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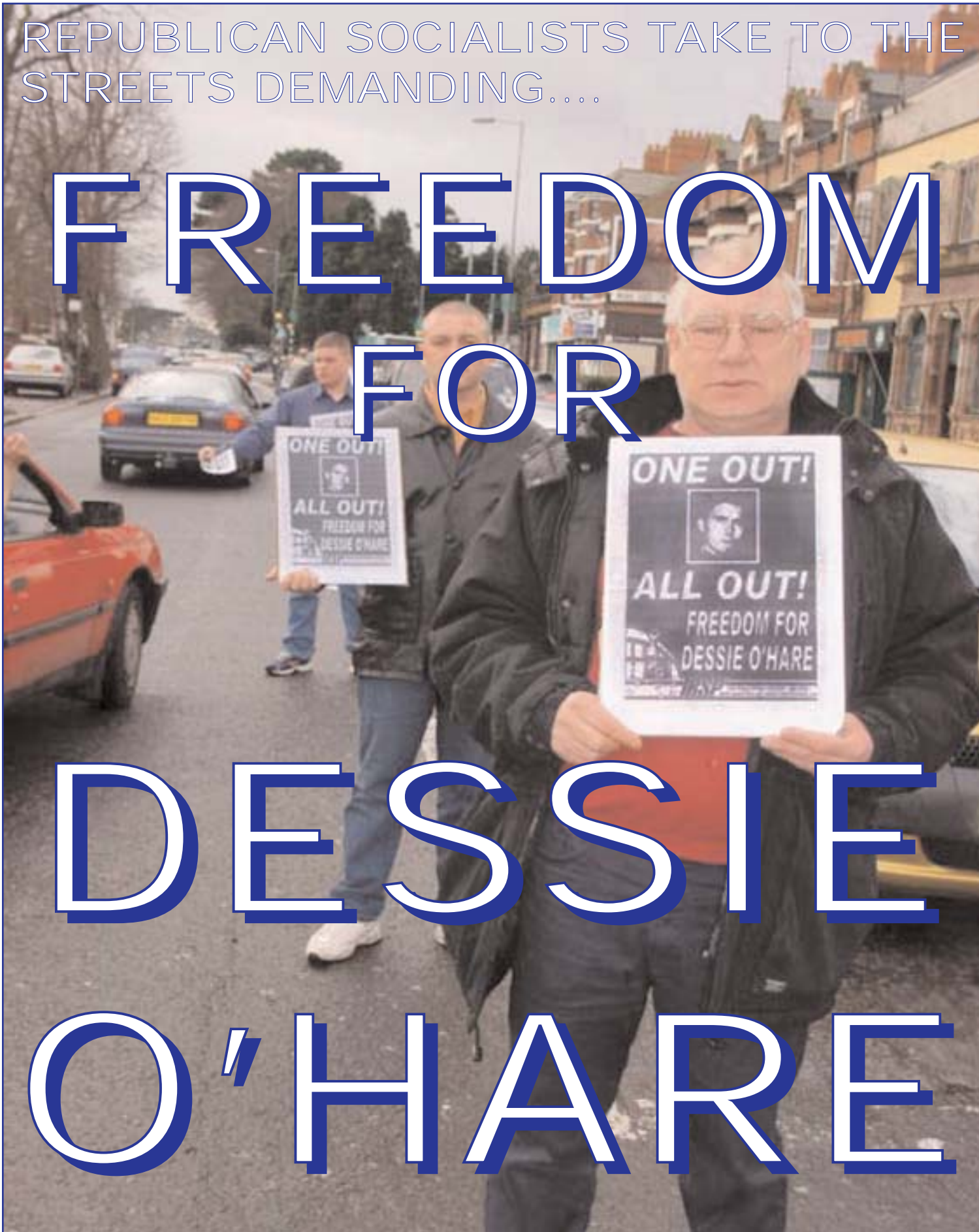
REPUBLICAN SOCIALISTS TAKE TO THE STREETS DEMANDING....

FREEDOM

FOR

DESSIE

O'HARE



TIME TO PLAY FAIR!

Dessie O'Hare is an INLA POW currently being held HOSTAGE in the top security Portlaoise prison in the 26 counties.

He was convicted in the non-jury Special Criminal Court of the 1987 kidnapping of Dublin dentist and multimillionaire John O'Grady. He was sentenced to 40 years.

He is a member of the INLA, whose ceasefire is recognised by both governments as complete. This allows for the release of all INLA prisoners whose actions occurred before April 1998 under Strand Three of the Belfast agreement.

Dessie fits into all the criteria laid out in the agreement to be eligible for early release.

All his co-accused have been released under these exact circumstances.

The 26 county administration has come up with a number of excuses for keeping Dessie hostage, all of which don't stand up to scrutiny. This is a case of basic inequality and prejudice.

Even non-political criminal prisoners have been released under this agreement such as Kevin McAlorum who was convicted of possession of the weapon used to kill INLA Chief of Staff Gino Gallagher.

Kevin McAlorum was never a member of the INLA or any other republican grouping yet benefited from early release because he was imprisoned under the same legislation that political prisoners are imprisoned under.

Finally, the Irish Government have already said that Dessie O'Hare should be released.

"Dessie O'Hare is a qualifying prisoner." The words of 26 county minister for "justice" John O'Donahue.

The IRSP and other groups interested in justice will be endeavouring to increase our efforts to get Dessie out. An election convention will soon decide if Dessie O'Hare should stand for election in the Dublin Central constituency of Bertie Ahern in a bid to further highlight this case of injustice.

THE VOICE OF IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALISM!

The Starry Plough or An Camchéachta was first established in 1975 as the national newspaper of the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

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Prisoner of War Website:
<http://irsm.org/irspows/>

IRSM Statements:
<http://irsm.org/statements/>

GOT A STORY?

If you would like to highlight an issue of concern in your area and would like to have it published in the pages of The Starry Plough then get in touch at the address above or contact a local IRSP representative, The Starry Plough is your paper.

For national and international news, or news for your workplace, community or action group then please send your articles, photographs, reports and any other information to The Starry Plough at the address above.

Deadline for next issue of The Starry Plough - An Camchéachta is May 25th 2002.

Editorial

Castlereagh break in.

Once again we have witnessed a farcicle episode involving the RUC, MI5, PIRA and Sinn Fein revolving around the burglary at the former Castlereagh torture centre on St Patrick's day.

A few solid facts have emerged and a whole lot of misinformation have emerged. The most difficult task for observers is to determine the facts from the fiction.

Fact 1; There was a break-in at room 202, the contact point for RUC informers and their handlers in the Belfast area.

Fact 2; It was definately an inside job because the office had only moved to this location in the two weeks prior to the theft and highly detailed and up to date information was needed to gain access to this office.

Fact 3; The documents stolen included details of informers and their handlers.

Fact 4; It was obviously a well planned operation involving military precision.

Fact 5; Security surrounding the investigation of the murder of Pat Finucane has been stepped up as a "precautionary measure"

Fact 6; That investigation is headed by Sir John Stevens, the commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and is looking into claims that the British Army and RUC colluded with Loyalist Death Squads in the murder of Pat Finucane.

Fact 7; Stevens has been investigating Special Branche's role in the murder and has requested access to their files.

Fact 8; Sir John Chilcot of MI5, a former civil servant who was involved in secret contacts with the IRA in the early 1990's has been named by the British Government as head of their inquiry into the break-in.

Fact 9; A large number of Special Branch personel have been promoted inside the "new" Police Service of Northern Ireland (new RUC).

Fact 10; Despite all the theories doing the rounds and the RUC assertion that the IRA were involved in the break-in not one shred of evidence has emerged. Despite the arrests no-one has been charged with the break-in.

These are the facts. Little hard evidence of anything. Readers - draw your own conclusions!

The Starry Plough - An Camchéachta, PO Box 1981, Derry, BT48 8GX, IRELAND

Eagarfhocail

POLITICAL STATUS BATTLE RECOMMENCES



Surveillance: The RUC photograph prisoners rights campaigners in Derry

Republican and Republican Socialist Prisoners are being forced to consider drastic action in a bid to regain the rights won during the 1981 hunger strike in which three INLA and seven IRA prisoners fasted to death rather than be classed as criminals.

Since the signing of the Belfast Agreement and the closure of Long Kesh prisoners rights have been slowly and steadily taken away.

There is even evidence that prison authorities are planning to reintroduce the idea of prison uniforms. Speculation is rife that a catalogue of prison issue clothing and other items is to be introduced. If this is it will take prisoners back to the days when Ciaran Nugent and Connolly Brady became the first IRA and INLA prisoners to refuse to wear prison uniforms and instead began what became the blanket protest. That protest ultimately led to the deaths of the hunger strikers.

Prisoners are now not allowed food parcels and visitors are subjected to a sniffer dog that basically has the power to decide if a prisoner is allowed an open or a closed visit. Republican prisoners have now decided to refuse to take closed visits in protest at this absurdity.

Relatives of the prisoners along

with friends and supporters gathered in Derry city centre on Saturday 23rd March in what was planned to be the first in a series of protests for prisoners rights.

The protesters gathered at Free Derry Corner and then made their way up Fahan Street towards the Diamond. As they passed through the gate at the entrance of Butcher Street they were watched by a group of loyalists who were attending the headquarters of the Apprentice Boys. Some of these loyalists even followed the protest as it made it's way down towards Shipquay Street although there was no trouble.

