

**Our  
People**



**Our  
Future**

20p

**What ÉIRE NUA means  
by Ruairí Ó Brádaigh**

OUR PEOPLE

OUR FUTURE

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Uachtarán Sinn Féin

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## What is Irish Republicanism?

To the Republican Movement which maintains direct organisational continuity from Fenian times, through the Irish Republican Brotherhood, past 1916 and the First Dail to the present day. Republicanism in Ireland has a very strict, yet extremely comprehensive meaning.

In the strict sense, an Irish Republican was one who gave allegiance to the 32-County Republic of Easter 1916 and who denied the right of the British Government to rule here. With the establishment of the first Dáil Eireann in 1919 as the Government of that Republic its supporters were Republicans, just as were those who opposed the setting up here of two partition states — Six County and 26-County — in 1921 and 1922.

The "Treaty" states, both North and South subservient economically to Britain, suppressed the All-Ireland Dáil which was the embodiment of the Republic. For the Republican Movement then, a Republican today is one who rejects the Partition Statelets in Ireland and gives his allegiance to and seeks to restore the 32-County Republic of Easter Week.

But what happened in 1922 is deserving of a deeper analysis. North of the Border life went on just as it had for hundreds of years, except that now the local Ascendancy class had a private powerbloc called Stormont, a private army named the B-Special Constabulary and the full backing both militarily and financially of the British Government. This power they have used unashamedly to divide Protestant and Catholic working people to their mutual disadvantage, exploiting them both.

In the 26 Counties all the symbols and trappings of freedom were gradually won, but despite limited efforts in the 1930s and 1940s, the new State remains a new colony, an example of unfinished and interrupted revolution, territorially, economically, culturally — a model of "Neo-colonialism".

So then a Republican in 1970 is one who seeks a great deal more than just physical control of the 32 Counties for the Irish people. He stands in a line of succession going back beyond Wolfe Tone to the Gaelic leaders of resistance to the Norman invasion. But it was Tone "the father of Irish Republicanism" who articulated clearly the objective:

"The rights of man in Ireland. The greatest happiness of the

greatest number. The rights of man are the rights of God and to vindicate one is to maintain the other. We must be free in order to serve Him whose service is perfect freedom."

Fintan Lalor likewise sought something more than mere political freedom. He spoke of "constitutions and characters and enactments of freedom," saying "these things are only paper and parchment . . . Let laws and customs say what they will, these truths are stronger than any law; those who control your lands will make your laws and control your liberties and laws." The restoration to the Irish people of their social, cultural and economic heritage was his aim.

James Connolly maintained that "the whole age-long fight of the Irish people against their oppressors resolves itself in the last analysis into a fight for the mastery of the means of life, the sources of production in Ireland."

To give depth and meaning to Republicanism — beyond just the right to fly the Irish Tricolour or to paint letter boxes green — is to see the Republican objective as one with political, social, economic and cultural dimensions. The Democratic Programme of the First Dail in 1919 which fulfilled this role has since been carefully left to one side in certain quarters.

*There are many calling themselves Republicans who would be perfectly satisfied with the name of a Republic for all 32 Counties while leaving the present social, economic and cultural system unchanged — or worse still, integrating it with the rampant capitalism of the E.E.C. They are deluding themselves and deluding others.*

For the Republican Movement only a struggle on many fronts will achieve the Republican objective of restoring the "ownership of Ireland to the people of Ireland" (1916 Proclamation). Such a struggle inevitably gets bogged down in parliament, be it Westminster, Stormont or Leinster House, and those attempting it get absorbed into the Imperial system.

Have we not seen the alienation of large sections of the Labour Party from some of its parliamentary representatives recently, while the "Civil Rights" M.P.s in the Six Counties were at loggerheads with the Fermanagh Civil Rights Association over the Enniskillen march?

All necessary means must be used to restore Ireland and her resources to the Irish people, not precluding as a last resort the use of physical force against the British Army of Occupation. *The means are, of course, only secondary — the objective and its interpretation are paramount.* For the Republican Movement the definition of Republicanism rests mainly on the nature of the ultimate goal and the condition of allegiance to the Republic of Easter Week.

We have outlined clearly in policy statements and through our official monthly, "An Phoblacht", the nature of the social and economic system — based on the right of worker ownership and the native Irish tradition of Comhar na gComharsan — which we seek to establish in a free Ireland.

*First published in the "Irish Independent", December 9, 1970.*

## Restore the means of production to the people

In the social and economic field the struggle of the national resistance movement throughout the ages has been unequivocally for the restoration of the wealth of Ireland, both land and industry, to the dispossessed Irish nation.

Thus in modern times the aim of the Republican Movement has been and remains the restoration of the means of production, distribution and exchange in Ireland to the Irish people. The Republican objective of real freedom for all 32 counties is but a means to an end. That end is a just social and economic system involving the equitable distribution of the nation's wealth amongst the Irish people. Full freedom is essential to achieve this and Republicans agree with James Connolly when he said:

"If you remove the English army tomorrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organisation of the Socialist Republic your efforts would be in vain. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through the whole array of commercial and individualist institutions she has planted in this country".

What then are the main features of the Irish economy, North and South, since 1922? The Six Counties economically is but a depressed offshoot of the English capitalist system. Its unemployment figures are consistently very high — about 8% of the insured working population, while the corresponding figure for Britain does not pass the 2% mark. In predominantly Nationalist areas (Derry, Strabane, Newry, etc.) the average is much higher at 15-20%.

Housing conditions — discrimination apart — are deplorable in places, including the extreme Unionist Shankill Road area of Belfast. Indeed an English Independent Television man mentioned to me last week that many Shankill people coming from their little back-to-back kitchen houses with dry toilets (same standard as Falls Road) thought that the Nationalist Unity Walk Flats people lived in palaces! The bitter irony of it! Furthermore, cultural deprivation and alienation are most marked in the Six-County area.

Despite some changes and modifications, the 26 Counties in the economic sphere is basically a continuation of the Act of Union (1800) system. The southern statelet is a supplier of cheap food and labour to Britain. The main instrument of industrial development has been native capitalism with foreign capitalism taking an increasing hand since 1958 (Repeal of Control of Manufactures Act). With the maintenance of the sterling link in its present form, the savings of the Irish people are channelled abroad and our people have had to follow this exported capital to find the employment it creates.

In passing, I should like to give credit where it is due and acknowledge the success of the Shannon electricity scheme, 1926, under the first Free State government and of the partial industrialisation 1932-38 under the second such administration, e.g., Bord na Mona, extension of sugar production, etc.

From this necessarily summary analysis I pass to the question posed here: "What kind of economic and social system would serve Ireland best?" Sinn Fein policy visualises the main instrument of major economic development to be the State. As a country we are, relatively speaking, underdeveloped, and in view of the quickening pace throughout the world and a host of other considerations the job will have to be tackled on an emergency basis. For example, the fishing industry will have to be developed as the bogs were 35 years ago — by the State.

Some areas are natural monopolies and these will have to be nationalised e.g., such key sectors of the economy as banking, insurance, finance, mines, building land (local authorities would act here), cement production, fishing rights.

Money must be brought under social control. It is the lifeblood of the economy — or, as some prefer to describe it, the lubricant which oils the economic machinery, and is far too important to be left in private hands. Credit Unions would be developed and extended on a local basis and would enjoy the right, now denied to them of financing local community projects. Co-operative banks would also be developed, representative of such interests as the trade unions and farmers' organisations.

Social and economic thinking in the Republican Movement is based on the Comhar na gComharsan ("Neighbours' Co-operation") philosophy which was developed over the I.R.A. radio in 1939, promulgated in the underground "War News" of the early 1940s and afterwards carried into the jails and internment camps where it was earnestly discussed and debated. It is founded on the right of worker-ownership and is native Irish as well as being co-operative or distributist in character. For us in Sinn Fein it is our "Socialism" just as for Julius Nyerere of Tanzania his Ujamaa or Familyhood is the basis of "African Socialism."

Comhar na gComharsan envisages worker-owner co-operatives on a large scale in agriculture, fishing, industry and the distributive trade. The benefits of larger units and scale of production are obvious in the struggle for survival in a world dominated by the giants of the Eastern bloc, the U.S.A. and the E.E.C. The worker-owner system would give the workers a say in the decisions affecting them. Ideally each individual would become the possessor of an economic unit of the means of production in the form of farm, workshop, business or share in a factory or other co-operative. Here is real industrial democracy. Marking a ballot-paper once every five years is but a travesty of democracy — that way the party machine governs as we have seen very clearly recently.

Neither the Western capitalism of the U.S.A. with its 30,000,000 poor and hungry amid plenty nor the Eastern Soviet state capitalism (or any of its variations) with its denial of freedom and human rights would give the Irish people "the ownership of Ireland" (1916 Proclamation). Comhar na gComharsan is based on native Irish tradition dating back to the Brehon laws and their provisions regarding communal—but not State—ownership of the means of production. It achieves a balance between the extremes of freedom and exploitation of man by man as in the U.S. and possibly, the fully developed E.E.C. on one hand, and the much too severe curbs on personal freedom on the other. I believe it to be an answer to the middle way sought by an eminent Churchman when he spoke within the past year of avoiding the "bottomless pit" of Western permissive society and the "concentration camp" of the Eastern bloc.

Private enterprise would, however, still have a role to play in the Comhar na gComharsan economy, but not in key industries such as cement production, to give an example which was recently very much in the public mind. State incentives would, of course, favour co-operative projects as the most socially desirable.

The Irish language and traditions would be linked to economic objectives and would be utilised as a morale-boosting factor in the all-out emergency-type national effort as has been done in Israel, Finland and even Denmark. One further point is relevant here; some useful lessons in the matter of co-operatives may be learned from the experience of Israel, Denmark and Yugoslavia where there are curbs on the activities of foreign capitalists and the attempted buying out of national assets. And have we not heard of the "Buy Canada Back" (from the U.S.) campaign in recent times?

There is no denying that the policies outlined here will call for short-term austerity, for the repatriation of our external

assets and total re-investment of savings in Ireland. But the high level of national morale and newly-released energies following a final successful outcome of our centuries-old struggle against British Imperialism would provide the ideal opportunity. In any event it is surely far better and in the national interest that sacrifices be made for these worthy objectives than for the E.E.C. "Promised Land" which we are told is about to be unfolded before us.

We will need to diversify our trade and will have to seek new trading partners in the non-aligned "third world", among the neutrals of Europe and even in Eastern Europe. Generations of our missionaries, medical people and teachers who have gone to assist the peoples of Africa have built up for us a great powerhouse of good will. Zambian civil servants and cadets have come here to train. An all-out effort to develop trade would go hand-in-hand with an active independent foreign policy at the United Nations.

In the matter of fishing rights, many of our richest rivers, lakes and estuaries are still in the hands of the descendants of the old landlords. All such inland waters and estuaries would be nationalised but would be managed and controlled by local co-operatives. The undoing of the conquest involves the dispossession of the riverlords also. Hearken to the voice of Pearse, realist as well as idealist:—

"Let no man be mistaken, as to who will be lord in Ireland, when Ireland is free. The people will be lord and master—a free Ireland would not and could not have hunger in her fertile vales and squalor in her cities."

Paper, paint and flag freedom was never the national goal.

Thomas Ashe, soon to die on hunger strike, wrote in 1917 in his poem,

"Let me carry Your Cross for Ireland, Lord"

"For the empty homes on her golden plains, for the hope of her future too".

In conclusion I quote a Comhar na gComharsan manifesto:

"Every man since Adam has been entitled by right to his share of the earth and the fruits of his labour. . . .

