.

Troops were sent out from Dublin to disarm the country. Cottages were burnt, portable gallows used regularly and hundreds of prisoners taken. Prisoners were given several hundred lashes to make them talk or had a cap of boiling tar placed on their heads.

The main arms store of the United Irishmen was seized. Their leader, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, was arrested in Dublin. But amidst this confusion a rising began. Peasants in response to a round Dublin rose in response to a bungled attempt to rescue Fitzgerald. Barracks were seized and the local yeomanry routed.

Meanwhile in South Wexford, the Catholic peasantry, frightened by talk of massacres, rose in their own defence. They defeated a force of British troops, even though they were armed only with crudely made pikes.



'Justice Knifeboard hanging a piper for playing Seditious tunes'—a cartoon by W Cox from the *Irish Magazine*, published in the early 19th century

Henry Joy McCracken led a rising in Ulster, seizing Antrim. But this force of Presbyterian weavers and farmers was being defeated by British troops at the very moment the United Irishmen rose in County Down.

The leaders of the Ulster rising didn't know of the existence of a rebel army just a few miles away. The Down rising was crushed too and thirty four of its leaders including McCracken, were hanged.

Meanwhile to the south the rebellion had become not the open war Tone had hoped for, but a civil war. Landlords and Anglican ministers were killed. Tales of the massacre of Protestants were quickly circulated, but the truth was different.

The people killed were representatives of a vicious ruling class. The rising was not based on religious sectarianism. In Wexford, the commander was a Protestant. On the other hand the Catholic cardinals called for the suppression of 'this awful and alarming crisis'.

### Force

But the rebels in Wexford were isolated and so finally crushed. The rebellion seemed over. 30,000 Irish rebels were dead. British rule seemed secure. Then in July the French finally arrived.

Eight hundred of them landed in Mayo. The Catholic peasantry rallied to them. They fought and defeated the British army at Castlebar. A march was begun on Dublin. But with the rebellion elsewhere over, they were eventually cornered and beaten by a vastly stronger British force.

Another French fleet had arrived only to be beaten by the Royal Navy. Among those taken was Wolfe Tone. He was tried and sentenced to death before finally committing suicide. The rising was over. The British treated the French soldiers as prisoners of war, but persecuted the Irish peasants.

By 1802 a quarter of the population of the Australian penal colony, Botany Bay, were deported Irish rebels.

The Catholic landlords and businessmen had been terrified by the rising. As a class they had rallied to the British crown.

### Rebels

1798 was as much a civil war as a rising against the British. It is a lesson republicans could learn today.

In Ulster Britain encouraged the Orange Lodge. They guaranteed prosperity to the Protestant settlers by integrating Ulster into Britain's industrial revolution. Defeated Protestant farmers and workers were demoralised and open to sectarian ideas.

But 1798 had shown that a movement which challenged both Ireland's British and Irish rulers could, in the words of James Connolly: 'make enthusiastic rebels out of a Protestant working class, earnest champions of civil and religious liberties of Catholics, and out of both a united social democracy'.

## HAMILTON SEMINAR ON NORTHERN IRELAND.



## IN MEMORIAM

THOMAS McELWEE

In loving memory of our cousin who was murdered in the H-Block cells on August 8 at the hands of British intransigence and inhumanity.

*"The dead who died for Ireland are Beacons in our night, for their halo around their sacred graves will catch the holy light that will beam on mother Ireland when her sons no more are slaves."*

Always remembered. The McElwee family.

On July 14th, about 30 people attended a lunchtime seminar on "Northern Ireland", organised by the University of Waikato Progressive Club.

Ciaran Marron from the Waikato H-Block-Armagh Committee showed the Troops Out/N.Z. H-Block Armagh Committee Tape-Slide Show and then told of his

personal experience of living under British military rule in Belfast. He mentioned in particular the special legislation which gives the police and army wideranging power to harass, arrest and detain, comparing the N. Ireland situation with that of New Zealand.

The slides and talk were well received by those present, and literature and posters were sold.



