

UNITED IRISHMAN

An tEireannach Aontaithe Bealtaine (May) 1978

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Belfast Ring Road — Republican Clubs

VICTORY

The decision of Northern Secretary of State to give the go-ahead to the Belfast transport plan has been welcomed in the main by the Belfast Executive of Republican Clubs.

In fact the Clubs can congratulate themselves as the new scheme is largely based on their proposals.

At the enquiry conducted by the Department of Environment on October 18 last the Party's West Belfast candidate, Brian Brennan in the forthcoming Westminster election submitted what was described at the time as the "most comprehensive and detailed set of proposals to be put before the enquiry."

Equally pleased at the outcome of the enquiry is North Belfast Republican Clubs' Cllr. Seamus Lynch. "I was very much concerned at the proposed destruction of residential

areas like Hamill Street. It has been saved and that is no small matter for the local people and for the city," he said.

However the people of Dockland are disappointed by the decision to continue with the West Tangent which will mean that one of Belfast's oldest communities will disappear.

Overall the new plan incorporates features which are a rejection of the roads philosophy. Two aspects alone stress this, the proposed rail connection and a new bus station. This

has been described by the Clubs as a real gain for public transport and a reversal of the widespread strategy which places the interests of private hauliers before people's needs.

Expenditure on the plan is estimated to be roughly £100 million and Mason claimed that it would create "significant employment opportunities in inner Belfast" and would also stimulate the construction industry. Here it is expected that the Belfast Republican Clubs' Executive will be renewing their campaign for a State Construction industry.

Footnote: The drive to replace the Shankil and Falls Roads black taxi "service" with public transport will produce interesting reactions from certain para-military organisations.

RACIST POWELL SUES



Enoch Powell, the right wing Unionist MP for South Down, is suing Des O'Hagan, Director of Elections for Sinn Féin The Workers' Party.

Powell, notorious for his racist views and "rivers of blood" speeches on immigration in Britain, is furious about an attack on him made by Des O'Hagan in Newry.

Powell is even suing the Newry Reporter, the local weekly paper, for daring to report O'Hagan's speech, in which he pointed out the similarities between the 'Blacks and Paddys go home' policies of Powell in Britain, and the 'Prods and Planters get out' call of the Provos and their political front groups in Ireland.

O'Hagan also made a slashing attack on the SDLP push for a 'Catholic Unity' candidate to oppose Powell in the South Down constituency. "This is blatant sectarianism", he said, "and we will have none of it. We will put forward a Socialist candidate, pledged to defend the interests of all the working people of the constituency, regardless of their creed or tradition."

A letter from top London solicitors Oswald Hickson, Collier and Co. to Des O'Hagan says they have been consulted by "the Right Honourable J. Enoch Powell, MBE, MP," concerning the "extremely offensive, grossly defamatory and wholly unfounded allegations" alleged to have been made against their client in O'Hagan's speech.

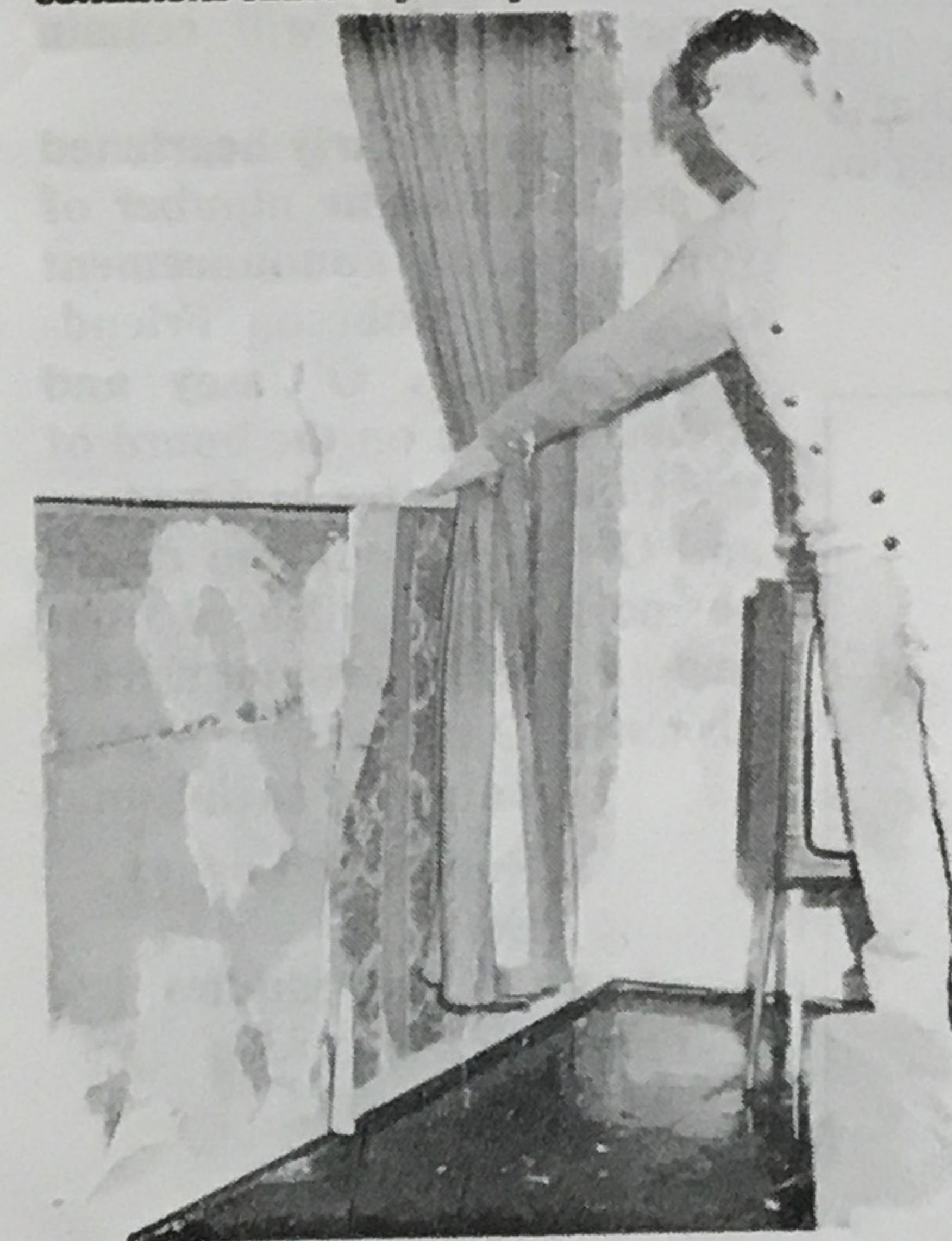
They are looking for a "full and unqualified apology," compensation for "the damage to our client's reputation," and a Statement in Open Court. They say they are commencing proceedings against Des O'Hagan, and the Newry Reporter and its publishers.

Finglas housing failure

The present emergency situation concerning 18 houses in the Finglas South area of north Dublin can hardly have been a surprise to the authorities.

They have been literally bombarded with reports of defects in the houses since the scheme began in 1973.

● It is over four years since Mr. FitzPatrick of Rathvilly Drive and other householders of Finglas South, first reported the terrible conditions caused by damp.



Finglas South is one of the "low cost" schemes introduced by Fianna Fáil when last in government and it consists of 1900 houses. These "low cost" schemes were built in many areas throughout the State and are a typical example of Fianna Fáil support for 'Free Enterprise' at all costs.

The houses were designed without fireplaces and using construction methods and materials which produced houses requiring constant heat throughout to keep dry. The central heating unit provided for this purpose can just about do that, but it will not keep the occupants of the house warm. And anyway, who can afford a heating bill of up to £100 every two months!