"Force or trickery has deprived the great majority of every generation of that right. . . .

"In Ireland and throughout the world today the majority of men have no absolute right to a share of the earth's fruits.

"We do not advocate state ownership; there lies dictatorship. Every man must be an owner to be free.

National strength needs central government. Personal freedom needs decentralised control. A healthy nation needs both ownership by the people of all industries and a central government to co-ordinate their activities is the solution.

To accomplish this the Irish people must have in their hearts the enthusiasm of Pearse, the devotion of Connolly, the anger of Mitchel, the heroism of Emmet and the faith of Tone.

To inspire them so and to lead them is the task we have before us . . .”.

*First published in the "Irish Press", December 3, 1970, in the series "What Social and Economic System Would Serve Ireland Best?"*

## Answer to Mr. Childers

13th December, 1970.

Mr. Childers is once more emerging as a protagonist of internment without trial. Like the house of Bourbon, he has forgotten nothing and learned nothing.

When I was in Mountjoy Jail in 1957 under the Offences Against the State Act, I was elected Sinn Féin T.D. for my native Longford-Westmeath, securing the third seat in the constituency and taking precedence over Mr. Childers and another successful Fianna Fáil candidate. Mr. Childers spoke then of "being humiliated" by the electorate.

He then went from church gate to church gate in Longford decrying and denigrating Sinn Féin. After some weeks of this I drafted a letter to the local papers from my prison cell, charging Mr. Childers with preparing the way for the re-opening of the Curragh concentration camp. The prison authorities and the Department of Justice — and God knows who else — considered my letter for three weeks and then suppressed it. So much for freedom of speech accorded to an elected representative of the people.

In July of that year Mr. Childers had his wish. The Curragh was re-opened and on expiration of sentence I was unceremoniously taken from Mountjoy in the early hours and thrown into the Curragh camp. My relatives were not told of my whereabouts until that evening, although they inquired at the Prison, the Bridewell and the Departments of Justice and Defence. The representative of Longford-Westmeath had disappeared, dare we say 'kidnapped.'

Later that same month Mr. Childers, then a minister of state, was reported in the North Longford notes of the *Longford Leader* as saying to the Rosduff Fianna Fáil Cumann: "We will fill every jail and barracks in the state to put down Sinn Féin." When Sinn Féin protested he denied ever saying the like, but Republicans had the word of witnesses who were present to vouch for what he did say.

For a year and three months I remained inside barbed wire with hundreds of Republicans from North and South of the Border. Then, to Mr. Childers's undoubted chagrin, I escaped

and spent the following six months as a T.D. "on the run" amongst the people who elected me, until the Curragh camp was closed.

Mr. Childers never stood for election in Longford-Westmeath again. In 1961 he moved to Co. Monaghan. He speaks now of the absence of protest in 1957. A more accurate account would be that news of the protests was effectively stifled. Did not Mr. Haughey as Justice Minister call in the editors of the daily papers in 1961 and thanked them afterwards for their co-operation? In Strokestown, Co. Roscommon, Gardaí called on the printers of posters for a public protest meeting, to give another example. In Longford a Fianna Fáil ex-T.D. told the local newspaper that a Government minister (guess who) had threatened to have all Government advertising withdrawn from it if the paper did not stop giving space to Sinn Féin. And that with the local T.D. in the Curragh without charge or trial!

Mr. Childers speaks of "groups of young people who have abandoned Christian thinking," and this from a man who as a government T.D. was responsible for Republican prisoners being denied Mass for five or six years in Port Laois Jail during the 1940s. The prisoners were clothed in blankets only — having refused to wear convict garb — and were not "suitably dressed."

But Mr. Childers should remember that this is not 1940 with a wartime censorship to cloak denial of human rights. It is not even 1957 with a special Government appointee in the Radio Eireann newsroom to act as censor, the newspapers warned off and Telefís Eireann not yet instituted.

This is 1970 and times have changed. The protest generation has arrived and so has a more liberal outlook. The protests will be long, loud and widespread; Sinn Féin will see to that. And Mr. Childers had better watch out. If he continues to think in terms of the 1940s or of 1957-61 he might be "humiliated" again — this time in Co. Monaghan — where the people are painfully aware of the denial of human rights and civil rights in Fermanagh, Tyrone and Armagh! It's time you updated your thinking, Mr. Childers.

## An Ulster Parliament

13th August, 1971.

Sinn Féin has always maintained that drastic political and structural change is necessary in Ireland for the Irish people, so that the Irish people may live in peace, happiness and prosperity in their own country.

Recent events north of the Border have highlighted this necessity. Mr. Lynch has declared that Stormont must be abolished, and be replaced by another Six County-type regime. Sinn Féin believes that a political solution to the present state of war in our country cannot be found other than in a 32 county context.

Mr. Lynch has spoken of "political action by all Irishmen north and south" in a situation which he did nothing whatever to bring about. On the contrary Mr. Lynch and his government have given moral and material aid and comfort to the enemies of our people—the British forces of Occupation in Ireland. His public sympathy for "these British boys", his condemnation — and his jailings — of those of the Six-County minority who opposed them are very recent memories.

The only constructive suggestion put forward in the present crisis has been by the Irish Republican Army when it urged that the people of Ulster — led by those beleaguered behind the barricades — should themselves go about setting up a regional parliament for all nine counties. The Border must be breached in any workable solution as the people in the depressed areas along it know to their cost.

The Settlement of 1920 and 1921 which set up both Stormont and Leinster House has been demonstrated to be unworkable and against the interests of the Irish people. It must be dismantled to make way for the New Ireland which the Irish people North and South, Protestant and Catholic will themselves build — a Democratic Socialist Republic.

Accordingly, in keeping with the Republican objective of a national parliament with regional government, Sinn Féin would wish that the people of Connacht which has suffered so much since 1921 — should now give consideration to joining with Ulster in setting up their own provincial assembly.



Meanwhile the resistance to British military repression in the Six Counties must go on. Aid of all kinds from the 26 Counties must be poured into the North in response to today's call from behind the barricades in Belfast. This can best be done through the Republican Movement.

We ask the people south of the Border to work through their voluntary organisations, or whatever means is found feasible, to provide for the human tide of refugees fleeing south from Unionist sectarianism and British military oppression.

Finally we call on the Irish people to consider and to accept the policy of the Republican Movement which has been vindicated so clearly and at such a price in recent times.

## Suspension of Stormont

24th March, 1972

Sinn Féin regards this morning's statement by Mr. Heath as an advance on previous British Government attitudes. The suspension of the Stormont Parliament for a year goes part of the way to meet one of the three points made by the Republican Movement a fortnight ago when a 72-hour truce was announced.

Point number one made on that occasion has not been met at all. This sought the "immediate withdrawal of British Armed Forces from the streets of Northern Ireland coupled with a statement of intent as to the eventual evacuation of H. M. forces and an acknowledgement of the right of the Irish people to determine their own future without interference from the British Government". For the people engaged in the resistance struggle in the Six Counties, whose efforts are spearheaded by the Republican Movement, this point is crucial.

The release of a small number of internees is simply an attempt to play on the human feelings of the beleaguered people. The release of every last internee is required and Mr. Heath's promise to "scale down" internment on certain conditions is an unashamed effort to use the internees as hostages against their own people. The sentenced political prisoners, both men and women, in Ireland and England, face terms of imprisonment of up to 15 years, while the notorious Special Powers Act remains in operation and British troops are free to continue their raids, searches and harassment of the civilian population.

A referendum of the artificially created Six-County area can never be accepted. The unit of decision by the Irish people is the 32 counties. At this moment, many Unionists must feel let down by the British Government and must surely be re-thinking their position. Sinn Féin would remind them that their real future lies with the rest of the people of this island in building the New Ireland, with regional government, the separation of Church and State and the development of a pluralist society. In this the people of the 26 counties must move to meet the people of the North by supporting the Republican Movement.

The present time calls for a cool appraisal of the entire situation followed by a determined movement forward towards the realisation of these goals.

## Reply to Cardinal Conway

3rd April, 1972. (Easter Monday)

Cardinal Conway has in effect told the Nationalist people of the North that they should accept the Heath initiatives and trust the British government as to their future.

In his excursion into politics all the influence the Cardinal can command is being thrown behind direct British rule just as his predecessors had urged successfully the acceptance of the disastrous Treaty of Surrender in 1921.

The triumph of the "peace at all costs" theory 50 years ago had not produced even a temporary respite for the Irish people, instead it had sown the seeds of recurring cycles of repression, violence, death and destruction on a massive scale.

Cardinal Conway has talked about what he would say if he met Seán Mac Stiofáin, but the fact is that the Cardinal had turned down a request from Belfast Comhairle Ceantair of Sinn Féin that he receive a deputation from them over 12 months ago. Had the request been acceded to either Seán Mac Stiofáin or myself or perhaps both of us would have availed of the opportunity to speak to the Cardinal. The reason given for refusal was that Sinn Féin was banned under the Special Powers Act and that we did not recognise the Stormont regime.

The Cardinal has spoken of the difficult journeys to visit men in Long Kesh. Did he at any time visit the men there or in Magilligan, or Crumlin Road, or on board the Maidstone? Did he even make the few minutes walk from Ara Coeli to Armagh Jail to visit the young women serving up to 12 years there?

Mrs. Monica Patterson of the "Women Together Organisation" appears very concerned about the people of Andersonstown but the fact is that she lives in the Malone Road middle-class area which is comparatively incident free. Mrs. Máire Drumm lives in the heart of Andersonstown; and has recently been released from prison; her husband is enduring his third period of internment, having served a total of 11 years in prison. Mrs. Mary McGuigan is from Jamaica St., Ardoyne; she too has spent the past year in Armagh Jail; her husband is in Long Kesh as is one of her sons; another son Francis was subjected to "in depth" interrogation and torture but escaped recently

from that concentration camp. While in prison Mrs. McGuigan's unoccupied home was wrecked by British troops. Unlike Mrs. Patterson, Mrs. Drumm, Mrs. McGuigan and their associates have borne the brunt of the struggle and have lived their days in the heart of it.

Republicans do not fear to look at the record. The Irish people can draw their own conclusions as to who has been involved, who has stood by the Northern people, and on the other hand, who has remained aloof from the struggle and now seeks to assist the British in dividing and ruling the people.

# Assessment of E.E.C. Referendum Result

11th May, 1972

The outcome of the E.E.C. referendum in the 26 Counties was made inevitable by the failure over the last 50 years to adopt the radical national, social and economic measures necessary to build an independent Ireland. The logical conclusion to the operation of a system of economic imperialism since 1921 has been to rob the people of confidence in their own country and to acquiesce in the handing over of control of their destinies to a Western European Power Bloc.

The only real alternative to this development is a dismantling of the 1921 system and the building of a New Ireland. The Republican Movement alone of all the groups opposing full membership of the EEC put forward such a programme. Our presentation of it to the people was suppressed by those who control the news media. In view of this, the result of the referendum, though disappointing, is not surprising.

During the course of the election campaign we refrained from criticism of others who were also opposed to the E.E.C.. We should now like to put on record our disappointment with the performance of the Labour Party who did not make any real impact, especially in rural areas. The voting figures do not indicate a defeat for Sinn Féin. On the contrary they show that Sinn Féin is the only real bulwark against the new imperialism.

This is clearly evident in those constituencies where Labour polled only a few hundred votes in the last General Election but where the 'NO' votes on this occasion were numbered in thousands. This underlines the need for people within the other Opposition groupings to define their objectives clearly, to reject the timid approach and to adopt a determined stand as exemplified by the Republican Movement.