After about fifteen minutes of a white line protest on Shipquay Street the crowd then moved into Waterloo Place where Marian Price briefly addressed the prisoners supporters. She thanked those present for attending and said that those who said the prisoners had no support were wrong given the number of people who attended this protest.



"We stand with our people in the hour of need" - INLA



What follows is an interview given by the INLA to a Sunday Newspaper recently. As usual only a small portion appeared in a typically tabloid sensationalist article. The Starry Plough prints the interview here in full:

Q1. Has the INLA secured new and more sophisticated stockpile weapons including landmines and rifles?

A. It is our policy not to indicate to anyone what we have in terms of resources personnel or intelligence so we will not answer this question.

Q2. Despite its opposition to the Good Friday Agreement does the organisations ceasefire remain firmly intact?

A. Absolutely.

Q3. If the recent campaign of violence from loyalists continues unabated will the INLA's hand be forced to strike back at the loyalist community or a leading loyalist?

A. In our New Year message of January 1st we said

"We reaffirm our ceasefire decision of August 22nd 1998 but view with increasing concern the escalating attacks on the nationalist working class by hate filled loyalism. We warn that such attacks put an almost impossible strain on republicans. Unless there is a halt then a republican response is inevitable."

Since then there has been the murder of a young postman because of his religion, threats and violence shown to catholic teachers and postmen, an attempt to blow up a pregnant catholic woman, and ongoing attacks on nationalist houses. Those who live in loyalist areas have nothing to fear from the INLA. We pose no threat to the ordinary protestant working class. There have not been nor will there be any threats to any section of protestant workers from the INLA.

Q4. Would the organisation comment on reports its volunteers are working closely with the dissident Continuity and Real IRA in a bid to ship new arms into the north.?

A. Rubbish! What others do is their business. We are a separate independent army politically opposed to the right wing form of nationalism espoused by these groups. We have nothing in common with them.

Q5. Would the organisation be happy to sit down with the UDA's Inner Council in a bid to persuade it to end its campaign of terror against the nationalist community?

A. The question presupposes
a) That there is an inner council,
b) That it has influence and
c) That it is interested in creating the conditions for peace.

We don't believe that it exists for anything other than propaganda reasons: UDA commanders reign supreme in their own areas and have build up their own little empires. They jealously guard their own power base and don't recognise any overall leadership. On peace let it be said that those filled with hatred of Catholics who are in the UDA can never be accommodated.

However we recognise that there are some genuine loyalists who recognise that accommodation has to be reached.

The INLA has in the past proposed a non-aggression pact, a grass roots initiative that would enable working class communities to co-exist side by side with clearly defined ways of negotiating settlements to problems without armed groups intervening. We will talk to anyone on this issue.

Q6. Has the INLA at any time issued threats to protestants in north Belfast and community workers linked to the Concerned Residents of Upper Ardoyne?

A. Twice in January Tom Gillan of ICTU publicised and condemned threats by the INLA, first on workers in Monkstown and then on community workers in North

Belfast. These public attacks by Gillan followed denials by the IRSP that there any threats from the INLA. At no time did the ICTU contact either the IRSP or any of the well-known mediators to ascertain if indeed there was any threat. Gillan's maverick and reckless public statements have to be condemned and we ask whose agenda was he working for? We repeat there never were any threats from us to any section of workers.

Q7. Is the INLA firmly intact or is there a danger of feud within its ranks erupting as it did in the past?

A. There is a centralised unified and politically committed leadership with the full support of the rank and file. This leadership has returned this movement to its roots of republican socialism. Previous leaderships forgot what they were there for, ignored the political reasons for the existence of the organisation and treated the membership with disdain. That we will not do and so there is no danger of any so called feuds occurring again.

Q8. If the loyalist campaign of violence ended would the INLA ever consider handing over weapons and possibly following a similar path as the provisionals?

A. We believe that unfortunately there will be continuing loyalist violence directed by bigots against nationalists in one form or another. That has been the history of the Northern state. Until that state goes we believe there will always be violence. However the silence of all guns is an objective all reasonable people would seek. As regards the red herring of decommissioning let us be clear. There was no decommissioning after the War of Independence, no decommissioning after the 56-61 Republican campaigns, nor no decommissioning by the Official IRA after 1972. We will not decommission. As regards following the Provisional path we don't agree politically with Sinn Fein but we do encourage people to engage in and participate in

politics.

Q9. Can the leadership confirm that it has been embarking on a recruitment process in the north and the Irish Republic in a bid to welcome young republicans who are unhappy with the direction of the peace process?

A. We do not poach members from any other group. We want people to join our movement on the basis of our political approach. If people are socialist, republican and agree with our analysis we encourage them to take the political road and join the IRSP.

Q10. Does the INLA have a good relationship with the Provisionals in the nationalist community?

A. We encourage good relationships with all fellow republicans. We have occasional contact with other republicans and occasionally exchange views on the political situation with other organisations. But we are a separate independent organisation following our own path.

Q11. Has the INLA the materials and weapons to defend nationalist communities from attacks from loyalists?

A. Let us be frank. No amount of equipment nor volunteers can ensure the defence of working class communities from random sectarian attacks. But like other republicans we see our primary duty at this moment in time to ensure that working class communities have some protection within their communities from these attacks. We stand with our people in the hour of need.

Q12. Is the INLA a threat to ordinary Protestants?

A. Emphatically not. In our original ceasefire statement we apologised for actions in the past and these included sectarian attacks that fell below the standards acceptable for a republican army. This movement is as firmly against any

attacks on the protestant community as it is against attacks on the catholic community.

Q13. Would the INLA ever consider putting forward people to contest local government elections again?

A. Obviously armies don't fight elections but we do support the call for a Republican forum issued by the IRSP and we would encourage all republicans of whatever views to put those views before the people. Elections are part of that process of putting their views forward. But any decision on fighting elections rests with the IRSP and whatever that decision is we will respect that.

Q14. Do the INLA consider the killing of Billy Wright as their most successful ever operation?

A. We refuse to gloat over the death of anyone. We don't have a points system for operations. All operations that were carried out in the past were part of the struggle for national liberation. All operations should be viewed in that light.

Q15. Finally does the INLA have an alternative to the Good Friday Agreement and a clear path it intends to follow?

A. We are opposed to the GFA on the basis that it institutionalises sectarianism, stabilises a sectarian state, divides working class people and copper fastens partition. However we are not so arrogant to believe we have a ready answer to a problem that has bedevilled people for centuries. Trust has to be built up from a grassroots level. We believe that can be done by something like a non-aggression pact. But we remain unswerving in our belief that the best solution is the creation of a socialist republic where power rests with the Irish working class.

DRUG PEDDLERS FLEE NORTH BELFAST

According to a report in the North Belfast News recently the INLA have been responsible for the destruction of a major drugs ring in North Belfast and in the process uncovered evidence of widespread solvent abuse involving adults selling glue to children for £3 a bag.

As part of the major investigation drugs uncovered by the INLA were cannabis, speed, cocaine and ecstasy. The tools of the dealers trade included guns, crossbows and various knives. As a result of this action a number of dealers have left the area.

The INLA has identified 24 small-time dealers in North Belfast, a number of whom have

been visited in recent weeks. One of the main players in the network of drugs godfathers operating out of North Belfast include a drug dealer who is originally from Carrickhill and a former associate of Paul Daly who was shot dead in May 2001.

The dealer, who gets his drugs from a criminal with UDA connections in Antrim, has claimed in the past to have links with the Continuity IRA - a claim rubbished by the group.

The evil dealer is alleged to have bombed his own home last year in a ploy to get out of North Belfast where he lived, and has since

moved to Newtownabbey.

He heads a network of around ten dealers who sell the drugs in the local community.

Paul Little, IRSP spokesman in North Belfast, said, "There is a major drugs problem and it is having a detrimental effect on our youth."

"It has gone unchallenged and we have allowed this drug culture, which is vibrant among young people to go unabated,"

And he concluded, "The IRSP view is that users are victims but there is a zero tolerance to drug dealers."

UNCENSORED NEWS

These are the stories and opinions that you will not have heard or read anywhere else. These are the opinions you were not supposed to see! These pages will carry IRSP press releases and local campaign stories that have not appeared anywhere else because of **POLITICAL CENSORSHIP**

RATS PLAGUE DUBLIN FLATS



LOCAL RESIDENTS TERRORISED BY EPIDEMIC OF RODENTS. DUBLIN CORPORATION DOES NOTHING

Starry Plough reporters were recently invited by a tenant of Rory O'Connor House, which is part of the Hardwicke Street flat complex in Dublin, to see for themselves the conditions to which Dublin Corporation are subjecting tenants to live under. The main complaint from several tenants being the infestation of rats in and around their homes.

Our reporters were called to the complex at the behest of Mrs. Doyle whose family lives on the top of Rory O'Connor House which is one of many tower blocks in the area. As our reporters arrived at Hardwicke Street they immediately came across a major building refurbishment which was obviously the main cause of the continuing rat infestation. Such an infestation could have been prevented or at least minimised or confined to ground level with preventative measures being taken (i.e. sealing dead or redundant drainage and temporally sealing new drainage at the end of each working day).

A terrified Mrs. Doyle disturbingly related her horror story by recalling how she first became aware of the rat infestation back in February, just weeks after construction began in the area saying: "I was in the kitchen when I noticed one large rat on top of the fridge jump on top of the young fella" (referring to her little boy).

Her young daughter, Allison Doyle confirmed the story by stating "One rat even jumped onto me when another one was on top of my brother!"