Householders, therefore, must find alternative heating and with the absence of fireplaces the choice is invariably bottled gas heaters. Unfortunately these heaters worsen the situation because of the amount of moisture they create.

In May of last year the local constituency council of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party in Finglas circulated a memorandum to the bodies responsible for the houses,

giving details of the defects and outlining proposals to rectify them. To date no action has been taken on any of them.

Since the present emergency erupted Proinsias De Rossa, chairperson of the Constituency Council called for action to be taken on his Party's proposals, not just in relation to the 18 houses which are of immediate concern, but in relation to the entire 1900 houses.

The Minister for the Environment must make money available immediately to Dublin Corporation for the installation of fireplaces at NO COST to the householders, and to carry out essential remedial work on the houses.

The Corporation must set up a special force based on its building and development section to carry out all the work involved. The Minister must provide additional funds to Dublin Corporation to enable it to cover a 75% subsidy on central heating costs.

Finally, the Minister must set in motion machinery for the recovery from the builders of all costs necessitated by faulty construction work.

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UNITED IRISHMAN

An tEireannach Aontaithe

PRESSURE

The only political initiative taken by the British Government in regard to Ireland in the last three years has been to increase the number of Westminster seats in the 6 Counties. Even that decision was taken for the wrong reasons. Its purpose was to help the Labour Government in Britain and not to help the situation in Ireland. In any case it will not be effective until the election after the next — possibly for five years.

The pressure at present comes from Wales and Scotland. It is here that the Labour Government will stand or fall in the next election. It is here that the working class people are being mobilised behind coherent demands that unite them. In Scotland the primary motivation for the demand for autonomy is oil. The Scottish people can clearly see this precious resource being robbed from them. They can see the pipelines moving south. They want to hold on to it and also on to all their other economic resources to improve their own living standards and build a better future for their children.

The SNP has been the unifying force for these demands. If Labour is to hold its position it must accede to Scottish demands for autonomy. Thus the pressure is on to force at least some measure of devolution.

There is no such pressure from Ireland. There is no clear unifying force which can mobilise national and international pressure against the British government. It is well to recall the position which existed just ten years ago when the struggle for civil rights became a major international focal point for such pressure. This was so successful that three governments, Dublin, Belfast and London were forced to fall in line and accede to the campaign demands.

At that stage, in the autumn of 1969, the unity and strength of mass pressure seemed to be (and was) almost invincible. The British governments hold on Ireland was only saved in the nick of time by what must have seemed to Wilson and Callaghan to be the miraculous intervention of the Provisional Alliance. This broke the painstakingly built up mass pressure and released the safety valve. Since then Britain has dictated the pace of events. It has now ground to a halt entirely.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Comrades,

I enclose P.O. for £10 for my sub to U.I. and Eolas, plus the change to funds in memory of our outstanding comrade John MacHale, killed in Scunthorpe.

It was indeed a great honour and pleasure to know him. Such men are hard to find.

I formerly lived in Scunthorpe where I was Branch Secretary of the Communist Party. I am still a member of the C.P.

If anyone from Clann wishes to see me I am only too happy to help if I can.

Fraternally, Is Mise,
Mick Kenny,
Goole,
Humberside
DN 14 5NL

will help establish public transport as a social priority. I agree with the UI article when it stresses the necessity of defeating the free enterprise private motor-car lobby. "Shared transport" must be given precedence over personal transport.

Socialists should campaign for the Rapid Rail system, coupled with a radical change in our road transport policy i.e. the creation of bus lanes, and the implementation of priority schemes in favour of public transport, e.g. Oxford etc.

Fraternally,
Bill McCamley,
Site 10,
Glanaon Rd.,
Finglas East,
Dublin 11.

Let us hope that this is the beginning of the recognition of his memory in the USA, that he so justly deserves.

I passed on the UI article to some black friends, who found it most interesting.

Finally, there is a small booklet on Paul Robeson, put out by the YWLL (CPUSA youth group). If you don't have it, I'd be glad to send it to you.

Best wishes for success,
Kevin Coleman Joyce
218 Centre Street,
Dorchester,
Mass. 02124
USA
April 11, 1978.

Comrades,

Your contention that the Rapid Rail system will solve Dublin's chaotic traffic conditions (UI March) is erroneous for a number of reasons.

Although Rapid Rail will take pressure off road transportation, it won't stop the growth (albeit, at a reduced rate) of private car ownership. Bearing this in mind our road passenger service (which will act as "feeders" for the Rapid Rail) will still have difficulty providing a dependable service. London's bus line faces interminable traffic jams, in spite of an underground laid decades ago.

The Rapid Rail system should be welcomed because it

A Chara,

In the March United Irishman, I was very pleased and surprised to read of the formation of the Paul Robeson Friendship Society.

The late Mr. Robeson was a great internationalist, supporting the working people of his native USA, and indeed, the working people of the world.

Because of his work for Republican Spain, he was made an honorary member of the Abe Lincoln Brigade, the USA section of the International Brigades. Only two other Americans, including writer Earnest Hemmingway, had this honour bestowed on them.

But, Mr. Robeson is little enough appreciated in the USA, thus my surprise at seeing his name in the UI.

The late Mr. Robeson was honoured in Los Angeles, California, April 9, 1978 with a "Paul Robeson Day".

Although an article in a local paper referred to Mr. Robeson mainly as an actor and lawyer, rather than as a socialist, black political activist, and humanitarian internationalist, it was the first public mention of him that I have seen since his passing in '76.

Dear friends and comrades,

May I congratulate you on your fine review of O'Casey's play, *The Star Turns Red*, in the March number of *United Irishman*. It was, as you wrote, the theatrical event of the decade, from one perspective. Tomas MacAnna's brilliant production deserves all the applause of O'Caseyans everywhere.

The play also points up one aspect of O'Casey that has been overlooked. Few can doubt that O'Casey's three Dublin plays are still poignant and relevant to the situation in the North, and many will say that his later plays showed him sadly out of touch with the "modern" Ireland.

Yet *The Star* addresses itself to an ever-present danger: the revival of Fascism; whether in Chile, South Africa, or in Ireland; whether accompanied by naked jack-booted terrorism or by subtle manipulation of the mind, the body and the soul. His play, he once wrote, was "a warning." That warning was directed to all of us, and as long as the forces of liberation are in struggle to produce a just and equitable society the play will remain relevant.

I was particularly heartened to see in the same number of your paper an announcement of a "Paul Robeson Friendship Society". O'Casey and Robeson were on the board of the Unity Theatre in London, and O'Casey would no doubt be particularly pleased that such a society would attract his native Dubliners.

Yours for socialism,
Robert G. Lowery,
Editor,
O'Casey Studies
P.O. Box 333
Holbrook,
New York.