We should like to pay tribute to the zeal and hard work of all our members and supporters in this campaign, which has not

been without success. It has yielded at least three tangible and significant results, as follows:

- 1 The new alliance of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael which combines the conservative forces in the 26 Counties and polarises politics along the lines of conservatives versus progressives.
- 2 The linking up of the problems of North and South and the education of a significant number of the people in the concept of a New Ireland. In doing this Sinn Féin was the only group who showed the relevance of the North in solving the problems of the whole nation.
- 3 The expansion and strengthening of our organisation throughout the 26 Counties and the placing of it on a firm and solid footing. In doing this our young members showed a spirit and dedication comparable to that of their comrades in the Six Counties.

Regardless of the outcome of the E.E.C. referendum the task of building the New Ireland must go on. To this objective we rededicate ourselves. The struggle in the North will be maintained. In the south we pledge ourselves to organise and lead our people in economic resistance to the consequences of E.E.C. policies. We will resist the robbery of our mineral wealth, the plunder of our fishing grounds, the closure of factories and the squeezing out of small farmers and small businessmen.

We have said that the underlying philosophy and policies of the Common Market are in conflict with the progress of mankind and the basic values of the Irish people. We have opposed full membership of the E.E.C. since it was first mooted and are confident that in the long term our stand will be vindicated. In the short term we will defend the interests of the Irish people and continue with the work of building the New Ireland.

## Ceasefire in the North

27th June, 1972

On the first day of the bilateral suspension of operations in British occupied Ireland, Sinn Féin extends congratulations to the brave people of the North, who have suffered so much since 1968 in the cause of justice and lasting peace; we also commend the heroic freedom-fighters of 1969/1972, who have carried the struggle to the enemy on a scale and with an intensity unknown in Ireland since 1921.

The present situation calls for discipline and forbearance on a very high level. Offensive military activity only has been suspended. The Civil Disobedience Campaign must be maintained and if possible intensified. Not alone must free areas be kept intact, but they must be strengthened by the election of properly-based community institutions as is proposed in Free Derry.

Political activity by Sinn Féin must take place on an un-precedented scale to organise the people, articulate their demands and give them leadership and direction. Short-term objectives will include:—

- 1 The release of all political prisoners.
- 2 Abolition of the Special Powers Act.
- 3 Removal of the ban on Sinn Féin.
- 4 Withdrawal of all political test oaths and their restrictions on candidates contesting elections.
- 5 Removal of the Oath of Allegiance to the British Crown as a condition of employment.
- 6 Confirmation of the P.R. system of elections.

In the 26 Counties, we now have the sorry spectacle of Republican prisoners still being denied political treatment while

their comrades in British hands north of the Border now enjoy full political status. If Mr. Lynch and his Government and their allies in Fine Gael and Labour are not completely insensitive, they must immediately:—

- 1 Abolish the Offences Against the State Act and their Special Courts.
- 2 Bring all Republican Prisoners in Mountjoy, The Curragh and Portlaoise together and give them full political rights pending a speedy general amnesty.

An active campaign to force such action is now being planned by the Republican Movement.

The possibilities for creating a New Ireland were never greater. To succeed, generosity is required from all parties. To miss the opportunity now presented would be a great tragedy in view of the tremendous price the people of the North have paid to reach this stage.

Sinn Féin calls on the people of Ireland to rally support to the Republican Leadership now engaged in a peaceful endeavour to secure a just and lasting peace.

## Police Closure Of Sinn Féin Head Office

6th October, 1972.

It is clear that this afternoon's action against the Sinn Féin organisation comes as a direct result of Mr. Lynch's meeting with Mr. Heath at Munich when the British government not alone gave Mr. Lynch instructions in specific terms but also informed the world press of the fact.

The arrest of the Sinn Féin General Secretary and the posting of a notice under the Offences Against the State Act seeking to close down our Head Office comes at a time calculated to do maximum damage to the organisation. The annual Ard-Fheis is scheduled for October, 28-29, that is in three weeks time, and the intention is clearly to disrupt the intensive preparations now taking place for that event. Furthermore, the arrest of General Secretary Walter Lynch for the second time this year came as he was getting ready to travel to a meeting to-night of representatives of all Cumainn and Comhairlí Ceantair in the Six Counties to consider the forthcoming local elections North of the Border.

Sinn Féin repeats: our offices at 2A Lower Kevin Street, Dublin are used exclusively for the purpose of the Sinn Féin organisation. They were raided previously on May 31 last. Apparently nothing exceptional was found on that occasion. They have again been searched by police to-day, October, 6.

We challenge Mr. Lynch and Mr. O'Malley. Will they now produce the evidence to substantiate their claim that the Sinn Féin head office was "being used for the purposes of an illegal organisation"? They must put the facts and the evidence before the Irish people in whose name they have attempted to stifle and suppress a regular opposition political organisation.

A Munich-type policy of appeasement has been taken a step further. Sinn Féin spokesmen have been banned from R.T.É. Now Mr. Lynch seeks to close down our head office. Will he attempt to provoke a direct confrontation with Republicans in the 26 Counties? The Irish people are entitled to know the answer.

## Ard-Fheis Address

29th October, 1972

A Chathaoirleach, a Theachtaí agus a Chuartheoirí,

Fearaim céad fáilte romhaibh ag an Ard-Fheis seo, an ceann is mó ag Sinn Féin le leath-chéad bliain anuas. Tá cuid inhaith den bhóthar curtha dinn ó tháinig muid le chéile ar an láthair seo, taca an ama seo anuraidh.

Ach ní chun maoite atáimid bailithe anseo. Breathnaímid siar ar bhliain chorraíoch, stairiúil, faighimid inspioráid ó ghníomhartha agus íobairtí na tréimhse sin, socraímid ár bpolasaithe agus ár bpleananna agus tugaimid aghaidh arís ar "an ród seo romhainn."

Tá mór-obair le déanamh. Tá cuspóir na bhfear agus na mban a d'fhulaing agus a thug a mbeatha le blianta beaga anuas le cur i gcrích go fóill—Poblacht Daonlathach Shóisialach a chur faoi réim san uile chontae in Éirinn.

Ná ceilimis an fforas sin orainn féin inniu: ná déanaimis magadh faoi íobairtí na laoch; ná tugaimis masla dá mbuan-chuimhne trí faillí inár gcuid oibre, ach brúimis ar aghaidh chun coimhlinte ar son cearta an duine in Éirinn.

On behalf of the outgoing Ard-Chomhairle I wish to extend the warmest welcome to our assembled delegates and friends on the occasion of the 68th annual Ard-Fheis of Sinn Féin.

We gather here this weekend with a great sense of high purpose, each one of us deeply conscious of the tremendous responsibility for the future of our country, for the generations yet unborn, which is thrust upon us at this time. As the national crisis deepens and the situation generally continues to open up the opportunity for effecting a just and lasting peace in our country increases.

In last year's Presidential address it was stated that with regard to the North, "the most desirable sequence is to bring down Stormont by making the area ungovernable; this would be followed by an all-out effort to force British evacuation and disengagement." Five months subsequent to our Ard-Fheis, on March 24th last, Stormont did indeed fall and a prime political objective of our movement was attained. The civil disobedience

and non-co-operation campaign to which our members gave leadership at ground level, the physical defence of the people by the Irish Republican Army, and the work on a political solution in the form of Dáil Uladh, all combined to bring about the downfall of the puppet parliament in Belfast after 50 years of tyrannical power.

Even "The Guardian" (Manchester) admitted editorially that it was not the Social, Democratic and Labour Party or the Dublin politicians but the "Provisional I.R.A." as they termed it, which brought down Stormont. However, let it be said unequivocally that advance on any front would have been impossible without the mass support of the splendid people which ultimately decides all such issues. And the people of the North have indeed carved out their place in history in the past twelve months.

The regime of direct British rule headed by Mr. William Whitelaw worked to a strategy of dividing the people from the guerrilla fighters as a preliminary to crushing the resistance. Elements of the Catholic hierarchy and clergy combined with "peace-at-all-costs" individuals to collaborate with the British design. But this new attack was turned, due in no small way to the grass-roots leadership of many of our most dedicated members. The ordinary people—in spite of the terrible price exacted from them by the imperialists—continue to support the resistance fighters and the civil disobedience.

Another feature of the Whitelaw administration has been the massive propaganda war mounted throughout the world following the shock revelations of continued British torture of prisoners and more particularly the brutal massacre of 13 of our fellow Irishmen by British paratroopers in the city of Derry on January 30 last. This propaganda machine works through every British sphere of influence, news agencies, embassies, consulates and trade missions. It is, of course, backed by enormous financial resources and has yet to be effectively countered.

The 26-County government, Markpress notwithstanding, have failed the people of the North in this regard also. They finally brought the Human Rights cases to Strasbourg only when their main opponents in Leinster House threatened to by-pass them. It remains to be seen what resources the Republican Movement can mobilise to rectify this deficiency which is certainly prolonging the struggle and the suffering of Irish people at this time.

The period of struggle which followed the removal of Stormont culminated three months later in a bilateral suspension of operations between British and Irish Republican forces on June 26 last. For the first time since 1921 belligerent status was conceded by the British to the people's resistance in Ireland and with the meeting in London ten days later between Republican leaders

and Mr. Whitelaw and his officials, political recognition was also forthcoming, much to the dismay of the Leinster House political parties who had sat on the fence for fifty years.

But the British made another move at that crucial stage; they played the "Orange card" of history, or rather the U.D.A. card in modern terminology. Releases of internees from Long Kesh concentration camp, which had averaged 50 per week since March, stopped abruptly, sectarian killings intensified and U.D.A. pressure on Nationalist communities with the connivance of the British Army became unbearable.

At Portadown on the morning of July 9 and again at Lenadoon in Belfast that evening the British breached the terms of the Truce and so the bilateral suspension to which so many hopes were pinned lasted just 13 days. As a further example of such breaches, two British officers found inside the Free Derry area on July 7 were arrested by a Republican patrol. On the same day Volunteers Boyd and Canavan were arrested by British forces while on vigilante duty in the Markets area of Belfast. The two British officers were released in a matter of hours but the volunteers were recently sentenced to nine and ten years imprisonment. The Truce of 1921, it should be noted, in so far as it applied to North-East Ulster, was broken in similar manner in a matter of days by a combination of sectarian attacks and back-stage British involvement.

Since July the struggle has continued with active resistance, civil disobedience and the giving of political leadership. Service is being rendered in heroic measure, on the streets, in the jails and prison camps and on the hillsides. The men and women, boys and girls and the mass of ordinary people participating in the fight, we assembled here today salute as the glory of their generation.

South of the Border during the past year, Mr. Lynch has relinquished his "standing idly by" role for one of total collaboration with the British government and its forces in the Six Counties. Arrests and jailings of Northern freedom-fighters multiply and the Special Court without a jury set up last May does an extensive trade. It required a 30-day hunger strike in July to force from Messrs. Lynch and O'Malley the political status that a 36-day strike in Belfast and Armagh jails had extracted from the British government the previous month for the first time in 50 years. More recently, the Leinster House establishment showed itself willing to let Republicans at the Curragh die on hunger and thirst strike rather than accede to five paltry demands.

Specifically referring to the forcible occupation by police of Sinn Féin head office at Kevin Street, Dublin three weeks ago, Mr. O'Malley told the London "Times" of October 16 that this

action was "part of the general policy of the Government and police here to harass these people to the greatest possible extent." I might add that the notice which remains nailed to the door of our head office is in the *second* official language of the State and in that language only.