While examining the Doyle's home, our reporters were shown evidence of many rat droppings and grease marks, clear signs of rodent activity throughout their home in areas which the Doyle family had to eat their meals, sleep and play.

Outside on the balcony, our reporters were shown a communal rubbish shoot that had no covering to protect residents or young children. Mrs. Doyle said "The cover was hanging off some time before it simply fell off and only recently have the corporation even bothered to rectify this fault after being reported to them by a number of other residents."

It was obvious to reporters as well as residents that the rubbish shoots have been a major source of food for the rats and cockroaches which have been serious major health hazards for tenants living in the area.

The Doyle family have been so afraid to to sleep at nights following regular sightings of large rats in their kitchen and bedrooms that they are now forced to sleep in their living room on the armchairs and sofa.

One local IRSP representative told the Starry Plough: "There is no way any family or families should be forced to exist under these terrifying conditions in the year 2002. Rats can cause many forms of phobias in young, middle aged and elderly people alike which on some occasions have led to counselling being required as a result of many horrific encounters with such rodents. This is surely a living nightmare!"

A desperate Mrs. Doyle said "I suppose there is nothing can be done, they (Dublin Corporation) have been very laxadazicle over this problem to say the least."

She continued "A fella came round and threw some poison behind the sink and said 'I'll be back' but I asked him to remove the sink to look for a nest or to take all the panels off but he just said 'I'll be back!...but that isn't good enough!"

Mrs. Doyle was given no advice as to what rodenticide was being laid by the Northern Area Health Board. Normally in the case of rodent infestation, an Anticoagulant is used and if digested by a 'non-targeted species' namely humans or domestic pets etc. the consequences can prove to be fatal.

The IRSP representative concluded by stating: "Advice is supposed to be given by all Pest Control Operators in case of such digestion so as a doctor or vet can be informed and would therefore know immediately what to do.

"The case of the Doyle family is just one of many in Dublin's inner city, in fact any inner city as to the contempt they are held in by the corporation, local council or local authorities alike. The question is if this problem had occurred in a more affluent area would the response of the Pest Control Company have been so flippant? Would they have been in and out in five minutes? and would the owners of private property be forced to suffer potential serious health problems, nightmares and possible long term phobias as Doyles now have? Highly unlikely to say the least!"

PUT PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT!

The Irish Republican Socialist Party called on the 26 County Administration to put people before profit in relation to drug abuse figures in the capital.

In a statement , a Dublin IRSP spokesperson said:

"In Dublin alone, the official number of registered drug addicts is estimated to be at 7,000 but the true figure would be more than double. 35% of those are under 25 years of age with some drug addicts seeking help and support are as young as 12.

"The 26 County Administration has spent millions of pounds protecting it's cattle industry from the effects of Foot and Mouth Disease, in the same period a fraction of that has been spent on protecting it's people from the effects of heroin abuse. Clearly all they are interested in is profit not people.

"Of the millions of Euros worth of heroin and cocaine seized in the past twelve months, most of those arrested in connection with these seizures, have been released on their own bail pending direction from the DPP.

"Drug dealing in the capital is an international business, last year there were 69 British, 17 East European, 15 African, 11 Spanish, 5 South American, 3 French, 3 North American, 2 Middle Eastern, 2 Portuguese, 2 Dutch, 2 Italian and 1 German involved in drug busts.

"Foot and Mouth Disease causes no serious health implication to humans. In Dublin alone, heroin abuse has claimed hundreds of lives, created thousands of victims and divided families and communities alike. When will we see the 26 County Administration Put people before profit?"

Scrap the Bin Charges - IRSP

Following on from our story last month in which we revealed plans by Fingal County Council to introduce charges for the disposal of household waste the Irish Republican Socialist Party have called on councillors to scrap proposed bin charges, calling it a double stealth tax on working class communities in Dublin.

A Dublin IRSP spokesperson said in a statement:

Our party call on all Fingal County Councillors to immediately scrap their proposed refuse bin charges which is yet another double taxation on the working class communities of the city. We feel that the working class of Dublin are being bullied into paying a tax which is totally unfair, unjust and in our view undemocratic.

The Council has an obligation to collect peoples waste. The letters that we received are not legal documents so our party are asking working class communities who receive these letters to ignore their bully boy tactics which the council are adopting.

Those in the Drogheda and Cork areas refused to pay a bin tax and succeeded in forcing their councils to collect the waste.

People must be made aware that it is every councils legal obligation to collect household waste. The council, under the law, are duty bound to collect the waste and have already been paid, through your taxes to collect it. Councils are in the process of robbing the poorest in society through this stealth tax.

The IRSP are asking people, don't be intimidated or bullied. We can't allow the council or city managers to con people, stick together and make people power beat the bin charges.

IRSP Online

www.irsm.org/irsp

Starry Plough Newspaper Online

www.irsm.org/irsp/starryplough

More Job Cuts Scandalous - IRSP

Following the announcement of job losses by EMC, which has plants in Dublin and Cork, the Irish Republican Socialist Party stated that the job cuts would effect the entire community whilst bosses profits remained buoyant as ever.

Six months of speculation have confirmed that EMC are indeed cutting its work force by an estimated 160 by the end of April through voluntary redundancies. We believe that such job cuts would directly damage the communities of Cork and Dublin as EMC's work force employees at this stage just under 1,600 in both factories.

Workers have agreed twice to take unpaid leave which has become all too common practice in multinational companies in the island as a whole. Families are literally forced starve or go without paying household bills for weeks which mounts up to

become more damaging whilst bosses can relax as profits remain unaffected.

EMC's announcement, like many others, is a devastating blow as many are unsure who are and who are not taking so-called voluntary redundancies. Many politicians will of course side with the bosses and blame all sorts of things from downturns in their economy to that old favourite, September 11th and workers are expected to believe this crap. It is rubbish and we all know it!



EMC's glossy brochures. No mention of the dole queue!

UNCENSORED NEWS Continued....

MAYDAY 2002 Let us arise!

This year, Mayday 2002 marks the 116th year since the first international workers day or Mayday back in 1886. On May 1st of that year, the American Federation of Labour called a General Strike in support of an eight-hour day.

During a picket at a factory whose workers were on strike, the cops murdered some days later in Chicago four labour activists. In response, a local workers paper called a mass demonstration and rally to be held in the Haymarket area of the city the following evening. During the demonstration a police agent threw a bomb into the middle of the crowd killing several workers and cops.

The attack was then used by authorities to discredit the growing Labour movement. As many strikers and labour activists were arrested and tortured with eight of them finally being wrongfully charged for the bombing. As a result four were hanged, one committed suicide and three spent seven years in prison before receiving a pardon for a crime they did not even commit. The campaign for an eight-hour day was stepped up and on July 14th 1889 in Paris the International Labour Congress adopted May 1st as a "workers holiday".

A spokesperson for the IRSP said: As we begin a new millennium, the class war remains

basically the same. Middle class bosses on the attack and successive Trade Unions still fail to fight back effectively for our class.

Instead they, like the left generally, are only seen leaving their offices once a year to dust off their mouldy banners to parade them through the streets inflicting meaningless speeches by boring well paid union officials.

The IRSP spokesperson added, what hope does this give those of our class who they are supposed to represent?

The truth is that most workers are either afraid to take action

where they work as many feel they can't win, even though the rank-and-file membership is what Trade Unions are supposed to be all about.

The unions today continue to seek to soften the edges of capitalism rather than do away with it all together.

At present we have numerous workplace disputes around the country. Postal workers have brought thousands onto the streets of the north against sectarian threats and murder by fascists.

As republican socialists we are playing our part in encouraging the fight back against sectarianism, continual job destruc-

tion and encouraging workplace militancy.

International Workers Day like the labour movement itself must be taken back from the parasites such as those comfortable union officials who at the end of the day have a vested interest in the system.

For the IRSP, the future of the labour movement lies not with those hidden in offices but in reclaiming its hidden past and openly creating a real fighting alternative which has got to be republican socialism.

Lastly we call on all republican socialists to turn out in strength in every

town and city throughout the country celebrating May Day to add our support for workers in struggle.

"The great only appear great because we are on our knees -- let us arise!"



IRSP EXTENDS WELCOME TO CHE'S DAUGHTER



Revolutionary: Che Guevara

The Irish Republican Socialist Party warmly welcomed a visit by Aleida Guevara, daughter of revolutionary Marxist leader Che Guevara, to Ireland during the month of March.

In a statement an IRSP spokesperson said:

"It's been an honour to be graced with the presence of Aleida Guevara, daughter of the highly renowned guellia leader and revolutionary Marxist leader Che Guevara.

"The Irish Republican Socialist Party has been inspired, just as others have, by her fathers socialist perspective of a world ripped apart by the corruption and greed of a few by the oppression of so many.

"We welcomed Dr. Guevara's visit to our country who conducted a national speaking tour highlighting the events of the failed US backed dictatorship over forty years ago and the subsequent embargos which have ravaged their country ever since.

"The IRSP would call on anyone interested in supporting the Cuban Solidarity Committees in Ireland or who is interested in the politics of Guevara and how the events of September 11th have altered lives in Cuba to continue to support the Cuban people in their struggle against US imperialism"

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL TELLS MULHUDDART TENANTS:

"PAY UP - OR FREEZE!"

By Gerry Murray



Cllr Gerry Lynam: Didn't get cold this winter!

As an IRSP member and chairperson of the Mulhuddart Residents and Tenants Association I was recently shocked to hear that the people of our area will not be getting central heating installed. Thirty six houses out of two hundred are the only ones without heating and Fingal County Council have dared to hold the families to ransom because they owe rent arrears. The legalities of such a move by the council are questionable and will be questioned.

