

1979

A Handbook of Republican Relations

Sinn Féin The Workers' Party

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Recommended Citation

Sinn Féin The Workers' Party, "A Handbook of Republican Relations" (1979). *Materials*. 36.
<https://arrow.tudublin.ie/workerpmat/36>

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**A
HANDBOOK
OF
REPUBLICAN
RELATIONS**

INTRODUCTION

There are two types of deafness. One is physical - the remedy for it is of a medical nature.

The other is natural, given the innate conservatism in people which makes them resistant to change. It is this resistance which is responsible for so many people being afflicted by the deafness of "those who do not wish to hear". Anyone who wants to change society must be aware of this barrier.

No progress can be made unless we are prepared to gradually give hearing to "those who do not wish to hear". Our medicine is public relations, publicity, propaganda - call it what you will. This medicine must be designed to kill the resistance of the conservative bug in people. The doctor who administers it is the PRO.

The information in this handbook will, we hope, provide PROs with a grounding on how to tackle the disease.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

PROPAGANDA

We should not fear the use of "propaganda", for contrary to the widely held view, it need not be a distortion of the truth. The word itself derives from latin and means "to extend", "to make known", "to spread an idea."

The raw material of propaganda is information and to be effective it must arouse interest and maintain that interest. Dry as dust facts and figures on their own cannot do this so they are dressed up and made "attractive" or "startling" and the end result is what we call "propaganda". The Republican Movement over the years has gained a reputation for being truthful in its propaganda and it is essential that this reputation be guarded by all members and Public Relation Officers in particular, for on it hinges our credibility.

Extravagant claims, cliches, and sloganeering should be avoided in all our propaganda material and activities.

EXAMPLES:

Facts: A Fish-in under the auspices of the N.W.R.L. was held on Cortan Estate. 50 people were present - 10 of them fishing - 4 fish were caught and subsequently impounded by the gardai who informed the organizer that legal proceedings would be instigated.

"OURS": A Fish-in on Cortan Estate drew a large enthusiastic crowd today. Many of them commenced fishing in the well-stocked river "owned" by the feudal landlord, Lord Cortan. Towards the end of the evening gardai approached the organizer of N.W.R.L. and warned that legal proceedings would be taken under the infamous Forcible Entry and Occupation Act and they then seized four of the fish caught.

"THEIRS": Sinn Fein today drew a rather small, rowdy crowd to a fish-in at Lord Cortan's Estate. Only a few of those present had rods and four fish were eventually caught. The gardai did not interfere for fear of causing a scene but before the crowd left they took names and addresses of the ring leaders. Lord Cortan's Estate is well maintained and he takes pride in his well stocked river which is quite a tourist attraction.

1. TERMINOLOGY:

Propagandists use colourful language when describing each other or each other's doings. For instance, we may be called "professional agitators" or "Reds"; our philosophy may be called an "alien ideology". These terms are carefully selected to arouse animosity against us. We may call our opponents "seoinin", "gombeen"; we call their philosophy landlordism - "Rachmanism" etc.

Overuse or misapplication of these terms diminishes their descriptive value. In some cases labels intended as abusive can be turned back on our opponents. For instance the title "felon" was intended by the British as derogatory of imprisoned Irish patriots. However, this term was taken over by the people and popularised in the song - "*Felons of Our Land*".

With intelligent use of propaganda the current use of "Subversive" to label all dissent, could become just as "respectable" as "felons". Rather than protesting that we are not subversive, we should point to Wolfe Tone's efforts to subvert tyranny. Use the label and point to the subversion of peoples' rights by speculators, commercial banks, law courts, etc.

2. SIMPLE LANGUAGE:

Always choose the shortest and simplest word available providing it conveys precisely what you have in mind. Always choose words your listener or reader will understand and be familiar with. If an unfamiliar word is used, qualify it with a brief explanation.

3. BE POSITIVE:

Stress the positive aspect of our policies; our opponents will be stressing whatever negative points they can find.

Exampler: Mornington, Co. Louth - Fishermen V Tara Mines.

A. 60 fishermen's families' livelihood threatened by proposed development of Drogheda Port which entails dredging of seabed at Mornington thus destroying mussel beds.

B. Port development promises more employment to Drogheda workers.

C. Fishermen request alterations in proposed port development to protect their livelihood.

D. Business and local political interests stress that fishermen are threatening the prospects of increased employment in Drogheda by opposing the plan.

The fishermen must stress the positive aspect by stressing that they support the port development in Drogheda but require that their livelihood be adequately protected in any development. Otherwise, if this is not done, their support among Drogheda workers who are their natural allies, will be lost.

4. QUOTATIONS:

There are many passages in the writings of Revolutionaries which are relevant to our situation. However, through overuse many such quotes have become hackneyed cliches. They should be used sparingly and only to add weight to a particular point.