So Gerry Fitt is no longer the elected representative of the people of West Belfast, replaced as he is by Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein. Fitt (now Lord Fitt of the British Upper House) first came to the attention of the local H-Block Committees here when lackeys of the Britz High Commissioner in Wellington kept triumphantly parroting Fitt's parliamentary speeches that Thatcher must not give in to the hunger strikers back in '81. I've just been re-reading Bernadette Devlin's wee book, *The Price of My Soul*, and come across this choice tale from the North's summer of 1968. The police had cordoned off a Civil Rights march:

"... The organisers of the march announced that we weren't going to force our way into Dungannon as this was a non-violent march. But they were beginning to lose their hold on the marchers. People shouted, 'What's the point of saying we'll get civil rights when you let them stop us having this civil right?' Gerry Fitt, the Republican Labour Member at Westminster for West Belfast, tried to match the feelings of the meeting which was becoming more angry and rowdy by the minute. 'If one of those bastards of the Northern Ireland Ges-

tapo puts a hand on any man here, I'll lead you through!' he stormed. Just at that moment a policeman with a big blackthorn stick struck a man and the crowd dragged Gerry off the platform and pushed him up to the front to keep his promise. Gerry fought his way back to the platform, scrambled up and said, 'Remember — there are women and children amongst us!'"

And from the same book comes this lovely story of another Civil Rights protest in the North:

"Beyond the police we could see Major Bunting and his Lambeg drums. The Lambeg drum is a large instrument which beats a dull thudding, ponderous note and drumming away there on this mild January afternoon it brought a touch of the jungle to the quiet Ulster countryside... We sat down to wait for action.

"Meanwhile the unceasing pounding of the drums was beginning to get on everyone's nerves until Wilkie Blackwood, a marcher from Omagh with a good, loyal, Protestant background, broke the tension by jumping up suddenly and shouting, 'Hold me back! The drums are getting through!' He made a mad dive at the police cordon, was brought up short and explained, 'It's all right officer! I'm with the wrong crowd! those civil rights people had me brainwashed, but the drums are calling me back! I know the colour of my skin, I know my own people! Let me through to the Major!'"

On such credentials the police almost let him through but he couldn't keep up the comedy and burst into laughter, so they booted him back among the marchers again."

Which brings me to a salutary tale told to me by Glen Eden's answer to O'Shadbolt. The O'Shadbolt and a dozen others were up on a charge of riotous assembly following the Poverty Bay during the winter of '81 and one of them, big smiling Ben from out Avondale way, was addressing the Gisborne jury.

"He was doing a marvellous job," says Shadbolt, "he told them about his Tongan wife, about the effects of racial prejudice on their lives and marriage, and the jury was impressed with the obvious sincerity that had brought him out on the Gisborne march. But then he suddenly started talking about the other part of his background, the Irish grandparents, how they'd rebelled against oppression and fought the British off their lands... Well, I thought, that's the finish of that, the jury thinks we're all in the IRA.

"But then the jury retires, returns — Not Guilty! And this little old lady comes rushing over to us from the jury box and says to Ben, 'Sure it was marvellous to hear about your grandparents back in Ireland, that was marvellous and you can take it from me as soon as I heard your wee speech my heart went out to you! Good on you, my boy! Up the Republic!'"

*Kelly*

## NEW ORGANISATION FOR AUSTRALIAN IRISH

At a recent Conference held in Melbourne, 21 groups from all parts of Australia supporting the Irish Republican cause, decided to merge into one national body. This has resulted in the formation of *Australian Aid to Ireland* which already is showing signs of becoming an extensive and effective organisation.

The objectives of Australian Aid to Ireland are embodied in the two-fold aim of "providing assistance for the oppressed families of Irish Political Prisoners, recognising that these prisoners and their families are among the most victimised of the opponents of British occupation in Ireland, and of seeking support for a united, free and independent 32-county Irish Democratic Socialist Republic, governed in accordance with the Proclamation issued on Easter Monday, April 24th, 1916." It is further stated that "Australian Aid to Ireland is an Australian-based non-profit organisation which, through an An Cumann Cabrach (the Irish Prisoners Aid Committee) in Dublin, provides support for the families and dependants of Irish political prisoners and for the prisoners themselves."