Firstly as a member of the IRSP I can not, and will not, stand by and allow the council to walk all over us. Many of these families are single parent, widow/ers or/and unemployed which would suggest that the council are fingering the weakest and most vulnerable sections of society for special treatment which is unacceptable.

There are almost 3,000 new homes being built on our door step and the contractors, Shannon Homes and O'Connors Brothers, have not, as yet, employed any labour from the immediate area. What we would like to see is a 10% local employment clause inserted into the contract by the council, thus forcing any company successful in securing the tender to make sure that 10% those

employed on the site are local people. We as a community have to endure the dirt and dust, as would be expected with any development work in any area, and are expected to sit idly by while no members of our community are offered employment and the contractors are not cleaning up as they go, as they would do if it was a middle or upper class area.

We as a community feel that enough is enough therefore we will be meeting with the site contractors to discuss the issue of local labour and any other outstanding grievances we, as individuals or a group, may have.

As well as the grievances over the building work being carried out in the area we shall be approaching the council on a number of other issues. We are a community crying out for help. Help to secure a better environment for our children so they can enjoy a higher quality of life. All we are asking for is that our basic needs are met, those being a health centre, post office, a chemist, creche facilities and changing rooms for our football teams. Nothing out of the ordinary for any community to ask for in the 21st century.

Is your council, private landlord, housing executive or housing association holding you or your community to ransom in this way? If they are we would like to hear about it. Our contact details are on Page 2.

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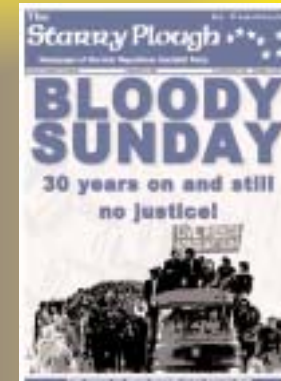
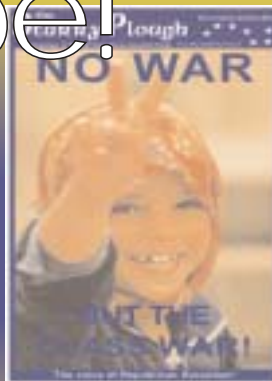
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CONNOLLY: NATIONAL LIBERATION, SOCIALISM & PARTITION

Connolly's major achievement is to have grasped the relation between nationalism and socialism, between the national struggle and the class struggle. A lot of socialists saw (and still see) the national struggle as a diversion from class struggle and as being incompatible with socialism. Many Republicans struggled against British imperialism, but with no references to the struggle for a Socialist Ireland. For them the class struggle had no relevance or was a diversion from the national struggle. Connolly set to explain to Republicans and Socialists the intrinsic links between the two issues. "I have spent a great portion of my life altering between interpreting Socialism to the Irish and interpreting the Irish to the Socialists." (CW1, 349) wrote Connolly. In the American edition of Erin's Hope, he stated that "the two currents of revolutionary thought in Ireland -the socialist and the national- were not antagonistic but complementary". To Republicans, he explained that they would only realise their aims through a socialist revolution. Imperialism is not about flags and emblems, it is about a certain socio-economic organisation, and without a radical social reorganisation of Irish society, the national struggle would end up being mere national recreancy. To Socialists who ignored the national question, he pointed that it would be impossible to build a socialist society in Ireland so long as the country was entangled in relations of economic and political subordination to the British Empire. Breaking the chains of imperialism and national liberation are a "first requisite" (CW2, 175) of socialism. Connolly's fundamental teaching is that the struggle for national liberation is not opposed to the struggle for socialism, but an integral and necessary part of it. This is why "The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland, the cause of Ireland is the cause of labour. They cannot be dissevered."

(CW2, 175). Socialism is impossible in Ireland without national liberation, and national liberation would be meaningless for the working class without socialism. Connolly correctly grasped the relation between the national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution. It has been argued that Connolly viewed national liberation and socialism as being two rigidly separated stages: first the national liberation stage, where socialism is not on the agenda until British withdrawal; and once Ireland is free -and not until then-, arrives the second stage where the struggle for socialism can begin. It is wrong to attribute such a view to Connolly. He viewed the national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution not as two separate stages, but as two distinct aspects of the same process. The national liberation struggle has to be fought on an explicitly socialist basis.

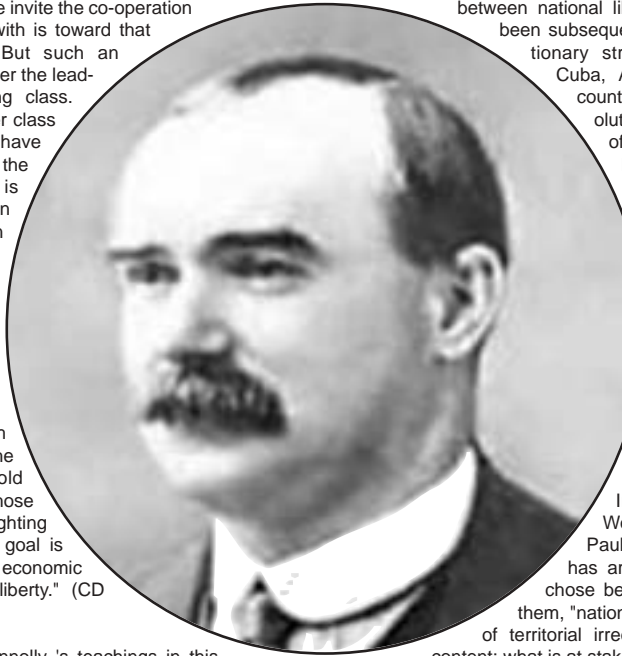
It is important to stress that Connolly was not some "left-wing nationalist" who tried to do some eclectic synthesis between nationalism and socialism. For Connolly, nationalism and socialism were not identical, but only complementary. He clearly knew that there was nothing intrinsically progressive about Irish nationalism, and was aware that there were areas of tension between the two; he only supported it in so far as it had a democratic content. Connolly addressed himself not the broad "nationalist" constituency, but the most advanced and progressive section of the Irish independence movement - the Republican tradition. National "freedom" is not above classes and their struggles. Connolly gave a class content to Irish Republicanism. Each social class has its own definition of "freedom" and its own view about the nature of "the Republic". National freedom and the Republic would only have a con-

crete content if it was for the freedom of the working class and the Workers Republic. "We are out for Ireland for the Irish. But who are the Irish? Not the rack-renting slum-owning landlord; not the sweating profit-grinding capitalist; not the sleek and oily lawyers; not the prostitute pressman -the hired liars of the enemy. Not these are the Irish upon whom the future depends. Not these, but the Irish working class, the only secure foundation upon which a free nation can be reared." (CW 2, p.175) Connolly rejected bourgeois nationalism, and rejects any subordination of the working class to bourgeois nationalism. "As a socialist I am prepared to do all one man can do to achieve our motherland her rightful heritage -independence; but if you ask me to abate one jot or tittle of the claims of social justice in order to conciliate the privileged classes, then I must decline." (CW1, 307-308) On the basis of a concrete analysis of social forces in Ireland, Connolly concluded that "only the Irish working class remain as the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for freedom in Ireland." (CW1, 25). The working class, because it has "nothing to loose but its chains" is the only class who will be able to lead the national liberation struggle to a successful conclusion. All the other social classes will capitulate and sell out at some stage because they are not prepared to risk their wealth and power. The genuine motor of the national liberation struggle is the working class. "Ireland cannot rise to freedom except upon the shoulders of the working class knowing its rights and daring to take them." (CW 1, 455) However, it is also true that Connolly argued for a strategic alliance with other classes. A successful revolution could in the specific conditions of Ireland only come about through an alliance of all anti imperialist forces: "We are prepared to co-operate with all ... even should the

aim they set for such organisation be far less ambitious than our own. We invite the co-operation of all who will work with us toward that end." (CW2, 248). But such an alliance had to be under the leadership of the working class. The place of any other class in the alliance would have to be subordinated to the working class (this is very clearly stated in his articles on Sinn Fein). So it is incorrect to argue that in 1916 Connolly had capitulated to Bourgeois nationalism. On the evening of 16 April 1916, Connolly informed members of the Irish Citizens Army: "In the event of victory, hold onto your rifles, as those with whom we are fighting may stop before our goal is reached. We are for economic as well as political liberty." (CD Greaves, p.403).

How relevant are Connolly's teachings in this

early 21st century? Connolly's views on the relation between national liberation and socialism have been subsequently validated by the revolutionary struggles in China, Vietnam, Cuba, Angola and so many other countries in the world. Socialist revolutions there were the outcome of national liberation struggles. However, there have been a number of Marxist critics like Eric Hobsbawm or Tom Nairn who dismiss on different grounds the idea that national liberation is still a relevant issue. But the "internationalism" of those critics remains purely abstract, as their national chauvinism renders them blind to national oppression. With the war in the North over the last thirty years, a current of the left in Ireland -represented by the Workers Party or critics like Paul Bew and Henry Patterson- has argued that socialists have to choose between nation and class. For them, "national liberation" is just a species of territorial irredentism with no democratic content; what is at stake is workers unity versus Irish



unity. The priority is to unite the Protestant and Catholic working class, not to solve the divisive national question. But they are wrong to see national liberation as territorial irredentism. Connolly had warned that partition "would mean a carnival of reaction both North and South and would set back the wheels of progress" (CW1, 393). The struggle against partition is not opposed to the struggle for socialism, but an integral part of it. It has a democratic content because, far from being a question of territorial irredentism, it is about opposing the "carnival of reaction". Connolly also understood the futility of sloganeering around "workers unity" in the North given the reactionary nature of Loyalism. Protestant workers "are slaves in spirit because they have been reared up among a people whose conditions of servitude were more slavish than their own". By contrast, Catholic workers "are rebels in spirit and democratic in feeling because for hundred of years they have found no class as lowly paid or as hardly treated as themselves" (CW1, 386). Sloganeering abstractly around "working class unity" in the Six Counties is not progressive because it fails to confront the reactionary nature of Loyalism, and practically condemns the most oppressed sections of the working class to subordinate their democratic revolt and interests to the backwardness of the Loyalist labour aristocracy.