But the Lynch offensive against the Sinn Féin organisation goes back to February last when more than a dozen of our public speakers were arrested and jailed. One of our joint General Secretaries was included but when the ordinary courts freed many of them after spending months on remand in custody, the remainder were sent before the Special Court and sentenced to terms of imprisonment. All this disruption took place within three months' leading up to the E.E.C. referendum in May.

Then in June came further "harassment and inconvenience", to use Mr. O'Malley's words, with the raid on our head office and the arrest there of Mr. Joe Cahill of Belfast followed by the arrests of the President and the Director of Publicity in their own homes. All three were jailed on bogus charges but were free again in a matter of weeks, due no doubt in large measure to their hunger strike from the moment of arrest.

Added to all these totalitarian actions has been the undemocratic Radio Telefis Eireann ban on Republican spokesmen for over a year now. With the advent of the Truce in June this ban was extended specifically to include Sinn Féin spokesmen. On the day following the breaking of the Truce by the British the ban on Sinn Féin representatives was withdrawn only to be re-imposed soon afterwards.

In the teeth of such harassment and attempted intimidation of members and supporters an intensive and enthusiastic campaign against full E.E.C. membership was engaged in over many months by Sinn Féin. Given the failure of those in power in the 26 Counties over 50 years to break the British economic stranglehold, the outcome was inevitable. In addition, the almost complete blackout of the anti-E.E.C. case by RTE and the seven daily papers in the State for some weeks before polling day had a crippling effect on the campaign. Contrary to reporting by the press and other media the 17% of the electorate who voted "NO" was almost completely a Sinn Féin vote. The Labour Party was divided on the issue and in most areas put in no campaign of any consequence.

In passing, it is appropriate to express admiration for the people of Norway who recently stood out against full integration into the E.E.C. and scored a victory for the small community against the mass-society and exploitation. I might add that irrespective of the outcome of the referendum we will resist the implementation of any decrees or policies of the E.E.C. which

would be detrimental to the best interests of our people or any section of it.

Other highlights of the year included the mass demonstration at the General Post Office, Dublin during February and the "Action Days" at the Border in March and again in June when many hundreds of members from all over the 26 Counties joined in the civil resistance with their Northern comrades by filling in cratered roads and clashing with British Army units. Most important of all to our concept of a New Ireland, was the public launching of EIRE NUA folders on June 28 and the distribution of a quarter of a million copies in English and 25,000 in Irish during July and August.

This comprehensive document spells out clearly the new and more democratic governmental structures which we would have replace the existing system North and South and requires the closest study by all who profess to stand for a New Ireland. On this point, now that Mr. Whitelaw — like so many British administrators before him — has bowed down again before the Unionist backlash and postponed the local elections until after the proposed plebiscite, it behoves us to be on the alert. It is possible that in the near future an attempt may be made by the British Government to impose another compromise settlement of the Irish question by arranging the plebiscite so that the people of the North may be given the option of a Federal link-up with the 26-County state as at present constituted. The only attitude to any such plebiscite of the Six Counties is to boycott it totally as it will not meet the national desire nor indeed will the piece-meal repeal of sections of the 1937 Constitution.

We were among the first to campaign for votes at 18 and while we agree that what is known as Article 44 should never have been, we visualise a completely new constitution for the 32 Counties with the separation of Church and State, the building of a pluralist society and with regional government structures.

In the matter of elections it is necessary to put in motion forthwith advance preparations for the local elections due in the 26 Counties next year. Further, it should be stated on every possible occasion that those who challenge us to elections such as that in Mid-Cork while at the same time they close down our head office, harass our members, jail our leaders and deny us access to the media are the very people — Lynch, Cruise O'Brien and Cosgrave — who themselves fear a 32-County election. Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour stand only to lose in such a contest and are in reality opposed to national unity. In describing their hypocritical attitude one is inclined to parody the

words of a famous man of God: "Lord, give us unity — but not yet".

The Leinster House politicians have robbed the people of their independence; they have moulded an outlook over half a century of looking to Dublin for everything and would now mould a Brussels-oriented outlook. Our policies would reverse that trend. Regional government has now become a catch-cry with many, just as has the term "New Ireland", but it was with our movement that both originated.

Our 54-page Social and Economic Programme also entitled EIRE NUA has already sold 12,000 copies. Never was there greater need for its implementation. The recent publication of statistics regarding the disparities of wealth in the 26 Counties may be startling to some. The revelation that 5% of the population owns in the region of 70% of the wealth is surely in itself sufficient reason for getting rid of the present system and building a Democratic Socialist Republic.

The abrupt dismissal of the entire work-force of 750 car assembly operatives by the Brittain Group while on official strike just recently is another indication of the times and reminds us of the attitude of the American E.I. company at Shannon some years ago in refusing to recognise a trade union. It will be remembered that the car assembly workers were among the foremost in the Anti-E.E.C. campaign.

The Free Trade Area Agreement with Britain continues to grind on doing its deadly work among us. Soon it will be reinforced by full E.E.C. membership. In the year to March 31 last, the total number at work in industry in the 26 counties fell by 3,900, compared with an increase of 2,400 in the previous year. A further fall of 2,000 is expected in the current year according to the Industrial Development Authority Report and these figures, added to the flight from the land, give some idea of what is happening behind all the gloss of the consumer society.

The level of redundancies is even more disturbing. The report states that 51% of these occurred in textiles, clothing and footwear, "industries which have been particularly affected by inflation and competition." Redundancies notified to the Department of Labour for the first half of 1970 were 1,892; for the same period of 1971 the figure was double — 3,778; and for 1972 (same period) 5,586, that is treble the 1970 figure.

Factories continue to close as was expected by Sinn Féin. One thinks of such names as Clover Meats and Ardfinnan Woollen Mills. At this point I would like to commend the action of the workers in a Dundalk footwear factory, the "Crannac" furniture factory at An Uaimh and the miners in the Ballingarry collieries who occupied their places of work as they were about to close

and continued to operate them themselves as co-operative enterprises.

It is vitally necessary that Republicans at local level get involved in such situations so that Irish workers may experience at first hand our concern for their interests and in order that our members may have an opportunity of implementing part of our Social and Economic Programme now.

Failure to get involved in the day-to-day struggles of the people and in the efforts now under way in all four provinces to build the new regional government structures can only result in our becoming simply a support group for the struggle in the North. The logical consequence of this will be to hand the Six Counties over to Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour to make a 32-County Free State or economic colony. The aim must be to achieve the leadership of the people in one's own local area. Building regional government structures and involvement in local issues, together with support for the North, provide the means. The fortnightly appearance of "An Phoblacht" is very welcome indeed and will help to bring together the various strands in the national issue.

The formal inauguration of bodies to work for Dáil na Mumhan and Dáil Laighean marks progress in that sphere. These councils together with Comhairle Uladh and Comhairle Chonnacht are revolutionary weapons. They and their local committees can be built up and expanded to replace the existing system and one looks forward to the successful Sinn Féin candidates of the future taking their seats in the provincial parliaments indicated by these bodies.

Let us repeat once more; we do not wish to submerge the Unionists of the North-east in an All-Ireland state; we offer them very real powers in majority control of a greater Ulster through the Dáil Uladh plan; incorporation of all nine counties will give a healthier balance of population with a credible opposition — something the Six-County state of Northern Ireland has always lacked. We would never ask you to join the 26-County State — we are trying to escape from it ourselves!

To all the people of Ireland we say; let us wipe the slate clean and start anew, "abolishing the memory of past dissensions;" regional government will correct economic imbalance and bring power nearer to the people, giving them greater say in decisions affecting their own lives; EIRE NUA will restore the wealth of Ireland to the people of Ireland with a more just distribution of the goods of this world, worker-ownership and participation in decision making in industry.

It all adds up to a new life, a better life, a more human life for all our people. It means raising the stature of mankind in Ireland, for we are spiritually, at least, part of a world-wide move-



ment to increase the dignity of man now threatened with being submerged by the consumer society. Our struggle is for weak and oppressed nations and peoples — but in the first instance for our own people now enduring all that Imperialism can inflict.

The heroism, the sacrifices, the terrible price paid over the past year all compel us to one conclusion: we must not fail — not now after all that has happened.

## Green Paper Solves Nothing

November 6, 1972.

Speaking in Tuam, Ruairí Ó Brádaigh, President of Sinn Féin, made the following comments on the British Government's Green Paper on the Future of Northern Ireland:

Having failed to disrupt the Sinn Féin Ard-Fheis last week-end by forcible entry and continued occupation of our Head Office at Kevin Street, Dublin, Mr. O'Malley is to try once more to extend his role as Britain's policeman in the 26 Counties.

He is in the best British tradition in dealing with the Irish people by reaching for yet another Coercion Act. If Mr. O'Malley had any knowledge of Ireland's struggle for freedom, he would realise that coercive legislation solves nothing and will serve only to complicate and aggravate the underlying problem — the continued operation of British imperialism in our country.

Mr. Childers has long been a protagonist of government by force. He was the foremost in advocating internment without trial in 1970, thus paving the way for Mr. Faulkner's disastrous and bloody enforcement of August, 1971.

This week-end Messrs. O'Malley and Childers are joined by Mr. Lynch in seeking to parallel active physical collaboration with British forces in the field, with political collaboration with the British Government in endorsing Mr. Whitelaw's Green Paper.

The Green Paper solves nothing and merely postpones facing up to the basic facts of the situation. In collaborating with the British design, the 26-County government is doing the Six-County Nationalists a grave disservice. They are attempting to sentence a future generation to endure from the very beginning again, all that this generation has suffered.

Politicians of all parties in Leinster House are not and have not been involved in the struggle in the Six Counties. Having sat on the fence for more than 50 years, they are at present engaged in a cynical attempt to cash in politically on the sacrifices of recent times, now that solutions are being talked about.

The people of the North, both Nationalist and Unionist, do not want Southern politicians or their 26-County state and Constitution. Republicans see the proposed link-up between

both existing states in the form of an all-Ireland Council simply as a means to extend the life of the present bankrupt partition system of Government, North and South.

The vast majority of the Irish people reject Britain's arrogant claim to sovereignty over part of Ireland as put forward in the Green Paper. As one Northern spokesman put it, it merely seeks to perpetuate Britain's grip on Ireland, although in a less partisan way.

Britain has yet to face up to the ultimate reality:— acknowledge the right of the whole people of Ireland, acting as a unit, to decide their own future; declare a timetable for the withdrawal of her forces and announce a general amnesty.

This would mark not just a "milestone in Anglo-Irish relations," as Mr. Childers put it, but a turning-point for the better and an end to the violence we have known as a people for 800 years.

One final point: acceptance of the Green Paper by the Dublin Government clearly means all-out collaboration with Britain as the recent arrest of Máire Drumm of Belfast indicates so obviously.

## R.T.E.

### Censorship

16th December, 1972.

In his reply to the Leinster House debate on his department, Mr. Collins, 26-County Minister for Posts and Telegraphs alleges that on May 22 last my reply to Mr. Lynch's announced intention of introducing further repressive measures was carried on an R.T.E. news bulletin while "the views of other political parties were not given".

The plain fact of the matter is that no other political party or spokesman gave a prompt reaction to Mr. Lynch's statement on that occasion. The so-called Leinster House opposition parties were running true to form; they did not act as an opposition at all and so by default my statement as President of Sinn Féin was carried, the only opposition to Mr. Lynch's declared intent to be expressed that evening.