FILMS

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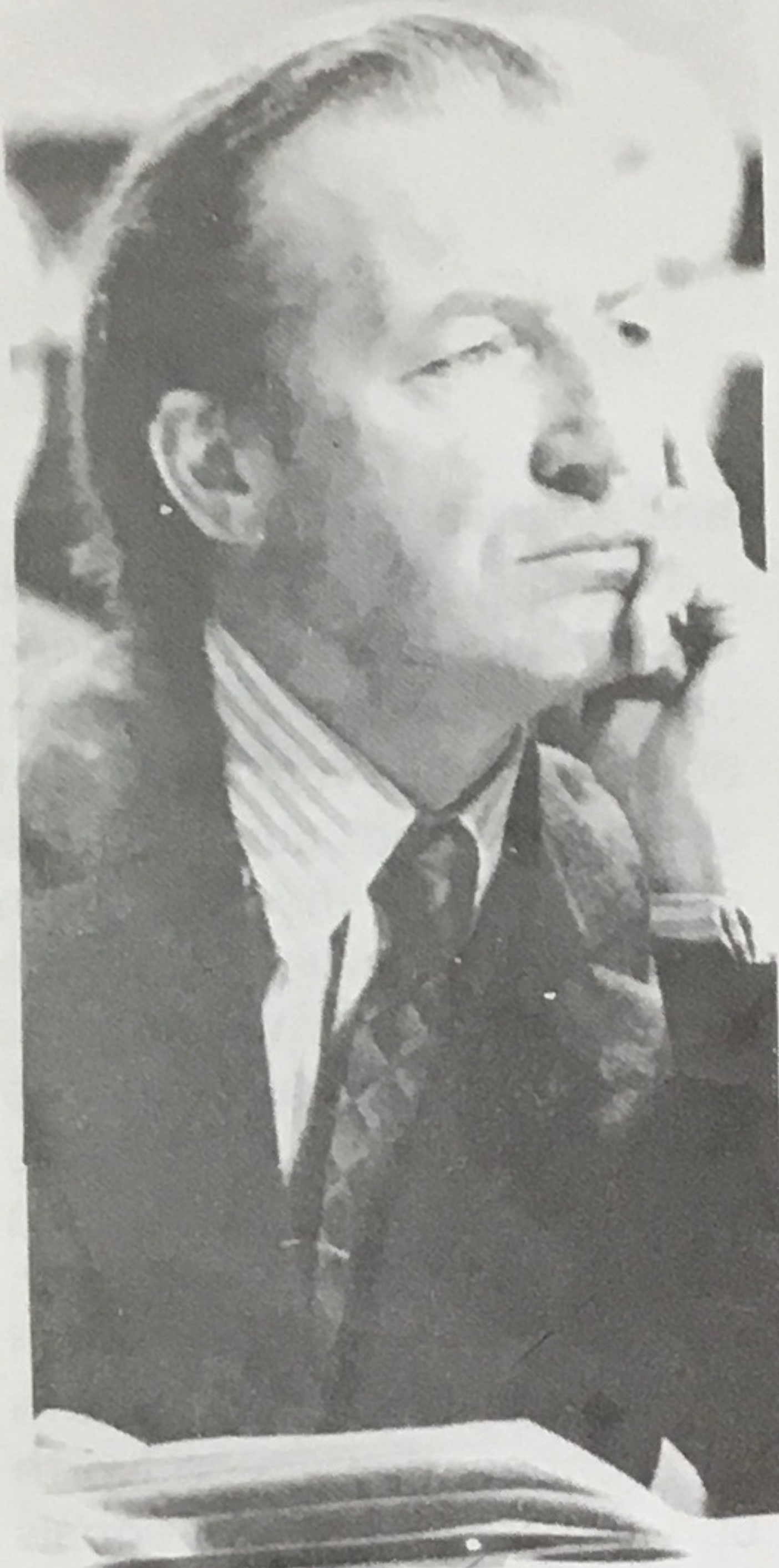
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● Charles Haughey.

Women must fight for rights

A highly successful seminar on Women's Rights in Ireland was held in April under the auspices of the National Women's Committee of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party. Delegates from all over Ireland, men and women, attended.

The first lecture dealt with Women at Work and it was given by an active trade unionist who outlined the prevalent attitudes towards women at work, both inside the trade unions and in society generally.

She emphasised the point that, despite the fact that legislation had been updated recently in relation to equal pay and sex discrimination,

many current attitudes militated against women workers. "Work needs to be done" she argued, "to inform and encourage women workers to take action, using this legislation to defend their own interests."

The second lecture, delivered by a teacher, dealt with Women and Education. She analysed the part the education system played in determining male/female roles. Even among small children, boys are directed into adopting an active, positive more aggressive role. Girls, on the other hand are geared towards a passive, home orientated role.

This division of roles at an

early age limited the potential of both boys and girls the speaker argued. On the question of single-sex schools, Sinn Féin The Workers' Party policy is clearly in favour of mixed schools. As the speaker pointed out, many social problems, violence in the home for example — can arise from the segregation of children in their formative stages.

Many specific areas of agitation and activity were identified during the discussions which followed. The Committee will maintain close liaison with other women's organisations to ensure the implementation of the equal pay legislation.

They also discussed plans to oppose the Department of Social Welfare's clear discrimination against married women in refusing them unemployment benefit by falsely alleging that they are unavailable for work.

The seminar also revealed wide areas in Education where progressive changes are required. In fact the whole system of Education was said to be totally irrelevant to the life of young women either at work or at home.

The National Women's Committee are presently assisting in the setting up of local women's groups to help in the local fight on these and other issues.

Contraceptive law reform now a major issue

Legislation to regularise the sale and distribution of contraceptives has been promised for some time. The Minister for Health, Mr. Haughey, first announced that he would be 'consulting' with interested groups before drafting any legislation. One such group was the Catholic Bishops — all chaste, all male and none ever likely to bear a child.

While 'consultation' was going on, ordinary women continued to make use of the existing family planning facilities and even though they were not directly consulted they made it clear what their feelings on the matter were.

Later still, a voluntary survey conducted by women in the Dublin suburb of Ballinteer showed a large majority in favour of the provision of a family planning service through their local health centre.

The Bishops, who were consulted, then issued a statement to the effect that they would not stand in the way of legislation to provide access to contraceptives. It seemed like

a great, liberal swing on the part of the Hierarchy. No longer, it seemed, did they want to interfere in the political affairs of the country or attempt to force Catholic teaching on the entire population.

But what exactly have the Bishops given away? Contraceptives are already being used by thousands of people and all their denunciations of their use have been ignored. Their stand on the issue was unpopular and even had begun to affect their influence. The Bishops have only conceded what they have already lost.

It may well be that this concession will be used as a bargaining point to get what they want in other aspects. Their statement on 'non-interference' laid great emphasis on the need to restrict the use of contraceptives to married couples only and to prevent their use by single people.

This has been echoed by the Minister for Health and it is very possible that the promised legislation will try to keep contraceptives out of the

reach of unmarried people. Similar proposals were put forward by the Coalition when it was in power. Another clerical/political deal is in the wind.

There is a danger that people will accept this legislation, any legislation, as a step forward and will overlook the flaws. The people who will suffer will be women and the poorer the woman, the greater the suffering.

Even if you don't want a child, it is still easier to cope if you have a nice house and a reasonable income. When you are living in crowded, bad housing, unemployed or badly paid, the burden of another child can be intolerable. Many women have paid, through lasting illness or deprivation, for the self-righteousness of the Catholic Hierarchy.

It is now up to Mr. Haughey to provide the family planning facilities which the vast majority of women want. At least he can no longer lay the blame on the Bishops for his failure to legalise the sale of contraceptives.



● Jim Savage of Cork shows solidarity with striking workers in Grunwick whose strike still continues.

Grunwick strike

The famous Grunwick Strike is now in its 20th month. The mass rallies and demonstrations have ended but the strike still goes on. Sixty workers are still out.

When the strike started in August 1976 basic pay rates were £25 for a 35 hour week for office workers and £28 for a 40 hour week for process workers.

As a result of the strike pay rates have been increased by 30% and there

has been dramatic improvements in holiday and overtime entitlements. But of course, the workers on strike, who forced the improvements, are getting nothing out of this.

A National Conference has now been called for Sunday, May 14, in the Wembley Conference Centre, London. The Committee feels that may will be the month of decision for the Grunwick Strike.

SHELL-FISH FARMING AT MORNINGTON

The closing of the mussel beds at Mornington, Co. Louth last month marked a major crisis in our shell-fish farming industry. Yet it received relatively little attention from Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Brian Lenihan.