Republican Socialists today are the most consistent followers of James Connolly's teachings on national liberation and socialism, the national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution. But our challenge is to take up the analysis where Connolly left. Circumstances have changed since Connolly's times and our task is to develop Connolly's teachings into the 21st century.

This is Republican Socialism!

The Irish Republican Socialist Party is an organisation created by and for working class people, to aid working class liberation in Ireland and internationally with others who share that common goal. The IRSP stands in the tradition of James Connolly, seeking an end to all forms of exploitation and the creation of a 32 county socialist republic, with the working class collectively owning the means of production, distribution, and exchange, as well as democratically administering society.

Socialism
The socialism we embrace is the kind that liberates, not enslaves. We strive towards a society that functions to meet human needs, not the need for profit. Our socialism is a means of liberating our class from all forms of oppression, whether economic, political, religious, cultural or social. It is a socialism that envisions our class controlling their own destinies and that of the nation as a whole.

National Liberation
The struggle for national liberation cannot be separated from the class struggle. Any attempt to isolate one from the other will result in failure. It is meaningless to speak of a free nation, if the overwhelming majority remain oppressed, and national sovereignty is lost through multinational corporate control of the economy just as much as by partition. At the same time, someone who refuses to challenge British imperialism in Ireland cannot claim to be fighting for socialism and the continuation of partition props up the divisions in the working class of Ireland that hold us back from our own liberation. We have no choice in whether or not we wish to consider the liberation of Ireland and the national and class questions, reality forces us to do so.

Equality
Our class faces daily, relentless assaults inflicted on us from many quarters and a constant onslaught of attempts to divide us. The IRSP oppose and fight against all forms of inequality and oppression, including that of women, travellers, lesbians, gays or other sexual minorities, refugees, Africans, Asians, and any other oppressed sector of the working class. We oppose racism, Zionism, sexism, homophobia, national chauvinism, and anything else which divides our class. We support reproductive rights and unhindered access to contraception, including a woman's right to choose abortion. We are opposed to religious sectarianism and seek the complete separation of church and state and a secular society.

Our Earth
The increasing destruction of our environment is due to mismanagement of industrialisation and the inevitable product of a system, which puts profit before all else, that is, capitalism. The IRSP is committed to sustainable and renewable energy sources, preservation of the ecology and biodiversity of our planet, with protection of all species and the promotion of a healthy environment for all people and animal life.

Revolution not Reform
The IRSP believe that the present class system cannot be reformed out of existence. There exists no parliamentary road to socialism and the liberation of our class. We need to build an organised working class movement with the politics capable of leading the fight against capitalism. Our class are entitled to control over all the wealth of society and to obtain it through any means necessary.

Loyalism & Nationalism
We distinguish between loyalism and Protestantism. We recognise the right of everyone to their own religious beliefs, provided they do not use these beliefs to oppress others. We have no quarrel with Protestant workers and welcome them to join us in struggle. However, we stand totally opposed to the political

ideology of loyalism. Loyalism is a reactionary, sectarian and imperialist ideology, with which we can make no compromise. We recognise that nationalism in the context of the Irish struggle is progressive, but we also recognise that nationalism can play a reactionary role. The national chauvinism of the Tories, National Front, etc. is counter-revolutionary and anathema to socialists. The nationalism of an oppressed country is vastly different from such reactionary jingoism. We support all struggles against imperialism throughout the world.

Class mobilisation
Only by mobilising our class north and south - Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter - can the goal of national liberation and socialism be achieved. Workers have distinct interests as a class, ultimately opposed to any other class, we must join together as a class to win control of society.

For a fighting union
As republican socialists, we take lesson from battles that have gone before us, in the community and in the workplace. We must reclaim our unions and organise the unorganised. We remain committed to the revolutionary industrial unionism of Larkin and Connolly. As republican socialists we see the creation of a fighting rank and file trade union movement as something that still holds potential and we support the building of a revolutionary shop stewards' movement.

IRSM EASTER COMMEMORATION 2002



The Irish Republican Socialist Movement held its annual commemoration on Sunday 31st March in Belfast to mark the 86th anniversary of the Easter Rising. The march, headed by an IRSM colour party, proceeded from

Costello House to the Republican Socialist Plot in Milltown Cemetery. Over five hundred people attended this year's event making it one of the biggest commemorations of the day throughout Ireland. John Murtagh of the IRSP's Ard Comhairle delivered the main oration.

"Comrades, once more we gather to pay homage and remember those Republicans and Socialists who gave their lives in the struggle for a Democratic Socialist Republic.

"Extraordinary events make for extraordinary people. The men and women of 1916 may seem like heroic figures, but we must never forget they were ordinary men and women who lived in extraordinary times.

"Today as we come to the slow ending of the armed conflict that has engulfed us all over the last three generations it is time to take stock and re-affirm our first principles. What did the ordinary men and women including our own comrades who died for a Republic think they were doing?

"Was it fighting for an abstraction called freedom? No.

"Was it for glory? No.

"Was it for the freedom to exploit others? No.

"Was it for the copper fastening of partition? No.

"Was it for the restoration of Stormont? No!! Emphatically No.

"It was for the right of you and me and all citizens born of this island to live with political economic and social freedom in a Republic that really did cherish all the children of the nation equally.

"For us in the Republican Socialist Movement, that can only come about in a Socialist Republic. The Republican Socialist Movement is made up of ordinary men and women, who live ordinary lives but who want, what is considered extraordinary today, the right to live in a Republic that is democratic inclusive and based on socialist principles.



An IRSM colour party leads this year's Easter Commemoration in Belfast.

"Ask yourself who today stands by that concept of the Republic?

"Those fat cats of Irish business life who can award themselves bonuses of £17 Million in one year for refusing union recognition as in Ryanair?

"The bought politicians, who feed on the stench of corruption greed and bribery in the current Dail?

"Without principle idealism or compassion they have allowed the poor of this country to slip further into debt and misery.

"The drug dealers in every town and village in Ireland who spread their poisonous trade amongst school kids?

"The Northern politicians who enflame sectarian passions with their petty disputes over symbols and flags?

"The racists who turn worker against worker by enflaming prejudices and ignorance.

"The trade union leaders who sell their workers out faster than Judas betrayed Jesus.

"Or the great and the good whose desire is to be photographed with USA Presidents preferably on St Patrick's Day in Washington.

"Their political life in Ireland has become so dumb-downed that a Photo opportunity means more than a political Manifesto.

"None of those groups of charlatans stand by the Republic of Connolly. We salute those ordinary men and women who whether in the INLA, the IRSP, the prison camps, on the blanket, on picket line and in day to day trade union activity, in community and tenant associations, trying every day to alleviate the hardships of working class life - are the real defenders of the Republic. Not for them the easy allure of the Yankee dollar. Just the ongoing republican struggle for a socialist Ireland

"Friends and Comrades you will not hear words of consensus and compromise "of moving the process forward" or of "inclusive dialogue" from this platform.

"For what those words and phrases stand for is capitulation to the class enemy. We know what side of the barricades we stand on. It is on the side of the oppressed, the exploited, the

marginalized and the derided.

"We are on the side of the victims of USA Imperialism and militarism. We stand by the Palestinian masses in their struggle for justice. We are with the poor of Afghanistan oppressed by foreign armies and religious fundamentalism. We are with the poor of Columbia and in defence of the Cuban Revolution. We salute the bravery of the continuing Turkish death fasters and the revolutionary communists in Spain that are tirelessly fighting against the most awful repression of fascism. We make no apology for our anti-imperialism and sincerely hope no one from this country flies to the USA to apologise to Senate hearings for the anti-imperialist actions of any Republican.

"In the North there is now a politically and economically aware nationalist middle class prepared to sup from the spoils of the Stormont table. They appoint their friends and relations on the growing number of quangos, award contracts to their best friends and tut tut about violence in working class areas.

"Yet every day in those areas violence continues unabated as the poison of sectarianism enflames working class areas. The INLA has been active in defence of working class areas. That poses no threat to any ceasefire or threatens anyone except sectarian and racist bigots. When the police and the forces of the state turn a blind eye to sectarian attacks is it any wonder that republicans have to take to the streets to defend areas from sectarian attacks. This movement will not turn the other cheek.

"However we appeal to all those who claim to be either republicans or nationalists in front line working class communities neither by word or deed heighten or enflame sectarian tensions. That was not the way of Connolly, Mellows or any other Republican Socialist. It is not our way.

"Heroin, the drug and all its side effects, personal, political and social are alive and well in this country. Heroin mainly effects the poorer working class communities and for that precise reason large sections of the working class in areas of our large inner cities have been isolated and left to live with all the side effects of capitalism but with precious little support, that is the nature of the beast.

