



Sinn Féin



Seán Martin/Seán Treacy Cumann - Tra Ghearr

Hunger Strikers continue to light the way

**THE REPUBLIC
WILL BE THEIR
MONUMENT**



The struggle of political prisoners to resist criminalisation is as old as Irish Republicanism itself. When Wolfe Tone was captured with a French military force off the Donegal coast in 1798 the French officers were treated as prisoners of war by the British but they took Tone to Dublin in chains as a common criminal. The Fenian prisoners suffered the worst privations of the Victorian criminal punishment system. From 1916 onwards the prisons became battlegrounds with Republicans winning recognition as political prisoners through protests outside and inside the jails, including Hunger Strike.



The Hunger Strike was always a last resort. In the H-Blocks of Long Kesh and in Armagh Gaol young Republican activists endured almost unimaginable conditions between 1976 and the end of 1980 when Hunger Strike was decided on by the prisoners themselves as the final weapon to defeat criminalisation. They were not simply protesting about prison conditions. The British

Government was attempting to defeat Irish Republicanism by isolating it and portraying it as a criminal conspiracy. The prisoners knew, in the words of Bobby Sands, that "what is lost here is lost for the Republic". For their prison comrades and for the wider struggle, they placed their lives on the line. Ten of them fasted to death in the tragic Summer of 1981, joining the 12

Irish Republicans who died on Hunger Strike from Tomás Ashe in 1917 to Frank Stagg in 1976.

This year Republicans have been marking the 25th Anniversary of the 1981 Hunger Strike. Sunday 13th August saw around 25 – 30,000 people parade to Casement Park to take part in a massive tribute to the Hunger Strikers. This march was not just about remembering the past. It was also about asserting the determination of the Republican people to achieve the type of Ireland for which the Hunger Strikers and their comrades sacrificed so much.

And what type of Ireland did they want? What type of Ireland do we want?

Is it a divided Ireland where Britain still rules Six Counties?

Is it an unequal Ireland where fabulous wealth exists side by

side with deprivation and discrimination?

Is it an Anglo-Americanised Ireland where our national language continues to decline and consumer culture dominates young lives?

Is it a dependant Ireland where solidarity with the oppressed of the earth is replaced with subservience to the new imperialism?

No, this is not the new Ireland we want!

Republicans are leading the forces for change to build a society of which all of us can be proud, an Ireland of equals, sovereign and independent, united and free, a Republic worthy of the name. In doing so we continue to be inspired by the legacy of the Hunger Strikers. Their monument will be the Irish Republic as envisioned by Tone and Connolly.

Successful Kevin Lynch Memorial Night held in the Hilton Hotel

The 1st of August saw the South & East Belfast Sinn Féin Comhairle Ceantair, in conjunction with the Short Strand 80/81 Committee, hold a night of drama, music and poetry in memory of INLA Hunger Striker Kevin Lynch.

The hall was packed to capacity with over 500 people in attendance. Members of Kevin's family, his brother Gerard and sister Mary, were present as were relatives of Vol

Joe McDonnell and Vol Tom McElwee.

The nights proceedings were chaired by the new Sinn Féin representative for East Belfast, Short Strand man Niall Ó Donnghaile.

The night saw members of the Markets Youth Group perform a tremendous play based on those who fight for Irish Freedom, performances from traditional Gaelic singer Eamonn Ó Faogáin and Francie Broily MLA, as well as a fantastic, rousing poem self penned by Short Strand Ex-POW John McComb.

The guest speaker for the night was the MP for West Belfast and Sinn Féin President Gerry

Adams. Like many in the audience he reflected upon personal events from the Hunger Strike period. He commended the families of those who died and he also praised those who turned out not just in support of the nights event but those who were on the streets during the protests.

A wonderful, commissioned oil portrait of Kevin was presented to his brother and sister by Cáitlín Ní Rúnaí, a young Sinn Féin member from the Short Strand.

The highlight of the night's event was the fantastic play, 'Ar an Plúid', a one man show depicting the experience of Kieran Nugent, the first Blanketman.



Niall Ó'Donnghaile addresses the crowd

The night's event was brought to a close with a rendition of 'Something Inside so Strong', performed by Short Strand musician Connor Smith.

The Martin/Treacy Cumann wish to thank all those people who turned out in support of the event, anyone who was in attendance knows how much of a success it was and more importantly, how much of a tribute the night was to Kevin Lynch and his family.

Short Strand Safer Neighbourhood Project Commended

The Seán Martin/Seán Treacy Sinn Féin Cumann would like to take this opportunity to commend all those who are taking part in the local Safer Neighbourhood Project (SNP).

This project is committed to creating a safer environment built on community spirit within the Short Strand district.

The successful mobilisation of local people over the past number of months has seen greatly reduced levels of anti-social behaviour in the area.