The beds were closed when 22 people in England contacted infectious jaundice after eating mussels which came from Ireland. The Mornington mussels were prime suspects because they are exported in unpurified condition.

Our shell-fish farming industry is worth almost as much to the economy as the sea fishing industry which is so

often in the headlines. Nearly £10 million a year is spent on protection of our sea fisheries and much more is spent on research and development and provision of facilities.

Very little is spent on research and development of shell-fish farming and the government maintain practically no control over the operations of the private exporters.

It may well be that the Mornington mussels were not to blame at all for the illnesses in England. But the fact that they are exported unpurified leaves them open to blame for everything.

Cabhair

Irish Republican Prisoners' Defence & Aid Fund
30 Gardiner Place Dublin 1.

Funds are urgently needed for ● Republican Prisoners' Welfare
● Aid for Dependents ● Legal Aid
All Contributions Acknowledged

THE POVERTY OF FEDERALISM

SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR MAJOR SHIFTS OF POLICY HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE SDLP, FIANNA FAIL AND FINE GAEL.

ALL THREE PARTIES HAVE HARMONISED THEIR POLICIES AROUND THE IDEA OF A FEDERATION BETWEEN THE TWO EXISTING STATES IN IRELAND.

THE REASON FOR THIS HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT IS NOT YET CLEAR. NO EXPLANATIONS AND NO

PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE ISSUE OF FEDERALISM HAS TAKEN PLACE. WHY IS THE OBJECTIVE OF A UNITED REPUBLIC BEING ABANDONED?

THIS IS THE FIRST OF A THREE PART SERIES OF ARTICLES IN WHICH WE DISCUSS THE MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REPUBLICANISM AND FEDERALISM.

THOSE WHO STAND FOR A UNITARY SOCIALIST REPUBLICAN STATE SHOULD STAND UP AND BE COUNTED NOW.

piece of sleight-of-hand which effectively eliminates democratic politics in favour of middle class paternalism.

Finally it achieves an agreed United Ireland. Only the churlish would want to question the meaning of this highly emotive phrase.

Republicans who have an unambiguous secular, socialist stance, are faced not so much with political and philosophical difficulties in opposing either hard or soft federalism, but rather with the continuing problem of making their voices heard above the orchestrated, missionary chorus of the federalists.

Federalism is an anti-political concept. No matter how much its acolytes may squirm and distort their purposes, its essential features stress the entrenchment of religion above politics. Undoubtedly the main reason why it has attracted support from both proselytising laymen and clerics of the main Christian sects.

Any of the schemes advanced, some would say stunts, make great play of the need to maintain the ascendancy of one religious grouping over another or equally apolitical, a local government based on power-sharing between the "minority" and the "majority". This playing around with constitutional formulae is nothing more than a continuous effort to provide an elaborate smokescreen, a will o' the wisp, so as to permit the perpetuation of the real evils in Irish society.

The list of those evils is clearly not the sort of litany with which the federalists concern themselves: poverty, unemployment, bad housing, pollution, sectarianism, exploitation of both our human and natural resources, grossly inadequate welfare, hospital and educational facilities, the denial of human rights and dignity. Tragically the list is almost endless.

But heaven deliver the federalists from such materialistic concerns. They prefer to pontificate about intricate constitutional refinements rather like so many mediaeval monks studying the accommodation problems of angelic forms on pinheads.

However the emergence of the federal solution in recent times can be traced to the influence of a closer historical epoch than the dark ages. The idea seems first to have been mooted by Herbert Samuel during the Home Rule debate of 1913 and subsequently had the backing of Lloyd George during the 1917-18 Irish Convention.

Its revival now by a mixture of Hibernian nationalists, liberals and clerics in the world of the EEC, international monopoly capitalism and the worldwide struggle of the working class for state power is both a significant comment on the reactionary politics of its proponents and their total inability to come to grips with the real problems facing the Irish people, both economically

and politically.

No matter how relevant the discussions of the 1918 period on fiscal issues or custom duties or the veto rights of Ulstermen and certainly the concerns of the Northern capitalists were very real, the present federal revivalism is ludicrous. To be sure it made good liberal sense to give the Northern industrialists a feeling of autonomy within an agrarian Ireland for the British empire still flourished. But in an economy dominated North and South by multi-nationals and where the economic balance of power is shifting in favour of the 26 Counties there is no place now even for the liberal view.

It is interesting that no Northern industrialists are playing a comparable role to their counterparts of the Irish Convention. One does not have to be a Karl Marx to understand why.

The appeal of the federal solution can also be understood as an intellectual easy option for those who have abdicated even from a crude Republican viewpoint. Rather than devise policies in pursuit of the goal of Tone, they prefer to strengthen sectarianism by pandering to the decadent remnants of the Orange leadership. Rather than promote the growth of a secular philosophy in the South they court the active sympathy of the most reactionary section of the Roman Catholic Church in Europe.

(To be contd. next month.)

The vogueish anti-political concept, federalism, is procuring widespread publicity. This is hardly surprising when one reviews the sources from which the idea emanates in its variety of guises.

From Fianna Fail to the Provisional Alliance, from Northern Tory-Liberals to Community "politicians" there is a degree of reinforcement, a unanimity of perspective, which suggests both a common philosophy and also deeprooted efforts to impose this final solution on the Irish people, North and South.

Federalism is an appeal to the reasonable man.

Who wants to appear unreasonable? Federalism solves the fundamental question of the relationship of Protestants to the rest of Roman Catholic Ireland. That this is "the fundamental question" is never demon-

strated. It satisfies the aspirations of the majority of the Irish people by guaranteeing a British withdrawal, sooner or later. The meaning of a British withdrawal is left sufficiently vague so as not to promote any questioning of such an obviously self-explanatory statement.

Federalism assuages the fear that the classical man-in-the-street has of central government. Naturally it does not raise the question as to the class character of a central government. It asserts the natural primacy of community as opposed to remote, faceless, bureaucratic control. A highly laudable proposition for those who want to control both the community and a central body. It replaces divisive politics with consensus politics, an adroit

LURGAN

Farcical Survey

Commenting on the Law Society's refusal to face the fact that prisoners are being brutalised by the RUC, Republican Clubs' Chairman, Councillor Malachy McGurran stated that he was not surprised that the Society's first statement on abuse of the law in the present troubles simply backed up the police.

In fact, Cllr. McGurran said, the so-called survey had been a farcical exercise conducted and concluded on an absurdly unscientific basis.

Why, for example, was a random three month period selected for examination, and how could the particular conclusions for that period be held to be true generally. How could the failure of a larger number of solicitors to reply to an obscure memo be taken as conclusive evidence that ill-treatment had not taken place, when in fact solicitors specialising in these cases daily allege ill-treatment of their clients, invariably supported by medical evidence?

Why did the Law Society refuse to conduct their survey on a wider basis

both by calling for medical evidence, by contacting concerned civil liberties bodies, and by interviewing complainants? How can the Law Society ignore the vast sums which have been paid out in civil actions over the years to the victims of police brutality?

The answer to these questions can only be that this exercise by the Law Society is simply another case of mutual backscratching by establishment institutions with a vested interest in the status quo. The refusal of the Law Society to face reality simply demonstrates once again that its regard for the rule of law is only valid when it is in their interest.

Certainly, this superficial survey will be regarded with cynicism by torture victims themselves and all those concerned at first hand with their cases.

DUBLIN

Demand on Education

Mr. Pat McCartan, chairperson of Dublin Comhairle Ceanntair of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party, called upon Mr. John Wilson, the Minister for Education, and the Fianna Fáil Government to face up to its responsibilities in Education.

"It is the duty of this State to educate our children and the Government is therefore responsible for the financing and control of our schools. It is time the Government stopped pussy-footing around and took a firm stand on this issue.

