

SAOIRSE

IRISH FREEDOM

UIMH. 7 SAMHAIN - NOVEMBER 1987

25P

AONACH NA NOLLAG

Christmas Sale of Work

Saturday December 5th

12 Noon - 6pm

CIE Hall

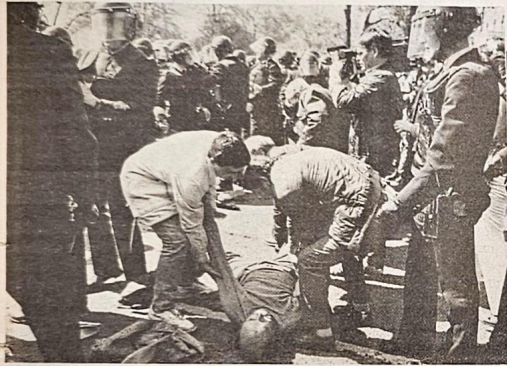
Marlborough Street

Dublin

Proceeds to: CABHAIR

Irish Republican Prisoners Dependants' Fund

Defeat Extradition



• The 'administration of Justice' by the RUC at a Republican funeral.

DELEGATES gathered at Republican Sinn Féin's 83rd Ard Fheis in October pledged themselves to re-double their efforts in the weeks ahead to defeat the threat of formalised extradition to the British occupying power.

The proposal to ratify what we call the 'European Convention on Repression' by the Dublin Government on December 1 next is the key component of the Hillsborough sell-out. The British government has always seen the Deal as an effective means of defeating the Irish struggle for self-determination.

Republicans realise that the stakes are high. Dáithí Ó Conaill, Cathaoirleach, pointed out to the Ard Fheis that "if the Haughey government is beaten on the Extradition issue it could mean the end of the Anglo-Irish Agreement."

Continuing pressure must be put on Fianna Fáil in the 26 Counties, and on the SDLP in the Six Counties, to back away from this latest betrayal. The Republican Sinn Féin campaign of raising the issue at local councils has exposed the SDLP on Magherafelt District Council in Derry - their councillors refused to support a resolution by Cllr. Michael McGonigle calling for the repeal of the 1986 Extradition Act and voted with the Unionists, who earlier had burned the resolution in the Council chamber.

Trade Unions Against Act

Kerry Comhairle Ceantair of Republican Sinn Féin have a widespread poster and leafletting campaign in motion against extradition. In a press statement they described it as 'collaboration with the occupying power' and noted the groundswell of opposition to the Act in Kerry. Similar activity is progressing in

other areas of the country and is producing results.

On October 22 the Cork Council of Trade Unions passed a motion for repeal of the Act. The Planning Committee of Roscommon County Council did the same the following day. Derry City Council has also voted against extradition. They join dozens of other local bodies who have voiced their opposition to extradition.

Neil Blaney's organisation has called for the Act to be amended to exclude extradition to the Six Counties and Britain. No-one should be extradited for any offence to these jurisdictions. Republicans would of course agree with Mr. Blaney's analysis that there can be no bargaining on the issue: "We do not recognise the Six-County state, nor do we recognise the right of Britain to be there." It is obvious therefore that one cannot hand over Irish citizens to the British.

In the USA Nicholas Mur-

phy, President of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the largest Irish-American organisation, has committed his members to opposing the Extradition Act. So too have the Brehon Law Society which includes many noted Irish-American lawyers. In a statement the US lawyers stated: "The prospect of returning any political rebel to face 'victim's justice' serves neither justice nor the long term political interests of the host nation."

On Word of Brit Police

Of the 20 states that have already signed the 'European Convention on Repression' twelve states will not extradite for political offences, eight refuse to extradite their own citizens while seven states will not hand over people to special courts.

Yet the Fianna Fáil government proposes to extradite on the mere word of a British police officer, without any safeguards, while Britain occupies part of our country! All Irish people should voice their opposition to the Extradition Act in the strongest possible terms in the coming weeks.

WITH THE spotlight of media attention this November on the appeal of the Six men framed for the Birmingham bombings it is necessary once again to state that these men are innocent and that they should be released and compensated.

Let us not be fooled, however, by this alleged parade of British justice. The Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas has recently released figures in relation to the operation in Britain of the Prevention of Terrorism Act introduced after the bombings in 1974.

These show that 500,000 Irish people have been stopped and questioned under the Act since November 1974. 6246 Irish people have been detained under its provisions, less than 3 per cent of this number were actually charged and a lesser percentage convicted.

It constitutes a racist decree, reminiscent of the Nuremberg decrees against the Jews, which is used to trawl through the Irish population, collecting low-level and probably useless information, and suitably terrorising the people it is aimed against.

We should also remember the approximately 60 political prisoners who went to Britain as Republican soldiers and were jailed for acts of war against British rule in Ireland - they are especially entitled to our support and affection.

Newry Irish Language Officer

"THE APPOINTMENT of an Irish Language Officer by the Newry and Mourne Council is a culmination and a beginning - the culmination of a four-year process leading up to this appointment and the beginning of a new age for Irish culture and its status in Newry and Mourne", said Eamonn O Mathúna, Cathaoirleach, Coiste na Gaeilge, in welcoming Belfastman Maolcholaim Scot - the first such officer appointed in Ulster - to Newry last September.

The Irish language committee of Newry and Mourne is also campaigning for bilingual road signs in the area, having temporarily erected one on the main Dublin road at Killeen earlier in the year.

Heritage

They have been strongly supported in their efforts by Bearnna Uladh Republican Sinn Féin whose spokesperson commented that the language has survived due to the determination of those who resisted daily the oppression of an alien power which sought to rob Ireland of its own heritage, culture and national identity.

Eamonn O Mathúna continued: "If we do not have the will to save and promote the Irish language, we do not have the will to tackle the problems and face the issues affecting the country at the time. Our will to win on the Irish language issue will be a measure of our will to solve the other problems."

"Real national liberation only comes when we are culturally independent. The Irish language is the heritage of all Irish people, irres-

PROTOCOL

DESPITE the axing of free ambulance services to medical card holders in several health board areas and the increasing privatisation of the health service, Fianna Fáil ministers continue to make appearances at 'opening ceremonies' where local committees have managed to make some improvement in their hospital services.

At Our Lady's Hospital, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim some weeks ago however, Dr. Rory O'Hanlon (Health) and Ray McSharry (Finance) met a picket organised by Leitrim Comhairle Cean-

pective of their religious or political affiliation.

"We hope to make people more aware of their Irish heritage and to be of service to the community in organising activities through the medium of Irish."

"BBC Radio Ulster broadcast ten hours of Irish in 1986, an almost total disregard of the Irish language and culture. The independent media did not carry one minute of broadcasting time in Irish, a startling contrast with Scottish and Welsh broadcasting."

"This is late 20th Century not mid-19th, 1947, but we still have famine rations in respect of Irish culture", he concluded.

Maolcholaim Scot has already reported on his efforts to draw up a panel of Irish language teachers and to provide Irish classes in the area, as well as promoting Irish on the council itself.

I ráiteas na Newry Reporter le déanar chair Brainse an lúir de Chonradh na Gaeilge faille roimh Maolcholaim Scot chomh maith agus tá súil acu go mbeidh bliain fíúntach a chaith-eamh aige ina phost.

tair of Republican Sinn Féin.

The picketers said that patients were left unattended or kept waiting while a new hydrotherapy pool and medical gymnasium were 'opened'. The Sinn Féin statement added: "We deplore this situation where protocol was given precedence over the needs of the sick."

The credit for these new facilities for arthritis sufferers belongs to the local fund-raising committee and the Arthritis Foundation of Ireland (AFI) who between them raised over 75 per cent of the funds.

Glens Co-op under threat

AN ATTEMPT TO close the Co-Operative cattle and sheep market at Fair Hill Street, Ballycastle, Co. Antrim has been branded as an act of blatant discrimination against the people of the town and district by Republican Sinn Féin local Councillor Frank McCarry.