The National Executive of Australian  
Leathanach 12

Aid to Ireland as elected at the Conference is as follows:

President: Les Lambert; Vice-Pres.: Barry Hughes; Secretary: Anne-Maree Whitaker; Director of Publicity: Jack Magee; acting Treasurer: Dorothy White plus the President of each State Branch and three Trustees appointed by the Ard Comhairle of Sinn Fein in Ireland. The latter are Bob Cunningham, Neil O'Donnell and Sean Lavin. The Republican Movement in Ireland was represented at the Conference by Jimmy Drumm (Belfast) who reported on the Movement's wish that the Australian support organisations should merge into one single organisation. He stressed that such an organisation would receive the unqualified support of the Movement in Ireland, and would be the sole organisation in Australia recognised by the Movement. State Branches have already been formed in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia and have rapidly become operative, whilst similar State Branches are in process of creation in Western Australia, Queensland and Northern Territory. Further branches are planned for the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania.

The organisations which have merged

to form Australian Aid to Ireland include: H-Block Committees from Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne, Woollongong, Perth, Gilgandra-Dubbo: Sinn Fein Branches from Melbourne, Adelaide, Hobart, Brisbane; Aust-Aid (NSW); Western Districts Irish Assn (NSW); Green Cross, Melbourne; Sydney, Woollongong, Adelaide; Irish Social Club (Vic.); Innocents Dependants Fund (SA); Free Ireland Movement (SA); Wild Geese Club (WA).

Readers of "Saoirse" who may have relatives or friends in Australia who could be interested in joining Australian Aid to Ireland are asked to put them in touch with the relevant State Branch or write to the National Secretary, PO Box K703, Haymarket, NSW 2000.

State box numbers to date are as follows:  
Western Australia: PO Box 123, Mosman Park, WA 6012.  
South Australia: PO Box 141, Brighton, SA 5048.  
New South Wales: PO Box K703, Haymarket, NSW 2000.  
Tasmania: PO Box 85, Lindisfarne, Tas 7015.  
Victoria: PO Box 182, Clifton Hill, Vic 3068.

# Plastic bullets: bishops' plea

The Northern Ireland Catholic bishops have called for an end to the use of plastic bullets.

In a joint statement on Monday, the bishops said that there can't be one law for the security forces and another for the public.

In the light of the number of innocent people who have been killed by plastic bullets, to continue their use is "morally indefensible", the bishops say.

Their statement also

strongly opposes the introduction of the death penalty. They warn that, in an already exacerbated situation, the return of the death penalty in Northern Ireland would have very serious consequences.

In Dublin on Monday, the former Taoiseach, Charles Haughey, met a delegation of relatives of plastic bullet victims. He assured them that Fianna Fail is opposed to the use of the weapon.

## PROCEEDINGS

Meanwhile, the parents of 11-year-old Derry boy Stephen McConomy, who was killed last year by a plastic bullet, have begun legal proceedings against the British Ministry of Defence.

Two weeks ago an inquest found that Stephen was not involved in a riot when struck by a plastic bullet fired from an army Saracen vehicle.

Last month, the Ministry agreed to pay substantial compensation for the death of Julie Livingstone, the Belfast schoolgirl who was killed by a plastic bullet fired by a soldier in 1981. In her case too, an inquest found that she was an innocent victim. Her mother then began legal proceedings in the High Court, Belfast. As the case was about to be heard, the Ministry settled out of court — but without admitting liability. The amount of damages paid was not disclosed but is understood to be substantial.

IP July 9

# disobedience charges urged

THE Northern Ireland Police Complaints Board has recommended that a number of police officers be charged with disobeying orders on the firing of plastic bullets.

The board said in its annual report that it was considering several complaints about plastic bullets, but added that the RUC deputy chief constable had told them that new instructions on their use were now in operation.

There were 1,603 complaints made against the police last year, down 112 on 1981.

The board, set up in 1977 to provide an independent element in the handling of complaints against

the police, said it dealt with 1,765 cases in 1982, some carried over from the previous year, and action was recommended in 35 cases, 13 by the DPP, 19 by the deputy chief constable and three by themselves.

Of the 660 cases investigated, 543 were referred to the DPP and 13 prosecutions preferred. The board said it recommended action short of the disciplinary code in 15 cases and the deputy chief constable accepted 11. In the three cases, where the board recommended disciplinary charges, informal action was taken in one, in another the officer admitted the

charge, and an officer was found not guilty in a third.

