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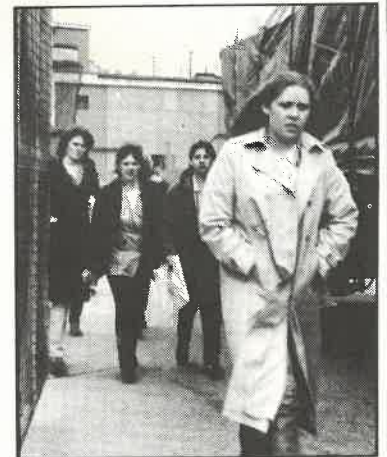
COVER: Gerry Adams with a defiant victory salute from the window of the Republican Press Centre in West Belfast, shortly after being declared the (abstentionist) MP for the constituency. His victory resulted in the lifting of a British exclusion order under the PTA made against him last December. It did not however similarly result in the lifting of RTE's Section 31 ban on Sinn Fein's elected representatives, which continues to deny him access to Free State radio and television



John Hume's talking shop

What dangers does the Forum pose? And what proposals is its 'agreed blueprint for a New Ireland' likely to come up with? Sean Delaney looks at its beginnings

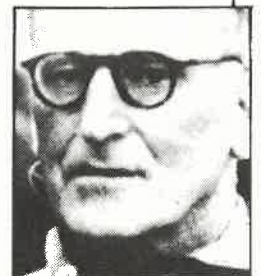
The FEA and Derry city



The Fair Employment Agency, writes Patrick Dempsey, is soon to publish a report which has turned discrimination on its head to appease loyalists

A Provisional at heart

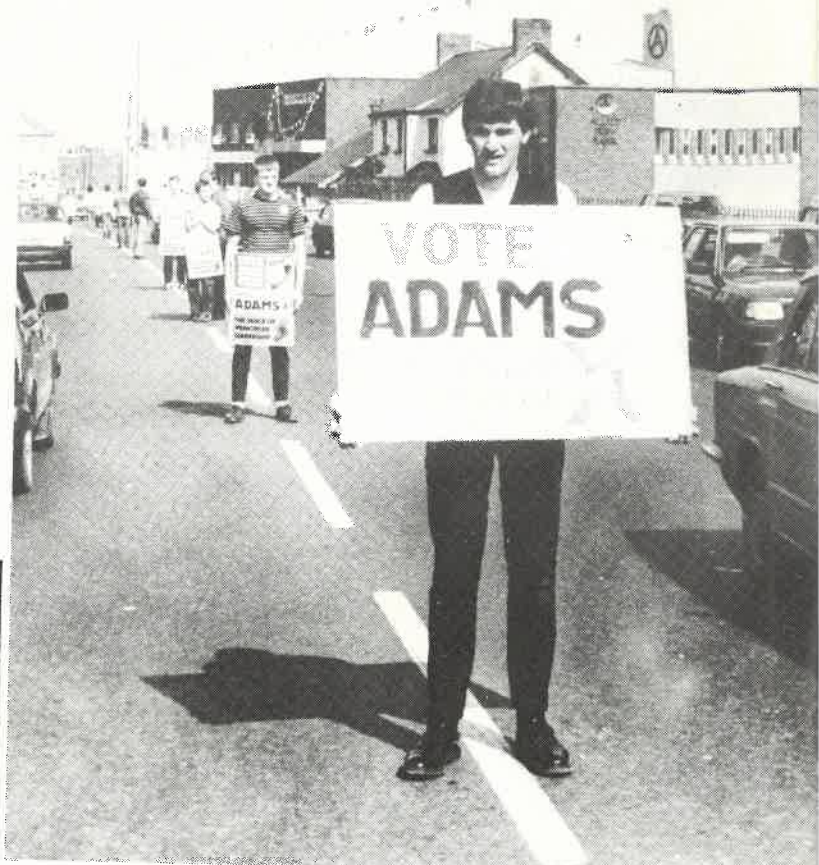
Frances-Mary Blake, who has edited his three books, examines Ernie O'Malley's contribution to history, as a revolutionary and a man of letters



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VIEWPOINT

A step along the road



THE scale of Sinn Fein's electoral success in the Westminster elections on June 9th has crystallised certain political realities and certain questions which republicans throughout the 32 counties must now begin as a matter of some urgency to consider, evaluate, and then unhesitatingly act upon. Perhaps more clearly than ever before in this phase of the national struggle, that success has given republicans a number of concrete strategic guidelines about 'the way forward' — a sharper understanding of that than has always been apparent, a renewed confidence in our own organisational ability, and with it, hopefully, the confidence to be honest and self-critical about our past shortcomings and mistakes, and open-minded and imaginative in discussing the things which remain to be done.

First of all, it is undeniable — and almost all the political pundits, even the most anti-republican, would concede this — that the election results have fundamentally altered the face of Northern politics and demonstrated beyond the slightest shadow of a doubt that the Assembly elections last October were no ephemeral flash in the pan. Sinn Fein has proved itself, both to loyalists and, privately, to the British themselves, to be the real political representatives of the anti-imperialist population. (Even the rabidly pro-SDLP *Irish News* has been reluctantly forced to the conclusion that Sinn Fein is a major political force, headlining its June 11th edition: 'Two Nationalist Voices'.)

The SDLP has been forced onto the defensive, prevented from entering the Assembly by the effective veto which republican electoral success represents, and caught hopelessly in the contradiction that while it is ultimately dependent on political concessions from the British for its survival, it has had to scurry South for assistance from the Free State political parties, in the shape of the Forum, to enhance its nationalist image and its credibility to the nationalist electorate.

In short, the SDLP is a party caught in the throes of a monumental political and organisational crisis, looking two ways at once and with no real, unambivalent policies for a future free of British interference. In contrast to Sinn Fein's enthusiasm and motivation, the SDLP is labouring heavily under the lack of commitment and weary demoralisation of its predominantly middle-class and middle-aged membership.

And one thing clearly shown by the election campaign (where posters of John Hume outnumbered posters showing the SDLP's actual candidates in each of the 16 constituencies he wasn't contesting) is that, in the absence of credible policies, the party is now almost entirely dependent on the personal charisma and media-built stature of its leader.

But the consequences of June 9th go far beyond merely the electoral conflict with the SDLP, far beyond what the Catholic hierarchy declared was 'a battle for the hearts and minds of the nationalist people', and far beyond the confines of the six counties. The Free State establishment, seeing the capacity of republicans in the North to destabilise the political scene through an electoral strategy within a remarkably short space of time (though the IRA has been destabilising it by a military strategy, too, for far longer), and knowing that many of the same social and economic ingredients for republican success exist in the 26 counties, will be trying even more desperately to undercut Sinn Fein (and boost the SDLP) through the New Ireland Forum and through a continuing reliance on Section 31.

The initial impetus of the Forum, which failed to exert enough appeal to the Northern nationalist electorate to significantly help the SDLP, does not augur well for its future. Nevertheless, the danger it represents needs to be exposed, offering as it does a watered-down concept of Irish nationalism that envisages a 'solution' far short of full Irish unity.

It is now more urgent than before that republicans in the 26 counties should learn from the experiences of their Northern comrades, and apply the lessons in the specific, and in some ways different, situation prevailing there.

There is no criticism involved, or lack of recognition of the difficulties, in stating that the political advances achieved by republicans in the North, and the politicisation of republican supporters, have not yet been fully matched in the

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26 counties. But there is an obvious danger — a partitionist danger, you might say — if that imbalance persisted for much longer and if Sinn Fein came to be viewed as a political party whose appeal was primarily confined to the six counties.

Within that context, the importance of what Gerry Adams said in the Bodenstown oration in June needs no emphasis, but should provide the basis for meaningful discussion and positive action in the coming months:

The 26 counties and a development of consciousness among our people here is of colossal importance in the task of building a strong 32-county-wide political movement — capable of linking the local struggles of the socially-deprived, alienated young people, unemployed, small farmers, women and Gael-geoiri with the national struggle. The advances made in the 6 counties need to be matched by a parallel development in the 26 counties.

Republicans know the British government cannot exist in Ireland without Dublin collaboration and that the Dublin government has never been found lacking in this regard, but we have also to realise that ordinary people, understandably enough, accept Free State institutions as legitimate.

To ignore this reality is to blinker republican politics, to undermine the development of our struggle and is to have a basic flaw in our analysis. It has to be stressed that the people of the 6 counties cannot secure Irish independence and the conditions for our Irish republic on their own. A firm foothold and relevant organisation for Southern politics is vital...

With all of this in mind, the drawing up of a political strategy for the 26 counties must become the primary short-term objective facing republicans.

In the SDLP's desperation to minimise the impact of Sinn Fein's 102,701 votes, John Hume was quick to shout that republicans had actually won more votes — 152,310 to be precise — in the May 1955 Westminster elections, and that these had 'soon faded away' (less than half, 73,415 votes, in 1959, and a string of lost deposits in 1964). The same thing, Hume said, would happen this time too.

Just how much this represents lurid wishful thinking on his part can be seen in two ways.

Firstly, in marked contrast to June 9th, republican candidates in the '55 elections were *unopposed* within the nationalist camp and were thus not in fierce competition for votes.

Secondly, Hume's excuse for Sinn Fein's strong showing in rural areas was that these, unlike urban areas, had not felt the 'full brunt' of IRA violence. On the one hand this is sheer nonsense, since it fails to explain how in electoral terms Sinn Fein is now the major nationalist party in Belfast (a total of 23,619 votes to the SDLP's 20,613). And on the other hand it is simply and logically contradictory, since this time round, the 102,701 votes Sinn Fein received were freely given *in a time of war*, when there can be no ambiguity about Sinn Fein's support for the IRA's armed struggle. In May 1955 the IRA's border campaign had yet to commence and the fall-off in subsequent elections is attributable to its military failure and the absence of a cohesive political programme at the time.

Neither shortcoming applies this time round where both the political and military struggles complement one another. This time, the unpalatable truth for John Hume is: the republican vote is here to stay.

The 1955 election also had a couple of well-known sequels which have some relevance, and parallel, today. Sinn Fein had two prisoner candidates elected, Phil Clarke in Fermanagh/South Tyrone and Tom Mitchell in Mid-Ulster. Mitchell's election was declared void by Westminster (shades of Bobby Sands!) and a by-election held. Mitchell contested again in a straight fight and won with an increased margin.

Within two months both republicans had been unseated



● Getting the message across loud and clear in Lagan Valley; and (below) East Derry candidate, John Davey, canvasses with Benedict McElwee, a former blanket man and brother of hunger-striker Thomas McElwee



by an electoral court and unionists took their seats. However, in Mid-Ulster the unionist MP was himself found to be ineligible because of his membership of certain statutory bodies, and a second by-election was called. This time a constitutional nationalist candidate, Michael O'Neill, intervened in the contest, splitting the nationalist vote and losing the seat to the unionist candidate, but receiving a derisory 6,421 votes to Mitchell's 24,124 in the process.

It is at least ironic that in June 1983 the SDLP's vote-splitting intervention in those same two constituencies achieved the same result, at the same cost to their electoral credibility.

VIEWPOINT



• DUP man Reverend William McCrea treats the Mid-Ulster electorate to a taste of gospel singing after his narrow win. At least Danny Morrison seemed to enjoy it...

BY any one of a number of yardsticks, Sinn Fein's electoral performance of 102,701 votes, an increase of 60% on its Assembly vote in October 1982, winning the West Belfast seat on the way, represented a massive political defeat for constitutional nationalism and its Establishment backers who had all loudly portrayed a vote for Sinn Fein beforehand as a 'vote for violence'.

At a press conference of the SDLP's four Belfast candidates on May 19th, one of them, Dr Alasdair McDonnell, boastfully declared that they were involved in 'a political war' with Sinn Fein and the IRA. Twelve days later, at another SDLP conference, this time to declare that the SDLP would 'stop at nothing' and would mount a campaign of disruption that would involve its MPs sitting on the floor of the House of Commons, if necessary, to highlight the North's ongoing crisis to the British government (!), McDonnell engaged in a second flight of fantasy saying that the SDLP could win up to six seats. More sober SDLP estimates still believed the party could win four seats: Foyle (its only victory), Newry/Armagh, Mid-Ulster and South Down.

(In the circumstances, it remains to be seen whether John Hume will carry out a solo 'campaign of disruption' on the floor of the House of Commons.)

As well as the SDLP's own optimism, the electoral poll conducted for *The Irish News* by the Market Research Bureau of Ireland, and various academic analyses, encouraged the misleading notion right up to polling day that the SDLP was way out in front. The MRBI findings, published on June 6th, which needless to say suited the editorial line of *The Irish News* exactly, predicted that the SDLP would poll twice Sinn Fein's figure, 16% of the total poll to Sinn Fein's 8% (the actual figures were 17.9% and 13.4%). A Queen's University politics department computer analysis of the Mid-Ulster situation ignored the swing to Sinn Fein which the Carrickmore by-election had indicated, and predicted that

the SDLP would receive 24.6% of the vote in that constituency and Sinn Fein 18.9%.

In the event, the SDLP's 137,012 votes, and the 18,121 increase they represent on its Assembly poll, constitute the maximisation of the potential SDLP vote, achieved only after the intense canvassing campaign conducted on its behalf by the media, the Catholic hierarchy and the Free State political parties.

There is considerable evidence however, most dramatically in Mid-Ulster where Danny Morrison (16,096 votes) missed victory by only 79 votes, that Sinn Fein's result is not simply due to a massive registration campaign, or a maximisation of a mutually exclusive republican vote as Hume has claimed, but that Sinn Fein is significantly eroding the SDLP's electoral base in some areas.

According to one set of statistics, since October last year — a remarkably short period of less than eight months — Sinn Fein narrowed the gap with the SDLP in the constituencies west of the Bann by a full eight percentage points, from a 58/42 share of the nationalist vote in October to a considerably closer 54/46. Obviously if this is evidence of a Sinn Fein increase *at the expense of* the SDLP, and there are clear indications that it is, the performance of the SDLP in the Forum charade, the continuing demoralisation in the party, and Sinn Fein's enhanced electoral credibility from this latest election are all factors which will further reduce the gap by the time of the EEC elections next year, and may reverse it in time for the 1985 local government elections.

Nonetheless, Sinn Fein now holds commanding electoral

| | SINN FEIN | | SDLP | |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| | Assembly '82 | June '83 | Assembly '82 | June '83 |
| Total votes | 64,191 | 102,701 | 118,891 | 137,012 |
| % of total poll | 10.2 | 13.4 | 18.8 | 17.9 |
| % of nationalist poll | 35 | 43.5 | 65 | 56.5 |

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majorities in three key 'nationalist' constituencies: **West Belfast** (Sinn Fein 16,379; SDLP 10,934), **Mid-Ulster** (Sinn Fein 16,096; SDLP 12,044) and **Fermanagh/South Tyrone** (Sinn Fein 20,954; SDLP 9,923). In at least two other constituencies with a sizeable nationalist vote, **North Belfast** (Sinn Fein 5,451; SDLP 5,944) and **East Derry** (Sinn Fein 7,073; SDLP 9,397), Sinn Fein are within easy striking distance of the SDLP total. Only in fact in three of the fourteen seats contested by both nationalist parties, can the SDLP be confident of maintaining a substantial lead in the short term: **Foyle** (Sinn Fein 10,607; SDLP 24,017) where Hume's high profile was the primary factor, **Newry/Armagh** (Sinn Fein 9,928; SDLP 17,434) and **South Down** (Sinn Fein 4,074; SDLP 20,145). In the latter two constituencies, nonetheless, Sinn Fein's solid showing with Jim McAllister and Paddy Fitzsimmons deprived the SDLP of two MPs, Seamus Mallon (his third 'unseating' since October!) and Eddie McGrady, which it had been arrogantly hopeful of getting.

The loss of the Fermanagh/South Tyrone seat, although entirely predictable in view of the SDLP's vote-splitting, was, other than perhaps the Foyle result, Sinn Fein's only real disappointment. On the face of it, the SDLP candidate Rosemary Flanagan (9,923 votes) polled better than optimistic Sinn Fein estimates had hoped, and it is an indication that there will remain a hard core of pro-SDLP support which it will be extremely difficult to erode.

The SDLP vote in that constituency was in fact very similar to that achieved by Austin Currie in 1979 when he split the vote against Frank Maguire. On that occasion the loyalist vote was split too, and Maguire won the seat nonetheless. However if compared with the Assembly results of last year, when Sinn Fein received a total of 16,725 first preference votes to the SDLP's 12,000, it could be argued that in that constituency the differential in Sinn Fein's favour has increased from 4,725 votes to 11,031.

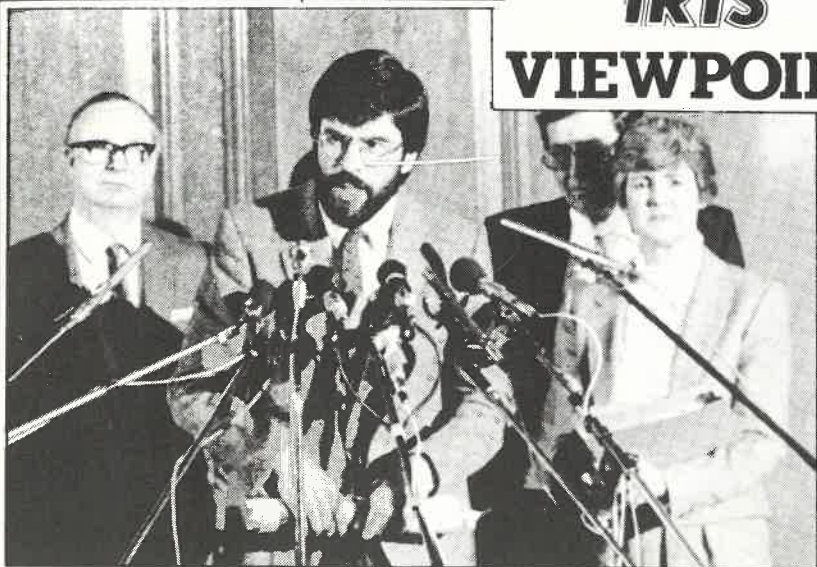
Overall, of course, Sinn Fein easily exceeded its pre-election objective of 90,000 votes and gained one seat in the process, almost gaining another, and depriving the SDLP of the 'strong Westminster team' that it had argued fatuously was "*absolutely essential*" for nationalist representation. That this result was achieved despite one of the most orchestrated anti-republican campaigns ever mounted by the British and Free State establishments, the Catholic hierarchy and the media, is at least as much a comment on the dramatically changing nature of Northern nationalist society as it is on the republican electoral campaign itself. It has amply indicated the massive potential that exists for republican organisational development in the six counties.

Before the elections, Margaret Thatcher conceded that Sinn Fein victories 'would worry her'. The next few years hold out the promise of several more headaches for the blue-rinse from Finchley.



●Beechmount Avenue, West Belfast — locally renamed RPG Avenue!

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● Gerry Adams makes his acceptance speech, as defeated candidates in West Belfast, Gerry Fitt and Joe Hendron look on grimly; (below) SDLP vote-splitting cost nationalists Owen Carron's Fermanagh/South Tyrone seat



● The challenge to the SDLP continues, with Alex Maskey's campaign for the Belfast city council by-election

THE strong likelihood, by the time this issue of *IRIS* appears, is that Sinn Fein will have achieved yet another electoral success in West Belfast, this time in the Belfast city council's Area 'D' by-election on June 29th, with the election of Alex Maskey. If so, it will be Sinn Fein's second council seat in over 50 years (it has of course only contested two!) and will be the prelude to a major local government election campaign by the party in 1985.

But unlike the constitutional parties, Sinn Fein does not regard elections as ends in themselves, but rather as means of reflecting the popular support for continuing resistance to British rule and exposing the falsehood of claims by the SDLP and other parties to 'represent' the nationalist people.

In Belfast, where Sinn Fein has run full-time advice centres for many years and has consistently campaigned on social, political and repression issues, and assisted local groups to run their own campaigns, that involvement will continue at the same organised pace, irrespective of elections and election results. The same involvement is true of Sinn Fein activists across the North and in some, though by no means *all* parts of the 26 counties.

But as Gerry Adams has pointed out emphatically, speaking at Bodenstown on June 19th, now that the political organisation is on its feet and developing rapidly in the North, there is a more urgent need than ever before to work out and implement a concrete political strategy for the South to redress the imbalance that undeniably now exists. The com-

mitment is there already, the enthusiasm — especially among young republicans — is not lacking, but there has to be a reappraisal in some respects to maximise the relevance of the republican message to larger sections of Southern opinion.

Hopefully, much of the necessary thinking will be done in the coming months, ensuring that this year's Ard Fheis will be a springboard from which will come a fitter and more organisationally sound Sinn Fein — a truly 32 county *revolutionary* organisation.

But the thinking and the resulting debates have to go on long after that. It is vital that republicanism should be always outward-looking, not introspective, able to adapt to confront changing tactical problems, not rooted in some too narrowly defined concept of the 'right' way. The success of the Northern electoral strategy, despite the initial doubts and hesitancy of many sincere republicans about it, holds a lesson for the future.

In the words of the Bodenstown oration:

Unless we make republicanism a living, viable philosophy capable of meeting the needs of our people, our struggle and our country, republicanism and the legacy of Wolfe Tone are no more than the academic high-minded visions of yesterday or yesteryear. While the fundamental tenets of republicanism will always remain valid, we have a duty to interpret and to develop our republicanism so that it meets today's political conditions and so that it becomes a coherent social and political philosophy.

There is no such thing as republican theology. We need a living political ideology, based firmly on republican principles and always open to refinement, reappraisal and self-criticism. We need to make our politics the politics of ordinary people



● The Forum's televised first meeting in Dublin on May 30th

Final crossroads

for SDLP?

BY SEAN DELANEY

THE appearance of a quarter-page advertisement in the Northern nationalist newspaper, *The Irish News*, on June 7th — only 48 hours before polling day — was perhaps a more eloquent commentary than any political speech or press statement could have been on the real significance of what has been grandiosely termed by its proposers, John Hume's SDLP, as "potentially the most powerful political initiative since 1920." The advertisement was, of course, inviting submissions to the New Ireland Forum. Eloquent commentary lies not only in the timing, but in the fact that it appeared on the page wholly set aside for electioneering coverage.

Certainly John Hume has had to gamble heavily on the Forum, as he attempted to use it in the run-up to the Westminster elections as a 'glitter-

ing prize' to win back sections of nationalist support the SDLP had so conspicuously lost in the October Assembly elections. Stripped of its padded rhetoric, there was no concealing the fact that the SDLP manifesto hinged entirely on an appeal to the nationalist electorate to support the party that initiated the Forum, while in the closing stages of the campaign an intense-looking Hume peered daily out of newspaper advertisements beside the claim that 'the presentation of an agreed Irish plan will make a powerful impact on British and international opinion'.

Even though at the televised first meeting of the Forum on May 30th

Hume had 'pledged' the party not to place its short-term or long-term political interests before 'the goal of achieving peace and stability in Ireland', in reality he made few bones about a strategy of linking the Forum with the electoral fortunes of the SDLP, arguing that it was "absolutely essential", as part of the Forum initiative, to have a strong SDLP representation at Westminster.

Meanwhile, outside the ranks of the SDLP, republicans and loyalists were unusually agreed, at least on the political motivation of the Forum's inception as an electoral gimmick to boost the flagging fortunes of 'constitutional nationalism'. The DUP's Peter Robinson drily called the Forum "an old bowl of Irish stew warmed up again."

Alliance Party leader Oliver Napier said it demonstrated that the SDLP was "a party in full retreat". And Sinn Fein's vice-president Gerry Adams said that "the acceptance by Fine Gael of John Hume's proposals must be viewed as a life-belt for a party under threat from Sinn Fein."

But other than its short-term function as an electoral ploy to counter the 'Sinn Fein threat', what does the future hold for the New Ireland Forum? Already there are signs, clearly disturbing to John Hume, that far from sinking their bitter rivalries Fianna Fail and Fine Gael are both equally as anxious as the SDLP to use the Forum for party advantage.

There are other questions too, the most important of which is what dangers does the Forum pose for nationalist aspirations? And when the Forum, with its 'agreed blueprint' collapses as it must, where will the SDLP, with all the last remnants of their credibility gambled on it, go then?

In the aftermath of the 1981 hunger-strike it was quickly all too apparent to the SDLP leadership that they had seriously miscalculated, not only on the mood of Northern nationalists generally, but even on that of part of their own grassroots' organisation.

Amid the bitterness and demoralisation, there was a distinct awareness that by refusing to take part in the National H-Block/Armagh Committee or to endorse the five demands, the SDLP had aligned itself with the British government at a period of acute nationalist crisis.

One symptom of this awareness was the virtual eclipse from the SDLP's front-line of the party's Mid-Ulster spokesperson Paddy Duffy, who made it clear that he would not stand in the Assembly elections in October '82 and did not contest the Westminster elections either. Within the SDLP, Duffy was regarded as one of its staunchest 'nationalist' proponents and had been behind a proposal two years earlier at an SDLP conference (which was defeated) that the party should meet to discuss with the IRA if there was any common ground.

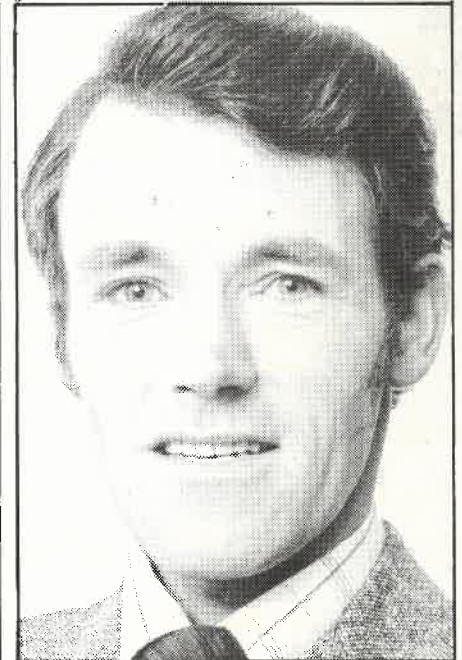
Again in Mid-Ulster, growing dissatisfaction with the direction in which Hume was taking the SDLP led to the resignation from Omagh district council, early this year, of one of the party's earliest members, Carrickmore man Brendan Mar-



● Seamus Mallon, confronted by H-Block supporters during his party's 1981 conference — the SDLP subsequently realised they had seriously miscalculated



● PADDY DUFFY



● BRENDAN MARTIN

tin. The resignation, extremely embarrassing for the SDLP in itself (they made it worse by saying Martin had been a 'closet Sinn Feiner' all along!), goes a long way to revealing the strains under which the SDLP party organisation found itself in 1981/82.

Even more revealing of the extent to which the SDLP was increasingly perceived to have distanced itself from the 'national question' and to lack the determination to face up to the British, was the

result of the Omagh by-election. Sinn Fein's Seamas Kerr became the first member of the party to take a seat in a Northern local council for 50 years, romping home with 2,289 first preference votes of the total 4,093 cast. Alliance polled 907 votes, beating the SDLP, with only 654, into third place.

But it was the results of the Assembly elections almost exactly five months earlier, the rallying effect they had on the nationalist population behind the Republican

Movement, and Sinn Fein's dramatic political consolidation of its gains, that really rang the alarm bells among the Catholic middle class, and swung a hitherto reluctant Free State establishment behind the Forum idea.

