

The

An Camchéachta

# Starry Plough



Newspaper of the Irish Republican Socialist Party

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# THEY CAN'T JAIL US ALL!

## Working Class Unity Can Defeat Privatisation & Water Tax!

The constant drip drip of information and news stories churned out by the press in recent months has everyone's head turned when it comes to the issues involved with Water Charges. Is this a deliberate act by those in high places or has everyone just given up on the issues that will directly effect them and their lives before it has even started?

The strategy is now in motion to frighten people into accepting that they are in a no-win situation and you can almost hear it: 'water charges are coming in and thats that', 'I don't know what we are going to do, we'll just have to tighten ouy belts', but that is music to the ears of those who are wishing for an easy life as they axe and privatise public service jobs and introduce further forms of hidden taxation.

And feeling rather distant from it all are those unemployed layabouts, good-for-nothing wasters up in Stormont. Those pliticians-in-waiting have been receiving literally thousands upon thousands of pounds for doing NOTHING other than attempting to arrange

talks about talks about talks whilst the daily grind and struggle for us to simply exist on what little we can at home or at work becomes more irrelevant to them.

John Spellar, the non-elected, unaccountable and arrogant British imposed ruler kept a straight face as he announced plans to force water charges onto the people of the occupied six counties. What he didn't say when he announced his plan was that the people in the north have already been paying for the maintenance and upgrading of the water and sewage system for a number of decades throught the rates system. Spellar and the rest of Britain's regime in Ireland going back to the early seventies diverted this money away from the water infrastructure and into so-called "security measures".

What he also didn't say was that as part of his plans 700 workers will lose their jobs as the water service is privatised.

The IRSP have consistently opposed not only the introduction of these unfair charges that will hurt the workin

class most but we have also vehemently opposed the right of any British appointed minister or even a ministers in a partitionist regime to make these decisions.

It is up to each and everyone of us to organise within all community and workplace organisations. For republican socialists we call for ALL our class, Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter to directly get involved in developing an organised and united campaign of mass rejection and non-payment which will show Stormont and the Northern Ireland Office where they can strick their Water Tax.

It is up to all of us to make sure that nobody feels left out, abandoned or isolated. We must ensure that everyone has the full backing and support of their neighbours, workmates and local campaign groups.

**WE CAN DEFEAT THIS AS  
THEY CAN'T JAIL US ALL!**

More on the Water Tax on Page 3.

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IRA CEASEFIRE  
10 YEARS ON

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**STAIRIÚIL**  
70TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE REPUBLICAN  
CONGRESS

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*THE VOICE OF IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALISM!*

The Starry  
Plough

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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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.

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**RECYCLE!**

Make sure you recycle  
this paper, pass it on to  
someone else..

**The IRSP took part in the years 36th Anniversary of the 1968 Civil Rights March. It was estimated the around 500 people attended the march and rally which focused on highlighting increased homophobic and racist attacks across the six counties.**

The original suspects of the '68 protest march - Eamonn McCann, Dermie McClenaghan, and founding member of the Irish Republican Socialist Movement, Johnny White returned to the Guildhall Square a little greyer, a little wiser and a little more out of breath 36 years on. This time there were no baton charges from the RUC although in attendance, they kept a low profile.

The march itself brought together many more organisations that cried out in one voice against continued injustice within today's society, racism, homophobia and of course at the ongoing imperialist onslaught in the middle-east.

As one of the organisers pointed out, it was a civil rights march for a new time, when communities have become more diverse.

An IRSP spokesperson commented following the event that "The politicians of every ilk will have you believe that life has got better but we would ask, 'Yes, but for whom?' We have seen the ever increasing gap in society between the haves and the have nots and the tightening of the noose with greater restrictions on our basic rights and freedoms by unaccountable Westminster politicians implementing water and other charges on the Irish people, this is unacceptable. Let us be clear about this,

It is now ten years since the August 1994 Provisional IRA ceasefire, and seven years since it was reinstated in 1997. Not one single member of the security forces has died since 1998. Various security figures, such as the PSNI chief constable, have publicly expressed their confidence that the Provisionals are not going back to war. In addition to this, the IRA went on to engage in two acts of weapons decommissioning and its leadership has in recent weeks begun talking about the possibility of IRA disbandment.

Despite the lack of any clear 'paramilitary threat', recent figures show that the British army and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) stopped and searched almost 15,000 people in the North last year. Around 11 000 of those searched were stopped by British soldiers. South Armagh and East Tyrone, two overwhelmingly nationalist areas, remain heavily militarised, with numerous spy towers, PSNI and British army barracks, thousands of British soldiers, and thousands of British army helicopter over flights every month. There are more British soldiers currently stationed in the North than in Iraq.

The majority of violence in recent years has occurred in loyalist areas such as East Belfast and North Down, yet the British army continues to concentrate its presence in nationalist communities. Loyalist groupings still engage in sporadic attacks on Catholic communities and immigrants. The British government has called the UDA ceasefire a sham, yet the people who run the organisation are still allowed to operate. Loyalist organisations remain fully armed and committed to retain their weapons. The UPRG has confirmed that decommissioning is "years away".

The IRA campaign was fuelled by Nationalist experience of discrimination in the North. However, the British government has been very slow to move on the central issues of human rights and equality. The two bodies set up to deal with these issues have proved largely ineffectual.

The Human Rights Commission (HRC), launched in 1999, has been heavily criticised by nationalists for its failure to support their human rights (for example in the Holy Cross case). The HRC has yet to carry out its central objective of producing a bill of rights. Four members have resigned since its creation, and many of the nationalist members who have held their places choose not to attend meetings. Following the resignation of chief

## E d i t o r i a l

Ten Years On From  
The IRA Ceasefire

From Protest To Resistance

commissioner Bryce Dickson, a joint parliamentary committee went to question the commission's independence.

The Equality Commission has been similarly criticised for its failure to properly support people taking anti-discrimination cases against employers. In 2002, that commission famously withdrew funding from cases that were already under way, leading to the collapse of numerous legal actions. While the body compiles figures on racially motivated attacks, it has no mechanisms in place to monitor sectarian attacks. Criminal justice reform has been very slow. The Justice Oversight Commissioner reported in June that significant reforms had yet to take place, and that reform should not be contingent on a new deal to restore power-sharing. Judicial appointments to the Northern judiciary are still far from transparent.

Policing reforms are still very problematic. The Patten report was gutted by the former Northern Ireland Secretary, Peter Mandelson. Under the current policing structures, the Northern Ireland secretary can interfere in the running of policing, the special branch and the so-called 'Securocrats' are still having a free run. The PSNI handling of the Orange parade in Ardoyne earlier in July shows that not much has changed in terms of day to day running of policing operations. On top of that, Nationalists are frustrated by the fact that the power sharing Assembly has been suspended and replaced by direct rule from London and the all Ireland dimension is undermined by the fact that the North-South bodies are operating on what SDLP leader Mark Durkan called a "care and maintenance basis".

The Sunday Business Post was thus entirely correct to conclude that reforms were in "a sorry state" ten years on from the first IRA ceasefire, and that the North "still awaits a proper human rights and equality regime, a power-sharing government, full policing reform and 'normalisation'." (29 August 2004) The Irish Echo also noted that the situation in the North remains in an "impasse" and that the North "still awaits the delivery of significant pieces of human rights and equality legislation, stable government and a proper transition to a "normalized" society." (2 September 2004)

**All this is a reminder of the failure of the Provisional strategy, the irreformable nature of the Northern statelet and more importantly, of the necessity of developing a Republican Socialist alternative.**

Civil Rights  
"The Struggle Goes On"

Participants at the Civil Rights Anniversary March in Derry

nothing has changed for our class. Partition is the biggest civil rights violation for the working people of Ireland. From partition came all the other violations, the gerrymandering, jobs, housing, political religious and racial discriminations."

During the rally there was a call for the setting up of a civil rights organisation to safe guard those who were represented today by the Rainbow Project, the IRSP, the Derry Trade Council and by the South Belfast Anti-Racism Network.

Since then the IRSP in Derry have actively participated in discussions centred around the possibility of creating a new civil rights organisation in co-operation with other progressive organisations.

But while we will be keeping our eye on the issues around civil liberties we will like the left republicans during the civil rights struggles of 68-72 also keep our eye on the social and economic issues that affect working people north and south. The South of Ireland has the widest gap between rich and poor in Europe. The top 20% of Ireland's top earners receive 4.5 times more than the bottom 20%.

This is despite the fact that wages in Ireland are 121% of the EU average. More than a fifth of Irish people are at risk from poverty which in comparative terms is defined as earning 60% or less than average earnings. Republican Socialists need to keep these class issues to the fore and not get caught up in the politics of what aboutery with other republicans over issues such as decommissioning or the Good Friday Agreement.

**We need to remember the flag we march behind at Easter is the Red Flag- the symbol of the freedom of the world's working class from poverty exploitation and starvation- the flag of socialism.**

# Working Class Unity Can Defeat The Water Tax: "STAND UP & BE COUNTED"

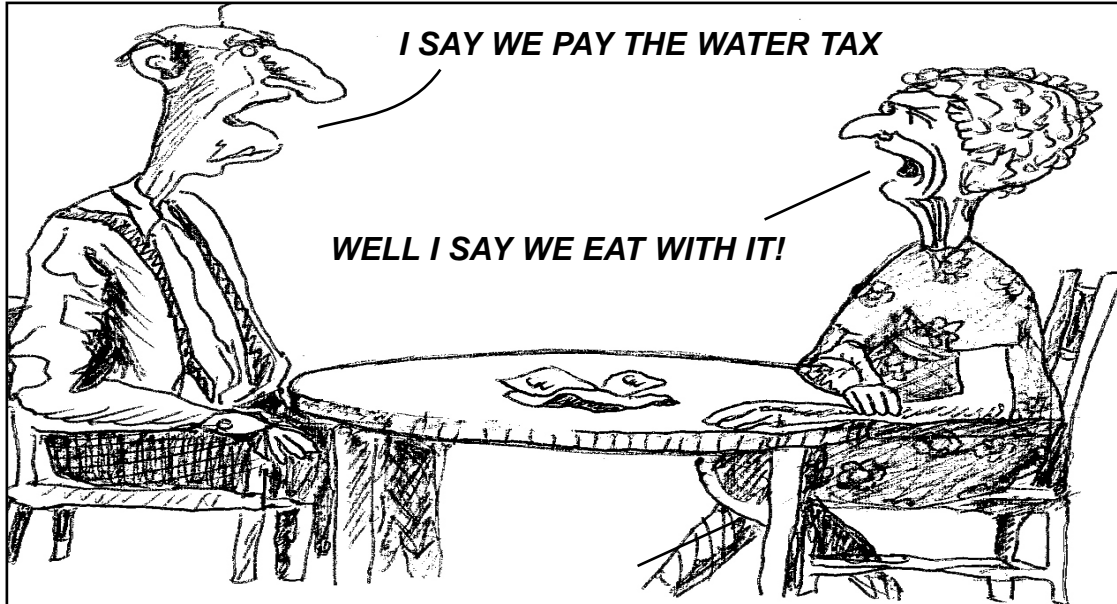
The Irish Republican Socialist Party has called on those elected representatives of district councils who reject any forthcoming introduction of a Water Tax as outlined by British government to "stand up and be counted".

Spokesperson for the IRSP in Derry Yvonne Dalton said "The majority of working class people are already subjected to borderline poverty, now communities will be forced to endure further hardships whilst attempting to cough-up several hundred pounds in order to cover the costs of this tax.

"We call on elected representatives of Derry City Council as well as all the district councils whose members have already stated that they are opposed to the Water Tax to make their positions clear, to stand up and be counted. We have received many calls and enquiries with regards to the possibility of a community based opposition to this tax and we fully believe that there is a strong possibility that as a defiant campaign gathers strength, things may just go to the wall. In that we mean, households having their water cut off, court summons and even imprisonment for non-payment. This is far from whipping up hysteria, infact this is what working class households are examining in the cold light of day when debating just how they or their neighbours will deal with this tax.

"As Republican Socialists, our party will be calling on our class to defeat this form of double-taxation by widespread non-payment and direct action and clearly drawing upon the experiences learned from similar struggles such as the anti-Poll Tax campaigns throughout England, Scotland and Wales and the ongoing campaign against the bin tax in Dublin"

Concluding "There is also a real fear, that with any reintroduction of Stormont rule public representatives throughout in the occupied six counties will merely continue



to go with the flow and follow on with current British government policy and guidelines. We have already witnessed this happening on many occasions in the past when Stormont was previously up and run-

ning, but are we going to have politicians simply shrugging their shoulders and saying, 'look this has been already made policy, and we're just doing our job'? This type of behaviour just won't wash when things

start to heat up and that is why we are asking them now, who will stand up with the poorest people in this society and be counted?"

## Outcome Of Water Consultation Is Hard To Swallow

People should not have to pay the cost of a basic need like water. The Speller proposals in no way consider ability to pay. The 25% discount proposed is inadequate and the charges will place an unacceptable burden on low-income families.

A workless or low-wage family in a normal semi-detached house, even with the discount, could face a total bill of £386, which will be levied regardless of the income level of the family. Respondents to the consultation overwhelmingly rejected this proposal.

Only 3% favouring a levy based on property value and since 78% of respondents advocated a metering system the e question has

to be asked about how the decision was reached. It is clear that the consultation process was a PR exercise and that the British Government is in cahoots with the companies who want to get their grub privatised hands on our assets.

Even if we accepted the principle of charging for water, and we don't, then surely if a system of water charging is to be introduced it should be efficient in economic terms, sustain the environment and produce socially just outcomes.

The Brit proposals mean in effect that the old republican song, "Only our rivers run Free" no longer holds true!

**Housing In Belfast 98% of working class Belfast is now strictly segregated by religion according to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.**

Accusations of ethnic cleansing came from the DUP's Nigel Dodds when a dozen protestant families in a media event packed up and left the Torrens estate. They said that they had had enough and that they could not take any more attacks from 'republicans'.

No republican worthy of the name republican would be involved in such attacks. Undoubtedly nationalist youths have been engaged in sectarian attacks. But the reality is that about 90% of sectarian attacks emanate from loyalist sources.

A curious fact about the evacuation from Torrens is that it occurred after the eviction by the UDA of a number of protestant families from the Manor Street area relatively close to the Torrens area. These families were connected to Johnny Adair who has been involved in feuding with the leadership of the UDA.

Furthermore the media knew

## Tuairim ..... Housing Issues: A Concern For All!

about the evacuation of the Torrens families before it occurred. (See Irish Independent Page 19 24TH August 2004) So what appeared on TV screens and in the newspaper columns after the 24th was an arranged planned event. The departing families knew well in advance they were leaving. So did the Housing executive. Were steps taken to ensure the empty houses would be secured from vandalism?

Did the departing families simply jump the Housing queue and secure accommodation from the Housing executive in more secure 'protestant' areas?

There are huge numbers of nationalist families on the waiting list for housing while large numbers of empty houses lie boarded up in 'protestant' areas.

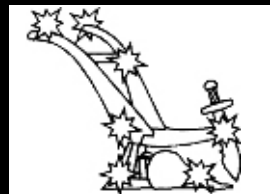
This is a disgrace. The current British overlords, the existing political parties and the Housing Executive have no coherent plan to tackle the injustices of the Housing market. None of them are prepared to neither challenge the private market nor halt the sale of public houses to the private market.

Landlords and estate agencies make huge profits from the squeeze on the housing market from nationalist families.