It is ridiculous when children have to be sent home because there is no money for heat or conditions endurable for both teachers and pupils. We call upon the Minister for Education, Mr. John Wilson, to take immediate remedial action on this matter."

WEXFORD

Economic madness

Speaking to a Regional Delegate Conference in Wexford last month, Tomás Mac Giolla, President of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party condemned the proposal to build a Nuclear Power Station at Carnsore Point in Wexford.

Pointing out that the safety and pollution aspects of the proposal to build a nuclear station had been adequately dealt with, he concentrated on the economic arguments against such a course.

"The ESB argument for a nuclear station", he said, "is that we are too dependent on foreign oil imports which are likely to become very scarce in the next 20 years. But a nuclear station would be totally dependent on imports from the United States of the necessary nuclear fuel. Yet this fuel is already so scarce in the US that they are cutting back on building further nuclear stations. If they allowed present plans to go ahead they would have 725 nuclear reactors in operation by the year 2000.

"The economic madness becomes all the more apparent when we see all the major international oil companies concentrating their search for oil in Irish waters. International experts are in fact convinced that a major oilfield does exist no more than 30 or 40 miles from Carnsore Point itself.

Instead of sanctioning the spending of at least £600 million on a nuclear station Mr. O'Malley should allow the ESB to go ahead and search for oil themselves. They already sought a licence to do this in 1974 but were refused permission.

THE PARTY PLATFORM

On January 1st this year Ireland became a full member of the Common Market and the last barriers to "freedom of movement" within the EEC fell.

Irish workers can now take jobs in any EEC country on

the same terms as the citizens of that country. This article takes a look at some Irish workers who have jumped the gun and taken employment abroad before effective "freedom of movement" was established.

EUROPADDYS!

It is Saturday night. The "Queen Vic" is packed. Through the smoke-filled atmosphere the old Queen stares disapprovingly at her surroundings. A stereo blasts out the Mull of Kintyre. In a corner a sing-song has started led by Seamus from Donegal and Eamon from Galway. Boof O'Hanlon from S. Armagh strikes up the "Broad Black Brimmer". The conversation is about piece-work, wet-time, politics, home.

We could be in any Irish pub in the Holloway Road, Northampton, Birmingham or Liverpool but we are in fact in Brussels, the capital of "Europe". Across the road the Berlaymont, the powerhouse of the EEC Commission, towers above the busy traffic of rue de la Loi, lights blazing from every window in flagrant contradiction of EEC Directives on energy conservation.

What has brought these Irish lads to Brussels where the traditional problems of the Irish emigrant are compounded by language difficulties and a totally alien environment? The answer is of course money. Most of the boys here have previously worked in London where they were recruited by agents for Continental building firms. The economic recession in Britain, coupled with the clampdown

on tax evasion spelt the end of the £200 a week wage packet which was the dream of every Irish construction worker in Britain.

Soon after Irish and British entry to the EEC, Continental building firms began to advertise for construction workers in the London evening papers. They had heard of the Irish willingness for hard work and their devil-may-care approach to health insurance, taxation and job security.

Belgian workers are, however, highly unionised and enjoy job security unequalled in most countries in Western Europe.

Their wages are also pegged to the cost-of-living index and they have generous holidays and statutory pension schemes. These various factors have pushed labour costs in Belgium sky-high and have led to many speculative builders getting their fingers burned. This is why they find the Irish labour so attractive.

Dazzled by promises of high wages and no tax the Irish came, first in a trickle and then in a steady stream. The talk of high wages was true. A skilled worker can take home £250 a week but the other side of the coin is that he must work a twelve-hour day, seven days a week to do so.

The employers can pay these wages because by not declaring their Irish workers,



● EEC migrant workers often live in overcrowded hostels rather than pay the high rents asked for private accommodation.

they can evade payment of taxes, social security benefits, holiday pay, etc. All in all the Irish labour scene in Belgium is reminiscent of the balmy days in Britain before the clampdown on the "lump" and other forms of tax evasion.

There is however one significant difference.

Unlike Britain, Belgium's health service is largely in private hands. Medical care is good but expensive. Since the employers do not pay any social insurance contributions in respect of their Irish employees they have no social security cover whatsoever. If they are off sick they simply get no pay. An accident at work could also be a financial disaster as a week in hospital in Belgium can cost up to £1,000.

In the event of permanent disability the worker and his dependents would not get one penny of industrial injuries or invalidity benefit. To crown it all, Irish workers can (and have been sacked at a moment's notice. A Belgian (or legal immigrant) would be entitled to several months' severance pay and could draw unemployment benefit equal

to 80% of his salary for up to 12 months.

Why then do the Irish accept these conditions. Simply because they do not know the first thing about Belgium or its complex social security laws. Very few of them have even a smattering of French and they have little or no contact with Belgian workers. Needless to say, unscrupulous employers are quick to exploit their ignorance in these matters. Another factor is the traditional Irish attitude to red tape such as tax, registration, social security, etc. Most of the Irish here are in their early 20's and have no family ties. If sacked they can easily get another job because of their reputation for hard work and their disinterest in social insurance.

The Irish are enjoying this bonanza while it lasts. Although the cost of living and of accommodation, in particular is significantly higher than in Ireland they can still manage to bank a large part of their wages by living in substandard housing under much the same conditions as their counterparts in some of the more unsalubrious

ghettoes in England.

Many of them have been here for three years and have saved enough to buy a house or a small farm at home. Others of course have spent most of their hard-earned cash in the English pubs which flourish around the Berlaymont area, or in the rip-off night clubs round the plusher Avenue Louise area.

The goldrush may however be coming to an end. Today there are literally hundreds of illegal Irish immigrants in Brussels and it is becoming increasingly difficult for authorities to turn a blind eye to them. Unemployment in Belgium is running at 11%, the highest figure for any EEC Member State and the building trade is one of the hardest hit sectors.

Unemployed Belgian tradesmen are unlikely to sit back and longer and allow illegal immigrants to take their jobs. The trade union movement is stepping up the pressure on the authorities to take action. Questions have been asked in Parliament. Meanwhile Queen Victoria wrinkles a disdainful nostril as the "Broad Black Brimmer" gets louder and louder.

Sotal agus Geilleadh

bairdeiri príosúin, ainneoin agóidí ó chuile dream idir phrofaisiúnta agus deónach, a bhfuil baint acu leis an scéal.

Is léir nach ndeachaigh an Coileánach i gcomhar le héinne agus a phlean á bheartú ach anois tá a chomrádaithe breátha ag seasamh leis guala ar ghualainn, iad bodhar go hiomlán ar argóintí deabhunaithe in aghaidh a neagóra?

GEILLEADH DON CLEIR

Gan a bheith sásta leanúint leis an leatrom atá á dhéanamh ar ogánaigh bhochta na príomhcathrach, rinne Wilson an Aire Oideachais beart a mbeidh a rian ar ghasúir na tíre seo go ceann piosa fada. An

géilleadh don chléir maidir le scoileanna pobail atá i gceist. Agus cuma céard deir Wilson féin, tá sé imithe siar ar a fhocal (ní rud nua é seo ar ndó i stair Fhianna Fáil:) chun dul i gcomhairle le múinteoirí gairmoideachais roimh dul i mbun gnímh. Tá súil againn gur i mbun stailce a ghabhfaidh na múinteoirí an babhta seo.

Ní hé amháin nach bhfuil ionadaíocht chuí nó ionadaíocht de chinéal ar bith acu sin agus go bhfuil tionchar nach bhfuil tuillte acu ag an gcléir, ach beidh moráltacht agus ide-eolaíocht na múinteoirí a mbreithniú de shíor. Is ar éigin gur ghá a thuilleadh a rá faoi na torthaí a bheidh ar an gcineál sin oibre — tá sean taithe ag bail an phairtíthe seo air sin cheana.