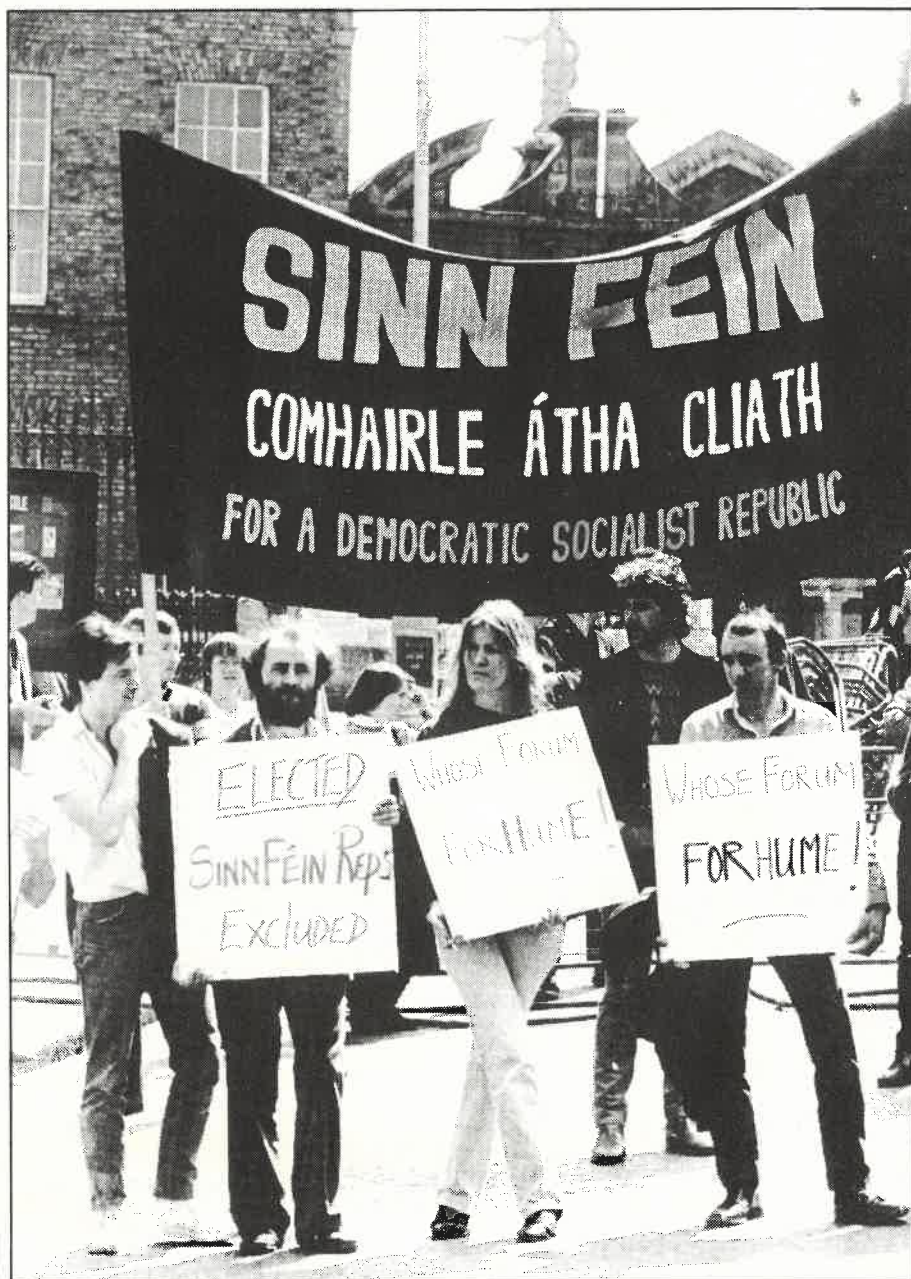
Hume had first canvassed the idea of a 'Council for a New Ireland' in the SDLP manifesto for the Assembly elections, saying he would ask the Free State government to set it up after the elections. The indications from Haughey's government however were less than hopeful. Haughey favoured the re-establishment of the London-Dublin summit, broken off during the conflict in the Malvinas, which he had himself boasted of as an historic breakthrough of constitutional importance at the time, and he was reluctant to get embroiled in a nationalist talking-shop alternative to the Assembly talking-shop in the North which ran the risk of further alienating the British.

FitzGerald was even more hostile to the SDLP proposal. At the outset of the previous Coalition government he had committed himself to a ludicrous 'constitutional crusade', in a hollow effort to appeal to Northern loyalists as part of his growing concern to seem to be doing something 'meaningful' about the North. He was equally concerned that Hume's Council would enrage loyalists and undermine his own efforts to appear as a moderate Southern statesman.

Both FitzGerald and Haughey undoubtedly hoped that the SDLP would be persuaded, perhaps with some minor concessions by Prior on the Assembly, to take their seats at Stormont.

BUT the October 20th results, which shook the Free State establishment as much as the SDLP, and the strong likelihood that with the experience behind them Sinn Fein would make substantial further gains in any Westminster elections, transformed that reluctance.

The size of the republican vote cut off the SDLP's manoeuvrability as to whether or not they would eventually take their seats in Stormont (if they were to retain any credibility they simply could not afford to) and reinforced a realisation among sections of the SDLP leadership that they needed to adopt a more 'hard-line' position to the British government's



● Sinn Fein activists highlight the Forum charade at its first meeting — from which Sinn Fein elected representatives were excluded

refusal to offer them tangible political concessions. While lending themselves to the Catholic middle class's declared campaign of 'winning the hearts and minds of the nationalist people' from Sinn Fein, the SDLP simultaneously were reinforced in their view that they needed to boost their own profile as a 'nationalist' party. And to do that they needed the help of the political establishment in the South.

With the return to power of the Fine Gael/Labour Coalition in December 1982, FitzGerald increasingly was concerned that the British did not understand the danger posed by Sinn Fein's Assembly vote and its future potential. Presiding over a collapsing economy, rampant inflation and unemployment, and with the lesson of Sinn Fein's political appeal especially among young people, FitzGerald was only too well

aware of the dangers inherent in the 26 counties if the republican political progress in the North was left unchecked.

For his part, the Northern director James Prior simply had no room to offer the SDLP anything if he was to secure even muted loyalist acceptance of the Assembly. Even without the SDLP's participation it represented the only achievement of his period at the Northern Ireland Office, and he was determined not to sacrifice it.

And though increasingly sympathetic to Hume's 'Council for a New Ireland', FitzGerald was still anxious neither to antagonise loyalists more than strictly necessary, nor to jeopardise the slowly re-emerging close political relationship between his government and Margaret Thatcher's. Soon after coming into office, his Foreign Sec-



● The Forum 'leaders' — (from left) John Hume, Garret FitzGerald, Dr Colm O hEocha (chairperson), Charles Haughey and Dick Spring

retary Peter Barry met James Prior for talks in London, and later in Brussels he met his British counterpart Francis Pym. Shortly after publicly announcing the setting up of the Forum this March, FitzGerald himself had a discussion with Thatcher about the Forum at an EEC summit meeting. Whatever was discussed between them there, it was nonetheless followed by Prior going some way to taking a 'soft' line on the Forum. Speaking to journalists on April 13th he said he thought the Forum might provide "something useful" in the current political debate, although he reiterated his belief in the Assembly.

(The British have apparently taken the position that since nothing of immediate political consequence can issue from the Forum there is no harm giving some gentle encouragement to what they too perceive as a Free State life-belt to the SDLP. After all, at least the SDLP will take their seat in Westminster!)

To drive home the SDLP's need for Free State help against Sinn Fein, Hume spent two days in Dublin on February 16th/17th discussing his 'Council for a New Ireland' with the main party leaders. On February 24th

FitzGerald announced that the Free State parties would meet 'to discuss progress towards ending violence and reconciling two traditions in the context of a new Ireland', in other words to discuss Hume's proposal. But he was outmanoeuvred by Haughey who, although cold to the idea while in power, was quite happy to make political capital out of it at Fine Gael's expense while in opposition.

That weekend, in the keynote address at the Fianna Fail ard fheis, Haughey used the occasion for a frontal assault on the six counties, in the best traditions of verbal republicanism, reiterating that: "The conclusion cannot be contravened that Northern Ireland is an unworkable and unsustainable political entity." He went on to say that Fianna Fail would support, "as a valuable first step in preparation for the final constitutional settlement," the SDLP proposal for a Council for a New Ireland.

Outflanked as he was, FitzGerald had still to wait until he secured the formal agreement of both the Labour Party and Fianna Fail before he could announce, on March 11th, a New Ireland Forum: "for consultation on the manner in which lasting peace and

stability can be achieved in a new Ireland through the democratic process."

Predictably, although the DUP, the Official Unionists and the Alliance Party, with a record of paramilitary activity, support for shoot-to-kill policies, and support for the British army, RUC and UDR under their various belts, all received invitations to take part, Sinn Fein (with already 35% of the Northern nationalist vote) did not because of its 'support for violence'.

FOR something claimed by the SDLP to be 'potentially the most powerful political initiative since 1920', the Forum has aroused little or no excitement among nationalist people, North or South, and total rejection by loyalists.

At the Stormont debate on March 15th, shortly after FitzGerald's announcement, not only the DUP and OUP, but also — to Hume and FitzGerald's disappointment — the Alliance Party roundly rejected invitations to take part. All three parties echoed Sinn Fein's claim that the Forum was largely designed to bail the SDLP out of its electoral difficulties.

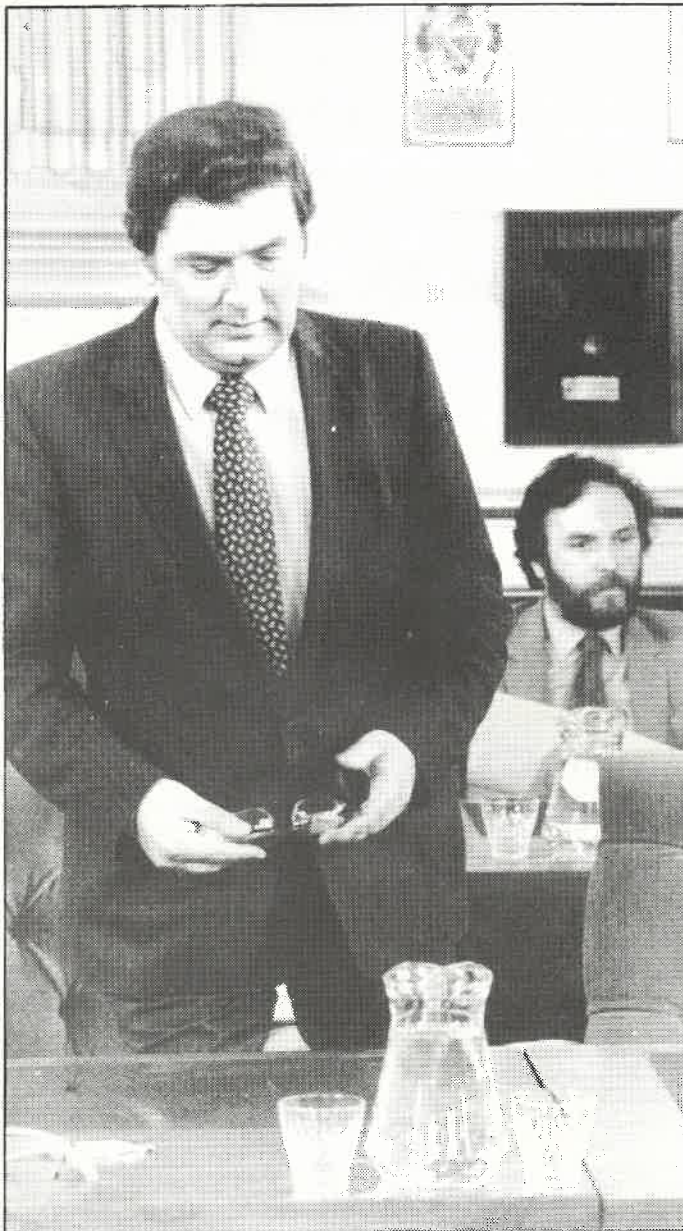
In a statement signed by its five elected representatives, Gerry Adams, Danny Morrison, Martin McGuinness, Jim McAllister and Owen Carron, Sinn Fein went further, to spell out the possible danger — despite its short-term pragmatic motivation — posed by the Forum:

"Whilst Sinn Fein can take some heart out of the dwindling fortunes of the SDLP, we are seriously concerned that the product of this New Ireland Forum — representing an input from everyone except the loyalists and that section of the nationalist people which has borne repression and most of the sacrifices — will be a real weakening of the national demand for independence..."

"For having come up with proposals and safeguards for those presently tied to loyalism, the loyalists will reject them out of hand because Britain is not ready to withdraw and will not withdraw, nor revoke the unionist veto, until it has been forced to and has no other option."

"Thus, when Britain is ready to withdraw and the loyalists realise that they will have to come to an accommodation, they will consider the Forum's proposals from the point of view of bargaining and whittling them down. The losers in such negotiations would, of course, once again be the nationalist people of the North."

Apart from this general political rejection by Northern political parties, the Forum has faced several problems



● Inside the Forum conference room — (left) John Hume and Hugh Logue of the SDLP, and (right) Brian Lenihan and Charles Haughey of Fianna Fail

among those actually involved in it. At the first planning meeting in Dublin on April 14th between FitzGerald, Haughey, Hume, and Dick Spring of the Labour Party, differences of interpretation emerged between the Fianna Fail and Fine Gael leaders on the aims of the Forum, with Haughey apparently demanding that the Forum should produce a blueprint for a united Ireland which should be then followed by a British-Irish constitutional conference on a British withdrawal. This verbal nonsense (when not backed up by any real will to achieve it) contradicted FitzGerald's own essentially anti-nationalist view that the Forum should 'keep all options open' — though his own long-term preference would most likely be a loose confederal relationship between North and South.

Haughey, with an opportunism at which he clearly excels, sees the Forum as presenting him with a platform

to portray himself as a 'Brits out' republican leader, while engaging in party political attacks on Fine Gael through the Forum discussions. FitzGerald, who on May 10th told Leinster House deputies that his constitutional review would be shelved until the Forum had completed its work (by the end of this year), must be extremely relieved to be let off the hook of a 'crusade' which had got embarrassingly dented on the abortion amendment debate. John Hume, who is more dependent than either of the Free State politicians on the Forum at least adopting a public posture of non-party politics, if the SDLP is to preserve any credibility, must be seriously alarmed at these antics.

Certainly, at the first full meeting of the New Ireland Forum, in Dublin Castle's St Patrick's Hall on May 30th (fortunately close to the June 9th

election date for John Hume), there was little evidence that any new **thinking** (let alone purposeful **action**) would emerge, in the RTE broadcast of the opening speeches of the four party leaders.

Opening the speeches, FitzGerald claimed that the Forum represented 'a unique attempt to bring peace and stability to this island by facing reality', but that reality did not apparently include an admission of the Forum's creation being a direct response to the republican threat: "*It was because of my conviction that we, the people of this state, have not sufficiently stirred ourselves to face reality, that I proposed the establishment of this Forum.*"

He went on, with appalling cynicism, to say that because the point of view of the 'sorely tried' nationalist people of the North was 'directly represented among us here' (by the SDLP!), it was

a 'major guarantee' that the Forum would not shirk facing reality. The key section of his speech contained a repudiation of the "preconceived" notion of Irish unity, amounting in effect to a call for a future loose confederal relationship between North and South:

"We believe that this Forum cannot hold back from examining any structures, any solutions, that might meet the essential requirement of giving expression to, and guaranteeing, the two Irish identities: the Irish/Irish identity of the nationalist tradition which has found itself stifled within the structures of Northern Ireland, and the British/Irish identity of the unionist tradition, which fears that it would be stifled under any different structures..."

"My party believes that we should start our work with a completely open mind, but with a common determination to identify together all the key elements in the Northern Ireland crisis, and to provide honest and sensible answers to each of them. In our view it would be a tragic and indeed a fatal error to seek to pre-determine our findings, or in any way to attempt to say now what our eventual proposals will or will not contain."

FitzGerald's anti-reunification speech stands in strong contrast to Haughey's 'republican' tub-thumping, emphasising the use the Fianna Fail leader intends to make of the Forum platform. At one point openly attacking FitzGerald's earlier 'constitutional crusade' ("*We need apologise to nobody about the character or performance of our state, and we do not intend to do so.*"), Haughey announced:

"Our purpose is to construct a basic position, which can then be put to an all-round constitutional conference, convened by the Irish and British governments as a prelude to British withdrawal."

He went on to hint at a federal arrangement:

"We may have to consider some form of autonomy for Northern Ireland, be it on the basis of the same area, or a smaller one,"

and he also hinted that a united Ireland would be prepared to join NATO to reassure Britain about her defence.

Labour Party leader Dick Spring's address to the Forum was remarkable only insofar as it totally avoided any mention of constitutional change, Irish unity or loyalism, and comprised instead an almost blow-by-blow *resumé* of the party manifesto. Borrowing from Connolly's *The New Evangel*, and equally falsely describing the Labour Party as the 'oldest political party in the Republic' (a comment that might have reminded those still awake that the real 'oldest party' had been excluded from the proceedings), Spring's

speech illustrated only too well how uneasy the Free State Labour Party has always felt on the topic of Irish unity, and emphasised the fact that in reality (were it not for Fine Gael and Fianna Fail participation) it wants nothing to do with the Forum.

John Hume's speech, too, was devoid of political input but rich in rhetoric, as might have been expected from someone desperately trying to 'sell' the Forum to the nationalist electorate in time for polling day:

"This is no academic, theoretical experiment, but an honest effort to confront the real chilling circumstance of today's Ireland in the full context of the real relationship between Ireland and Britain today. This is the most serious effort that has ever been made by Irish political leaders to face reality..."

This was Hume at his most eloquently 'statesmanlike', going for the 'big one'!

E LOQUENT words spoken in the marbled surroundings of a conference room by sleek middle-class politicians have a tendency however to sound hollow when translated into the harsh reality of the streets those politicians so despise.

Whatever 'blueprint' is produced after the Forum's deliberations, it can have no short-term impact on the political realities of the North, not simply because it will be rejected by the loyalists who are just not interested in talk of 'accommodation' with their ethos or of 'reconciliation' (to use the Forum's vogue word), but perhaps more importantly because it will be seen by growing, and increasingly politically conscious, sections of the nationalist people to be totally irrelevant to their everyday experience of life in the Orange state.

The 'reality' the Forum politicians profess to be so ready to face, bears no resemblance to the nationalist reality of British occupation and loyalist supremacy — not a "*frightened intransigence*" as John Hume termed it, but a triumphant and irreformable sectarianism guaranteed by the British presence. The Forum's 'reality' makes no mention of plastic bullets or of deliberate shoot-to-kill policies, of the RUC and its paid informers, of non-jury courts and internment by remand, of emergency legislation, of the Payment for Debt Act and appalling housing conditions, of savage poverty and unemployment... instead all of these are effectively dismissed in Garret FitzGerald's patronising comment about the 'sorely tried nationalist people', because to admit otherwise would be

to face the uncompromised reality that the British presence and loyalism are twin obstacles to peace which have to be fearlessly confronted, not *accommodated* on their own terms.

As for any long-term impact the Forum might have, that can only be, as has been said before, to seriously weaken the nationalist aspiration at such a date in the future when loyalists are *forced* by British withdrawal to negotiate, by presenting a compromised blueprint for a 'new Ireland' that loyalists will further whittle down in order to preserve their *status quo* intact.

What then of the SDLP? Where will it go when the Forum has played out and when its proposals have been rejected out of hand by the British and the loyalists?

Despite its pre-election 'hype' the Forum failed to capture the imagination of the nationalist electorate in the North, and so win back a share of Sinn Fein's Assembly vote, as John Hume clearly hoped it would. It is not precisely determinable, but likely nonetheless, that it did succeed to some extent however in raising the SDLP's profile and giving the semblance of a constitutional 'way forward' sufficiently, in the run-up to June 9th, to at least give heart to many disillusioned SDLP voters and so prevent a further erosion of their vote. Whether Hume will feel that the return on his gamble was a sufficient one, is doubtful.

In the aftermath of the elections the New Ireland Forum charade will be seized on more desperately by the Free State establishment in its efforts to bolster the SDLP. Yet ironically, the very real anti-nationalism it manifests, behind John Hume's golden rhetoric, threatens only to exacerbate, rather than heal, the existing strains within the SDLP. Conceived as essentially a sop to the party's 'nationalist' faction (where its failure was so dramatically emphasised by Danny Morrison's near victory at the SDLP's expense in Mid-Ulster), the Forum is unlikely to be able to offer a 'blueprint' remotely acceptable to that faction, because of the Free State establishment's need not to antagonise the British government and the unionist parties. Far from healing internal rifts, the polarisation within the SDLP is certain to go on.

Speaking in St Patrick's Hall in Dublin Castle about the suffering of the last decade, John Hume said: "*I sense that we have come to a final crossroads.*" Even then, he might have sensed that the SDLP has already taken the downhill track

report is likely to provide ammunition for both loyalist and British politicians in the publicity arena of the United States, where considerable interest in the past has focussed on the continuing employment discrimination against Catholics.

The report will provide a further telling indictment of the FEA's unwillingness to seriously challenge job discrimination in the six counties, and is a reflection of the lengthy series of compromises made to loyalist demands by the FEA under Bob Cooper's chairmanship, as previously revealed in *IRIS* No. 4 last year (*The Fair Employment Agency - an empty exercise in 'reform'*).

From the FEA's establishment in 1976 until it was badgered in 1980 into carrying out an informal enquiry into the Protestant-dominated engineering industry in Belfast, the Agency successfully avoided facing up to the burning issue of institutionalised discrimination in the Orange state, concentrating its energies, such as they were, into organising pleasant education seminars on the subject and examining individual allegations of discrimination.

Following revelations in the Belfast nationalist weekly, *Andersonstown News*, in 1977 that the Ford Autolite factory in the predominantly Catholic Andersonstown district was discriminating against Catholics, the FEA did decide to launch an enquiry. This was however broadened into a general engineering enquiry at the insistence of NIO industry minister Don Concannon, at a meeting with Bob Cooper in January 1978, because the British government was alarmed at the prospect of charges of discrimination being levelled specifically at Fords. That company was being used extensively in propaganda terms by the NIO, under Roy Mason, to encourage further American investment; one of their subsequent 'successes', ironically, was De Lorean.

Concannon's intervention also had the effect of delaying the Belfast engineering enquiry for a staggering two years. When it was, eventually, concluded, against a background of hostility and obstruction from the Belfast employers and of gross inefficiency from the FEA itself, the findings of the report were left unpublished.

However, when the findings were 'leaked' last year, they showed that while little improvement had taken place in the employment prospects for Catholics since 1971, the FEA had stopped short of a finding of discrimination and had indeed been extremely circumspect in its criticisms of sectar-



● BOB COOPER - Agency chairman



● GLEN BARR - UDA spokesman

ian employment in Fords, Harland and Wolff, Shorts, Sirocco and the rest of the firms involved in the enquiry. Indeed, the FEA had even gone as far as to congratulate Harland and Wolff for its 'considerable efforts' to achieve equality of opportunity.

But as well as political pressure from within the NIO, it was in part the very make-up of the board of the FEA itself that militated against any finding of discrimination, and produced a call for a parallel enquiry into Catholic-employing firms in Derry which could be used to 'balance' even the muted criticisms it had made of sectarian employment in Belfast.

AS early as the 15th board meeting of the FEA, on November 8th 1977, one of its members, Glen Barr, a leading fig-

ure in the Ulster Defence Association, introduced this call into the initial discussion about the Belfast engineering enquiry.

The minutes of the meeting record: "Some concern was expressed that the enquiry was covering the area around Belfast only. Considerable discussion followed and it was finally agreed that as the inclusion of say a single firm from the Derry area might have an entirely distorted picture the exercise should continue as at present but any report would be held until another investigation had been done in the Western area of Northern Ireland."

Three months later, the minutes of the Agency board meeting record: "The question of looking at areas outside Belfast was again emphasised. Companies such as Molins and Sperrin Metal were particularly mentioned." The reference at this stage to Molins, a tobacco machinery company in Derry's Maydown industrial estate, assumes a greater importance in the light of how the Agency's investigation was subsequently to portray the company.

While Glen Barr was coming under pressure from the UDA in Derry to use his membership of the FEA to make allegations of Catholic discrimination in the city, Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party was equally anxious not to be outdone.

Early in 1978 the FEA had published a research document that drew heavily on E.A. Auger's earlier statistical analysis of the 1971 census (*Religion and Occupational Class in Northern Ireland, 1975*). Titled *An Industrial and Occupational Profile of the two sections of the population in Northern Ireland* the document pointed out that Catholics were two-and-a-half times more likely to be unemployed than Protestants, and that those Catholics in employment were far more likely to have less security of employment and to be in lower-paid occupations.

True to its reticent form, the FEA stated that these statistics did not necessarily provide evidence of discrimination, but only of the more nebulous **absence of equality of opportunity**. Nonetheless the document produced uproar in the DUP camp, which in October 1978 held a press conference (attended by Paisley, Peter Robinson and Gregory Campbell) at which they launched their counter *Document of Discrimination*.

Terming the FEA document "a slander against Ulster Protestants" the DUP document contained what purported to be detailed and comprehensive statistics on the employment situation in Derry



● Arntz Belts in the Catholic Pennyburn area — one of the five firms investigated

Ulster Democratic Unionist Party

206 ALBERTBRIDGE ROAD, BELFAST, BT5 NORTHERN IRELAND
Telephone: Belfast 56418/9 Telex: 718059

"DOCUMENT OF DISCRIMINATION"

PRESS CONFERENCE
3 OCTOBER 1978

DUP COUNCILORS REPRESENTATIVES

Gregory Campbell
Councillor Mrs Ann Hry
Councillor John Henry

PAINCY INDUSTRIES

Rev. Dr. Ian R. K. Paisley M.P.
Alderman James McClure
Alderman Peter D. Robinson

● The DUP document — its wild allegations were enough to frighten the FEA

which revealed "evidence of deliberate discrimination" against Protestants in the city.

Yet, as we will see, the statistics (in some instances grossly inaccurate, as in the case of Derry's largest private employer, Du Pont's) were a highly selective portrayal of the employment situation, and ignored the reality that, even in Derry, Catholics were proportionately far more likely to be out of work or in low-paid employment than their Protestant counterparts.

The 1971 census figures had shown that in Derry 23.1% of the Catholic population was unemployed while the unemployment rate for Protestants, at 7.8%, was almost exactly one-third. For such a situation to have been reversed in the space of seven years would have involved a change little short of revolutionary.

GOADED by DUP pressure outside the Agency, which called for the FEA to be scrapped as it "was only used with enthusiasm in attempting to find discrimination against Roman Catholics", and prompted by UDA influence within the Agency, the FEA moved towards carrying out an investigation, although like the Belfast enquiry it was dogged by indecision and delay.