Mr. Collins says I am "not even an elected representative". It makes little difference as far as Fianna Fáil is concerned. When from 1957 to 1961 I was Sinn Féin T.D. for Longford/Westmeath I spent much of that period behind barbed wire without charge or trial in the Fianna Fáil Concentration Camp at the Curragh.

Did Mr. Collins, who at that time was very active in public affairs at U.C.D., make any protest at this invasion of the democratic rights of an elected representative and of the people who had chosen him? For the record Sinn Féin has quite a number of local councillors who will be contesting the already postponed local elections in the 26 Counties — when these are held — along with a wide panel of fresh candidates. And once more for the record, I am not a spokesman for the Irish Republican Army; I speak only for Sinn Féin.

Incidentally, within 24 hours of being grilled on the "7 Days" programme of May 30 last — "savaged of everything but my dignity" as one commentator put it — my home was raided and I myself arrested under the Offences Against the State Act. The bogus charges brought against me were thrown out of court after a fortnight in Mountjoy Prison on hunger strike.

Since that time, which coincides more or less with Mr.

Collins's meeting with the R.T.E. Authority on June 23 last, I have been denied access to all programmes on R.T.E. radio or television. During the bi-lateral Truce of June 26-July 9 when advance by political means to a just and lasting peace was thought possible, the ban remained in force. The occasion of the public launching on June 28 of our blueprint for a New Ireland — the "Eire Nua" Governmental Programme spelling out the new structures for a federal solution within Ireland — similarly fell within the ambit of Section 31.

The obvious conclusion to be drawn from all this is that Messrs. Lynch, O'Malley and Collins are cynically using the powers contained in the Broadcasting Act to stifle normal political opposition. This was particularly evident during the Referendum on E.E.C. membership last May.

The fact that I was elected President of Sinn Féin for the third successive year by over 1,000 delegates at our Ard-Fheis carries no weight with Mr. Collins and his kind. They have forcibly occupied our Head Office at Kevin Street, Dublin and have jailed many of our members, including the Editor of "An Phoblacht" Colmán Ó Muimhneacháin.

As for Fine Gael and Labour, they also feel threatened politically by us so they will not object. They will not even act as an Opposition. In the circumstances, Sinn Féin will oppose promptly, incessantly and with vigour in order to bring some reality into Irish public life. We promise all of them that.

And since Mr. Collins denies us access to the media, something which is vital in order to build a real political alternative to the present Establishment, we are forced to seek that poor man's *modus operandi* which has stood our Northern brethren in good stead and appeal to the parliament of the streets.

## Border Bombings

29th December, 1972.

This statement was issued by Ruairí Ó Brádaigh after bombs had exploded in three border towns, Clones, Belturbet and Pettigo, killing two people and injuring many more.

Encouraged by their recent success in stampeding the Fine Gael opposition to the Offences Against the State Amendment Bill, the British or pro-British bombers have struck again in the 26 Counties.

This time they hope to blackmail Mr. Lynch into implementing his new totalitarian legislation against northern political refugees and Irish Republicans generally. If Mr. Lynch does allow his hand to be forced by the activities of politically-motivated bombers, then British or pro-British agents — of whom we have heard further in recent weeks — will be dictating policy and effectively ruling the 26 Counties.

Sinn Féin condemns these anti-people attacks unreservedly and extends heartfelt sympathy to the relatives of the two young people who lost their lives and to the many injured.

The motivation of the bombers is clear; their activities and the many sectarian murders are encouraged by the highly publicised incitement of people like Mr. William Craig who is "prepared to tolerate sectarian murders". R.T.E. in giving full freedom of the air to such spokesmen bears some part of the responsibility in this regard.

Later on December 29 Ruairí Ó Brádaigh was arrested and charged before the Special Criminal Court.

## A New Democracy

The writing of this article has been interrupted many times. It was started in December, 1972, continued in the Curragh Military Prison in February, 1973, cut short by the visits and letters strike by Republican prisoners there, and concluded on the writer's release in May 1973.

Addressing the non-jury Special Court in Green Street, Dublin on December 30, 1972 following his arrest, Ruairí Ó Brádaigh, said, *inter alia* :

"As President of Sinn Féin I am actively engaged in a full time capacity in organising and preparing for local council elections due within the next six months, with the additional possibility of an early general election in the 26 Counties; and even more important still, I am preparing to organise public opinion against such proposals in the forthcoming British White Paper on the Six Counties which may deny the right of the Irish people to unity and independence. I believe this to be the real reason for my arrest."

He added that his political opponents wished to silence him and stop his political commentary at such a crucial time. Sentenced to six months imprisonment in early January on the unsupported word of a police Chief Superintendent — the first such case under the O.A.S. (Amendment) Act of December 1972—the pattern became clear.

In February a 26-County general election was sprung; on March 8 came the Border Poll and on March 20 the long awaited British White Paper. May saw local council elections in the North followed by elections to the new Stormont Assembly in June.

Ruairí Ó Brádaigh would have been in prison for all these political events were it not that he was moved from Mountjoy Jail to the Curragh "Glasshouse" for fear of public demonstrations at the jail gates. At the Curragh he received remission of sentence resulting in his release on May 14.

Only the 26-County local elections—postponed once more for a year — remained to engage the attention of the political leader of the Republican Movement. This was the "real reason for his arrest" and imprisonment — to interrupt the political progress of the Movement.

Mr. O'Malley speaking to the London "Times" called it "harassing and inconveniencing these people as much as possible."

\* \* \*

"Who will tell the British Government when the time has come to tell it, keep its hands off?"

"Human nature, even the strongest human nature, is weak and the time will inevitably come, if this Free State comes into existence, when you will have a permanent government in the country; and permanent governments in any country have a dislike to being turned out, and they will seek to fight their own corner before anything else.

"Men will get into positions, men will hold power, and men who get into positions and hold power will desire to remain undisturbed and will not want to be removed — or will not take a step that will mean removal in case of failure."

(Liam Mellows: Treaty Debate Jan. 4, 1922)

I write on December 8, 1972, the 50th anniversary of the death, by firing squad of the author of the lines quoted above. He and three other Republican leaders were executed by order of the Free State Government without any pretence even of a trial—a deed without precedent "in the annals of any modern civilised government."

The bitter fruit of a settlement not based on *justice* was being tasted by the Irish people. That the Treaty of 1921 has not been a *lasting* settlement either has been amply demonstrated in North East Ulster in recent times. The removal of Stormont last March is sufficient evidence in that regard.

But Stormont's downfall has also shaken the foundations of that other offspring of the bogus settlement of fifty years ago, Leinster House. It too has been in crisis and as I write the votes are being counted as part of an effort to modernise the Southern partition parliament and make it more acceptable to the people (Article 44 and votes at 18 Referenda).

One short week ago a deepening crisis almost paralysed it because the ruling party had decided that nothing short of a clean sweep of all remaining civil liberties and democratic freedoms could ensure its survival for another while. Politically motivated bombers ensured safe passage of the Offences Against the State Amendment Bill, by a strategically-timed intervention which caused two deaths and scores of injuries to innocent people.

In an attempt to justify this draconian measure many efforts have been made to prejudice the people of Ireland against the Republican Movement.

(1) It is alleged that the Irish Republican Army is conducting an anti-people campaign in British-occupied Ireland. Yet any objective analysis of the casualty figures (e.g. Michael McKeown

—"The First Five Hundred" published August, 1972) will show that no more humane campaign has been carried out by guerrillas in the 20th century, not to speak of campaigns by professional armies. The I.R.A. has *not* deliberately caused the deaths of uninvolved civilians, has *not* engaged in the torture of prisoners and has *not* been involved in sectarian murders. This compares most favourably with the record in this respect of the British Army and its undercover agents, the R.U.C. and its Special Branch, all arraigned internationally at Strasbourg, and the various extreme loyalist groups who can turn the sectarian killing on and off at will. (Ref. U.D.A. statements of January and early February 1973 which marked a three-week lull and then a resumption in so-called "motiveless murders".)

(2) Messrs. Lynch, Cosgrave and Cruise O'Brien, while denying the Republican Movement due credit for the downfall of Stormont (British sources have been more objective here — see Guardian reference on second page of Ard-Fheis address) have been misrepresenting our attitude to the Leinster House Parliament

When Sinn Féin speakers say that "we brought down Stormont and will remove Leinster House also" they invariably go on to say that it is proposed to replace both partition assemblies by an All-Ireland Parliament with a new constitution, a Charter of Rights and the complete re-structuring of government throughout the 32 Counties.

(3) The ruthless political opponents of Sinn Féin dwell on the negative aspect of this statement without alluding to the positive side, thus condemning us "out of our own mouths" with a half truth. They *also* suggest that the Republican Movement intends to attack by violence the 26-County State. This, of course, is not true and is contrary to the publicly declared policy of the Movement which has been rigidly adhered to for more than a quarter of a century now.

(4) They dub any active political organisation outside of the conventional ranks of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and Labour as composed of "subversives," which term of course carries with it the innuendo that such people have no right to engage in political activity at all. The fact that Fianna Fáil came to power in 1932 with a public political programme to "subvert" the existing (Free) State and bring in a new constitution is of course conveniently ignored.

(5) The charge that we intend to "undermine democracy" is the one most frequently hurled at us, yet the reverse is in fact

the case. The publicly declared aim of the Republican Movement is to establish throughout Ireland a far more democratic system than that which obtains here since 1922. This is spelled out clearly in the Republican policy document "Éire Nua," which was launched at a press conference in Dublin on June 28, 1972, two days subsequent to the coming into operation of the short-lived IRA-British Army truce in the Six Counties.

The truce was broken by British troops, first at Portadown on Sunday morning, July 9 and finally at Lenadoon, Belfast that evening. The Movement had been preparing a massive political campaign starting with the "Éire Nua" folder of which quarter of a million had been printed for public distribution.

The acceptance of the Republican demands for the gradual removal of the British presence from Ireland, and the acknowledgement by the British Government of the right of the Irish people acting as a unit to decide their own future, would both bring about a permanent ceasefire and restore democracy in Ireland. British rule and the existence of the partition system, based on a sectarian head count in the Six Counties, effectively deny the democratic will of the whole people of Ireland at present.

Further, "Éire Nua" would have the existing centralised and bureaucratic systems North and South replaced by a "community of communities" in Ireland: district councils with real powers in local areas of 10,000 to 40,000 population, including areas of the major cities of Dublin, Belfast and Cork; these would be grouped into about 15 regional bodies, including one for the Gaeltacht, under four provincial parliaments in Ulster, Munster, Leinster and Connacht, federated in an All-Ireland state whose parliament would concern itself with such matters as foreign affairs, defence and over-all financing.

Thus the decision-making process at the centre would be broken up and brought down the country, nearer to the ordinary people with the slogan "power to the provinces, power to the people." A nine-county Ulster Parliament would give the former Unionists a working majority in the most populous (1½ million) province of the New Federal Ireland. In addition, the impact of the present machine politics would be further countered by the Comhar na gComharsan (Neighbours' Co-Operation) philosophy of worker-ownership and participation in industry.

The Republican proposals add up to a more human system and an increase in the stature and dignity of man in Ireland. Their implementation would result in much more democratic structures of government than those which operate now.

(6) The misrepresentation as to how the present situation in the Six Counties came about is the most sinister of all. Here the

chorus is led by Mr. William Whitelaw, British Secretary of State for the North. Interviewed on News Extra, B.B.C. 2 on February 8, 1973 he said: "We must not overlook the fact that the I.R.A. started all this. That must never be forgotten."