STAI SIUN EITHNIGH

Ceist stáisiúin éithnigh ansin. Níl Fianna Fáil sásta fiú dul i mbun diospóireachta faoin scéal chun seans a thabhairt do choismhuintir na tíre seo fáil amach go díreach céard tá i gceist, olc maith no dona. Agus an sliomaire sleamhain slioc sin O Máille ag diúltú d'fhiosrú poiblí faoin stáisiún éithneach cumhachta dúirt sé nár thuig sé cén fáth go mbéadh gá lena leithéid, go raibh fhios ag cách go raibh stáisiún den chineál a bhí beartaithe aige, i mbun oibre ar fud an domhain, go sabháilte.

Nár fhoghlaim sé ceacht ón gComhrialtas faoi fhiosrú poiblí i dtaobh príosúin na tíre.

NOREEN WINCHESTER

Agus mar bhárr ar chuile shórt bhí cás Noreen Winchester ann. Ní mór a rá gur suimiúil an diospóireacht a bhí tosaithe faoi chás an chailín bhoicht, abhar nár labhradh go hoscailte faoi i dtír 'Chaitliceach' na hEireann go dtí seo. Ach tógadh an scéal agus saoradh Noreen a mharaigh a hathair a bhrú é féin uirthi go gneasúil ó bhí dhá bhliain déag aice. B'fhéidir anois nach mbeidh an oiread céanna leis ar mháithreacha labhairt amach faoi iompar barbartha den chineál seo in aghaidh cailíní óga, arbh iad a n-ionacha féin iad. Dhá dtarlódh sé an taobh ó dheas den teorainn agus dá mba ann a bhí Noreen Winchester ar a trialach ba lua go mór an phoiblíocht a thabharfaí don chás agus ní docha go saorfaí í

SCEAL
SCEIL

LOUGHAN HOUSE

Tá an-mhí imithe tharainn, mí in ar éirí le Fianna Fáil an Uaibhris cur go mór lena seirbhís in aghaidh cois mhuintir na tíre seo — ar bhealach, tá súil againn, a chuirfidh táirne ina gcónraí sa deireadh thiar. Teach Loughan — tá O Coileáin ag leanacht lena phlean barbartha gasúir idir 12 agus 16 a chur faoi ghlas ann ag

THE UNITED WORLD

Confusing Italian situation



● The spot where the Moro escort was killed, marked by masses of flowers left there by people who travelled from many parts of Italy.

Tomás MacGiolla visits Brittany

Tomás Mac Giolla, President of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party attended the 14th Annual Congress of the Breton Democratic Union (U.D.B.) which was held in Brest on April 29 and 30, and May 1st.

Fraternal delegates from the UDB have been regular visitors to the Ard Fheis of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party in recent years. At the last Ard Fheis they extended a special invitation to the President to attend their Congress and do a short tour of Brittany.

The close solidarity between the UDB and Sinn Féin The Workers' Party arises from their similar analyses of the problems facing the Breton and Irish peoples as a result of imperialist exploitation.

Both parties understand the need to organise working people to resist imperialism; both recognise the need for Left unity despite all the obstacles which exist; and both are aware of the divisive effects of terrorism.

The UDB had spectacular

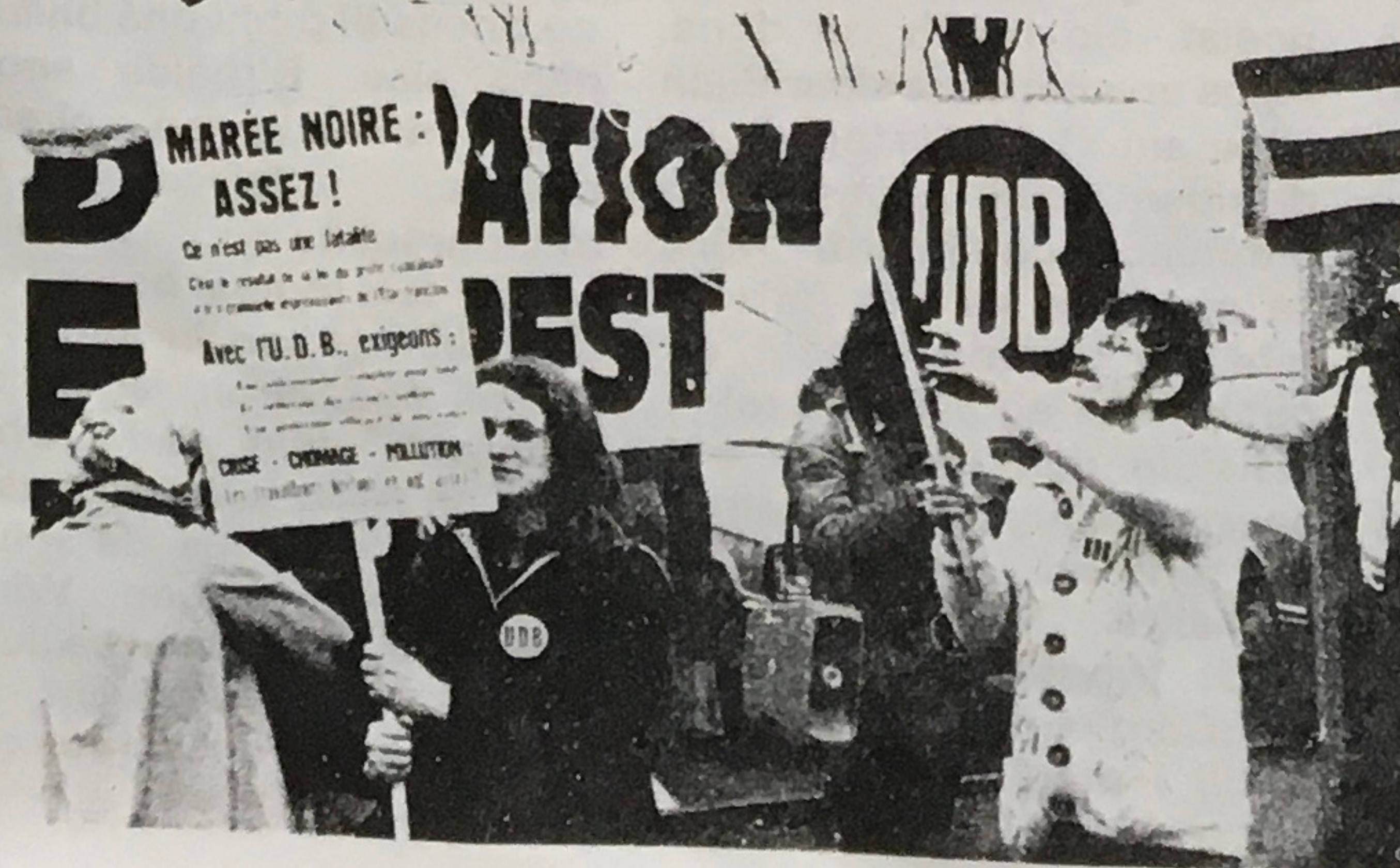
successes in the Municipality Elections in 1976 in which they participated on the list with the socialist and communist parties of France. They also took part in the recent French General Election and although retaining their vote, did not succeed in having anyone elected.

The 14th Congress was a highly successful one and demonstrated that the UDB have clearly developed policies on all aspects of life of the Breton people. They are the growing party of the Breton workers.

The highlight of the weekend for Tomás Mac Giolla was the public meeting which he addressed in the Town Hall, Brest on Sunday, 30 April.

