

CELTIC NEWS

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Spring Edition, 1969. No. 21.

B R E I Z H *
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* Brittany has scarcely been out of the news
* for the past few months. First the intensi-
* fication of the bombing campaign towards the
end of last year, followed by a series of quick arrests made
by the French Security Police and the visit of the French
President to Breizh at the beginning of the month.

A statement issued by the F.L.B., which indicated the seriousness of the attempt made by the French government to partition Brittany, was a prelude to an intensive bombing campaign in the region of Nantes - where the first arrests were effected between 29th December and 2nd January. Ten people were arrested and were found in the possession of incriminating material. The French authorities realising the strength of the organization called in all their security forces in an all-out effort to destroy the Front organizations. On 14th January twelve more people were arrested in the St. Brieg district.

The F.L.B. claims responsibility for 30 bomb attacks against Public buildings in the last two years. Almost one ton of explosive was seized by the police along with arms, uniforms and printed material.

Among the people arrested are four priests, one the headmaster of a Catholic College, a 28 year old doctor, a 63 year old farmer and his son, a factory worker, an architect and town councillor, which shows (if all these men are guilty!) how widespread was the support afforded the F.L.B. amongst all sections of the Breton population.

De Gaulle, on his visit to Breizh on 1-3 February was hardly given a friendly welcome. There were demonstrations, counter-demonstrations, some cheering and plenty of hissing and booing too particularly in Rennes, where several arrests were made by the numerous police present.

In his final speech in Quimper he made some vague references to the proposed referendum on regional reforms, without mentioning any date, showing at the same time a complete ignorance of the present mood of the Bretons when he tried hard to ridicule the F.L.B. claim to "liberate Brittany" (from French Rule) by saying "we did that 25 years ago".

To date about 50 persons are under arrest. The latest arrests taking place shortly after De Gaulle's visit to Brittany. Under existing French laws a person can be kept in custody for ten days without any specific charge being brought against him. For anyone with a knowledge of French police methods, so well illustrated during the Algerian War of Independence, the plight of the Breton prisoners is a matter of deep concern to all Celtic nationalists and friends. The Bretons themselves have set up a special fund to aid the prisoners and their families.

The arrests have caused widespread emotion all over Brittany. Sympathy for them is most common in the rural areas, and farmers' leader GOURVENNEG, who led the assault on Morlaix prefecture building 7 years ago, said that he approved of their actions. E. OLLIVRO, parliamentary deputy for Gwengamp constituency, where three of the priests were arrested, blamed the French Government for the situation. Many associations and political parties, while disapproving of the use of violence, gave credit to the arrested men for their motives. The Union Democratique Bretonne, while remaining critical of the "Political immaturity of the F.L.B.", calls on the Breton

people to fight for the liberation of their jailed fellow-countrymen. A statement signed by 127 priests, after pointing out that Catholic teaching allows violence in the struggle for national and social liberation when fundamental human rights have been violated for a long time, gives a list of the conditions in Breizh which suggests strongly that such is the case in their country to-day. They all express their solidarity with the arrested man and undertake to support them during their trial so as to secure from the court the maximum possible understanding and leniency. Many politicians, who at first condemned the prisoners, had to revise their statements in order not to run counter to this popular feeling. Those, like Ploven and Martray, who made hostile statements were severely rebuked and by the young people in particular.

C Y M R U * * * * *
Free Brittany: Gwynfor Evans, in the London House of Commons, asked the Prime Minister to go to Paris and call in Breton and French, from the steps of one of the principal government buildings for a "FREE BRITTANY". Groups of Welsh people in many centres have been supporting Brittany in her present plight by protesting to the French ambassadors and to General De Gaulle himself against their oppression; and by giving support to the families of the imprisoned patriots. Television and radio programmes, and newspaper reports, have told the sordid story of French imperialism in Breizh.

Cymru O Fôn i Fynwy: Our alien government has long tried to divide Wales by claiming that one county, Gwent (Monmouthshire) was part of England. This claim was, of course, absolutely false. Now, the English government has admitted the truth & has announced that Gwent will henceforward always be considered a part of Wales; and that the words "Wales & Monmouthshire" will not be used officially again. Wales is one... "from Anglesey to Monmouth".