The Belfast Nationalist daily paper the *Irish News* asked Mr. Whitelaw in an editorial of February 10 entitled *False Premise*:

"Is he unaware that the origins of the present disturbances—recurrent for so many generations now—go back to 1966 when the first sectarian murders took place? Are the reports of the Cameron Commission and the Scarman Tribunal unknown territory to him? Has he now had access, as political Supremo, to the secret Bailey Report? Did he hear nothing of the attack on the Civil Rights March of October, 1968, when well-known people like Mr. Gerry Fitt and Mr. Eddie McAteer were among the injured? Did he never hear the word Burntollet? Did nobody tell him of the bombed water mains which finished O'Neill?"

"Most incredible of all, does he not know why the British Army was sent in in force? It was to protect the Catholics, but why? Has he not heard that five hundred Catholic homes and over one hundred Catholic businesses were destroyed in Belfast on the nights of August 14 and 15, 1969 and that, far from there being an I.R.A. force, there was not even a bit of barbed wire to keep back the Unionist petrol bombers and gunmen who invaded the Catholic ghettos in their hundreds?"

Subsequently, of course, the British troops were shown up in their true colours as defenders of the Establishment and British Rule with the Lower Falls Curfew of July 3—5, 1970 and the deaths of many unarmed civilians at their hands.

The editorial continues:

"The truth is the only thing which can possibly achieve peace, and if Britain, speaking as Mr. Whitelaw or anyone else, is working from a false premise, it cannot produce a just and equitable solution to the problems of this area.

"The doctor who makes a wrong diagnosis will prescribe the fatal remedy."

A simple checking of the facts of the situation as it developed with the findings of the "Insight Team" investigation as published in the *Sunday Times* in late 1971 is something Republicans

have no need to shrink from. The sequence of events, including British Home Secretary Maudling's "declaration of war" on July 23, 1971, and internment (August 9 of the same year) with its systematic tortures and humiliations of internees is a matter of public record for all who wish to establish the truth.

In due course the "fatal remedy" has been prescribed in the form of the British Government's White Paper on Northern Ireland of March 20, 1973. All the proposals are based on the Border Poll of March 8 in the Six Counties. The sectarian head count of 1920 which dictated the boundaries of the Northern Partition statelet cannot provide the basis for a just and lasting peace.

The people's resistance of the past 4½ years—political, civil disobedience and physical—has shaken British Imperialism in Ireland to its foundations. The British have been forced to remove the old Stormont and dismantle the governmental structures used by them to control the North since 1921. They then substituted the unstable expedient of Direct Rule. In the White Paper they are desperately trying to create new institutions, i.e., local government and the new Stormont Assembly with some credibility and support among the anti-Unionist population so as to stabilise the situation and perpetuate their own control.

Unprecedented British military repression in the North, together with all out collaboration and attempted extradition by the Dublin Government, have accompanied this attempt at an imposed solution which represents not a change of heart but only a change of tactics by the British.

The propaganda war has likewise been stepped up at home and abroad while Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien—whose articles are used by the British consulates throughout the U.S.A. as hand-outs—is now responsible for R.T.É. The misrepresentation of the Irish Republican position intensifies in a last ditch attempt to make the White Paper "stick."

I have set out in this much interrupted article to clarify the situation particularly with regard to the Republican Movement vis-a-vis the centralised, bureaucratic 26 County State. In conclusion I would ask the reader to glance again at Liam Mellows's remarks of 50 years ago which prefaced this article. They throw light on the anti-Republican attitude of the new Dublin Government which now includes Labour Party Ministers; they also indicate why the Republican Movement does not wish to have the new Stormont Assembly, etc. operated.

"Men will get into positions, men will hold power..." Liam Mellows and many, many Irish people have paid with their lives because the truth of this was not recognised.

"Who will tell the British Government, when the time has come to tell it, keep its hands off?" Now that the time has come again, certainly not the "National Coalition," or Fianna Fáil either.

"Human nature, even the strongest human nature, is weak ...". Human nature has not changed since 1922. To operate and participate in White Paper institutions which do not provide the basis for a just and lasting peace will indeed be the "fatal remedy."

## Six-County Assembly Elections

5th July, 1973

Following the collapse of the old Stormont Parliament before the resistance of the people in the Six Counties, Britain has devised in her White Paper new institutions through which to stabilise the situation and perpetuate her own control over the area.

This was followed by elections to the new Stormont Assembly which were not free as far as Sinn Féin was concerned. Our organisation is banned under British law, many of our members imprisoned and interned and our supporters are harassed and subjected to intimidation day and night by a brutal soldiery. Furthermore, our members in going before the people in an all-out campaign would be marked down for future "attention" and possible internment by the same forces of British terror.

Rather than enter an unequal contest under such circumstances Sinn Féin did not attempt to nominate candidates but instead called on its supporters either to boycott the polls or spoil their votes as local conditions indicated. This stand was responsible for the comparatively low poll (63%) and high rate of spoiled votes (6%) in West Belfast, where Sinn Féin in the teeth of all the disadvantages could certainly have won a seat. It is reasonable to deduce also that only a Sinn Féin or Dáil Uladh-type candidate could have taken a further seat from the Unionists in Fermanagh-South Tyrone.

Reduced polls and invalidated ballot papers were a feature of the count in the other ten constituencies but on a diminished scale and indicate the widespread nature of the "boycott or spoil" stand. It is important to realise that in contested constituencies in the past a poll of approximately 90% was usual rather than the exception. Intense psychological pressure was exerted on voters to the effect that not to conform would "allow the Unionists to win" and resulted in the electors often choosing a second-best by default since their first choice was denied free participation in the contest.

The number of seats gained by the S.D.L.P. in these circumstances means that they will in a short time be called to account for the unconditional release of the internees, a general amnesty for all political prisoners and the securing of their "declaration of intent" from the British Government. Notwithstanding the outcome of this unfree election, it is difficult to see the new Stormont Assembly working at all since all democratic processes have to be bent to allow it to function. This is of course dictated by the artificial and undemocratic basis of the Six-County State which divides Protestant from Catholic and effectively prevents reconciliation based on justice.

In the likely event of the new Stormont going the way of its predecessor — it has been given nine months to get working — Britain will be forced to face reality and consider winding up her centuries-old intervention in Irish affairs. Towards forcing Britain to plan and put into effect a phased and orderly withdrawal from Ireland over a period of years the energies of the Republican Movement are directed. To render the new British institution unworkable is therefore of paramount importance at this time.

## British Agents in 26 Counties

18th August, 1973.

The "New Statesman" of August 10 stated in regard to the Littlejohn Affair that last autumn and winter when political persuasion and Mr. Heath's bullying failed to get Mr. Lynch to take tougher action against "I.R.A. elements within the Republic", then "a number of highly convenient things began to happen."

This journal instances the petrol bomb attacks on two garda stations in Co. Louth on September 22 last and a bomb at Dundalk Post Office later that night and gives as its understanding that the Littlejohn brothers have since confessed to a measure of responsibility for both the Castlebellingham and Louth police station petrol bombings.

There was considerable tension at the time because of the danger of death to Republican prisoners on hunger and thirst strike at the Curragh. Responsibility for these incidents was denied by the Provisional I.R.A. but Mr. O'Malley, the then Minister for Justice said in an R.T.E. interview the following Sunday that "it did not matter whether the Provisional I.R.A. denied responsibility or not" and went on by implication to blame the Republican Movement.

The closure and occupation of our Head Office at Kevin Street, Dublin followed on October 6 and an interview with Mr. O'Malley in the London "Times" of October 16 revealed that this action was "part of the general policy of the government and police here to harass these people to the greatest possible extent".

Similarly the now notorious bombings in central Dublin on December 1 blasted the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Bill through and Mr. Lynch seized ruthlessly and cynically on the opportunity to blame Irish Republicans once more by suggestion in a special T.V. appearance.

The new legislation was enacted but for four weeks was not put into operation. Then on December 28 came three more bombings without warning in Clones, Belturbet and Pettigo — all border towns — claiming two lives and leaving many injured. Next day I issued a statement to press, radio and television



saying that the Dublin bombs had put the bill through and that the Border bombs were meant to push the 26-County government to operate the new Coercion Act.

I also said that if the hand of the Dublin government was forced by such action then the politically motivated bombers were dictating policy and would be in fact the real rulers of the 26-County State. Within hours of publication of the statement I was arrested by the Special Branch in Kevin Street, Dublin and was later sent to jail on the mere word of a Chief Superintendent of police. I myself became the first victim of the new legislation.

Weeks later a further bomb at the same place in Central Dublin claimed another life and the pace of arrests and the use of the new powers speeded up. To-date thirty-one men have been jailed on the "belief" of a police officer by the non-jury Special Court.

Mr. Cosgrave may pose as a very "strong man" when it comes to dealing with the Republican Movement, but the Littlejohn Affair has illustrated that when it comes to facing up to the British Government he is a very small boy indeed.

Well might David May, editor of the British Magazine "Time Out", which Watergated the entire business, say: "the contempt shown by the British Government to Ireland is appalling — they've treated it like a Banana Republic".

## Mountjoy Prison Hunger Strike

28th September, 1973.

In the statement put out this afternoon, with regard to Mountjoy Prison, the Dublin government is clearly challenging Republicans to a show-down. It is an unequal contest that only the State can win as has been shown in 1922/23 and again in the 1940s.

The last confrontation in Mountjoy in May last year was used by the Government to re-open the Curragh Prison and re-introduce the Special non-jury Courts. What further repressive action do Mr. Cosgrave and the O'Brien-Fitzgerald-Costello trio now seek to justify by provoking violent scenes inside and outside Mountjoy in which "all the resources of the state" will be used?

Mr. Heath has come and gone — a man obviously in a hurry to settle the "Irish Question" his way. The S.D.L.P. appear to be prepared to sell out Irish unity, internees and everything else in the pursuit of office in the new Stormont Executive; and Mr. Cosgrave this afternoon got ready to give another turn of the screw to repression in the 26 Counties.

The protest by Republican prisoners in Mountjoy is now in its sixteenth day; eight prisoners including Joe Cahill, Gerry O'Hare of Belfast and J. B. O'Hagan of Armagh are now sixteen days on hunger strike. Their demands are:

Political status, which was granted by Mr. Whitelaw in the North on June 19 last year; the usual quarter remission of sentence which is granted to all prisoners including those in the Curragh but is denied only to the Republicans in Mountjoy; and a further hour's recreation time each evening until 8.30 p.m.

The government's statement speaks of violence and the danger to the public. In the Curragh since March 5 a non-violent protest in the form of refusal to take visits or write letters out has been in progress. Most points have been met with the exception of decent visiting arrangements and so the protest there goes on into its eighth month with no injury to anyone except the prisoners themselves and their relatives and friends. But those who posture in support of non-violent methods have been strangely silent in the face of this self-sacrifice. No voice has been raised

in support of the Curragh prisoners with the exception of Sinn Féin, the Irish Civil Rights Association and the People's Democracy.

Since visits have not taken place in Mountjoy for two weeks now in punishment for the prisoners' refusal to return to their cells each evening until 8.30 p.m. it is impossible for relatives and friends of the men inside to know what is happening in "D" wing of the prison. One thing, however, is certain: The public are in no danger from the Republican prisoners in Mountjoy or from their friends and comrades outside. The danger to the public is from the British and pro-British agents who have placed bombs without warning in the streets of Dublin, Belturbet and other towns which have taken the lives of five residents of the 26 Counties within the past year.

The "full resources of the State" were not mobilised in defence of the people of the North in 1969, 1970 or 1971; they were not used against Crinion, Wyman and their ilk earlier this year. They have been reserved since the foundation of the State solely for use against those who seek to build a new Ireland — and to retain in office those who cling to the Old Ireland fashioned in two parts in Westminster in 1920.