"The proposed building of a new cattle market on the outskirts of Ballycastle which will be privately owned and will be in direct competition with the existing farmers Co-Op is an attempt by faceless yuppies to exploit the present situation for their own immediate personal gain", he said.

Fair Hill Street is the only industrial area of Ballycastle and has been neglected by the British DOE who have failed to improve the roads or provide parking space for heavy lorries in the town. They have instead insisted on building houses for old people in the street which is

completely unsuitable for the purpose. Grants from the Housing Executive to refurbish buildings have encouraged this situation.

This catalogue of failure to plan for the benefit of the people of Ballycastle has been described as only the tip of the iceberg regarding discrimination in Ballycastle and the Glens of Antrim.

"Discrimination exists in almost every British government department, the Health and Social Services, the DOE road services and planning for new houses, Tourist facilities and in dealing with the Travelling Community." Cllr. McCarry stated.

Sounds Familiar?

AFTER THE resignation of Peter Robinson from the DUP deputy leadership, an unnamed member of the DUP said, "Would you want to be leader of a party that confused tactics with principles?" This is a reference to Paisley's 'talks about talks' with the NIO civil servants and refusal to negotiate as a protest against the Dublin/London Agreement.

PETER CUNNINGHAM ELECTRICAL

36 Old Bawn Avenue
Tallaght, Dublin 24

National Draw

£ 2,000: George Harrison, New York, USA;
£ 750: Mick Cullen, Bundoran, Co. Donegal;
Colour Television: Frances Wood, England;
Video Recorder: Susan Saunders, England;
3 in 1 Stereo: Dave Mahony, Cork;
Washing Machine: Brendan Crowe, Dublin;
Fridge: Tommy Rafferty, Tallaght;
£ 200: Kathleen Moffat, Leitrim;
£ 100: Tommy Wynne, England;
£ 50: Patrick Morgan, Newry.

Limerick Residents' Water Cut Off

THE GRIM REALITY of the anti-people policies of the 26-County regime was exposed during the last week of October in a housing estate in Limerick.

Residents in Caherdavin estate who have refused to pay water and refuse charges for over a year in protest at what is in effect, double-taxation, were singled out by Limerick County Council workers who dug up their water supply, cut the pipes and covered them with quick-drying cement.

The Council have also instructed their workers not to collect refuse from certain houses where the charges have been withheld. They have targeted Door-

doyle and Castletroy estates for similar measures in the coming weeks. 8,000 people in the area are going to be affected.

Eimear O'Connor, a spokesperson for Republican Sinn Féin in Limerick accused the Fianna Fáil government of manipulating the local authorities into doing their dirty work for them and called on County Council workers in Limerick to consider taking supportive action with Residents' Associations to combat these unjust measures.

She pointed out that their counterparts in Limerick Corporation have already refused to carry out dis-

PAT McCARRY

Motor Body Repair Specialists
Grantham Place, SCR, Dublin 8
Telephone: 754811

LEABHAR

BROADENING THE BATTLEFIELD
- The H-Blocks and the Rise of Sinn Féin
by Liam Clarke (Gill and Macmillan)

IN THE PAST year a number of books have been published relating to the Republican Movement and the H-Block Hunger Strike. Some have reached the best-sellers' list, proving the great interest in Republicanism amongst the general public. One book which has been largely overlooked is "Broadening the Battlefield" by Belfast journalist Liam Clarke.

Liam Clarke attempts to analyse the developing trends in the Republican Movement in the years leading up to the Hunger Strike and in its aftermath. He himself does not come across as being in any way sympathetic to the Republican cause, "if anything he would seem to have more in common with the Workers' Party."

His book, however, is reasonably objective and he sketches the hijack of the Republican Movement by Adams and his 'urban northern' supporters, the subsequent run-down in the armed struggle against the Brits and the increased involvement in electoral politics which led them into recognition of and entry to Leinster House and the split that occurred in the Republican Movement on November 2 last.

There are some errors in the book. For example he states on page 46 that a motion was passed at the 1978 Ard Fheis which allowed Sinn Féin to contest local elections in the 26 Counties. This, of course, was always Sinn Féin policy.

Reorganisation Document

Clarke believes that the Adams group utilised certain events in the past ten years to promote their aim of taking over the Republican Movement and he says that plans for this 'takeover/hijack' began in the cages of Long Kesh in the early 70s when Adams and company were interned there. He cites the so-called 'Adams document' on reorganisation of the IRA, found by 26-County police in 1978 and subsequently published in the press. This reorganisation he believes, was used to replace or 'box-off' potential dissidents.

Some of the material contained in this document, which besides reorganising the IRA, proposed the takeover by

IRA personnel of Sinn Féin and other branches of the Republican Movement, had been floated by Jimmy Drumm,

when he spoke at Bodenstown in 1977. Jimmy would have been seen as 'safe' by traditional Republicans who might have mistrusted other 'urban northerners'. The concept of the 'long war' was also floated around this time, moving away from the earlier idea of a victorious IRA pushing the Brits to negotiations (as had already happened in 1972) and ultimate withdrawal. Clarke points out that in the context of such a plan the giving of recognition to existing institutions such as Leinster House was a surrender of principle and gave credibility to such institutions but if it was accepted that there would be a long war of 20 to 30 years it would be easier to push through a tactical position which would lead to the recognition and entry into Leinster House or other such institutions.

He gives a run-down on the ending of the introduction of the H-Blocks, the ending of Political Status, the Blanket and Dirty protests and events on the outside, for example the evolution of the Relatives Action Committee which supported the armed struggle into the H-Block/Armagh Committee which supported five demands.

By 1980 the prisoners had determined to go on Hunger Strike and by this time also Adams and company had moved into key positions in the Sinn Féin POW Department, giving them effective control over the communication system in and out of the jails. This was used to their advantage in later years when prisoners in jails in Ireland and England used the pages of An Phoblacht/Republican News to propagate the 'party' line. This had been assiduously fed to them for some time, that in order to 'broaden the battlefield' or as they put it to gain electoral support for the armed struggle in the 26 Counties, recognition of, and entry into Leinster House, was necessary.

What happened during 1980 and 1981 is well known to all - two hunger strikes and ten men dead. The election of Bobby Sands and later, Owen Carron, paved the way for future electoral involvement and eventually led to Adams

taking a Westminster seat for West Belfast. It also gave him the opportunity he had waited for and in the next five years, electoral involvement became an end rather than a means to an end. He became President of Sinn Féin in 1983 and stated that he would not lead Sinn Féin into Leinster House. By 1986 he and his friends had pushed the change through first an Army Convention and then a Sinn Féin Ard Fheis, leading inevitably to a split in the organisation. Those who remained faithful to Republican principle became known as Republican Sinn Féin.

Narrowing the Battlefield

Having contested a 26-County general election in 1987 they achieved the lowest ever Sinn Féin vote and lost 24 deposits out of 27, so instead of 'broadening the battlefield' by constitutional politics they narrowed it significantly.

The book also posed the question of Adams' membership of Sinn Féin after the 1960 Split. He did not at first take the Republican side but came across later. In hindsight it would appear that he should have stayed with what became the Workers' Party as he is now pushing very similar policies.

For Republicans reading this book the message remains clear, the road to the Republic is a long and hard one, there are no short cuts along the constitutional road. Those in charge of the military struggle stand indicted in the eyes of history for their failure to prosecute the war during the Hunger Strike and for allowing the struggle to be hijacked by opportunists seeking a path to the parliamentary woolsock.

"Broadening the Battlefield" is well worth reading. You may not agree with all the author says, but his analysis of the traumatic events we are all familiar with is well researched and clearly enunciated. We should all take notice of the methods used to hijack our Movement and ensure that it will never again happen.

- Máiréad Ní Chaomhín

Eagarphocal

OATH SWALLOWING

THE OCTOBER 12 announcements by British government sources in Stormont that they may introduce a political test oath for candidates in future Stormont or local council elections must be faced up to as another example of distorted British 'democracy' in Ireland.