The same profiteers gain in 'protestant' areas by buying up the publicly built properties dirt cheap and then after a period leasing the houses to desperate asylum seekers and economic migrants who know nothing of the history of this

forsaken place. The few remaining protestants in these areas seeing to them strange faces taking over what is regarded as 'protestant' houses thus become easy prey to racist ideology.

## Starry Plough Special 30th Anniversary Edition



We will be publishing a special edition of the Starry Plough to mark the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Irish Republican Socialist Movement. Look out for the Dec04/Jan05 Special Edition!

## Fight Racism

Anti Racist Rally Despite it absolutely pouring down with rain on Friday 10th September the local South Belfast over 100 persons attended event. The local event was held at Shaftsbury Square in South Belfast and saw local residents joined by representatives of between twenty and thirty locally based organisations

Community, women's, human and equality rights organisations, stood shoulder to shoulder with all the main minority ethnic organisations who were represented from the local area, trade unionists, community activists and students also showed solidarity for the South Belfast ARN call to attend.

Despite the horrendous weather, the atmosphere was very spirited with music and continuous hoots and waves of support from passing cars and buses as we stood in the centre isle of Shaftsbury Square to highlight our stand against racism and in solidarity with the minority ethnic communities. Placards were drawn up by participants in different languages, with also a huge sign of Say No to Racism drawn up on individual cards, which was then lined facing onto the Road.

The local South Belfast ARN group is also to host an Anti Racism gig in the very near future in the locality. So thanks to all who attended.

## Guinea Pigs

Even though the PSNI/RUC have not fired a plastic bullet for just over two years they have yet to abandon the idea of getting rid of the lethal weapon altogether.

The IRSP have stated that "It is no surprise that despite the fact that this paramilitary force hasn't fired a baton round in several years, that in itself doesn't mean anything to our class as they continue to order thousands. They are still training their members in the use of a weapon that has murdered seventeen innocent people and injured countless others.

"Around this time last year we have seen the the approval and erratic use of other experimental forms of crowd control such as CS gas or pepper spray, this again raises a number of serious questions which has come about with regards to its use on several members of the public.

"Many people to date have suffered respiratory difficulties with possible life threatening side effects such as blistering of the eyes, nose and throat is this what they policing board and the British government call effective policing?

"Or is it that the population occupied six counties remains some sort of hostile threat and therefore we can be treated a mere guinea-pigs in what they describe as a new era of peace"

## Ardglass Anti-Social Behaviour

Recent months have seen a spate of attacks on commercial and residential property in the Ardglass area, which the IRSP believes could have been prevented. The RUC/PSNI, as in other working class areas of the north, have no regard for the people who are continually suffering at the hands of the anti-community elements. A local IRSP spokesperson claimed that these people are almost certainly working to an RUC/PSNI agenda in attacking people in their own communities. "These people have been caught numerous times by the RUC and freed almost immediately. This is nothing exclusive to Ardglass, from our own information this abuse of local working class communities with the active participation of the RUC/PSNI is widespread across the north."

Within the space of three weeks houses have been burgled, cars stolen and in one night £3000 pounds of damage was left by vandals. Tensions are growing in the community and the IRSP must ask "what is this so-called 'police force' doing to protect the people of Ardglass from mindless vandals"?

Further complaints have been heard about this sort of behaviour and many locals believe that a drug influx has led to local youths behaving in such an erratic way. Local residents say that the police are never on patrol at weekends when these attacks are most common.

It has been noted that mon-fri the RUC/PSNI members enjoy a walk to the local shop for a paper and biscuits but are never seen apart from this little excursion. This begs to ask the question "why are these people situated in Ardglass and what is their purpose?"

The IRSP urge residents to stay together to stop this disease of anti-social behaviour spreading and getting even more out of control.

## Disclaimer

Once again we have to point out that a publication entitled "Starry Plough Bulletin" has absolutely nothing to do with the Irish Republican Socialist Movement. The latest edition Sept 17th 2004 Issue 11 carries an endorsement of the current political position of the IRSP.

A casual reading of the publication would lead one to believe that it is an IRSP publication. It is most definitely not. It has no address, no contact number no e-mail or any means of identifying who writes it. It also publishes lies, particularly about Pat Fincucane, the Belfast solicitor murdered by British agents in the UDA run by British Intelligence services. The Bulletin comes in the post to our offices in Belfast. It is probably the work of British Intelligence services.

## Attempted Repression in Rathenraw Estate

*In last month's edition of 'The Plough', the IRSP e-news service, IRSP Political Secretary John Martin drew attention to recent events in Rathenraw, which we reproduce here for further reading.*

**The IRSP support the right of the local community association to carry out their activities freed from intimidation or threats. All members of the IRSP are told that when working in local communities that they work with the community -not against them and that under no circumstances should they try to take over or manipulate any group for narrow party advantage.**

Far, far too many so called community associations in nationalist areas are really under the control of (New) Provisional Sinn Fein, are not independent and are used as devices to control the community. Republican socialists feel confident in our own politics. As Ta Power once wrote you can't fool the people forever. Eventually they will uncover the careerists and opportunists. The local population in Rathenraw now know the wisdom of that.

## Loyalist Death Squad Attack North Belfast Bar

IRSP:RUC/PSNI Accountability Has To Be Questioned

**Loyalist Attack on 32<sup>o</sup> North Public Bar. The IRSP wish to place on record their disgust at the recent attack carried out by loyalists on the 32<sup>o</sup> North bar in the early hours of Friday 3rd September 2004.**

IRSP spokesperson for the area, Charlie Clarke stated; "It is with sheer and utter revulsion that I witness this attack carried out by the hands of loyalists. The very fact that there were people from this area still in the premises when this diabolical act of lunacy was carried out clearly shows the utter contempt and ingrown sectarianism that these disciples of evil have for the decent people of this community.

"The people of Ardoyne have suffered for thirty years at the hands of these death squads, who were facilitated and aided by the State and

their security forces. I seriously call into question the accountability of the PSNI, thirty years on, when a mob of fifty or so loyalist thugs can launch a calculated attack upon an unsuspecting community under the very noses of those put in place to protect. The intimidating presence of the colossal cameras located in this very place were unable to prevent this from happening, and further brings into question the purpose of these 'Big Brother' contrivances.

"The IRSP would take this opportunity to warn the people of Ardoyne and North Belfast to remain vigilant over the coming weeks. We would advise those who use transport to gain entry and to exit the area, to always use the taxi depots within the community. We believe there remains a very real threat to the people of Ardoyne."

## IRSP: An Attempt At Mass Murder In Ardoyne

**An attempt to massacre the customers in the 32 Degrees North Pub, on the front of the Crumlin Road, at Ardoyne, Belfast took place in the early hours of Friday morning September the 3rd. A digger was taken from a building site on Twaddell Avenue, on the loyalist side of the Crumlin Road and driven straight into the pub causing damage and starting a fire.**

The UDA took the forklift from a site where shall we say the UDA have 'influence'. They managed to pull steel sheets off the front of the forklift to get access to the cab. Windows were smashed and some structural damage was caused to the building when the telescopic forklift hit the pub. The loyalist attackers, supporters and members of the UDA, then threw four petrol bombs into the pub.

Fortunately no one inside the pub was injured. That this was a well organised plan to cause as much death and damage as possible can be seen by the immediate gathering of a large loyalist crowd in Twaddell Avenue who began to attack the bar with stones and missiles. When the RUC/PSNI came along and

surveyed the damage their only quotable comment was 'A motive for the attack is not clear'. Yes indeed the more things change the more they are the same.

The refusal by both the RUC/PSNI and the Housing Executive to recognise sectarian attacks for what they are is astounding. Attacks on catholic residents in Torrens by loyalist thugs was put down as community violence thereby depriving the Catholics involved of the opportunity of compensation for sectarian harassment. Yet the housing executive were able to re-house 12 protestants families last week from the Torrens estate immediately because of alleged attacks from republican elements.

Indeed this was the justification used by the Red Hand Commandos, a cover name for the UDA, for the attack on the bar. After the attack Nelson McCausland, a sectarian bigot and member of the DUP and councillor for the area called, not for the prosecution of the attackers but for the demolition of the pub. And Sinn Fein wants to go into Government with the DUP?

In recent weeks there have been a series of attacks by the UDA in the greater Belfast area. Members and supporters of the Republican Socialist movement have received death threats. The UVF magazine Combat has published pictures of our members in Ardoyne with their faces circled as if a target. The same UVF also openly carried guns on the Shankill in June as their own paper confirms.

Loyalists have attacked catholic homes in Craigavon. The republican socialist movement has come under a lot of pressure to respond to these events. Naturally the IRSP has urged caution. Over the past number of months we have been working along with others to ensure that interface areas did not explode in a orgy of violence. We have taken risks in reaching out. As socialists we wish for the unity of all sections of the working class. But as republican and as revolutionaries we can not just sit by while a low level war of attrition continues against our fellow workers. Patience is a virtue but is not inexhaustible.

## Nothing Has Changed

.....  
British Security Forces Still An  
Instrument of British/Unionist Hegemony

Stop-and-searches numbered 15,000 in 2003 in the North of Ireland New figures have shown that nearly 15,000 people were stopped and searched by police or members of the British Army in Northern Ireland last year. The British Army carried out more than two thirds of the 14,910 stop-and-searches in the past year, with 4,000 carried out by police.

An IRSP spokesperson said the figures show the British Army and police have abused their powers despite the so called reforms brought in under the Patten Report". "Nothing has changed on the ground with the British security forces still an instrument of British/Unionist hegemony," said John Martin, Ard-Comhairle member of the IRSP. "So much for demilitarization, so much for peace building. These figures combined with the recent IMC report show that repression with a little bit of reform is still the preferred British security response." In addition the arming of undercover police with powerful .40 calibre semi-automatic Glock 22 pistols does not indicate moves towards demilitarization.

These Glock pistols carry a fifteen-round magazine and cost over £400 per piece. They have considerably more 'stopping power' than standard PSNI side arms. So the question has to be asked who are the PSNI/RUC intent on stopping?

*If you wish to receive the IRSP 'FREE' e-news service, then all you have to do is email:*

[johnmartins@eircom.net](mailto:johnmartins@eircom.net)

## IRSP Demand Release of Seamus Doherty

The IRSP in Derry are demanding the release of a local Republican who is currently being held in Maghaberry prison on very dubious evidence.

Seamus Doherty from the Brandywell area has been held on remand for ten months now while at the same time two others who were charged in similar circumstances have had their charges withdrawn. It has also come to light that members of British Army Intelligence in a bid to plant incriminating evidence entered the Northern Ireland Forensic Lab and tampered with sealed evidence bags. Yvonne Dalton, local IRSP spokesperson described the continued incarceration of Seamus Doherty as a crime and is a wakeup call to those in the wider nationalist community who continue to believe that the new PSNI are any different from the RUC are seriously deluded. She also reiterated the fact that the people behind Seamus' imprisonment have no right to imprison any Irish person. She said "While it is a classic case of injustice it has always been our view that the British never had and never will have the right to imprison Irish people no matter what the reason."

## Strabane IRSP Received Assurance

The IRSP in Strabane hit out at so-called republicans in the area involved in the shooting of a 21 year old man in Co. Tyrone.

In a statement issued to the Starry Plough office and media outlets, a spokesperson for the IRSP in Strabane said that they have been informed that the Irish National Liberation Army was not involved in this or other recent attacks despite RUC/PSNI claims.

The statement said "We have met with the family of the young man and they are satisfied that the INLA were not responsible.

He said that others, purporting to be republicans, had carried out the attack. "We state quite clearly that these actions are anti-republican in their very nature.

"These attacks are about social control and ego-boosting for those responsible. It is a sad day when so-called republicans turn their guns on the most vulnerable sections of the community."

## Widespread Redundancies: Union Response A Disgrace!

By Kevin Morley

**The latest round of capitalist butchery to take place in the twenty six counties is coming in the form of redundancies at the semi-state company Aer Lingus. On Friday 20th August 2004 The Irish Independent informed us of the details making up the package on offer to employees at the company. The broad sheet reported that 'redundancy terms of at least nine weeks pay for each year of service (subject to a maximum of 130 weeks) are up for grabs, a sure sign that the company wants the redundancies to be voluntary and is determined to avoid industrial disruption.**

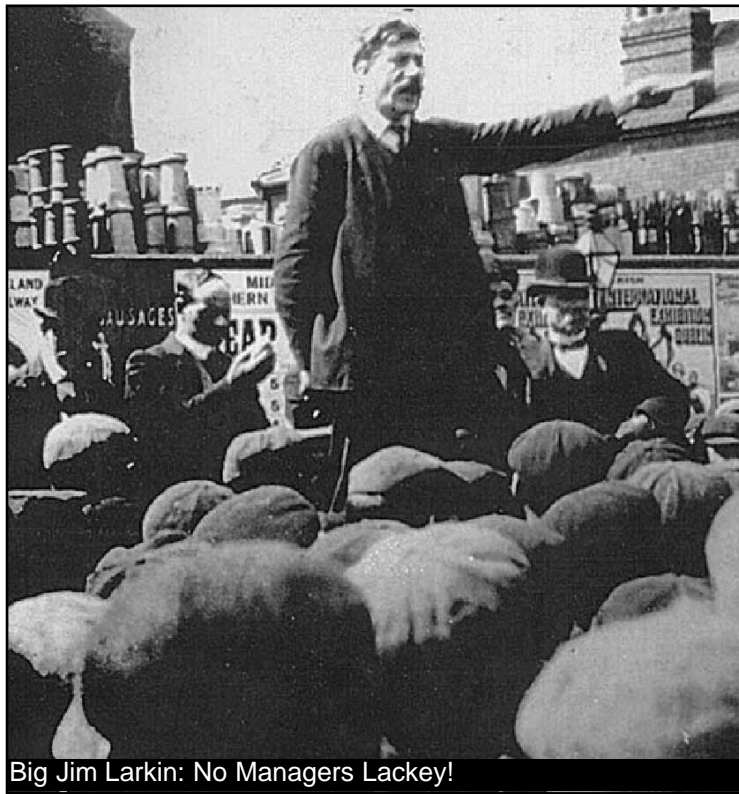
All workers who apply for severance pay will be entitled to a minimum of 40,000 euro based on at least nine weeks pay per year of service. But workers do not have much time to make up their mind-September 14th is the deadline for applications'. On the surface this may sound a generous offer but the reality is somewhat different. Let us not forget when a person is made redundant by any employer their job is gone. Basically it has been sold for whatever the terms of the redundancy package are at any given time and any given company. Not only has the person in questions job gone, meaning that the position will never be filled again, but the employment of future generations have also being wiped out. Nobody should have this right, the right to sell their job and possibly the jobs of their siblings. However from the workers point of view, given the alternative of possibly walking away with nothing the situation is regrettable but understandable. In years to come, however, it is these same workers who will have to look at their unemployed offspring's and somehow explain the circumstances in which they sold their job and possibly their kid's future. The employers, as usual, will not have these problems to deal with. In an ideal world governed under socialist/communist conditions and principles the problem would not arise because words such as competition and profit in relation to employment will cease to exist, along with the uncertainty of unemployment. However we do not, as of yet, live in a world of liberty and freedom for working class people and under the present sys-

tem we are all just pawns in the capitalist game of chess and the employees at Aer Lingus are no exception. No employer, no matter how large or small should have the entitlement to buy, or even offer to buy, peoples livelihoods in order to compete in this imbecile world of free market economics.