5. EFFECTIVE ARGUMENTS:

For a case to be effective it must be firmly based on logic, on reason and on provable facts. The facts and figures used to support an argument must be completely understood by the user and be absolutely correct. An unscrupulous propagandist can use any given set of statistics to "prove" almost any point of view to an uninformed audience. You must be able to pinpoint the inaccuracies in their argument. When you do so effectively

your opponents credibility will crumble. In doing so, however, don't add to the confusion and possible boredom by detailed figures. State that the argument is inaccurate because of a misinterpretation of figures, the correct position is, etc. as borne out by statistics issued by, etc.

6. CLOSED CIRCUIT:

Some of us suffer from the "closed circuit mind". Moving as many of us do exclusively in Republican/Socialist circles, or being well-read on Republican/Socialist policies, we are inclined to talk at the people we want to influence. We often use language which is completely misunderstood by them. We must bear in mind that most of the present adult population left school before they were fourteen years old. Many thousands continue to leave at fifteen years of age and these are the working class people who cannot afford to go on to higher education.

Our job is to influence them towards a radical outlook for a solution to their frustrations. To do this effectively we must get "inside" their minds and see things in their terms.

CHOOSING A P.R.O.

Each cumann must elect a public relations officer to take charge of relations with the mass media and other publicity responsibilities. It is not necessary to have experience in journalism or advertising to do a good publicity job for the Movement. The basic skills are simple. Success depends on a combination of imagination and reliability.

CHOOSE SOMEONE WHO -

- has a sound knowledge of the Movement's policies and can express them.
- has a sense of what is news.
- can write simply, accurately and quickly.
- has access to a typewriter.
- has time to study local as well as national media and their requirements.

Although this manual will provide information on the basic skills required of PRO's, there is no end to the material available to help them. Study the media carefully and become an avid critic of their techniques.

For instance, how are stories written in the local paper? What subjects do they pick for photographs? Why do some advertisements catch your attention - - while others are ignored. This kind of analysis will be put to use when you prepare a news release or when you are asked to lay out an advertisement or prepare a spot announcement for radio or television.

The job of PRO has many facets and requires time and initiative. Be sure that your PRO knows this when he or she takes on the job.

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#### ACTIVE PROPAGANDA:

Every public action or word spoken or written by a Cumann or Club member is an act of public relations. The job of the PRO is to get the activities of the Cumann and the policies of the Republican Movement across to the community as quickly, as effectively and as often as possible.

The PRO of the Cumann or Comhairle Ceanntair is the person directly responsible for the image among people of what Sinn Fein is. His/her job is to reflect Sinn Fein as a progressive revolutionary-socialist party in the Republican tradition through the use of all the media - press, radio, television - through properly publicising activities aimed at explaining and gaining support for movement policy.

The responsibilities of the PRO cover -

1. Production of the Cumann newsletter;
2. The issuing of all cumann press statements;
3. The establishment and maintenance of good relations with reporters;



4. The production of leaflets, posters, banners, badges, etc. and the ensuring that all of these reflect the stated policies of the Movement.

The PRO should use initiative in times of crisis, contacting as many members as possible to get a consensus view on any issue and then acting on agreed lines. A file should be kept of all statements and literature issued and also a scrapbook of press clippings concerning Cumann activities. It is essential that typing and duplicating facilities be available at Cumann or Comhairle Ceanntair level to assist the PRO in carrying out their duties.

Regular discussions should take place with Cumann Press Officers under the chairmanship of the Comhairle Ceanntair Press Officer where various problems which arise from time to time, local or otherwise can be discussed. Policy as to the steps to be taken, on a wider scale, should be arrived at here. It hardly needs to be said that a relatively minor problem to the Comhairle Ceanntair at large could be a pressing matter in the Cumann area. Help and cooperation, readily forthcoming will help not only the local Cumann but in the final analysis the movement in general.

The Comhairle Ceanntair press officers meeting serves another important function. That is to see that ALL press officers are on the one voice on matters of national policy as laid down by the Head Office. Here matters are clarified. It could well be that a press officer from Head Office could be invited to help in smoothing problems. It is important to guard against contradictions, with one press officer saying one thing while another says something else. Other political parties capitalise on this sort of thing and make the most of it. If a meeting of the Comhairle Ceanntair press officers is held to consider some action or other to be taken to advance some worthy object the statement to be issued to the press should be agreed upon; written down and typed and copies handed to each press officer present.

Copies should also be sent to Press Officers not present at the meeting. Then, and only then should the statement be issued to the press. Press Officers living some distance away are thus aware of what is contained in the statement before it appears in print. In this way contradictions, referred to previously, will not arise.