As such it follows a long line of imperialist tricks in occupied Ireland - from redrawing of boundaries and gerrymandering to property/householder qualifications - all designed to distort real democracy. The greatest gerrymander of all, of course, was the arbitrary partition of six north-eastern counties from the rest of Ireland.

By such means were Republicans precluded from local government by the Stormont regime from 1922 to 1973. An oath of allegiance to the British Crown was demanded for candidates in Stormont elections from 1933 on. Sinn Féin itself was banned by British law in Ireland between 1956 and 1974. Oaths of allegiance were also applied to civil servants, local government employees, teachers, nurses and others in an attempt to humiliate and drive out of the Six Counties those who opposed British rule and the Orange state.

The latest 'anti-violence' pledge is only another version of these sanctions which, in the past, illustrated the corrupt nature of a sectarian system. Those who attempted to go along with these restrictions on access to elections became part and parcel of the system they initially opposed. This, of course, is what was intended.

Equally the new oath is designed to draw Republicans into the web of 'constitutional' politics. British Minister of State Richard Needham said as much on Downtown Radio on November 4 last when he responded to the willingness of Leinster House Sinn Féin to take the new oath. He said they 'are welcome to join the political process. However, their actions in the council chambers will be kept under close scrutiny.'

The rules are being subtly changed again by the British: the 'political process' now means taking an oath before being elected! The willingness of Gerry Adams' organisation to fall into this trap is a further sign of the deterioration that was forecast a year ago. Their PRO is reported as referring to the Six-County statelet as 'Northern Ireland', surely indicating that yet another milestone has been passed. What begins as acceptance of 26-County institutions progresses into collaboration with the Six-County and Westminster apparatus as well.

Republicans should remember that if their representatives are driven out of public life it will show up to the world the artificial democracy in the Six Counties and the necessity, clearer than ever, for its liberation from British rule.

Roinn na Gaeilge

RITHEADH rún sa mhór seoiden clár gur ceart go mbeadh stáisiún teilifíse amháin do cláracha sa Gaeilge toisc an éileamh mór atá ann i measc muintir na Gaeltachta agus an pobal i gcoitinne.

The formation of an independent station, Teilifís na Gaeltachta, which had its first transmission during An Oireachtas i Ros Muc, Contae na Gaillimhe, was welcomed by the Ard Fheis. Speaking on the motion, Ruairí Ó Brádaigh, praised the efforts and determination of those involved.

A series of motions was passed which called for the promotion of the Irish language as a priority with Republican Sinn Féin and to encourage all members to use cúpla focail at cumann and comhairle ceantair meetings and also to use in correspondence, where possible the proper Irish form of Irish place names. This set the tone for the discussion which was directed towards the practical usage of the language i ngach gné den saol.

30 per cent
Irish Spoken

This was evident during all other sessions with roughly 30 per cent Irish spoken

throughout the Ard Fheis - speakers with the cúpla focail agus daoiné eile atá líofa sa teanga - contributing equally.

A call for Roinn na Gaeilge to be set up to foster the Irish language in the movement and to take responsibility for promoting the usage of gaeilge throughout the 32 Counties in liaison with all cultural officers was enthusiastically supported. Members of Republican Sinn Féin will have the opportunity through Roinn na Gaeilge to hold Aeráochtaí, Feiseanna and concerts in their areas.

Cuireadh brú i rith na hArd Fheise chun an teanga a chur chun chinn. Mhol na teachtaí ba cheart go dtosáimís ag úsáid ár gcuideán-ainmeacha agus seoltaí sa Gaeilge.

"Tús maith, leath na h-óibre".

Radical Economic Policy

DURING the discussion on Economic Policy a motion calling for the setting up of a radical movement of Irish youth under the banner of 'FIOR EIRE' was passed.

'FIOR EIRE' would seek to organise the youth of this country in a demand for radical change of the present system and economy which has failed them for all their lives.

As a practical beginning to creating an alternative economy, responsive to Irish native resources and guaranteeing equal opportunities to all its citizens, the idea of promoting self-help projects, independent of the organs of the 26- and six-county systems was proposed.

Such projects could be started up, for instance, in precise areas where the es-

tablishment, north and south are depriving communities of services such as house and road repairs - displaying a sign with the words 'FIOR EIRE, this is a self-help project to provide useful work for Irish youth'.

Young People

By organising young people independently of the patronage system, they would get a sense of what could be achieved by taking matters into their own hands and, it was felt, could educate and inspire them to repudiate the present system and the politicians involved.

By taking care of their own affairs they will no longer have to endure discrimination in areas of employment and education. Those

who reject emigration as a solution to their social and economic problems would have a part to play in 'FIOR EIRE'.

A motion was passed for a call to condemn the savage cuts in the health services, social welfare and local government. Further to this there was a call to draft policies in line with Republican principles, on the economy, job creation and the environment. A further motion agreed to, proposed a two-tier social and econ-

omic policy:

- (a) short-term - to deal with present day issues and
- (b) long-term.

Other areas discussed were agriculture and the fishing industry, areas that could be improved for the benefit of the Irish people.

It was agreed that the Republican Government would compulsorily repatriate Irish investments overseas and confiscate native resources for refusing to comply.



• A section of the crowd



• Geraldine Taylor, Belfast delegate, gets her point across.

Defence of the Republic

SEVERAL motions in this section of the Clár dealt with the rights of the Irish people to take up arms in defence of the Republic. Bob Murray, Belfast, speaking on behalf of the National Executive, stated that the Irish people have always countered armed might by armed struggle and moral right.

The same right to defend oneself that is universally recognised as belonging to the individual is also accorded to the nation state by Ar-

ticle 51 of the United Nations Charter in defending itself against foreign aggression.

While the motion was not blanket endorsement of any individual or group, he said, the motion meant that the Ard Fheis recognises the historical right of the Irish Nation and supports those who engage in armed defence of the Irish Republic proclaimed in arms in 1916, endorsed by the people of all Ireland in 1918, effectively established in 1919-21, gall-

antly defended in 1922-23, and for which so much suffering and sacrifice has been endured in its defence to the present day.

The delegates supported this view wholeheartedly, and the motion was passed.

Pressure of Time

Several important motions on the national unity and independence programme of Sinn Féin had to be referred due to pressure of time but hopefully will be thoroughly debated at the next Ard

Fheis. A motion from the Patrick Carty Cumann, Bundoran, however, did nail down the intention of the organisation to convene the Third Dáil, the National Assembly of the sovereign Irish people, representing all Ireland.

The continued opposition of Republicans to the club of former colonial powers, organised in the interests of capitalism, which constitutes the EEC was expressed in two motions from Cork and Athlone Cumainn.

The following Officers and Ard Chomhairle were elected at the 83rd Ard Fheis:

Uachtarán Ruairí Ó Brádaigh
Leas-Uachtarán Eamonn Ó Loreáin
Ard-Rúnaíthe Caitlín Knowles agus Líta Ní Chathmhaoil
Cisteoirí Náisiúnta Seosamh Ó Néill agus Seán Ó Conchúir
Oifigeach Poiblíochta Ruairí Óg Ó Brádaigh
Cathaoirleach Dáithí Ó Conaill

Ard Chomhairle: Pádraig Mac a'Bháird, Dún na nGall; Róibard Ó Muirí, Béal Feirste; Deasún Ó Longáin, Luimneach; Gearóid Mac Cárthaigh, Corcaigh; Proinsias Mac Fhearraigh, Gleannata Aontroima; Déaglan Ó Cuimín, Liatroim; Máire Mac a'Bháird, Dún na nGall; Emmett Breathnach, Uíbh Fhailí.

Constitution

THIS IMPORTANT session saw the passing of several key resolutions which, taken together, re-establish the strong foundation of principle upon which policies and strategy can be built.