Campaign for Welsh Signs. The Welsh Language Society is concentrating its efforts now on obtaining Welsh language road-signs, or bilingual signs. The Government & Local Authorities have long dragged their feet over this issue. Members of Gymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymraeg have painted over hundreds of English-only road signs all over the country. More Welsh or

tilingual signs are going up each year; but the pace of change is still too slow.

'Enquiry' on Self-Government: The London Labour Government has set up a Commission to 'enquire' into the subject of self-determination for Cymru & Alba (as well as matters concerned with Kernow, Mann, the Channel Isles and the English regions). This is the Government's intrigue in order to delay acting on the U.N. principle of "self-government for every nation, large or small". Compare De Gaulle's "promise" to Breizh.

Investiture taken Lightly: Except among those servile to London, the "Investiture" of Prince Charles is taken very lightly in Wales. Many councils & organizations have refused to take part. Plaid Cymru at its Conference dismissed the matter as one of no importance, - it was unanimously "left on the table". Over 60% of the people are disinterested. It is self-government that is the vital issue.

Celtic League: New members are being enrolled every week in Cymru. The 1968 Annual Volume is being highly praised. (Will members show it to their friends, please). Names and annual fee (minimum 10/- only, which includes Annual Volume and the Celtic News) should be sent to Mr. J.E.Jones or Mr. Anthony Edwards (addresses on later page).

K E R N O W * As we are deprived, we are told it is gain.
* * * * * British Rail was all smiles at its Truro forum last March but when the year grew old it bared its teeth at the main line again over the abolition or increase of some cheap-day returns, the further reduction of Camborne station and surcharging some summer trains at present popular from Paddington.

Hospitals. Bodmin can have no casualty hospital, though Stratton is excepted. Treliske, the great palace near Truro, must replace the local service of the people - so that they shall cost less.

Schools. One secondary school, Penrice, is inadequate to its needs. Another, Penrose, was closed through a mysterious infection for which the headmaster mentioned the ancilliary importance of the lavatories whilst the area medical officer

denied the part played by admitted rats!

Cornwall's Police Force was recently merged with Devon's. The recently received bill shows it was a more expensive policy than the preceding one.

Superior breeding and feeding send Grade I pigs 15% above U.K. average to Redruth bacon factory, but work is at one quarter capacity, says the manager.

However there is polarisation. A spirit of protest sweeps at British Rail, the Ministry of Health, the Department of Science & Education. A television personality has led us back (he thinks) to overspill, apparently without knowledge that the persistence of the County & Local Councils is winning industrial enterprises for Cornwall without overspill. The County Council is going to investigate provision of a combined arts & sports centre.

The spirit of Cornwall moves in her scholars. At 87, Richard Blewett of St. Day has been awarded an honorary M.A. degree by the University of Birmingham. His thesis was about the last Saxon onslaught in West Cornwall about 900 A.D., Christopher Bice of Newquay has produced a list of Cornish first names. The Gorsedd's Language Board has issued a nine-point policy. GANS TAVAS, GANS TYR!

A L B A * That Referendum: Though few Nationalists in Alba
* * * * * really imagined that the strong-arm men of Westminster would pass the famed Referendum Bill, giving the Welsh & Scots peoples, in particular, a chance to show the world how they wanted their countries governed, that did not lessen the anger any at its being thrown out in such a blatant manner. Many Scots are extremely picqued at this latest Dolchstoss, and, if this feeling can be nurtured every so often until the elections, it will ensure the S.N.P. many more votes.

Out of disgust we will say no more about the Bill, but will quote Mrs. Ewing, who gave the real reasons for the Bill being ejected. She said that Parliament seemed only to approve of referenda on self-determination if they were sure of two things: "If we know the answer we are going to get and we know we will

like the answer we are going to get. In the case of Scotland and Wales you know what the answer will be, but you do not like the answer. Is not that what it really amounts to?"

1320 Club Bureau: The 1320 Club, outlawed by the S.N.P., has once again taken the initiative and set up a foreign affairs bureau, based at Hawick, to inform the Governments of the world of the movement for independence in Alba. Political enquiries will be handed to the S.N.P., and trade and social inquiries will be handed on to be dealt with by the appropriate authorities.