It should be emphasised here that all ~~statements~~ issued should be in line with movement policy. Mistakes and misunderstandings of policy are easy to make but the effects are hard to undo.

### METHODS:

- A. Press Statements - Press Conferences -
- B. Public Meetings - Lectures - Symposia
- C. Visual Propaganda - Leaflets - Posters
- D. Local Newsletters
- E. Pickets - Poster Parades - Fish-ins - Sit-ins - Deputations.

### PRESS STATEMENT:

Without saying as much a press release is really asking for free publicity from a newspaper, magazine or periodical. Good quality information on anything worthwhile or that is of a newsworthy nature is welcome by newspapers. That is what they are for.

Format: The points to keep in mind are:

1. The first page of the press release should be on headed notepaper;
2. Press release should be headed with "For Immediate Release" or "For Favour of Release".
3. Press releases should be typed on paper of reasonably good quality. They do get a knocking about in a newspaper office or newsroom.

4. There should be a margin of two inches on the left side for the use of the sub-editor who handles the copy.
5. Type the statement on ONE side of the paper only. If you have to use two or more pages then do so.
6. Press Releases should be double spaced and checked for errors. This is particularly important where names are concerned. If possible the name should be checked.
7. All press statements should be signed by the P.R.O. and if possible, a telephone number and always an address should be given should the editor need additional information or verification re release.
8. Copies of each statement should be filed by the PRO.

Content: The press release should be as brief as possible and to the point. Flowery language and "padding" is easily recognised by news editors. If you are announcing a demonstration, the essential facts should be given first - the purpose, time, date, place and the sponsor should be your first few lines.

Example: The Martin O'Leary Cumann of Sinn Fein will picket the Corporation on July 4th at 3pm in order to expose their complacency in the face of atrocious corporation housing in the Kilbeely district."

The body of the statement should go on to give more details ...During a housing survey conducted by local members of Sinn Fein recently, it was discovered that..

Where the subject of the news release concerns some matter of controversy, extreme care should be taken to see that it contains nothing that might be construed as being libellous.

Definition of Libel: A matter that might end up in an expensive lawsuit would damage not only our Movement, but also the paper that published the story. It need hardly be added that that would put an end to all press releases as far as the newspapers were concerned. Other newspapers not involved would be very wary of publishing anything from the source that had been the cause of

a libel action. Apart from the risk of libel there is little cause to worry. Example: Write your press release first. Then check it. Next make any corrections necessary and then type it. When this is done, copies should be sent out.

#### DISTRIBUTION:

One of the first jobs of a Public Relations Officer should be to make contact with reporters on the various newspapers which are sold in the area and with someone of the staff of community newsletters and magazines. This would include free-lance journalists and any local representatives of national newspapers, T.V. and radio in the area. A PRO should learn their particular interests and deadlines so as to best help them pick up the desired information, he or she wishes to publicise. In developing such contacts, always give them some means of contacting you should the need arise.

The second job should be to draw up a list of the leaders of the community: i.e. Resident Associations, Tenant Associations, Macra na Feirme, Muintir na Tire, Irish Country Womens Associations, Irish Housewives Association, Trade Union Organisations, Youth Movements, clergy of all denominations, Womens Liberation Movement, Small Farmers Association, Cultural Movements, politicians etc. and to ensure that they as well as your press contacts get copies of the newsletter,

Copies of all press releases etc. should also be sent to the UNITED IRISHMAN, the IRISH PEOPLE and Head Office as a matter of course.

College and community magazines and trade Union news sheets, R.T.E. and Radio Eireann newsrooms should not be overlooked. They operate as newspapers and should be treated that way. One should use one's own initiative as to what papers should be given the release; there is no need to inform the national papers for instance, if the matter is of purely local interests and not likely to spread.

Deadlines: Evening papers begin operations as early as 8am. To request publication in an evening paper such as the Evening Press, Evening Herald, the Evening Echo or the Belfast Telegraph, it is essential that the press release should be with the news desk on the night before the day of publication of the paper. In the case of the "dailies" - Irish Times, Irish Independent, Irish Press, Cork Examiner etc. - a release on the evening prior to the day of publication would be wise.

Where simultaneous publication is a factor in your release, the release can be sent a few days in advance to ALL the newspapers. In this case, an embargo is placed on your release. This embargo means simply, that publication is more or less prohibited until a certain time has elapsed. All that is necessary to do is to state clearly on the top of the page "NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL (DATE)." This ensures that newspapers spread over the whole country, North South, East and West, will carry the release the same day. In the case of TV, it is essential that it be given no advantage over the newspapers. Newspapers do not like this at all.