According to Aer Lingus chief executive, Willie Walsh, "the terms of this scheme are a significant improvement on all previous severance programmes". Mr Walsh went on to say, "the offer was generous and the airline had no option but to face up to this market reality and act decisively". This of course is a symptom of the free market which we are all forced to endure, a system where profits come leagues ahead of jobs and therefore peoples livelihoods and those of future generations. Aer Lingus have already butchered 3,000 sacrificial lambs (employees) and now want a further 1,000 to come forward before the alter to be butchered. The number of job cuts the company are seeking in this round of barbarism amounts to 1/3 of the remaining employees on the payroll. The chief executive wants to cut staff numbers from the present 3,821 to 2,668 by the year 2007.

The butchery plan, which Aer Lingus have in mind for their employees, involves the almost complete elimination of the catering section; staff numbers in catering are to be slashed from 206 at the present to a mere nine in three years time. Staff at Shannon airport will be cut from 172 to 66, Cork from 72 to 57 and flight services, which include cabin crew, will be reduced from 1003 at the present to around 880.

Willie Walsh has made it plain that "if the offer fails to reduce staff numbers sufficiently the management will not shirk its responsibilities. Where necessary we will take decisions to achieve the objectives of the (business) plan" he said. The connotations of this statement are pretty obvious, take this package or be made compulsory redundant it would appear, the terms of which could be significantly less favourable. It would appear that the staff have little option, there is a loaded gun at



Big Jim Larkin: No Managers Lackey!

their heads.

It is possible that this massacre could have been avoided if the correct fighting strategy had been adopted by the trade unions. Instead of negotiating 3,000 jobs away the SIPTU (Specialist, Industrial, Professional, and Technical Union) should have had contingency battle plans drawn up in order to resist the job cuts. This of course did not happen and the union leadership, or people who masquerade as trade union leaders, were busy negotiating what they thought were the best possible terms in which 3,000 employees could be sacrificed. A comparative macabre scenario could be drawn here between a person awaiting execution and the sacrificial lambs at Aer Lingus. The person awaiting execution is given a choice which way they wish to die. By hanging, firing squad, lethal injection or electric chair. These are the options open to them, the fact that they are going to die is non-negotiable it is merely a question of which way they prefer to go. This comparison can be drawn with the sacrifice of 3,000 job losses at Aer Lingus. The fact that these jobs were going was non-negotiable the question was on what terms and, as has turned out, the terms agreed for the 3,000 staff were not even the best available as the present terms on offer, which involves more cash, prove.

No self-respecting trade union should be sitting down with management negotiating away their members jobs and futures. One of the primary aims of trade unionism is to fight job cuts. It sounds like management say jump and the trade union say how high. It would appear SIPTU still have not

prepared a battle plan, perhaps they don't want to, as union official Michael Halpenny said "the offer was acceptable on the face of it but there are issues to be ironed out". In a word pathetic.

However it should not have been like this particularly if a concrete plan of defence regarding job losses had been drawn up in the first place. This should have involved more autonomy for the shop stewards in order that a council of war could be formed which would have involved the rank and file union members in democratic discussion on defence of jobs at the point of production. This done the shop stewards committee could have drawn up a motion demanding that their leaders withdraw from talks unless the issue of negotiating redundancies was taken off the table by management. All out strike action should have been taking place BEFORE the 3,000 jobs were axed and a motion to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) demanding a general stoppage should have been presented to congress. While this red tape was going on the workers could have been organising pickets of other airlines and related industries.

Generally speaking trade union leaders are part and parcel of the capitalist system, if you want to find a trade union leader go to the same golf club as the managing director. Of course there are honourable exceptions to the rule. Jim Larkin and James Connolly could hardly have been described as management lackeys, in fact both were involved in the 1913 Dublin lockout in which Larkin was jailed which involved primarily the forerunner of SIPTU the Irish Transport and General Workers Union.

**In Britain another exception to the generalisation would be Arthur Scargill, former president of the National Union of Mineworkers, who led the miners through the bitter year long strike of 1984/85, and A.J. Cook who led the miners in the 1926 general strike in Britain. Unfortunately these people tend to be the exception rather than the rule when it comes to class struggle and class based trade unionism and are perhaps some of a small group worthy of the name trade unionist. Many of the people who infest Liberty Hall in Dublin, unlike their aforementioned predecessors, and Congress House in London are masquerading as trade unionists when in reality they are mere puppets of the capitalist system and class.**

"They have shown that they would be ready undertake whatever action they felt necessary to prevent any chages made to wages that was hard fought for which in turn stopped them in their tracks!"

## Combating Industrial Terror

Health and Safety concerns of workers across Ireland's shop floors as well as on increasing numbers of construction sites continue to be over-looked in the booses pursuit of quick financial gain according to a recent statement issued by the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

A spokesperson for the IRSP in a statement claimed that it is now seen as 'normal' for workers to be involved in incidents at work were lives of employees are put at risk.

"In our books this simply amounts to a form of industrial terrorism" a spokesperson for the party said.

He pointed out that "the party statement comes as new figures have shown that at least three construction workers are 'murdered' each week on sites across both islands due to a continued lack of health and safety promotion and awareness"

"Workers from many countries who now reside and work in this country are being left vulnerable to say the least."

In light of the new figures released Strabane IRSP also spoke of the growing number of European workers within the Tyrone locality stating "Our party would like call upon all employers who are in any way serious about the health of their workforce to examine the amount of languages presently being spoken by their workforce and set about creating multi-lingual safety signs to aid workers at risk within their place of work.

He said "This would help in conjunction with ongoing efforts from within the communities by activists in current attempts being made to break down all forms of isolation. Be it from within the workplace or from the community at large this would further counteract attempts made by small-minded people who would seek to further divide our communitities along racial or ethnic backgrounds.

"Greater solidarity is required now more than ever if we are to move away from the days were it was Irish workers abroad who where targeted or left isolated. We all remember the bad old days were signs stated 'No Dogs, No Blacks, No Irish!'"

## Private Bidding

Public sector union UNISON, has joined forces with one of the largest unions in Germany in a bid to challenge privatisation head on.

The move itself is seen as a direct threat to the increased loss of jobs due to the growth of privatisation.

## Strike Averted Over Low Wages

A spokesperson for the IRSP informed the Starry Plough in a statement that there was a strong possibility of widespread strike action by school staff throughout the six counties which would have closed hundreds of schools.

The workers, employed by the five education and library boards across the north, were notified by public services unions of a British government decision being proposed which would see themselves cut out in a freeze on wage increases already owed to them following a negotiated pay deal earlier in the year.

The spokesperson said "Our party was informed that those involved would have been low paid public sector workers such

as school cleaners, school caretakers and even classroom assistants and only within the six counties who would have been hit. This is despite the fact that they had just recently fought a long hard battle to receive an increase in their living wage and were now about to have that payment frozen." he said.

"The latest installment of a 8.9% wage deal, which in itself was aimed at tackling low pay in that sector, was also due to be paid this month. This would have went ahead if it were not for the possibility of widespread strike action of over 30,000 unionised members balloted on industrial action. To opposed to such changes in their wages.

"It was a British government decision to go back on a deal for workers which strangely decided that payments would be frozen for some reason best known to themselves. As to why workers within the six counties alone were selected for such a pay freeze is still unclear but what is very clear to those who treaten workers and think they can get away with it should think again. This debacle has shown bosses in the Department of Education for what they really are and also to British government who obviously cooked up such a farce.

"They have shown that they would be ready undertake whatever action they felt necessary to prevent any chages made to wages that was hard fought for which in turn stopped them in their tracks!"

## A WORLD TO WIN!

### E-Bay Bows To Brits On IRA Items

On-line auction giant e-Bay has banned the sale of all Irish Republican oriented materials from sale on its site.

The Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America (IRSCNA), supporters of the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP), found out about the new policy recently when their thirty regular listings of assorted T-shirts, pins, and badges were suddenly terminated and their account suspended for thirty days. The IRSCNA, which has sold its items on E-Bay for almost three years now, was somewhat annoyed to be told that they had been suspended because of a new E-Bay policy banning the sale of IRA items. The IRSP's armed wing is the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) and, while the IRSCNA offered many items featuring its striking AK-47 grasped in a clenched fist in front of a red star emblem, it offered absolutely nothing for sale related to the IRA.

"We're quite proud of the distinctive aspects of the IRSP and INLA and aren't at all complimented to have them mistaken for the IRA, but we aren't surprised that to E-Bay, one Irish Republican is just like any other," said Peter Urban, North American Coordinator of the IRSCNA.

E-Bay informed the IRSCNA that: "In accordance to policies on our UK site, the sale of all IRA items is not allowed under our Offensive/Violent materials policy. In an effort to bring many of our policies under a worldwide umbrella of enforcement, we will also not be allowing any IRA items listed on our other sites, including the US site, with designated worldwide shipping.

"You may however relist your item on the US eBay site, so long as it is listed with US shipping only. Will the IRSCNA be back on E-Bay when its thirty day suspension is over?"

Peter Urban said, "Certainly we'll be back, though we'll have to restrict our sales to the United States in order to do so. We aren't happy about it, as we do a lot of sales in Britain and Ireland, as well as Continental Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, but we'll still use e-Bay for sales in the U.S. The problem for us, is that we are organized throughout all of North America, and this is an affront to our Canadian members, not being able to sell there either."

He continued, "Needless to say, E-Bay is a capitalist enterprise, so we are hardly surprised that they've taken a position in support of British imperialism in Ireland, but it is a shame that political censorship of this nature is invading the internet. Those of us engaged in efforts outside the mainstream have given tremendous impetus to the growth and development of the Web, because we needed alternative resources. Having helped encourage these alternative resources, we're now finding ourselves excluded from them."

"This must be that 'freedom' Bush keeps saying everyone hates Americans for. Freedom to conform...it's the American way," Urban concluded, with perhaps just a hint of sarcasm.

### Columbus Statue Toppled in Caracas

On October 12, various popular movements in Venezuela gathered in the center of Caracas to celebrate a "Day of Indigenous Resistance" (previously Columbus Day) beneath a bronze statue of Christopher Columbus. Protesters first covered the statue with banners and graffiti, and then climbed to the top to attach a heavy fishing rope around Columbus's neck. Hundreds of protesters easily toppled the statue, even bringing the marble boat that served as his base along with him.

The statue was dragged through the streets of Caracas, hung from a tree, and finally broken into pieces. The "Revolutionary" Police of Caracas (under the authority of "revolutionary" mayor Freddy Bernal) arrived, firing tear gas and ammunition into the air. Despite heavy resistance, the cops managed to seize the pieces of the statue and arrest five people. The protest then moved to mayor Bernal's office building, demanding the release of the prisoners.

### Poisoned Workers Targeted for Retrenchment

Workers retrenched from Samancor, South Africa led a march on the seventh congress of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA. The union received a memorandum from the protesters that details the number of deaths among workers retrenched from the plant, owned by the multinational, Billiton.

Corporate abuse subcontracted union connivance, as NUMSA agreed to the retrenchments at the same time that a company set up by its shopstewards there began managing labour for the plant. The Union nonetheless assured the retrenched workers of its working class solidarity but offered no seats at the congress to the Samancor Retrenched Workers' Crisis Committee. The procession of coffins dispersed without event.

# Basques Imprisoned

By Peter Urban

The Irish Republican Socialist Party joined with anti-imperialists from throughout the world in calling for the freeing of six Basque nationalists who have been imprisoned in Mexico for more than a year.

Asier Arronategi, Jon Artola, Axun Gorrotxategi, Joseba Urkijo, Felix Garcia, and Ernesto Alberdi have been held for more than a year, at the Reclusorio Norte prison, in Mexico City. The reason for this protracted detention is an extradition request to the Mexican Government by the Spanish Audiencia Nacional, the successor to the Tribunal de Orden Publico, which Franco used to persecute Basque nationalism.

The case against the six Basque nationalists arose out of a conspiracy concocted by the former ruling conservative party, the Popular Party. Then involved in the extremely unpopular US/British imperialist occupation of Iraq, the Popular Party sought to whip up the kind of hysterical fear of 'terrorism' that the US administration had been so successful in using in its own efforts to roll back democratic rights in America. In order to create this anti-terrorist hysteria, the Popular Party rested the bulk of its platform on the pledge to fight against Basque nationalism and the

ETA.

Within months of the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar enjoyed a victory for his party and Spanish national chauvinism when the European Union declared the ETA a 'terrorist organisation'.

Then, in July of 2002, Judge Baltasar Garzon ordered the seizure of all assets belonging to Herri Batasuna, the political party associated with the ETA. A month later, Garzon went even further, ordering a complete ban on Herri Batasuna's electoral activities. Then, in March 2003, Spain's Supreme Court banned Herri Batasuna permanently. This was the first time that a political party had been banned in Spain since the fall of Franco.

The French and Spanish states increased cross-border cooperation in the Basque lands, raising renewed worries about a return to the "dirty war" previously waged against Basque nationalists (between 1983 and 1987, under the Gonzalez government, death squads under state control, calling themselves "Anti-Terrorist Liberation Groups" (GAL) carried out a campaign of assassinations, kidnappings, and torture of Basque activists in both Spain and France, killing at least 28 people).

It was within this context that ten people were originally arrested in Mexico and Spain. Originally, six Basques with Spanish nationality and three others with Mexican citizenship were detained across Mexico on an extradi-

tion request issued by Spain. A 71-year old man was arrested in Guernica as part of the same sweep, which was claimed to be an assault on the ETA's financial and logistical structure. In Mexico, bank accounts worth 900,000 Pesos (roughly 80,000 Euros) have been frozen.

The Spanish government accused Mexico of being a refuge for the ETA. Eager to demonstrate that it was a cooperating participant on the so-called 'war on terror', Jose Luis Santiago, who heads the organised crime department of the Mexico's Attorney General's office, said, when Mexico rounded up the Basque activists, "With these actions we are showing Mexico will not be a land of impunity for any criminal groups ... especially those dedicated to terrorism."

The extradition case is filled with significant 'irregularities', including the manipulation of documents by the Spanish Ambassador to Mexico. There can be no doubt that if these six activists are extradited to Spain, they would be subjected to torture. The United Nation's Committee Against Torture and Amnesty International have found that Spain tortures Basque prisoners both physically and psychologically.

Long having supported the struggle of the Basque people in their struggle for independence from both Spain and France, the IRSP was an early participant in a petition campaign launched to win the release of the Basque activists. The IRSP's international department has called upon the Mexican government to immediately release the Basque activists and demanded that the Spanish government stop its campaign of harassment against Basque nationalists around the world.

## A Feast Of The Ghouls: Western Imperialism & the Rape of Yugoslavia

**US and British imperialism, those ugly twins, are today at work destroying the nation of Iraq. So fresh is that carnage that it is easy to forget that only two to three years ago it was Afghanistan being bombed into rubble and then socially engineered to suit the needs of western imperialism.**

That invasion helps to obscure even more the events of only five years ago, when the forces of NATO were employed as the surrogates of Anglo-American imperialism in Yugoslavia, destroying the resistance put forth by the Serbian section of the nation.

The Guardian recently reported that the Rambouillet Accord (the peace pact NATO was forcing upon Serbia--the failure to sign on to which was used as the justification for launching a massive bombing campaign) annexe B provided for the military occupation of Yugoslavia and was inserted in the accord with the expressed intent of provoking the Belgrade government to reject the accord. Why would this be done? To provide justification for bombing the Serbians, who insisted on asserting their national sovereignty rather than bowing meekly down before western imperialism, why else?