The deputy chief constable preferred 36 charges against 19 officers and the DPP directed 14 charges against 12 officers in 13 cases. Complaints about police action under the NI (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1978, accounted for 162 of all cases dealt with by the board, twice as many as in 1981.

The board was unhappy that the complaints system was not widely known to the general public, but noted that the NI Office had agreed to display leaflets

Irish Times  
July 21

## SAÍOCHTA/CULTURAL

### Léirmheas Ceirnín/Record Review

#### "THE FUREYS"

##### "When You Were Sweet Sixteen."

The Fureys have for some years been one of the foremost of the many Irish folk groups. However it is only through the release of their latest album "When You Were Sweet Sixteen" that they have had any real exposure to the New Zealand audience. The band comprises the four Furey brothers Finbar, Eddie, Paul and George with Scotsman, Davey Arthur who joined two years ago. They are all talented multi-instrumentalists who guarantee to keep the listener's interest.

The album itself presents a variety of music from slow love ballads like "I Will Love You Ev'ry Time" which starts the record and the title track which is first up on side two,

to straight forward political songs like "Belfast Mill" and "Yesterday's Men" (both about redundancy) and the classic "Green Fields of France" a song about the futility of the First World War written by Eric Boyle, a Scotsman, who has been residing in Australia for some years. Two instrumentals are included; "The Lonesome Boatman" on side one and "Seige of a Nation" on side two both are fine pieces of music which feature the flute as the dominant instrument.

The Fureys are noted for their strong melodies which are made all the better by Finbar Furey's vocals. His is a unique, powerful voice which highlighted by his strong Irish accent, serves to brilliantly por-

tray the feelings conveyed in the songs.

However, I tend to think the album comes dangerously close to being overly sentimental in the last song on the first side "Oh! Babushka" and the first two songs on side two, "When You Were Sweet Sixteen" and "Anniversary Song". Otherwise the album is strong.

All in all the album, a bid by the group for the more accessible market, is definitely worth buying and when you go in to get your copy ask if it is possible for the previous Fureys albums to be made available in New Zealand.

B. Casey

## Ireland In Theatre

Stage plays of particular interest to NZ trade unionists are currently being premiered in Auckland at Theatre Corporate (opposite the All Golds Club in Galatos St) and should be turning up at other theatres round the country during the next twelve months.

\*\*\*  
The intransigence of the That-

cher Government in Britain towards Irish political prisoners on hunger strike was raised at the FOL Conference two years ago and has been the subject of condemnation by both the Auckland and Waikato Trades Councils.

Behind those ten dead hunger strikers lies the residue of centuries of colonial rule — "Northern Ireland — the worst slums in Europe and the most modern prisons" goes the

slogan.

Seamus Quinn is from Belfast and has been residing in New Zealand for the past couple of years. His play, *A Street Called Straight*, focusses on a group of young friends in a working class protestant neighbourhood of Belfast. In their childhood and their relationships is revealed those forces and prejudices that shape the current war in the North. It is a savage anti-

imperialist play.



## THEATRE CORPORATE

### A STREET CALLED STRAIGHT

BY SEAMUS QUINN.

SEAMUS Quinn lives in Canterbury. Most of his life has been spent in Belfast and a certain amount of that life he has transmuted into "A Street Called Straight", given its first production (and a fine one) by Auckland's Theatre Corporate last month.

It is a rare play: passionate, committed, funny and reflective.

Four kids innocently hang round the stolid, coal-black streets of Short Strand, a Protestant working class neighbourhood in East Belfast. They play daft games of cowboys and indians, progress to twisting on the dance floors and pissing up large down back alleys.

It is the mid-1960s when Orange parades are harmless bombast and Fenians the butt and disorgers of abuse.

Five years later and the kids are adults trying to come to grips with a war.

#### Passionate and engaged drama

The central character, Frank Willis, has maintained contact with Catholic relatives of his mother's. British troops have been given their head to intern indefinitely anyone they consider suspicious and Willis provides vivid descriptions of the random barbarities aimed at and inflicted upon the Catholic community.