The first resolution taken in this session encapsulates the basic Republican position and was passed without opposition. Proposed by the National Executive it read:

"That Republican Sinn Féin pledges its allegiance and loyalty to the Sovereign Irish Republic proclaimed in arms in 1916 and endorsed

by the people of all Ireland in 1918, effectively established in 1919-21, gallantly defended in 1922-23 and for which so much suffering and sacrifice has been endured to the present day."

It was natural that the most recent defection from Republican principle would result in constitutional motions seeking to prevent a recurrence. After a searching debate on several proposals two motions from Cumann Wolfe Tone, Tallaght and Roscommon Comhairle Ceantair, were approved by the delegates.

In essence they provide that any alteration or amendment to the Constitution of Sinn Féin in regard to the fundamental principles of abstention from, and withholding recognition of, Westminster, Stormont or

motions received the unanimous support of the delegates.

A motion providing for the establishment of foreign branches of the organisation subject to the usual rules and with any modifications

which centred on the criterion of merit, rather than tokenism or sexism, in filling positions within Sinn Féin, three motions from cumainn in Armagh, Belfast and Limerick were passed which cancel any special



• Seán Keenan of Derry, Honorary Life Vice-President

Leinster House assemblies must be supported by 100 per cent of the delegates at the Ard Fheis. These

sanctioned by the Ard Comhairle to suit local conditions was carried.

In response to a debate

privileges for women within the organisation

See page 6, section on Social Policy

DUE TO the demands of coverage we have held over coverage of the following sections:

International Affairs: Including a delegation from Unita Naziunalista, Corsica; Solidarité Irelande, Paris; and a fraternal delegate from the USA: Addresses by representatives of CABH-AIR - Irish Republican Prisoners' Dependents Fund; Cumann na mBan; Na Fianna Éireann; National Graves Association; Sections on Electoral Strategy, Education, Governmental Policy.

Revolution — Not Reform

A Chathaoirleach, a Theachtai 'is a Chairde uilig. Céad míle fáilte romhaibh ar fad ag an Ard Fheis seo, an 83ú ceann de chuid Sinn Féin. A greater welcome than is usual at an Ard Fheis is extended to you at this our 83rd such event.

You are and you represent those who rejected the attempts at the 82nd Ard Fheis last year to subvert the Sinn Féin constitution and make a reformist body out of our revolutionary political organisation. You "walked out" of the Dublin Mansion House at the critical moment on November 2 last and resumed the Ard Fheis at the West County Hotel.

To do so at that time, to go "against the tide" in such a manner required considerable moral courage, but you are better people today as a result of the action you took and you are, accordingly, stronger in character and firmer in resolve. In all of this, of course, you were sustained by your dedication and attachment to the Republic proclaimed at Easter 1916 and established by the First (All-Ireland) Dail - created by the free vote of the Irish people on January 21, 1919.

Fifth Time

For the fifth time in 65 years an attempt was made to depart from that basic Republican and revolutionary position and to accept the British imperialist and colonialist alternative, the 26-County state, the Six-County statelet and the overlordship of Westminster itself. The years of the great breaches of trust - 1922 and 1926, 1946 and 1969, and finally 1986 - with all the disastrous consequences for faithful Irish Republicans which flowed from them, loom before us today.

Those of you who were present at last year's Ard Fheis and those of you who were not, those of you who have since joined our ranks "heard the call of a cause laid low", to quote one of our past Presidents, Brian O hUiginn, and rallied once more to the 32-County Republic.

You rejected all the bland-

ishments - aye, and all the threats, the claim that we had no right to continue on the Republican path when others had left it - you have quietly and carefully rebuilt the Republican Movement and assembled this week-end's very successful Ard Fheis.

Different

You were told with great insistence that the departure from our ranks last year was "different" from all previous cases over the years. But the issue was exactly the same; only the personnel engaged in it and the generation involved were different.

Liam Mellows himself put it on record on December 8, 1922, the day he and three other Republican leaders were executed without trial while prisoners of war, by the Free State; Mellows said: "By truth and honour, by principle and sacrifice alone, will Ireland be free." Not by Treaties of Surrender in 1922 or Hillsborough Deals in 1985, but by serving high ideals and adhering to principle and by giving of oneself.

In this connection, it is necessary to record that the issue of armed struggle was used to cloud and cover over the departure from basic Republican principle. It is appropriate here to quote the reply of Tom Maguire, last and faithful survivor of the second Dail Eireann, when asked on an American-recorded interview last March if he supported the present armed struggle.

Comdt. General Maguire, last surviving general officer of the Irish Republican Army in the Black-and-Tan War, answered: "Of course I do but then it depends on what those directing it have in mind." He surely spoke for all of us when he said that he would much prefer an armed campaign firmly based on principled defence of the All-Ireland Republic

than on the quagmire of Free State party politics.

Who is Sinn Féin?

It is necessary at this stage in clarifying certain matters, to deal with the question of who is Sinn Féin, who is entitled to use that historic name and work under its constitution which is an express Republican document since the great Ard Fheis of 1917, seventy years ago this month.

The Constitution of Sinn Féin in operation at the 1986 Ard Fheis is quite explicit. It stated: "The organisation is based on the following fundamental principles:-

- (a) That the allegiance of Irishmen and Irish women is due to the sovereign Irish Republic proclaimed in 1916;
- (b) That the sovereignty and unity of the Republic are inalienable and non-judicable."

In everyday language, our loyalty is to the All-Ireland Republic and the Republican position cannot be given away and is not a matter for decision. Those who voted to accept the 26-County neo-colonial state clearly breached the constitution in the fundamental principles and put themselves outside the Sinn Féin organisation.

Furthermore, rule 1b (membership) clearly says: "No person who approves of or supports the candidature of persons who, if elected, intend taking part in the proceedings of the British or partition governments by which Ireland is ruled, or who approves of or supports the intention to take their seats in these institutions, shall be admitted to membership or allowed to retain membership."

While the Ard Fheis purported to amend this rule, such amendment or any other change in the Constitution and Rules would not

become operative until the Ard Fheis was over and therefore could not be acted on at the same Ard Fheis. On this basis alone also, those who approved of or supported acceptance of the Free State position expelled themselves from Sinn Féin.

Finally, and for the record as to the unconstitutional vote itself: by the narrow margin of 1.65 per cent of those voting was the breaking of the constitution claimed to have been approved. It is not necessary to remind delegates here of the of the numerous cases of manipulation of the vote. Of the delegates who arrived at the Mansion House to find their voting cards already taken - including our Vice-President for life, Tony Ruane - and of duly elected delegates being debarred from the Ard Fheis.

Journalists and other persons of goodwill asked us why we should not have called for an inquiry. There is of course an old saying about going to law with a certain gentleman and holding court in hell. We were not surprised to learn then that in an unprecedented move, the counterfoils of the voting cards were destroyed in a shredding machine early the next morning, thus making any inquiry impossible.

Case Rests

However, our case rests on the fundamental principles of the Constitution and on its rules. As the ballad spoke of the Flag of the Republic in an earlier and similar episode, we now say of the Sinn Féin Constitution and the name Sinn Féin itself: leave it to those who intend to defend it, until England's tyranny cease.

We welcome the accredited representatives of Cumann na mBan to this Ard Fheis. Their Republican record is impeccable and it is



Ruairí Ó Brádaigh addresses the 83rd Ard Fheis in Dublin on behalf of the National Executive of Republican Sinn Féin on October 25 last.

well to remember that theirs was the greatest majority vote against the Treaty of Surrender in 1922. Since then they have always spoken out for the Republic in advance of crisis Ard Fheis-canna. Last year was no exception and we applaud their fearless stand.

Cabhair

In addition, and in the wake of last year's Ard Fheis, the Prisoners' Dependents Committee was re-organised since the existing National Committee refused to provide for the families of our members in the event of their going to prison in the future. Furthermore, a number of Republican prisoners did not want their families assisted by a compromised body and others who were receiving aid in relief of distress arising out of Republican activities found themselves cut off because of their unswerving support for the Republic.