Why are wars fought around the globe? To defeat terrorism, defend democracy, promote freedom, protect the homeland? Are you insane?

Wars follow one upon the heels of the last, all around the globe, for the purpose of enriching the rich of the imperialist nations of the world. Wars are a manifestation of the class war, representing the armed attack by the capitalist class of the world's most powerful nations on the working class of the most vulnerable nations, in part through the destruction of the last vestiges of national sovereignty among the world's weaker and poorer countries. Today war may be thought of as a larger, more destructive form of old-fashioned piracy,

wherein the armed might of a stronger nation was unleashed against the assets of a rival nation, with the objective of transferring the wealth of the latter to the former.

Oh, but there is much more! Chapter Four, Article I (1) of the Rambouillet Accord, which was exclusively devoted to the economy of Kosovo, called for the creation of a 'free' market economy, thereby seeking an end to the isolation of the last nation in Eastern Europe not already within the claws of the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank, or the European Bank for Reconstruction.

In 1999, British Prime Minister Tony Blair railed against the failure of the Serbians, at the Davos summit, to undertake 'economic reform', by which he clearly meant selling off state assets. When later that year NATO began bombing what was left of the former nation of Yugoslavia, it was quite clear that the targets of the bombing campaign was not military sites, as might be anticipated, but rather buildings of state-owned industries. During the bombing campaign, NATO destroyed 372 industrial sites, yet they only destroyed on fourteen tanks during the campaign.

Also not discussed at the time of the belligerent NATO campaign, five years ago, is that Kosovo has Europe's second largest coal reserves, as well as significant other mineral wealth, including large deposits of zinc, silver, lignite, lead, gold, and petroleum. In some instances, the imperialist grab for these resources was blatant, such as when almost 3,000 NATO troops, using tear gas and rubber bullets, seized and occupied the Trepcina mine complex, then valued at US \$5 billion.

These mineral mining firms are even now winding their way towards privatisation and transfer to foreign multi-national corporations. The Ferronikeli mining and smelting complex, which processes some 12,000 tonnes of nick-

el annually, goes on the auction block in November of this year.

At the time, 75% of Yugoslavia's industry was still state owned or collectively owned. While the days of public ownership were already numbered, a law having been passed in 1997 which addressed the privatisation of industry. However, that law required 60% of the shares in businesses that were state-owned be sold to the workers of the company, when they were privatised. Such a restriction was certain to put a crimp in the plans of western imperialists, anxious to grab up the assets of the former state economy at bargain basement prices and then exploit them for their own interests.

After NATO succeeded in overthrowing the government in Serbia and installing their own regime, among the first things the new administration did was to repeal the privatisation law of 1997, replacing it with a new privatisation law, which instead of requiring 60% of shares go to former workers at the company, now allowed for up to 70% of the shares to be sold to foreign investors. Only 15% of the shares were reserved for the company's workers under the new law.

Today, the Kosovo Trust Agency is in the midst of selling off the first 500 state or collectively owned industries. The law concerning land ownership in Kosovo was even changed to make these former-state industries more attractive to foreign buyers.

The Kosovo Trust Agency can now sell 99 year leases for the land on which the facilities stand, which can be transferred or used as loans or security. When the auction gavel finally stops pounding, the economic assets of the Yugoslave nation will be firmly in the hands of western imperialism.

**For the workers of former Yugoslavia, the outcome of the bombing they endured five years ago is to see the assets of the nation sold to foreign imperialists, to see their wages collapse, and to see the value created by their labor extracted and repatriated to the imperialist nations, who first destroyed their nation with bombs and are now feasting on what remains of it, like ghouls round a corpse.**

By Peter Urban

## Hundreds Honour INLA Volunteers James Mc Phelemy & Alex Patterson



Section of the crowd at Strabane commemoration

An estimated 1,500 Friends and Comrades gathered in Strabane, to honour and pay tribute to two brave comrades James Mc Phelemy and Alex Patterson.

Friends and Family of Derry man Seamus Doherty attended at which his father spoke of his continuing imprisonment. IRSP Ard Comhairle member, Eddie McGarrigle also from Strabane, gave the main IRSM oration. The Ard Comhairle representative told the those at the march and rally that he unfortunately did not know either of them but what he did know was that they both gave their lives for the cause of a Socialist Republic.

IN his oration Mr. McGarrigle said "James Mc Phelemy was aged 20 and was Killed In Action on the 10th of August 1988. James was shot while preparing to attack an army post at Claudy in Co Tyrone. Unfortunately small children wandered in the line of fire and it was when James tried to warn them of the danger they were in that the army were able to target him and shoot him dead. Alex Patterson was aged 31 and a father of four when he was Killed In Action on the 12th of November 1990. Alex did not know that when he was attempting to attack a U.D.R. mans house that the S.A.S. were staking it out and were waiting for him. He was captured but then summarily executed by the S.A.S. The nature of his death again raised the issue of the

Shoot To Kill policy that was sanctioned by the British Government.

"Both young men were killed on Active Service just a few short years from each other in the late eighties and early nineties when the Republican Socialist movement was at the heart of the conflict in the occupied six counties. They along with all the other dead volunteers will never be forgotten and that is why monuments like this are important. We need future generations to see and understand what people like Alex and James believed in and that they belonged to an organisation that followed the teachings of James Connolly. Hopefully this monument, and all the other ones that have been erected by the ex-prisoner committees, will achieve that understanding. I am sure that if they were here today they would be very proud to witness Republican Socialists marching for the first time through the town of Strabane. The very fact that the IRPS are still here is proof that we are alive and well and that our commitment is still strong.

"As I stand here today and look beside me I can only admire the work of Teach na Failte and the ex-prisoners memorial committee in erecting this fine monument to our fallen comrades. I can remember around two years ago in Belfast as I was standing on a platform with Bernadette Mc Aliskey remembering two other fallen comrades when Bernadette stated that, the Republican Socialist Movement certainly had a percentage of good people, of brave people, of incorruptible people and of socialist people than any other organisation within the independence and resistance movement. And also, for a small organisation per head of its population of members, probably suffered more than any other organisation. This is the movement that James and Alex believed in.

"The very fact that so many people turned out here today to honour them both pay tribute to the honour and esteem that they were both held in. They were not only a credit to their families, but also a credit to the area that they came from as they gave their time, their energy and ultimately their lives for the freedom and empowerment of the working class. Unfortunately they did not get the chance to contin-

ue to play their part in the struggle as death stole them away from us. Their deaths were not only a sad loss and a devastating blow to their families but it was also a major set back for the struggle in this area.

"I am sure that there are many people here today who have their own personal memories of Alex and James and so will remember them for what they were, ordinary young men growing up in an era of repression and injustice that would eventually determine the path that they would chose to follow.

"It was not always easy to be a member of the Republican Socialist Movement as there were always pressure coming from many quarters but that was the life Alex and James, along with the rest of us chose, and so ultimately made this movement what it is today. Unfortunately both these young men did not live to see how this movement has flourished over the past number of years, but it is because of the memory of James and Alex, and also the memories of all the other dead volunteers that have made the Republican Socialist Movement survive throughout the darkest days of the troubles.

"I can remember laying in prison in the seventies and eighties and hearing news of some of my comrades who were killed or assassinated and I remember how deeply it effected me, so when I look here and see ex-prisoners who are from this area, and who were no doubt friends of Alec and James, then I can imagine how they must have felt when they heard about their friends.

"We were the lucky ones, although incarcerated in prison, sometimes years on the run and usually constant harassment from state forces it cannot compensate for the loss that James and Alec's families have had to endure. It is the families who will never forget their loved ones.

**"Life here should never have been such that young volunteers gave their lives to battle injustice. So from whichever organisations volunteers came, everyone should honour his or her sacrifices. To the memory of our comrades James and Alex, we salute you both!"**

## Cuimhneachán

**Tomas Gorman:**  
*"The nature of our enemy has changed. Our resistance to it must change also."*

Several hundred people marked the 23rd National Hunger Strike Commemoration in Derry with a march and rally from Rosemont factory to the Republican Socialist Plot at the City Cemetary. Speakers included the Paddy Browne of the Free Seamus Doherty Campaign and Marian Price of the 32CSM. Tomas Gorman of the Irish Republican Socialist Party gave the main oration of the day who spoke on behalf of the relatives and former comrades to pay homage to the ten brave men who 23 years ago showed bravery and selflessness in the ultimate.

"They are, an inspiration to us all. This is reflected in the huge numbers of you who have turned up here today to pay your respects and to show solidarity with the families of all the ten hunger strike martyrs.

"Whilst all of us have taken time to come here to commemorate the sacrifices that these ten men made, if I may be blunt, we are not doing enough. In 1981, Volunteer Patsy O'Hara asked the poignant question whilst he was carrying out his Hunger Strike. **"After we have gone, what will you say you were doing? Will you say you were with us in our struggle or were you conforming to the very system that drove us to our deaths?"**

"These words ring as sorely true today comrades as they did in 1981. Are we resisting the system that drove these men and countless others like them to their tragic fate? Or are we conforming? Whilst it is of great importance to remember our fallen comrades we must not allow ourselves to get comfortable in a tradition of remembrance. In the 26 counties, the various governments have chosen to pay lip service to the radical ideals to the great men of 1916 and they have carried out hollow acts of commemoration such as naming a train station after James Connolly. This is an insulting token to the great ideals of comrade Connolly. We must not fall into the same sense of self-righteousness through hollow acts.

"It is true to say that the nature of our struggle has changed comrades. We no longer have the ugly face of Imperialism kicking in our doors or murdering our family in the streets. We no longer stare down the barrel of the imperialist gun, as do the suffering people in Iraq and Afghanistan do today. No comrades the British capitalist war machine has realised that it cannot baton or shoot down the spirit of resistance that in the past spurred on the Irish working classes against imperialism in the streets of the Bogside and Ballymurphy. The imperialist system has changed their tactics

comrades.

"They are no longer trying to beat us down with their armed forces. No, they are trying to suck us into their system. The imperialists are trying to transform us into benign cogs of their machine.



Tomas Gorman at the National Hunger Strike Rally, Derry

They are buying us off with the wealthy rewards of their murderous endeavours. They are buying us into conforming.

"Some are choosing to conform and become part of their system. Some have confined their resistance to the boundaries set by the imperialist machine. Comrades we can under no circumstances allow this to happen to us.

He said "We must radically change our own attitudes and values if we are to achieve the same conviction for radical social and political change in this land as our fallen comrades. For Imperialism in its new neo-liberal form is imposing its cancerous culture of self-gain upon us.

"We must push this message into our communities by whatever means that are at our disposal. No act should be below you. If some of you see the tasks required as distasteful and petty then let the end goal of socialism be your motivating force. If this is not enough to moti-

vate you then you have no place in the republican socialist struggle.

"It is time for each and every one of us to take the ideals of socialism out of the realms of discussion and manifestos and elections and make it directly relevant to our underprivileged communities. Stir in them the spirit of togetherness. Then we will see the symptoms of neo-liberal capitalism, sectarianism, racism, sexism, homophobia, antisocial behaviour, alienation, poverty, drug abuse and self destruction crumble away in the path of a united working class community, a real movement that will sweep away the main barrier to freedom in Ireland; Partition of this Island and its

people.

"The nature of our enemy has changed. Our resistance to it must change also. The struggle against imperialism fought by our ten brave comrades and the hundreds like them here in Ireland and indeed all over the world now lies within ourselves comrades.

Turning to international prisoner solidarity Mr Gorman said "We demand that he and all other political prisoners being held in Ireland and throughout the World are released immediately. Let us not forget the suffering being inflicted upon the families of Basque and Catalan prisoners. Basque and Catalan prisoners are being moved to prisons hundreds of miles from their families in a deliberate move to cause emotional and financial strain on their families and friends. Our comrades from the PCE (r) and GRAPO are currently being held in Paris awaiting extradition to terror camps in Spain, we demand their immediate release. Our comrades in Kurdistan are suffering state oppression akin to the fascist states in Europe during the thirties and forties. They have suffered as we have the loss of loved ones through hunger strike. Within the last week, 1600 Palestinian prisoners went on Hunger Strike against the inhumane conditions being meted out by the wantonly murderous racist Zionist regime of Ariel Sharon. Our thoughts are with them all in this difficult phase of their struggle.

In closing he made the position of the IRSP clear, stating: "...be under no illusions, when we have made progress in the revolution the state will discard the kid gloves and their forces will rear their ugly head once again in an attempt to undermine us. Like the ten brave Hunger Strikers comrades, we will not shirk! Once we have regained our resolve and revolutionary fervour we will struggle on with greater strides towards our goal. A Socialist Republic that cherishes true freedom for all of its children."

## Seamus Costello Commemoration:



# "We are no we shall be e

### Quote by Seamus Costello, founder of the

Friends and comrades, once more we gather to pay homage to Seamus Costello, republican, socialist, revolutionary. Seamus in life was a giant of a man politically. He stood out among his contemporaries for his belief, energy, ideas, and charisma. In death he stands out for us as an icon, a hero to emulate and a leader to mourn. As founder member of the IRSP and the INLA he played his part in ensuring that the authentic ideas of republican socialism would endure. The ideas of Connolly and Mellows, the radical tradition of the Republican Congress, and the more progressive ideas of the Republican Movement were all encapsulated in the person of Seamus Costello.

But in paying tribute to Seamus we do not make the mistake of mindless hero-worshipping. Irish republicanism has played a progressive role in Irish society because of its ability to renew itself in each generation and become relevant to the lives of the people from which it had sprung. Seamus Costello was a catalyst in renewing the republican tradition in the latter part of the 20th century. Seamus played a major part in convincing many in the mainstream Republican Movement that the time for clichés, flags, and faded memories of old men was long past.

He pointed the way by standing for elections, taking his seat, playing a full part in the community he came from while never forgetting the national question and the crime of partition. Seamus saw a role for an army of the people prepared to both defend the interests of the working class whilst also prepared to challenge imperialism and its hold over the whole of Irish society.

That is what we must learn from the leadership of Seamus: the ability to adapt, to renew, and to avoid becoming stuck in the old ways. After all the world he lived in has all but disappeared. The Soviet bloc no longer exists, there is only one super-power, the Officials have become irrelevant while the Provos of the seventies are but a distant memory and dreams of the year of victory have become replaced with that 'radical' revolutionary cry: implement the Good Friday Agreement!

Those who claimed to have smashed the old Stormont now want to rebuild it and look forward to working in a coalition with the party of Paisley. So much for the strategy of fragmenting unionism.

I wonder what Seamus would have made of it all?

Internally he would have been disappointed at the way his movement lost its way in the aftermath of his death, particularly in the eighties and early nineties. Since 1995 we have painfully examined our past failures, held our hands up to past mistakes, and have taken this movement back to the ideals, ideas, and beliefs that first motivated Seamus and his fellow comrades to set up this movement. We have tried to instil confidence, self-respect, loyalty to the movement, and a fundamental belief in the primacy of politics. These attributes go to the very heart of our ideology. Confidence in the class, self-respect for our values of socialism, loyalty to our own movement but not uncritical loyalty, and of course the primacy of politics.

But Seamus would not have been satisfied with just that. There is so much more to be done. A huge emphasis must be placed by the incoming leadership of this movement on political education, on activity, on discipline, on democracy, and on being revolutionary agitators.

The days of the loud mouth in the pub are gone. The days of using this movement as a flag of convenience for personal gain are gone. The days of bullying working class youth are gone. The days of policing working class communities are gone.