The Irish people should be on their guard as they may well be witnessing today the opening scene in the drama of a final sell-out of the struggle in the North. Political extradition from the South, the Human Rights case at Strasbourg and the formation at all costs of the new Stormont Executive are all factors in the situation. Party politicians in the 26 Counties care nothing about the suffering people as they seek to retain office or the prospect of office. A New Ireland would diminish rather than enhance their political fortunes and they will collaborate to the last with the British in resisting such an outcome to the struggle.

Particularly relevant to today's situation is the whole question of penal reform with regard to which Mr. Cooney appears to be totally in the hands of his conservative Department Officials. The "reforming" administration of six months ago has become just as blind and arrogant as its predecessor.

## Presidential Address to the 69th Ard-Fheis

21st October, 1973.

A chathaoirligh, a theachtaí is a chairde ar fad.

Fearaim céad fáilte romhaibh go léir ag an Ard-Fheis seo. Is iomaí fobairt agus is mó fulaingt atá déanta ag ár muintir ó bhailigh muid le céile anseo anuraidh. Cé gur i ngéire atá an troid imithe le bliain anuas níl teipthe orthu ná baol air.

Seasann siad an fód go calma ag tabhairt misnigh agus inspioráide do phobal Éireann sa bhaile agus i gcéin, fhaid agus tá an chaibidil deiridh den troid á scríobh acu.

Ní mór dúinne sna Sé Chontae Fíchead agus thar lear ár ngeallúintí a chomhlíonadh trí sheasamh gualainn ar ghualainn leo. Chuige sin, caithfidh muid tabhairt faoin ár ndualgais go fuinneamhach agus go bríomhar.

Mar sin ba mhaith liom an cúrsa oideachais pholaitiúil atá á chur i bhfeidhm a lua, agus a fhógairt go bhfuil an cúrsa sin riachtanach do gach ball de Sinn Féin. Ní caint gan tairbhe a theastaíos anois ach gníomh grad.

On the occasion of the 69th Annual Ard-Fheis of Sinn Féin I wish, on behalf of the Ard-Chomhairle to extend a sincere welcome to all our assembled delegates and visitors.

Since we gathered here in Dublin last year many traumatic events have shaken the political life of our country, North and South. The splendid resistance of the people to British rule in the Six Counties has been maintained with all the idealism and self-sacrifice of this generation of young people. Despite unprecedented repression by British militarism, with the now notorious paratroopers well to the fore, that resistance has continued in all its aspects: civil disobedience, military resistance and the promotion of the only realistic political solution in the form of Dáil Uladh.

The number of prisoners in jail in the North — over half of whom are held without charge or trial — is at an all time high figure of approximately 1,500. Girls and schoolboys of 15 years have in the past year joined their menfolk "behind the wire", making the Heath and Whitelaw regime in Ireland the only government in Western Europe since the fall of Nazi Germany to hold women and children in concentration camps.

The late-night and early-morning raids, the harassment, the arrests continue at an ever-increasing pace; civilian deaths at the hands of British Army uniformed and plain-clothes squads mount up; and the number of horrible sectarian assassinations of politically uninvolved people which started about two years ago has now passed the two hundred mark. But far from surrendering in the face of all the suffering and torture the heroic people remain unbeaten; they stand "bloody but unbowed".

Meanwhile, the British have been erecting a political smoke-screen behind which they continue to seek a military solution. The Green Paper for Discussion of a year ago was followed by their White Paper on Constitutional Proposals for the Six Counties of March 20 last. The White Paper was of course completely restrictive in that it was based on the worthless Border Poll of March 8, the result of which was a foregone conclusion. The vote was confined to the Six-County area, artificially carved out of the body politic of Ireland in 1920 on the basis of a sectarian head-count. Sinn Féin gave the lead in securing the massive 42% abstention from this meaningless exercise in playing with loaded dice.

In the White Paper itself Britain is desperately trying to create new institutions with some credibility and support among the anti-Unionist population, so as to stabilise the situation and perpetuate her own control over the area. The B-Specials were abolished and replaced by the Ulster Defence Regiment of the British Army — a more modern and efficient force; the old corrupt and gerrymandered local councils were removed in favour of a new system of local government, but this was stripped of all powers in health, education and housing to be left only with the care of public parks and cemeteries and the collection of garbage; similarly, the infamous Special Powers Act of Stormont was superseded by the Emergency Provisions legislation of Westminster which is even more repressive, providing for non-jury trials, the arrest by British troops of Irish children of 10 years and upwards, and the internment without trial of boys and girls of 14 years and over. To Mr. Whitelaw who says that this is emergency legislation only Sinn Féin replies that so was the Special Powers Act: it was brought in for a year in 1922: was renewed annually until 1928 when it was extended for five years until 1933, when it was made permanent. But then, life in Ireland under British rule tends to be one long emergency!

In the same way the old Stormont parliament, brought down by the peoples' resistance spearheaded by the Irish Republican Army, has as its would-be successor the new Stormont Assembly. At the same time as elections to this new body were being announced the ban on Sinn Féin under British law was re-

imposed and military repression in the Six Counties stepped up considerably. Rather than enter the election under such circumstances Sinn Féin called for a "boycott or spoil" campaign which was fairly successful—especially so in West Belfast. Despite all the adverse conditions even bitter opponents of our organisation have admitted publicly that we would have secured a number of seats had we put up candidates. The number of seats gained by the S.D.L.P. by default means that they can now be called to account for the unconditional release of the internees, a general amnesty for all political prisoners, the securing of their "declaration of intent" from the British Government and the other objectives we were told could be secured by them through their form of "political action".

The bending of all democratic processes in the name of "power-sharing" to make the artificial "Northern Ireland" entity function normally through a new Stormont Executive cannot succeed. The unnatural and undemocratic basis of that statelet divides Protestant from Catholic and effectively by its very existence prevents reconciliation based on justice.

The much-heralded Council of Ireland, we are told, will be all things to all men! So it was with the ill-fated Boundary Commission which was used so effectively to "sell" the Treaty Settlement of 1921 to a section of the Irish people. But in 1925 when the Treaty had been pushed through by a bloody Civil War, and demobilisation had taken place, the first Free State Government found themselves tricked and cheated by British politicians. The Boundary Commission came to nothing and its abolition in return for the cancellation of alleged war debts was called a "damned good bargain" by Mr. Cosgrave No. 1.

Similarly, Nationalist Irishmen and women are told that the proposed Council of Ireland will grow into an All-Ireland parliament if only the warfare would stop—while Unionist people are told the very opposite. But if the civil disobedience campaign and the struggle generally does come to a halt and "demobilisation" takes place, what is there to prevent the Council of Ireland from being still-born? Nothing — nothing but the word of English politicians, and we in Ireland know to our cost in blood and tears just how much value can be placed on that.

*No, we are not prepared to accept the British White Paper on trust, as we are asked to do. The basis for a just and lasting peace in Ireland — and that is the only peace worth having — remains a firm commitment by the British government to (1) make a planned, phased and orderly withdrawal from Ireland over a period of years; (2) acknowledge the right of the people of Ireland acting as a unit to determine their own future; and (3) declare*

*a general amnesty for all political prisoners by they Loyalist or Republican.*

Within the last two days Mr. Whitelaw has called for tripartite talks on a common law-enforcement area for Ireland and the handing back to the British forces of political refugees who come South of the Border. Here we see the British openly and brazenly attempting to stretch their political and military tentacles back into the 26 Counties. Every day for weeks before Mr. Cosgrave met Mr. Heath on July 2 last, one could read in the newspapers of attempts at political extradition.

At present 11 cases are pending before the Dublin High Court. The twelfth was Jim Bryson; they cannot extradite him now for he died fighting like a modern Cúchulainn. In view of these cases it is interesting to read what the father of the present Attorney-General had to say when demands similar to those of Mr. Whitelaw and Unionist politicians were being made some years ago.

Speaking in Leinster House on November 30, 1955 Mr. John A. Costello, then leader of the Dublin Government said:

"I must, therefore, emphasise in order to prevent any future controversy or discussion on this point, that there can be no question of our handing over either to the British or to the Six-County authorities, persons whom they may accuse of armed political activities in Britain or in the Six Counties".

That unequivocal statement is a far cry from the utterances and actions of 26-County politicians today. They see the whole political settlement of 1921 which set up both partition states going into the melting pot and with it their political careers. A New Federal Ireland would not enhance their fortunes in any way. A 50% increase in the electorate, which the inclusion of 1½ million people from North of the Border would bring about, would not mean many votes for Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael or Labour. In such a completely new political arena the comfortable game of "ins and outs" of office for Fianna Fáil on the one hand, and Fine Gael and Labour on the other, would be at an end. Whatever few Unionist votes would go to any of them, they would certainly receive no Nationalist support, for the nationally-minded people know that they have been betrayed, abandoned and cast out by Leinster House politicians for over 50 years.

And so they resist change; they oppose the inevitable. They stoop to such practices as collaboration with the invading British forces, the operation of non-jury courts, the jailing and general harassment of those who promote change, who seek a

new and better Ireland. They contemplate the lowest form of national treachery — political extradition — in order to gain a few more years respite. It was apparently something of this nature Mr. Brian Faulkner had in mind when he spoke on R.T.É. News at One-Thirty on June 22 last, a right denied to Sinn Féin spokesmen for almost a year and a half now. Mr. Faulkner spoke of joint action between Mr. Cosgrave and the British forces to obtain "peace for this generation"— in other words to give politicians North and South a chance to enjoy the spoils of office for 10 or 12 years and "after them the Deluge".

This is the short-term thinking which has left our generation such a legacy of violence, destruction and death. What is wanted, of course is a lasting settlement based on justice, which will remove violence for all time, and not just a temporary cover-up operation, like that of 1921, which sowed the seeds of future violence. To settle for less than a permanent solution is to blind oneself to reality. Success for the "peace for this generation" school of thought, would mean sentencing a future generation of Irish people to endure what our generation has suffered all over again.

But British interference in the 26 Counties has taken another and more sinister form in recent years. The calculated use of the agent provocateur in the persons of the Littlejohn brothers and others has come to light. Mr. Desmond O'Malley gladly used the climate of opinion created by their activities in the Free State to close down and occupy Sinn Féin offices in Dublin and to prepare a vicious amendment to the already outrageous Offences Against the State Act, in November last. And when the Dublin Government was in danger of falling, because of lack of support for this measure, and the Fine Gael opposition was splitting, British or pro-British agents were ready to hand to cause explosions without warning in central Dublin, killing two citizens and injuring 127 others.

Here was the signal for the importation of the "politics of the latest atrocity" into the 26 Counties. Mr. Lynch cynically and ruthlessly seized immediately on these strategically-timed bombings to rush his Offences Against the State (Amendment) Bill through, and by implication blame the Republican Movement. He indicated in a special television appearance, where he sought to place responsibility, without his having a scintilla of evidence and despite the obvious fact that the blasts conflicted with every interest of the Republican Movement. The main opposition party was simultaneously stampeded back behind Mr. Cosgrave, thus allowing through a bill they had earlier described as fit only to take its place on the South African statute-book.

Despite the demonstrations by thousands on the streets, the

the protests by prominent people in all walks of life, the token strikes and marches by workers, the best efforts of trade unionists, students and all concerned with civil liberties, the combined action of Fianna Fáil, most of Fine Gael and the politically-motivated bombers won through. The sense of timing displayed in setting off the bombs is reminiscent of the sequence of blasts by which extreme Unionists blew Captain Terence O'Neill out of office in 1969. The consequence of this line-up by groups — all of which stood to lose by the failure of the O.A.S. (Amendment) Bill — is that the people of the 26-Counties now have internment without trial in a camouflaged form.