"In a system designed to ruthlessly pursue profit and gain, peoples live, hopes, dreams and happiness have no part to play, it is in these communities that heroin is most visible. These are the areas of our cities that were left for dead by the authorities decades ago.



John Murtagh, IRSP Ard Comhairle member delivering the main oration at this year's Easter Commemoration.

"Today we as republican socialists strive to create the conditions of a 32 county socialist republic full of justice, fairness and equality for all, irrespective of race, colour or creed, but within that political context it is up to each and every one of us as political, community and anti-drug activists and more importantly as parents to work tirelessly for the children of tomorrow, for our history will not judge us on what we have tried to do for our people but on what we have achieved.

"Active community and anti-drugs members of this movement will be judged by the very same people we represent, the people of no property, the poor, the deprived, neglected and the ignored and we will not be deflected by those, who would rather sell the cheap-headline than to report the real life daily struggle of social exclusion and inequality inflicted on the working class by those who for years have treated us as second class citizens.

"As we predicted when the Good Friday Agreement was signed, sectarianism has not only been institutionalised it has spread like wildfire. The Good Friday Agreement has benefited the middle classes not the working classes. And it has not been fully implemented. This movement took the extremely difficult decision to recognise that the will of the Irish people was for the implementation of the GFA and for peace. We acted accordingly and the INLA ceasefire has been as solid as any. We have respected the wishes of the Irish people.

"We define the national liberation struggle as that struggle which seeks to force a British military withdrawal from the occupied six counties. The destruction of the pro-British loyalist armed forces. The withdrawal of British political influence from all parts of Ireland. The ending the partition of the island of Ireland and the overturning of both the partitionist governments presently administering political affairs of Ireland. The gaining of collective economic control of the nation's resources by the nation as a whole and the eradication of any control or influence exercised by foreign capitalists over any aspect of the Irish economy. The recognition of a separate Irish cultural identity and the establishment of revolutionary 32-county socialist republic.

"We now call on the 26 County Administration to respect their own Good Friday Agreement and immediately release one of the last remaining prisoners to qualify for release under the Good Friday Agreement, Dessie O'Hare. They have acted in bad faith over the release of Dessie. From this platform we send greetings to our comrade Dessie and say we will not stop

until your release.

"Elections are due to take place in May in the 26-counties. At this time the Ard-Comhairle are considering a proposal by the Dublin Membership to run Dessie O' Hare as a candidate in Bertie Ahern's constituency of Dublin Central. The Ard-Comhairle will after conclusive debate with the membership make a final decision at an election convention, which will take place within the next ten days.

"Comrades, friends, relatives of our martyred dead, as we walk away from this graveyard ponder not on the dead but on the living. No one can predict the future. But if everyone here played just a small role in fighting injustice and oppression then the dawning of a new day in political life in Ireland would be that much closer."

The Short Road To Addiction

The Long Road To Recovery

An Interview with a former Heroin Addict.

It is estimated that there is currently 14,000 heroin addicts in Dublin City. There are large areas of the capital city of Ireland which have been devastated by this drug epidemic. Heroin abuse has destroyed whole communities, wrecked whole families, murdered and destroyed thousands of lives. For over a generation this scourge has demoralised the working class communities and caused nothing but misery and pain.

In recent years the greed of the drug barons, who are making millions, has increased, this has led

to a number drug related gangland killings, greed and power is what the brown and white power offers these young men.

The Starry Plough believes that no matter what we say about drugs, or how we try and educate people, nothing can be more poignant than the real live events of a former addict. This is an interview, the Starry Plough had with a young man whom we shall call "Patrick", who has been clean for over 6 years and is now an active member of the Irish Republican Socialist Party in Dublin

Starry Plough: At what age did you first come into contact with drugs and what were the circumstances?

Patrick: I was about 11 or 12, at that age, we were drinking, smoking hash, taking sleeping pills. This went on for about 2-3 years.

Starry Plough: What were the reasons, as a youngster, you drank and smoked hash?

Patrick: There was nothing for us in the area, there was no facilities for us, peer pressure, no job opportunities, boredom and I guess just "to be one of the boys."

Starry Plough: What is the situation of your family in terms of being affected by heroin?

Patrick: The whole family has been affected when it comes to heroin, it's a love/hate relationship. They love their son/daughter who's addicted to heroin but they hate what heroin is doing to them, their family and the community. And do I have any members of my family on heroin? there is currently one brother and one sister who are seeking help to wean themselves off that drug.

Starry Plough: What was your first experience with heroin?

Patrick: Well it started off when a doctor introduced me to DF 118, a painkiller which is codeine based and very addictive. I was taking 25 a day, that went on for a couple of years. People from all over Dublin were coming in for his tablets, giving him backhanders and presents (bottles of whiskey etc.). It wasn't until the parents in the area had got together and reported him to the authorities that he was arrested in his surgery. He was branded a legal drug pusher. There was nothing done to help those of us who were addicted to the legal drugs. It was as if we were forced to move onto illegal heroin to get our fix. He destroyed not only my life but plenty of others, he still continued to practise until he retired a couple of years ago. He claimed in court at the time that addicts were threatening him to get gear, that was a load of crap.

The first time, I took heroin, four of my friends lived in London, they came back to Ireland (it was about 1986), not only did they come back, but they brought the

devil with them. We were all sitting in a shed, near St Josephs Mansions, one of the lads showed us how to use it. We all took a try, liked it and were on the road to addiction.

Starry Plough: Do you think you were hooked after the first time?

Patrick: Well I was already addicted to other drugs, but from that day on, it was an everyday occurrence and at that time it was 40 quid a bag. We all thought we could control it, that we could do without it. But it just became heavier and heavier. I then turned to crime to feed my habit. Everytime you take it, your addiction gets worse, but you still think you are in control.

Starry Plough: You mentioned getting involved in crime was helping you finance your growing drug addiction, describe a daily routine for you in those days?

Patrick: I'd get up at seven in the morning, and if I had gear from the night before, I'd take it. If I had no gear I'd go out looking for cash to get my morning fix. The girlfriend would go to work, she never took anything, so while she was out earning a wage, I'd walk the streets until I got money from somewhere, robbing food and clothes, jumping counters, bank snatches, doing anything I could to feed my addiction. At this stage I was on a habit of three quarters, i.e. £120 a day. That continued like a roundabout, took drugs, robbed stuff, went to prison, it was never ending.

Starry Plough: When you were in prison, how did you feed your addiction?

Patrick: Well when I went in first, like any prisoner, I went on the two week detox program. In other words I was given methadone for two weeks. With a habit like mine, that was a complete joke. I ended up getting other people or myself, going to a doctor, complaining I that I couldn't sleep. I'd get some roche, i.e. sleeping tablets, which were crushed and then injected it. I was taking that if I couldn't get any gear.

Also I got paid every week (grat money, which was a payment of £5.60 a week for good behaviour) and family/friends left in money. If I hadn't enough money in my account to send out to a friend to buy me gear I would ask a mate of mine on the landing to pool

together and we'd buy a quarter or two. It was easy enough to smuggle in. It would be passed by kissing, smuggled up the anus, same in regards to a syringe. There were workers in prison who either for cash or after been threatened also brought in gear, also inmates who were not on gear were

the estimated thousands of addicts seeking treatment, detox, rehabilitation etc. It took eight weeks just to see a specialist doctor. It wasn't a guarantee you'd be taken on to the program of rehabilitation, it usually takes months and months. Some of my fellow addicts at the time were on a waiting list just to get on to a



Deadly Killer. An addict injecting himself with heroin

threatened that if they didn't smuggle in gear they would get their faced slashed, battered, that kind of thing. For the most part, the Prison Authorities turned a blind eye to what was going on because it was easier to control people when they were strung out on gear. But having said that efforts were made by John Lonagan, Governor of Mountjoy, to have facilities to deal with drug addiction, but because of endless red tape it took years for his plans to come to fruition. There is now a drug unit in mountjoy that caters for 12 addicts at any one time. Not nearly enough but it's a start.

Starry Plough: What was your lowest point?

Patrick: It had to be when, we bought the house and moved in that my girlfriend found me overdosed in the bathroom. I was rushed to hospital, had the usual stomach pumped etc. The girlfriend wouldn't leave the hospital until they put me into rehab or something, I was that bad. They said there was no beds, only 2-3 facilities which could only accommodate around 40 addicts out of

Mountjoy and instead of scamming to get heroin on the outside or injecting roche on the inside, I stayed away and isolated myself from my old mates. After I did three weeks of cold turkey where I endured on a daily basis sickness, stomach cramps, cold sweats, hallucinations and feelings of near death I started doing prison work, attending educational classes and attending Narcotics Anonymous and when I listened to other addicts giving their experiences I was basically listening to myself. There was no difference between their stories and mine. In my cell I decided to make up to my girlfriend and kids, To right all the wrongs I had done. And eventually when I did finally make up with the girlfriend, she realised I was serious and was trying to kick my habit for good and to try and put the past behind me and build a future for the girlfriend and the kids.

Starry Plough: What was it like to receive help when you were released from jail?

Patrick: First of all the main problem I had to contend with was pressure from fellow addicts I knew who were trying to encourage me to go back on the gear, and off course, the drug dealers were offering me free gear to get back on it. But I had to be strong enough inside and want to really give up gear myself and as far as I was concerned the road to addiction was leading me at this moment in time onto the road to recovery.

Starry Plough: So rather than attempt to treat your addiction, you were sent to a mental home, did they believe your addiction stems from a mental problem? How long were you there and what happened next?