Where an "embargo" is placed on a release it can be taken for granted that the newspaper, Radio etc. will honour it. It will be seen, therefore, that there should be a good system for releases. Haphazard issuing to one newspaper on one day, followed by the same release to another paper a few days later will not endear the Movement to news editors. Care, consideration and thoughtfulness will pay dividends.

It is helpful to deliver your press releases directly to your contact person at the newspaper, TV, etc. A last minute item might be telephoned in first so as to hold the press if necessary. Your contact will usually do what is necessary if you prove yourself to be a reliable source of correct and important information.

## PRESS CONFERENCE:

Up until now we have outlined the procedure for organising publicity at the Cumann level. At Comhairle Ceanntair level it is only to be expected that any operation would be a little more sophisticated. It is at Comhairle Ceanntair that we enter a completely new field and the most important part of press relations would be the "press conference". This is not to say that every time a statement is issued by the Comhairle Ceanntair a press conference is required. The holding of such a conference would arise only when an important decision has been arrived at or when a highly controversial matter is taken up by the Comhairle Ceanntair and it is decided to reveal whatever action is to be taken to the public.

If, as a case in point, the Comhairle Ceanntair decided that picketing of a nearby beach is to take place, then the press conference is the place to issue a statement to that effect. It must be made clear to reporters and photographers, and through them to the people at large, why the picketing is to take place. A prominent member of Sinn Fein should be requested to attend and he should be thoroughly briefed in the local history of the beach to be picketed. He must be prepared to answer awkward questions. Questions on the local issue should be answered by the local members since they would naturally know more about the matter than the visitor. The presence of the prominent member is to give the conference an official character.

To organise a press conference it is, of course, necessary to invite the newspapers to send along a reporter and a photographer. This should be done in good time for the invitation to be entered into the diary of the news editor. TV and Radio should also be invited and here, too, the invitation is sent to the news editor. The invitation should indicate what the news conference is about and could be sent

the following lines: "The.....Comhairle Ceanntar of Sinn Fein will hold a press conference at the ...Hotel (or hall) at....on Friday next, September 15th. The purpose of the press conference is to outline action to be taken by this Comhairle Ceanntar in regard to the denial of entry to the beach at.....of members of the general public. We should be glad to welcome a reporter and photographer". The invitation is then signed by the press officer of the Comhairle Ceanntar.

When the reporters and photographers are assembled a typewritten copy of the statement you would like to appear - the sub editor may cut it down somewhat - is handed to each reporter. This is the reporter's copy. His story is based on this. The copies given to the reporters should be decently turned out and every effort should be made to give them all the help they ask for by way of clarification, should that be necessary. You want the reporter to give you some publicity and help on the good work so do not make ~~this~~ job difficult; rather do all you can to assist him to help you. After the statements have been read out there will inevitably be questions asked. This, perhaps, could prove to be the most important part of the conference. It is here that the news value of the conference either becomes important or a dead letter.

How the conference goes depends almost entirely on the quality of the speakers to whom the questions are addressed. Take care, therefore, to have only speakers who are thoroughly versed in all aspects of the matter being discussed. The colourful phrase is what the reporter delights in. Hints of impending trouble for the person denying entry to the beach will almost always make the headlines, but it should be qualified by a spirit of reasonableness. "We don't want trouble but we shall not avoid it if it has to happen."\* If the Comhairle Ceanntar considers it necessary, refreshments should be offered to reporters and photographers. Finally, make the conference brief. An hour is usually long enough.

## HOW TO DEAL WITH REPORTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS:

When a photographer or reporter arrives at your meeting or gathering make contact at once. This should be done by the publicity officer or the person to whom the job has been delegated. Tell him the names of the people present who are regarded as being important to you. If there are press releases being handed out, see that they get one. In short, give them all the help you can. Make their job as easy as possible. Do not attempt to tell them their job or whom you think they should photograph or talk to. Let them do their job in their own way.

For reporters to work in some degree of comfort at meetings, it is essential that they be given a separate table. It should be placed where they can hear what the speakers are saying without having to strain themselves to do so. If the occasion is really important, easy access to a telephone during the recess or interval should be seen to. Make sure that any telephone or telephones are reserved exclusively for reporters during that time. The reason for this is that it enables him to send, very quickly, at least part of his story (which has to be set up by compositors) if he phones his newspaper. That leaves only the second part of his story to be set, the first part being already underway. Such facilities are really appreciated and save many a headache for the working journalist.

If possible, have your own photographer present to ensure photos for the UNITED IRISHMAN and the IRISH PEOPLE. If there are no other photographers present, your photographer can offer photos of the event to other newspapers immediately.