Within a week two sections of Article 44 of the 1937 Constitution were removed and the long awaited votes at 18 conceded, but the most repressive piece of legislation in Western Europe was passed — an enactment more vicious and totalitarian than anything available to the British regime in the Six Counties. The net result was to place us temporarily farther away than ever from a New Ireland.

The Republican solution is to provide an entirely new Constitution and Charter of Rights: a federal solution within Ireland of four provincial parliaments overseen by an All-Ireland assembly. Tinkering about with the status quo in the 26 Counties will not impress the Unionists, or show the British Government that we in the South are in earnest, in changing to meet the new situation. Only a decisive move towards the building of a pluralist society and the separation of Church and State will do that. Sinn Féin is giving the lead with its programme of regional government now being promoted through four provincial councils and an All-Ireland co-ordinating committee. This latest body consisting of delegates from Comhairle Uladh, Comhairle Chonnacht, Comhairle na Mumhan and Comhairle Laighean meets at Athlone because the Republican programme envisages the administrative capital in the New Ireland being separate and distinct from the commercial capital in Dublin. However, it is necessary to point out that embryo regional government structures are most meaningful at local, that is at county and district level. Here is where the brunt of the work must be borne and tied in with preparations for the forthcoming local government elections in the 26 Counties.

An important issue in these elections will be the galloping inflation which has accelerated greatly following entry to the E.E.C. last January, and is linked with the recent increase in interest rates on mortgages for houses to a staggering 11¼% per annum. Living costs have risen enormously; the Common Market regional policy as regards Ireland is almost worthless

— if the allocations to us from the regional fund are the yardstick, and Britain and West Germany are combining to destroy the Common Agricultural Policy. This outcome was forecast by Sinn Féin last year in its anti-E.E.C. campaign and it will be interesting to watch future developments in this regard. Sinn Féin speakers and members should not be slow to drive the lesson home whenever such points become topical.

The great inequalities in the distribution of wealth continue in all of Ireland and that includes the 26 Counties under the allegedly reformist National Coalition. There have been and there are no indications of any change in the position where 5% of the people own 71% of the wealth and 65% own no wealth at all. These unchallenged statistics give the prime reason for bringing an end to economic as well as political and military colonialism in all of Ireland.

No move towards a more equitable distribution of wealth in the community could be expected when one considers that before the general election of February last a National Coalition spokesman promised a small and influential number of bankers, financiers and stockbrokers that (and here I quote from the uncontradicted article in "Hibernia" of March 30 last):

- \* There will be no dividend control.
- \* No profit control.
- \* No change in the company tax structure, other than that foreshadowed in the Fianna Fáil pre-election white paper.
- \* Banks will not be nationalised and the finance and other credit institutions will not be taken into public ownership.
- \* There will be no major moves to end the mining exploitation.
- \* All the stated ambitions of the Labour Party, when in Government, are going to be denied. Fine Gael's own speculative gains tax is to be left on the shelf.
- \* There will be no early move to regulate mergers and takeovers.
- \* There will be no intervention by the Government on the outflow of cash from Ireland for investment overseas, especially in Britain.

The Labour Party have not only let down their supporters on the economic and social questions, but they have sold out politically as well. They participate in the operation of the O.A.S. (Amendment) Act where the mere "belief" of a Chief Superin-

tendent is sufficient to send a citizen to jail for up to two years; they continue through their Minister Dr. Cruise O'Brien to reinforce the R.T.É. ban on Sinn Féin and other radical spokesmen — here we are told that Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act is to be replaced by something we will not like any better; they acquiesce in the proposed re-writing of Irish history, or in its "de-contamination" as Mr. Burke has called it; they assist through their Local Government Minister in sacking and banning from public or semi-state employment for seven years of citizens sentenced by the Special Non-Jury Courts; they take part in active collaboration along the Border with British forces and they attempt political extradition; and then to crown it all they have the gall to grant an audience to a supporter of the late Dr. Allende's Chilean government — the overthrow of which all right-thinking Irish people condemn — and vote him £500 from their funds! No doubt the prime consideration here is that Chile is 10,000 miles away.

I might add that Republicans expect all of the foregoing, with the exception of the Chilean interlude, from the Fine Gael party. The Irish folk-memory recalls many of the terrible events set in motion by a previous generation of Cosgraves, Fitzgeralds and O'Higgins in following up their "grim path of duty" as they saw it. But such repression is not in keeping with Labour Party ideals and objectives. Sinn Féin must be to the fore in pointing out to the disillusioned supporters of that body that the Democratic Socialist Republic is and remains our ultimate objective. We will not be deflected from our pursuit of it, and our record in adhering to principle speaks for itself.

To increase the political awareness of our members and deepen their understanding of our policies and the means to be adopted in furthering them, a comprehensive Political Education course has been prepared and is already being put into operation in several areas. Instructors are being trained and considerable enthusiasm has been engendered for the politicising of our Movement. With the rapid sequence of events in the North there was a tendency to jump from the first stage of mobilising the emotional response to the third stage of presenting the alternative way of life, in our case "Éire Nua", without passing through the intermediate stage of thoroughly educating the new members politically.

This omission is now in the process of being made good and the Ard-Chomhairle in setting up the Education Department insisted that the course be made essential training for all members. The achievement of this objective will be followed up by the appointment of full-time organisers in all provinces who will work through regular briefing and reporting sessions.

Next will come the surveying of the local areas in preparation for the local elections, and then the election campaign itself.

In this connection it is well to refer to Sinn Féin's decision not to participate in the 26-County general election last February. The election was called by Mr. Lynch when he had harassed Sinn Féin as a political organisation for over 12 months during which time 22 of our public speakers were jailed, half of them being Ard-Chomhairle members. In this age of the mass media he effectively denied access to R.T.É. to Sinn Féin spokesmen from June of last year; the closing of head office and other premises in Dublin followed with resultant disruption and in the New Year more of our political leaders were imprisoned under the new legislation. I refer to Máire Drumm, Colmán Ó Muimhneacháin, Paddy Duffy, Éamonn Mac Thomáis and Mary McGuigan.

In point of fact, the Sinn Féin President was the first person to go to jail solely on the "belief" of a Garda Chief Superintendent. It is interesting to note that Britain herself has refused to violate her own legal system with such coercive and repressive legislation. Mr. Whitelaw observed recently at the Conservative Party Conference in Britain: "I am no lawyer, but I understand that it is extremely difficult in law to prove membership of an unlawful organisation". Not so Mr. O'Malley; nor indeed is Mr. Cooney inhibited in this manner!

Sinn Féin then having been bound hand-and-foot politically through being banned from R.T.É., having its head office seized and its leaders jailed, refused to enter an unequal contest in the 26-County general election. Prominent Republicans did, however, assist other concerned citizens of varying political views from many walks of life in successfully launching the Irish Civil Rights Association to combat such measures as the O.A.S. (Amendment) Act and oppose other denials of civil liberty. Local Sinn Féin members played their part too in combining with others to organise activities and demonstrations in support of I.C.R.A. objectives.

Some of this activity centred on the prisons and at this point I would like to congratulate the Mountjoy hunger strikers on their wonderful victory of two weeks ago. The Curragh prisoners are still without visits and letters out, in spite of their 8-month old passive resistance and non-violent campaign. To the men and women, boys and girls in Long Kesh, Crumlin Road, Armagh, Mountjoy, the Curragh and the prisons in England, we at this Ard-Fheis send greetings and sincere admiration.

For "An Phoblacht" the past year has seen it move successfully into becoming a weekly newspaper despite the arrest of

two Editors. For our members, support towards achieving the new circulation targets must be a high priority.

To our prisoners and to the beleaguered and deprived people throughout Ireland we say: The next six months are crucial for the struggle; if the New Stormont does not work by then it too will be abolished, even though the S.D.L.P. become "poachers turned gamekeepers"; what Mr. Heath has called "a situation of the utmost gravity" will then have arisen, and the British Government will have to consider other possibilities; besides, a British general election is due in 18 months and Heath wants the dreaded Irish question settled before that. Our message then is: stand firm on all fronts; educate ourselves and extend our organisation; we must realise the enormous sacrifices of the past five years; given wise direction and work, work and more work, time can be on our side; but we will get nowhere by standing still; let us return home then, fired by a new enthusiasm, and get down to work.

## Tripartite Agreement

9th December, 1973.

The Agreement signed today in England by the Representatives of Westminster, Stormont and Leinster House constitutes a step backwards rather than an advance for the Irish national claim. It simply implements the objectives set out in the British Green Paper of October 1972 and the White Paper of March last.

- "A Acceptance of the present status of Northern Ireland . . . compatible with the principle of consent . . . and possibility of subsequent change.
- "B Effective consultation and co-operation for benefit of North and South, and
- "C The provision of a firm basis for concerted governmental and community action against terrorist organisations".

The formal declarations contained in paragraph 5 of the Agreement are *NOT* the long-sought Declaration of Intent by the British Government to respect the will of the people of Ireland. Rather does paragraph 5 seek to enshrine internationally at the United Nations the wishes of a minority within the Irish Nation on the basis of the cruel and artificial dismemberment of Ireland over 50 years ago.

All prospect of the Council of Ireland evolving into a meaningful body is effectively stymied by the provision that Council decisions must be unanimous. In this way the Tory-Unionists have again been given a built-in means of vetoing the will of the vast majority of the Irish people.

The Border Poll of March 8 last which was held on that very basis was rejected by political parties in the 26 Counties and actually boycotted by the S.D.L.P. and 42% of the electorate in the Six Counties. A short nine months later the result of that Poll is to be declared sacrosanct and a "step forward".

Many points in the Agreement remain obscure, among the vaguest being the Consultative Assembly which is to be merely

a talking shop. The ineffective Council of Ireland buried by a similar tripartite agreement in 1925 is being resurrected for the main purpose of defeating the heroic resistance of the people to British rule. The Dublin government is now to be effectively tied into "concerted action throughout Ireland to defeat terrorism". (British White Paper, Part 5, Paragraph 115).

The Leinster House politicians undertake to prepare to change accepted international law in order to relieve pressure on the British occupation forces engaged in repression in Ireland. Following up on last year's amendment to the Offences Against the State Act which removed the onus of proof from the prosecution to the accused, further inroads are to be made into the safeguards of human rights, even at international level.

One very pertinent question which Sinn Féin asks and which needs to be answered at this time is: who is going to bring to justice the British soldiers who commit "sheer unadulterated murder" to quote the Derry City Coroner?

It is fair to ask what contribution did Mr. Cosgrave or Mr. Corish—or indeed Mr. Lynch — and their parties make to bring about talks, other than what they have done to stab the Northern people's resistance to British rule in the back. The Republican Movement which gave leadership to the people and bore the brunt of the suffering, torture, imprisonment and death was banned by British law from effective participation in elections. The participants at Sunningdale appear to regard the struggling people as fitting material to do the fighting and dying but not appropriate persons to join in talks about their own future, a right they have surely won at great cost.

In conclusion, another question: Can all the participants to the four-day conference honestly and sincerely say to themselves tonight that they have laid the basis of a just and lasting peace in Ireland? Sinn Féin does not believe that they can do so, no more than those who signed the Treaty of Surrender on December 6, 1921 or the Boundary Agreement on December 3, 1925.



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**Organisation:** Sinn Féin

**Author:** Ruairí Ó Brádaigh

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