A New Chairman-?: There was a controversy recently in Nationalist circles when Mr. Arthur Donaldson, present Chairman of the S.N.P., said he would not be seeking re-election at the next Conference, then changed his mind, much to the surprise of many Nationalists, as Mr. William Wolfe was regarded as his successor. As pointed out, however, in one Scottish daily paper, this is far from being a sign of schismatic weakness, but a healthy sign in a developing party. The Conference, held in Oban this year, is from 30th May to 1st June. Fellow-Celts are cordially invited to come along as observers.

INVASION: The Highlands & Islands' Development Board recently moored one of the steamers which ply between the mainland and the Hebrides, in London, and have done well in attracting tourists and trade. That's just what we need. We are rather suspicious, however of the inducements for Sasunnaich to come to the Highlands, and Alba in general. Over the past few years the increase in English people coming to settle in Alba has been phenomenal. The jobs they take are often top-level posts with the best wages in influential businesses. A similar situation occurs in the Basque country of Spain, where droves of Spaniards are deliberately sent in to discourage the use of the Basque language in Euzkadi. Our Scottish correspondent knows of many Scots who wanted jobs in the Highlands who have been refused posts which have then gone to Englishmen with no better qualifications. In South Uist recently, the schoolmaster refused to teach the English children belonging to the rocket range there (which is being expanded) because they were destroying the Gaelic culture. We need more like him, for Eng-

lish becomes the language of the playground all too easily in the Gaidhealtachd once the English move in.

E I R E * In Eire, a committee of support for the jailed
* * * * * Bretons and their families (secretary: Caitlin
Ni Chaomhanaigh, 17 Pairc Herberton, Rialto,
Ath Cliath 8) has issued an appeal to those who wish to help. They could write to the prisoners (as soon as their place of detention is known); write to President De Gaulle expressing concern at the long-standing denial of rights which led Breton Patriots to resort to violent means; ask their associations to adopt resolutions of solidarity or sympathy; contribute to a fund set up by the committee to help the prisoners (to pay legal fees) and their families, some of which are already in need. Resolutions of sympathy were adopted in January by the Irish-language organizations AN COMHCHAI DREAMH (Students and Post-graduates) and MISNEACH. They lay particular stress on their concern for the future of the Breton language. They were conveyed to President De Gaulle, copies being sent to C. Ni Chamhanaigh, and to Mr. Henri Leclerc, 28 rue de Franquoville, PARIS 16e, the solicitor who will be defending at least some of the accused.

GAELIGE ABU. A march through the streets of Corcaigh (Cork) was organised on 25th January by the local branch of Conradh Na Gaeilge (Gaelic League) to protest against the lack of clear government policy for the restoration of Irish, particularly as regards the provision of secondary schools, books and television programmes in Irish. It was attended by about 500 people. (Gaeilge Abu - Victory to Irish!)

ULADH ABU? Captain O'Neill's gamble on undermining the dissidents in his Parliamentary Party by an appeal to the people was hardly a success. Dr. Paisley running O'Neill a close second at Bannside with 6,000 odd vote demonstrated that the Battle of The Boyne happened only yesterday as far as rural Ulster is concerned. Unionist representation has increased by one - a pro-O'Neillite, while two Civil Rights members replace a Nationalist and Unionist, respectively. The new line up promises a rough ride for O'Neill, who will have to

perform a most elaborate balancing act. The elections had the merit of giving many people their first opportunity to cast a vote, it was the first contest at Bannside for 20 years for example. The internecine warfare within the Unionist Party has amounted almost to a repetition of the De Valera-Collins election pact of 1922, when the Sinn Fein Party split into Republican and Free State wings. As with the south in 1922 so with the north in 1969, there can be no turning back. The Civil Rights movement may at last bring the Six Counties from the 1690's to the 1960's.

CIVIL RIGHTS. In Ochill, where many of the older generation are still Irish-speaking another Civil Rights movement has arisen. This is a protest against the failure to tackle the problem of Western depopulation. Parallel with this, and more in the public eye, has been a campaign in Dublin for housing to be given priority. The profusion of luxury office building and the facilities for gross profits through land speculation is evidence that there is no proper sense of priorities, and that the country's greatest asset - its people, is being sadly neglected. Excuses in this field are as unconvincing as those of the northern Unionist regarding discrimination.