The Seán Martin/Seán Treacy cumann, while commending those residents who continue to take part in the SNP, would also take this opportunity encourage more Short Strand residents to play an active role in this initiative.

Need Advice or Help?

Sinn Féin is an activist based party intent on giving the people of the Short Strand the best representation possible. If you need help with an issue, no matter how big or small, we will do our best to help you.

You can contact us at our South/East Belfast constituency office at **174 Ormeau Road** or **telephone: (028) 90243194**.

Concern expressed at Maghaberry situation

East Belfast Sinn Féin representative Niall Ó'Donnghaile has expressed his concern at the conditions being experienced by those prisoners being held in the segregated wing at Maghaberry Gaol.

Mr Ó'Donnghaile's remarks come after he visited the Gaol and protest action was mounted by those currently being held on the segregated wing in the Prison.

The East Belfast Sinn Féin representative said, "In August 2003 Sinn Féin made it clear to the British Government that the practice of forced integration which they were attempting to operate within Maghaberry was flawed and doomed to failure.

"Shortly after this the British Government did introduce a segregated section within Maghaberry to house

Republican prisoners in the face of opposition from the Prison Officers Association." He continued, "Unfortunately it appears that the regime being imposed on those being held in the segregated wing differs greatly from the other parts of the prison.

"Sinn Féin have been contacted by a number of families of those being held in Maghaberry concerned about the repressive nature of the regime in operation in the segregated wing and problems arising on visits especially with the use of a sniffer dog which has led to a number of visits being cancelled as they were about to commence".

The Sinn Féin representative said that Sinn Féin had been given numerous accounts of persistent strip searching, petty regulations and difficulties accessing

adequate education facilities.

"There is a firm belief that the men being held there are pawns in a wider battle between the prison administration, the NIO, and the Prison Officers Association, the latter of which certainly resists prisoners held in segregated conditions being given equal and fair treatment", said Mr Ó'Donnghaile.

He concluded by saying that the prisoners being held in the segregated wing had now embarked upon a series of protests to highlight their case.

"There must be a realisation that all prisoners have the right to be treated in a humane fashion regardless of their political or religious affiliation and that conflict within the prison system is in nobody's interest", said Ó'Donnghaile.

Slógadh Shinn Féin

Sinn Féin's annual Irish language gathering - Slógadh Shinn Féin 2006

Bhí Slógadh Shinn Féin i mBéal Feirste den chéad uair le 15 bliain déag ag deireadh Mí Iúil. Ba léir ón tús go raibh tábhacht ar leith ag baint leis an tSlógadh i mbliana nach raibh amhlaidh roimhe. Seo an chéad Slógadh a bhí ann ó ghlac an Ard Chomhairle leis

an mholadh uailmhianach chun an pháirtí a ghaelú. Bhí fuinneamh agus dóchas san aer nuair a tháinig Gaelgeoirí an pháirtí le chéile an uair seo.

Thar an deireadh seachtain bhí Oíche díospóireachta, cheoil agus craic sa suíomh bhreá



cultúrtha Lárionad an Droichead. Bhí gnó tábhachtach idir lámha againn agus muid ann, ionadaí éagsúla ag caint ar Chearta Teanga in Éirinn, rud a bhfuil tábhacht ar leith ag baint leo sa lá atá inniu ann, go háirithe i ndiaidh cás Máire Nic an Bhaire ar na

mallaibh. Shuigh Pilib Ó Ruanaí, iar-phríosúnach Poblachtánach ón Trá Ghearr agus ceannródaí teanga sa taobh seo cathrach sa chathaoir. D'fhán muid sa Droichead d'óiche amhránaíochta agus filíocht le Fergus Ó hÍr, Éamonn Ó Faogáin agus léigh iarthóir úr an pháirtí in Oirthear Bhéal Feirste Niall Ó Donnghaile sliocht de cuid Roibeárd Uí Sheachnasaigh, níor chríochnaigh muid go dtí na huaireanta beaga.

Ba chúis bróid dúinne a bheidh páirteach sa Slógadh i mbliana agus go raibh cuid de lonnaithe taobh istigh de limeastéir comhairle ceantair s'againn. Bhain achan duine a bhí ann an



Seanna Walsh: Sinn Féin Roinn an Chultúir

sult as an craic ach go háirithe na himeachtaí tábhachtacha ar ghaelú an pháirtí thar tréimhse 7-10 mbliana, rud a féidir linn uilig bheidh páirteach leis.

Is é athgabháil na Geailge áthgabháil na hÉireann!

Housing Executive and DSD must act on Short Strand Housing study findings - Ó'Donnghaile

East Belfast Sinn Féin representative Niall Ó'Donnghaile has called upon the Housing Executive and the Department for Social Development (DSD) to act on the findings of a study carried out by 'St Matthew's Housing Association'. The study, commissioned by the Housing Association, and launched earlier in the year, shows that the official housing waiting lists for the area do not accurately reflect the housing need.

