



## Ó Caoláin Addresses Successful INC AGM

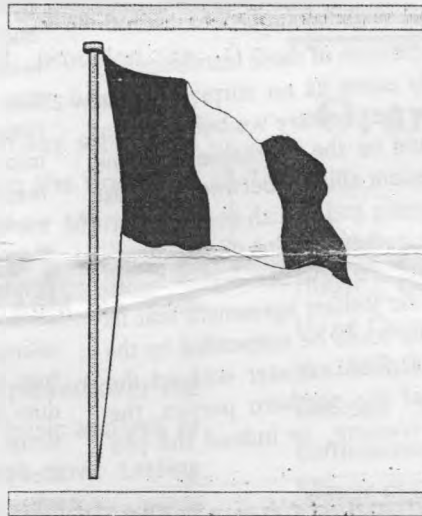
The Irish National Congress AGM provided an important opportunity to debate the issues which face Irish nationalism today. There were many significant contributions to the debate both from the floor and the platform.

Sinn Féin TD for Cavan Monaghan, Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, was just one of a number of speakers who addressed the INC AGM on the 12 February 2000.

Praising the vital role the INC has played over the past 10 years Ó Caoláin stated, "The basic analysis of the INC is as correct and as relevant now. Lasting peace must be based on the right of the Irish people to determine our future together on this island, free from the legacy of colonialism and conflict."

The former Chairperson of the INC, Robert Ballagh, prophetically pointed out: "Once again the Unionists have walked away from a power sharing experiment and once again the British have backed them and have broken legal requirements that they signed up to. Sadly, during the debates on the Belfast agreement we in the INC warned of such dangers but we were not listened to." The outgoing chairperson of the INC, Paul Mc Guill, echoed the calls of the previous speakers by calling for a united front to overcome the many obstacles which now face Irish nationalism. "I firmly believe in nationalist-republican unity. We still face an immense task to achieve our objectives and to have any chance of success we must communicate and cooperate in a spirit of mutual respect and toleration."

He went to say "The INC has weathered the storm. We have adapted and survived. The worst is now behind us and, come what may, we are not going to go away you know."



## Orange Order to march in Dublin

Following the suggestion of the Peace Train's Chris Hudson OBE, in the wake of the incineration of the three Quinn children by loyalist bigots in Ballymoney in 1998, the Orange order intend to march down Dawson St. on the 28 May where a plaque commemorating the Order will be unveiled by Lord Mayor of Dublin Mary Freehill.

The INC intend to make an anti-sectarian protest at this event. The Orange order is not an innocuous religious organisation but rather is a supremacist, sectarian, anti Catholic one with links to loyalist paramilitaries. Andy Tyrrie of the UDA said in 1980 'quite a few' UDA were in the Orange Order and that the Order 'was supposed to be a threat to the British government, a way of saying your not going to put us into a united Ireland.'

Sectarianism should be condemned not celebrated. If you would like to attend this anti sectarian protest please ring Sile Carson on 01 4526050.

## Irish Neutrality on the bacon slicer

The recent change in uniform by the Irish army from a plain green to NATO standard camouflage combats is just the latest incremental step in the erosion of Irish neutrality and consequently dilution of Irish sovereignty.

This move follows previous ones designed to ease Ireland's entry into NATO.

\*Ireland has taken up observer status on the NATO led partnership for peace and the Western European Union.

\* Irish troops for the first time are now serving alongside NATO troops in Kosovo.

\*In contravention of their 1997 general election manifesto promise Fianna Fail now refuse to hold a referendum on neutrality prior to full membership of the NATO front, 'Partnership for Peace.'

\*Senior Irish army generals have called

### *"The INC oppose Irish membership of Nato"*

for membership of PFP.

In the context of the low morale in the Irish army demonstrated by the recent hearing compensation claims and the lack of investment in men and equipment, it seems likely that a future government will justify membership of NATO as a means of redressing these ills as well as a quid pro quo for American support in the peace process.

The INC opposes Irish membership of NATO or any other multinational military alliance. We support Irish military neutrality and the work of the Peace and Neutrality Alliance (PANA) in defending it.

It was an attempt to curry favor with our militaristic, imperialist overlords which led to the deaths of over 50,000 Irishmen between 1914-1918 and we should not make the same mistake again.