Those things were never on the agenda of the Republican Socialist Movement but unfortunately some scum floated towards the top of this movement in the past aided by the British. Their day is done.

Republican socialists must be servants not masters of the working class. That's what we are about: taking the message of liberation, of class struggle, of republicanism to the vast majority of people on this island.

Externally I have no doubt that Seamus would have continued to be anti-imperialist and socialist and republican. Seamus had beliefs. Not interests.

Seamus's advocacy of the broad front was premised on the belief that the coming together of radical and progressive forces was in the interests of the Irish working class. Not for him or any republican that adhered to Connolly socialism a reactionary alliance with the most conservative forces in Irish Society. For how else can you categorise the pan-nationalist front of Sinn Fein (Provisional), the SDLP, and the coalition of Fianna Fail and the Progressive Democrats: an alliance with the every people who demonised republicans, who split with gold the Republican Movement, who supported the most repressive laws against republicans, who framed our comrades over the Sallins affair, and persistently and consistently demonise this movement?

What republican in the tradition of Tone can accept an agreement that reduces the anti-imperialist conflict of over two centuries to a sordid little sectarian war between two "communities", for by signing the GFA the signatories accepted the internal conflict argument that British imperialism had been promoting for years: that the conflict in Ireland was religious. The Good Friday Agreement has led to increased sectarianism as the working classes are pressured into identifying with the two sectarian blocs. Partition has been solidified.

We reject the notion that there are two separate divided communities. Republican socialists reject the two community approach. There is one community and a divided working class and while elements of that self same working class clash those who benefit from the divisions of the working class pocket their profits and come July jet off to quieter and sunnier climates.

Was that what the conflict was about? That is no victory, nor indeed an honourable draw. That was a crushing defeat for the progressive forces in Ireland. Was it for this that men and women sacrificed the best years of their lives in struggle, in prison, in exile, and in death?

Is it not time to call a halt to the endless round of talks about talks about talks especially when the two main groups can not even meet in the same room?

What kind of government can work when the leading partners don't even talk to each other? And in relation to parliamentarism Seamus had it right when he said, "Before the Republican Movement can achieve power, we must succeed in breaking the confidence of the people in the existing parliamentary institutions, and I would suggest that this should be one of the main functions of our TDs. They should also be full time revolutionary organisers in their own areas, thereby demonstrating to the people who elected them the fundamental difference between ourselves and the other parties."

Don't misunderstand what we are saying. The IRSP with the full support of the INLA are in favour of dialogue. We emphatically restate that armed struggle is not the way forward today. That road may lead somewhere but most assuredly not to the Republic. Yes, dialogue is possible, but not with those who think we are lesser human beings. Why should republicans seek to be talked to by right wing bigots of the DUP? They don't represent the real interests of any section of the working class. Let's reach out to the working class on the basis of principled political positions not for temporary expediency.

Seamus Costello, a man before his time, pointed the way forward, and I quote, "We maintain that any co-operation with the

Protestant working class must be on the basis of a principled political position. It must be on the basis of explaining fully to the Protestant working class what all our policies are. We must try and politicise them, simultaneously with conducting a political campaign to get rid of Britain."

There is no permanent solution possible that envisages the continued existence of the sectarian six county state. Those who pretend otherwise fool not only others but themselves.

Unless and until the six county state is either totally abolished or totally transformed, sectarianism will dominate politics here and the imperialists can continue to present our conflict as a religious struggle.

Well, my friends, it is not. It is a political conflict against the impe-

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Seamus Costello Commemoration Marching through

rialist imposition of foreign rule on any part of this island.

Similarly the conflict in Iraq is not about fundamentalist Muslim terrorism but about the imperialist exploitation of the resources of Iraq. Those who are against that war should have a simple clearly understood slogan for the British and US invaders: "Out of Iraq, Out of Ireland." Any other position ignores the reality of the naked brutal power of imperialism and lets them of the hook.

To those on the left who merely raise the slogan "Stop the War," catch yourselves on. It is only by a consistent and principled opposition to all forms of imperialism that wars can be ended. The bounden duty of the left is not to patronise liberal opinion with platitudes but to stand by the anti-imperialist fighters and extend

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# “...thing and everything!”

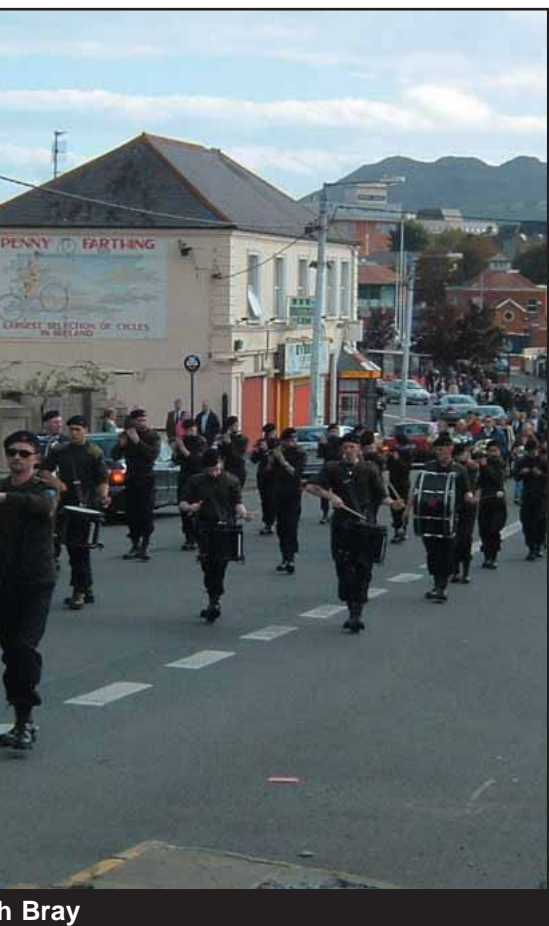
## The Irish Republican Socialist Party

cal support to progressive anti-imperialist fighters. And it that  
nds the liberal classes, well, tough.

ody, especially not an administration of Brits, whose hands

ered with the blood of thousands of innocent Iraqis, has the  
t to call republicans, who oppose their claim to rule this island,  
inals. We are not and we never have been terrorists. Seamus  
ello was a freedom fighter, patriot, anti-imperialist, and social-

is only right to express our full solidarity with current repub-  
political prisoners in Maghaberry and reiterate our call for the  
mediate release of Dessie O'Hare and the other qualifying  
blican prisoners arising from the Belfast Agreement. We make  
distinction between different republican groupings when it



h Bray

es to solidarity with republican prisoners. Do not forget there  
ld be no republican prisoners in jails if there was a final set-  
ment to the national question. And so long as the national ques-  
ion is unsettled then so will there be republicans who will wage a  
uggle to establish a Republic on the island for all the people of  
island.

comrades, while we right emphasise the so-called bigger pic-  
of the political dispensation we must never forget the day to  
struggles of working people. We need to take the ideals of  
alism out of the realms of discussion and manifestos and elec-  
s and make them directly relevant to our underprivileged com-  
unities. Poor health, low wages, substandard housing, classed  
education services, crime, and anti-social behaviour are

neither republican nor loyalist, Catholic or Protestant, North or  
South, six or 26 county issues. They are class issues and affect us  
all. We need to arouse in our class the spirit of fraternity. That's the  
way to take on the symptoms of neo-liberal capitalism: sectarian-  
ism, racism, sexism, homophobia, anti-social behaviour, alien-  
ation, poverty, drug abuse, and self-destruction. A real movement  
built on the values of fraternity, solidarity, cooperation, and  
democracy will crumble away these barriers to freedom in Ireland.

Our movement to be relevant must update its republican social-  
ism. Too close a concentration on the national question and an  
unquestioning approach to the nature of imperialism in Ireland has  
distorted and held back the struggle for socialism in Ireland and  
also incidentally is the antithesis of the approach that Seamus  
would have taken.

From this platform today, may I appeal to all those progressive  
republicans, republican socialists, or Connolly socialists to do as  
Seamus did, get involved in the day-to-day activities of the class.

It's fine and useful to reminisce about the past, to write the histo-  
ries, to tell the tales of past heroic deeds, but, comrades, it does  
not challenge the future.

These are glorious days to be alive and see the stirrings of class  
struggle in the world. There is a growing anti-imperialism world-  
wide: in Iraq, Nepal, the Philippines, Pakistan, India, Venezuela,  
Bolivia, and the former Stalinist states, the working class is mov-  
ing into battle. Now ask how you can aid this struggle. Everyone  
has something to contribute no matter how small. Participate in  
your union branch, join or set up a community group in your area  
to organise people, protest, agitate, organise. Remember, to beat  
the system, you do need comrades. From this platform we appeal  
to all genuine republican socialists.

Look around at the world we actually live in and I defy you not to  
be angry at the injustice and inequality and not have the wish to  
change things. There are enough resources in our world to feed  
and clothe everyone. Yet every day thousands die from disease,  
famine, and hunger. Why? Because of capitalism.

We have called in the past for the convening of a Republican  
Forum where republicans and socialists of all hues can dialogue  
together to map out a way forward for the future. That's in the tra-  
dition of Seamus Costello's call for a broad front and building anti-  
imperialist unity. But we recognise that many on the left think they  
can go it alone and don't need to relate to any section of the repub-  
lican left.

It will be part of our task to persuade not only the left but the work-  
ing class, by the things we do, by the actions we take, by the exam-  
ples we set, by the calibre of the comrades we attract to our ban-  
ner of the Starry Plough, that there is merit in working together.

For, comrades, many people still harbour illusions that Sinn Fein  
in government North and South can make a difference to the social  
and economic conditions in this country. They can not. They will  
not. At best they may put a more human face on capitalism but it  
will still be capitalism and that's a system that exploits, brutalises,  
and also is destroying the world. It itself needs to be destroyed,  
not reformed.

Let us follow that example of Seamus Costello. Stand with the mar-  
ginalised, the downtrodden, the victims, the poor, and all who are  
voiceless in the modern Ireland. Strive for equality, solidarity,  
working class unity, human rights, and justice for all. Let us daily  
work towards the socialist republic. In the end that's the only fit-  
ting memorial to all our dead comrades, Seamus included.

Comrades, there is much work to be done. Let's do it.

## The IRSCNA On Costello

Thirty years ago this year, Seamus  
Costello led a small group of revolution-  
aries out of the Official Irish Republican  
Movement to form the Irish Republican  
Socialist Party and Irish National  
Liberation Army. There is something  
very important about this development  
and it is reflected in the names given to  
the political and paramilitary wings of  
the movement.

Irish Republicanism has seen many

Connolly before him, broke with those  
who would ask the working people of  
Ireland to wait, to first focus on getting  
the Brits out, on unification, and then  
address their own interests. It took  
vision and courage and resolve of steel,  
but Costello, in founding the Irish  
Republican Socialist Movement, said  
the workers will wait no more. The work-  
ers of Ireland will win their liberation and  
in doing so, they will liberate their  
nation, but they will no longer fight for a



Wreath Bearers at the recent Seamus Costello Commemoration

divisions over the course of its history  
and since 1916, such divisions have  
often resulted in new introductory letters  
coming to be associated with the names  
'Sinn Fein' and 'Irish Republican Army',  
but that was not the case in 1974.  
Unlike the Officials and Provisionals,  
unlike the Continuity and the 'Real', the  
INLA did not feel compelled to make a  
claim to the mythological mandate of  
the sainted Second Dail, likewise the  
IRSP did not feel compelled to embrace  
an apostolic succession tracing its ori-  
gins back to the organization whose ori-  
gins were so reactionary, James  
Connolly felt compelled to hurl fiery  
polemics against it time and again.  
Symbolically, the decision to forego  
becoming yet another Sinn Fein and yet  
another IRA, testified to Costello, and  
those who joined him, having recog-  
nised that what was needed wasn't sim-  
ply to create a newly purified, or more  
militant, version of the Republican  
Movement. Instead, Costello and those  
others who founded our movement,  
recognised, as Connolly had before  
them, that what was required was an  
alternative to simple Irish republican-  
ism. What was needed, and what they  
founded, was a movement organised  
on the basis of a different analysis-one  
that wed the national liberation struggle  
to the class struggle of Irish workers  
and held that the two were inseparable.

No longer would the IRSM seek the  
republic of Tone or even the republic of  
1916, born as it was in the compromise  
of Connolly with the less revolutionary  
orientation of the IRB leaders.  
Henceforth, the IRSM would seek a 32-  
county Irish workers' republic and would  
not be satisfied with anything less. It  
was the tremendous vision of Seamus  
Costello to forge this break with the  
past, so as to not be defeated by the  
same contradictions that had defeated  
Irish republicanism at each turn in the  
past, which led Nora Connolly O'Brien  
to say that Costello was the one con-  
temporary who most represented the  
views of her father. Costello, like

republic in which they will remain  
oppressed.

For his vision, his courage, his commit-  
ment to a revolutionary path, lesser  
men killed Seamus three years later.  
Because this perspective, held solely by  
the IRSM, tore asunder the blinding ide-  
ology of old republicanism, it had the  
capacity to move beyond the hopeless  
repetition of past defeats and lead the  
Irish people to victory, by not simply  
removing the British masters, but by  
removing all masters. Because it alone  
offered the way forward to victory, it ter-  
rified reactionaries of all shades-imperi-  
alists, native capitalists, and the tradi-  
tional leadership of the republican  
movement, whose positions of power  
rested on maintaining a monopoly over  
the course of the republican struggle.  
Because it terrified them, they killed  
Seamus Costello. Then they killed  
Miriam Daly, Noel Lyttle, Ronnie  
Bunting, Jim Power, and many others.  
Because they came after, to defend and  
move forward the revolutionary vision of  
Seamus Costello, they killed Ta Power,  
Gino Gallagher, and others like them.

They have not killed the Irish  
Republican Socialist Movement, how-  
ever, nor has our movement been  
turned from the revolutionary path it set  
out upon thirty years ago. So long as  
our movement remains alive, to present  
a revolutionary alternative to the  
approach advocated by traditional Irish  
republicanism, the spirit of Seamus  
Costello remains alive. We in the  
International Department of the Irish  
Republican Socialist Party are dedica-  
ted to the revolutionary tradition embod-  
ied by Seamus Costello, which provides  
Irish working people with the means to  
achieve their liberation. Through the  
work of our Department, we will strive  
to ensure that Costello's heritage, as rep-  
resented by the IRSP, provides a beacon  
for the working people of the world  
as well.



# The Case For A Decent Health Service

By Kevin Morley

Today's media reporting on the state of the health service in the twenty-six counties tends to be very confusing to say the least. By confusing it is meant that the message, which the media, and particularly the tabloid press, are trying to put across, is not always as clear-cut as it would first appear. For example on Monday July 19th 2004 the ever informative tabloid The Star could tell its readers of the huge cost to the tax payer of the medical card scheme in the twenty six counties health system.

The headline on page eight of the tabloid read 'HUGE COST OF MEDICAL CARDS TO TAXPAYER' and went on to inform us that 'payments to doctors, pharmacists and optometrists cost the state a staggering 1.4 billion euro last year alone-- an increase of over 161m euro on the previous year'. What exactly The Star is trying to tell us is unclear. Are they, for example, implying that doctors should not be paid for their services to capitalism in getting sick people back to fitness in order that they can re-enter the job market and offer their labour power for sale to the highest bidding sweater (employer). After all it is this wonderful system of exploitation which the media, including The Star so loyally supports and advocates as the finest available to mankind which to manage our affairs, if so they should not be moaning about the cost of repairing wage slaves ready to be exploited again. On the other hand could the tabloid be implying that the cost of getting people well again is too expensive therefore let them perish?, or could they be suggesting that doctors, pharmacists, dentists and optometrists are being greedy?. If that is the case then they are not alone because this system, capitalism, geared towards individualism encourages selfishness and greed!