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M A N N I N * The editor regrets that there is no Manx
 * * * * * * contribution this time, this is because
 * * * * * * the article from Mann was not received
 in time for inclusion in this edition.

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A NEW BRANCH OF THE CELTIC LEAGUE has been founded in New York by a committee composed of Tomás MacIneirighe (Chairman), Sean O Dubhagáin (Secretary-General), Aine Ni Cheallaigh (Corresponding Secretary), Tomás P. O'Clunáin (Treasurer), and Florence Mac Dúshléibhe (Financial Secretary). As all the officers seem to be Éireannach it would be appropriate if we wish them Céad míle Failte (a hundred thousand welcomes). For further details please contact the Celtic League General Secretary in Dublin.

THE INTERNATIONAL FOLK HIGH SCHOOL MOVEMENT will hold its yearly course this year in Edinburgh, 26th July to 3rd August. For more details please write to Dr. Noelle Davies, Cúl nan Géid, An Chloch Liath, Co. Cill Mantáin, Éire.

BRETON CLASSES IN LONDON. It is hoped to start Breton Classes in London later this year. If anybody is interested in joining would they please write to Michael Keen, 121 Highlands Heath, Portsmouth Road, London, S.W.15, for further details.

INTERCELTIC YOUTH CAMP. Urdd Gobaith Cymru (Welsh Guild of Youth) will hold its Celtic Camp at Glan Llyn, near Bala in Merionydd from 9-16th August. The cost will be £6 (about 48 N.F.) and forms can be obtained from Miss Delyth Rees, Swyddfa'r Urdd, Aberyswyth, Cymru. The age group will be 16-25 years. Application forms plus deposit of £1 (12 N.F.) to be returned before 30th April.

SUPPORT FOR BRITANNY: There is support for the Breton prisoners in all the Celtic countries. Most Celtic organisations, take a view similar to that of the association Kendalc'h (6,000 members) that while not approving of violence themselves they warn that it is because the cultural and economic situation has become so desperate in Brittany that such a large number of Bretons belonging to all social classes and highly respected in their own communities, should feel the need to take recourse to violence. This indeed is the attitude of the Celtic League, we cannot condone violence but feel also that we should remind the French authorities of the words of Coretta King, widow of Martin Luther King, "to destroy a culture is violence".

There are committees being set up in all the Celtic areas to collect money to support the wives and families of the prisoners and to help swell the Defence Fund of the men. For Ireland the address of the Secretary of the Defence Fund has already been given in the report on page 7. In Alba anybody who wishes to help or to contribute to the fund should write to Mr. B. Audic, 7 Globe Court, Calderwood 16, EAST KILBRIDGE (Glasgow). Kernow has a Committee

which was set up a few weeks ago and which is already collecting. MEBYON KERNOW has appointed its Vice-Chairman to preside over efforts on behalf of the jailed Bretons and the Kernow Branch of the Celtic League has sent £1.10. to the fund. A committee is being set up in the London area to cover England and money may be sent to Mr. Nic Ap Gawain, Bulmershe College, Earley, READING RG6 1HY. There is as yet not committee in Wales but this should be remedied by the time this edition is distributed.

Letters may be sent to the prisoners but the authorities will hardly let these through if not written in French, and if they are deemed politically offensive. The Irish Support Committee has provided the following model for all those who have no French:- "Dear Mr....., I wish to assure you of my solidarity in your present situation" which reads in French as - "Cher M., Je tiens à vous assurer de ma solidarité et de ma sympathie pour votre cause."

If you wish to help the prisoners to improve their material situation in prison, you could send them money orders - but no cash. All the prisoners except one are in Prison de La Santé, 42 rue de la Santé, PARIS 14e. Their names & addresses can be obtained from the secretaries listed above.

Invitation. We should like to invite our readers to contribute to the fund, and to send their contribution, however small, to Caitlin Ni Chamhanaigh directly or through their Celtic League Secretary.