The Dublin and Cork based committees did, however, stand loyally by us and on this basis was formed CABHAIR, the Irish Republican Prisoners' Dependents Fund. They are doing excellent work in support of prisoners on both sides of the Border and in England and they are most welcome here to-day.

An Coiste Náisiúnta takes this opportunity to send greetings to all Republican prisoners, wherever they may be, and assure them and their families of our continued support and unflinching concern for their welfare.

Permission to March

The National Graves Association continues to do a noble work and we are pleased to have them with us on this week-end also. But we wish to ask if in accordance with their constitution that permitting their name ask permission of the British Crown Forces to march at Easter time?

Contact has also been renewed with comrades, friends and supporters internationally and we are proud to have representatives here from both a national committee and a national liberation movement in Europe. We refer to Solidarité Irlandaise in France and United Nationsists in Corsica.

You will have noted, too, the many messages and expressions of support from Europe, the United States, Canada and Australia. In particular, our exiles in England, Scotland, Wales and around the world have a special relationship with us and this we acknowledge wholeheartedly.

Immediately following on the adjourned Ard Fheis last year, an Coiste Náisiúnta moved swiftly to publish a monthly paper, first by the name of the Republican Bulletin, then under the honourable name of "SAOIRSE - Irish Freedom" - this was the title of Seán Mac Diarmada's paper before 1916. Twelve issues in all have appeared since then and we are happy to have this week-end a pictorial issue in the new tabloid layout which will be the format for the future.



Early in the New Year, premises for Head Office were acquired at 21 Shaw Street, Dublin 2 and from then on it was business as usual. An Coiste Náisiúnta takes this opportunity to commend the dedicated staff at Head Office and of SAOIRSE for their unstinting work over such a critical year. They were the team which manned the engine room of the Movement and we know we speak for all of you when we acknowledge in comradely fashion their considerable efforts.

Major Events

Apart from re-organisation at home and abroad much work was undertaken over the past year. The usual commemorations of those who died for Irish freedom were organised and in all cases were very well attended. Major events like the annual parade at Bodens-ton, the international march at Buncrana and the nation-wide series at Easter were very successful. The enthusiasm shown on these occasions, at the annual Testimonial Dinner for Veterans and all other social events indicated that Republican supporters and well-wishers were well aware of the authenticity of our stand and sought to express solidarity with us.

On January 1st last we picketed the British Embassy in Dublin and handed in a letter serving notice on their government that Sinn Féin was still Republican

and very much alive. Later in the month Comhairle Ceantair Bhaile Atha Cliath made its protest outside RTE against the re-imposition of the Section 31 ban on freedom to disseminate and receive ideas.

In February came the 26-County General Election when much of what we had said on November 2 regarding acceptance of Leinster House was borne out. Making compromises on the national question does not win electoral rewards nor does it earn public respect. Our members distributed 100,000 leaflets throughout the 26-Counties.

These said that Ireland, the nation, cannot be achieved through Leinster House because it is part of a system designed to keep our people divided and weak. Voting for any Leinster House candidate reinforces the partition system and brings on the people's heads more of what they have already suffered.

Calling for a change in the system and not just in personnel, the demand was made for solid foundations on which to build: (a) a British withdrawal and a new system of independent and truly democratic government with a strong emphasis on local control; (b) a recognition that we are underdeveloped and must get down to total national reconstruction based on our own resources; and (c) a cultural revival in every aspect to give us the spiritual driving force to build such a future.

SEA No Vote

Republican Sinn Féin took an active part in calling for a "NO" vote in the Single European Act Referendum in May. The EEC promises of 1972 and 1975 had not been delivered on, of course, and the SEA meant a further tightening of the noose of EEC imperialism around our small and underdeveloped country. We did not join with other anti-SEA campaigners as our policy of proposing an alternative model of development outside the emerging EEC/NATO super power meant that we produced our own leaflets, again 100,000, together with posters, public meetings and canvassing.

The outcome was gratifying in that against all the odds the basic radical vote in the 26 Counties increased by 113,000 - from 212,000 on a poll of 71 per cent in 1972 to 325,000 on a much lower poll of 44 per cent in 1987.

The emergence of such a substantial radical vote of 325,000 in the teeth of the four major parties, who claim 95 per cent of representation in the 26 Counties, pointed to clear disillusionment with the Establishment and a widespread desire for the development of an alternative kind of politics.

This being the case, the question to be faced at this Ard Fheis is whether Republican Sinn Féin can meet the challenge. This weekend's Clár is certainly an indication of a great questioning of the system and the seeking of answers to the problems of the late 1980s and of the situation of Ireland right into the next century.

The fall of 20,000 in the vote for those who call themselves Republican while remaining semi-constitutional, at the Westminster election in the Six Counties in June indicates a growing distrust by the electorate there in those who are already actively discussing entering a new Stormont and even Westminster itself. Their recent public pronouncements that they will sign any anti-Irish pledge, take any foreign oath or declaration the English Establishment may put forward bodes ill for their conduct of what they still call the liberation struggle.

Refuse to sign Pledge

Nelson Mandela is not a young man. He has been 25 years in the jails of the South African racists since last August. But he still refuses to sign a pledge rejecting the use of physical force even though such action would secure his immediate release from prison.

In this connection we find the British occupation regime in the act of composing a political test declaration for candidates in local council and Stormont elections in the Six Counties. Republican Sinn Féin has local councillors working for the people North as well as South of the Border. We see this latest British move as a return to the old pre-1972 Stormont when such test oaths and declarations barred Sinn Féin from two levels of public life for 50 years.

Where are those now, lay and clerical, who so insistently urged "political action" on us. Now that modest success has attended Republican efforts in this regard the road forward is being barred and they are silent. During the hunger-strikes of recent years, they did not speak out for the prisoners either, although they had postured at advocating passive resistance over the years. They are clearly on the side of British imperial rule in Ireland if they do not push to remove the obstacles about to be placed in the way of electoral activity by Irish Republicans in their own country.

Another threat which has loomed for some time is the proposal which is a key component of the Hillsborough sell-out of 1985, to formalise and speed up the extradition of Irish citizens from the 26 Counties into the hands of the British occupying power. Our efforts, already underway to defeat this further betrayal, must be re-doubled and extended in coming weeks.

Slabhra na Staire

Is taisec mhór shuibhir i Ghaeilge - oidhreacht mhóthúcháin taithí agus cuimhní ár muintire ó thús aimsire. Níl aon rud chomh diograsach léi seachas an talamh féin. Ní bhaineann sí le haon aicme, aon chreideamh aon réigiún tíre nó grúpa daoine ar leith. Is í an chosaint is fearr ar chríonnaacht agus ar chneastacht na muintire í agus an fáil cosanta is fearr a chinnteoidh pobal beo, aibí, cruthaíoch, so-athleanta dúinn san am atá le teacht. Ní féidir leis an nglúin seo éalú ón dualgas trom atá orainn go léir maidir lena chinntiú go dtiocfaidh sí slán beo mar theanga an phobail agus mar ghnáthurlabhra. Mar níl cead ag aon ghlúin ar leith nó ag cúpla glúin fiú, ceangal a bhriseadh i slabhra na staire - go háirithe nuair atá a fhios againn go mbeadh sé beagnach do-dhéanta an ceangal a scaoilfí, a athcheangal arís - rud a bheadh cinnte ag teastáil ó ghlúin níos críonna, níos faide anonn. Tá dualgas gach Poblachtach i leith

bhuairid traidisiúin na Gaeilge chomh trom, ar a laghad leis an dualgas atá orainn maidir le cothú aisinghríneach na sairse. Cuirimis chuige in aoin Dé, leis an díograis chéanna a spreagann sinn le cur i gcoinne smacht Gall.