## Children

The newspaper went on to inform us that 'doctors were paid over 4 million euro last year just to administer vaccinations to children'. The way the paper reported this issue one would be forgiven for thinking that the tabloid was advocating abolition of vaccinations for children. Admittedly 4 million euro does appear to be a large sum of money but under the present economic system, the market economy, and government policies geared towards laissez faire it is not surprising and certainly should not be

used as an excuse to discontinue vaccinations. The figures obtained by The Star were contained in the annual report of the General Medical Services (Payments) Board and 'have caused widespread controversy' according to the tabloid. Whether the



New Scanner installed in St Lukes Hospital in Dublin

figures are good, bad or indifferent they are just another symptom of this imbecile system we are forced to live under where profit is the order of the day, greed before need. No one group of benefactors out of this capitalist mess have any right to criticize another because at the end of the day they are all beneficiaries except, of course, the working class. They are the only group, and the largest, which have any right to complain, as they are the people who benefit the least out of capitalism even though they are the creators of all the wealth.

## For A Decent Health Service

The only permanent and sure way to prevent individuals or groups from profiteering out of societies

needs is to abolish the economic system which spawns such greed in the first place. No individual or group can be singularly blamed for being greedy and selfish because not to be so would mean being left behind and trampled on by the rest of what passes for civilisation. As the overthrow of capitalism does not look likely, certainly not imminently (this does not mean never) we must look at perhaps the best attainable within the confines of the conditions which surround us now. If medical cards are funded by the tax payer, as The Star headline says, which would mean obviously those in employment taking up most of the burden, and the same medical cards are used by the elderly (everyone in the free state over the age of seventy are entitled to a medical card regardless of income), the unemployed and the disabled then could this mean that those in

themselves to bring this abolition about the amount of profiteering would be greatly reduced.

Of course such a scheme as this would probably demand an increase in taxation which would be earmarked for health but most, certainly working class people, perhaps would not mind paying say the price of three pints of stout per week extra in tax in the full knowledge that if they or any of their family were to become sick they would not have to wait all day to see a doctor at a hospital. Plus a decent pay increase for all health service employees, a reduction in hours forced to be worked would encourage people, particularly young people to enter the various professions within the health service. Plus a decent pay increase for all workers across the board, taken from the wealth created by those workers would sweeten the pill of tax increases which at first may be viewed with suspicion. Add to this a government programme aimed at full employment thus creating more tax payers to fund this new health service.

The twenty six counties has a population of around four and a half million people, smaller than some European cities. Are those clowns who occasionally perform in the Dail circus seriously telling people that they can not manage the nations health any more competently than this comic show, where people in many instances are forced to spend up to two weeks on a trolley in a hospitals A and E (Accident and Emergency) if they are lucky before they can get a bed on a ward.

Such a scheme as an NHS, as briefly outlined above, would probably meet with stiff resistance particularly from consultants and doctors who are raking in huge profits especially from their private clinics. After the second world war, in the UK, the labour administration under the premiership of Clement Attlee faced the same problem when they introduced the National Health Service. However they proved that with enough governmental resolve to face down all opposition including consultant and doctors bodies it could be achieved.

**It would be true to say that the UK NHS is today only a shadow of its former self, mainly because British capitalism no longer needs a large healthy workforce as it did immediately after WW11, but historically it has been proved it can be done. A national health service, run competently, in the twenty six counties may not provide all the answers to the problems facing the nations health, only the overthrow of capitalism and implementation of socialism/communism will ultimately provide those, but it would certainly be a start towards putting health before wealth.**

## Mary Reid, The GIGN Agent & The Fight to Clear Her Name

By Terry Robson

The socialist and poet, Mary Reid, was born in her Grandmother's home in Monaghan in 1953 and died in the most tragic circumstances in a drowning accident on the Inishowen Peninsula in Donegal 29 January 2003. She was three months short of her fiftieth birthday. Her pet and constant companion, a small terrier named Macha, was never to be found. Before her divorce she was married to Cathal Og Goulding, the son of former IRA Chief-of-Staff Cathal Goulding. She had a son, also named Cathal.

At the time of her death she worked as a community researcher and as a lecturer in Woman's Studies in Derry. She led a full and active life in community work, teaching, and in socialist republican politics in addition to her passion for poetry and Celtic mysticism. She was fluent in Gaelic and French and was able to converse in Spanish and German. She was an acknowledged expert on the myths surrounding St Patrick's Purgatory on Lough Derg in Donegal and was a keen student of the esoteric writings of the Armenian mystic George Gurdjieff. She walked across France and the Sinai desert and was planning to walk across England from Whitehaven to Robin Hood Bay in Yorkshire, when the accident occurred, in support of guide dogs for the blind.

Mary studied law at Trinity College, Dublin; Politics and History at UCD and held a Masters degree in Rural Development and Economics from UCG and a MA in Creative Writing in Irish from the University of



Mary Reid: Outside A Paris Court Giving A Speech To Supporters and To The Media Following Her Release

Lancaster on completion of her studies with the poets James Simmons and Cathal O'Searcaigh in Donegal.

During her early years as a student Mary developed an enthusiasm for radical politics eventually becoming one of the first editors of the Starry Plough, the paper of the Irish Republican Socialist Party. She was instrumental in almost single-handedly managing the protest campaign and directing the legal defence of the train trial defendants. She spent many years in France working with international political refugees and was arrested with Mick Plunkett, former General Secretary of the IRSP and Steven King, in a sting operation involving the French Secret Service planting explosives and weapons in their apartment, described

in an editorial in Le Monde as the 'scandal of the Irish of Vincennes'. She was innocent of the charges and received an apology from the French government, although she continued to fight to have her name fully cleared.

Her case against Paul Barrill, a former head of GIGN, the French equivalent of the SAS and the person most associated with the attempt to implicate the three Irish refugees in the bombing of a Jewish restaurant in Paris, collapsed after it was announced by his Counsel that the file to prosecute Barrill was presented a day late. Mary's own Counsel Antoine Comte declared his interest in continuing the case against the former GIGN agent and is currently considering how this can be pursued.

Paul Barrill is a notorious figure in France who is believed to have been involved with several African and Middle Eastern dictatorships as a 'security consultant'. His involvement in France during the course of the imprisonment of Mary and her comrades is often described as 'farical' because of his penchant for publicity, however his role in this specific affair was an extremely dangerous one because of his use of several agents provocateur and the willingness of the then Mitterrand regime to employ suspect methods against Irish revolutionaries.

Mary Reid returned to Ireland in 1987. She spent her first year in Louisburg in Mayo and then for the rest of the time in Derry, with brief spells in Donegal. She spent many of the final months of her life in what she described as her second home in the French Mediterranean port of Sète.

In an obituary in the Irish Times, Eamon McCann captured the essence of Mary's life, when he described her as 'a mass of enthusiasms, infuriating to some in her occasional forays into mysticism, but always entrancing. She saw transient things transfigured, found magnificence in the mundane, had a huge heart and a wild imagination.'

(The author of this article Terry Robson, is a former political prisoner and partner of Mary Reid for the last fifteen years of her life.)

# Republican Socialists Of The First International

Peter Urban

*This is the concluding part of both these articles on, Republican Socialists of the First International:*

**The working class in America consists in the first place of Irishmen, then of Germans, then of Negroes, and in the fourth place of American-borns, since the Americans prefer to speculate, lounge about in offices, etc. We need the Irish to create a good organisation, and the Irish have declared and are always declaring that their fellow-countrymen will never affiliate with the Association as long as Woodhull, Cleflin and their adherents play a role in it.**

Three Irishmen, all with Fenian backgrounds, held seats on the General Council of the IWMA. Samuel Kavanagh and EP St. Clair were elected to the General Council of the International at the Hague Congress, following a resolution to move the Council's seat to New York from London.

Both had been previously elected to the US Federal Council during first US Congress of the International, held July 6-8, 1872, which was presided over by an Irish delegate, Robert Blissert. Out of twenty-two candidates for the twelve seats on the new Council, the two Fenians drew the most votes—twenty-nine each out of forty-one votes cast.

Joseph Denieffe, one of the leaders of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, recalled Kavanagh in his memoirs as a "brave and faithful" Fenian. EP St. Clair, however, seems to have been a far better Fenian than he was an Internationalist. St. Clair was originally christened Edward Pilsworth but, when arrested for Fenian activities, gave the name St. Clair to the authorities. So as "not to lose credit for his conviction for Fenianism," he retained the name St. Clair after his release.

St. Clair was originally in the London section of the IRB, but worked later on John Devoy's staff, organizing British Army soldiers in Ireland for the Fenians. He ran a pub as well, where Devoy and his staff, including St. Clair, were arrested. His republican activities preceded his work with the Fenians and he had served under Garibaldi in Sicily and Naples, then using the name 'Williams'.

St. Clair's career on the General Council of the IWMA was considerably shorter than his career as a republican soldier and organiser. Shortly after his election to the General Council, he ceased attending meetings. He also refused to return records of

the International in his possession, though these were eventually regained.

Neither St. Clair nor Kavanagh were able to equal the impact on the International as their predecessor on the General Council, JP McDonnell. In the era of the First International, McDonnell personified Irish republican socialism, and his political work made an impact on the history and revolutionary development of three nations—Ireland, England, and the United States—as Connolly would a few decades later.

McDonnell was born on March 27, 1847. His first contact with Irish republicanism came while he was at the Catholic University of Dublin, where he joined the republican organization, the Brotherhood of St. Patrick. He established a reputation as a gifted orator and was almost expelled from the university because of speeches he delivered on the Brotherhood's behalf.

An essay written while at University, "Present, Past and Future of Ireland," once again brought threats of expulsion, but the influence of an uncle on the Board of Education of the National Schools saved his academic career.

In 1862, McDonnell led a group of students in tearing down loyalist flags and illuminations in protest of the celebration of the marriage of the Prince of Wales in Dublin. It was also around this time that McDonnell first joined the IRB.

He was a contributor to the Fenian newspaper, the Irish People, until its suppression in September 1865, and one of the editors of another Fenian paper, The United Irishmen, throughout 1863-65, and then setup the Irish People.

In 1865, McDonnell was appointed to be a member of the provisional council of the IRB and the following year was arrested under the Habeas Corpus Act for his IRB membership. When McDonnell was arrested, the government was searching for James Stephens and the newspapers stated that Stephens was sure to be discovered soon, as the government now had McDonnell, "Stephens' sheet anchor."

McDonnell was held in Mountjoy Prison in Dublin for ten months without ever having been tried. Following his release, McDonnell briefly put out an Irish republican newspaper, the Irish Star, but this was abandoned after ten months because of police harassment.

McDonnell then moved to London, in 1868, where he resumed his work as a newspaper editor with an Irish nationalist paper, the Universal News. He also worked as the summary editor of the London Evening Standard and was the London correspondent for the Dublin Irishman.

It was around this time that McDonnell first took membership in the IWMA. In 1869, he helped to organise the Hyde Park demonstration in support of the Fenian prisoners, which drew nearly 100,000 people. McDonnell's early work with the IWMA was interrupted when he was once again arrested and held for three and a half months.

He had been involved in organising an Irish brigade to defend the republican French government against the Prussians, under the guise of creating an ambulance corps, and the German ambassador requested his arrest for violation of neutrality laws. Several months after his releases from prison, on July 4, 1871, McDonnell was elected to the General Council of the IWMA. He was appointed Corresponding Secretary for Ireland and proved an able organiser of Irish sections in both England and Ireland.

At Hague Congress of the First International, he was appointed to sit on the credentials committee. He was also appointed as a reporting secretary for English at the Congress. Throughout the Congress, McDonnell remained aligned with the majority led by Marx and was among the signers of a proposal calling for the transfer of the seat of the General Council from London to New York. He moved to America in December 1872 as a steerage passenger, and greeted America by publishing a series of articles in the New York Herald on the poor conditions encountered by steerage passengers on Trans-Atlantic crossings.

In 1874, McDonnell helped to found the Association of United Workers of America, based on the principles and rules of the International, which was most successful in recruiting Irish and native-born American workers. The United Workers was then affiliated to the International in late 1875.

After the demise of the First International in July 1876, McDonnell became the editor of The Labour Standard, the newspaper of the Central Trades Council of New York, then being used as the organ of the Workingmen's Party of the U.S., of which he was a member. McDonnell later helped to organise the International Labour Union, in early 1878—a trade

union comprised primarily of ex-members of the IWMA. McDonnell was elected to the Central Committee of the ILU and voted its fraternal delegate to the British Trade Union Congress held in December 1878.

McDonnell moved to Paterson, New Jersey in 1878, where he re-established the Labour Standard. In Paterson, McDonnell once again arrested, found guilty and fined \$500 for using the term "scab" to describe strike breakers in his newspaper. He was again arrested in 1880 for an article written on the conditions of the brickmakers in the Patterson brick-yards and imprisoned. Upon his release, however, thousands of people gathered around the jail to meet him and he was driven through the streets in a carriage to the cheering of the working people of the city.

McDonnell organised the first Trades Assembly of Paterson, in 1884, and he was one of the principle organisers of the New Jersey State Federation of Trades and Labour Unions, of which he was the chairman for fifteen years. He was also a delegate to the Knights of Labour convention held at Richmond, Virginia, in 1886. McDonnell played a role as a working class advocate to the New Jersey state legislature and was responsible for drafting and pushing through the legislature the bill first making Labour Day a New Jersey state holiday. He was also the first Deputy Factory Inspector in New Jersey.

In 1900, McDonnell became a member of the Executive Committee of the National Association of Anti-Imperialist Clubs, an organisation that worked for Puerto Rican independence. He was also an active member of the Anti-Poverty Association.

Throughout the remainder of his life in the United States, McDonnell, maintained relations with both his comrades from the International and the Fenian movement. The Fenian leader, O'Donovan Rossa was an occasional dinner guest at the home of the McDonnell's and correspondence was maintained with the Marxist Sorge.

McDonnell was the personification of the relationship between the struggles of Irish republicanism and international socialism in the period of the International Workingmen's Association. As Marx had hoped would occur, the Irishman, Joseph Patrick McDonnell, injected a great deal of revolutionary fervor into the British working class movement, as well as into that of the U.S..

**He helped to establish a tradition from which others could draw inspiration and built a bridge between Ireland and the international socialist movement. McDonnell's life and his contribution to the causes in which he participated was perhaps best summed up in his obituary in the Labour Standard, which began: "Ireland has had many heroes. One breathes no longer. Labour has had many martyrs. One more has made the supreme sacrifice—his life." The paper went on to conclude: "On the long muster roll of heroes, Ireland has not a more devoted patriot nor Labour a brighter name."**



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for national liberation & socialism!

## Léargas

### Hermann Gorter

This is the third in a series of article looking at revolutionary currents in Marxism, other than Marxism-Leninism. The previous articles focused on the contributions of Rosa Luxemburg and Anton Pannekoek.

**of our class, unlike the capitalists orientation towards political organisation as their primary vehicle for asserting their power as a class, beyond which, it is in the workplace where workers command the most power, where they alone have the ability to immediately bring the functioning of capitalism to a halt.**

The battle, whose points of conflict were defined in the exchange between Left-wing Communism and Open Letter to Comrade Lenin, were brought to the third congress of the Communist International.