Armed with the 1971 census figures for Derry, the FEA's first step was to approach the Department of Environment which had carried out a Derry household survey in 1979. The initial refusal of the DoE to provide the FEA with correlated information on religion and employment was a fairly accurate reflection of the hostility displayed by government departments and private industry generally, even to the FEA's timid steps into the discrimination minefield. Writing to DoE official F.D. Kane in a letter dated May 2nd 1980, FEA chairman Bob Cooper pointedly described the loyalist pressure which had prompted the Derry investigation and in doing so illustrated the likelihood that the final outcome would involve some accommodation with that pressure in an effort to bolster FEA credibility within unionist circles:

"There is a widely-held belief among the Protestant population in Londonderry, including the Unionist Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, and to some extent backed up by Protestant leaders in Londonderry such as the Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry and the Moderator of Derry Presbytery, that Protestants in that area are now being discrim-

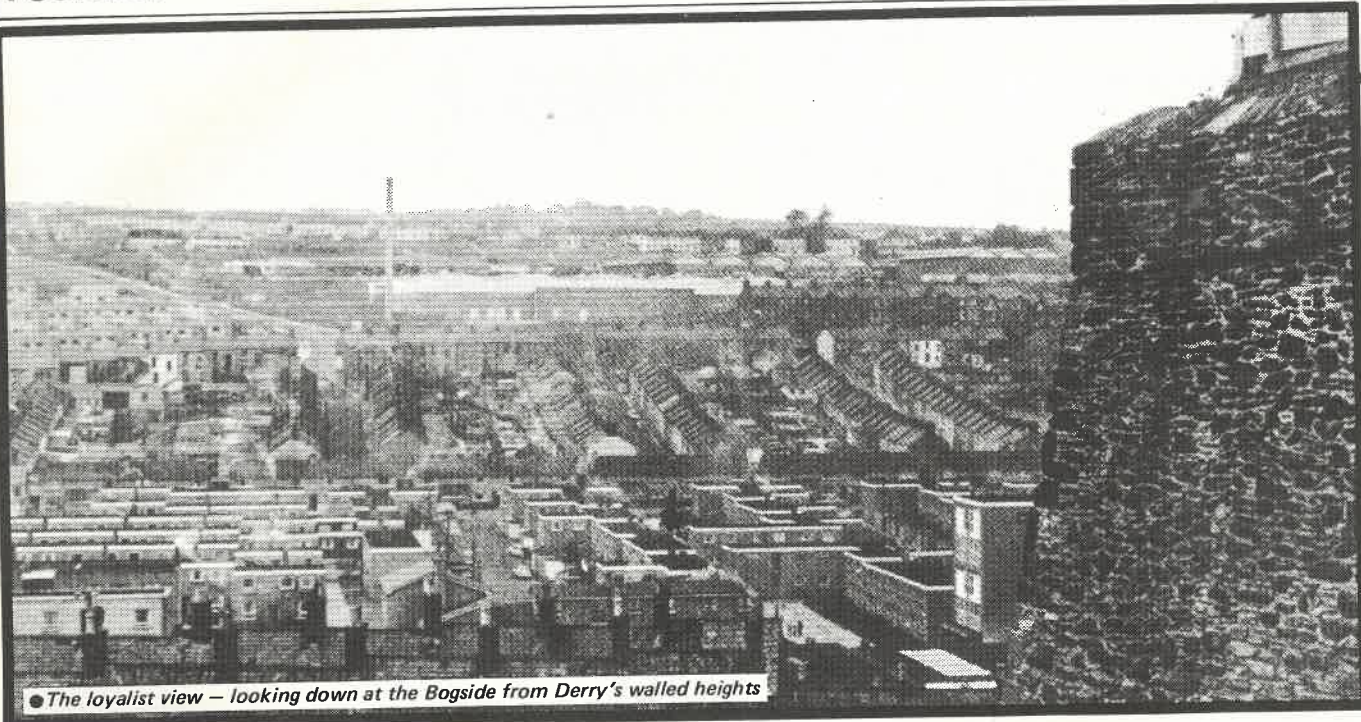
inated against in terms of employment.

"The Agency considers that it has a duty, in view of these strong feelings, either to find out if this is true and if so, what can be done about it, or to find out if it is not true. The 1971 census figures are useless from the point of view of this exercise, because the allegation is that the change which has taken place since 1971 is a consequence of the fairly dramatic change in the political power structure in that area."

(The change was certainly fairly dramatic, as both Cooper and F.D. Kane were aware. In 1969 the gerrymandered Derry Corporation, which returned 12 loyalist and 8 nationalist councillors in an overwhelmingly Catholic city, was dissolved and replaced by the Derry Development Commission. After the electoral boundary reform of 1973 the new Derry city council returned 18 nationalist councillors and nine loyalists.)

The DoE, with continuing reluctance, did eventually accede to the FEA's request for statistical data in October 1980. Although both the DoE and the FEA concurred that the data was not completely reliable and subject to a margin of error of up to 10% for sample inaccuracies, it did nonetheless clearly indicate that the unemployment situation had not substantially altered since 1971, with Catholics still disproportionately disadvantaged (see Table 1).

The DoE survey, based on a sample of 15,654 heads of households (out of an estimated 21,081 households in Derry) estimated that unemployment in the city, then at 15%, was almost twice the six county average of 8% (only 55% were actually in full-time employment), but that even in areas where the popul-



● The loyalist view — looking down at the Bogside from Derry's walled heights

Derry — a strategy of neglect

I need hardly point out to you that in Derry, unless something is done now, it is only a matter of time until Derry passes into the hands of the Nationalist and Sinn Fein parties for all time. On the other hand, if proper steps are taken now, I believe Derry can be saved for years to come.

(Sir Dawson Bates to Lord Craigavon, 1934)

THOSE members of the Londonderry branch of the SDLP whose abstention on the issue last April led to the defeat of a motion to change the city's 'official' name back to Derry, can justly be said to have done their level best to preserve the remnants of Sir Dawson Bates' loyalist preserve for his equally bigoted unionist successors.

Hailed as the Maiden city, the undefiled sanctuary of loyalist supremacy, Derry has exercised a strong symbolic influence in the Orange psyche over the centuries.

And after partition the swift steps taken by unionists — the abolition of proportional representation, the restriction of the franchise, the gerrymandering of electoral boundaries, discrimination in jobs and

housing, and of course as always the armed presence of the RUC and 'B' Specials, did indeed serve to secure Derry for 'years to come'.

But the consequences of a history of poverty and neglect imposed on the city in the interests of minority rule are still being felt. In order to secure and maintain not only Derry but the entire Stormont state, systematically pursued policies of economic neglect and discrimination in employment were followed in areas where the Catholic population constituted a majority. This policy produced the major regional, economic and social disparities that exist today along the line running East and West of the River Bann.

Protestant allegiance was maintained in these areas by a system of political and economic patronage which ensured that Protestant em-

ployers gave first preference to Protestants in both public sector and private employment.

By 1962, 97% of all government-sponsored industrial investment was restricted to the greater Belfast area. By 1964, of 111 advance factories sponsored by the Stormont government only 16 were located West of the Bann. By 1968, of 240 government-sponsored firms employing 60,000, only 10% were employed West of the Bann. Not until 1965-69 were any commercial land holdings purchased West of the Bann by the Stormont government for industrial investment. These disparities in industrial location survive to this day.

The 'Matthew plan' of 1963, which limited the further expansion for Belfast, totally ignored Derry's potential as the North's second largest city and opted instead for the creation of a new town, Craigavon, securely within the unionist heartland. This strategy was reinforced by the 1970-75 Matthew / Wilson economic development plan, which while finally designating Derry as a potential area of industrial growth, suggested

that the future lay not with introducing massive investment into areas such as Derry but in encouraging migration from those areas to new centres of growth such as Craigavon.

Similarly the New University of Ulster was located in Coleraine, a politically motivated decision which ensured the relative failure of NUU as an academic centre of excellence.

It was policies such as these that led the architect Coppcutt, who had been brought over from England to design Craigavon, to resign in disgust. He said that the designation of Craigavon as a new city was a consequence of religious and political considerations, and that if Derry was developed instead "this would indeed be earnest of the sincerity of the desire to prepare Ulster for the 21st century."

He added that Craigavon would prevent growth in other regions, and that he and his team were not being asked to make a positive contribution to Northern Ireland's growth but to "engineer propaganda rather than a new city." (Irish Times 1964)

ation ratio of Catholics and Protestants was about level Catholics experienced rates of unemployment two and three times higher.

For example, in the area designated East Bank Rural, 70% of the unemployed were Catholic; in East Bank Village 72% of the unemployed were Catholic, and so on. Far from being reversed, it appeared from these statistics that the heritage of discrimination remained intact.

HOW then did the Fair Employment Agency approach its employment investigation in Derry, instigated at loyalist demands, furnished with these preliminary statistics that seemed to refute their claims outright?

At its meeting on November 5th 1980 the Agency's Research Sub-committee recorded: "The proposal is to examine the composition of as many firms as we can handle, divided into groups or categories (e.g. engineering, shirt-making, retail) to establish a pattern of employment for the area and to establish if the allegations of discrimination against, or lack of equal opportunity for Protestants, have any foundation."

The Research Sub-committee actually went on to propose that 26 major private employers covering six areas of employment, as well as the civil and public services, would be dealt with in the enquiry.

The proposal however was rejected by the Agency board (the background to the hostility between the board and those involved in the Research Sub-committee was dealt with in IRIS No. 4). Instead, Bob Cooper used his influence to arbitrarily select five Derry firms — Du Pont, Molins, Arntz Belts,



Viking and Essex International — already known to have predominantly Catholic workforces, of which at least one (Viking) could by no stretch of the imagination be described as a 'major em-

ployer'.

The choice of the five firms was puzzling in another respect. Three of them were located in predominantly Catholic areas of Derry: Essex International in Creggan, Arntz Belts in Pennyburn and Viking in the Springtown industrial estate. On the face of it, there appeared to be little reason why the absence of a significant number of Protestants employed in these companies should be evidence of any inequality of opportunity.

Another interesting aspect of the FEA's approach was that it informed the firms that it was carrying out a formal investigation under Section 12 of the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act, 1976. By contrast, the slightly earlier Belfast engineering enquiry (which was an enquiry into discrimination against Catholics) had been conducted informally under Section 11, which has no legal powers of enforcement and which relies largely on the employer's goodwill and co-operation.

TABLE 1 — Population and Unemployment by Religion

| AREA | POPULATION (%) | | MALE UNEMPLOYMENT (%) | |
|------------------------|----------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|
| | Protestant | Catholic | Protestant | Catholic |
| Faughan | 80 | 19 | 5.2 | 15 |
| North-west Bank, Urban | 7 | 92 | 8.2 | 23.5 |
| Mid-west Bank, Urban | 23 | 75 | 12.3 | 17 |
| South-west Bank, Urban | 1 | 98 | — | 24 |
| Bogside | 1 | 99 | — | 13.6 |
| East Bank, Urban | 64 | 34 | 10.2 | 14 |
| West Bank, Rural | 61 | 39 | 13 | 20 |
| East Bank, Rural | 50 | 49 | 10 | 23 |
| West Bank, Village | 64 | 34 | 6 | 14 |
| East Bank, Village | 51 | 45 | 7 | 16.4 |

NOTE: the unemployment percentages refer to the ratio within either section of the population. For example, in Faughan 5.2% of the Protestant population was unemployed compared with 15% of the Catholic population. These should not be confused with further statistical breakdowns given in the main text.

This was both because of the Agency's reluctance to offend Belfast engineering employers and because of the unwillingness of some Agency members to support a Section 12 investigation. Neither criterion, apparently, applied in the Derry investigation however.

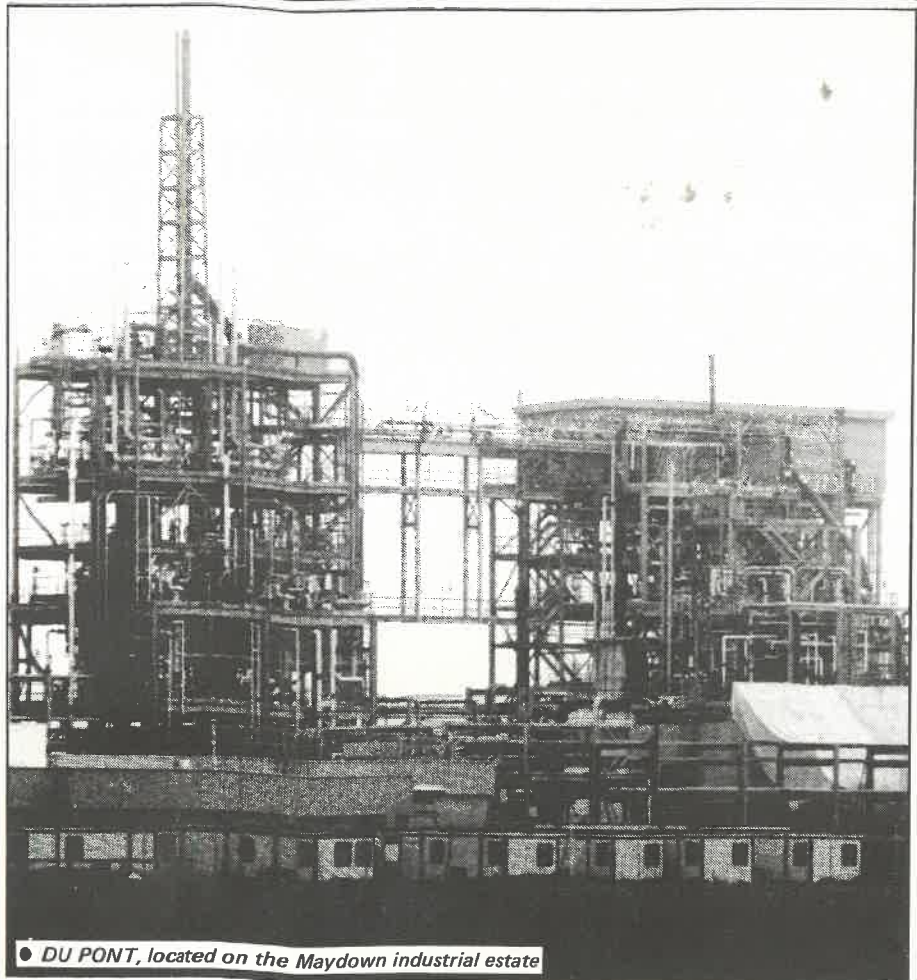
On April 24th 1981 Bob Cooper and the Agency's research officer met management representatives of two of the firms, Du Pont and Molins, for preliminary talks.

To their surprise, both firms' representatives proved extremely anxious to facilitate the FEA, in stark contrast to the Belfast employers who had consistently obstructed the informal enquiry and had only provided statistical information when threatened that the basis of the enquiry might be changed.

Du Pont, set up in 1960 on the Maydown industrial estate in the Waterside area of the city, is a US-owned firm manufacturing synthetic and man-made fibres. The statistics it subsequently supplied to the FEA indicated that at July 1981 it had a total workforce of 1,359, of whom 797 (59%) were Catholic, 467 (34%) were Protestant, and 94 (7%) were classified as 'other'.

Not only did these figures contrast with the DUP's "Document of Discrimination" statistical 'evidence' which claimed Du Pont employed only 300 Protestants and 1,450 Catholics, but it also approximated to the ratio of Catholics to Protestants in the city.

The FEA was also to find evidence that Catholics in Du Pont were mostly in the operative sections, while Protestants had a disproportionately greater concentration in better-paid manager-



● DU PONT, located on the Maydown industrial estate

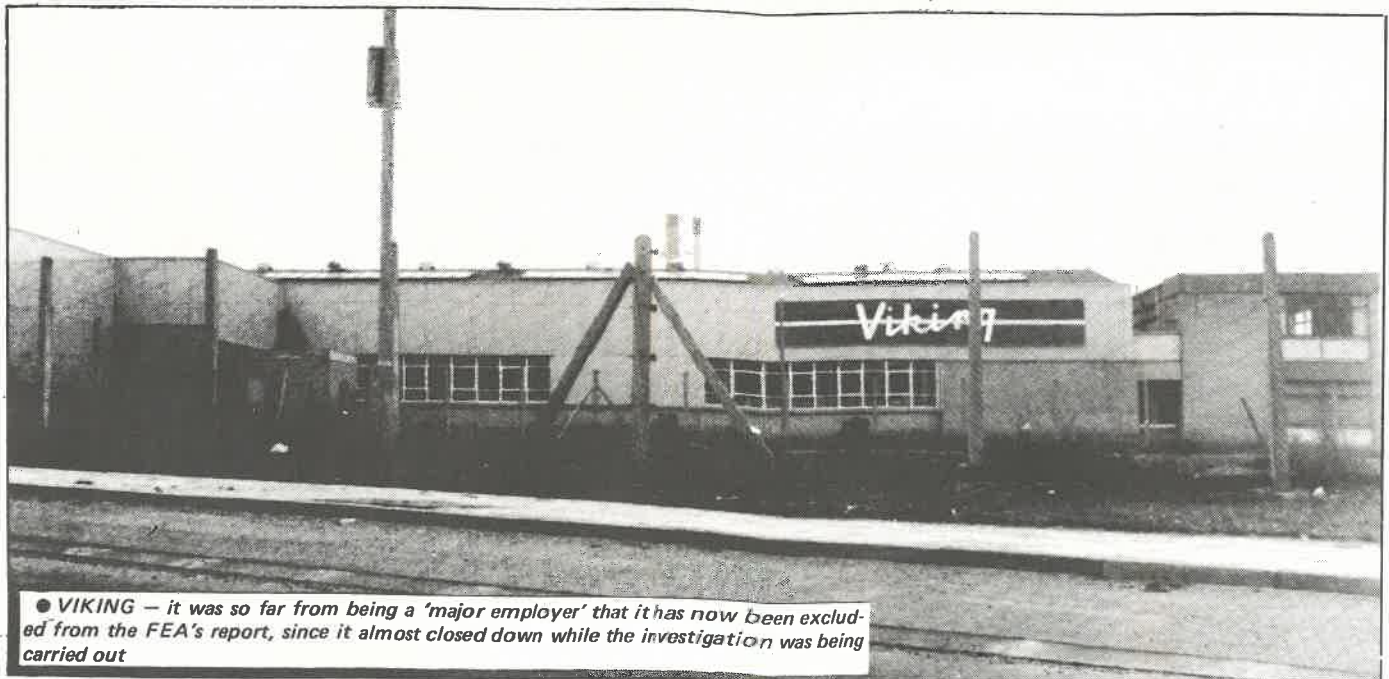
ial and administrative levels.

Molins too, which it will be recalled featured in the FEA's original talks about the Derry investigation, provided no evidence of a lack of equality of opportunity. A British-owned tobacco machinery firm, opened in the Maydown estate in 1966, it employed 419 in mid-1981, 78% of whom were Catholic, 18% Protestant, and 3% 'other'.

The company explained the disprop-

ortionately high level of Catholics by the fact that in 1966 they had initially recruited through unemployment offices and at social gatherings such as city centre dances. At a time when Protestant unemployment was proportionately very low it was inevitable that most of the applicants should have been Catholics.

But Molins told the FEA that, in recognition of the problems of discriminat-



● VIKING — it was so far from being a 'major employer' that it has now been excluded from the FEA's report, since it almost closed down while the investigation was being carried out

ion in the North, although other company plants outside the six counties recruited staff informally 'on the grapevine', in Derry the company insisted on widely advertising the few vacancies that arose. Nonetheless, with a declining workforce and a labour turnover of less than 1% annually, that situation, said Molins, did not frequently arise.

The FEA's initial draft report on Molins, prepared in January 1982 by its research officer, recognised Molins' efforts to recruit on a fair basis: *"It would appear then that Molins, in terms of its recruitment policies and practices is close to a model employer in that many of the (recruitment) policies which the Agency regard as problematic do not occur."*

Such a glowing description however threatened the equanimity of the FEA's board, many of whom had been insistent that the Derry investigation would provide evidence of discrimination against Protestants.

To facilitate this view, Bob Cooper took the unequivocal step (not for the first time) of effectively rewriting the key section of the Molins draft report, which now read: *"The Agency considers that a company which has a labour force which is out of balance with its catchment area does not provide equality of opportunity unless it introduces a programme in order to attract applicants from that community which is under-represented."*

Behind the usual blandness of Cooper's jargon, the tell-tale balancing and juggling act designed to mirror previous criticism of sectarian engineering employers in Belfast, was unmistakable.

ON a second visit to Derry on October 1st 1981, Bob Cooper and the Agency's research officer met representatives of Essex International, Arntz Belts and Viking — all firms with almost totally Catholic catchment areas.

Nonetheless, Essex International astounded the Agency by informing them that it was so keen to recruit on a cross-community basis that it had advertised managerial and technical vacancies in newspapers using only a box number. However applicants had invariably lost interest when they subsequently learned that the factory concerned was Essex.

Even Catholics from the Waterside, Essex management told the FEA, were reluctant to take jobs in Essex when available, because of having to travel into Creggan. Protestant schools simply declined to respond to Essex's invitations

to enquire about job vacancies, and there remained a shortage of technical staff. Factory inspectors declined to visit Essex, so exacerbating its 'image' problem.

As in the case of Molins, the FEA's original draft report commented favourably on Essex International's recruitment policies, but once again a revised draft by Cooper and the Agency board deleted these references.

The other two companies predictably had almost totally Catholic workforces. Arntz Belts had also opened in Derry during the '60s when Protestant unemployment was low. Its 190-strong workforce was recruited from its immediate catchment area of the Bogside, Creggan and Shantallow. Its workforce was declining and its turnover of employees was zero.

Viking cycles employed only about 45 workers at the start of the FEA's investigation, and declined still further so that it faced imminent closure. By early 1982 the investigation had been virtually abandoned in Viking's case, although the company has since recovered.

Apart from Cooper's revision of draft reports in the cases of Molins and Essex International, there are other disturbing indications that the FEA intends to use the final published report to allay loyalist criticisms of its role, by implying that the same **inequality of opportunity** exists in the Derry firms as in the Belfast engineering companies.

The virtual deletion of the term 'discrimination' from the FEA's vocabulary — which most certainly ought to have characterised the findings of the Belfast enquiry — and its replacement by the blander and more widely interpretable 'equality of opportunity', has effectively provided the FEA with the means of paralleling the two investigations. Both in Derry and Belfast, the FEA will argue, firms fail to provide equality of opportunity.

The decision to publish future reports, including that of the Derry investigation, was taken by the FEA in February 1982. One of those insistent that the Derry report be published was Agency board member and Official Unionist, Professor Desmond Rea. It is likely that Rea believed that the Derry report should offset the damaging impact of the FEA report on the Northern Ireland Electricity Service, published last December, which showed that Catholics were structurally disadvantaged in the NIES in terms of wage levels and promotion opportunities.

FEA chairman Bob Cooper's own

activities since the conclusion of the Derry investigation give rise to suspicions that he regards it as being necessary that the forthcoming report, despite the evidence it gathered to the contrary, should satisfy loyalist demands and deflect the firms examined, in order to deflect continued criticism of the FEA.

On January 21st 1982 Cooper met DUP politicians Gregory Campbell and David Hayes in Derry's Everglades Hotel, to discuss their allegations of discrimination against Protestants in employment. The DUP men themselves admitted that they were not unduly concerned about firms in the Bogside, Creggan, Shantallow or Pennyburn areas employing 100% Catholic workforces since *"there was no way any Protestant, in the present circumstances, would go to work there"* (an admission that raises question marks over the FEA's selection of three of the five firms under investigation from those very areas), but they were insistent that the workforce on the Maydown industrial estate should be between one-half and two-thirds Protestant.

Not surprisingly perhaps, they were unwilling to explain to the FEA how it was, if widespread discrimination was being practised in Derry, that all the evidence still pointed to a far higher ratio of Catholic unemployment.

Despite all of this, Bob Cooper has persisted in a policy of appeasement to loyalist bigots both within and outside the mis-named Fair Employment Agency. Instead of squashing the groundless accusation that tangible discrimination against Protestants in job opportunities exists in areas of the North, Cooper has been content to play along with loyalist attempts to turn discrimination on its head.

Seven weeks after his meeting with the DUP in Derry, in a remarkable statement to the Belfast Telegraph (9/3/82), Cooper went as far as he could to give credence to the ridiculous:

"Protestants in Northern Ireland feel there is a greater degree of job discrimination against them now than at any time in the past.... There was a time when it was mainly Roman Catholics who believed they were discriminated against," he said.

Cooper went on to say that Derry was one part of the North where there were particularly strong feelings among Protestants that they were being discriminated against.

All the signs point to that being the clearest message contained in the Derry report when it is published. Derry's unemployed Catholics could be forgiven for being cynical about the motivation of the Fair Employment Agency

CATHOLIC HIERARCHY

Propping up the Orange state

AT A PRESS briefing on May 3rd, Bishop Cahal Daly declared that a vote for Sinn Fein was 'a wasted vote' and that people should think seriously before risking being seen as 'supporting violence'. As polling day approached, the rising crescendo of calls from Bishop Daly and other members of the hierarchy became increasingly explicit in their support for the SDLP. Against the background of this intervention into the arena of nationalist party politics *Patricia Collins* sketches the role played by the leadership of the Catholic church over the past fourteen years against nationalist resistance. Also in this issue, Fr Des Wilson gives his views on the danger of such an intervention.

"THE gravest danger which has been created for Belfast Catholicism for half a century." These were the words chosen by Dr Cahal Daly, Bishop of Down and Connor, on January 18th of this year to describe republican violence. The occasion was the funeral of Judge Doyle, executed by the IRA a few days earlier.

However the danger which Bishop Daly saw the IRA as creating was not of a religious or theological nature. The IRA, according to the bishop, has no moral right to use force against British occupation. Its methods are therefore 'illegal' and 'evil'. According to the Catholic hierarchy in fact, in Bishop Daly's words, IRA violence is the *"greatest evil"* in Irish society.

And what of the violence of the British army, the RUC and UDR — of which there were plenty of examples in the winter of 1982-83? On November 27th last year at another funeral, that of young Michael Tighe, gunned down by the RUC in Lurgan, the Catholic Bishop of Dromore, Dr Francis Brooke, spoke in massive contrast of the RUC's *"most*

difficult and dangerous responsibility" and of their *"restoring law and order in the Province."* It would certainly seem that in the Church's eyes there are two distinct types of violence, only one of which is to be condemned.

During this latest phase of the struggle, Northern nationalists have continually been subjected to political haranguing and preaching by the Catholic hierarchy, which has used all the means at its disposal, from the pulpit and the school assembly halls to the newspapers and television screens, to hammer home its message: renounce armed resistance, turn away from the Republican Movement.

But since the Assembly elections Sinn Fein's rising profile has been seen to pose a threat not only to the SDLP — it was also seen by the hierarchy to be a threat to their influence on the



● BISHOP CAHAL DALY

nationalist community. At the end of 1982, Fr Denis Faul made this revealing declaration: *"The Provisionals are now posing as politicians... They are competing with the Church as moral spokesmen for the Catholic community."* The Church's declared 'battle for the hearts and minds' of half a million Northern nationalists was on.



● Bishop William Philbin, pictured here in Twinbrook on the outskirts of Belfast — he was unashamedly pro-British

A pervasive church

IN the occupied six counties, the Catholic church has often been described as a 'quasi-state within the state'. In urban areas especially, unemployed Catholics could spend their entire lives having little contact with the institutions of the Orange state other than signing on the dole and being harassed by the RUC. From baptism to burial the Church was at the centre of a network which includes charities, credit unions, residents' associations and youth groups.