Patrick: I lasted three days in St Micheals, in severe pain going through withdrawals. I was that sick and the place drove me mad I had to leave. I broke out and went to my brothers place in Ballybough where I got some money for heroin. I then ended up back on the streets. The girlfriend and I broke up at that stage. I was back to square one burgling shops at night, doing jump overs by day. This couldn't last and I finally got caught and was given a fourteen month sentence. I was determined this time that I was going to use this time to finally kick gear for good. I started out with the usual two weeks detoxification course in

Starry Plough: Six years on, you are drug free, your kids go to a school in an area that was badly affected by the scourge of heroin abuse, as someone who's

wore the T-Shirt do you feel your kids are receiving adequate drug education?

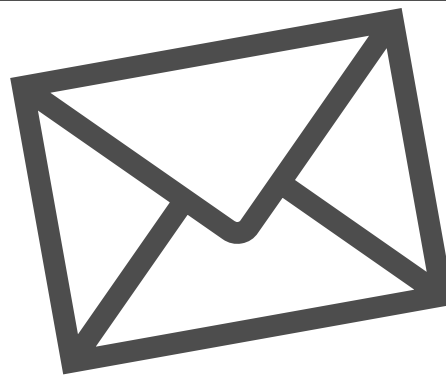
Patrick: I've four kids, three of which attend school in Dublin's North Inner City. I believe they learn more about drugs from the school yard than they do in the class room. I'd say my kids could educate the teachers about the real affects of heroin abuse and how it's affected our community. My kids live in an area where you can't hide from drug addiction and the teachers who educate my kids don't live in our environment. There is a small amount of drug education in schools but the bit that there is, is limited to solvent abuse and the catchphrase "Just say no". I believe that if our children are to have a future free of the drug culture that is prevalent within society, drug education must be made compulsory in all primary and secondary schools as well as all government funded job creation and training schemes which is what the IRSP have been fighting for. To adequately deal with drug addiction you have to deal with social injustice, money has to be made available for suitable housing, health, education and employment opportunities.

Starry Plough: Dwelling on your experience, what would you like the reader to learn from your experience?

Patrick: I can't educate the people of my community about drug addiction but I would hope that they look upon me as someone whose been to hell and back, ie a victim. I hope that they don't judge me on what I stole in the past and what hurt I caused, but on what I am trying to do now fighting for improved drug education for all our kids. The people of Dublin as well as Cork, Limerick and Dundalk know too well about the dangers of drug addiction (Heroin, Crack, Cocaine, Speed etc.) because they live with a daily diet of Death, Misery, Addiction and Imprisonment brought on by drug dealers who through their greed, inflict great pain on families and communities alike. To those who live in areas such as Belfast, Strabane and Derry, while reading this interview you may believe that the problems encountered in this interview are confined to inner-city Dublin which may be hundreds of miles from away from you, but when it comes to the scourge of heroin addiction, Death is just around the corner.

RED LETTERS

Starry Plough Readers Views



Special Branch and the office break in

A Chara,

May I first of all take this opportunity to congratulate the staff of the Starry Plough for a very professional publication. I look forward to the day when the "Plough" will be a weekly occurrence. It certainly deserves to be.

Now onto the main point of my letter and the recent "break-in" at Castlereagh holding centre. My point is this, the RUC have total security in all of their bases yet three men were able to walk into one of their most prestigious establishments, beat up and rob a Special Branch detective, and walk out unnoticed.

Who was responsible and why did they do it?

A number of theories have emerged, from the unbelievable to the totally insane, but one thing is certain. This was an inside job from start to finish. Possibly an attempt to either get rid of incriminating evidence, remember Stevens and the mysterious burning office, or an attempt to find some information that would be useful to the real terrorists, the FRU and M15 in their secret dirty war against republicans.

No matter who or why there is one certainty, all the current pressure on the RUC to wind up this force within a force will amount to nothing. The RUC, like the state they represent and protect, cannot be reformed! I will not be holding my breath waiting for that to happen. Time for change, time for revolution!

Realist,
Newry
Ireland

LITREACHA DEARGA

This is your page to create debate about the issues that affect the Working Class both at home and internationally. If you would like to contribute please send all correspondence to:

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Starry Plough
PO Box 1981
Derry
BT 48 8GX
IRELAND

or email:

starry_plough@hotmail.com

Please remember to keep your letter brief and to the point as the editorial collective reserves the right to edit it's length but not it's content.

Life Lived Cannot Be Rewritten or Undone

A Chara,

Coolock.

Opening any morning newspaper be it a tabloid or broadsheet and you shall read about heroin. Either about its importation into the country, the pathetic addict dying from an overdose, a drug related illness or neglect, or the junkie being locked up for a crime that he or she has no control over, or even about its price and how easily it can be bought in Summerhill, Fatima Mansions or

No one cares, well lets be honest most people who have not got an addict in their family do not have to deal with it on a daily basis, most working class people who come into contact with people who are on drugs are usually the victims of their crimes,

"Why should we care, they would rob our homes and bags as quick as they would look at you!"

They are right, they would, but do they really want to, we all know how it starts in the inner city, a couple of cans, watch the stolen cars, take a few E's on the weekend, and then someone asks,

"Do you want a line of gear to bring you down?"

The destruction of that person and on many cases a family has begun, from one night a week every heroin addict starts by saying,

"I only do it now and again I shall never be a junkie!"

How wrong they are.

Heaven, that's how they describe it, nothing else in this world matters when they have had a line of heroin, what most people pray a lifeline for, the addict can have in 10 seconds, total happiness, bliss, nothing can compare, that is what they want, its so good they can not do without it, but that's only the start, everyone is different and some of the addicts quickly realise that it's not for them and get out, but that is very few. The others try all right, try their best, but unfortunately their best is not good enough, diarrhoea, cramps, sweats, chills, anxiety and insomnia for weeks on end and the only thing that can take it away is the brown grains of the HEROIN, nothing else.

What can we do to help existing addicts, what can we do to save the community and the children that are growing up in these areas from becoming the heroin addicts of the next twenty five years.

We must first of all try and bring the Heroin trade off the streets by treating the addicts with heroin in the hospitals or special areas of hospitals which 3-4 times the daily dose of heroin. Some people say that their tolerance for it shall only grow, but it grows just as fast on the street. We now have some sort of control, no more addicts dying on the stairwells, at least eight addicts every year (such as Fatima Mansions), overdoses happen every night, if its available free in the hospital why would it remain to be sold on the streets of Summerhill.

We need jobs for addicts as well as proper education for our children and the chance of making a decent life for themselves away from the poverty that their parents and grandparents have grown up with. If an addict wants to slowly detox it is available however the waiting lists are huge. An overnight detox is available but at an expensive financial cost as it is only available privately. Once an addict is detoxed, a small pellet is placed underneath the skin, which renders the heroin useless, so when the addict has heroin again he or she cannot obtain any high what-

soever.

We must have this type of treatment made available to our existing addicts complete with a life-long counselling programme as a follow up to this treatment if it is even needed. If this problem is not addressed and is allowed to continue our children and their children shall be doomed in the grip of this deadly drug, so we must ask ourselves:

Were do we lay the blame?

the person who harvests the opium, the person who imports it, the government who dance around it, or those of us who are not willing to fight it!

We must demand that our children are given a proper chance growing up in these areas as they would in Howth or Killiney and equally we must support and demand that our children are given a better chance in life as the middle class children of Foxrock, they are unaware of the danger that face them in the years to come.

As election time again, we are told of a new birth of society but when it passes we will be left with the unchanged system of poverty and despair that always benefits a few. Enslaving our class as we are left with our problems.

Declan Duffy
INLA POW, Portlaoise Gaol

GREETINGS FROM HUNGARY

A Chara,

I would like to congratulate the staff at An Camchéachta for telling it like it is. My INLA comrade who is incarcerated in Portlaoise was so kind to send me a copy which really made my day.

I am in contact with comrade Dessie O'Hare and I'm aware of his case. Plans are under way to fully publicise his fight for freedom here in Hungary. The Eire Government should be ashamed for stooping lower than the Brits have regarding the release of P.O.W's under the Good Friday Agreement! All Republican Socialists need to take a stand, take legal action, write letters and keep publicising his case as well as any other P.O.W's case the Eire Government have failed to live up to within the Good Friday Agreement!

Lets bring our boys home once and for all! I am originally from the US, I'm 27 years old and currently serving an 11 year Prison sentence here in Hungary. I would like to take this opportunity to send my love and respect to all the Republican Socialist Prisoners of War through out Ireland as to the Staff and volunteers of the INLA, the comrades of the IRSP and of course the staff at An Camchéachta!

Last but not least, to my INLA comrades in Portlaoise Gaol (you know who you are) stay strong because only the strong survive!!

yours in struggle
Tommy Torma
Political Prisoner, Marianosztra Prison, Hungary

Isn't it ironic?

Dear Comrades,

It is ironic to hear the bellowing and outrage of British MP's in the House of Commons about the US government's treatment of "detainees" in Cuba. It is admirable that they show concern, however, it is an abomination at the utter silence heard in the House of Commons in regards to the Irish Republican POW's held by the British Crown Forces in HMS Belmarsh and Maghaberry. Their conditions and treatment by the Crown Forces is not that much different than what we hear the MP's complaining to the US Government about.

Irish Republicans are subjected to a revised scheme of "internment" and a detention system that is only used against them and not other segments of the populace. Where is the MP's shouts of concern?

Irish Republicans continue to be stopped, harassed, searched and any other inconvenience that can be forced upon them for no other reason than their belief in total Irish freedom. Where is the MP's shouts of concern?