He explained the struggle of the Irish people against modern British and American imperialism. The packed hall, aware of the similarity with the struggle of the Breton people, gave him a rousing reception.

● Members of the U.D.B. join in the protests which followed the recent massive oil spillage off the Coast of Brittany.



With the kidnapping last month of Aldo Moro, president and elder statesman of Italy's Christian Democrat Party, and the slaughter of his five-man escort, the heated debate on terrorism that has dominated the Italian scene for many months has reached fever pitch.

The capture by the "Red Brigades" of the man who has been a member of almost every cabinet since 1949 and prime minister five times has profoundly shaken the image and the authority of the Italian state which — in spite of the strength of the vast democratic forces that are now emerging and demanding a share in government — remains firmly based on the power of the Christian Democrats.

But the slaughter of the armed escort has aroused not only popular anger at the State which allowed under-armed men to assume such dangerous tasks without training and without organised tactical support, but also a determined resistance to the terrorists and their organisations.

In Italy right-wing and ultra-left terrorists have been increasingly active for years. Their campaign has mounted to a crescendo with the approach to power of the Italian Communist Party. Naturally, there is a great deal of deliberate confusion as to the nature of the terrorists and their objectives in the conservative press, and much distortion.

To counter this, and to assist in mobilising popular resistance to the terrorists based on a thorough understanding of the issues that lie behind their activities, the left-wing press, and in particular l'Unità, the Italian Communist Party daily, have published a series of articles recently. The Italian Communist Party itself has just completed a detailed and heavily documented study of the phenomenon of terrorism in Italy.

Right-wing, neo-fascist terrorism, has operated for many years in Italy a campaign based on the strategy of creating tension, so as to prepare the ground for authoritarian right-wing government. Its objective over the years has consistently been to destroy the growing power of the communist party and to stem the country's leftward development.

On the left, the situation appears more confused, but it is in reality quite

clear — as the Red brigades and their allied groups explain in their statements and documents. Their aim is also to create the conditions that will lead to authoritarian government, even fascist government. For this reason some confused observers have referred to them as "red fascists".

This is a thoroughly misleading label, but yet we must ask ourselves why should groups of the left direct their actions to such an end. Because, their theorists argue, once a right-wing authoritarian regime is established, there will be a "proletarian rebirth".

naive

This, according to the ultra-left in Italy who support terrorism, is the way to a new society. It is a policy based on naive interpretations of history and of marxism and on mystical phrases such as those above. It is also essentially elitist.

It also totally ignores the experience of all countries that have suffered fascism. Fascist regimes in Greece — not to mention those in Italy and Germany in the thirties — in Chile, in Brazil, in Spain have never resulted in "revolutionary rebirth". On the contrary, they have resulted in long and extremely difficult struggles for the reconquest of basic democratic liberties, for the reconstruction of popular unity and for political renewal.

In every single case of fascist or authoritarian government, the historical processes of democratic development have been blocked, often for decades. It is therefore perfectly clear that the ultra-left terrorist theories are unrelated to facts, and in their practical effect must be measured as extremely dangerous to democratic or revolutionary advance.

It is equally clear that the organised forces of the working class must oppose such theories unequivocally. Whatever might be the views of the left terrorists, their actions are not revolutionary, and the consequences of their actions disastrous for working

people.

Revolutionary advance depends absolutely on the concerted actions of a united people. The conquest of socialism depends on the restructuring of society at a thousand points and in a thousand ways and this can be attained only by the total involvement of the democratic forces in society — it can not be brought about by the isolated actions of elitist or terrorist groups.

Such actions can certainly topple the existing state and whatever democratic (or even pseudo-democratic) machinery already exists, but open the way only to equally elitist authoritarian regimes. The experience of recent history shows that this results in immense suffering by the working people and the dismantling and destruction of revolutionary organisations.

The Italian experience has lessons for Ireland. The struggle for the reconquest of Ireland can not be attained without the dismantling of the imperialist machine that diverts her riches abroad and maintains her people in poverty and chronic unemployment. The political terrorism of the Provisionals, for all its left-sounding phrases which have sought to awaken a sense of sympathy and solidarity among the embittered, impatient and politically inexperienced elements in this country, has not led to the minimum reduction in imperialist structures.

repression

It has, on the contrary, reinforced repression and has undermined that popular, democratic unity which is indispensable to the success of any revolutionary advance in Ireland. It has increased the danger of authoritarian government, north and south, with all the stifling consequences that this forebodes for the Irish revolutionary movement.

There is no short cut to revolution. There is no easy road. A timely study of the political terrorism that is sweeping Italy and other European countries might help us to understand this, and direct the Irish republican movement to the united efforts that our own political terrorists destroyed almost ten years ago.

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●The Free State Army shelling the Four Courts in June 1922 — using weapons borrowed from the British.

O'Malley records how the Republic was betrayed

"The Singing Flame", by Ernie O'Malley. Published by Anvil Books. Pp.312. Price £10.

"The Singing Flame" is a remarkable memoir of the Civil War. It is written with the same intimate style as Ernie O'Malley's famous record of life on active service in the Tan War ("On Another Man's Wound") and it takes the reader into the atmosphere, as well as the events surrounding the collapse of the Irish Republic.

But having said that it must also be admitted that "On Another Man's Wound" is a far better book. Part of the reason is simply that O'Malley died before completing "The Singing Flame". What we have here is a draft prepared, very ably, by a young English historian, Frances-Mary Blake.

personal

Both titles are intensely personal accounts of a man whose commitment to The Republic was that of a soldier. A man who understood the military aspects of the struggle and also had a tremendous perception of the way it affected ordinary men and women in their everyday life.

However, Ernie O'Malley was not a politician, and a book about those crucial months of the Truce and Civil War which omits politics, cannot be satisfactory.

For example one remarkable aspect of the book is that although O'Malley held senior positions in the IRA as a member of the Army Executive and its Headquarter's Staff he never once gives a detailed account of the internal debates of the organisation, or of its negotiations with Mulcahy and Collins, who were building up the new Free State Army.

What it does, as compensation, is provide some wonderful insights into

the new Free State mentality that was emerging. For instance, Eoin O'Duffy telling O'Malley that he should get himself new headquarters, his present one were "too small". And 'Ginger' O'Connell gleefully explaining that they would be allowed an army establishment of 20,000 men under the new Treaty settlement. Other headquarter's officers assumed O'Malley would be with them — after all he was from a castle Catholic background destined to follow in his father's footsteps until the national struggle took him away from medical school.

But O'Malley kept faith. To him and to very many other senior IRA officers The Republic was as unnegotiable as their own consciences and their personal oaths of allegiance to it. That was their strength and their weakness.

There was no effective liaison with Dail deputies or Sinn Féin either, let alone the labour movement. De Valera was defeated defending Document No. 2 in the Dáil, the Army Executive fell defending The Republic in The Four Courts. The powerful IRA organisation in the South and West sat on their hands waiting for the fight to come to them and the Labour Party abdicated any position of responsibility in the crisis.

O'Malley's book is a personal record of how the Republic was betrayed, how that betrayal affected him and tore apart the Volunteer movement he had helped to create. How it killed friends and friendships, wrecked lives, hopes and families. But if you want to know WHY it all happened and how the national struggle for independence from British Imperialism was lost look elsewhere.



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Hope for the future

THE crowd-puller in Dublin on Mayday weekend was 'Waiting for Future' at the Project Arts Centre, East Essex Street.

This show is a play, a musical, and a red-hot social commentary all rolled into one. Put together by a group of young people from the Irish Democratic Youth Movement, it crackled with the humour,

when the present-day membership of the IDYM will be in the prime of their lives.