Tacaíocht Iomlán

Ach is gá a bheith praiticiúil faoi na cúlraí seo chomh maith, ar ndóighe. Sin é an fáth go dtugaimid tacaíocht iomlán d'athleachtas Chomhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge agus Chonradh na Gaeilge maidir le feabhsú mór ar chaidreamh múinte na teanga sna scoilleana. Sin é an fáth go n-éilimid arís eile, Udarás ceart daonlathach agus córas cothrom rialtais áitiúil don Ghaeltacht flúrinneach agus deireadh leis an gcur i gceíl. Seasaimid le cearta na dteaghlach Gaeilge, thuaidh agus theas. Go deimhin, ní féidir le heagraíocht a bhfuil an dearcadh bunúsach náisiúnta atá againne acu, aon difríocht a dhéanamh idir cearta na nGael agus na Gaeilge i gceachtar den dá stát.

Cinsireacht Alt 31

Maidir le scéal na Gaeilge ar an teiliifís, tá tuiscint ag dream mar Sinn Féin, a bhfuil cinsireacht stáit á bheith ináirde go gcoinne le blianta, ar an éagóir a dhéantar ar lucht teanga ar bith nuair nach bhfuil seirbhís theilifíse le fáil acu. Is é an trua é nach raibh RTE chomh coisniasach céanna maidir leis an dualgas reachtúil atá orthu faoi chothú na Gaeilge agus soláthar seirbhísí do Ghaeilgeoirí sa Ghaeltacht agus ar fud na tíre, is a bhí siad riamh maidir le feidhmiú na cinsireachta polaitiúla faoi Alt 31.

Oireachtas Ros Muc

I dtaca le Teiliifís na Gaeilge, tréaslaimid leis na daoine i gConamara a thug

eolas dúinn, ag an Oireachtas i Ros Muc le gairid, faoina bhfuil ar siúl ag lucht mionteanga eile. Bhí sé de phribhléid againn a bheith i láthair i Ros Muc ag an diereadh seachtaine nuair a cuir-eadh scéim thrialach teiliifíse ar an aer - scéim a chruthaigh gur féidir an beart a dhéanamh agus a chruthaigh freisin nach bhfuil san argóint faoi chosaint ach leithscéal le gan taca a dhéanamh.

Foundation Stone

Following on our year of reorganisation and selective activity, we have now at the Ard Fheis put the foundation-stone of Irish Republicanism, which we took with us in the form of the Sinn Féin constitution out of the Mansion House last year, firmly and securely into position once more. It is not enough to vindicate our actions in that regard.

With the road now clear we must realise the challenges that face us - mass unemployment, renewed and forced emigration of our youth, cut backs in health, education and social welfare, widespread disillusionment with the status quo, British rule reinforced by Hillsborough ... all need to be confronted.

We have not "gone home". We are here and we are very much in business. We have no intention of letting slip now all that has been won by so much sacrifice down the years. We must complete our political education, dedicate ourselves once more, gird ourselves anew, reach out to the coming generation and advance steadily and in a clear-headed way towards the high ground of our goal - the Republic of Pearse and Connolly in modernised and updated form - and so - right into the 21st century.



Resist, in ainm Dé



• *Commandant-General Thomas Maguire, TD, Second Dáil and late GOC Second Western Division, IRA.*

RAITEAS O THOMAS MAC UIDHIR, Ceann Feadhna, Ginearálta, Oglaiġ na hEireann, agus Teachta Dála an dara Dáil Eireann.

A Mhuinntir Dhilis, Shinn Féin,
Tá sibh bailithe le chéile arís ag an Ard Fheis. D'fhan sibh dílis do Phoblacht na hEireann, an Phoblacht a bunaíodh i 1916, agus do Dháil Eireann, a tháinig le chéile, den chéad uair ar 21 Eanáir, 1919, i dTeach an Ard Mhaoir, Baile Atha Cliath.

Chuala muid go mion minic: "Ní Siocháin go Saoirse". Ní bheidh sairse sa Tír seo go mbeidh Forsaí ar Corónach ruagthe amach as na 32 Condaeth. Leanfaidh an troid i gcoinne Gall go dtí go mbeidh na forsáir sin imithe.

Níl san rud seafóideach sin "An Anglo-Irish Agreement" ach aguisín leis an gConradh Bréagach a rinneadh ar 6ú Nollaig 1921, an Conradh a scoilt ár dTír seo i 1921-1922. Le bagairtí, le feall, le plámás, agus le gach cineál diabhláochta, leanann Rialtas na Breataine ar aghaidh i gcónaí.

Má éistean Eireannach leo, agus má chreidteann sé iad, níl ann ach amadán. Is oth liom a rá go bhfuil an iomarca daoine den chineál sin sa Tír seo. Tá an Stáit na 26 Condaeth ag cuidiú le Rialtas na Breataine. Is rud fealltach é sin. Rinne an Saorstát sin leithéid i gcónaí.

Republicans always believed in the reconquest of Ireland for the Irish people. They believed in the Fight for the Land, and their motto was "The Land for the People". The present policies of the 26-County government is the furtherance of the Conquest. The young able-bodied people are being driven out of the country to foreign lands. The duty of Sinn Féin is to work among the people, to give them courage and leadership, to fight back against the attempts to destroy the Irish Nation.

The Irish Republic of 1916 was a reality. The setting up of Dáil Eireann was a democratic act, and the continued suppression of the Irish Republic is British terror in action. British propaganda is polluting the whole country, and is aided and abetted, in a slavish manner, by the Free State media. There must be resistance to that terror. It is your task to organise that resistance, in ainm Dé.

23-10-1987

Tomás Mac Uidhir

A LARGE number of telegrams and messages of support were read out at the Ard Fheis from the following:

USA

Joe Stynes, Clan-na-Gael leader, New York (Kildare)

George Harrison, New York (Mayo)

Tim Garvey, Boston (Kerry)

Thomas Falvey, New York (Kerry)

Michael Flannery, Noraid founder, New York (Tipperary)

Dan McCormack, San Francisco (Tyrone)

Irish National Caucus, New Jersey

Seamus O Dubhda, New York (Kerry)

Jim Keane, Chicago (Kerry)

POWS

John McElhinney, POW, Portlaoise

John Hayes, POW, Albany, Isle of Wight,

Tommy McKearney, on behalf of 25 POWS
England
Long Kesh

AUSTRALIA

Sean Lavin, former trustee of Australian Aid for Ireland, Victoria

EUROPE

Comité Soutien Liberté Pour L'Irlande, Paris
Solidarité Irelande Groupe Etudiants Paris
Sorbonne

Caitríona, Paris

Other Veterans of the 40s present were Bertie and John L Mac Cormack, Dublin; Sylvester Fitzsimons, Roscommon; Gearóid Mac Carthaigh, Cork; Margaret Langsdorf, Dublin; Seán Keenan, Derry; Paddy Fox, Galway; Michael Walsh, Galway; Martin Calligan, Clare; Paddy Earley, Leirigh; Ned Gargan, Meath. Dáithí O'Connell also welcomed Murt O Ceallaigh (son of Sceig, Dublin) and stated that Tom O Connor (Kildare), Seán Hughes (Dundalk) and all recently deceased members of the Republican Movement would be sorely missed.

Cimí — Prisoners

SA ROINN seo a bhfuil ceangal ar leith le gach teachtaí le, glacadh deich rúin in iomlán agus rinneadh leasú de cheann amháin de, uimhir 148. Mar ba ghnáth ba é na hábhair ba thábla-achtar sa roinn seo den édar na Príosúnaigh agus a geleithúnaíthe, cursaí nochthuardaigh agus droc bhail na bpríosúnaigh i nGearrálta.

Delegates condemning the disgraceful use of strip-searching in general went on to accuse the Free State authorities of "being hypocritical when it complains of the inhumanly conceived

practice of strip-searching women in Maghaberry and before that in Armagh, when prisoners are also being strip-searched daily in Portlaoise jail."

CABHAIR

In regard to Prisoners' Dependants, delegates were earlier informed by an tUachtarán Ruairí O'Bráidigh of the trojan work already being done by CABHAIR on behalf of the Prisoners. Nevertheless, in a short debate delegates were reminded not to be complacent on this matter and

were urged to appoint a POW Officer to all existing cumainn with a view to raising funds for this worthy cause and that all monies raised in this respect be handed over to CABHAIR.

