

Republican SINN FÉIN Poblachtach

Protest against RUC/PSNI Harassment, Lurgan, Co Armagh - 11/11/2017

Firstly I want to start off by thanking everyone for being here today and showing your opposition to the harassment suffered by republicans and their families. It's good to see so many people here showing your support.

Since the partition of Ireland the northern state and its armed militias have used special powers to quell republican dissent. Today the PSNI carry on that tradition faithfully. From endless house raids, stop and searches, politically motivated arrests and attempts to recruit members of the community as informers.

Over 8000 stop and searches have been carried out in the past year alone using terrorist related legislation in the occupied 6 counties with almost a quarter of these taking place in north Armagh alone. I'm sure the majority of people here today have been the victims of this harassment and continue to suffer it on an almost daily basis.

A large number of house raids have taken place at the expense of our friends and comrades with the PSNI seizing items such as family computers, kid's tablets, and computer consoles and damaging property intentionally. All this is, is an attempt to put pressure on families and cause fear and anxiety in young children. As a result the PSNI themselves are instilling a terror and hatred of themselves into these kids through their corrupt and oppressive actions.

Nearly 20 years on from the so called Good Friday agreement Irish citizens are still denied the right to engage in legitimate political activities.

I myself have only been a political activist for a little over 2 years since joining Republican Sinn Féin, in that short space of time I have witnessed the undignified methods the PSNI will use to try and intimidate and silence political activists who oppose them. For me it started with the odd stop and search of myself and my vehicle. After a while it became more regular, and as the searches became more regular they also got heavier handed with the PSNI trying to provoke a reaction out of me. From there things moved on to them knocking my door and warning me my life was under threat from loyalist paramilitaries, which they seemed to think was something to laugh and joke about in front of a child.

I am almost sure in saying these threats were fabricated by the police themselves or even by their masters in MI5 as another intimidatory tactic. As we all know MI5 are fully operational in the occupied 6 counties this very day. I have been approached 3 times in the last 12 months and attempts made to recruit me as an informer. They have offered me money and made promises of giving me whatever I wanted in exchange for information on certain named people in the community. I made it more than clear I wanted nothing to do with them and reported the incidents with my solicitor. After they got the hint I wouldn't cooperate that's when they started with the threats by telling me I would end up in jail or dead if I didn't change my mind and trying to use my family as a weapon to get at me.

Republican SINN FÉIN Poblachtach

Protest against RUC/PSNI Harassment, Lurgan, Co Armagh - 11/11/2017

I would like to take this opportunity to urge everyone here today not to be fooled by the promises of money from these people. They don't care about you and you mean nothing to them. Many a person has foolishly chose the road to turning informer which only leads to 1 place usually a ditch over the border.

More recently I was arrested by the RUC while at the shopping centre with my family. It caused great distress and had my young son in tears screaming after me. A few weeks later myself and four comrades were charged for taking part in so called unnotified parades and the wearing of a paramilitary style uniform under Section 13 of the terrorism act while a commemoration took place in the Kilwilkie Estate. The uniforms in question are a Republican Sinn Féin national colour party uniform and are not aligned to any illegal or proscribed organisation. These are trumped up politically motivated charges designed to appease the unionist politicians in the area. Republicans don't need permission to walk the streets of their own country and will continue to commemorate Ireland's patriot dead no matter what the consequences of it may be from the British state. We defy you, do your worst.

Seemingly anyone who disagrees with the continued British occupation of Ireland are smeared as dissidents by those who claim to uphold the rule of law in this part of Ireland. The PSNI remain the cutting edge of British rule and the cutting edge of Britain's war machine in Ireland.

The British presence in Ireland is illegitimate and has been the most significant contributing factor to conflict in Ireland. Historically the only resistance the British took notice of was an armed resistance like the men of 1916 and the men in every decade since.

Republicans must organise and resist Britain's occupation.

I will finish with a quote from Bobby Sands who gave his life in the pursuit of Irish freedom.

"They won't break me because the desire for freedom, and the freedom of the Irish people is in my heart. The day will dawn when all the people of Ireland will have the desire for freedom to show. It is then we will see the rising of the moon."

- Christopher Hamill, Ulster PRO. 11/11/2017