He eloquently describes the nationalist sentiment he finds in that community (softly singing "Four Green Fields" he asks, When did we Prods ever think of Ulster as a field?) and comments upon the nature of British imperialism:

"There always has to be someone under (England's) foot — wogs, Pakis, paddies — someone for the English to look down  
Leathanach 14

upon to keep them from looking at themselves, to keep them from seeing the truth — that they were its first victims."

During the loyalist riots that follow the suspension of the Stormont Parliament, Willis' beloved friend John Clarke is crushed to death by a British armoured car. Willis rebels against the death, assassinates a British Brigadier General.

He is captured, but before he can be tried his cousin, aware that Willis "feared being taken prisoner like other people fear dying" puts two rifle bullets into him. As he falls under the shots, Willis' face "shows fear, but the fall to his knees is exultant; he is embracing death."

Now this is drama, passionate and engaged drama, running at full tilt.

It's the reflective part that is worrying. First, it is a Brits Out play that manages to ignore the oppression, historical and current, of the loyalist state apparatus.

Second, while political commentators will tell us the Irish are obsessed with history, this play strikingly (and mistakenly) turns its back on history and addresses itself to a romantic idealism.

Willis' growing anger in the play stems partly from his view that "the Brit is set on taking over". Now we've recently had the Ulster manager of the touring Lions telling the press that everything was all right in Northern Ireland until the Civil Rights crowd came along.

Willis' sentiments here come close to maintaining that everything was all right till the Brits shifted from Aldershot to Armagh.

Willis sees the British occupation troops

as "a blind force, killing indiscriminately because it doesn't know anything else" and concludes "I'll be against the Brit."  
Muddled abstraction

that's all. There's nothing left but the Brit. It's the only thing left to believe in."

This sort of thinking would puzzle someone up the Catholic Falls Road, London and whose experience of oppression makes differences between the British Army, the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the local loyalist militia quite meaningless — except possibly in terms of firepower.

It's a muddled abstraction that seems tied in with Willis' idealist philosophy: "... I came across a book by a Frenchman and he explained what I felt. He said that a rebel is not necessarily a victim of oppression, that rebellion can be experienced by a neutral onlooker, a man who is only a witness. The anger that he feels in the face of oppression makes him a human being.

"That's why I'm different from the IRA. They are revolutionaries. They oppose the senile hierarchy of the Brit with their own senile hierarchy and call it a command structure. And the Brit smiles at its reflection, it smiles a cold smile and uses them, just as they use it. For they have ousted the Catholic MPs who only wanted reform, not revolution. Me — I'm not a reformer, nor a revolutionary. I'm just a rebel."

It is logical that having dismissed — or rather ignored — history, Willis dismisses revolutionaries, for it is an awareness of that current of forces shaping our lives which turns the instinctive rebel into the revolutionary.

And once you start stepping outside history and dismissing revolutionaries, you can end up confusing the rats with the rat poison.

How many plays by resident NZ writers are this provocative? It is shameful that "A Street Called Straight", workshopped at the Playwright's Workshop last year has taken twelve months to step out of our stages.

It will be even more shameful if Seamus Quinn's play is not produced up and down the country, for his is fine writing.

## Cluichí/Sports

### Gaelic Football

Cook's senior footballers ended almost a decade of frustration and inferiority when they beat Kerry in the Munster final by 3-10 to 3-9. One of the best Munster finals of recent years was decided by a brilliant last-minute goal, reminiscent of the Offaly winner which foiled Kerry in last year's all-Ireland final.

All credit must go to Cork, who fully deserve the victory which gave the county the Munster double. The team was superbly fit and determined to end Kerry's daunting reign.

Offaly meet the Dubliners in the Leinster final. The winner of this game will meet Cork in a semi-final to be played on Sunday August 21 at Croke Park. Meanwhile Galway took out the Connacht final by beating Mayo 1-13 to 1-10. It was a close encounter in which Galway's superior confidence and fitness eventually won out. Galway will meet Donegal in its all-Ireland semi-final. Donegal took the Ulster title for

only the third time when they beat Cavan 1-14 to 1-11 last week.

### Hurling

Once again the brilliance of Jimmy Barry-Murphy assured Cork a berth in the Munster senior hurling final. A marvellous last minute save by Cork goalkeeper Ger Cunningham and a late goal by Barry-Murphy were the decisive moments of this thrilling replay. Cork won by 1-14 to 1-12. The final itself was a disappointing match in which Cork trounced Waterford 3-22 to 0-12. The attendance was only 20,000 — the lowest in memory.