The show has some terrific songs, finishing with a real show-stopper 'We are the Future'. There's anger and bitterness over the misery of emigration and unemployment and starvation-wages, and sorrow too for all the wasted lives, but the dominant theme



●Taking a break during rehearsals.

anger, warmth and energy of the future generation — and smashed home some uncomfortable truths about the past and the present.

The action switches in time from the depression and emigration of the fifties, through the surge forward of the seventies, and into a bright prophesy of the beginning of the twenty-first century —

is confidence for the future — the confidence which comes from knowing where you're going, and how to get there.

The star of the show was not even on stage. The sheer vitality, drive and enthusiasm of director Kathleen Desmond as she powerhouses her way through rehearsal has to be seen to be believed

Bookshop opens



THE BOOKSHOP was officially opened on April 21 and over 150 people attended the 'gala' occasion. Padraig Mac Caillaigh cut the tape on behalf of Charlie Gilmore who unfortunately was prevented from attending due to illness. Charlie sent his good wishes for the bookshop's success and Tomás Mac Giolla read Charlie's prepared address.

THE BOOKSHOP is open Monday — Saturday from 9.30a.m. to 5.30p.m. Some special features include a large number of Irish and Children's books and a wide selection of records and cassettes of folk and traditional music.

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PEOPLE IN POLITICS

CONSENT

In the news at Carrickmacross Urban District Council, Co. Monaghan recently was Sinn Féin The Workers' Party Colr. Francis O'Donoghue. Calling for a more humane approach to the treatment of young offenders, he won the Council over to supporting a resolution altering "the age of criminality from seven to fifteen years". Colr. O'Donoghue added that public representatives had a moral responsibility to face up to the social and economic problems confronting children from under privileged and deprived families.

NEW FORCE

Further North in Co. Tyrone Colr. Frank McElroy Vice-chairman of Omagh District Council was laying down Republican policy on the need to overhaul the existing structure of the RUC. McElroy claimed, "The Police Service that we in the Republican Clubs envisage is a service which must be built up from scratch, be unarmed, have no duties of a military nature and be under both a central civilian control body and a local civilian control body." Colr. McElroy linked the idea of a restructured RUC to the continuing need for a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and the ending of all repressive legislation. A voice of sanity while others gun down unarmed men.

WHEN

Our Party's other paper The Irish People carries as its front page story to Irish workers and the Trade Union Movement that Mayday should become a public holiday. Right enough it's a bit much that our fellow workers in the North and over on the "main-land" should enjoy a day off to celebrate the growing strength of the working class while the Southern government ignores what is in fact almost a universal holiday. Probably we will have to wait until the Minister of Labour is a member of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party. There are no prizes for forecasting when that will be nor do we want any pessimistic letters.

TARGET

The wounding of David Payne, former UDA Commander in North Belfast and now prominent in the Peace Movement stresses just how difficult it is to abdicate from any of the right-wing terrorist organisations in the North. As we go to press no one has claimed the shooting but the motives are fairly clear. Engage in politics and one automatically becomes the enemy of both the right and the ultra-left. Payne now joins the list of "unexplained" woundings and killings stretching from Duke Elliot to Sammy Smyth.

TIPP

The magnificent success of the Party film "Going, Going, Gone" can be measured by the demand for showing in all areas of the country. Already it has been distributed to almost fifty areas including a fortnight in the USA. Thanks to the trade union movement and the many schools who expressed interest. A venue for your diary if you live in Tipperary is the ITGWU Hall, the Quay, Clonmel, May 31 at 8p.m. Speakers at the showing will be Eamonn Smullen of the Industrial Affairs Department and Des O'Hagan Director of Education.

BODENSTOWN ANNUAL COMMEMORATION

Sunday, June 18, 1978

Areas should organise transport now

PARADE ASSEMBLES AT 3p.m. IN SALLINS



●Cork Harbour Commissioners' office with their only remaining tug, MV Shandon in the foreground.

Cork Port Scandal

Cork Port is one of the largest harbours in the world and is situated only 30 miles off the world's busiest shipping lane.

• It has plentiful supplies of fresh water, it has natural gas and large evidence of oil deposits off its coast. It is a potential boom area for job creation.

Much progress has been made to date and many jobs created but the potential is almost endless with central planning and finance being made available.

Twenty years ago Cork Port was simply an import/export port. Its main imports were coal, machinery, fruit and fertiliser and its exports, live cattle, butter, bacon, poultry and eggs. Today it is a thriving industrial port handling up to 40% of the 26 County shipping traffic.

It is Ireland's premier deep water harbour providing direct employment for over 7,000 people in portside industries. It houses the largest concentration of heavy industry in the state including an oil refinery, a shipyard capable of building ships up to 70,000 tons, a steel mill, pharmaceutical industries and many new industries based on natural gas such as the N.E.T. fertiliser plant and a new E.S.B. station.

Its development in the next twenty years could be even more rapid with the development of a Harbour Plan and every prospect of the finding of oil off our coast. The only obstacle to planned development in the National interest is the Harbour Authority.

Cork Port is controlled by an authority set up under the Harbour Acts 1946/47 and comprises 23 members. It represents mainly the private business interests in the harbour area who appoint 12 members. The 7,000 workers in port related industries have only two representatives.

The Cork Harbour Commissioners run the harbour in a similar way as the Corporation members run the affairs of the city. They are responsible for the policy making on the development of the port and for the control of its servicing industry. It has a full time administration under a General Manager who has much the same power as City Manager.

Since the majority of Harbour Commissioners are private businessmen they run the port in their own interests. In the past twenty years while business was booming and making maximum use of all the Port facilities these private businessmen refused to allow the Harbour Authority to expand its equipment and gave over the servicing of the Port to their business colleagues to make fat profits for themselves.

In 1958 the Harbour Commissioners had two tugs and did all the towage in the Harbour. Today there are six tugs in the Harbour Area but only one belongs to the Harbour Commissioners. The others, in the main, belong to British companies, such as Corry Tugs. The same can be said for the dredging operations.

After the war the Cork Harbour Commissioners bought dredging equipment and did all its own dredging. Now they only do maintenance dredging and contract out any new dredging to private companies. It is expected that the dredging of the new Deep Water Port at Ringaskiddy will go to the Westminster Dredging Co. — a British Company who come complete with crews while thousands are unemployed in Cork City. The waste removal from the Pfizer's Chemical Plant is also carried out by a foreign company, Redland Purre.

The Cork Comhairle Ceanntair (Executive) of Sinn Féin The Workers' Party are calling for the expansion of the Harbour Commissioners' Service Department. They see this servicing industry, including oil rig servicing, as capable of providing 1,000 secure

jobs for Cork workers.

Despite the restrictions placed on them by Commissioners interested only in their own private profit and despite the antiquated financing system which leaves them constantly short of cash, the General Manager and Staff of Cork Port have far sighted plans for future port development.

What is planned basically is the constructing of a deep water Port at Ringaskiddy capable of accommodating ships of up to 70,000 tons and ships of up to 100,000 tons in the outer channel. This plan is complemented by the I.D.A. plans for a new industrial complex at Ringaskiddy to which Cork County Council have piped a water supply which will provide 30 million gallons of fresh water per day.

The road structure connecting this area to the city, however, is totally inadequate. Unless Cork Corporation are granted the necessary finance to implement the new road transportation study, the Cork Harbour Commissioners' fine plans will be very much impeded.

However, the greatest obstacle to any planned development by the General Manager is the greedy type of Commissioners appointed to the Harbour Board. It is time the people of Cork woke up to what is happening and have this out-of-date system scrapped.

What about a bit of democracy? The next election of commissioners is due in 1980. If we are to have change now is the time to start campaigning for amendments to the Harbour Act.



PEACE,
WORK
& CLASS
POLITICS

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Further information from:
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