## STARTING LOCAL CONTROVERSIES:

One of the best ways of gaining publicity is in starting local controversies. THIS SHOULD NOT, OF COURSE, BE THE SOLE REASON FOR BECOMING INVOLVED IN LOCAL AGITATIONS. Many a good local agitation has not been



used to the best advantage to gain publicity for the policies of the Movement. There should be no shortage of subjects for such agitations. Dangerous bends on roads, dangerous buildings, lack of water supply, bad housing conditions, pedestrian crossings, demands for local industries, private ownership of natural resources, food prices, ground rent; some or all of these needs apply in most areas. Always remember that it is absolutely essential to organize the people most involved to push the agitation. When started, controversial agitations should be followed through. They should be planned so that Sinn Fein is not left standing on its own without the people's support when the going gets rough.

A principled attitude should be adopted on basic issues such as ownership of land - fisheries - housing, banks, etc. Minor issues such as pedestrian crossing, road surfacing etc., should not be allowed to become "dead-end", i.e. Know when starting out how far you intend to pursue the issue, know how far the authorities, landlords, etc., can bend to accommodate your demands, which must at all times be well reasoned. Know how far you can bring your support with you. Don't leave it behind. When success or failure comes, be ready to inform the public of the reasons for it. Be ready also to switch to another related issue when the end appears in sight.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

The letters to the Editor in all newspapers have a large audience. To be effective, a letter should be short, to the point and deal with one issue only. Editors will not accept anonymous letters for publication. Some editors will not accept letters unless the name and address is for publication unless it is a special circumstance. Straight forward letters are best. "Tongue in cheek", unless well-written, can be misunderstood and likewise, efforts to start controversies by attacking a comrade's letter can backfire. The answering argument may not be published if the editor "smells a rat".

## "OPEN LINES":

"Open Lines" are popular now with Radio and Television, getting the views and questions of viewers and listeners by phone. When these programmes are used, questions and comments should be brief and to the point. Long-windedness obscures the issue raised.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

Events of this nature cannot be successively organised without at least a week's planning beforehand. Having selected a subject which has some relevance to the people in the area, the next requirement is a venue. If it is to be outdoors, a suitable time and place should be selected to attract as many passers-by as possible. A reliable amplification system is essential for all outdoor meetings.

- (A) HALL - If it is to be a hall - it's better too small than too big. If it is more than 20 sq. ft., a good amplifier will be required. It should be checked well in advance of the meeting to ensure proper operation;
- (B) PANEL - An adequate panel of speakers with at least one main speaker who should be an authority on the selected subject should be lined up;
- (C) PRE-PUBLICITY - Press releases, posters, handbills, advertisements, announcements - wherever there are gatherings. Any or all of these methods should be used, depending on funds available.
- (D) LITERATURE - Literature should be distributed and the UNITED IRISHMAN and the IRISH PEOPLE sold at the meeting. A collection should be taken to help defray costs. Stewards with armbands under a chief steward and answerable to the Chair should be on hand to supervise the meeting.
- (E) CHAIR - The Chair should be a member of the Cumann or Comhairle Ceanntar. He or she should not make

(E) cont.

a speech. Some introductory remarks should be made and first speaker introduced without delay. When the first speaker is finished, the Chair should be immediately on his or her feet to introduce the next speaker or open the meeting to questions. Delay between speakers or questions can kill a meeting stone dead. If possible, have a member of the Cumann ready to ask questions, in case none come readily from the floor.

(F) COPIES OF SPEECH - The PRO should have copies of the speech on hand for the press (remembering to retain a copy for filing).

(G) HECKLERS - The odd heckler, sometimes with a drink too many, is not much of a problem. Stewards should not interfere unless requested by the Chair. They should be moved quickly and firmly using minimum force. Experienced speakers can deal effectively with hecklers and inexperienced ones should carry on, ignoring the heckler.

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### PUBLIC SPEAKING

The speaker who addresses or who takes part in a lecture or public meeting and proceeds to give "facts", as they see them and which are not correct, is a menace not only to him/her self but also does the organisation on whose behalf they are speaking irreparable harm. Once a statement is made, it is almost impossible to have it corrected, and if it is, the people who first heard it are about the last to hear of the correction.

Before making a speech or issuing a statement to the press, T.V. or Radio, make sure your facts are straight. Dates, times, hours, etc. must be correct. If you use statistics, make sure they are the right ones. They could be out of date. If you must make a historical reference to some event, get your dates right. Sometimes a reference to something that appeared in the

press or on TV or Radio is pertinent. Quote that date, the right date. If you are not sure of your facts, or even not too sure, then keep off that particular topic altogether and confine yourself to what you do know and can speak with authority about. Above all, don't make your speech too long. Fix a time limit to the time required to put your subject over. Don't get yourself involved in obscurities. Keep it short. Keep it simple. Keep it straight.