**If you would like to join the INC just send your name, address and £10 waged or £5 unwaged to the Irish National Congress, P.O. box 2814, Dublin 7**



## EASTER DEMONSTRATION

Eighty four years to the day and hour since the 1916 rising the INC intend to hold a protest outside the British Embassy in Ballsbridge.

The protest is against British bad faith in the peace process culminating in their unilateral suspension of the institutions of the agreement.

The protest will take place at 12 noon on Easter Monday 24 April all INC members and supporters are asked to attend. If you need any more information on this protest please ring Cathal O'g on 087 2714821.

## New Chair for INC

The INC national executive has appointed its first woman chairperson this March when Mary Lou Mc Donald replaced outgoing chairperson Paul Mc Guill.

Paul Mc Guill who had been chairperson of the INC for the last 18 months stood down due to additional work commitments.

The national executive paid warm tribute to the work Paul put in as chairperson and he remains on the national executive as secretary.

The national executive is confident that Mary Lou will continue with the recovery and expansion of the INC.

## INC Easter raffle

Following our very successful Christmas raffle the INC is once again looking for your generous support in this years Easter raffle.

This year the INC hopes to launch campaigns for the representation of northern nationalists in Leinster house, the abolition of the RIR, trial by jury north and south and a non sectarian judicial system in the north. as you know we can only launch such campaigns if we have sufficient support from you so once again we appeal to you to continue to support our work by buying raffle tickets joining the INC or making a donation which can be sent to: **The INC, PO box 2814, Dublin 7.**

For More Information  
on the INC you can e mail  
[pmcguill@hotmail.com](mailto:pmcguill@hotmail.com)

# Britain waives the rules- yet again!

Right on cue for the INC's AGM the British government fulfilled our darkest criticisms of the Belfast agreement by unilaterally suspending its Institutions.

The suspension of these institutions regrettably came as no surprise to the INC. On the contrary we believed that this would be the inevitable outcome of the ancient alliance between unionist intransigence and British duplicity.

It is ironic that despite all the media hype about the new democratic legitimacy of the Belfast agreement that its institutions could be suspended by the fiat of a British minister without the consent of the northern parties, the Irish government, or indeed the pro

*"The Unionists have extended the veto that they have on constitutional change to a veto on even the form of government"- John Hume (1980)*

agreement electorate.

It is disturbing that the private assurances given by Tony Blair to David Trimble prior to the referenda and the secret letter of resignation given by Trimble to his party seem to count for more than the actual text of the agreement. In effect these private assurances given by Blair and Mandelson both before the referenda and last November amount to secret protocols which supersede international treaties and democratically endorsed agreements. Britain's extreme actions to prevent the resignation of first minister, David Trimble, this February are in marked contrast to her inaction to prevent the resignation of deputy first minister, Seamus Mallon last July.

By unconditionally amending articles 2 and 3 last December the Irish government is left with the most humiliating diplomatic shambles since the 1925 boundary commission. In effect they have sold the birth right of northern nationalists and have received nothing in

return.

Decommissioning was an aspiration not an objective of the agreement. All parties agreed to use their influence to try and attain it by May 2000. Despite 18 wasted months of unionist procrastination where deadline after deadline (many of which were actually written into the agreement) were broken, many media commentators cynically expected northern nationalists to deliver something which is not even in the agreement (unilateral actual decommissioning) but to do it within a unilateral and arbitrary ultimatum set by David Trimble to save him from his own party. It is not the duty of northern nationalists to underwrite the political cheques signed by either David Trimble or Peter Mandelson when they lack the political capital to honour them.

The arrogant and imperious actions of Peter Mandelson by suspending the institutions without seeking the consent of anybody other than David Trimble surely begs the question is his position as untenable within the nationalist community as Mo Mowlam's position was within the unionist community? David Trimble cannot be allowed to continuously blackmail the people of Ireland with his threats of resignation, if he cannot deliver the hard liners within his own party then perhaps nationalism should deal with a hard-liner who can. Regardless of whether or not the institutions of the Belfast agreement can be resurrected neither Britain nor unionism can be allowed to flout their commitments and exercise their conspiratorial veto over progress in Ireland.

The South can reassert its sovereignty by unilaterally granting the right of representation in Leinster House to elected representatives of the Belfast assembly. Britain must accept that her action in unilaterally suspending the institutions (including all Ireland bodies which impinge upon the sovereignty of the southern state) were illegal and she must agree that in future these institutions can **only** be suspended with the agreement of **both** governments and **all** parties.