The hierarchy has tried its best to maintain that system, by fighting to retain control of Catholic schools and displaying increasing awareness of the problems of poverty and unemployment. Bishop Daly's condemnation, in his 1983 Lenten Pastoral, of the "great injustice all around us", the "bad housing" and "the masses of unemployed and their dependants", is a far cry from the suggestion his predecessor, Bishop Philbin, made to a meeting of the St Vincent de Paul Society in 1965, that they "help people who, although their incomes were adequate, found themselves in distress due to mismanagement of their household budgets."

But against the political upheavals of the late '60s and the '70s the hierarchy was often left confused. Some priests who spoke out against intern-



● Dismantling barricades in Belfast

ment in 1971 were swiftly moved to remote country parishes, yet in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday dozens of clergymen flocked to Derry to be among the mourning crowds. Bishop Philbin rarely made any statements on the political crisis, despite the trauma of events for nationalists, except to unilaterally condemn IRA actions. In September 1969 he had asked Belfast nationalists to pull down the barricades and they followed him. After '69 he repeatedly urged his flock to 'stop supporting violence', but this time with little success.

But while Bishop Philbin was consistent in his unashamedly pro-British stance, other clergymen tried the subtle approach. In 1976, a team from the Irish Council of Churches, chaired by Dr Cahal Daly (then Bishop of Ardagh

and Clonmacnoise), published a report entitled *Violence in Ireland* in which the word is defined thus: "It is essential to distinguish between the lawful use of force, and the unlawful use of force which is violence."

The state, argued the report, "has the right to use such force as is necessary to restrain wrong-doers, for anyone else to use force is unlawful and therefore constitutes 'violence'... There is no justification in the present situation in Ireland for the existence of any paramilitary organisations... The Churches jointly remind their members that they have a prima facie moral obligation to support the currently-constituted authorities in Ireland against all paramilitary powers."

Finally, the report also recommended that there should be "action by the Churches to ensure that their worship is not exploited by paramilitary organisations at funerals and commemorations." There had however already been 'action'. In December 1975, the tricolour-draped coffin of IRA Volunteer 'Basil' Fox had been turned away from St Paul's Church on the Falls Road in Belfast. The same 'action' was not in evidence in other churches when dead UVF and UDA members, and indeed Catholic RUC and UDR men, were being buried.

1976 saw the rise (and fall) of the Peace Movement, which was strongly supported, aided and financed by the British government and the Churches. The support the emerging Peace People received from the Catholic hierarchy manifested itself in many ways: permission to use church grounds and

premises; the direct involvement of nuns, priests and church activists such as those of the Legion of Mary in the organisation of rallies and meetings; and moral support through statements and articles.

When the Peace People's circus crashed, it became clear that the IRA was here to stay. The Catholic hierarchy looked to other means of helping to 'normalise' the six counties.

One of these means was the historic visit of Pope John Paul II to Ireland in 1979. What remains of his Drogheda address, rumoured to have been written for the Pope by Bishop Cahal Daly, is the plea to the IRA to lay down its arms. A muted call to 'responsible leaders' to enforce civil rights was quietly ignored by those 'responsible leaders' and played down by the media. Video recordings of the Drogheda address were played again and again to Northern Catholic schoolchildren that year, in religious education classes.

Helping the RUC

MEANWHILE, in the Autumn of 1979, the Catholic hierarchy took part in an RUC-organised seminar on 'community relations' — in essence, how to get the RUC back into nationalist areas. The 'leaked' report of this secret seminar highlighted the hierarchy's continuing preoccupation: *"A clergyman called for greater support of the RUC by ordinary people, and in particular for the ostracising of terrorists: this would include the denial of opportunities to achieve propaganda aims through funerals."*

Significantly, a few months later, all the churches on the Falls Road refused to accept the body of IRA Volunteer 'Dee' Delaney. Two weeks previously, Catholic clergymen had officiated at the military funeral of a UDR man shot by the IRA.

As for the Catholic schools located in 'difficult' areas (meaning 'nationalist' of course), *"unobtrusive"* steps would be taken to extend the use of the RUC's 'Youth Liaison Scheme'. It was said, in the course of the seminar, that *"teachers and other professional people could, by expressing tactfully their support of the police, facilitate the return to normal policing."* Any youngster will testify to the fact that this was implemented, and that numerous mentions were made during school assemblies of the deaths



● The Church's acceptance of the military funerals given to unionist aristocrat Norman Stronge and his son James, both executed by the IRA in January 1981, contrasted with their treatment of the body of IRA Volunteer Dee Delaney (below) a year earlier



of UDR and RUC personnel, while plastic bullet victims rarely if ever got an explicit mention.

The role of the Catholic hierarchy in not only failing to support, but consciously undermining, the republican hunger-strikes of 1980 and 1981 against criminalisation, and finally being instrumental in their collapse, has been well documented elsewhere (see *IRIS No. 2*, November 1981). It was a crucial period in time in the relationship between the Catholic church and the nationalist people.

The lesson of the Church's role was not lost on the prisoners, who described Fr Denis Faul, the Catholic chaplain in the H-Blocks, as a *"conniving, treacherous man"* and the role of the hierarchy throughout the hunger-strike as *"misleading and immoral."* Nor was the lesson lost on the tens of thousands who

had supported the prisoners. When the time had come to confront the British government, the hierarchy had backed down and asked the dying prisoners to abandon their fight instead. They then turned to the heartbroken families and distilled the poison of defeat in them. Anything was better than destabilising the state.

Never since 1969 had the hierarchy found it so difficult to steer a course between the twin 'dangers' of supporting the 'men of violence' and risking alienating its flock. The hunger-strike was the watershed. Martyrdom had to belong exclusively to the Church, it could not be allowed to fall to the IRA.

The hierarchy was prepared to lose some of its followers for the sake of this stand, but it was confident that it would win them back later on.

Winning hearts and minds

THERE were more arrests and house raids by the British army and RUC in nationalist areas in the three months that followed the end of the hunger-strike in October, than there had been throughout the rest of 1981. There was also a flurry of condemnations of the IRA by a variety of clergymen.

On November 13th 1981, Fr Faul called on people to inform. *"Everybody,"* he declared, *"has a duty to tell the authorities if they know anything*

about the commission of murder." Another attempt by Fr Faul to undermine nationalist resistance consisted of issuing statements calling on people to pass on information to 'responsible' people such as priests and teachers. Immediately dozens of teachers got together to publish an advertisement in the press that they would have no part in this scheme.

This frontal assault on republicanism has to be seen in the context of the low ebb of morale in the nationalist community at the end of the hunger-strike, which lasted well into the Summer of 1982. The RUC's use of paid informers, increased repression, and continuous condemnations of the armed struggle, against a backdrop of economic deprivation, created a feeling of deep despondency.

Meanwhile the hierarchy was busy trying to win back the hearts and minds of its alienated flock in a two-pronged drive: towards the young and the unemployed, and against the "evil of violence."

The Catholic schools, which in at



● Catholic schools are a prime element in the hierarchy's opposition to republicanism

least one British television programme during the hunger-strike had lyrically been described as "havens of peace" in the midst of a "strife-torn community", were once again used to promote Pax Britannica. Throughout 1982, the

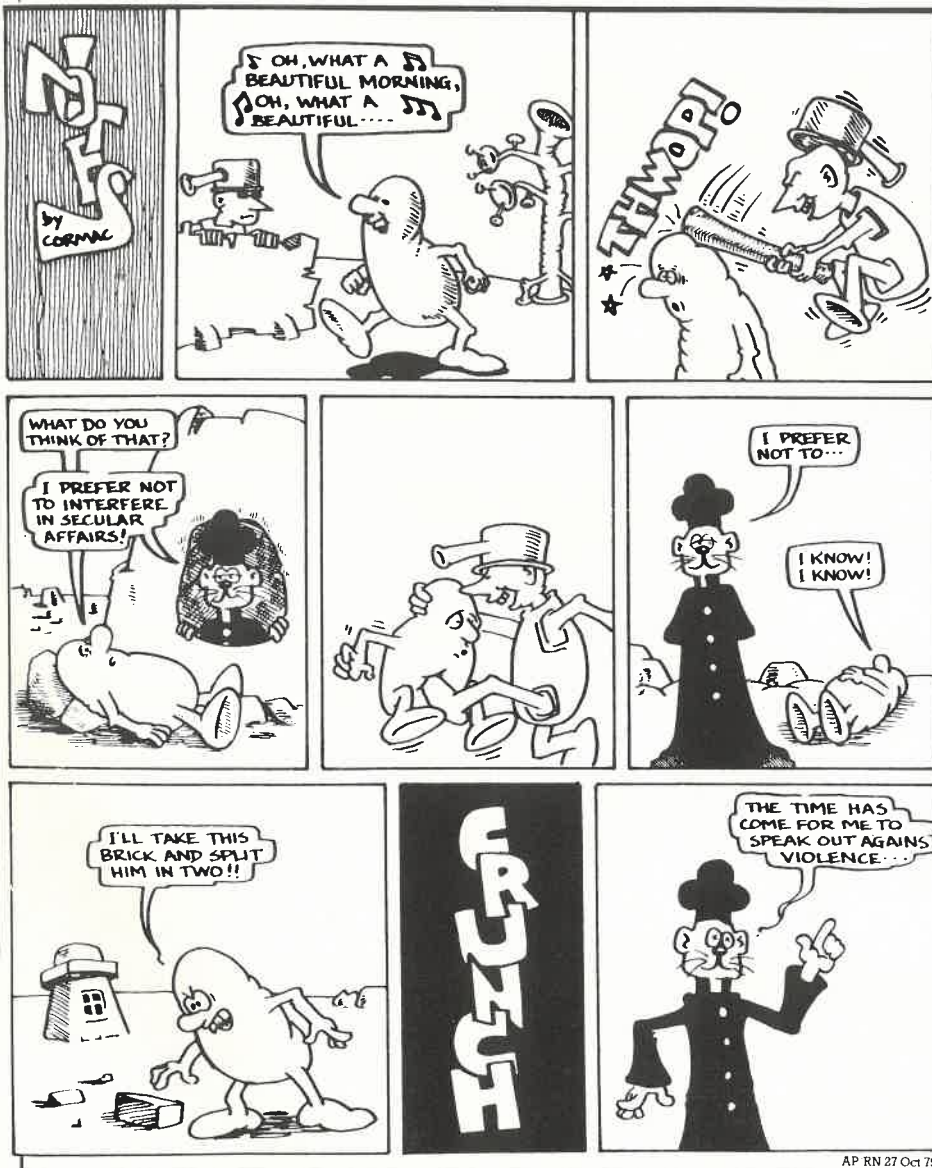
clergy and some of the teaching staff of Catholic schools, in conjunction with the staff of Protestant state schools, and the Irish Council of Churches, were busy discussing ways and means of turning youth away from 'violence', and promoting 'peace' in the schools. 'Reconciliation' meetings with students of other denominations, prayers for killed RUC and UDR personnel, even the language used at school assemblies, were examined.

The outcome of all this surfaced in Dublin on February 17th 1983 when the ill-named Irish Commission for Justice and Peace launched their new 'Peace Education Programme'.

The hierarchy's attempts to act on unemployment were rather awkward. In parts of the six counties the St Vincent de Paul Society tried to organise community workshops to 'take people off the dole queue'. However, in one scheme in the Dungannon area, people felt they were being exploited and losing what little money they were entitled to in supplementary benefits.

In March 1983, in an obvious and belated attempt to undermine Sinn Fein's widespread success, through its proliferating advice centres in Belfast, in providing help to nationalist people on the whole range of social issues, Bishop Cahal Daly called his clergy together and asked that at least one priest in each parish involve himself in social issues.

Early in April he went further, announcing the appointment, for the first time in 120 years, of two auxiliary bishops in the Down and Connor diocese, Canon Patrick Walsh and Fr Anthony Farquhar, to co-ordinate the Church's involvement in social issues, primarily in West Belfast. Without admitting openly



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that the rising profile of Sinn Fein was the motive for the Church's novel concern, Bishop Daly said: *"We're deeply concerned about the deprivation and unemployment, the whole complex of bad housing, deprived environment, the neglected and rejected in society."*

The bishop's manifesto

THE political thinking of the Catholic hierarchy has never been expressed so often and so loudly as in the last eight months.

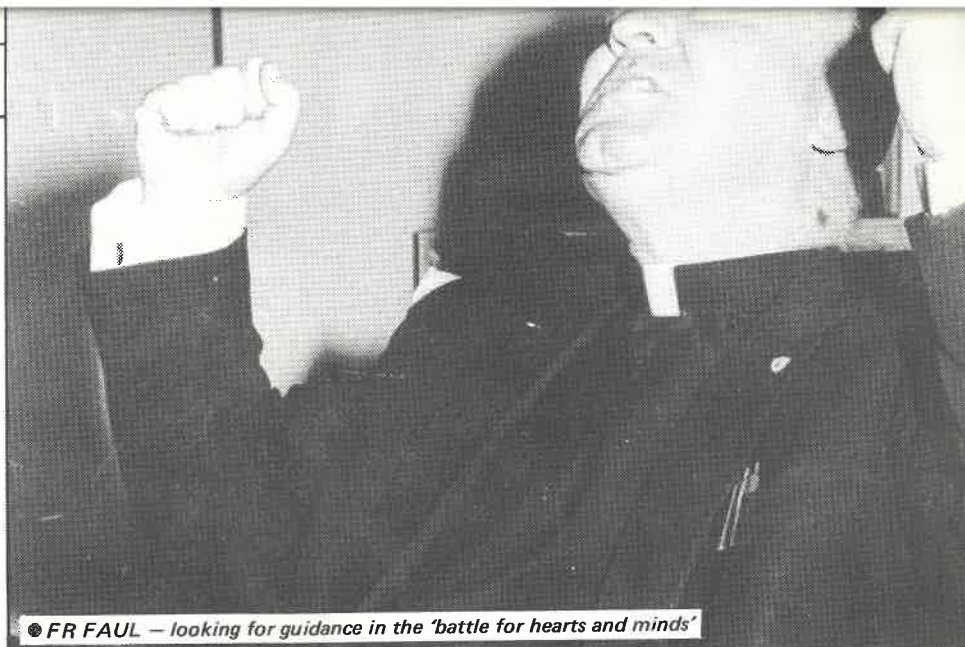
On October 17th 1982, the Very Reverend Fr William Philbin, Bishop of Down and Connor, retired and was replaced by Bishop Cahal Daly. If the timing, three days before the Assembly elections, was coincidental, the choice of man was deliberate: an up-front bishop for a front-line diocese. A bishop versed in the social sciences, who could cope with the falling church attendances, and sufficiently articulate to hold his own in the charged political atmosphere of the North.

After years of Bishop Philbin's obtuse conservatism, Bishop Daly, it was expected, would be welcomed as a breath of fresh air. Fr Des Wilson was reinstated in his priestly faculties, while some of the most prominent 'Bishop Philbin's men' were removed, including Fr Toner who had played an infamous role in trying to demoralise the hunger-strikers.

Four days after the succession of Bishop Daly to the diocese of Down and Connor, the election results, especially in West Belfast and Fermanagh/South Tyrone where Sinn Fein topped the poll, came as a reminder to the hierarchy of the extent of support for those they called 'the men of violence'.

The Church attempted desperately to rationalise the result in two ways. Firstly, the Church implied that Sinn Fein had conned some voters by playing down its support for the armed struggle, ignoring the reality that the media had focussed exclusively throughout the campaign on the theme of the 'armalite and the ballot box'. Secondly, the Church tried to explain the 64,000 people who voted for Sinn Fein in the same way as the SDLP, saying that economic deprivation pushes idle and frustrated young people 'into the hands of the paramilitaries'.

The Church struggled to make up the ground. While Cardinal O Fiaich and Dr Edward Daly, Bishop of Derry, issued token statements protesting against strip searches of prisoners and



● FR FAUL — looking for guidance in the 'battle for hearts and minds'

'security forces excesses', Bishop Cahal Daly gave no less than eight major political addresses or interviews in his first seven months of office. His inaugural address had provided the code words — turn away from the men of violence (*the IRA*) and support the men of vision (*the SDLP*).

On New Year's Day he was more specific: *"The armalite and the ballot box cannot be carried together,"* he said, turning his back on centuries of history and in particular on Irish history between 1918-21. An IRA statement calling on Bishop Daly to spell out whether he believed the British presence in the North was morally good, was left unanswered.

Eventually, after more attacks on the Republican Movement, culminating in remarks at the funeral of Judge Doyle, Bishop Daly summed up the Catholic hierarchy's political stance on 'violence' and the legitimacy of the 'Northern Ireland' state, in a major speech delivered in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, on March 22nd.

St Anne's speech

MISQUOTING the philosopher Karl von Clausewitz about war being the pursuit of political aims through other means (according to Bishop Daly he said that war is 'diplomacy conducted by other means'), the bishop attempted to prove that since 'war' and 'politics' are — contrary to Clausewitz's view — different in nature, a group such as the Republican Movement, which upholds the right to take up arms against a foreign occupation, cannot *"honestly and credibly claim to be a political movement."*

This intellectual balderdash was a

poor attempt, in the words of the song, to 'brand Ireland's fight 800 years of crime'. But the bishop was to sink even lower. After saying that *"nationalists must acknowledge that the Stormont regime had notable successes and achievements to its credit,"* Bishop Daly went on, in an open justification of the UDR, RUC and the legitimacy of the six-county state:

"Just as unionists are fully justified in maintaining their political convictions, they are also justified in believing in the right and the duty under law to defend these political institutions against the threat of overthrow by armed uprising. There are some who choose to do so by service in security forces or in the police force. There are also people, and not all of them are unionists, who believe that in any civilised society there must be normal policing; and who therefore choose policing as a career of service to the whole Northern Ireland community. The republican paramilitary campaign of assassination of members of the UDR and of the RUC is equivalent to a campaign of shooting fellow Irishmen simply because they have different political convictions from nationalists."

What real effects can all of this rhetoric have on the nationalist community? Militarily oppressed, at the bottom of the economic and political heap, half a million nationalists cannot take kindly to Bishop Daly's remarks on the 'achievements' of the Stormont regime and the right of unionists under law to 'defend their political institutions'.

Political double standards are wearing thin in the harsh lights of West Belfast, and the hierarchy's refusal to back the hunger-strikers in 1981 is not easy to forget. These outbursts do more to reveal the hierarchy's real fear of the Republican Movement's political progress, than to sway nationalist voters away from supporting Sinn Fein.

Fourteen years of intense political struggle have caused a considerable degree of disaffection with the Catholic hierarchy. It will take more than moral sermons to change that ■

Confidentiality and the clergy

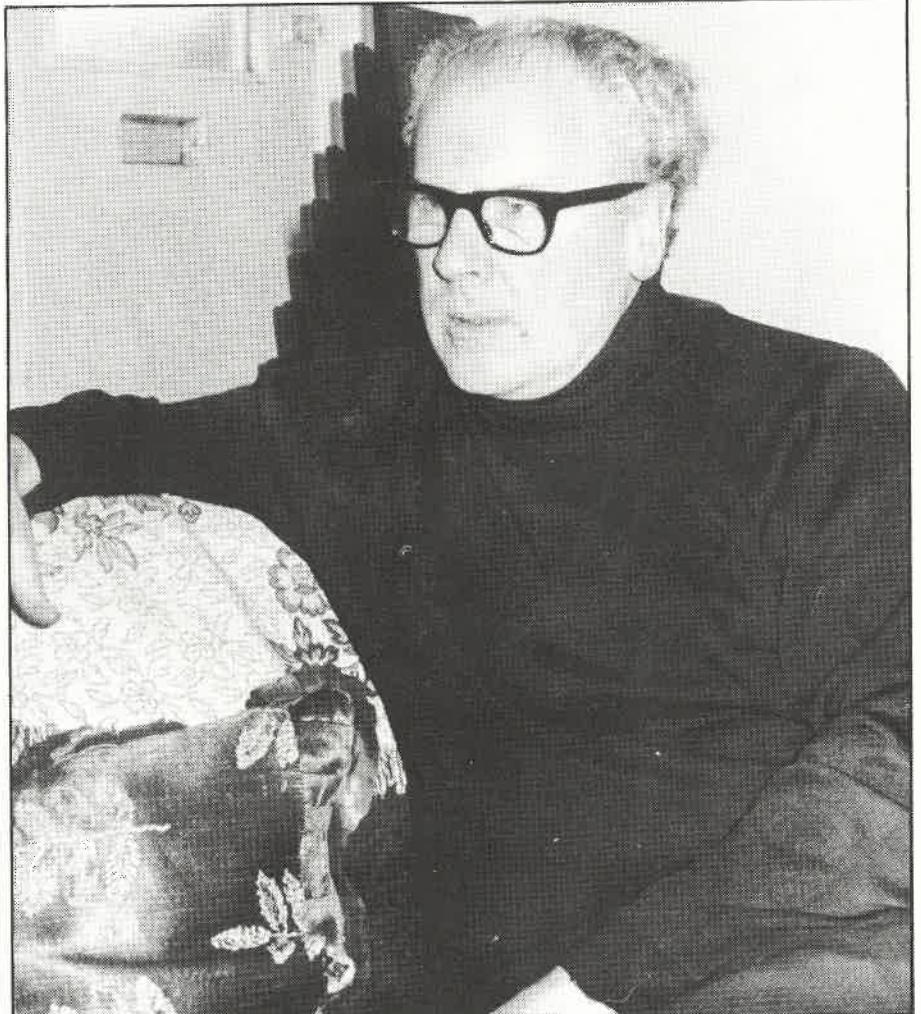
WEST BELFAST priest Fr Des Wilson points to what he regards as some worrying aspects of the Catholic church's recent political involvement in the North.

THE position of clergy in Irish life is becoming more and more clearly defined. There are some worrying features about it.

For example, in the six counties Protestant clergy have organised and run political parties for many years. The unionist parties of various kinds have underlying clerical support through the Orange Order while the DUP is entirely managed by Protestant clerics. The Alliance Party in its beginnings was strongly supported by Protestant clergy also, some of whom had been campaigning for Terence O'Neill while he was in crisis with Faulkner and his supporters.

In the old Nationalist Party, which was replaced by the SDLP, there was a heavy Catholic clergy influence. In the old days the conventions called to select candidates for elections very often had Catholic priests in the chair. With the passing of the Nationalist Party this clerical connection ended, because the founders of the SDLP were determined that it should. Clerical influence on the SDLP is not built into its structures, as it is in all the 'unionist' parties except Alliance; instead there was on the one hand an early attempt to supplant the SDLP by a party more like the old Nationalist Party allied to clergy (a weak effort in the early '70s), and on the other hand a recent series of interventions by clergy designed to help the SDLP.

Due to the open control of political parties by Protestant clergy in the six



● FR DES WILSON

counties, it is now probably true to say that the area is the most clerically dominated region in the European Community. Intervention by Catholic clergy then could make an unacceptable situation even worse and potentially dan-

gerous for the clergy themselves.

OPEN

The theoretical position of the Catholic church is that its clergy must be open to all members of all parties, and

therefore to be a member of a particular party renders the work of clergy impossible; clergy must be open to all or they are open to none. But there is a very practical reason why Catholic clergy cannot openly take sides with one party rather than another — the fact that many different voices are being heard from different parts of the Catholic world.

For example, the present Pope has forbidden priests to take part in politics, but at the same time he requires full participation by the Church in politics in Poland. And while Catholic church authorities in Ireland are saying that it is impossible to be a practising Catholic and an armed revolutionary, Catholic authorities in Nicaragua have a different view — a number of Catholic priests have seats in the revolutionary government and they assert that the revolution in arms was necessary and moral.

There are different interpretations of the Catholic code of morality and it is difficult for clergy anywhere to hold to any one of them absolutely. The beliefs held today may well change tomorrow, and often the best that clergy can do is to show that whatever way we are doing things now, there is a better way available. If there is no better way available the clergy have often been stuck with a revolution, and have had to come to terms with it.

COMING to terms with an armed revolution has not always been as difficult for them as it might seem. In 1912 in Ireland, the Protestant clergy fully supported the planned revolution of Protestants and gave their blessing to it. According to one gunrunner of the period, Crawford, some of the arms imported through Larne in 1914 were stored in a Bishop's palace (Fred H. Crawford, *Guns for Ulster*, Belfast 1947).

The 1916 revolution in Dublin has been approved by churchmen after the event. The Franco revolution against the lawfully elected government in Spain in 1936 was supported fully by churchmen in Ireland, with some minor exceptions, as a crusade for Christ. The 1956 revolution in Hungary was hailed as a courageous stand for freedom there. This selective support for revolutions must cast grave doubt on the permanence of any policy of churchmen condemning a particular revolution. Today's teaching has a way of becoming tomorrow's opposite, especially in politics.

In a world where churches have in

the past favoured armed revolution in certain cases, and in the present have priests sitting in a revolutionary government, any condemnation of armed revolution can be at best (to use an indelicate pun) provisional.

JUNE

During the recent Westminster elections clergy used the condemnation of armed revolution to divert votes from Sinn Fein. Uncharacteristically, Church of Ireland and Catholic clergymen found themselves supporting each other. Churchmen who, according to the best figures available, are one in a thousand of the population and in some cases can attract only five to fifteen percent of their own members to church, made statements so overtly political against Sinn Fein that they resembled statements made by Italian churchmen against the communists in elections in the past. Statements which were not surprisingly condemned as undue interference by the liberal establishment in Ireland at the time.

The Church of Ireland is of course a special case. A number of its clergy are part-time soldiers, not chaplains but soldiers in full training. The Church of Ireland sees no incompatibility in this, and indeed soldiering among clergy has a longer history than foxhunting. In the present situation in Ireland, however, it further erodes the credibility of churchmen who on the one hand condemn revolution against oppressive government in the name of Christ and yet encourage their soldiers to take up arms in the name of the Queen.

Such an ambivalent attitude is bound one day to produce very bitter fruits. It is highly doubtful if the churches can hope to come out of this present situation with anything but a minority of their members committed to them. The blame will not be on the materialism of the age simply, but also on the willingness of the churchmen to put their faith in fighting rather than faith, in the UDR rather than in the Almighty.

AMONG Catholic clergy other problems have been created. For example, in some measure the confidence of people has been eroded unnecessarily. This has come about through the ill-advised and damaging statements of churchmen asking people to use clergy to pass on information about incidents involving arms or explosives.

In times past there was always, it seems, a steady flow of information

coming to the state authorities from churchmen, but this was in the main Protestant churchmen — the interest of the authorities in having them well placed about the country was to ensure just such a source of information.

But Catholic clergy were assumed to be on the side of the oppressed people. For them confidentiality was of first importance. To ensure confidentiality most severe penalties were imposed on any clergy who would for example violate the secrecy of the confessional. But secrecy and confidentiality extended to all revelations made to priests. It was assumed that priests would go to jail rather than reveal what people had said to them in private.

Yet there was, not long ago, a concerted campaign by some churchmen to break this confidentiality, to make clergy a vehicle for information to state authorities.

It must be said without reservation that such a practice would be entirely and absolutely against the teaching and practice of the Catholic church. Further, it would damage without repair one of the few things which enables a priest to work with other people. Once confidentiality is lost the priest might as well pack his bags and go.