Public speaking is another way of putting over an ordinary conversation. If this is borne in mind, it can be undertaken without too much difficulty. We are all familiar with the fellow who lays down the law in the "local". He is, in fact, engaged in public speaking. There is only one difference. While the pub manner of putting over a point of view can be regarded as spontaneous, the somewhat more formal way of making a public speech from a platform or stage simply requires a little more thorough preparation and attention to some simple rules of delivery.

It should be noted that the following points only apply where there is plenty of notice to the speaker. Obviously someone who is asked to speak at a day's notice or even a few hours' notice cannot be expected to make these preparations.

- (A) Your speech should be written out in full.
- (B) Read it over a number of times, then jot the MAIN HEADINGS of what you really mean to put over on one side of a correspondence card - not more than two or three headings to a card.
- (C) Refer briefly to the headings and you'll be surprised how well what you have written down in your speech will come to mind. It would be as well to practice this a couple of times before taking up public speaking.
- (D) When you have referred to card 1 and finished with

(D) cont.)

it, just move it to one side face down, then deal with card 2 and so on.

(E) On no account read your speech in full to your audience. Few people like to be "read to".

A short snappy speech carries more impact than a long-winded rigmarole repeated over and over again. The audience gets bored and more harm than good is done.

Before you write your speech, think about the following points:

a) What type of AUDIENCE are you going to talk to?

1. What is their general attitude likely to be, i.e., interested, indifferent, friendly, sceptical, hostile.
2. How much will they know already?
3. How fast can they take things in?

b) What is the PURPOSE of your talk?

1. Is it to give background (so long as they get the general picture, it will do)?
2. To give detailed information (they must remember certain things)?
3. To put forward a new point of view (they must be influenced and interested)?
4. To teach a particular skill (they must know the drill from A to Z)?
5. To outline a proposed course of action? (They must be clear about what is required of them).

You may have different objectives at different stages in your talk.

c) What SUBJECT MATTER do you want to include?

1. Collect the material;
2. Sort out your ideas into groups;
3. Decide which groups will form your introduction; main arguments and conclusions.

d) How will you PRESENT it?

1. Speak clearly and audibly.
2. Don't put on a special voice. Speak naturally.
3. Speak out without shouting. Open your mouth to let the sound come out. When you want to emphasise a point, don't shout, simply speak more slowly.
4. Speak to the audience not to a corner of the room.
5. Avoid mannerisms like jingling wafers, fiddling with notes, etc.

If there are adult education classes in your area, ask for a public speaking course for your Cumann. Comprehensive or technical schools will provide this if there is sufficient demand.

Never apologise for your inexperience. Your audience will make allowances for you without begging for it.

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VISUAL PROPAGANDA

There is now a design group within the ~~Movement~~ and all Cumann should request their assistance in doing posters and layouts, newsletter covers and handbills. This group is concerned that all our visual propaganda should reflect a socialist revolutionary party concerned with the practical day-to-day problems as they affect people. Too often we, ourselves, project an image of woolly-headed romanticists.

1. LEAFLETS:

Leaflets should be used to announce a forthcoming action where participation by the general public is desirable and should also be given out at public meetings and poster parades to give more details on the event or action.

Layout is of utmost importance. A good leaflet should have a striking heading to catch the eye and indicate something of what the rest of the leaflet and

action are all about. "For example: 1,000 men and women in Irish and British Concentration Camps." The body of the leaflet would go on to give more facts, describe what action your Cumann or area is taking and encourage citizens to participate in whatever ways the cumann decided upon. Depending on the reason for the leaflet, you might want to include a cut-off section to give your reader the opportunity to submit his or her name and address and possibly a donation in order to indicate an interest in further actions to be taken.

Leaflets can be done on stencils and run off on a duplicating machine, or if funds are available, a higher quality effect can be produced by a printer. A leaflet produced on electro-stencil is relatively inexpensive and attractive, allowing for design and more elaborate lettering. After the desired layout is burned onto the stencil by a special machine, you can run off as many copies as needed on a duplicating machine.

That a document should be mechanically, as well as mentally easy to read is of marked advantage. A high standard of layout should always be observed.

2. POSTERS:

As with leaflets, posters should be eye-catching and contain the essential facts and demands regarding the subject or issue you wish to publicise.

Good slogans, well printed are read. This is your objective. They should be short and if possible include a demand or expose a situation so as to involve the people passing by your picket. If you have the talent, a design can be included on the poster to emphasise your words. But this is not necessary. Words well laid out, clearly and effectively written and correctly spelled will do the job most satisfactorily.

Posters should be produced on large white poster board, durable enough in wind and rain. You may wish to attach them to sticks. Black ink, paint or marker

is cheapest but often a colour such as red adds the required emphasis or urgency you may wish to give to a certain word.

Posters produced on a massive scale are best given to a printer or produced on silk screen.