Pledges of solidarity with Republican Prisoners in Ireland, Britain and throughout the world were passed unanimously. It was felt that the question of prisoners serving life sentences should be given special attention.

Letters of support were read out on behalf of Prisoners by Cathleen Knowles and Lita Ní Chathmháil.

VETERANS of the 1939-40 'Sabotage Campaign' in England, who were present at the Ard Fheis included Leo Duignan, Leitrim; Charlie Dineen, Kerry and Paddy O'Connell, Tipperary. All three were sentenced to 20 years penal servitude in English jails for the courageous parts they played.

Hillsborough Wall

MOTION 172 on the Clár brought a large number of speakers to the platform to debate the issue of the large tracts of land which have been confiscated by the British occupation forces

and used for enemy observation posts, bases and checkpoints in an area already bristling with a heavy enemy presence. South Armagh Councillor Eamonn Larkin, speaking in

favour of a campaign to highlight what constitutes the real and only achievement of the Hillsborough Deal, said that "British troops have no right to turn a farmer away from his own land at the point of a gun."

Social Policy Debate

COUNCILLOR Eamonn Larkin of Newry and Mourne District Council, speaking on a motion from Bearná Uladh/South Armagh, called for an examination of the effects of Microwave Radiation emissions from British Army Surveillance equipment in the Six Counties, and in particular the area of South Armagh.

Cllr. Larkin went on to demand the removal of this whole array of gadgetry which he said was responsible for skin cancer and other serious health hazards to local people and their livestock. Recent disclosures reveal that these microwaves can cause animals and humans to abort as well as causing epileptic-type fits, and interfering with heart pacemakers.

Farmers who had protested at the confiscation of their land by British Occup-

ation Forces for the erection of these emplacements were threatened and abused by these so-called 'peace-keeping' forces, Eamonn said.

Travellers

Seámas Leonard of Dublin Comhairle Ceantair, proposing the motion that Travellers are entitled to full citizenship and freedom from fascist attacks, made a special plea to Republican Councillors to make an extra effort on behalf of Travellers where issues concerning them arise at Council level, and above all to withstand the blackmail used by some bigoted members of the settled community to barter votes in exchange for Anti-Traveller Council action.

"As Republicans we must stand with the oppressed, and if need be our Coun-

cillors should practice reverse discrimination in favour of Travellers to offset the entrenched prejudice that keeps Travellers' Rights a political football that is frequently used by unprincipled party politicians to garner a few votes at election time."



Cllr. Frank McCarry of Moyle District Council seconding the motion, outlined some of the problems facing RSF Councillors who were always in a minority, when trying to get fair play for Travellers. Cllr. McCarry cited a case in Ballycastle,

Co. Antrim, where despite his best efforts and the support of a few other Councillors, the Council went ahead with plans to erect barriers at a car park in the town to deny access to Travellers. The Council only abandoned the plan when local residents objected to the ugly appearance of the proposed barriers which Frank said, only goes to prove the double standards of vote catching politicians.

Speaking on behalf of the National Executive, Bob Murray of Belfast said that Travellers were guaranteed equality with all other children of the nation in the Proclamation, and that as Republicans we must uphold the rights of Travellers to live and develop in freedom and dignity wherever they choose to in Ireland.

A lively and stimulating debate took place on a num-

ber of motions from around the country on the subject of the increasing number of homeless people, and in particular the very young and the very old.

Plight of Homeless

The plight of the homeless was continually tied in by speakers with the obsolescence of empty housing units and the speculation and profiteering by landlords at the expense of the poor and deprived.

Emmett Walsh for Kearns/Perry Cumann, Co Offaly and Alfie McAvoy of Denis Spriggs Cumann, Cork made well thought out contributions as did speakers from Dublin, Belfast, Limerick, Glaway and West Wicklow.

A present day 'Rachman' scandal unfolded when Danny Mullan of the Seán McDermott Cumann, Belfast gave details of how

some landlords in the city were ripping off the Department of Health and Social Services for thousands of pounds per week by renting accommodation to families that were little more than dog boxes.

Women's Position

In regard to women's position in Irish society, a motion from the National Executive was carried which called on women's work in society to be socialised so that they could play a full role in the revolutionary process. This would mean that day-care centres, laundries, people's restaurants and other services would have to be provided.

An intention to establish a Law on Nurture which would demand that men who father children would have to provide for their upkeep, was also passed.

MÁLA POIST

THE GREAT strength of Irish Republicanism might well be summed up in that very phrase: a deathless dream and a faithful few. No matter how bleak the prospects, there has always remained the vision of the Republic and the fortitude of men and women forever willing to defend it.

"Damn your concessions" might as well be the official motto of the Irish Fenian, so often has it been the guiding principle spoken from the "dearns baoil", the prison cell and hillside.

And who mans the "dearna baoil" tonight? Who stands alone for the Republic of 1916 now? I never thought you would have had to ask us that. But since you ask we'll answer. Those who give loyalty neither to King nor Kaiser, who recognised neither Leinster House nor Stormont but adhere still to the Proclamation made that Easter Monday - the people of Republican Sinn Féin.

Yet is it enough to rest secure in the knowledge that Republican Sinn Féin alone now carries the banner of the Republic? I don't think so. For what it is worth, my opinion is that Republican Sinn Féin should stop worrying about establishing its Fenian credentials. You already have them - wear them lightly, ignore the pretenders and get to the work of establishing the Republic.

It is on this point that I would like to make a suggestion. That Republican Sinn Féin give serious thought to a proposal that a broad-based extra-parliamentary

congress be established to struggle for a Socialist Republic.

The facts of life in Ireland today are that many disparate groups share a common desire to see an independent Irish Socialist Republic. On that basic point they are at one. However, for a variety of reasons, these same groups differ on the exact path to achieve the objective. These differences come from deeply-held convictions and should be respected for their honest sincerity.

Should even deeply-held convictions be allowed to permanently separate, though? If enough common ground exists on many major issues, why can there not be co-operation on these issues and leave the differences to another day. There is no question that Republican Sinn Féin or any other party would be asked to abandon one iota of principle. Each and every sacred tenet can be held without compromise. All that is asked is that on a mutually agreed range of issues, effort is pooled and co-ordinated.

The range of issues could be as wide or narrow as is found acceptable. In fact, it might well be wise to limit the initial issues to a modest number in order to avoid disappointments. Just for a start we could look at the issue of extradition, the perversity of the legal system North and South, unemployment and emigration. A combined effort on these points must benefit all. Defence of the Republic surely cannot be confined to only one area, i.e. the realisation of its political mandate -

vital, admittedly as that is. Defence of the Republic also includes defence of the people. Doesn't the very word "Poblacht" come from "Pobal".

Of prime importance at the start are the lessons of advantageous unity rather than any grandiose plans or expectations. What reason could Republican Sinn Féin have for taking up such a proposal? Put crudely - is there any advantage to be gained from all this? On the other hand, are there any dangers or pit-falls involved? These are of course reasonable enough questions from people who have seen their cause betrayed so often.

First look at the reasons for taking part. The main advantage is that it is positive action to create a meaningful and energetic extra-parliamentary focus or force. The lie is firmly given to the claim that it is impossible to be relevant or in "the political mainstream" and still resist the "parliamentary woolscak". Secondly the foundation can be laid for a real and viable alternative to the shambles that is Leinster House and Stormont. And isn't that what the Republic has always meant - a genuine alternative to the treaty-imposed regimes in Belfast and Dublin?

There are of course potential pit-falls. Republican Sinn Féin may fear to lose its identity within such a united congress. Honest Republicans may worry that political opportunists would use it to gain personal advancement. Even that Republican Sinn Féin might be overwhelmed by ultra-leftist elements.

