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Letter from Sean Garland : New Editor "United Irishman"

Sinn Féin

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16th May, 1973.

A Chara,

This month sees the appointment of Jackie Ward, Derry, as new editor of the United Irishman. Over the past six months this task has been handled by the Editorial Committee. The Committee will remain in existence but Jackie will be responsible for producing and editing the paper. The May issue, we feel, is a paper that can compare favourably with the best of the past. We are confident that the U.I. will continue to improve and play a much more important part in the years ahead.

In January 1973 we sold 68,000 copies of the U.I. We have been unable to reach that figure since, due to circumstances beyond our control. Dublin, which is the largest sales area in the country, has fallen back, due we feel, to the following reasons:

- 1) The total involvement of the Dublin membership in the General Election of Feb. '73.
- 2) The late publication of the March issue, which was held over to analyse the Election results.
- 3) Easter Commemoration and selling of Easter Lilies during April.

We have maintained the same print order for May and we feel that the Dublin organisation will now be able to return to the January situation. Over the past years the trend during the summer months, has been for United Irishman sales to increase substantially.

The role of the United Irishman as educator, organiser and campaigning newspaper over the past six years has been one of the decisive factors in building the Republican Movement. Since 1967 the sales of the U.I. have risen from 14,000 to 66,000. With other radical publications coming on the market, and filling a long-felt need, we see the United Irishman's role as continuing to be the voice of the Republican Movement on all of the many issues that confront the people; British control and influence, repression north and south, lack of housing, jobs etc.

As well as extending our influence, the U.I. which has since 1967 made a steady profit; has enabled the Republican Movement to open and stock a bookshop carrying a large range of literature, contribute generously to the U.I. building fund and help to finance the publishing and printing of many Repsol pamphlets; and at times help pay towards keeping fulltime personnel on the road. All this, we are confident, can not only be continue, but increased.

One of the main forms of activity of our members has been the selling of the United Irishman. This activity, which is a demonstration of our members dedication and commitment, along with the content of the paper, accounts for the large circulation. We are very aware of all that our sellers contribute to making the U.I. the most successful revolutionary monthly paper. The selling of the U.I. is one of our few means of contact with the people. It should, whether we sell door-to-door, in pubs or at churches, keep us in touch with the people and what way they are thinking. Now more than ever, the Dublin cumainn and members must realise the importance of the U.I. and begin now to increase circulation, not alone in pub sales but also door-to-door sales.

Publication of the June issue may be held over until Friday, 1st June to allow us to give coverage to the local elections in the Six Counties. This will also mean that sellers have more time to sell the May issue.

Is mise, le meas,

SEAN GARLAND.