3. BANNERS:

Banners are most often used in marches to identify a group among many groups. Cumann and areas would carry a banner with their name and perhaps an emblem, for example, at Republican Commemorations, at marches for international solidarity or racism in South Africa.

Banners should be fairly large but still manageable for those who are to carry it. Weatherised cloth is most suitable and in choosing a colour make sure there is sufficient contrast between the background and colour you choose for your lettering.

Banners with slogans or a recognizable design are often hung in a place of prominence at press conferences and public meetings and if attractive, can be quite helpful in ensuring coverage by a photographer from the press.

4. FACTS ABOUT NEWSPAPER ADS:

Newspaper space is sold by the line and sometimes by the column inch. An inch of space equals fourteen agate lines of type. Most papers have eight columns of type, each of them about two inches wide. e.g.

If you want an ad. which is six inches long and four inches wide, it will cover twelve column inches or 168 lines. If the rate is 10p per line, the ad. will cost £16.80.

Newspapers also have schedules for advertising. Since ads. are normally inserted with some concern about timing - notices for meetings, etc. - make sure to determine the deadline for a particular newspaper issue well in advance.

You may want your ad. to be on a particular page - perhaps 2 or 3, the best positions in most newspapers. You may have to pay quite a high position charge for this privilege.

Whatever the reason for submitting the ad., you want it to be seen. It is worth paying a little more to buy enough space so that your message can stand out. Most of the principles which guide good leaflet layout will also influence the design of a good newspaper advertisement. Normally you will not be able to use colour. However you can dictate the size and choose the copy. It is vital that white space be reserved and that the copy be kept to a minimum. A good sense of layout and design can be absorbed through the study of advertisements appearing in the daily newspapers.

POSTER PARADES - PICKETS

The PRO should be prepared with a statement for the press who have already been notified in advance of the event and a leaflet for the general public explaining the reason for the picket. One person, preferably the PRO, should act as spokesman, dealing with the press and Gardai should trouble arise. Torches made from brush handles, perforated sided tin cans and fire lighters could be carried on some occasions at night.

NEWSLETTERS

These are a marvellous way of impressing your views on the local community. Again, good clear layout is essential. Your first page should feature a bold heading and name which the community will be able to easily identify after the first issue. Soiled or smudgy copies should not be distributed. The content should be short and snappy, dealing with local issues mainly and national issues where they effect the community.

LOCAL NEWSLETTERS: The newsletter can take two forms.

1. A purely Sinn Fein policy document using local issues to highlight our policies, or
2. A community magazine, reporting all useful local news while at the same time editorially examining local issues in the light of Republican socialist policies.

Such a magazine, if none already exists in your area, could have a large circulation and be supported by local advertisements. Advertisers must not be allowed to have any influence on editorial policy and this would have to be made clear to them at the outset.

DEPUTATIONS

A deputation can be organised in the early stages of an agitation. It should include representatives of all the bodies concerned in the agitation and should be given plenty of press publicity before hand.

RADIO AND TELEVISION

Under existing and proposed legislation, Sinn Fein is unlikely to get time on RTE. Republican Clubs, however, are more fortunate with the BBC in this respect.

The electronic media are powerful weapons of persuasion. Most Irishmen and women spend some time each day listening to radio or watching television.

There are two main situations in which Republicans find themselves broadcasting as the spokesperson of their organisation. Sometimes they may be asked to participate in a political broadcast on behalf of the organisation (during elections etc). At other times they will be invited by a radio or television station to participate in a panel or phone-in show, perhaps in a news interview.

The key point to remember when you appear on television (and are heard on radio) is that you are speaking to people but you are speaking to them individually or in twos and threes. You must have knowledge and conviction. There is no room for bombast or oratory.

The second main point about television is that it casts an intense and sometimes a cruel light on the person appearing before the camera. Everything appears exaggerated: movements, facial shadows, voice characteristics, etc.

Frankly, some people would be well advised to appear as little as possible on television. Others would make an adequate presentation only after a concentrated course of coaching. Be realistic about your spokesperson. If there are people who can do this particular job better, let them do it.

The TV Studio:

The TV studio will be a maze of wires, lights, sets and people. Don't worry about the technical details. Just make certain that you understand the director's time signals, which lens of the camera is "live" and when there are two cameras, which camera is on (usually the one with the red light). During the programme you will treat the live lens as you would the eyes of a person you were engaging in conversation.

Television Interviews:

Very often on television you will be interviewed. Where do you look?

When you are being asked a question, look at the interviewer. If your answer is short (a sentence) keep your attention on the interviewer. If your answer is longer, look at the live camera as if you were looking at a third person in the circle of conversation. At the end of your reply, be looking at the interviewer again. Be natural.