Speaking about the report Niall Ó'Donnghaile said, "The St Matthew's Housing Association is to be commended on their initiative in commissioning this study. The findings are quite startling, showing that within the next four years over 200 hundred new households will form in the area and around 225 new homes will be required to deal with the impending housing crisis in the area. Essentially, this highlights the fact that the official housing waiting lists do not reflect the real housing need in the area.

"The study also highlighted the inadequacies of the current housing arrangements showing that a fifth of those surveyed believed that their homes were

inadequate; this view was particularly prevalent among the elderly and those with special needs.

"Within the Short Strand community a quarter of household heads are unemployed and two thirds of people in the area are in low income households. This coupled with the fact that the redevelopment of the area in the 1970's saw objections by the Tenants Association that the houses being built in the area allowed no potential for families to expand in the area ignored, places the onus on the Housing Executive and the DSD to move to tackle the impending housing crisis in the Short Strand area".



Niall Ó'Donnghaile

He concluded, "The official housing policy directed at the Short Strand since the 1950's has seen the population drop from 10,000 to 3,500. The Housing Association study shows that much more needs to be done to meet the housing need in the area. I would now call upon the DSD and the Housing Executive to immediately act upon the findings of this study".

Young people encouraged to get on the Housing Waiting list

Sinn Féin's Niall Ó'Donnghaile has urged young people in the area to ensure that they get their names down on the housing waiting list.

"One of the findings of the survey commissioned by the St Matthew's Housing Association was that the current waiting list for housing in the area does not reflect the real need for housing in the area", said Ó'Donnghaile.

"It is crucial that people get their names down on the housing waiting list. This is particularly relevant to young people in the area. The findings of the survey state that there will be an estimated 200 new households forming in the area within the next few years. It also stated that many families are forced to leave the area because of the lack of housing.

"If we are to be successful in ensuring that the Housing Executive and the DSD move to tackle this housing crisis then young people must get their names down on the housing waiting list".



Remembering the Prison Struggle

Short Strand 1981 committee pays tribute to the Hunger Strikers

The Short Strand 1981 committee was formed at the beginning of the year with the aims of celebrating and commemorating the legacy of the Hunger strikers. The committee is made up of exPOWs, community activists, and Sinn Féin members.

The committee organised a number of commemorative

vigils to give the people of the Short Strand an opportunity to commemorate the 10 1981 Hunger strikers and their comrades Frank Stagg and Michael Gaughan. These vigils have been well attended.

The committee have also organised a successful function which gave people an opportunity to see H3, a powerful film based on the prison protests undertaken by Republicans in the run up to the Hunger strike in 1981. The banners on the Mountpottinger Rd depicting the 12 hunger strikers cannot have gone unnoticed by anyone, they were put in place following the fundraising efforts of various committee members and the support of the community, the committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all those individuals, families and businesses that made such a wonderful tribute possible.

Certainly the biggest event on this year's commemoration calendar was the National Hunger strike march and rally which took place at Casement Park on Sunday the 13th of August. Around 30,000 people from across Ireland and beyond were in attendance to hear tributes paid to the Hunger Strikers and their families by friends, comrades and family members, with the main speech being given by Party President Gerry Adams MP.

Prior to the National Rally The Short Strand 81 committee, in conjunction with the Sinn Féin South & East Belfast Comhairle Ceantair, held a highly successful night of Celebration and Commemoration in the Memory of Kevin Lynch in the Hilton Hotel. This evening was one of music and poetry which saw 500 people joined representatives of the Lynch, McDonnell and McElwee families. (Full Report inside).

The exceptional turnout at this event is evidence of the high esteem in which the Hunger Strikers are held in by the people of this area.

Seán Martin/Seán Treacy cumann unveil new Banner

The Óglach Charlie Monahan commemoration parade which took place in April saw the Seán Martin/Seán Treacy Sinn Féin Cumann unveil their new Cumann banner.

The banner portrays the images of the two Volunteers that the cumann is named after and includes a quote which it can be said is very apt for a district such as ours.



Don't wish for a United Ireland
Work for it

5 reasons to join Sinn Féin

- Saoirse - Campaign for Irish unity and independence
- Siocháin - Advance the peace process
- Comhionannas - Work to build an Ireland of equals
- Feachtas ar son athrú - Deliver change through campaigning locally and nationally
- Ceartas sóisialta domhanda - International solidarity



If you would like to join Sinn Féin fill in the form and send it to: South and East Belfast Sinn Féin, Unit 3, 174-178 Ormeau road Belfast BT7 2ED.
Name:.....
Address:.....
Tel/E-mail:.....
Age:.....