Curiously enough, the same clergy who say that priests should be unmarried so that, among other things, they can be more secretive about other people's problems, had no hesitation in saying that priests should not be secretive at all when it was a matter of revolutionary acts. Clearly, opposition to a revolution takes precedence over many things, some of them very sacred things.

PRINCIPLES

A number of principles have to be restated. That of confidentiality is one of them. It should be assumed that clergy will not give information to anyone, no matter what side he may be on, which would endanger the life or freedom or health of another person. It should be assumed also that clergy will not become soldiers unless they give up their clerical work, the two things are incompatible.

It should be assumed also that clergy should be open to receive with respect members of all political parties and groups. It should also be presumed that clergy will reflect faithfully the teaching of their own Christian churches, no matter what the needs of the state may be.

Unfortunately, in the situation created by the governments in Ireland even the clergy have often been sucked into the state machine. The churches can only suffer as a consequence

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

LACKING any effective 'voice' within the community at a time of spiralling unemployment, young people in Ireland are being hit the hardest. The jobless rate for the 15-19 age group is twice the overall percentage, and with the 32 counties holding the dubious distinction of the highest unemployment rate in western Europe it all goes to shape a future which the youth can only face with increasing cynicism and despair. Tony Barry of the republican youth organisation Na Fianna Eireann examines the problem both North and South.

A tidal wave of despair

THE Free State is no stranger to unemployment. Since 1922 over one million people have been forced to leave the land of their birth to find work in Britain or the USA — while their political leaders fiddled on a chauvinist harp to the tune of 'The Old Bog Road'.

More recently, the fruits of an economy largely built since the 'industrial revolution' of the 1960s on the shifting sands of fickle multinationals, lured by increasing grants and tax exemptions, can be seen in catastrophically escalating rates of joblessness. Unemployment in the 26 counties has risen sharply, from 77,000 in 1973, 120,000 in 1977 and 185,000 in early 1983, to an estimated 200,000 next year.

But the situation for school-leavers is even more drastic. According to the National Manpower Service they have only a 50-50 chance of getting employment in their first year of job hunting. 7,000 of those who left school during 1981 were still without their first job in June 1982, while a further 2,000 who had managed to find work had been made redundant within the same period. Of those (in the Free State alone) who left school in 1982, 20,000 were still without work by April 1983.





Queuing up for school

YOUNG PEOPLE are desperately queuing up for limited places in further education in a bid to avoid the stigma of the dole queues.

In 1982 over 2,000 people applied for a mere 40 places on a hotel management degree course at Dublin's College of Catering. Around three-quarters of the applicants were already technically qualified. CERT, the South's catering industry training agency, received 5,000 applications for 500 places in 1982 (a 150% increase on the previous year's applications).

Overall in 1981, nearly 20,000 people applied for the 7,380 places at third-level colleges in the 26 counties. That represented an increase of 2,000 applicants on the year before — all chasing 600 fewer places.

Many post-primary schools, especially in working-

class areas, are starting to offer pre-employment courses, aimed at young people who have left school but return on failing to find work. An estimated 3,600 took part in these classes in 1980/81.

Meanwhile the 26 counties' Department of Education reports that twice as many 17-year-olds are now in full-time education than during the industrial boom period of the '60s, and that private fee-paying 'cram schools' are springing up to cater for the increasingly competitive rat-race to get into third-level education.

One Dublin school, Rathmines Tech, which specialises in repeat courses for the Leaving Certificate, found itself besieged in September 1982 by a crowd of 300 school-leavers who camped overnight in the street for a place in the college! They were joined the following morning by a further 600.

Unemployment is greatest among those who leave school without qualifications — 30% of school-leavers in 1981. Some idea of just who is worst affected can be gauged from a 1978 survey of one working-class area of Dublin which reported that two thirds of 15-19 year olds had left school at or before the age of 15.

YOUNG people want work. The problem is that there isn't any. Between January 1980 and July 1982 registered unemployment in the 26 counties rose by a staggering 69%. Even so the increase for those under

25 over the same period was an almost unbelievable 110%.

The National Youth Council of Ireland estimates that there are at least 15,000 young people who don't bother to register as unemployed and that the real number of under-25s out of work is in the region of 65,000.

Furthermore, with half the South's population under 25, the NYCI estimates that the number of people in the 15-25 age bracket will total approximately 670,000 by 1991, of which up to 400,000 will be seeking work.

The response of the 26-county government to this massive tidal wave

of joblessness among young people has been nothing short of farcical.

The stark fact is that there is no comprehensive policy on youth in the Free State. A 'task force' set up by the then Tanaiste, Brendan Corish, in October 1974 to plug this gap failed to report back until a full six years had lapsed.

Its recommendations copped out on virtually every major area of concern to young people today, including vital law reform issues and, of course, youth unemployment. Even so, many of the most trivial of the report's recommendations have yet to be implemented by the Leinster House

government.

The lack of a co-ordinated policy on youth is all too apparent when the confused plethora of existing youth training schemes is considered. While the Work Experience Programme is run by the Department of Labour, the Temporary Youth Employment Scheme is run by the Department of Education, and the Environment Improvement Scheme is run by the Department of the Environment. On the other hand, AnCO runs the Community Youth Training Programme, and the National Manpower Service — which like AnCO is a creation of the Department of Labour — runs the Employment Incentive Scheme...

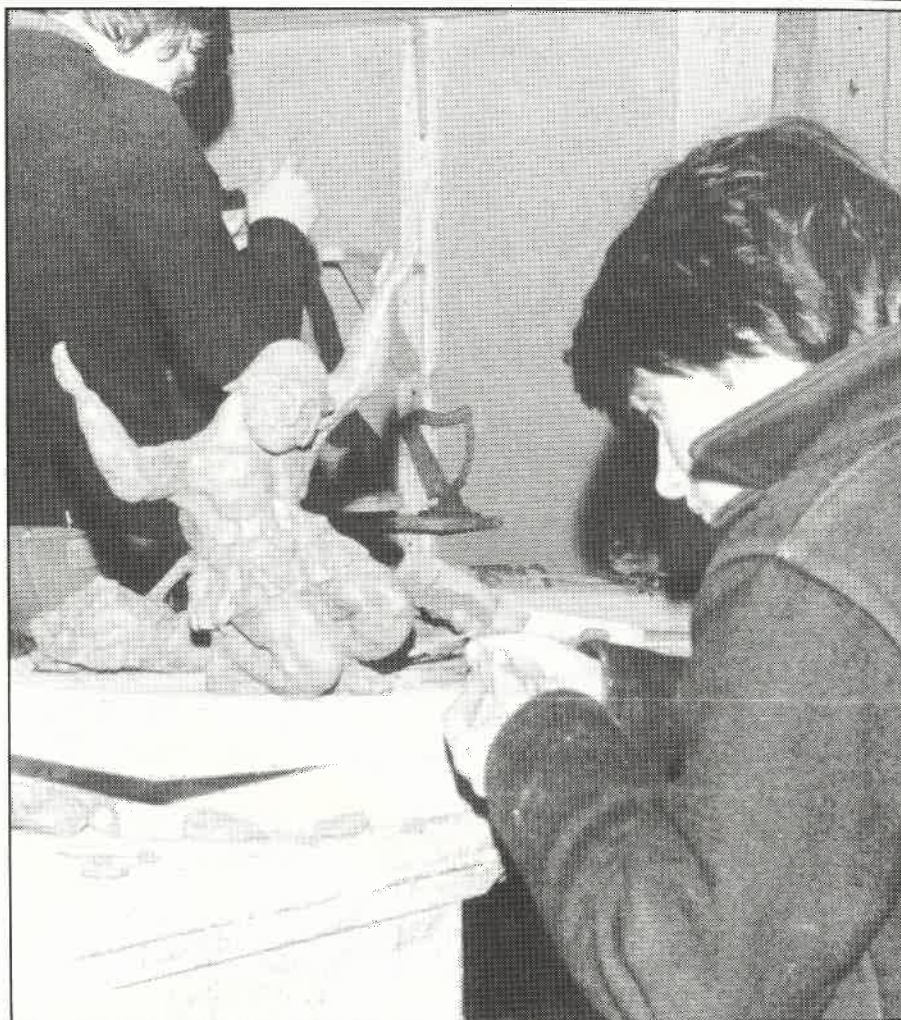
AS if this alphabet soup of work training schemes was not enough, Free State political parties have added the most appalling cynicism to their dismissive treatment of youth unemployment.

In February 1982, in the very last days of its term of office, the Coalition government set up the Youth Employment Agency. The YEA had been a plank in the Labour Party's electoral platform, just as the Employment Incentive Scheme had been earlier in Fianna Fail's election manifesto.

Within five months, amid a blaze of publicity, sixteen projects catering to provide technical skills and temporary jobs for unemployed young people were announced. Yet of these only three were new, and at least one of these has still to get off the ground. The other thirteen were simply a continuation of existing training schemes and work experience programmes run by government departments or semi-state agencies like AnCO.

This governmental cynicism is mirrored across the establishment political spectrum in the South. Fine Gael TD John Kelly earlier this year pointed to emigration as the only solution to mass youth unemployment. A Fianna Fail youth conference on unemployment last February debated motions calling for compulsory military or community service for those out of work, for the scrapping altogether of the Youth Employment Agency, and for recognising that trade unions are "a major barrier to full employment."

Last March, the Department of Environment announced that 435 jobs created under the Environment Improvement Scheme were to be axed. The bitter irony lay in the fact that the Environment Minister is none other than Labour Party leader Dick Spring



● Derry youth on a YTP course — a mechanism for lowering unemployment figures

and the jobs affected were funded in part by the YEA, which Labour had avidly promoted only a few months earlier as an election gimmick.

And in one of its most recent attacks on the young jobless the Free State government has imposed a £10 fee on job applications to the Civil Service — one of the main sources of employment for young people. This levy is equivalent to 40% of the weekly allowance received on government training schemes or on the dole.

UNEMPLOYMENT is of course no less of a problem in the 6 counties, where despite its vaunted claim to be part of the 'United Kingdom' the rate of joblessness — at 120,000, 22% of the working population — is almost twice as high as in Britain. Here too, sectarianism raises its head as everywhere else in the North, with nationalist school-leavers, according to the British government's own figures, at least twice as likely to be out of work as loyalists.

Until the Autumn of last year the Youth Opportunities Programme was

the lynch-pin of the Thatcher government's efforts to 'combat' youth unemployment. Half the school-leavers in Britain and the North went through a YOP scheme in 1981, lasting between three and twelve months. Less than half of those involved got a job out of it in the end, but it was a useful mechanism for artificially lowering the unemployment figures.

In 1982 the British government introduced the Youth Training Programme into the 6 counties, a full year ahead of its introduction in Britain. Replacing the YOP schemes, the YTP offers a guaranteed place for twelve months to all 16-year-olds who apply, but there are fewer places for 17 and 19-year-olds. Those involved get the princely sum of £25 per week for a 40-hour week lasting for 48 weeks of the year.

The Manpower Services Commission task group in Britain estimated that without programmes such as the YTP, 54% of all 16-year-olds and 48% of all 17-year-olds would be registered as unemployed by September 1984.

But far from training the youngsters involved, the YTP is an exercise in de-skilling. Not only do trainees end the twelve-month course without

Features

the guarantee of a job and without any formal qualifications, but apprenticeship schemes in Government Training Centres and third-level college courses are being heavily run-down in order to facilitate the YTP.

A recent discussion document drawn up by Derry Sinn Fein's trade union department points to the North-West College of Technology where courses offering some minimal qualifications are being scrapped and replaced by the YTP which offers none.

The document goes on to note that the number of full-time GCE students in the college has dropped significantly this year, and that over the past two years in the Further Education sector the only new teaching appointments have been to the YTP.

LIKE the YOP which preceded it, the YTP is firmly tied to the needs of local employers rather than those of working-class youth. For a mere £25 per week some 16 and 17-year-olds will be expected to do work which would normally be done by workers at union rates. And in return for this

work experience the only possibility of future employment will come from the personal contact between the employer and the trainee.

One intimidating aspect of the scheme is 'profiling'. Trainees are 'invited' by the college teacher or trainer to write a log and to be interviewed, to assess 'social attitudes' such as the ability to take orders. This profiling obviously provides employers with a ready means, should they wish, of discriminating against those they see as potential 'trouble-makers', trade union activists, etc.

But even the fundamental aim of the YTP, to provide young people with 'work experience', is seriously in doubt. Statistics from the Manpower Services Commission showed that, within Britain, the success of the former YOP schemes varied from area to area depending on the extent of local unemployment. For example, whereas schemes in the south-east of England were placing 60% of their trainees actually within a workplace, that figure was only 40% for an unemployment 'black-

spot' such as Liverpool. In the North, notwithstanding the unavailability of figures, it follows that the YTP schemes will be even less successful than in England in providing real work experience, and that they will benefit loyalist youths proportionately more than nationalist youths, given their greater access to loyalist-dominated industry.

Already, evidence of the failure of the YTP and similar schemes to create employment opportunities has come in the form of a Department of Employment-commissioned study carried out by the Institute of Manpower Studies at Sussex University. It looked into the Young Workers Scheme started in January of last year, and subsidised by the Department of Employment to the tune of £15 per week per trainee (bringing their weekly pay to just under £40).

The study showed that the YWS has created only about 10,000 jobs at a cost of £60 million a year. 16,300 young people are in jobs created as a direct result of the scheme, while about 6,500 adult workers have lost their jobs as a result of it

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FOLLOWING the recent publication of O'Malley's third book *Raids and Rallies, on the Tan War years 1920-21*, Frances-Mary Blake, who edited the book and his earlier works, writes an appreciation of the man who wrote *On Another Man's Wound* and *The Singing Flame*, and who was once described as 'perhaps the very first Provisional'. Elsewhere in this issue, Gerry Adams reviews O'Malley's new book.



ERNIE O'MALLEY

Soldier of Oglagh na hEireann

WHEN the truce of July 1921 took effect between the Irish Republican Army and British Crown forces, a young IRA leader wrote to a fellow officer:

"What do you think of the Peace Move? There seems to be something in it whatever it is. Perhaps Dev would accept a Republic with the exclusion of Ulster... We are very much worried as we don't know what way the game is going. The number of real Republicans even in the IRA is small — that is of men who will see the Republic through to the bitter end."

His name was O'Malley and for the past three years he had been very active in the war so that in consequence of his energy, organising ability and out-

standing personal courage, he was appointed O/C of the 2nd Southern, the second largest division in the country. Early in 1921 police reports from Dublin Castle had named him as 'a notorious rebel'. Late in 1922 the Free State's military command would claim that: "The capture of O'Malley should mean the complete breakdown of their (Irregular) organisation in the North Eastern area." What happened between had proved that Ernie O'Malley was himself one of that small number — an Irish republican par excellence.

If it's again fashionable in some circles to denigrate 1916 and all the Easter Rising ever sought, then by contrast the Civil War that followed the 1916-21 fighting has been tacitly ignored. And yet the year 1922 was a watershed for Ireland. During that crucial year Ernie O'Malley had a prominent part in what (in a letter he sent to a Dublin newspaper while

hunted on the run in August 1922) he called "a just and holy cause — namely the defence of the Republic to which (we) have sworn to be faithful."

More than sixty years later, and in a time of recurring warfare, the spirit of the man and the message of his three books merit a new attention.

HIS reputation was made while in his early twenties. By 1939, aged 41, he was seen as a legendary figure from the past, and at his death in 1957 the *Sunday Press* praised him as the very type of the resistance, exceptional even amongst exceptional men.

Ernest Bernard O'Malley came from a respectable and middle-class Catholic family, which accepted the Union and did well by it, yet he showed an early



● IRA 'flying columns', constantly on the move, destroyed widespread transport and communications links during the Tan War

dislike of authority. When King Edward VII visited Dublin to the cheers of most of his Catholic subjects, the very young O'Malley refused to remove his hat and would spell 'King' with a small 'k'. The second son in a large family, he was a first-year medical student at University College Dublin when the Easter Rising first moved him towards Irish nationalism, which he was later to define as: "*Not only the urge of the people to possess the soil and its products, but the free development of spiritual, cultural and imaginative qualities of the race.*"

It was not a sudden conversion, a flash of light on the road to Damascus, an immediate enthusiasm. Involvement and understanding came slowly out of what was at first an unwilling interest; belief grew slowly and was unencouraged by those around him, but eventually, aged nineteen he left home and university to become a full-time member of the IRA. And in a sense he would be 'on the run' for the rest of his life.

He wrote a book about his Tan War days which became an instant classic on publication in 1936 — *On Another Man's Wound*, its latest reprint in 1979. It is a brilliant portrayal of a popular struggle against a foreign power. "*It was a people's war, that is why we fought so well as from November 1920. The people understood, they made allowances, and there was need for that,*" O'Malley wrote in a

smuggled-out note from Mountjoy Prison Hospital, in January 1923, while expecting execution during the Civil War.

Once he would have followed his elder brother into the British army of World War One "*for excitement*"; instead O'Malley's military talents went into the IRA where he appeared a very regular Irregular.

"*I was driven myself had they only guessed it,*" he wrote, after agreeing that his strict training methods were resented by some of the country men he organised to wage guerrilla warfare. A hot temper triggered by impatience, which he could blame on "*my red hair and O'Malley name*", plus the reverse coin of introspection seen as aloofness, were easily compensated for by special gifts and soldierly qualities.

It's been said that he would have made a great Jesuit. He did make a great IRA commander. And at once that most dangerous of opponents, both an idealist and a man of action, much more so than were most of his contemporaries.

FIGHTER and writer, scholar and farmer, involuntary Sinn Féin TD (elected for North Dublin while imprisoned in Mountjoy in 1923), lover of literature and promoter of the arts, he kept two ideals throughout his

life — the Irish Republic (never realised except in the mind), and personal development through the study of the many shades of beauty in the world. His first volume of memoirs (to 1921) was published soon after his 1936 return to Ireland. The second book (1921-24) made fresh historical reading as the first detailed and personal account of the Civil War years by a high-ranking republican, so *The Singing Flame*, only published in 1978, is a rare new source for a poorly documented period.

Released from internment camp in July 1924, he felt that in Cosgrave's Ireland "*my name was enough to damn me*", and until 1935 he mostly travelled abroad, either aiding the Catalan separatists, or walking through Spain, France, Italy, to follow his love of art and architecture, music and mountains. In 1928 he had journeyed to America (with a false British passport) to help raise funds for a newspaper that he hoped would "*arouse the nation's concern, that would give to the world outside Ireland the truth, aims and aspirations of the Irish people, instead of a misrepresentation that served the interests of the British.*" (That project later ironically became *The Irish Press*.)

Afterwards he made his own way

through the USA and Mexico, living hard in the depression years, but always bearing the historical image of Ireland, the desire for freedom and the inspiration of a heritage.

Titles of the poems he wrote at that time indicate his old and new concerns for the victims of oppression: From two islands; Deirdre; We have not sought for beauty; Navajo country; Mountjoy hanged 1921. It was during semi-exile in the artists' colony of Taos, New Mexico, that he first set down his memories of what may well be the most spectacular IRA career of the period. 'As thrilling as a cinema drama', reported a Dublin newspaper on his gun battle and capture by Free State soldiers in the exclusive Ailesbury Road suburb in November 1922.

Any outline of his later life may well seem anti-climax, but somehow more individualistic and interesting than the government, business or professional careers of Civil War companions. He was not a conformist. His back scarred by a hail of bullets, wounded and injured about a score of times, he was also at home in the quiet world of books, welcomed in the spheres of artistic endeavours, remembered as a stimulating friend by a wide circle. He loved the wild Mayo coast and the islands of his childhood. He had a reserved humour, a delicate irony. As a man of action and a man of letters, his abiding influence was hard years of war in a national resistance.

On August 10th and 11th, 1924, the remaining original members of the pre-Civil War Irish Republican Army Executive (that is those of them who had opposed and fought against the Treaty), together with the co-opted members of the Executive during the Civil War (about 26 in all) met secretly to review the past and decide policy for the future. Ernie O'Malley was voted on the 'sub-commission committee to the Executive for Emergency Consultative Purposes', and it was he who proposed the motion, at this first post-Civil War general meeting of the Executive:

That Volunteers be instructed not to recognise Free State and Six County Courts when charged with any authorised acts committed during the War or for any political acts committed since, nor can they employ legal defence except charged with an act liable to the death penalty

which was passed unanimously, and that refusal to recognise those courts in one way or another lasted until the 1970s.

AN important theme of both his books is the treatment of republican prisoners, who



● (Above) Ernie O'Malley, taken during his arrest in Dublin Castle, 1921, (under the alias Bernard Stewart); (below) the photo was published in the RIC gazette after his escape later that year, with a description — he was badly tortured in Dublin Castle

THE POLICE GAZETTE, OR RUC-AND-CRY, JUNE 3, 1921. This section contains several columns of police notices and descriptions of individuals. Key entries include: MAYO: Description of DONALD R. HARRINGTON; TYRONE: Description and photograph of JOHN O'LEARY; MONAGHAN: Description of GWEN O'DUFFY; QUEEN'S COUNTY: Description of JAMES RYAN, alias WALSH; ROSCOMMON: Description of JAMES McMANUS; TIPPERARY, S.E.: Description of JOHN RYAN (Master) and EDMOND REILLY; WESTMEREATH: Description of THOMAS BEGLIN; WEXFORD: Description of THOMAS CURRIGAN; and DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE: Description and photograph of ERNEST O'MALLEY, alias BERNARD STEWART. Each entry includes a physical description, date of arrest, and the issuing authority.

were even then denied prisoner-of-war status: a concern for all IRA men unaccepted as political prisoners or prisoners-of-war, and all his life he supported their lonely cause. He himself had taken part in the mass hunger-strike of October/November 1923, although medically exempted and suffering intense pain from old wounds and bed sores, for the length of its 41 days and being one of the four in Kilmainham who had wanted to continue.

While in American exile his diaries show support for the republican prisoners in the Free State, of whom he wrote: "who are there for the very same reason that the men we read of and revere were imprisoned." Back in Ireland, at a meeting in 1939 of the Irish Academy of Letters he voted in favour of Peadar O'Donnell's motion that a concert be organised to support dependants of IRA prisoners — not surprisingly the motion was rejected.

His was the drama and sacrifice of a really doctrinaire republican; a very brave man, at once ruthless and sensitive, whose contrasting traits of character are well revealed in his autobiographical writings. He was very nearly killed in November 1922 when the Free State troops besieged his headquarters — ensuring ill health that affected the rest of his life and very likely resulted in his comparatively early death, aged 57. But while not shirking the possibility of death in action, he fought for military victory, and for a time believed that it was possible.

An old Ulster proverb says it is easy to sleep on another man's wound. There are many in Ireland today who rest cruelly or carelessly on the hardships and sufferings of brave men and women who fought or still fight for their country's freedom.

The only books O'Malley wrote were about the Irish wars and it is in those that he should be most remembered. *On Another Man's Wound* records the war against the British forces from 1916 until the calling of the truce in July 1921 and is told by one who volunteered for Oglai na hEireann in 1917 and by 1921 was O/C of the 2nd Southern Division (and later Assistant Chief of Staff in the Civil War). It is exciting, always enthralling, beautifully written, and far and away the best of the Tan War books. O'Malley was brave and energetic in his total dedication to the Republic as proclaimed in Easter Week; his personal ad-

ventures, dramatic and varied, are an integral part of the wider significances of the national struggle.

And unlike some of his companions who later called themselves the 'Old IRA' or the 'Neutral IRA', he did not change his republican beliefs. Indeed he recognised that some Irish have always helped in the conquest.

During the 'National Emergency' years of World War Two, de Valera himself was very keen to have so famous a fighter as Ernie O'Malley join the Free State army and pressure was put on him to follow many renowned republicans into its ranks. O'Malley asked: "Would I have to inform on my former comrades and work against them?" "But of course!" "Certainly not!" — and that was that. Only a month or so before his last illness he was writing in his diary: "I can never see a peeler without feeling uneasy."

HOPEFULLY O'Malley's books should fire the imagination of a new generation of republicans. In so many ways *On Another Man's Wound* relates to what is happening today between the British and Irish nations. It is tragic that his wartime experiences should remain so pertinent; nevertheless a source of guidance and encouragement; a book to convert the unbeliever or to inform the ignorant, just as Ernie O'Malley himself turned to republicanism at Easter 1916 when as a young medical student he witnessed Pearse reading the Proclamation outside the GPO and then followed the subsequent events of the Rising.

His well-to-do family never discussed national politics at home; his elder brother was an officer in the British army and died in that service, but Ernie devoted the best years of his life to the fight for the Irish Republic, so that in 1923 the Sinn Fein newspapers claimed that he had 'perhaps the greatest individual record during the (Tan) war' and was 'one of the bravest soldiers who ever fought for the independence of Ireland.'

He wanted to show the struggle of a mainly unarmed people against the might of empire and his book pays constant tribute to the heroism of a risen people. He was famed for his own courage, although like the truly brave he freely admitted to feelings of fear and inadequacy. Undeterred by mass condemnations from the British and their Irish allies, by news-

papers and professional politicians and Catholic Hierarchy, between 1919 and 1921 the Irish Republican Army waged a war that also involved shooting policemen, executing British officers, burning buildings, punishing spies and informers, all those actions which Westminster and Leinster House vie with each other in condemning today.

O'Malley was very active in attacks on barracks, ambushes, raids, and always in organisation and leadership crucial for the building of a people's army. He fought the Auxiliaries, an elite group of ex-officers attached to the police — a sort of 1920 SAS. He admitted that the Royal Irish Constabulary had "guts to stick it out", but insisted: "We can't admire Irishmen who fight for foreigners against us." His book could still be a useful handbook for contemporary guerrillas.

Britain was not immune then, either. Cathal Brugha was ready to wipe out the British Cabinet if Conscription was enforced in Ireland. English warehouses and docks went up in flames in a series of contemporary reprisals.

A significant section of *On Another Man's Wound* concerns his eventual capture in Co. Kilkenny in December 1920 and the torture and imprisonment he underwent at the hands of the British army, including his interrogation ordeal in Dublin Castle, the Castle-reagh of the Tan War.

Threatened with hanging for an action he did not commit, in the midst of brutal questioning O'Malley replied: "With us hanging is no disgrace." It is a revealing line. The British never understood the mentality, motivation and moral strength of their opponents.

The prison chapters illustrate how he and his comrades defied the prison system and bewildered their guards who "had been told that we were murderers. That meant an image from a Sunday paper; twitching hands and furtive walk, or sullen hardness. They heard us laugh and sing, rag and annoy each other, joke and refuse to take prison regulations seriously."

But he pays tribute, too, to those who showed humanity to prisoners. This makes his verdicts on the others and on the British caste system all the more convincing.