If the interview is longer than the standard news or opinion item (30 to 60 seconds) it may take one of the following forms:

1. It may be fully ad lib., with neither questions or answers prepared in advance.

2. The questions may be planned and structured in order to get a flow of information. The answers are ad lib, although the interviewee might have knowledge of the questions in advance.
3. Both the questions and the answers may be scripted but unless done carefully, this method tends to look stilted and sounds exactly what it is - play acting.

Always listen carefully to the question. No matter how fatuous or cliched it is, always give it a good try. But if you are pressed beyond your knowledge of the subject, state firmly that you have no further comment. Remember that you have rights too.

A Few Tips on Radio:

Scripts should be carefully prepared as they should when used in television. Speakers must be able to lift the words off the paper and be able to say them conversationally. A natural tone is important. You must transmit your sense of confidence and conviction.

Again remember that you are speaking to individuals. If you get on a listener's nerves, he has a simple remedy - he will turn you off!

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#### BOOK SHOPS - BOOK STANDS

In large towns a book shop should be opened if suitable premises on a main street can be obtained. It could serve the dual purpose of a local H.Q. A reliable member prepared to give all his time would be required for such a project and members would have to pay his or her keep initially.

Alternatively, a book stall could be constructed by a local carpenter, preferably on the line of a trailer, which could be towed at the back of a car, and brought to fairs, football matches, shopping centres, etc. One or two light card tables can also be used and set up on the main street or in a shopping centre along with a Sinn Fein banner.

## TOOLS FOR THE PRO

The PRO does not require many tools for his/her work. They should know where to get things done and by whom (if someone else is helping with the work).

1. Press Index: A list of local and national newspapers and contacts in each, free-lance journalists and radio and television representatives in the area with information on how to reach them.

2. Printing Equipment: PROs should have access to a duplicating machine and typewriter and keep a ready supply of stencils, correction fluid and paper -(with and without letterhead) on hand. In addition they should explore other printing methods with a local printer.

3. Posters: An ample supply of poster boards, paints, ink and/or marking pens should be available for quick production of demonstration placards. Hold onto used posters and encourage Cumann members to treat them gently. They most probably will be needed again.

4. Silk Screen Equipment - (optional).

5. Files: Keep files on press coverage of Cumann activities. This can be most helpful in writing up reports for HO and providing various interested media with additional press material on cumann work in the area. Also keep a clipping file on issues the Cumann is involved with or interested in, including local and national reaction to your activities. In writing press statements or speeches it is very helpful to have the background and facts readily available. This information is also useful when familiarising your guest speakers with the details and background of a given local issue they have been invited to speak about.

6. Cumann Banner. SELF EXPLANATORY

UNITED IRISHMAN and IRISH PEOPLE:

Full use should be made of these journals by gathering local news and sending it to them and by sending reports regularly on Cumann and Comhairle Ceanntair activities. Equally, for obvious reasons, it should be of particular interest to the PRO that both journals are sold as widely as possible in their area and to as wide a cross section of the community as possible, i.e. apart from pub sales.

PROPAGANDA DEPARTMENT:

The "Propaganda Department" at 30 Gardiner Place has been set up to assist PROs in their various functions, to seek out new and improved ways of using the media and to impress upon the Movement the need for publicity in general.

It is planned that seminars and discussion groups for PROs around the country will be conducted on the subject and techniques of propaganda.

PROs are urged to keep in touch with the Propaganda Department, to send on copies of news releases, local press coverage, newsletters, leaflets, etc., in order for the Department to make recommendations and share your ideas with other PROs.

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NATIONAL BOOK SERVICE

|                                                                                   |                            | Price<br>incl. post. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| The Revolutionaries                                                               | Sean Cronin                | 40p                  |
| Republican Congress                                                               | G. Gilmore                 | 32½p                 |
| Stolen Waters (the case for public<br>ownership of Ireland's rivers and<br>lakes) |                            | 15p                  |
| Culture and Revolution in<br>Ireland                                              | E.O Murchu                 | 20p                  |
| Revolutionary Movements<br>of the Past                                            | Dr. J.de Courcy<br>Ireland | 20p                  |
| I.R.A. in the '70s                                                                |                            | 10p                  |
| The Re-Conquest of<br>Ireland                                                     | J.Connolly                 | 15p                  |
| Labour Nationality<br>and Religion                                                | J.Connolly                 | 15p                  |
| The New Evangel                                                                   | J.Connolly                 | 12½p                 |
| Workshop Talks (The<br>Meaning of Socialism)                                      | J.Connolly                 | 10p                  |
| The Relevance of James<br>Connolly in Ireland today.                              | G. Gilmore                 | 7½p                  |
| Irish Mining - the need<br>for action (Resources Study Group)                     |                            | 22½p                 |

All are obtainable from:-

National Book Service,  
30 Gardiner Place 1.