Kilkerry beat Offaly in the Leinster final. It was a mighty battle in which Offaly fought like trojans all the way but in the end could not reply to the skill and stamina of the reigning all-Ireland champions.

### Remembering '58

The Tipperary and Dublin teams which won the 1958 all-Ireland senior championships are to be honoured later this year with

awards annually presented by the Irish Nationwide Building Society and the GAA. The awards were initiated two years ago and are presented annually to the all-Ireland winning teams of a quarter of a century previous. In 1958, Tipperary defeated Galway by 4-9 to 2-5 in the hurling final while Dublin won their first football final since 1942 by defeating Derry by 2-12 to 1-9. Each player and substitute on both teams will receive an award.

### In England

Yorkshire's under-21 footballers made history on Sunday when they won the provincial championships of Britain at their first attempt. They gave the gaelic games revival in the county a major boost with a 1-13 to 3-2 win over Gloucestershire in the final at Halton Moor, Leeds. The revival of gaelic games in England continues with the formation of a London board for the promotion of women's gaelic football and canogie.

E. Doyle

## New Zealand

### H-Block/Armagh Committee Diary

#### Auckland Branch

**MEETINGS:** Regular meetings take place on the last Wednesday of the month, 7pm, Trades Union Centre, Great North Road. For further details phone 769-103.

#### Wellington Branch

**MEETINGS:** Regular weekly meetings are held in the branch office, 25A Marrion Street, 4th Floor, every Thursday at 7.30pm.

**IRISH LANGUAGE CLASSES:** Language classes are being held on Tuesday nights at the committee rooms, 25A Marrion Street, at 7.30pm. All welcome.

#### An Evening of Rebel Music

"Ourselves Alone" will be playing a selection of republican songs old and new at Cosgroves, Cambridge Hotel, Wellington, on Saturday 27th August, 8 — midnight, and Thursday 22 September, 8 — 11 pm. Come and join the fun.

\* Further information on these activities are included in the local H-Block newsletter or can be obtained by ringing Brian 847-102 or Linda 376-668.

#### Hamilton Branch

For information concerning activities and meeting dates phone 255-861.

#### Dunedin Branch

**MEETINGS:** Meetings are held regularly. For times and dates phone 771-614.

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Porirua

#### Christchurch Branch:

For information concerning activities and meetings, phone 438-96.

## National Conference

A National conference of the NZ H-Block/Armagh Committee will be held in Wellington on August 27 and 28. Delegates are expected from all major centres. Matters for discussion will include, Saoirse, contact with the new Australian organisation, (Australian Aid for Ireland,) possible name change, future activities and direction. The conference will take place at the Wellington Committees rooms, 25A Marion St, 4th floor.

For more information ring Linda Wgtn 376-668.

A special performance of the Wellington group 'Ourselves Alone' has been arranged at the Cambridge Hotel for Saturday the 27th, 8pm to midnight.

**SUPPORT THE REPUBLICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE GAOLS OF IRELAND AND ENGLAND. JOIN THE NZ H-BLOCK AND ARMAGH COMMITTEE. SEND YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS TO YOUR LOCAL COMMITTEE:**

**NZ H-BLOCK AND ARMAGH COMMITTEE**

**AUCKLAND, P.O. BOX 39132**

**WELLINGTON, P.O. BOX 50466.**

**CHRISTCHURCH, P.O. BOX 6028**

**DUNEDIN, P.O. BOX 779**

**Hamilton, C/- C. Marron,  
Okete Rd, R.D.1, Raglan**

### INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM NZ H-BLOCK/ ARMAGH COMMITTEE:

**THE PATRIOT GAME** 90 min film on the Irish struggle, concentrating on the last decade in the north.

**HOME SOLDIER HOME** 30 min film on the role played by the British Army in Northern Ireland, Aden, strike-breaking.

**BRITAIN IN IRELAND** 40 min tape-slide show presenting a history of Britain conquest and rule in Ireland.

**NO BRITISH SOLUTION** Well illustrated booklet on the history of British rule in Ireland, the role of British troops, the case for withdrawal. \$1.50 plus 30c postage.