AFTER an historic escape from Kilmainham Jail in February 1921, he returned to the Martial Law areas and an intensified campaign, until he was first baffled, then broken-hearted by the truce called in July. One of the grimmest incidents had taken



● Black and Tans on patrol



● Free State army unit searches Killaloe, County Clare, during the Civil War

place one month previously, when O'Malley as O/C of the division had taken it upon himself to execute three captured British officers because: *"Any officers we capture in this area are to be shot until such time as you cease shooting your prisoners."*

He wanted the Republican Army to have status abroad, rather than be hidden behind the image of a suffering colonial people. As he bluntly put it to his affronted superiors later in 1921: *"We (the IRA) had never consulted the feelings of the people. If so, we would never have fired a shot. If we gave them a good strong lead, they would follow."*

If his books were required reading in schools and universities, instead of the shoneen or revisionist (or simply non-existent) versions of modern Irish history, then the people of Ireland would be better prepared to achieve a true independence. As Ernie O'Malley wrote of the best of the IRA recruits, in words that typify his own unyielding spirit: *"At times one came across a man who had been born free. There was no explaining it. One just accepted and thanked God in wonder."*

His two books should be read together. It is in *The Singing Flame* that the British faces fade and are replaced by Irish counterparts; the high noon of summer darkens to the Mulcahy/Cosgrave years. Of course *The Singing Flame* is partisan; one intended by its author as support for the republican tradition — with the 'cult' of



● LIAM LYNCH

1916 transformed into the 'cult' of 1922, where the Four Courts of Dublin stands in place of the GPO. It is also an exciting story, full of incidents and answering some questions that had been posed for half a century; relating his Civil War days as Assistant Chief of Staff in Dublin where he commanded future Fianna Fail ministers like Sean Lemass and Tom Derrig, while leading a hunted existence in a city resembling Belfast of the 1970s.

The second of the books also has clear lessons for today, containing many parallels and the same abuse and falsified arguments used against

the republicans then as now. In the early days of the Civil War O'Malley and his company heard a priest at Mass denounce them as looters and murderers. *"The Hand of God was against us."* His officers wanted to walk out, but he motioned them to remain. *"If we were going to be insulted when we could not hit back, we might as well be dignified. It was good to get out in the fresh air again."*

He could have accepted power and privilege under the Free State but he remained faithful to the Republic and rejected both the Treaty and de Valera's alternative Document No. 2. He told a Free State general, Ginger O'Connell, at the time of the Treaty debates: *"You'll have to fight in our area if you are false to your oath. That's where you'll meet with immediate and terrible war."* The irony was pointed: Lloyd George had threatened an 'immediate and terrible war' if the Treaty was not accepted. True to his word, when the Treaty was ratified, O'Malley's Second Southern Division was the first to renounce its allegiance to both IRA GHQ and Dail Eireann.

In the war against the Staters, O'Malley was (Acting) Assistant Chief of Staff to Liam Lynch. He was also O/C of the Ulster and Leinster Commands. But Lynch was away in the South/Cork area and O'Malley remained based in the enemy's stronghold of Dublin. He tells of waging a guerrilla warfare

that this time for him was urban rather than rural. When asked why they were still fighting, he replied: "I think they think they're fighting for a younger generation." (He was then 24.)

He himself knew that he was fighting imperialists, both British and Irish varieties, and believed that the Free State Cabinet and a few bishops should not be immune from the war.

At the same time he recognised the great support given by the Cumann na mBan and other republican women, and one feature of the book is the courage, strength and involvement of such women. As he writes: "During the Tan War the girls had always helped but they had never sufficient status.

Now they were our comrades, loyal, willing and incorruptible comrades. Indefatigable, they put the men to shame by their individual zeal and initiative."

The *Singing Flame* reveals much of Free State treachery; also inside stories of the critical months before the attack on the Four Courts began, and then a vivid picture of the war. But perhaps its most important pages are the prison chapters, detailing the scenes of prison life in Portobello barracks, in Mountjoy, in Kilmainham and the Curragh internment camps; the deaths of comrades and the hunger-strike event.

Despite his wounds, the threats of execution, and a wasting sickness worsened by forty-one days on hunger-

strike, O'Malley was himself a leading challenge to "the petty automatons that help to keep one captive." Some of his most inspiring passages in *The Singing Flame* concern that other war that prisoners fought in jail.

Then as now they fought against criminalisation and for prisoner-of-war status. As O'Malley wrote: "Free men cannot be kept in jail, for their spirits are free... In our code it is the duty of prisoners to prove that they cannot be influenced by their surroundings. Make the enemy feel a jailer but be free himself." An appendix of prison letters documents that spirit of defiance.

Not surprisingly he was the last republican leader to be released from the Curragh in July 1924, although he had been confined to bed with his many wounds for most of his imprisonment. (Despite operations, he carried five bullets to the grave.)

WHEN *The Singing Flame* was published, in 1978, twenty-one years after his death, the chief political book reviewer of *The Irish Times* saw Ernie O'Malley as 'the unrepentant Fenian and perhaps even as the very first Provisional.' (His younger brother wrote about the same time, but independently, that 'Ernie was a Provisional at heart.') As he was also one of the bravest, most idealistic, most dedicated and determined of socialist republican fighters, ruthless against imperialism, but chivalrous in war, that appears to be praise indeed.

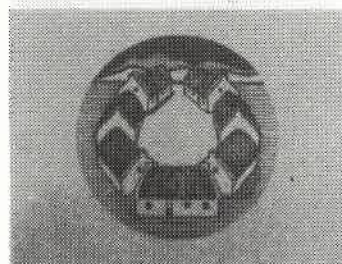
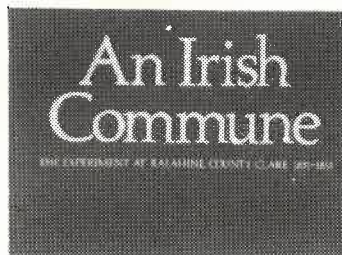
On 30th June 1922 Ernie O'Malley, as O/C of the garrison, most unwillingly surrendered the destroyed Four Courts in Dublin. When Free State officers accused him of deliberately causing the fire and the great explosion that had wrecked the building, he denied that they had set off a mine. "It was the spirit of freedom lighting a torch. I'm glad she played her part."

And two years before he died he wrote: "The spirit of freedom is immeasurable and its strength can suddenly increase in unexpected ways."

The time will come when through that Spirit of Freedom the Irish Republic will not just be realised in the mind, and then the epitaphs of those like O'Malley and Bobby Sands and Francis Hughes can indeed, together with that of Emmet, be truly written, as part of a living tradition ■



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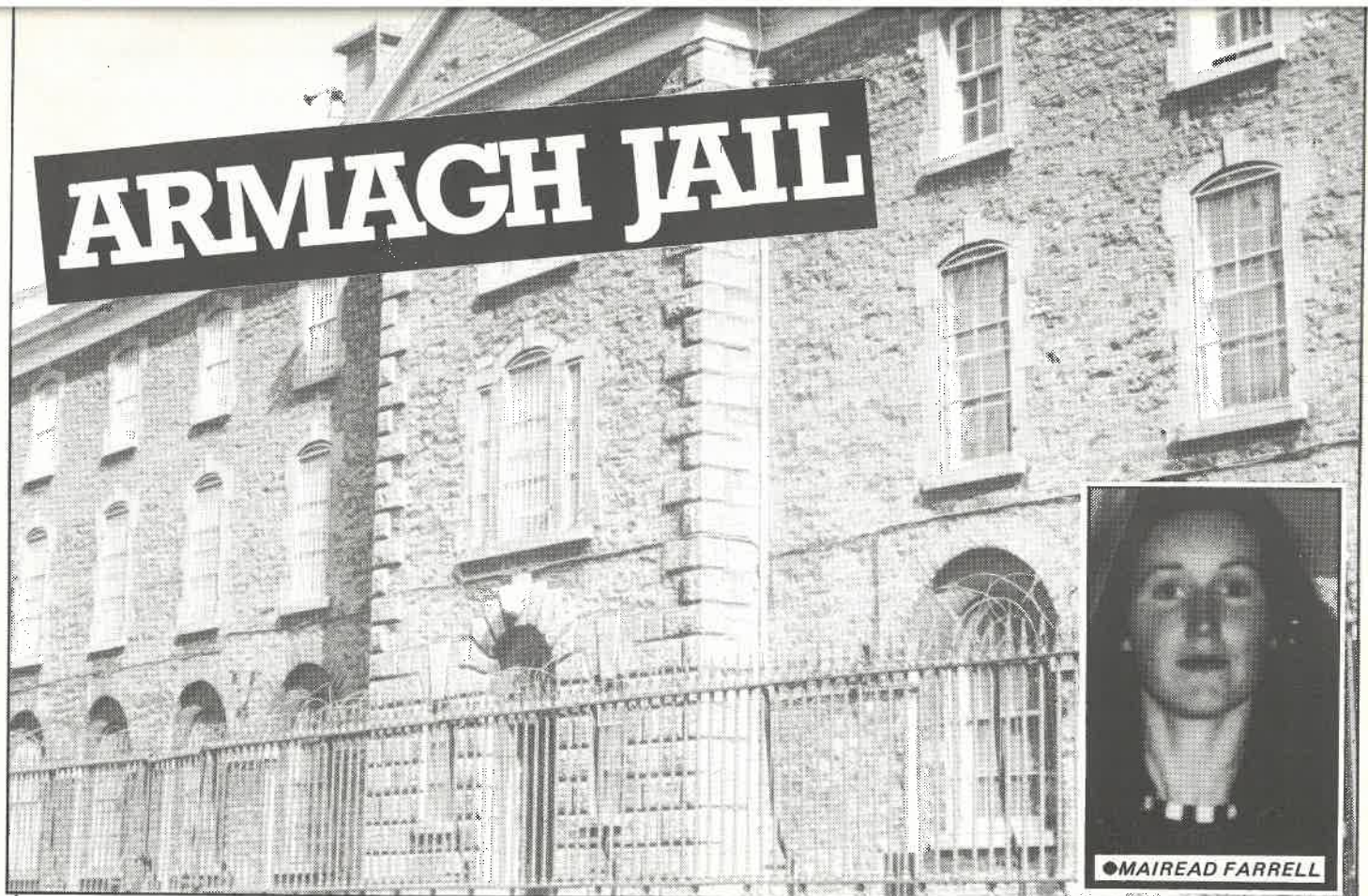
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ARMAGH JAIL



● MAIREAD FARRELL

No let up in repression

ARRESTED on active service in April 1976 and sentenced at her trial eight months later to 14 years' imprisonment, Belfast republican Mairead Farrell became one of the first women POWs to take part in the protest for political status. Later on she was involved in the 'no wash' escalation of the protest in Armagh jail, and in December 1980 was one of three women prisoners to join the first hunger-strike. Here, in a smuggled communication to IRIS, she writes about the strip searches, prison work and isolation that are features of the prison regime's repression in Armagh.

DURING the last seven years that I have been imprisoned in Armagh jail my comrades and I have endured much from the prison administration's ever-changing attitude. Now, three months after the termination of our 'no work' protest, the conditions have deteriorated, the regime is more repressive, and the punishments more severe and excessive. I hope here to give you an insight into this present-day situation in Armagh, where the new prison regime has resorted to the familiar tactic of 'divide and conquer' in every aspect of prison routine.

Considering the overall prison population of the North there are very few women prisoners —

all of these are held in Armagh. Republicans form the vast majority of the total, and at present there are 28 sentenced republicans and seven on remand, scattered throughout the jail. Within the prison building there are three separate structures housing prisoners — 'A', 'B' and 'C' wings — each of which is completely isolated from the others.

Inside each of these wings there are two landings, one blocked off from the other with no contact possible between the two. This is geared to further isolating republicans in the jail, with the number of prisoners on each landing not exceeding nine. This in fact is not a prison,

but many prisons within a prison. The purpose of dividing republicans into small units is one of surveillance and control, it is not primarily a security measure but more a means to determine any weaknesses in individuals which the administration hope to exploit for their own ends.

The whole atmosphere is hostile and oppressive, with every movement, spoken word and general habit chronicled by Screws on the landings and scrutinised by the prison administration daily. One cannot help feeling like a caged animal walking up and down with every twitch monitored, analysed and filed away for further use against us... or so they believe. It's a popular boast of the present regime that they know all we say and do, but they choose to forget that their mania for surveillance does not reveal what's in our minds, and that's what counts!

PETTINESS AND PUNISHMENTS

Since the installation of the present regime a year ago, there

has been a marked increase in pettiness and severe punishments. The manner in which this is employed I can only describe as a two-fold tactic designed to divide republican POWs and break their resistance to the system. The first technique is obvious, constant punishment by long spells in solitary confinement, loss of remission and all so-called 'privileges', so as to inflict as much suffering as possible in preparation for the second technique.

This involves a relaxation in the situation with a promise of more to come provided 'you keep your nose clean'. It's as though the prison regime model their treatment of prisoners on the principle of 'teaching a dog new tricks' — do what we tell you well and the reward will be yours, with the possibility of bigger and better rewards in the pipeline. Then suddenly the breathing space is over and things revert to the more familiar pattern of harsh punishments, leaving the taste of what life could be like if only republicans would stop being republicans!

When the 'no work' protest ended, these techniques were put into operation immediately in an orchestrated attempt to break the POWs. In the first fortnight, most republican prisoners had received more punishment than would have been possible during a month on protest. This punishment reached the heights in severity with many women spending days, and in some cases months, in solitary confinement.

With the failure of this two-fold tactic the prison authorities have to content themselves with continuous punishments meted out on petty pretexts, trying to beat the republican spirit into submission. A prime example of this is the continuation of strip searching despite the public outcry it provoked. The NIO have attempted to play down this degrading practice by saying that it is necessary when moving high security risk prisoners to and from the jail, while a notice displayed in the strip area states that all

prisoners must be stripped naked leaving and entering the jail because of 'prohibited articles' being smuggled in.

This refers to the incident last November which sparked off the strip searching when two YOPs (ordinary prisoners) stole the keys of a magistrate's car "for a laugh" while in RUC custody and brought them back into the jail. The two YOPs have since been released. Ironic? Maybe, but having listened to three women who have endured this disgusting practice daily for months, as have those in the Black informer trial, I can only think of the enormous mental effect this must have at what is already a stressful period. Each of these women has been stripped over 135 times. This is not 'in the interests of security', it is psychological torture. The prison administration have agreed it is an unnecessary practice, yet it continues because it's a new-found weapon in the attempt to rob republicans of dignity.

PRISON WORK

This repressive attitude is mirrored in all areas, and in none more so than in the area of prison work. Throughout Europe many prisons have abolished prison work due to the economic recession. For since work is so scarce on the outside it is impossible to secure contracts for work within the prisons. The same position applies to Armagh, with no industry prepared to supply a contract. Yet instead of the administration taking a sensible view of the situation by providing educational and vocational training during the day, they demand that POWs sit at sewing machines all day every day, doing nothing but stitching prison-issue jeans which aren't even in use. Such work is monotonous, and one would think that the administration's interest would be in keeping minds occupied and in providing some type of mind-stimulating alternative to demeaning work which can only increase tension and discontent throughout the jail.

It is hypocritical of the NIO

to even speak of work inside the prisons when tens of thousands in the six counties remain unemployed. The facilities are available in Armagh for the implementation of a full-time education programme. It would not need a major shift in NIO policy, but basically would be an acknowledgement of the reality that there is no work to be done in the prisons and that an alternative needs to be found. Eventually the NIO are going to have to look at this problem realistically, they are only avoiding the inevitable.

SEGREGATION

With so much monitoring of republicans, the constant strip searching and the introduction of new rules every day under the guise of 'security', it seems very contradictory to me that the prison administration would even consider housing ordinary prisoners in the same area as us. They formally deny that we are in a separate category but we nonetheless merit special treatment as high security risks. It is obvious that these ordinary prisoners feel as uncomfortable with republicans as we do with them. Hence their decision to remain in their cells regardless of the Screws' attempts to shift them out by coercion and threats.

It is plain to see that there is a need for segregation along these lines in Armagh. It is true to say that we do not have a republican/loyalist-type situation here as is the case in the H-Blocks, but the need for segregation is still a major issue.

In my opinion the future ahead for republican POWs in Armagh looks grim because of the attitude we're met with on these important issues. It is such a small jail with a low population of inmates that one would think a reasonable existence would be possible with little difficulty. It is, of course, but not under the present circumstances, as for the past year the prison regime has been, and continues to be, geared towards punishment alone and there is no sign that this will change ■



**A REVIEW OF IRA MILITARY OPERATIONS DURING
THE PERIOD FEBRUARY – MAY 1983**

A constant level of resistance

All operations referred to were claimed
in supplied statements by the IRA

IN the face of every danger, the threat of imprisonment or death, the RUC's use of paid informers, and the day-to-day reversals and frustrations, the IRA's revolutionary soldiers continue undaunted to chip away at the British war machine (and occasionally blast a hole in it!).

Over the four months under review here, from February to May inclusive, IRA Volunteers in each of the North's six counties have maintained a level of operations which has remained remarkably constant despite periodic ebbs and flows. It is worth briefly categorising the number and type of the operations which IRA Volunteers have been engaged in, while remembering that for each successful attack or media-worthy failure there are many more operations abandoned after considerable expenditure of time and resources.

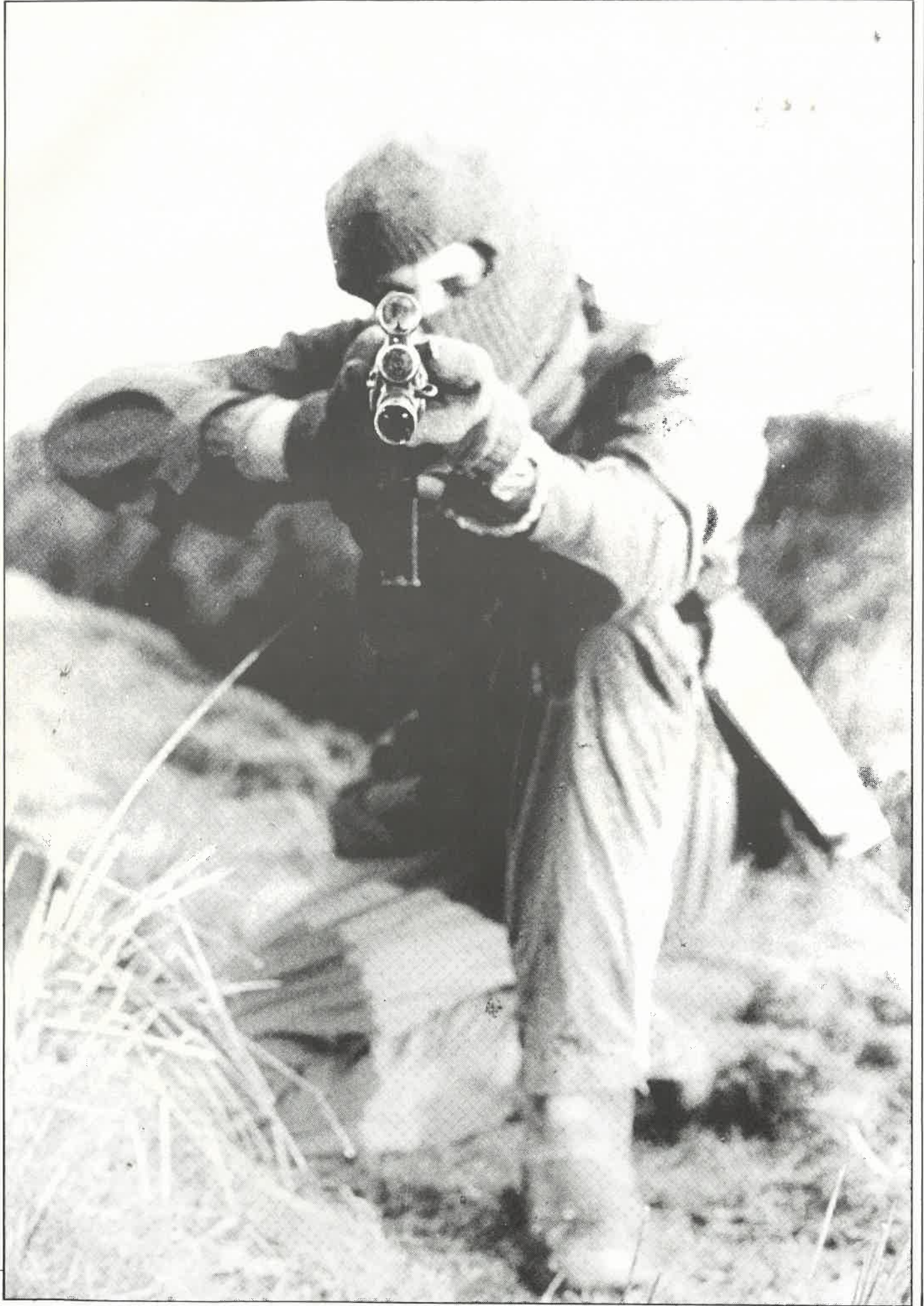
Of the former category, those that for whatever reason made the news, in the February-May period the IRA carried out 21 shooting attacks, ten suc-

cessfully-detonated bomb, landmine or mortar attacks and three successful booby-trap attacks. Hand grenades were used in six separate attacks.

On the debit side, on at least eight occasions bombs or landmines (not counting incendiaries) either failed to properly explode or were located by British reconnaissance before they could be usefully exploded. These included one 800lb bomb and two bombs containing 600lbs of explosives apiece.

In terms of enemy casualties, the Irish Republican Army inflicted wounds, either very serious or at least requiring hospitalisation, on six British soldiers, nine UDR soldiers and seven RUC men; it executed in the same period four British soldiers (including one SAS man), five RUC men and one UDR soldier.

Sobering as these statistics are, they provide the real evidence that the IRA is buoyant and confident against the barrage of British assaults on the Republican Movement, actively backed by growing sections of the nationalist people, and well able to maintain the gruelling path of resistance to any who stand in the way of Irish freedom.



FEBRUARY

THE Derry Brigade of the IRA opened the month with two operations, in the first of which a British soldier was wounded.

On February 2nd republican Volunteers opened fire on the soldier, a member of the UDR, as he drove along Strand Road in Derry. The soldier was hit in the shoulder but managed to drive to safety.

Three days later, at Ardmore outside the city, Derry IRA Volunteers had to abandon 600lbs of explosives they were moving in a horsebox to their intended target. The Volunteers were however able to withdraw from the area safely.

TYRE DEPOT GUTTED

North Armagh IRA Volunteers in Armagh city launched a highly successful blast incendiary bomb attack on the Shaw Tyre and Battery warehouse on the night of February 6th. After forcing an employee to open the warehouse, the IRA strategically planted bombs which completely destroyed the building and its contents when they detonated.

BELLAGHY AMBUSH

Several shots were fired at a UDR soldier on February

7th as he drove along the Gulladuff Road, at Bellaghy in South Derry, hitting him once in the body. The soldier survived by swerving out of the line of fire through a hedge, into an adjoining field.

IRA 'POITIN' STILL

Innovative IRA Volunteers in the Sixmilecross area of County Tyrone had a very near miss on February 10th when British army and RUC personnel arrived to carry out a search of a derelict cottage at Lurganboy. Two months earlier the IRA had rigged up an elaborate 80lb booby-trap bomb disguised as an illicit poitin still. The explosives were packed into a churn triggered to detonate when the lid was lifted.

The IRA then sent a series of anonymous letters to the RUC telling them of a still 'in the Lurganboy area'. Unfortunately the RUC were reluctant to move in, and when finally they did it was so cautiously that they discovered the bomb.

SOUTH DOWN ATTACK

Volunteers lying in am-



● Plainclothes RUC men examine the scene of the ambush outside Warrenpoint barracks on February 20th which resulted in the death of an RUC Reservist — the barracks is on the right of the photograph

bush positions on the Castlewellan-Newry Road shot and seriously wounded a UDR soldier in the chest, as he drove by shortly after 8am, on Thursday, February 10th. The attack was one of a steadily escalating level of republican operations in the South Down area this year.

SNIPING ATTACK

Derry IRA Volunteers fired several aimed shots at a

Brit foot patrol at the junction of Waterloo Place and William Street on February 12th, but claimed no hits.

DROMORE BOMB DEFUSED

A massive IRA landmine hidden in a culvert on the Dromore-Ederney road in County Tyrone was unfortunately located and defused by Brits on February 15th. The bomb contained 600lbs of explosives packed into six beer kegs.

WARRENPOINT ATTACK

The first member of the occupation forces to die in an IRA ambush in February was a 20-year-old member of the RUC Reserve. As the Reservist left the Warrenpoint, County Down, barracks in Charlotte Street to walk to a nearby shop, on February 20th, he was caught in a burst of automatic fire and died almost instantly from chest injuries. As the active service unit pulled out of town, one Volunteer hurled a hand grenade at the barracks.

SHOOT-TO-KILL SQUAD BOMBED

The second RUC man to die in the space of just over 24 hours was a member of



● The derelict Albert bar in Armagh city where a member of the notorious RUC 'shoot-to-kill' squad was killed in a remote control bomb attack on February 21st



the notorious Divisional Mobile Support Unit operating in Armagh city (generally believed to be responsible for the deaths last December of INLA Volunteers Roddy Carroll and Seamus Grew).

At around 8.30pm on February 21st members of the Unit, travelling in two unmarked cars, stopped at the junction of Lower English Street and Cathedral Road in the nationalist Shambles area. Several members of the patrol got out to take up covering positions, and moments later one of them — a 30-year-old sergeant — died when IRA Volunteers detonated a remote-control bomb located in the derelict Albert Bar, beside which the RUC man was standing.

SIXMILECROSS AMBUSH

The IRA in County Tyrone, which had earlier been unsuccessful with the booby-trap 'poitin still', struck with greater effectiveness twelve days later, on February 22nd, when its Volunteers opened fire on an RUC Reservist and a UDR soldier as they drove a lorry along the Cloughfin Road near Sixmilecross. The RUC man was hit in the arm and leg, and the UDR soldier in the head, arm and leg. Their lorry overturned into an adjoining field but both men survived.

BALLYGAWLEY ATTACK

The third IRA execution of enemy personnel in the space of five days was also in County Tyrone. Shortly after 8am on February 25th, IRA Volunteers approached a 22-year-old UDR soldier as he parked his car outside John Finlay engineering works at Ballygawley. They opened fire and the soldier died instantly from head and chest injuries.

LANDMINE FAILURE

Tyrone IRA Volunteers had a near-miss on February 24th, this time on the Stewartstown Road outside Coalisland. Two members of an eight-strong UDR patrol, which had stopped to set up a vehicle checkpoint at Annagher Hill, took up cover posit-

ions near a 50lb IRA landmine, under the watchful eye of republican Volunteers! Unfortunately only the detonator exploded, and no injuries — other than severe shock — were recorded.

MARCH

ANOTHER member of the RUC, this time in Belfast, died at the revolutionary hands of the IRA, as the month began.

Shortly after 3pm on March 2nd, three IRA Volunteers approached the RUC man on Serpentine Road in North Belfast — an area generally regarded as 'safe' by enemy personnel — and shot him dead.

CLADY AMBUSH

An RUC Reservist was wounded in the shoulder as he helped to man a permanent vehicle checkpoint in the Tyrone village of Clady, close to the Donegal border. Several shots were fired in the attack which was launched on March 4th shortly after 8pm.

RAIL-LINK DISRUPTED

The main Belfast-Dublin rail-link was severed for 16

hours on March 7th after IRA Volunteers detonated another bomb at the much-attacked Kilnasaggart Bridge near Meigh in South Armagh.

TRIPLE AMBUSH

Three UDR soldiers, a father and two sons, were the target of a South Down Brigade IRA ambush on March 9th. Volunteers at Castlewellan opened fire on a car containing the trio, hitting two of the occupants and wounding them slightly.