Some prisoners were kept six days without sleep and given injections to keep them awake. There is now evidence of gross brutality against some of them. Pierre Lemoine, Kemper Town Councillor, who has heart trouble, nearly died after two days of questioning. He was still after three weeks detention (on 30th Jan.) in a Rennes hospital under the surveillance of the political police; he was unable to stand and could not be transferred to Paris, even in an ambulance. Fr. Anton Ar Barzh was so mistreated that he had to be sent to Rennes mental hospital. When the archbishop of Rennes complained about this the police authorities replied that

"this priest is an alcoholic, and he is suffering from a nervous breakdown consecutive to the withdrawal of alcohol". However his name has been taken off the list of people having received psychiatric treatment. Lucien Divard was beaten up so badly that his companions could not recognise him, another man arrested in Paris last week was similarly brutalised. The questioning of prisoners is in the hands of specialists from Paris, who had "experience" in Algeria.

One of the principal leaders arrested has refused to speak. The police went to see his wife, threatening to take her small children away from her if she does not reveal the names of her husband's friends.

The detainees are strictly prohibited from writing to their families and friends in Breton even if it was their normal practice to do so before arrest.

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THE NEW CELT: The New Celt will not now be appearing in March, and, in view of the fact that the launching of the magazine has already had to be postponed once before, the directors of The New Celt have decided to return all the subscriptions received from Celtic enthusiasts. The idea of an Inter-Celtic review will now have to be shelved for the moment, until The New Celt Limited is able to raise sufficient capital to launch the magazine.

It should be emphasised that it is still intended to launch this magazine sometime in the future, and in the meantime the Company will publish and produce Pan-Celtic material, such as the Celtic Christmas Cards.

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AN EXAMPLE FOR US? The fact that he lives in the borough of New Ham has not stimulated any particular local patriotism in the Editor. One recent experiment in the borough does however provide possible scope for Celtic emulation. Policemen in East Ham are to attend regular classes in

Hindi as a facility for dealing with the sizeable Indian population in the borough. If an English local authority can show this degree of courtesy (and common-sense) towards one of the languages relatively new to the English

scene, cannot all Welsh authorities show a similarly enlightened attitude towards the Senior language in Wales? In Alba this principle could be applied at least to the Gael-teachd. All Gardai Siochána, in Ireland, should have a fluent command of Irish. This should be enforced, and any lack of courtesy shown to the Irish language or to any Irish speaker should be subsequent to prompt disciplinary action. Those who wish to adopt the self-imposed role of pushing English through the majesty of the law will find plenty of scope in the English police-force, but perhaps not in East Ham?

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NEW SECRETARIES: The following are new National Secretaries: Alba. Mrs. Denovan, Errolbank, 9 Dalgleish Road, DUNDEE, is taking over from Maire Bean Mhic Aoidh. Our best wishes to Maire and Garbhan for the excellent work they did for the Celtic League in Scotland. London. Dr. Dafydd Ap Glyn, 23 Belvedere Close, TEDDINGTON, Middlesex is taking over from Michael Keen.

APPEAL. The Secretary-General of the League would be obliged to any member who could spare him old copies of Celtic News.

CELTIC LEAGUE ADDRESSES

ALBA: See address of new sec. given above. BREIZH: E. Gwalareg (assisted by Jacques Derouet), 2 Place du Martray, 44-NANTES, who will handle correspondence and distribution. CYMRU: J. E. Jones, 1 Heol Esgyn, Cyncoed, CAERDYDD, and Anthony Edwards, 2 Clos Ton Mawr, Rhiwbeina, CAERDYDD. EIRE: Miss Janice Williams, 47 Páirc Liosain, ATH CLIATH 6. KERNOW: R. Green, Travellers Rest, Illogan Down, REDRUTH. MANNIN: J. Irving, Tynwald Grove, PEEL. LONDON BRANCH: See address of new secretary given above.

General Secretary: A. Heussaff, 9 Br. Cnoc Sion, ATH CLIATH 9, Eire. Treasurer: Dr. Noelle Davies, Cúl na Géid, An Chloch Liath, Co. Cill Mantain, Eire. Editor Celtic News: Padraig O Conchuir, 84 Pulleyns Avenue, East Ham, LONDON, E.6.

MEMBERSHIP: Ten shillings per annum (minimum) Europe. Members outside Europe are asked to make this 15/- (~~£~~ 1.80) to allow for extra postage charges please.