All reasonable fears but we believe, unnecessary fears. The Republican identity is too strong to be easily dis-

solved. History teaches us that any threat to Republicanism comes from reformists within, not from alliances with outsiders. Opportunists may well arise but Ireland's gombreen men are flourishing at present. Whatever short-term gain such villains might win can only be minor in comparison to the overall progress obtained. Who worries about leaving when they're making cheese?

As for doubts about ultra-leftists, if such people exist in Ireland at all, it is unlikely that an organisation which has "damned concessions" for so long would fall prey to any outside influences of either left or right.

There is ample precedent for such a move. From the Land League, through Tom Clarke's hand in the Irish Volunteers until the Republican involvement within the CRA in the late Sixties. Doubts were expressed then as they will be now put, but who can deny that on each occasion the Republican cause emerged stronger and revitalised.

In the aftermath of the 1986 split there may be a slight tendency to retrench and nurse open wounds. This would be a mistake. Fortune favours the brave and the bold. Republican Sinn Féin should grab the initiative and ensure their grand cause is not arrested by unnecessary lowering of their sights.

TOMMY McKEARNEY

DENIS CUMMINGS

JOHN MCCOOEY

JAMES TIERNEY
H-Blocks, Long Kesh

Paddy Ryan of Dublin, a close friend and comrade of Tom's, who spoke feelingly about Tom's work for the Irish Republic. A decade of the Rosary was recited in Irish by Lita Ní Chathmhaoil and the oration was delivered by Ruairí O Brádaigh who paid tribute to Tom's unswerving Republicanism.

The sympathy of Republican Sinn Féin is extended to Tom's widow Anne, his son Connie and his sister Irene, from Maharees, Co. Kerry. (An appreciation will be carried in the December edition of SAOIRSE - Irish Freedom).

MICK DEMPSEY

MICK (Nicholas) Dempsey from Galbally, Co. Wexford, died on October 25 last. He was born in 1912. Heartfelt sympathy is expressed with his family, relatives and friends from RSF.

As a young boy of 10 years of age, at Mass in his

native Galbally, Free Staters stood outside the Chapel gates. Some neighbours told him to get home quickly and warn the Volunteers who were in his father's house to get out. The last man had just got clear when the soldiers arrived to search the house.

At a later date he carried guns across fields where he met Maire Comerford who took the guns on her bicycle to a safer place, seven miles away.

As a young man he played minor and senior football for his native parish and county and was a founder member of the Galbally GFC. A staunch Republican all his life, he always opposed attendance in Leinster House. Having waited for news of the 1986 Ard Fheis he was sadly disillusioned when he heard the decision. "I will not now ever see Ireland free, now with these politicians taking over", he said.

COMHBHRÓN

CAFFREY. At a meeting of Comhairle Chonnacht a vote of sympathy was passed on the death of Eugene Caffrey.

DENNIHY. Sincere sympathy is expressed with the Dennihy family, Ballyfinane Co. Kerry, on the death of Mrs. Nancy Dennihy. From Comhairle Ceantair Chiarraí.

GASKIN. Bearna Uladh Republican Sinn Féin conveys its deepest regret at hearing of the recent death of Mrs. Gaskin of Dundalk and takes the opportunity to express its belated sympathy.

HARRINGTON. Comhairle Ceantair Chiarraí, Sinn Féin Poblachtach extend deepest sympathy to the Harrington family, Maharees on the death of their mother, Mrs. Eileen Harrington.

HICKEY. Deepest sympathy is extended to Bernard Hickey and family on the tragic death of his nephew Cianan. Ar dheis lámh Dé go raibh a anam. From the Carroll/O'Donovan Cumann Inchicore, Ballyfermot and Walkinstown.

HUGHES. The Willie Stewart Cumann, Dundalk would like to extend its deepest sympathy to the family of Seán Hughes who was brutally murdered on Sunday, October 12. Seán was a hard working member of our Cumann and will be sadly missed.

KELLEHER. Votes of sympathy were passed at recent meetings of Bearna Uladh and Comhairle Uladh Republican Sinn Féin with the Kelleher family, Listowel, Co. Kerry and the Dempsey family, Cullyhanna, Co. Armagh on the recent death of Michael Kelleher of Listowel. Go ndéana Dia trócaire ar a anam.

LALLY. Deepest sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Liam Lally, Railway Avenue, Inchicore, especially to his brother Christy and his wife Theresa. We share your loss, your anger and your frustration. From John and Mary Horan, Clondalkin.

MAC LIATHAIN. A vote of sympathy was passed at a recent Comhairle Chonnacht meeting on the death of Ruairí Mac Liatháin, Mervue, Gaillimh. Deepest sympathy is extended to his family, relatives and friends.

MORGAN. Bearna Uladh Republican Sinn Féin extends its sympathy to the Morgan family, Ednappa, Jonesboro, Co. Armagh on the tragic death of their son Tomas, ex-POW.

O'CONNOR. A vote of sympathy was passed with the family of the late Tom O'Connor, Kill, Co. Kildare, at a meeting of Comhairle Uladh on October 4 last. I measc Laochra na nGael go raibh a anam uasal.

O'CONNOR. Deepest sympathy is extended to the O'Connor family, Maharees, Co. Kerry and Kill, Co. Kildare on the death of Tom O'Connor. From Kerry Comhairle Ceantair.

REILLY. Deepest sympathy to the Reilly and Murphy families, New York and South Armagh, on the recent tragic death of Helen Reilly in the USA. From the Officer Board and Ard Chomhairle of Republican Sinn Féin. Go raibh saimhneas síoraí dá hanam uasal.

RUANE. Votes of sympathy were passed at Comhairle Chonnacht and Comhairle Ceantair na Gaillimhe meetings on the sudden death at home of Matthew Ruane, Monivea, Co. Galway.

TIERNEY. At a recent meeting of the Patrick McKenna-Seamus MacElwaine Cumann, Republican Sinn Féin, Scotstown, Co. Monaghan, a vote of sympathy was passed with the family of Patrick Tierney, Scotstown, a member of the cumann, who died recently.

WALLACE. Comhairle Chonnacht and Comhairle Ceantair na Gaillimhe recently passed votes of sympathy on the death of Joe Wallace, brother of Tony Wallace, Galway, who died suddenly in London. Go ndéana Dia trócaire ar a anam uasal.

I gCUIMHNE

CROSSEY. Vol. Michael - 16th Anniversary.

In loving memory of Vol. Michael Crossey, (Lurgan) North Armagh Brigade, Oglagh na h-Eireann, who was killed in action on November 22, 1971. Always remembered by Nuala and Seán Moore and family. I measc Laochra na nGael go raibh a anam uasal.

CROSSEY. Vol. Michael - 16th Anniversary.

In proud and loving memory of Vol. Michael Crossey, (Lurgan) North Armagh Brigade, Oglagh na hEireann, killed in action on

November 22, 1971. "It is not those who can inflict the most, but those who can endure the most who will conquer".

Terence MacSwiney From Francis and Rosaleen Lavery and family.

MURPHY. In remembrance of Spotter Murphy whose 1st anniversary occurs at this time. From Republican Sinn Féin in London.

Readers please note that Christmas greetings to prisoners should reach 'SAOIRSE' office no later than Monday November 30.

THE OCEAN BAR

Main Street, Bundoran, Co. Donegal
Proprs: Joe & Mary O'Neill
Telephone: 072-41641

THE OLD BARRACKS

Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal
Proprs: Brendan & Frances Magill

TOM O'CONNOR

THE FUNERAL of Kildare Republican, Tom O'Connor, took place to Bodenstown Cemetery on Thursday, October 1, after Mass in Kill Church. A large crowd attended and the coffin was carried into the cemetery by his comrades. A Guard of Honour of local Republicans flanked the coffin.

At the graveside the proceedings were chaired by

DONNELLY. Greetings to Adrian Vincent Donnelly, POW in HMP Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs., from Treasa in London.

LANE. Best wishes and congratulations to Alfie and Cathleen Lane, Cork, who celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on Tuesday, October 27, from the members of Cumann MacSwiney, Sinn Féin, Corcaigh.