**THEY KILL CHILDREN** Booklet documenting the use of plastic bullets by state forces in Northern Ireland.

\$2.00 plus 30c postage.

# IRA undermine UDR morale

BRITAIN'S 'Ulsterisation' policy received repeated and heavy blows from IRA Volunteers over an eight-day period from Saturday, July 9th, to Sunday, July 17th. The UDR suffered its most serious loss since its foundation when four members died in a landmine explosion in County Tyrone. In other attacks on members of the crown forces and on commercial targets the IRA continued to demonstrate its versatility. Indeed the RUC were fortunate not to lose a number of members in Counties Down, Tyrone and Derry, but not so lucky were four members of the force injured in a series of sniping attacks.

## LANDMINE AMBUSH

Four UDR men died and a fifth was seriously injured in the spectacular ambush by an IRA unit of the Tyrone Brigade on Wednesday, July 13th.

A 700lb landmine was hidden in a culvert on the main Ballygawley to Omagh road by Volunteers. A convoy of landrovers travelling from Castleterg in County Tyrone to Ballykinlar Camp in County Down, for a training exercise, passed the spot at around 7.45am and the Volunteers detonated the landmine from a firing position overlooking the road.

The bomb left a crater 15 feet deep and 40 feet wide in the road.

The four UDR soldiers who were killed belonged to the regiment's 6th Battalion, based in the garrison town of Omagh. Last week's deaths brings to 133 the number of declared members of the UDR who have been killed since the regiment was formed in 1970.

Claiming responsibility for the operation, the IRA said:

*"The UDR is the sectarian regiment which murders, tortures and harasses our people, and for this a number of them have paid the price of the British government's 'Ulsterisation' policy."*

## NEW INCENDIARY DEVICES

A new type of blast incendiary device of a highly sophisticated nature was used in a number of attacks on commercial targets.

On Saturday, July 9th, Volunteers of the IRA's South Down Brigade caused extensive damage to a furniture store at Annsboro Mill in Castlewellan when four incendiaries they had planted on the windows exploded. Another device exploded in Kirkwood's timber yard in the town while several others were discovered and defused.

On the same day, active service units of the IRA's Belfast Brigade successfully planted incendiary devices fitted with electronic delayed-action mechanisms.

It was on Sunday morning, July 10th, that the devices exploded at Gribben's furniture store in Duncairn Gardens, Campbell's on the Shore Road, Jamal Fashions in the city centre, Bel-1 furniture store on the Lisburn Road and Bannon's furniture store in North Street. All of these premises were either completely gutted or extensively damaged in the attacks.

An ASU in South Down succeeded in planting four incendiary devices in the Ulsterbus depot in Portaferry on Monday, July 11th. These were unfortunately discovered by British forces and were subsequently defused.

## ANTI-TANK WEAPON

Two units of the Belfast Brigade launched a successful attack on Springfield Road joint British army/RUC base on the same day, July 15th. The first ASU launched a missile from an anti-tank weapon which struck the sentry post.

In a statement, the IRA report that the Volunteer who fired the missile "was supported by several other armed Volunteers who fired a number of shots at the enemy post before making their escape."

*"A second ASU, which had earlier secured the area before the attacking unit moved into position, covered the withdrawing ASU and then safely withdrew itself."*

In a follow-up search operation, crown forces raided about 150 homes in Cavendish Street and Iris Drive.

## GRENADE ATTACK

The heavy presence of RUC men in Downpatrick to protect the July 12th parade did not deter an IRA active service unit of the South Down Brigade from hurling a hand grenade into the local RUC barracks. All Volunteers involved in the attack returned safely to base.

# Armagh attack

A FIVE-STRONG IRA active service unit of the Armagh Brigade's 2nd Battalion safely negotiated the Armagh city security zone in the early hours of Saturday morning, June 25th, and breached the security fencing of the city's main post office to plant a number of incendiary devices.

The five armed Volunteers, who were backed up by a second ASU, placed 21 incendiary devices and three hoax bombs in Post Office vehicles in the compound. The devices had been specifically designed to fit into the petrol tanks.

In the resulting blaze more than two dozen vans were destroyed or damaged.