GRENADE ATTACK

Three Russian military F1 hand grenades were thrown at the heavily-fortified Springfield Road barracks in West Belfast on Saturday 12th March, the first time such grenades had been used in the North. Unfortunately the grenades exploded outside the RUC barracks' perimeter fence.

SUCCESSFUL NEWRY ATTACK

Six days after the South Down attack at Castlewellan, the local IRA brigade claimed an enemy fatality when they shot dead, on March 15th, an RUC Reservist about a mile outside Newry.

Two bursts of automatic gunfire were directed at a van driven along the Tandreege Road by the RUC man shortly before 7am, from a commandeered Renault car which drew alongside. The Reservist died instantly when his van careered out of control and plunged 30 feet down an embankment.

FERMANAGH MORTARS

British soldiers manning a permanent checkpoint on the Enniskillen-Swanlinbar road at Mullan, County Fermanagh, had to dive for cover on March 16th, when nine of ten mortars sited on a lorry nearby successfully detonated. Unfortunately, although the mortars came very close, they fell short of the checkpoint.

RPG 7 ATTACK

One British soldier occupant of an armoured Saracen vehicle was seriously wounded in the leg when Belfast Brigade IRA Volunteers launched an RPG 7 rocket in the Britton's Parade area of West Belfast on March 17th. Four Volunteers were involved in the ambush, launched around 10am after they walked out of a house near



● British troops seal off the area where a Saracen armoured vehicle came under fire on March 17th from an IRA unit using an RPG 7 rocket launcher in West Belfast's Britton's Parade — one soldier suffered serious leg injuries in the attack



by, where they had lain in wait for twelve hours. The armour-piercing rocket struck the Saracen moments after it drove out of Fort Pegasus British army base, penetrating the right side. As they withdrew, the active service unit kept up heavy covering fire from automatic weapons.

TYRONE SHOOTING

A man who had recently resigned from the UDR was shot and seriously wounded on March 25th by Tyrone Brigade IRA Volunteers as he drove away from a friend's house. The IRA has repeatedly warned those resigning from the occupation forces to publicise this fact through intermediaries, to prevent this type of mistake.

LURGAN GRENADE ATTACK

Volunteers of the North Armagh Brigade threw a hand grenade at an RUC landrover on Tullygally Road East, just outside Lurgan,

on March 25th. The grenade struck the front of the landrover and exploded, although the RUC admitted no casualties.

BELFAST BOMB

Members of a British army foot patrol in West Belfast cheated death on March 26th, when only the detonator of a 15lb bomb located in a derelict house in Malcolmson Street exploded as they passed by.

BORDER POST SHOT UP

Tyrone Brigade IRA Volunteers fired at least twenty shots at the British army checkpoint at Aughnacloy, shortly after midnight on March 28th. No casualties were admitted by the Brits.

BRIT BLOWN UP

One British soldier was badly injured, and subsequently died as a result, when a Belfast Brigade IRA bomb was detonated in a derelict building on the Falls Road,

on March 30th, as his foot patrol passed by. The 28-year-old corporal in the Devon and Dorset Regiment had been a British soldier for eight years. He died in hospital on April 8th.

APRIL

TYRONE Brigade IRA, which in the previous two months under review had proved itself to contain some of this revolutionary army's most active and resourceful soldiers, struck with devastating efficiency on April 9th in the British army garrison town of Omagh, killing one Brit and seriously wounding another.

An IRA surveillance unit had been watching the Royal Arms Hotel — a known drinking haunt for Brits in the town — for some time that evening when a car containing four plainclothes British soldiers (members of the Queen's

Regiment) drew up in the hotel car park.

While the occupants went for a drink, an active service unit moved into position and attached 10lbs of gelignite with a mercury tilt-switch to the car. Shortly after midnight, two of the original four Brits returned to drive away. As the driver reversed out, the bomb detonated killing him instantly. His companion, who was not in the car, but standing beside it directing the driver, lost a leg and suffered serious face and neck injuries in the blast.

OMAGH ENCORE

Little more than 24 hours later, having warned that they would make the garrison town 'completely unsafe' for enemy personnel, the IRA struck again just outside Omagh. A 100lb command-wire detonated bomb exploded wrecking Kyle's garage at Gortaclare. The bomb had been intended for the RUC, who regularly used the garage as a rendezvous point

for patrols, but when the ASU was obliged to abandon the planned attack it used the bomb for a purely commercial attack — the family owning the garage being prominent locally in UDR and loyalist political circles.

CULLYBACKY GUN ATTACK

A few days earlier, on April 6th, North Antrim IRA Volunteers had proved their ability to strike at will even in predominantly loyalist rural areas, when they mounted a gun attack on an RUC patrol car in Main Street, Cullybacky. Several shots were fired hitting the vehicle, but unfortunately, although the RUC felt so safe from attack (!) that the vehicle was not armoured, the occupants escaped injury on this occasion.

SAS TAKEN APART

The IRA in Derry city, which has established a reputation for uncovering and dealing abruptly with undercover SAS personnel on a somewhat regular basis, scored

a notable success on April 11th, killing one member of an SAS patrol and seriously injuring another.

At 8.30am, after intensive surveillance of SAS movements, a four-person ASU ambushed a green Sherpa van containing five of its members as it approached the junction of Strand Road and Grosvenor Road. Spraying the van with automatic gunfire, causing it to crash, the IRA Volunteers then safely withdrew to Shantallow, leaving the SAS 'elite' short of another two operational killers.

BARRIER BOMB

Volunteers from the First Battalion, North Armagh Brigade, were unlucky on April 13th, when they detonated by command-wire a bomb hidden near the security barriers in Dobbin Street. The operation was carried out at 7.15am as two RUC men and several British soldiers stood close-by while the barrier was opened. Yet despite being only yards away they escaped injury as chunks

of debris from a derelict building were hurtled by the force of the blast.

TERRITORIAL KILLED

A sergeant in the Territorial Reserve was shot dead in Keady, County Armagh, on April 13th, as he locked up the shop of which he was manager, that evening. Several shots were fired at the soldier, who was also a local press officer for Ian Paisley's DUP. He died instantly from head and chest injuries.

BOOBY-TRAP IN CROSS'

A 100lb booby-trap bomb planted by the IRA in a derelict house on the outskirts of Crossmaglen in South Armagh exploded on April 17th without causing injuries.

However, the embarrassing significance of the bomb for the Brits was that it had been planted several days earlier, prior to a major British army 'security sweep' of South Armagh on April 14th, looking for arms and ammunition as well as for IRA Volunteers. The massive

search drew a big blank, the reason why becoming clear when the IRA revealed that its intelligence units had learned of details of the swoop beforehand and had planted a number of booby-trap bombs in derelict buildings, none of which unfortunately had been searched.

RUC INSPECTOR LUCKY

Despite his car being hit several times by automatic gunfire in an IRA ambush on April 21st, an RUC inspector escaped unhurt.

The ambush took place that morning at Princes Street in Derry city, close to Strand Road RUC barracks. IRA Volunteers had occupied a house in nearby Oakfield Road overnight before moving into position.

ARMAGH GRENADE ATTACK

Also on April 21st, Armagh city IRA Volunteers hurled a hand grenade at a mobile RUC patrol on Dalton Road around 10.30pm. No casualties were claimed.



● The IRA were unfortunate not to have inflicted even heavier casualties on the occupation forces in their booby-trap bomb attack in Omagh on April 9th — one member of the Queen's Regiment was killed and another suffered serious injuries



MAY

A WELL-PLANNED operation by South Armagh IRA Volunteers near Crossmaglen led to enemy personnel being tied up for four days before they could move in to clear a suspected booby-trap.

A petrol tanker commandeered by the IRA on the Newry Road on April 29th was located later that night by the Brits at Mounthill, lying abandoned. Realising the probability it was booby-trapped, the Brits sealed off the area until May 3rd and carried out extensive searches of the immediate district. Their caution paid dividends on this occasion when they discovered not only a 3lb bomb on board the tanker, but a rather bigger 100lb bomb concealed near-by. The tanker was burnt out in the Brit efforts to make the booby-trap safe.

FERMANAGH CAR BOMB

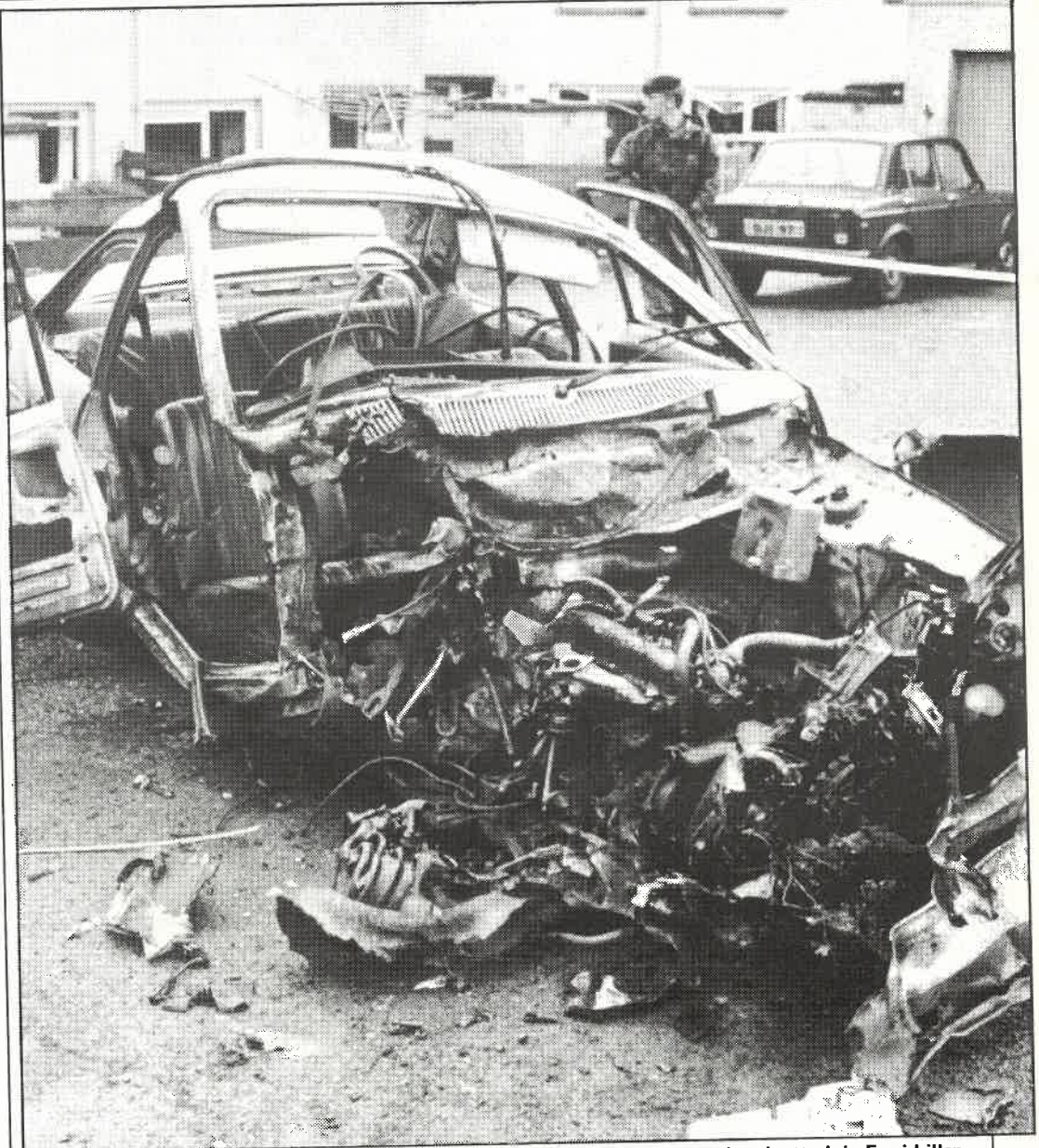
A 39-year-old UDR soldier in Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, suffered serious leg and abdominal injuries when he was caught in an IRA booby-trap bomb which ripped through his car outside his Hillview Park home on May 5th.

LISNASKEA MISS

The following day the Fermanagh Brigade missed a successful repeat of the car bomb attack, when a booby-trap planted beneath the car of an RUC Reservist, which was parked outside Lisnaskea's Ortine Hotel where the Reservist worked part-time, exploded prematurely.

COUNTY DOWN AMBUSH

Just how close IRA units repeatedly come to almost inflicting major losses on the occupying forces was demonstrated once again on May 7th, when only the detonator of a massive 800lb bomb exploded as one of two British army landrovers pass-



● The wrecked car of a UDR man who was seriously injured in a booby-trap bomb attack in Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, on May 5th

ed alongside. The explosives were packed into a car parked along the Rostrevor-Kilkeel Road in County Down. Volunteers in the area, who detonated the bomb, safely withdrew to base.

SHEER NERVE

An IRA active service unit believed to contain about 15 armed Volunteers calmly drove into the Lismore housing estate in the village of Crossmaglen with a lorry loaded with mortars, a van and two cars, and proceeded to set up a mortar attack on the adjacent heavily-fortified and heavily-manned Brit base, on May 7th.

Then, when at the last minute they learned that a number of local people were

inside the barracks, they simply packed up and withdrew, taking their cars, van, guns and mortars with them!

Embarrassed Brits later learned how lucky they'd been when reporters arrived to question villagers about unconfirmed reports of an IRA presence.

BELFAST BLITZ

Belfast Brigade IRA Volunteers launched a successful and highly disruptive commercial attack on city-centre business premises on May 9th with a series of five grille bombs. Four of the bombs detonated, causing extensive damage to a linen shop, a clothiers, a furniture shop and an estate agents. A fifth bomb at a

babywear shop failed to explode.

ARMAGH GRENADES

Two hand grenades were thrown at a UDR foot patrol at Banbrook Hill in Armagh city on May 10th. Two soldiers were rushed to hospital with leg and head injuries.

CIVILIAN DEATH

In an accidental shooting in Derry city on May 10th, an IRA Volunteer killed a 47-year-old civilian woman as she tried to prevent an active service unit removing her British army husband from a house in the Gobnascale district. In a subsequent statement the Derry Brigade explained: "One of our ASUs entered the house

and ordered the soldier out to the street. One Volunteer was tackled by several women in the house and in the ensuing struggle a weapon was discharged accidentally." The soldier, a sergeant, was also shot and wounded in the attack.

CHOPPER UNDER FIRE

An armour-reinforced British army helicopter was hit several times by IRA Volunteers using an M60 machine gun and automatic rifles, as it flew low over Silverbridge in South Armagh on the evening of May 12th. Two of the occupants were wounded, and smoke started to pour from the aircraft which limped back to Bessbrook barracks, a few miles away.

RUC EXPERT KILLED

An RUC communications expert who had been in the RUC for more than 20 years was shot dead by Belfast Brigade IRA Volunteers as he got out of his car on May 16th, outside his home in the Upper Malone area of the city. The 44-year-old man, who was based at Knock RUC headquarters, was shot several times by a lone Volunteer who walked up to him. He then withdrew from the area on a motorbike driven by a comrade.

LANDMINE ATTACKS

In the first of two IRA



● A spectacular IRA bomb attack devastated the Andersonstown British army/RUC barracks on May 24th

landmine attacks on succeeding days, two RUC men were

injured on May 23rd when their armoured patrol car

was partially caught in the blast of a bomb on the Lime-

INFORMERS WARNED

AFTER the attack on Andersonstown barracks, the IRA's Belfast Brigade issued a statement which included a reference to a previous attempt by the IRA at the end of April to carry out that attack. On the earlier occasion a number of Volunteers were forced to abandon the bomb, and narrowly escaped when the Brits and RUC established a checkpoint ambush, having been tipped off by an informer.

As the result of an enquiry, the IRA explained: "In April, a number of Volunteers, who were involved in an operation similar to today's attack, narrowly missed death or capture when they escaped from an enemy ambush on the Andersonstown Road.

"This ambush was set up after Fr Mc-

Corry of the Oliver Plunkett parish, and who lives in Stewartstown Park, supplied information to the enemy.

"Contrary to our stated position of dealing severely with touts, no action was taken against this priest as we felt that, at that time, people would not have fully understood the necessity for action against this particular person.

"Similarly, within the past ten days, an elderly woman in the Ballymurphy area supplied information to the RUC which again could very easily have led to the deaths or capture of some of our Volunteers. As in the previous case, no action was taken for similar reasons.

"Having said this, however, we wish to state that from here on, regardless of a person's position or profession, we will take all necessary action to remove informers from

our midst. A tout is a tout!"

In a particular reference to the activities of priests such as Fr Denis Faul, the statement elaborated: "Certain clerics and members of the Catholic hierarchy have publicly called on people to inform on our Volunteers and their activities against enemy forces.

"Anyone considering giving information to the RUC should remember this. Those members of the Catholic hierarchy who, directly or indirectly, urge people to become informers in aid of the British forces should realise this information can and will be used in order to ambush and execute republican activists.

"For this reason, those passing on any information to the RUC or Brits must recognise that we will ensure that they suffer the consequence of their actions."

hill Road near Pomeroy in County Tyrone.

The following day another RUC patrol car was similarly rocked by a landmine on the Crossmaglen Road at Cam-lough in South Armagh, with both occupants injured.

On both occasions the IRA were extremely unfortunate not to inflict RUC fatalities, with the difficulties of precisely timing detonations clearly illustrated.

BARRACKS WRECKED

In a spectacular operation on May 24th, Belfast Brigade IRA Volunteers virtually completely wrecked Andersonstown Brit/RUC barracks in the heart of West Belfast with a proxy van bomb containing several hundred pounds of explosives. Adequate warnings were relayed through a series of agencies to the RUC, but unfortunately as a result of their deliberate delay there were some minor civilian injuries. Weeks after the attack, British soldiers were still engaged in rebuilding the barracks (see also *Informers warned*).

RESERVIST BOMBED

North Armagh Brigade IRA Volunteers were unlucky a second time when they failed to kill an RUC Reservist on May 27th as he drove to work in Waringstown. A bomb planted at the side of the road detonated as the Reservist's van passed by, but he escaped with severe shock and arm injuries from flying debris.

Only four months earlier, on January 11th, the same man had suffered flesh wounds in an IRA ambush as he drove a van through the Teghnevan estate in Lurgan, when nine shots were fired at him.

DERRY SHOOT-OUT

IRA Volunteers in Derry city once again demonstrated that when it comes to the crunch they are more than a match for Britain's paid 'Professionals'. An active service unit, returning from an aborted operation dressed in RUC uniforms(!) on May



● Belfast city centre was the target of an IRA commercial bomb blitz on May 29th which destroyed three shops and damaged several others

29th, found their path blocked by a British army mobile patrol in the Drumahoe area of the city, which had become suspicious and overtaken them.

Jumping out of their car the Volunteers opened fire on the Brits' armoured vehicle, also hurling a hand grenade and putting the Brits'

radio out of action. They were then able to drive into nationalist Gobnascale, commandeer another vehicle and escape.

COMMERCIAL BLITZ

Belfast Brigade IRA Volunteers again carried out a successful commercial incendiary attack on the city

centre on May 29th, planting five bombs which gutted three shops and caused damage to others. It was the second blitz of its sort, during the period under review, in an area of Belfast that has recently been much-promoted as an example of returning 'night-life' and 'normality'

Senior members

*Tadhg sat up on his hills
Sniping at passing Tommies from the barracks,
Growling in Gaelic,
Plowtilth on his boots.*

*Vincent was just a boy
Kept in at curfew by a careful Da
In a soft suburb
Of the cautious city.*

*Tadhg was two-and-three with Fionn the Hero
(Meaning his cousin)
And helped to shoot him
After the treaty split them.*

*Vincent is solid stock:
His uncle was Home Rule MP:
His face is sleek with merchant generation:
'Liberal plumbing makes a cultured nation.'*

*Tadhg is a bully on the committees,
As full of malice as intelligence;
His language is as hairy as his ears;
He has a drover's voice.*

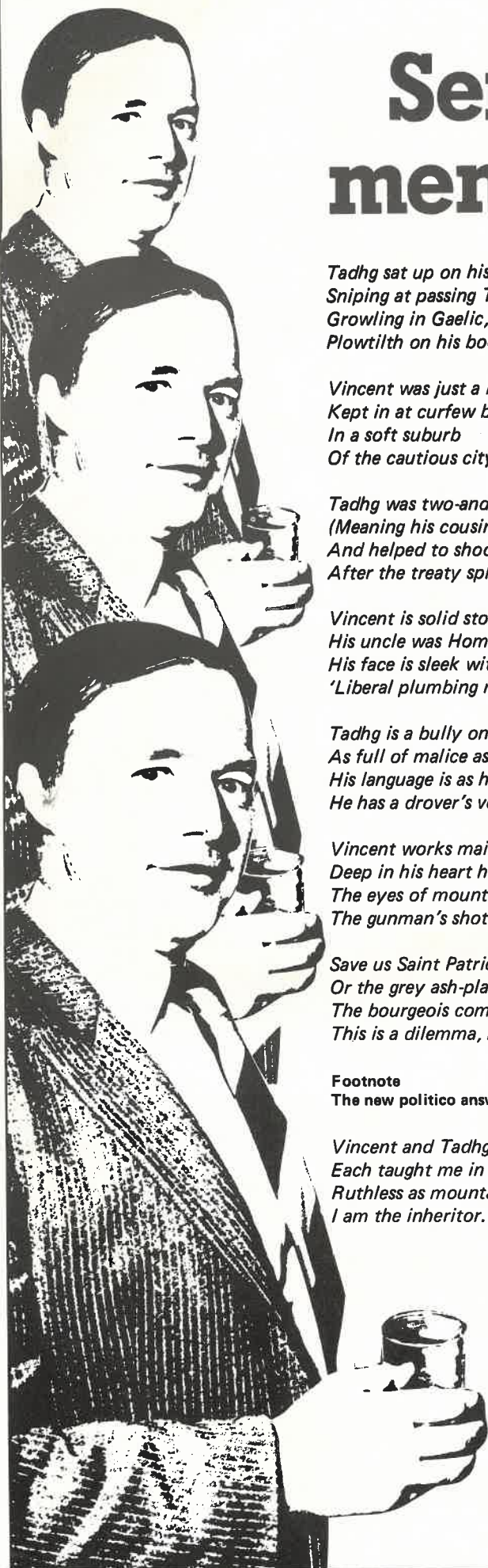
*Vincent works mainly for the money men.
Deep in his heart he fears the tinker's shout,
The eyes of mountain goats,
The gunman's shot.*

*Save us Saint Patrick! Is it gin and plush,
Or the grey ash-plant that shall master us?
The bourgeois coma or the bully's push?
This is a dilemma, not a choice.*

Footnote
The new politico answers my sad voice:

*Vincent and Tadhg, though sadly out of date,
Each taught me in his way to rule the state,
Ruthless as mountain rocks, slick as the city street
I am the inheritor. Kneel at my feet.*

Sean Lucy (1931)



The tales of Sam the Travelling Man

*The other week I met a man who had travelled far and wide,
And he told me tales he swore were truth, but I know he must have lied;
I'll now recount the things he said and I know you'll all agree
That the tales of Sam the travelling man as truths could never be.*

*He told me that the world was ruled by a little group of men
Who owned the major companies that owned their smaller kin;
He even claimed that these same men controlled the course of war.
Now I tell you, Sam the travelling man took his tales too far.*

*He told me that the media seldom spoke the truth,
'Selected truths or none at all,' and then he said to boot
That the men who ran the media and blinded all our eyes
Were the ones who owned the companies! Such frightful bloody lies!*

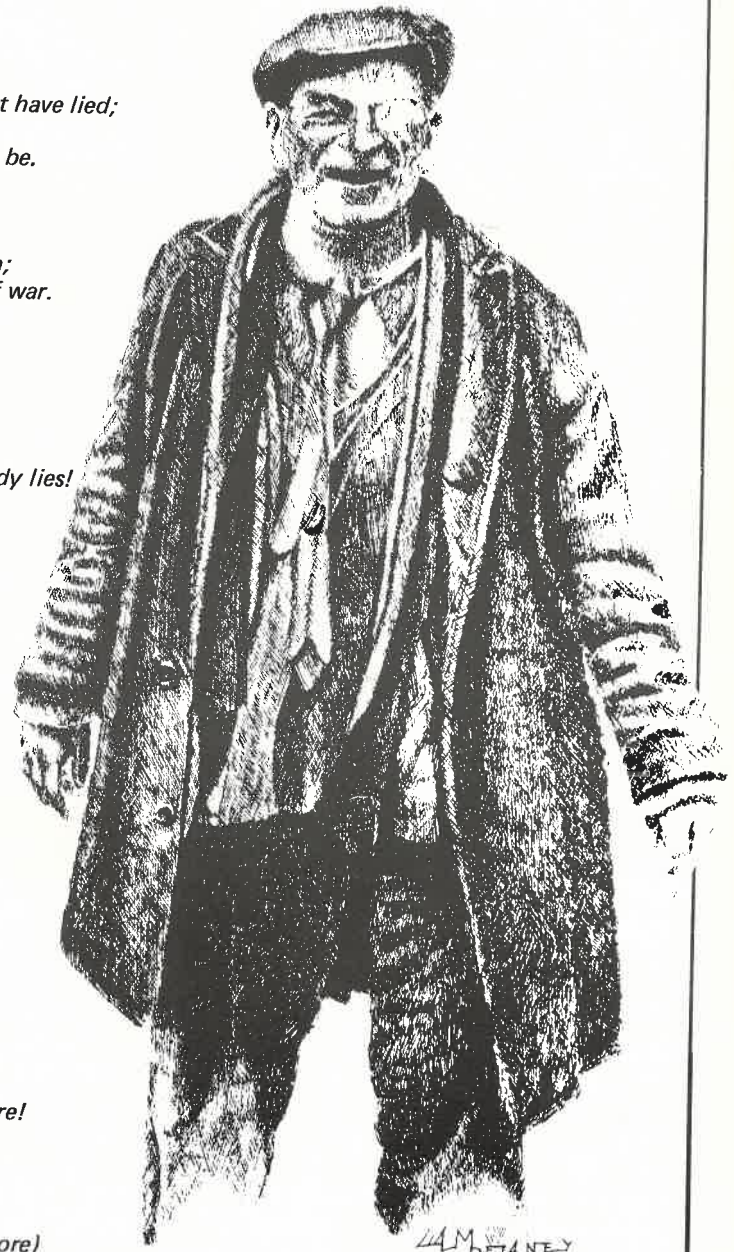
*He told me that religion had always been ill-used,
Long before the Moslems or the Hindus or the Jews,
'Keeps people in subjection, is a power base of its own,
Since the witchdoctor and shanan, the sorceror and druid.'*

*He told me then that the Christian today did not exist,
'Just look around at how they act and tell me if it fits;
If Christ showed up on Earth again, they'd add it up in costs,
Then march him off to Calvary and nail him to a cross.'*

*He told me that our sisters were, by guile and plan abused;
That love was egotistical and womanhood lay bruised.
He called it exploitation, and said of wifely ties,
'You've smothered half creation, you'll live to see them rise.'*

*He said that education was to keep the status quo,
'See how well it changes nought, and keeps the low down low;
It moulds us to conformity and dulls the learning drive.'
Now, I tell you man, the tales of Sam would set your blood afire!*

*For all the time Sam was lying, or else was just a fool;
I read it in the newspapers and learned it all at school,
That any man who speaks such words (and Sam spoke many more)
Is one of those 'subversives', and a liar to the core!*



SAM DELANEY

Ciaran de Baroid



For what died the sons of Roisin?

by Luke Kelly

For what died the sons of Roisin?
Was it Fame?
For what died the sons of Roisin?
Was it Fame?