At that conference in 1921, the various parties within the Third International that embraced

the positions outlined by Gorter were ordered to merge with the Bolshevik-oriented communist parties in their respective nations. Some, like the Communist Workers' Party of the USA (of which John Reed, author of Ten Days That Shook the World, was a member), submitted to the order and liquidated into the dominant Communist Party, but others, like the KAP in the Netherlands and the KAPD in Germany refused and left the Third International.

It is noteworthy that this congress of the Third International immediately preceded the adoption of the New Economic Policy in Russia which Lenin described as a plan for implementing State Capitalism, on the Prussian model, in the Soviet Union. In 1923, Gorter was one of the leading figures involved in founding the Fourth International (not to be confused with the Trotskyist international founded years later, which used the same designation), the Communist Workers'

International (CWI).

It is significant that none other than Jim Larkin attended the founding congress of the CWI and maintained close ties with Sylvia Pankhurst, a British socialist whose organisation was also associated with the CWI, and with Left Communist long before and after its brief existence.

**The founding document of the CWI states its objective in the following way:**

*The proletarian revolution...can only be that of a majority over a minority...But as the revolution arises from this majority, no party dictatorship, no using and tricking of the masses by the party and its dictatorship, is viable, instead a class dictatorship is needed...A really proletarian revolution...will end parliamentarianism as soon as the revolution comes. Parliament is an arm of the bourgeoisie, the soviet and the factory organisation with the workers' council is the proletariat's arm.*

**(The Communist Workers' International by Herman Gorter, published in 1923, republished in London in 1977)**

**The next article in this series exploring other revolutionary currents in Marxism will focus on Paul Mattick.**

## History

# 70th Anniversary Of The Republican Congress

Liam O'Ruairc

**The main attempt to give a social content to the Republican cause in the late 1920s and early 1930s was made by a section of the IRA. The most prominent of them were Peadar O'Donnell, Frank Ryan and George Gilmore. They attempted to develop a social programme which would rally the people to the Republic. They developed their positions in the pages of the IRA paper An Phoblacht. In An Phoblacht in 1928, O'Donnell wrote: "I believe our movement for freedom must be based on the peasant farmers and the town workers, and that we must openly declare ourselves for a government based on this section of the nation".**

Elsewhere he stated: "There is no longer any possibility of the separatist movement being merely an attack on the military occupation of the country. It must be the mobilisation of the working classes for a transfer of power to the workers." (An Phoblacht 19 April 1930) Through their influence, the IRA's outlook became explicitly communist. For example, O'Donnell wrote in An Phoblacht, 7 February 1931: "Beat the landlord out of life, beat the capitalist out of industry, smash the state machine, arm the workers. Vest in them, in alliance with the working farmers, all the power over production..." Internationally, from 1926-7, the IRA orientated itself towards the Komintern and the Soviet Union. Some Republicans, including David Fitzpatrick and George Gilmore, went for military training in the USSR. In 1930 an Irish section of the Krestintern, the Komintern's peasant international, was set up with Peadar O'Donnell as secretary. In autumn 1927, David Fitzpatrick, from the IRA headquarters staff, was in Moscow for a congress of the Friends of Soviet Russia, and appointed to the presidium. The same year, Frank Ryan went to Brussels to attend a congress of the League Against Imperialism, another Komintern front. In 1931, M. Twomey, the IRA's Chief of Staff stated: "If it is Communism to undo the Conquest, the effects of which have wrecked the nation, to destroy landlordism in its many forms and restore their heritage to the dispossessed; to enable those who produce wealth to obtain the fullest advantage of the wealth; to break the stranglehold of imperial banking on the Irish industry; to end robbery and exploitation by a privileged minority, then Tone, Emmet, Mitchel, Lalor, Connolly, Pearse and Mellows were Communists, and the Irish Republican Army is a Communist organisation." (An Phoblacht 16 May 1931)

Republicans made a serious attempt to identify themselves with the problems and interests of the workers and small farmers and placed a great emphasis upon social agitation. The IRA was intimately involved in the countryside agitation against payment of land annuities. When the Free State bailiffs and police came to collect the land annuities in the countryside, local republicans and IRA units were frequently involved in physical resistance. Elsewhere, Republicans were also very active individually or as units in labour struggles, unemployed demonstrations and trade union organisation. But while supporting local economic agitations, the IRA and republicans' direct involvement in political agitation came too late. It was Fianna Fail that reaped the political benefit of the land agitation that had been initiated by the republicans. One must remember that the IRA was primarily a military force, the armed defenders of the Republic, ready to take up arms to re-establish the Republic when a suitable opportunity offered itself. In September 1931 the IRA launched a political party called Saor Eire. Saor Eire's objective was 'to achieve an independent revolutionary leadership for the working class and working farmers towards the overthrow in Ireland of British imperialism and its ally, Irish capitalism'. (An Phoblacht, 10 October 1931). The congress sent greetings to the USSR. But in October 1931 the government banned a number of organisations including Saor Eire, and the clergy declared membership of the party to be sinful. The Church's assault, the gov-

ernment ban, and jailings of Republicans, ended the Saor Eire episode.

Things complicated when Fianna Fail took power. The backbone of Fianna Fail (in those days) was made up of revolutionary nationalists who have been hardened by war, prison and persecution (this has many similarities with Provisional Sinn Féin today). Some Republicans believed that Fianna Fail's aim was the Republic, instead of consolidating the power of the Irish capitalist class. The IRA gave critical support to the party. A section of the IRA believed that the army should put pressure on De Valera and Fianna Fail to declare the Republic, amalgamate the IRA with the Free State Army and go North to liberate the Six Counties. An ambiguity was that the IRA had not made clear the qualitative difference between the Republic it was fighting for and Fianna Fail's. The fundamental class issues at stake were not grasped and developed at a strategic level. On top of that the IRA leadership gradually capitulated to the prevalent anti-Communist climate created by the Church. By 1933, Communists were banned from membership of the IRA by Army Council orders (An Phoblacht 17 June 1933). This marked the end of the IRA's openly socialist phase.

At the IRA convention of March 1934, a final effort was made by O'Donnell and Gilmore to force the IRA into a radical political role. Their proposal was supported by a majority of the delegates, but it was opposed by the Executive and the Army Council and lost by one vote. O'Donnell, Gilmore, Ryan and Michael Price walked out and organised a Republican Congress preparatory conference in Athlone in April 1934. They issued a manifesto proclaiming: "We believe that a Republic of united Ireland will never be achieved except through a struggle which uproots capitalism on its way." (Republican Congress, 5 May 1934). However, when the Congress finally met in Rathmines on September 29-30 1934, a disastrous split occurred over the ultimate aims, tactics and strategy of the organisation. One section led by Frank Ryan, Peadar O'Donnell and Gilmore argued: "The Republican Congress, rallying centre for mass struggles capable of smashing imperialist and native exploiters, calls for a United Front of working class and small farmers so that the subjugated nation may be roused to free itself and to free and unite the Irish Republic." (Republican Congress, 29 September 1934). Their opponents, led by Michael Price and Nora Connolly O'Brien could not subscribe "to anything less than a declaration that this Congress stands emphatically for the overthrow of capitalism in Ireland and for the enthronement of the Irish Workers Republic." (Republican Congress, 13 October 1934) They argued that "you cannot get rid of British imperialism until you smash capitalism" while the others held that "you cannot smash capitalism until you get rid of British imperialism". The

two sides simply couldn't agree on whether the objective should be a socialist republic or simply a republic, whether they should organise as a political party or a broad front and whether the immediate enemy was Britain or capitalism in general. The proposals put forward by O'Donnell's group won by 99 votes to 84. Placing a Workers Republic as an immediate demand at this stage was unrealistic. Peadar O'Donnell explained: "We dare not jump through a stage in the fight raising now the slogan 'Workers Republic', and leaving Fianna Fail to escape, saying that they are standing for one kind of Republic, but that we stand for a different one. My quarrel with De Valera is not that he is not a Socialist, for he makes no pretence to be one. My quarrel is that he pretends to be a Republican while actually the interests for which his Party acts - Irish capitalism - are across the road to a Republic" (Republican Congress, 6 October 1934). Workers need to get acquainted with the fight against imperialism before support can be won for the Workers Republic. Class consciousness of a socialist kind must be allowed to develop. Michael Price and his supporters walked away, many ending up in the Labour Party. This fatally wounded the Republican Congress which survived until 1936 without having much of an impact.

**It is now exactly seventy years since the formation of the Republican Congress. Despite its failure, it still enjoys a mythical status on the Irish left today (in particular because it won a number of Northern Protestants to its cause). But the experience of the Republican Congress shows how difficult it is to unite Republicans and Socialists on aims, tactics and forms of organisation. Especially when the objective conditions are unfavourable for such a venture.**

## 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 interconnection of the national and class questions, reality forces us to do so.

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 aim to build a strong alliance in Irish society of our class in towns and cities, agricultural workers in the countryside, unemployed workers, working class refugees, linked as a movement internationally with other like-minded liberation struggles.

We firmly stand-by the struggle for a republic. On that we are inflexible, but our struggle for the republic is a means to an end. For us, the national liberation struggle is but an aspect of the struggle for socialism.

### 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 pro-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.

### 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.

If you agree with us, then we urge you to join the Irish Republican Socialist Party and help build a movement that can accomplish these aims and objectives. Be part of the Irish revolution!

## Teagmháil Contact

The Irish Republican Socialist Party has established Cummain in all major cities and towns throughout Ireland as well as Republican Socialist Committees in Europe, United States & Canada. Each IRSP cumann meets on a weekly basis to activate, educate and organise events locally such as public and political educational meetings, solidarity protests, pickets and demonstrations from community to workplace struggles. The Irish Republican Socialist Party has active Cummain, as well as individual members and supporters in the following towns and cities across Ireland, to contact and get involved with the nearest IRSP Cumann in your area write to your nearest contact address listed below:

### Ireland: [irsp@irsm.org](mailto:irsp@irsm.org)

**Ardglass, Armagh, Cork, Limerick, Newry, Galway, Sligo, Waterford, Wexford:**

Email: [irsp@irsm.org](mailto:irsp@irsm.org)

**Dungiven, Donegal, Letterkenny, Strabane, Derry:**

P.O. Box 1981,  
Derry, BT48 8GX.  
Email:  
[derryirsp@hotmail.com](mailto:derryirsp@hotmail.com)

**Belfast Central, Belfast North, Lagan Valley:**

392 Falls Road, Belfast,  
BT12 6DH.  
Tel. 028 90 321024  
Fax. 028 90 330786

**Bray, Dublin, Dundalk:**

Email: [dublinirsp@hotmail.com](mailto:dublinirsp@hotmail.com)

### Europe: [irsp@netwizards.net](mailto:irsp@netwizards.net)

IRSP has members, supporters and contacts active in many working class campaigns and prisoner solidarity in towns and cities throughout England, Scotland and Wales, and across Europe, write to our International Department for further details on how you can actively participate.

**IRSP International Department**

Email: [irsp@netwizards.net](mailto:irsp@netwizards.net)

### North America: [irsp@netwizards.net](mailto:irsp@netwizards.net)

**Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America**

2057 15th Street, Suite B, San Francisco, CA 94111, North America.  
Tel./Fax. 415 861 1355 Email: [irsp@netwizards.net](mailto:irsp@netwizards.net)

IRSC has members, supporters and contacts active in working class struggles and prisoner solidarity throughout United States, Canada and Latin America. Write for further details on how you too can actively participate.

### IRSM Online & Other Links

**Official IRSM Website:**  
<http://irsm.org/irsp/>

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

**Ex Republican Socialist POW Support Organisations:**

**Teach Na Failte (Strabane):**  
31 Patrick Street, Strabane, Tyrone  
Tel/Fax: 028 71 884616

**Teach Na Failte (Belfast):**  
392b Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6DH.  
Tel/Fax: 028 90238321

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

**Solidarity with Turkish Hunger Strikers Committee (Dublin):**  
[www.geocities.com/turkishhunger-strike/](http://www.geocities.com/turkishhunger-strike/)

**Free Dessie O'Hare Campaign**  
[www.irsm.org/irsp/free\\_dessie](http://www.irsm.org/irsp/free_dessie)

**James Connolly Society:**  
[www.wageslave.org/jcs/](http://www.wageslave.org/jcs/)

**Larkspirit:** [www.larkspirit.com](http://www.larkspirit.com)

**Cork IRSP Online:**  
[www.irsm.org/cumann/cork](http://www.irsm.org/cumann/cork)

music  
ceol

Green Day  
(2004)

'American Idiot'

# American Idiot

By Danielle Ni Dhighe

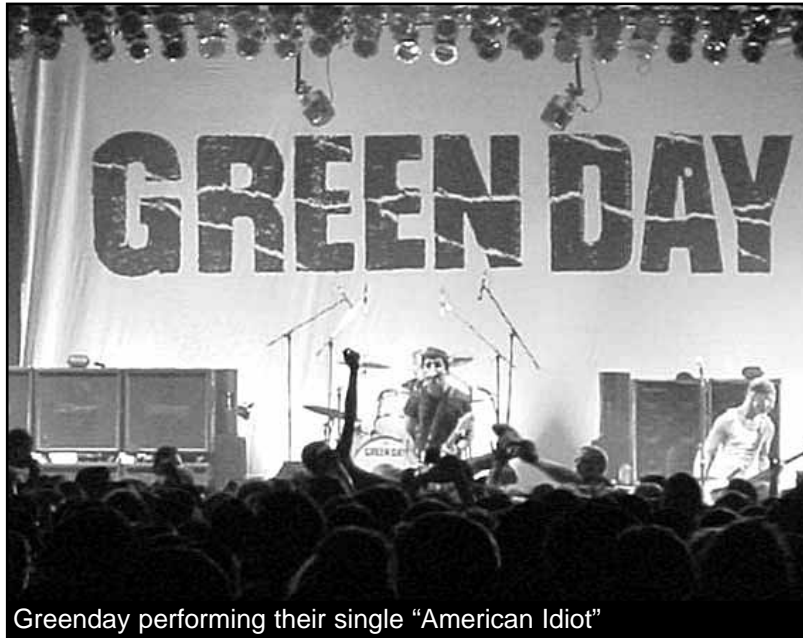
Many people, especially young people, would agree with the sentiment of the song that they "don't wanna be an American idiot."

That sentiment is out there and it isn't limited to America. A mainstream band can put that into song in an entertaining fashion, but it's up to principled revolutionaries to take it further and agitate, educate, and organise for real change.

The new Green Day single, "American Idiot," is a pop-punk attack on media manipulation and post-9/11 hysteria.

This is perhaps the most topical the band has ever been and singer/guitarist Billie Joe Armstrong sounds passionate singing lines like "I'm not a part of a redneck agenda/now everybody do the propaganda/and sing along in the age of paranoia."

The problem is, that for all its conviction, the song offers nothing more than "we're not the ones who're meant to follow/for that's enough to argue" as an answer. No matter how passionate the song, it's unable to transcend bourgeois liberalism, and even within that context it seems to avoid overt criticism of some obvious targets.



Greenday performing their single "American Idiot"

film

sceo

## The Magdalene "The Magdalene Sisters" (2002)

Director: Peter Mullan

The Magdalene Laundries were institutions maintained by the Catholic Church in Ireland for the incarceration of young women thought to be a "moral danger" to themselves and others -- unmarried mothers or girls who were considered "indecent" for some reason.