Irish Republicans are sent to special non-jury courts, not unlike military courts we have been hearing so much about, in which adequate resource and defense is a farce. Where also the scales of justice are tilted towards the government. Where is the MP's shouts of concern?

Irish Republicans once sent up

to the British Gaols are exposed to physical and verbal attacks by the Loyalist and criminal elements that they are forced to be housed with. A blind eye is turned by the Screws in the intimidation and beatings of the POW's. Humiliating and dehumanising treatment such as strip searches and a general antagonism of the POW's is common place. Where is the MP's shouts of concern?

Irish Republicans are once again in a fight to regain the political status that was taken from them in the Great Betrayal. A fight won by the deaths of ten brave volunteers. Where is the MP's shouts of concerns?

The British MP's should demand of their own government, which they are a part of, no less than what they expect of the US Government. Stop the hypocrisy now! The MP's in political honesty should support the fight for Irish freedom for Irish Republican POW's special status and demand of themselves and their government that they support the four demands: 1. The separation of Irish Republicans from ordinary prisoners and loyalist; 2. Recognition as a group; 3. The right to their own spokesperson and; 4. A prison wing or space of their own.

But what do we hear from the British MP's? Silence, Utter Silence!

sincerely
Sean O'Lunbaigh
Ohio, North America

Letters Continued.....

PRISONERS RIGHTS BEING DENIED YET AGAIN

A Chara,
Under the terms of the GFA INLA POW Dessie O'Hare should have been released two years ago on June 28th 2000. But the 26 county administration have refused to release him and say they are still processing his case. It's now four years since they began releasing POW's and Dessie is now one of the last qualifying POW.

Every spurious excuse was used to deny Dessie his freedom, every excuse has been exposed in the courts as null and void, yet the Justice Department continues to hold Dessie as a Prisoner Of War when the majority of other 'Qualifying Prisoners' have long since been released. Even Dessie's co-accused who were serving the same sentence have all been released under the terms of the GFA.

If the 26 county administration are serious about the 'spirit of peace and reconciliation' then they must honour that spirit and release Dessie immediately.

Denis Thompson, Friend & Comrade, Portlaoise Gaol.

A Chara,

On Sunday 3rd March 2002, a number of republican prisoners being held in Maghaberry Gaol were denied the right to attend Mass by the prison search team. When one of those prevented attending spoke with a senior prison officer he was told that "the search team done what they liked and that he could complain if he wished" but, "it would not do much good".

This is just the latest in a long line of incidents where republican POW's rights have been denied or abused. I will take this opportunity to list some of them: Assaulting republican POW's, Assaulting our visitors, Banning our visitors, introducing closed visits, cutting visits short, ending all parcels (books, papers, food etc), denying exercise, seizing & destroying handicrafts, denying use of prison church (while all other denominations are allowed to use it).

It is ironic that 21 years after the start of the 1981 hunger strike once again republicans in the North face another prison protest. Have the NIO learnt nothing from over forty deaths which have occurred as a direct result of their failed penal policies in the North's gaols. Would it not make much more sense to introduce a more humane regime similar to what was administered in the H Blocks in the late 1980's early 1990's.

Kevin Rainey
POW, Maghaberry Gaol.

Liam Mellows Society Seminar

Royal Hotel, Arklow

Sat 20 April & Sun 21 April 2002

Speakers:
Joe Bowers, Bernadette McAliskey, & Ruan O'Donnell

Sat 20 April 2002

12:00pm Registration and reception by Councillor Brian Reese, Arklow Urban Council 1:00 p.m.

Socialism:

Is there still an Irish Working Class and if so, does it include northern unionists?

Chair: John Morrissey, committee member of Liam Mellows Society

Speaker: Joe Bowers, past chair of Northern executive of ICTU and former member of national executive of ICTU

Platform questions from: Dr. Terry Robson founding former member of IRSP and currently lecturing at Magee University, Derry

5:00 p.m.

Democracy:

Do the people have any role to play in the

building of and management of an Irish republic?

Chair: Gerry McDonnell, trade union official in Co. Wicklow

Speaker: Bernadette McAliskey, former MP for Mid-Ulster and long-time advocate/defender of human and civil rights.

Platform questions from: Finbar Cullen, joint editor of The Ireland Institute's journal, The Republic

Sun 21 April 2002

12:30 pm

Republicanism:

Does the Good Friday Agreement complete the agenda of Irish republicanism?

Chair: Sean Doyle, committee member of Liam Mellows Society

Speaker: Dr. Ruane O'Donnell, history lecturer in University of Limerick.

Platform questions from: Margaret McKearney, research student at TCD

1:00 pm.

1:30-2:00pm

Lunch

Summary and farewell

Cuimhneam

Fallen Volunteers and political activists remembered

The staff and volunteers of the Irish National Liberation Army remember with pride our comrades whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Vol. Danny Loughran	Assassinated	6 April 75	Co. Antrim
Vol. Jim Power	Killed in Action	7 May 81	Co. Antrim
Vol. Matt McLarnon	Killed in Action	12 May 81	Co. Antrim
Vol. Patsy O'Hara	Died on Hunger Strike	21 May 81	Co. Derry

"When the freedom of our country and class has been won, let us guard it well, remembering it was paid for in the blood of those now dead. The building of the revolutionary party is the only tribute befitting our comrades."

The Ard Comhairle and Membership of the Irish Republican Socialist Party remember at this time our comrades who died in the struggle for a Socialist Republic.

Vol. Danny Loughran	Assassinated	6 April 75	Co. Antrim
Vol. Jim Power	Killed in Action	7 May 81	Co. Antrim
Vol. Matt McLarnon	Killed in Action	12 May 81	Co. Antrim
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"When the freedom of our country and class has been won, let us guard it well, remembering it was paid for in the blood of those now dead. The building of the revolutionary party is the only tribute befitting our comrades."

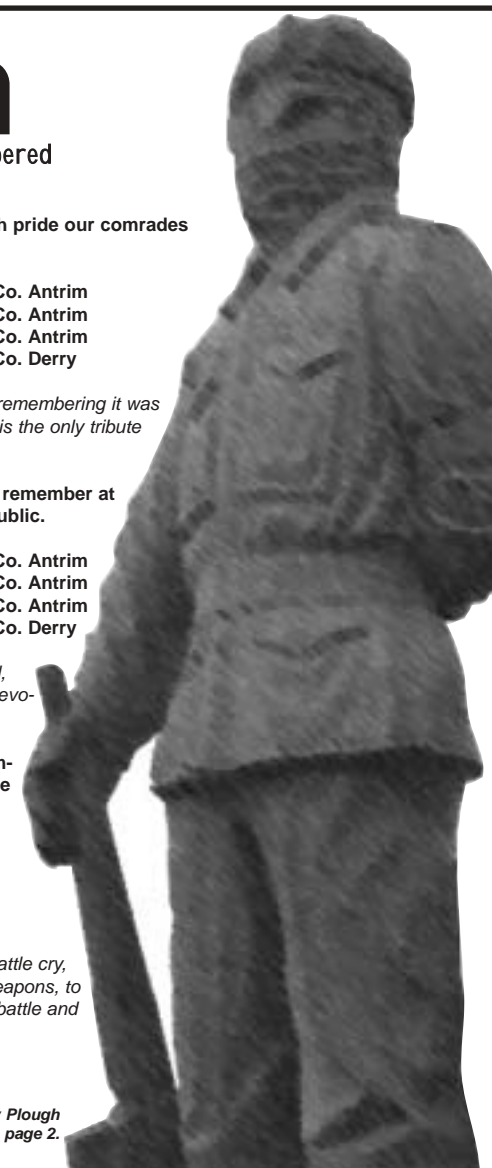
Republican Socialist POWs in Maghaberry, Portlaoise and Magilligan remember with pride the volunteers of the Irish National Liberation Army who gave their lives in the struggle for Socialism.

Vol. Danny Loughran	Assassinated	6 April 75	Co. Antrim
Vol. Jim Power	Killed in Action	7 May 81	Co. Antrim
Vol. Matt McLarnon	Killed in Action	12 May 81	Co. Antrim
Vol. Patsy O'Hara	Died on Hunger Strike	21 May 81	Co. Derry

"Whenever death may supound us, let it be welcome, provided that this, our battle cry, may reach some receptive ear and that other hands reach out to pick up our weapons, to entone our funeral dirge with the staccato of machine gun fire and new cries of battle and victory ever onward, Venceremos"

Insertions:

If you would like to place an insertion into Cuimhneamh then please contact the Starry Plough with details as soon as possible before you want it to appear. Our contact details are on page 2.



Mayday Events

Here are some as finalised details were not available at the time of going to press of the others. As always check your local press or local IRSP personnel nearer the date.

4th May
Annual Mayday March Belfast.

Republican Socialist contingent

on the march plus an appearance from Billy Bragg at rally before start of march. Flags and Banners are welcome.

5th May
The Jim Connell Committee, present the Red Flag Mayday.

A free family festival and banners parade in Crossakiel, Kells Co Meath at the Red Flag monument.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the birth there of author Jim Connell in the district in 1852. Billy Bragg confirmed to play this festival. The Red Flag song, written in December 1889, celebrates the winning of the 8 hour day at the East London Becton gas works by the Gas and General Workers Union, the forerunner of GMB, in the spring/summer 1889 shortly after the union was formed. Flags and Banners are welcome.



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Newspaper of the Irish Republican Socialist Party

FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION AND SOCIALISM!

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DAY 2002

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