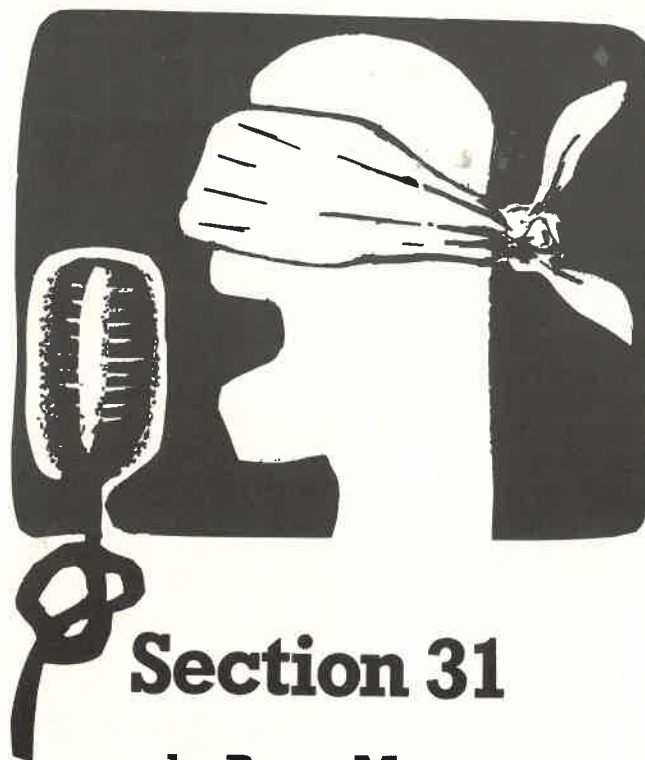
For what flowed Ireland's blood in rivers?
That began when Brian chased the Dane
And did not cease nor has not ceased
With the brave sons of '16
For what died the sons of Roisin?
Was it Fame?

For what died the sons of Roisin?
Was it Greed?
For what died the sons of Roisin?
Was it Greed?

Was it Greed that drove Wolfe Tone
To a pauper's death
In a cell of cold, wet stone?
Will German, French or Dutch
Inscribe the epitaph of Emmet
When we have sold enough of Ireland
To be strangers in it?
For what died the sons of Roisin?
Was it Greed?

To whom do we owe our allegiance today?
To whom do we owe our allegiance today?
To those brave men who fought and died
That Roisin live again with pride,
Her sons at home to work and sing,
Her youth to dance and make her valleys ring
Or the faceless men who for a mark and a dollar
Betrayed her to the highest bidder?
To whom do we owe our allegiance today?

For what die our patriots today?
For what die our patriots today?
They have a language problem so they say,
How to write 'no trespass'
Must grieve their hearts full sore,
We got rid of one strange language
Now we are faced with many many more.
For what suffer our patriots today?



Section 31

by Barry Moore

Chorus:
Section 31 on the TV
Section 31 on the radio
Section 31 is a blindfold
Section 31 makes me feel cold

Who are they to decide what we should hear?
Who are they to decide what we should see?
What do they think we cannot comprehend?
Why do they fear what our reaction might be?

Chorus:

The pounding of the footsteps in the early morning light
Another family woken by an awful deadly fright
There's a body on the pavement with a bullet through the jaw
There's a 13-year-old victim of plastic bullet law

Chorus:

The silence in my ears, the darkness in my eyes
Heightens the fears and deafens the cries
Of another brother taken in another act of hate
A family preparing for another awful wait

Chorus:

Who are they to decide what we should hear?
Who are they to decide what we should see?
What do they think we cannot comprehend?
Why do they fear what our reaction might be?

THE appalling censorship contained in Section 31 of the Free State's Broadcasting Act, which forbids the transmission on TV and radio of interviews with or statements from representatives of Sinn Fein or the IRA, was highlighted once again recently during the Westminster elections.

While all the other political parties involved, including the Official Unionists and DUP who are

strident in their support for British violence, were allowed to present their views unhindered, the republican position was left unrepresented or else given a token mention by those who are hostile to it. Along with Sinn Fein's 30 Free State councillors and its other Northern Assembly and council elected representatives, Westminster MP Gerry Adams has continued to be denied access to RTE since his election.

IRIS

BOOKS

The spirit of freedom

'RAIDS AND RALLIES';

by Ernie O'Malley

— published by Anvil Books, 1982

REVIEW BY GERRY ADAMS MP.

ERNIE O'MALLEY was one of the leading figures in the 'people's war' — as he called it — against the British in 1920-21. Captured in the Civil War badly wounded, and lying in Mountjoy Prison Hospital in January 1923 expecting execution by the Free State government, he wrote:

"We had from centuries of oppression the faults of slaves, seldom their vices, and when one met men who were born free one thanked God for it. The girls too developed and broke away from strict parental discipline. This to my mind was the greatest innovation. The people were gradually drawn into the movement. One cannot write about the older women; they understood us so well and their great hearts reached out to us lonely and tired.

"It was a people's war, that is why we fought so well as from November 1920. The people understood, they made allowances, and there was need for that."

In two previously published books, *On Another Man's Wound* and *The Singing Flame* — both historical classics of that time in my view — we are taken through the periods of the Tan and Civil Wars with O'Malley's philosophising observations lacing his personalised account of events. Both these works are now generally recognised as masterpieces which, for literary as well as historical and political reasons, deserve space on republican bookshelves.

Raids and Rallies is an account of eight IRA operations carried out during the period when official British policy was described by Lloyd George as "fighting murder with murder", and it is an intriguing and factual narration not only of the operations themselves but of the relationship between the IRA and the people, and of the ingenuity with which IRA Volunteers overcame their logistical and armaments' problems.

Of course those were different days, when without control of the air and instant radio communications the British and RIC were restricted in their mobility, but there is still a lot in this latest book which is pertinent to today's struggle.

As Frances-Mary Blake says in the in-



● ERNIE O'MALLEY, pictured during the 1930s

roduction: "While *Raids and Rallies* stresses the common cause of a people against an alien government and its alien law-and-order forces, it also underlines what condemnation there was of the 'war of independence' at that time. Much of it is familiar. There were the thunderous editorials of the daily press, the pronouncements of the Catholic Church hierarchy, and the pressure of establishment propaganda."

Republicans today of course suffer under similar conditions with the same forces ranged against us, and as Frances-Mary Blake correctly notes much of O'Malley's experience is familiar.

Apart from these parallels with today's struggle, *Raids and Rallies* is valuable because of the detailed record of the IRA actions it contains. O'Malley took part in three of these: at Hollyford, Drangan and Rearcross RIC barracks, and had personal knowledge of the others, at Rineen, Scramogue, Tourmakeady, Modreeny and Carrowkennedy; he details in a matter-of-fact way how these offensives were planned and executed.

I was intrigued at the ingenuity with which the IRA Volunteers carried out their attacks. Gelignite bombs wrapped in clay so that they would stick to armoured vehicles; petrol poured into barracks by means of a creamery pump or by petrol bombs; cart bombs, home-made detonators, all the paraphernalia of home-made engineering and crude armaments, from landmines loaded with scrap iron and nails to shotgun cartridges hand-loaded with heavy shot.

And today's opponents of the IRA attack it on the basis that the IRA of yesterday would never have stooped to the methods used these days in Crossmaglen, in Derry, Tyrone and Belfast! In Ernie O'Malley's day, he and his comrades were being attacked on the basis that their forerunners would never have employed the methods of Rineen, Carrowkennedy or Modreeny!

That is the other main value of *Raids and*

Rallies, it places today's struggle firmly in its proper historical perspective. That is, as that part of the struggle for independence left unfinished at the ending of the Tan War.

Then as now, and O'Malley graphically illustrates this, the IRA depended first on its own tenacity and determination and upon the active or passive support of the people amongst whom it operated. Then as now, it was opposed by the Irish establishment, the British government and their numerically stronger and better-equipped forces. Then as now, despite all the setbacks, the IRA had something to fight for; as O'Malley notes: "The spirit of freedom is immeasurable and its strength can suddenly increase in unexpected ways." Recent events in the six counties have confirmed the contemporary truth of that observation.

For many reasons, *Raids and Rallies* is an important book, needing to be read by all republicans — militarists and politicians alike. We will all learn something from it — especially the undeniable truth that the people do understand and they do make allowances.

We can be grateful for that, for as in O'Malley's day there is still need for it.

Getting 'high' on violence

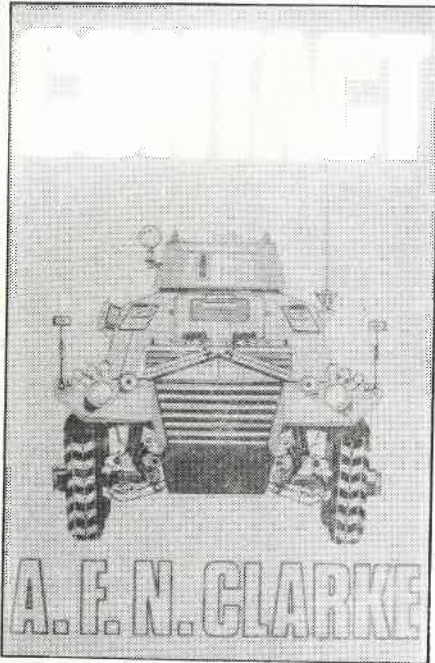
'CONTACT', by A.F.N. Clarke

— published by Secker and Warburg,

Price £6.95

REVIEW BY GEAROID MacARDLE

WRITTEN in anger, according to its author, ex-paratroop officer A.F.N. Clarke, about two tours of duty with the British army (Belfast in 1973, Crossmaglen



in 1976), *Contact* is a readable book — though no literary masterpiece — owing a lot in style and construction to a Micky Spillane thriller, but without the benefit of a plot. It is compelling insofar as it gives us an insight to the thoughts and motivations of an 'ordinary' British soldier.

Clarke makes no attempt to hide the racist, sexist and superior attitudes of the 'elite' Parachute Regiment and its stormtroopers, and indeed at times goes out of his way to emphasise them. The Irish are presented as sub-human, whether in Belfast...

... They are typical of the ghettos of Belfast, with two rooms upstairs, two down and an outside toilet. An assortment of sweating humanity lives in sordid conditions of filth — sinks full of greasy plates, bedrooms with a stench of unwashed bodies and bedclothes, peeling wallpaper and damp everywhere...

or in Crossmaglen...

... To say they lived in squalor would be understating it. Dirt was ingrained in their skins and fleas hopped around their clothes. Their teeth had completely disintegrated and their hair was matted with filthy knots. Like something out of Quatermass and the Pit. South Armagh, still light years away from civilisation. Where barbarity and cruelty are the prime factors of a successful life. Where stealing and killing are as natural a part of living as breathing is to most of us...

A.F.N. Clarke only gets lyrical at one point, and that is when he bemoans that the beautiful South Armagh countryside should be wasted on the mere Irish. Elsewhere his honesty is more embarrassing to the British Ministry of Defence, as he describes how booby-traps are set up close to Flax Street army barracks (in Belfast's Ardoyne) by the Paras, how 'buckshee' (extra unrecorded) rounds of ammunition are supplied so that soldiers can disguise how many they have fired, and how extra powder is put into 'bat-

on rounds' (rubber and plastic bullets) to give them more 'poke'...

... Some push pins and broken razor blades into the rubber rounds. Buckshee rounds have had their heads filed down for a dum-dum effect... who's to know when there is so much spare ammunition floating about? Lead-filled truncheons, magnum revolvers... one bloke even has a Bowie knife...

Throughout its 156 pages *Contact* revels in violence:

... A few kills would be nice at this stage. Good for morale. Ideal for infecting some new life into the senses of the Company...

... We are getting high on the violence now. High on the exhilaration of the chase, the feeling of uplift every time an Irish man goes down... we're doing just what we want...

... 'Zap that little ****!' A loud report and the rubber bullet thwacks into a teenage boy, catching him between the legs...

... There's a look of disappointment on the faces of a couple of toms (privates) who would dearly love to blast Paddy...

... Everyone cheered, of course. Only afterwards does the real impact of death come home to you. At the time it's a thing of enjoyment, and morale soars...

... Memories of Bloody Sunday and the cheers that followed, and the myths and awe that grew around some of the toms who claimed to have shot four or five apiece, and the eager ears listening to tales of gunmen falling, of piling bodies into the back of pigs, some still warm but not for much longer...

These random extracts give some idea of how British soldiers are turned on, or at least of how A.F.N. Clarke was turned on. Landmines have a lesser fascination for him, and the chance of Paddy firing back is even less exciting.

Despite its horrifying aspects, *Contact* — if only for its frankness — must be a welcome publication. The manner in which the much-publicised 'yellow card' firing regulations are ignored, and the admission that British casualty figures are disguised, should make it compulsory reading for those in high places who protest that the British army can do no wrong.

Paratrooper Clarke was one of the lucky ones, leaving the British army in August 1978, a full year before Narrow Water. The sub-humans of Belfast and South Armagh were nevertheless glad, I am sure, to see the back of him.

An unbroken tradition

WE SHALL RISE AGAIN'

by Nora Connolly O'Brien

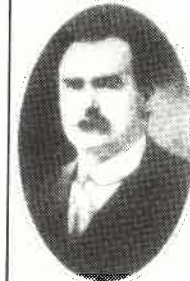
— published by Mosquito Press, 1981

REVIEW BY PETER HAYES

AS I reached the door, my father called me back and I went back to the bed. He put his arms around me and pulled me down to him and hugged me and whispered in my ear, "Don't be too disappointed, Nora. We shall rise again."

He did not want me to drop out of the

WE SHALL RISE AGAIN



James Connolly

Nora
Connolly
O'Brien

fight. He knew it would go on after he was gone.

And then I had to go out. Those were the very last words that he said to me before I was taken away — *'We shall rise again!'*

THIS is, quite simply, a remarkable series of reminiscences from the daughter of James Connolly, put together in book form from recorded conversations shortly before her death in June 1981, at the age of 88.

Those of us who were privileged to hear Nora Connolly O'Brien speak at the Sinn Féin ard fheis in November 1980 remember clearly the extraordinary vitality and enthusiasm she displayed towards the continuation of armed struggle, and particularly, the resistance of the prisoners. What comes across equally forcefully in the 120 pages of this short and easily-read book is her precise grasp of the republican tradition from 1916 onwards, the essential soundness (despite certain unorthodoxies) of her vision, and her compellingly direct way of giving the reader a 'taste' of what it was like to be centrally present in the making of great moments in Irish history.

Nora takes us from the prelude to the Easter Rising to the bitter anticlimax of the executions that followed, in the process managing to give a daughter's unique insights into the character of Connolly himself. She then traces the continuing liberation struggle from the Tan War phase, and the 1930s' efforts to build socialism through the Republican Congress, to the resumption of that struggle since 1969:

The unbroken tradition is saved by the Provos coming out against the border which cuts us off from six counties of our country.

The theme of the continuity of the republican tradition is central to much of what Nora Connolly O'Brien wished to say, and aptly enough she herself symbolised that unbroken chain no more clearly than when she clasped the hand of a former blanket man at the 1980 ard fheis. Her book is also an extremely valuable recognition of, as well as

contribution to, that continuity.

As Nora herself said: "The old have a job to do, to remind the young." We shall rise again more than succeeds in this aim.

● Available from Mosquito Press, 27A Old Gloucester Street, London WC1N 3XX; £1.95 plus 50p post (paperback), £3.90 plus 75p post (hardback).

The GAA in its time

'THE GAA IN ITS TIME', by Padraig Puirseal
— published by Purcell, 1982
(Hardback, 365 pages, IR £9.50)

REVIEW BY CELT

THE GAA IN ITS TIME is another welcome addition to the literature on the Gaelic Athletic Association. The work was begun by the late sports journalist Padraig Puirseal and originally intended for publication to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Association. Having been put aside and revised for the centenary year 1984, the author unfortunately died in September 1979, leaving publication to the efforts of his wife, Agnes, and family.

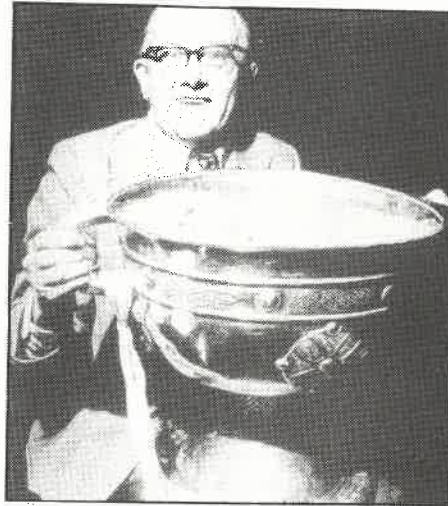
The immediately striking characteristic of the book is the professional style of the author. Puirseal's hard-working commentaries in the sports columns of the *Irish Press* have guaranteed an interesting and commanding script for the reader eager to trace the roots and development of the largest national sporting body in Ireland.

Puirseal has managed to avoid a chronological litany of the events which helped to shape the Association, but instead has adequately fused a commentary on the athletic and games movement with the historical background of the time. The author displays an obviously deep-rooted love for the ideals of the GAA and the role it was to play in the reawakening of national identity amongst the people of Ireland.

The early chapters comprehensively cover the new-born Association's trials and tribulations. Puirseal has documented his account with many letters written by influential characters of the day. He refers to the letter of acceptance written by Dr Croke on agreeing to become patron of the Association. He quotes those sentiments which were later to form the basis of the GAA's Charter:

"If we continue travelling for the next score years in the same direction that we have taken for some time past, condemning the sports that were practised by our forefathers, effacing our national features as though we were ashamed of them, and putting on, with England's stuff and broadcloths, her masher habits and other effeminate follies as she may recommend, we had better at once, and publicly, abjure our nationality, clap hands for joy at the sight of the Union Jack and place 'England's bloody red' exultantly above 'the green'..."

The influences of Maurice Davin, Mich-



● Padraig Puirseal, pictured with the All-Ireland Football championship trophy

ael Davitt, Michael Cusack and Charles Parnell reflect the individual characteristics of these men as their personal fates and destinies coloured the development of the Association. The political upheaval in the country at the time was to have a lasting ideological impact on the GAA's thinking, and is worthily recorded in this book.

As the author continues his account the reader is presented with famous players and matches. The description of County heroes adds an enjoyable dimension to the book, and the incidents of heartbreak or victory at the final whistle are portrayed in a way that clearly shows Puirseal's wholehearted love of Gaelic games.

The period from 1959 to 1979 has been compiled by his sister Mary from Puirseal's own notes and from articles the author wrote which were published, mostly in the *Irish Press*.

His article on his own choice of greatest hurling and football teams of all time will cause enthusiastic debate among GAA devotees and a ready source of record about some of the best-known players on the field of Gaelic sport. Legendary folk heroes like Rackard, Ring and Doyle from hurling, John Joe O'Reilly, Heffernan and O'Shea from football, fill the final pages of a most enjoyable literary account of the people who foster and play our national games, written by a man whose personal commitment to the Gaelic tradition was intense.

The oral tradition

'IRISH FOLK HISTORY',
by Henry Glassie
— published by O'Brien Press

REVIEW BY GEAROID MacARDLE

IRISH Folk History, with line drawings by the author, is another fine publication from O'Brien Press, written "for the people of Fermanagh/In memory of those who have gone/In celebration of those who remain." It is a welcome addition to the grow-

ing number of local histories published recently, and Henry Glassie succeeds, by using his own techniques, in his aim of letting the people speak for themselves.

This is an oral history, an authentic record, in the old story-telling tradition, gathered in ceilis, at firesides, in the countryside of South Fermanagh and in the townland of Ballymenone. Glassie never 'intrudes' in this collection but encourages us to learn for ourselves, from the local bards and *seanachai*, how life evolved in that community.

In his introduction he tells us how he worked to transcribe the stories and songs in a way that would retain some of their flavour: "My goal was to make the texts look like they sound. To that end I left white space for silence, used italics and capitals for emphasis, and I inserted diamonds (◇) to indicate a chuckle in the voice, a laugh in the tale."

This technique, previously used to preserve native American (Indian) myths, works admirably well in the stories recorded by Glassie in Ballymenone between 1972 and 1979, and encourages the reader to read aloud — and so to better savour each nuance and undertone. In this way, Henry Glassie reveals the Saints from Patrick to Colmcille, episodes of the various wars from the Battle of the Biscuit Ford and the Macken Fight to the Brookeborough raid, tales of landlords, the land and the famine, and of course the people and their view of life both local and national.

Irish Folk History adds to the already rich history of our country, and in these days of the lazy media — television and video — it is a welcome reminder that the oral tradition remains alive and that a rural community only miles from the border, within the occupied zone and subject to all the pressures of life in modern-day Ireland, retains its firm understanding of its history, its roots and its Irishness.

Irish Folk History



FOLKTALES FROM THE NORTH

HENRY GLASSIE

By the author of *ME JEWEL* and *DARLIN' DUBLIN*
and *THE LABOUR* and *the ROYAL*.

GUR CAKE & COAL BLOCKS

'A TREASURE OF
FANTASTIC LORE'
— *PUNING HERALD*

**EAMONN
MacThomáis**

Rare oul' times

'*GUR CAKE AND COAL BLOCKS*,'
by Eamonn MacThomáis
— published by O'Brien Press, Price IR£3

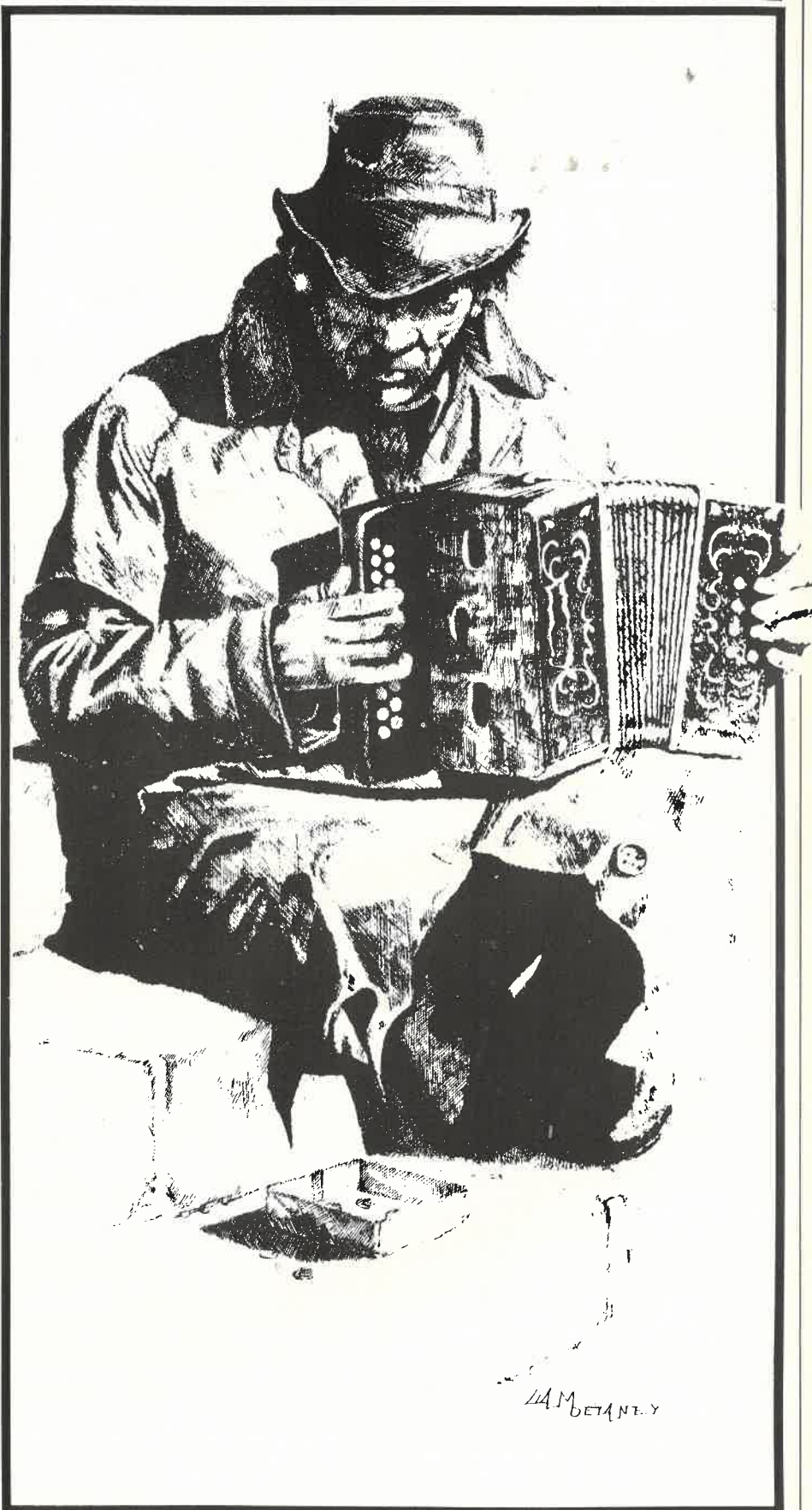
BY GERRY ADAMS MP

GUR Cake and Coal Blocks, from the author of the best-selling *Me Jewel* and *Darlin' Dublin*, *The Lady at the Gate*, *Down Dublin Streets 1916*, *The Labour and the Royal* and *Janey Mac Me Shirt is Black*, was first sent to me in 1976, in Cage 11 of Long Kesh, by my friend Eamonn MacThomáis.

Then a hardback edition, I protected it from Screws and over-zealous borrowers until upon my release I was foolish enough to lend it to some erstwhile comrade whose name escapes me. Like all good books it was never returned, and I was delighted therefore to receive this second paperback edition, though if on reading this review my book thief is moved to return my hardback copy, complete with Eamonn's signature on the flyleaf, I will receive it with gratitude and forgiveness.

This is a brilliant book, with illustrations by Liam Delaney and Michael O'Brien. It tells not just the story of Eamonn MacThomáis' life but the story of working-class Dublin thirty or forty years ago. Many of the characters brought to life — and many of the expressions — will find an echo in Belfast street lore. Lord Muck, eckers, cogg-ing, and all of the institutions — pawnshops, chapels and public houses, were universal to urban life whether in Glasgow, Belfast or Eamonn's beloved Dublin.

Gur Cake and Coal Blocks is unique however in the way that Eamonn MacThomáis



brings all these things back to life, with humour and an eye to detail which captures the reader's imagination. It is the sort of book that one regrets finishing, a book which every citizen of — or visitor to — Dublin should read.

Parochial Northern visitors to our capital city after a weary day in its bustling city centre often remark: "*The only good thing*

to come out of Dublin is the Belfast Road."

They obviously haven't read any of Eamonn MacThomáis' material, for in it is revealed all the crack, history, humour and human life that was — and perhaps still is — Dublin in the rare oul' times. This book captures and assembles these times for posterity, and the author is to be commended for providing us with such an excellent record

THE CULTS IN THE MEDIA

BY CORMAC