With the legal consent of their families (more specifically, their fathers), they were imprisoned and made to work for no pay in laundries, always exploited and in some cases sexually abused. Women were incarcerated until the Church determined they were no longer a "moral danger" -- for many women, their release never came and they lived the rest of their lives behind the walls of the laundries as prisoners of the Church.

The last of the laundries closed as recently as 1996, so it's hardly ancient history.

The four main characters in this film are young women who are incarcerated in one such laundry in the 1960s.

Two of them are unmarried mothers, one an orphan who is found guilty of "flirting," and the last a young woman who is brutally raped and then punished for reporting it.

The film tells a harrowing story of abuse and exploitation, pulling no punches. Director Peter Mullan (a member of the Scottish

Socialist Party) doesn't flinch from the truth and gets excellent performances from the cast, particularly Geraldine McEwan as the sadistic nun who runs the laundry.

He also embellishes the film with touches of dark humour.

The Catholic Church predictably accused the film of being "anti-Catholic". It would be more accurate to say that the film attacks the abuse and exploitation of women in the name of "morality."

While the position of women in Ireland has improved dramatically since the time period portrayed

This film is a must see for anyone interested in the subject of women's rights in Ireland, both to show how far women have come and to reflect how religious "morality" can still influence daily life on an increasingly secular island.

### Léirmeas

If you would like to review a book, a movie or music etc for the Starry Plough then contact us at via our email:

plough@irsm.org

## Litreach Dearga

### Red Letters

PO Box 1981 - Derry - Ireland plough@irsm.org

## Class Politics & Street Art!

A Chara,

I have been following your online debate on 'Murals' or 'Political Art' with some interest and have decided to pen this in an effort to encourage more class politics through street art.

On the issue itself, I have noticed that leading up to the current political "peace process" the rapid de-politicalisation of wall murals away from the issues of national liberation struggle and internationalism, towards more of a 'cultural' and 'remembrance' theme. In turn you can now buy lovely glossy books, tours of certain districts in a 'pig' or open-top bus and, oh sorry did I forget to mention the T-SHIRTS!

What was once another form of 'effective propaganda' for self-determination and socialism has now like most things in our days, been bought out and tied-up in many ways with the steady flow of euros and 'peace funding'.

Republican socialists have never been that imaginative as we can see by the amount of actual murals created by them over the years but as an activist, you don't need to be that artistic, remember Caker Casey, a simple slogan painted on a gable wall in Derry's Bogside said so much and has stood the test of time.

Adh mor,  
Artist, Lower Falls

Editors Note:

We're sure there are many IRSM members and supporters who would agree wholeheartedly with your sentiments. If others want to get in touch to discuss this further then they can contact us at the Starry Plough and we will be happy to put like-minded in contact with each other.

Please ensure that when writing to keep your letters brief and to the point. Due to time and space many are unfortunately withheld from print. We would encourage contributors to email correspondence but ordinary mail is also accepted.

# LOYALIST ATTACKS IN DERRY

A spokesperson for the IRSP in Derry has urged people living in vulnerable areas of the Waterside district to exercise caution following a recent upsurge in loyalist violence.

During the recent upsurge one man was shot and killed and others were wounded in shootings and pipebombings. These attacks were, on the whole, internal in that they involved loyalists attacking loyalists but when these attacks subsided loyalist activity took a more sinister turn when local cityside based taxi drivers were subjected to sustained attack while driving through protestant areas. One Catholic driver claimed that his car was hit by a blast bomb during one such attack. Another said his car was surrounded by a number of masked men who were armed with cudgels but he managed to escape in his car. Nationalist homes Gelvin Gardens and Anderson Crescent in the Gobnascale area were also attacked by masked men.

IRSP spokesperson Yvonne Dalton urged local taxi drivers and isolated nationalists to be on their guard. She said, "We have been monitoring the recent loyalist activity and sinister and threatening statements issued jointly by the UDA and UVF and we are alarmed at this upsurge but on the whole we are not surprised. These groups generally when they finish their periodic attacks on each other inevitably turn their weapons on nationalists in a bid to re-establish their credibility within their areas.

She concluded: "The UDA and UVF in Derry issued a joint statement recently claiming that they will take the war to republicans. This is undoubtedly part of their effort of reingratiating themselves within their community and is a serious and sinister development. The silence of local unionists on the matter is there for all to see. We in the IRSP demand that these threats are lifted immediately and assurances must be given that no further attacks on nationalist's homes will occur."

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FOR UNCENSORED POLITICS

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# 30 Years of Struggle!

## Irish Republican Socialist Movement



www.irsm.org

# 30th Anniversary Solidarity Notices

This coming December the Irish Republican Socialist Party and Irish National Liberation Army will celebrate 30 years of struggle for national liberation and socialism in Ireland. For a movement which has been described as perhaps the most persecuted in the history of Irish republicanism, this is a vitally important occasion.

The movement has come through armed attacks aimed at destroying it. Our best volunteers and political activists have been taken from us during times when the movement was gaining real ground. We have gone through the supergrass show trials, prison protests and venomous attacks by M15 and Special Branch controlled journalists. During thirty years of almost non stop attacks of various types the Irish Republican Socialist Movement has prevailed, but not only has it prevailed but during the past number of years the IRSM has grown in confidence, strength and is an influence for good in the working class communities from which it gains its members and supporters. As we approach the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the IRSM we are filled with confidence that the problems of the past are firmly behind us.

Accordingly, we are soliciting anniversary notices to be published in the Starry Plough/An Camchéachta, the newspaper of the IRSP, to demonstrate the support the movement enjoys around the world today from fellow anti-imperialists, socialists, and Irish republicans and to help support the ability of the IRSP to expand and improve the newspaper's ability to serve as the voice of revolutionary Irish Republican Socialism. Notices will be approximately 2-3/8 inches wide by 1-1/4 inches (6 centimeters by 3 centimeters) and any artwork used should be supplied in a digital format.

The cost is \$20 US Dollars, £10 Pounds, or €15 Euros per

### notice.

Individual members of the IRSP, supporters of the IRSP and local IRSP cumain are encouraged to take part in this project. We are also encouraging all members and supporters in the Irish Republican Socialist Committees of North America (IRSC-NA) or the Federation of Irish Republican Socialist Committees Abroad (FIRSCA) to put in a notice for the city, state, or province they reside in.

We are also asking our friends and comrades in other socialist, anarchist, syndicalist, anti-imperialist, Irish activist, trade union, Irish language and cultural organisations to put in a notice, as a display of solidarity.

This effort has been initiated by FIRSCA in support of the IRSP and all inquiries should be directed to Peter Urban at [irsp@netwiz.net](mailto:irsp@netwiz.net) or

2057 15th Street,  
Suite B,  
San Francisco,  
California 94114  
USA.

Funds for anniversary notices can be sent to that address as well or sent via PayPal using the email address provided. Alternatively notices can be forwarded directly to the Starry Plough at our address in Derry

All notices and funds must be received by 20 November 2004 to be included in the special thirtieth anniversary edition of the Starry Plough.

## Cuimhneam

Fallen Volunteers and political activists remembered

Members of the Republican Socialist Movement whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Vol. Seamus Costello	Assassinated	5th Oct 77	Co. Wicklow
POW Colm Maguire		10th Oct 87	Co. Laoise
Vol. Patrick Campbell	Killed in Action	10th Oct 99	Co. Antrim
Vol. Ronnie Bunting	Assassinated	15th Oct 80	Co. Antrim
Vol. Noel Lyttle	Assassinated	15th Oct 80	Co. Antrim
Vol. Tony McClland	Killed in Action	16th Oct 79	Co. Armagh
Vol. Alex Patterson	Killed in Action	12th Nov	Co. Tyrone

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

*"Whenever death may surprise us, let it be welcomed provided that this our battle cry may reach some receptive ear and other hands reach out to pick up our weapons to intone our funeral dirge with the staccato of machine gun fire and new cries of battle and victory. Ever onward to victory, Venceremos!"*

Vol. Seamus Costello	Assassinated	5th Oct 77	Co. Wicklow
POW Colm Maguire		10th Oct 87	Co. Laoise
Vol. Patrick Campbell	Killed in Action	10th Oct 99	Co. Antrim
Vol. Ronnie Bunting	Assassinated	15th Oct 80	Co. Antrim
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Vol. Tony McClland	Killed in Action	16th Oct 79	Co. Armagh
Vol. Alex Patterson	Killed in Action	12th Nov	Co. Tyrone

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.

*"The reconstruction of the Revolutionary Party of the Working Class is the only tribute befitting our fallen comrades - Let us now set about this task."*

Vol. Seamus Costello	Assassinated	5th Oct 77	Co. Wicklow
POW Colm Maguire		10th Oct 87	Co. Laoise
Vol. Patrick Campbell	Killed in Action	10th Oct 99	Co. Antrim
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Vol. Tony McClland	Killed in Action	16th Oct 79	Co. Armagh
Vol. Alex Patterson	Killed in Action	12th Nov	Co. Tyrone

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

*"We owe it to you, who have died to honour the cause you nobly served. Other generations have failed, we must not."*

The Starry Plough would first like to express its sorrow at the death of Neil Sheridan, a former INLA prisoner, in Maghaberry jail. We extend our condolences to his family and friends. Neil died tragically in mid-September.

### 30th Anniversary Special Edition

For the thirtieth anniversary edition of the Starry Plough we wish to remember all volunteers and comrades of the IRSM. If you as an individual, a relative or as a cumann wish to contribute notices for the special edition then please forward these to the Starry Plough office before 20th November 2004.

### Insertions:

If you would like to place a notice into Cuimhneamh then please contact the Starry Plough office with details as soon as possible before you want it to appear. Our contact details are on page 2. Family notices are especially welcome.



## R.S.M.

# MEMORIAL FLUTE BAND

## STRABANE - DERRY



To join or to help out please contact either

STRABANE: 028 71 884616

DERRY: 028 71 262999  
or email: [derryirsp@hotmail.com](mailto:derryirsp@hotmail.com)

<http://www.angelfire.com/band2/rsmmemorialfluteband>



# Republican Socialist Martyrs

## ★ Flute Band - Belfast ★

Are you 12 years and over and interested in joining the Republican Socialist Martyrs Flute Band?

If you are in the Belfast area then why not become involved in our flute band?

We can train you in flute, drums or colour party and new members are always welcome so if you are interested or if you know anyone who is then get in touch. If you do not want to join the band but can provide time towards fundraising etc then get in touch also.

For details contact:

**Costello House,**  
392 Falls Road,  
Belfast.  
Tel 90 238 321

## FREE ALL POLITICAL HOSTAGES



### FREE DESSIE O'HARE NOW!

Dessie O'Hare is a qualifying prisoner under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement. He is currently being held hostage by the 26 County administration and is being denied his right to freedom from his incarceration for political reasons.

For full details of Dessie's case please go to the following website: [http://irsm.org/irsp/free\\_dessie/](http://irsm.org/irsp/free_dessie/)

An

The Starry Plough

# Camchéachta



Pairtí Poblachtacht Soisialach na h-Éireann

FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION AND SOCIALISM!

## VICTORY TO THE VENEZUELAN REVOLUTION!



**Why we must support the Venezuelan Revolution!**  
By Ramon Sanchez

Very few people thought in 1998 that things were going to go so far in Venezuela. That year Hugo Chavez was elected by a popular majority on a programme of tackling poverty and improving the living conditions of the Venezuelan people. His election also showed how disappointed the people were with the traditional political parties. Indeed, they were the responsible for the misery of the country despite the massive revenues coming from the oil.

On April 11th, 2002 the World woke up with the news that the Venezuelan government had changed overnight, after the resignation of Chavez. In most of the media the new was cheerfully announced as the democratic "transition" after Chavez. In fact a coup d'etat was carried through by the Venezuelan oligarchy with the help of the US embassy in Caracas. If someone had a doubt of the involvement of the US in the coup, Collin Powell made it clear enough, appearing on TV to announce recognition of the new government. Only 48 hours later the same media had to announce that Hugo Chavez had been put back in office by paratroopers, the former army battalion commanded by Chavez. The reality was very different. When all the poor from the Caracas slums realised that a coup d'etat was taking place, they marched towards the Miraflores Palace with serious intentions to overthrow the new government headed by the leader of FEDECAMARAS (the bosses organisation) and backed by the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy, the most reactionary section of the army and also the bureaucracy of the old trade union organisation CTV. Incredibly, and against any sort of logic, the Chavez government had done practically nothing against the plotters, though people in the streets were demanding measures against them. The nineteenth peasant uprising leader Ezequiel Zamora said "the only way to deal with a wasps' nest is with fire, if you disturb it but do not destroy it they will come back to sting you". The reaction took advantage of the situation and tried to destabilise the movement again.

In December of 2002 they tried a so-called general strike (an actual lock-out) called by the boss' organisation and CTV bureaucracy. The spontaneous answer of the masses was the key to defeat this lock-out. Suddenly the PDVSA workers (oil state owned company) organised themselves and ran the oil plants. Neighbouring workers set up pickets in front of the PDVSA facilities to fight back against the sabotage, the students and unemployed teachers replaced the pro-opposition teachers at the schools, the local women organised daily life in their communities.

At the beginning of 2004 the reaction played the card of the referendum. The Bolivarian

Constitution (the new Constitution passed by Chavez) allows the holding of a referendum to recall the president and other publicly elected positions. After they failed to achieve the 2,400,000 minimum signatures needed to call the referendum, the reaction hired fascist gangs to terrorise the workers, students, trade unionists and all those who support the revolutionary process. But they were beaten. Once again the spontaneous answer of the Venezuelan working people defeated the reaction. On June 6th a massive 2 million strong demonstration took place in Caracas when Chavez accepted the decision of the National Electoral Council to hold the recall referendum. This controversial decision started the "Santa Ines Battle". Having already backed Chavez seven times, the workers will battle for the eighth victory of the poor against the oligarchy. On August 15 the recall referendum took place. That day the Venezuelan workers, students, peasants and fishermen defeated again the counterrevolution-this time at the polling stations. In an election characterised by a massive turnout (around 90%) the 58.95% of the electorate voted against the recall of President Chavez.

Trotsky defined Revolution as "... the direct interference of the masses in historical events". This is what is actually happening in Venezuela right now. People are taking control of their own future. But this process is not free from dangers. Military provocations by the Colombian Government are taking place along the border shared with Venezuela, seeking justification for a foreign intervention. Those provocations respond to the interests of US imperialism. We must recall that Venezuela is the world's fifth largest oil exporter. The political and economic influence of US imperialism is being seriously threatened by the Bolivarian movement. The struggle of the Venezuelan workers, peasants, fishermen and youth is an encouraging beacon for the masses in the rest of Latin America. The financiers, the businessmen, the big banks, the oil companies and other gangsters controlling the continent's economy cannot tolerate the people thinking by themselves. The actions of the Venezuelan people are seriously threatening capitalism as the ruling economical and social system. However the dangers are not only abroad. In Venezuela the reaction, although defeated, has not been eliminated. Everyday there are calls on TV for US intervention in the country. We, the workers and youth of the rest of the world must defend a process that has achieved the establishment of indigenous people's rights to land and bilingual education; the introduction of food subsidies and vouchers for pregnant women and first time mothers; a massive expansion of health care to working-class families; an additional 1.5 million children in school getting three free meals a day amongst other measures. If our Venezuelan class brothers and sisters are defeated then we will also be defeated as well. If they are successful the winds of revolution can blow again in Latin America and in all over the world.

THE VOICE OF IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALISM!