

Force protester groups get €400,000 subsidies

Martin Frawley

THE two garda associations involved in protest actions over proposed pay cuts are getting more than €400,000 a year from the government towards their administration costs.

According to the most recent accounts from the Department of Justice, the Garda Representative Association (GRA) received €103,000 in 2011 to pay for the salaries of two gardai who were seconded to work there. The GRA is currently led by general secretary PJ Stone and deputy general secretary John Healy.

The GRA also received €31,484 to cover the cost of phones and postage and €92,958 towards renting offices in Phibsboro, north Dublin. Its total subvention was just under €228,000.

The Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors (AGSI) received €117,305 to cover the cost of two sergeants assigned to

work there. The AGSI, which represents about 2,000 sergeants and inspectors, is led by secretary-general John Redmond and John Jacob, his newly appointed deputy.

The AGSI also received €15,099 to cover postage and phones and €46,613 towards rent, also in Phibsboro Tower, bringing its total to €179,017.

The Department of Justice also pays €58,000 each to two other garda associations representing superintendents and chief superintendents. The total state subvention to the four associations is €523,000.

Last week the department said it had “no comment” as to whether it was considering withdrawing some or all of the funding given the protests being mounted by the two main associations.

GRA and AGSI officials, including Stone and Redmond, protested outside Leinster House last week. Officials also picketed outside the Croke Park II pay talks last month. Alan Shatter, the justice minister, has said

the picket could “discredit the force in the eyes of many people”.

Jacob said the AGSI was not aware of any threat to its state funding. “We would be very disappointed if that were the department’s reaction,” he said.

AGSI members are continuing to engage in protest action including refusal to use their personal laptops, mobile phones and cars on duty. They are also refusing to volunteer to police sporting events and concerts.

Gardai cannot participate in any form of industrial action or join a trade union. Jacob said the current protest represents “passive resistance” to the Croke Park proposals. “We would never encourage members to disobey direct orders,” he said.

Stone said the GRA was trying to “keep a lid” on the situation but its members are annoyed. Under Croke Park II, a garda on an annual salary of €54,954 stands to lose €2,400 or 5% while a sergeant on €62,123 would lose €2,400 or 3.5%.





Concern . . . Redmond

Gardai vote on pay deal

By **BRIAN HUTTON**

MIDDLE-RANKING gardai are gathering today to decide if they will reject the public sector pay deal.

The fall-out from the Croke Park 2 agreement is to be discussed at the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors annual conference in Sligo.

AGSI general secretary John Redmond said: "Our members are in limbo and there is a deep sense of worry and concern around pay and allowances, so much so that it will totally dominate the conference."

He added that delegates would be looking to guest speakers Justice Minister Alan Shatter and Garda Commissioner Martin Callinan to alleviate some of their anxiety.



GARDAI **Minister to** **face anger** **of officers**

By CATHAL McMAHON

MID-ranking gardai will come face-to-face with Justice Minister Alan Shatter tonight in what is expected to be a frosty exchange.

The under-fire minister is due to address the annual conference of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors in Sligo.

A number of delegates have slammed the decision to invite Mr Shatter to the event and he is likely to be greeted with silence after his speech.

AGSI general secretary John Redmond said: "Some weren't happy he was invited. However, it is tradition we invite the minister."

Mr Redmond added Mr Shatter and Garda Commissioner Martin Callinan needed to get a feeling for the anger among members.



COPS TO SHATTER: 'YOU TOLD US LIES'

AGSI conference fury over station closures

By STEPHEN BREEN in Sligo

UNDER-FIRE Justice Minister Alan Shatter was last night accused of "lying" over the closure of Garda stations across the country.

The Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors launched a stinging attack on the Fine Gael TD during their 35th annual conference at Sligo's Clarion Hotel yesterday.

AGSI official Larry Brady addressed Mr Shatter – who was seated awkwardly beside the union's general secretary John Redmond.

In a speech from the AGSI President Tim Galvin, delivered by Mr Brady, he told Shatter: "Twelve months on and nothing has changed. Your words were lies. One hundred stations were earmarked since then

and despite numerous requests to Garda management and you Minister, we find out what stations are closing on the Garda Portal system while you stand in the Dail making the announcement."

Destroyed

He added: "Station closures have destroyed the bedrock of this association. We are different than any other police force in Europe. We live and work within the communities we serve, and this link is now going to be destroyed."

Referring to a number of recent attacks on gardai, he said: "Since we spoke to you we have had our colleague Adrian Donohoe shot dead, a number of colleagues shot at, a young garda in Tallaght slashed in the face and another member in Store Street (Dublin) beaten and the private car of a member torched in the car park of a station in Clare.

"Do you Minister really care about your employees? Or is it lip

service?" Members of the Carlow/Kilkenny AGSI branch walked out as Mr Shatter addressed delegates.

The senior politician said: "The reality is that a reduction in the public service pay and pension bill must form part of the solution to our financial and economic difficulties."

"I sincerely wish this Government had not inherited such a disastrous economic legacy – but we have. I know this is not a popular message, but it is reality."

The Minister said it was not possible to consult with every individual in relation to station closures which he described as an operational decision made by the Garda Commissioner which he would not second guess.

Commissioner Martin Callinan will address delegates later today.

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TAOISEACH TACKLED

AN outraged garda slammed the Taoiseach for cutting public sector pay as he canvassed yesterday.

Fine Gael chief Enda Kenny was approached in Ratoath ahead of the Meath East by-election by the man who identified himself as an officer.

The garda fumed: "My daughter was

taken into hospital St Patrick's Day. We went over to Tallaght Hospital.

"She was seen by doctors, seen by nurses. The cleaning staff were in the hospital and also the food had been served.

"Now you're turning around to cut those people's wages."



Seating arrangement . . Minister Shatter & AGSI general secretary Redmond



Cool reception . . Fine Gael Deputy greeted with wall of silence by delegates





We've had enough . . members of Carlow/Kilkenny branch exit the room



Minute's silence for slain Adrian

By **CATHAL McMAHON** GARDAI last night held a minute's silence for their murdered colleague Adrian Donohoe.

Speaking at the opening of the AGSI conference, General Secretary John Redmond said: "I want to mention the terrible tragedy of the murder of our colleague."

"We all know the dedication he had to his family and his community."

Det Gda Donohoe was gunned down as he carried out a cash escort at Lordship Credit Union in Co Louth on January 25.

Thousands of officers attended the dad-of-two's funeral in Co Louth.

Mr Redmond explained that everyone in the force was "taken aback" by the first murder of a serving member in 17 years.

Justice Minister Alan Shatter also paid tribute to the fallen officer.

He said: "Detective Garda Adrian Donohoe was the victim of a brutal, callous and cowardly murder by thugs who have no respect for human life."

"I know his loss was devastating and traumatic for his family and for members of the force."

"I believe that it is right that I acknowledge his bravery and sacrifice and wish all of those engaged in the investigation into the dreadful events at the Lordship Credit Union success in bringing those responsible to justice."



▲ **SHOT** Adrian Donohoe



AGSI CONFERENCE

MINISTER 'LIED' OVER CLOSURES

Gardai told Shatter's consultation vow was a sham

BY **CATHAL McMAHON**
Crime Reporter
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A TOP garda rep has accused Justice Minister Alan Shatter of lying over station closures.

Tim Galvin said his members were left in the dark about downsizing.

The minister was met with a wall of silence as he addressed the annual conference of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors in Sligo last night.

While Mr Galvin was unable to attend the conference, his speech was read by colleague Larry Brady.

He said they were assured by

the Government the lack of consultation of the first series of station closures would not be repeated.

Mr Brady said: "Your words were lies. We find out what stations are closing on the Garda Portal system while you stand in the Dail making the announcement.

"Worse than that is the fact the president and general secretary are called to a meeting to be updated on the plans and while the information is available on Twitter.

"We are different than any other police force in Europe.

"We live and work within the communities we serve and this link is now going to be destroyed and we believe that the consequences will not be seen for a number of years."

Mr Brady also took attacked the Minister's handling of the pay talks.

He added: "This is not about Ireland PLC or An Garda Síochána, this is about survival, survival for themselves and their families.

"Enough is enough. I stand here prepared to fight more cuts to my pay packet and those of my colleagues."

Referring to a number of recent attacks on members of An Garda Síochána including the murder of Det Gda Adrian Donohoe, delegates were told officers are not protected.

He said: "Since we spoke to you we have had our colleague Adrian Donohoe shot dead, a number of

colleagues shot at, a young garda in Tallaght slashed in the face and another member in Store Street beaten and the private car of a member torched in the car park of a station in Clare.

"Do you minister really care about your employees? Or is it lip service?"

But Mr Shatter last night hit back at garda groups claiming they have "lost their way".

He insisted he was doing all he could, in the current economic climate to

protect the force.

However, the minister claimed that the bodies which represent gardai are doing a "disservice to members of the force".

Mr Shatter said: "Just last week, members of both the GRA and AGSI had a protest outside Leinster House.

"I believe both bodies have lost sight of the specific purposes for which they were formed.

"They seem to be under the belief that by presenting themselves as some sort of protest movement they are acting in the interest of members of the force."

He said it would have been better if their

members had been at the negotiation tables for the Croke Park II talks.

Mr Shatter also slammed unnamed individuals within the garda representative groups "who show no respect for authority or the rules they should abide by".

He added: "I will, as Minister, continue to defend the Force and its members from unfair criticism and false allegations made either inside or outside the Dail but I will not disregard wrongdoing."

Mr Shatter defended recent station closures and claimed that these had not been made for political gain.

Referring to a recent controversial



decision to close Stepside station in South Dublin the politician slammed criticism.

He said: "Even if you take a cynical view of politicians, in fact especially if you take a cynical view, the fact that the largest station closed this year is Stepside in my constituency must surely support my contention that the public interest, and not any individual interest, must be paramount."



We find
out about
closures as you
make statement
in the Dail

TIM GALVIN



**LEGAL
NOTICES**

IN THE MATTER OF THE
COMPANIES ACTS 1963-2012.
NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF
RECEIVER AND MANAGER.
CERTAIN PROPERTY OF

BLOODSTONE DEVELOPMENTS
LIMITED (In Receivership).

KBC Bank Ireland, p.l.c. having
its registered office at Sandwith
Street, Dublin 2 ("the Bank"),
with reference to Bloodstone
Developments Limited ("the
Company"), a company
incorporated in the State, hereby
gives notice that on the 20 March,
2013, Mr. Brian McEnery of BDO,
Four Michael Street, Limerick
accepted an appointment as
Receiver and Manager under the
powers contained in the Mortgage
dated 1 August 2007, held by
the Bank over certain property of
the Company mortgaged and/or
charged by the said Mortgage.

Dated 26 March 2013.

MacSweeney & Company,
Lismoyle House, Merchants Road,
Galway, Solicitors for KBC Bank
Ireland Pic.



Senior gardaí walk out during Shatter's speech

By **Darragh Murphy**

GARDAÍ last night staged a walkout during a speech by Alan Shatter.

The Justice Minister was stonewalled throughout his address at the opening of Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors' three-day conference last night.

He rounded on gardaí for missing the chance to argue their case in the public sector pay talks, criticised representative bodies for picketing the talks, and hit out at them for staging a protest outside the Dáil.

In turn, the Carlow-Kilkenny branch walked out during the speech, which was met by silence.

Mr Shatter said: 'I believe both bodies have lost their way, lost sight of the specific

purposes for which they were formed and seem to be under the belief that by presenting themselves as some sort of protest movement they are acting in the interest of members of the force.'

'I believe the approach taken is a disservice to members of the force.'

Mr Shatter's wide-ranging address to the AGSI conference in Sligo also referred to the leaking of information and garda abuse of power – a pointed reference to officers wiping penalty points, a report on which is due to be handed to the minister shortly.

He also revealed that he has asked

Commissioner Martin Callinan to examine officers' access and use of information on the internal Pulse System, which logs investigations.

He said: 'It should in no circumstances be used as some sort of social network to be accessed out of curiosity by members of the force in circumstances in which such access has no real connection with their duties or work in which they are engaged.'

Mr Shatter also rejected criticism of the closure of 100 garda stations, noting that Steapside station, the largest to close, is in his Dublin constituency and three miles from Dundrum station. The AGSI had accused Mr Shatter of telling lies about the closures. But

he said it was impossible to consult every individual in relation to an operational decision which was made, in any case, by the Garda Commissioner.

In relation to pay cuts, he said it was wrong to say AGSI and the Garda Representative Association had been sidelined in talks.

He said: 'Great efforts were made to protect the core pay of lower to middle-

paid workers, but the point is the place to make any such argument was at the negotiating table.'

A minute's silence was held for Detective Garda Adrian Donohoe who was shot during a raid on a credit union robbery in Louth in January.



BROKE COPS: WE SLEEP AT WORK

Shock claims as cutbacks hit force

CASH-strapped gardai are SLEEPING in their stations because they can't afford to drive home.

Delegates at the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors conference heard how officers in **EVERY** Irish county face financial ruin as a result of cutbacks.

They included one guard who could only afford sandwiches for his pregnant wife, another who went without heat for two weeks and others who are struggling with their mortgages.

Shock statistics from AGSI's 35th

By **STEPHEN BREEN**, in Sligo

annual conference at Sligo's Clarion Hotel also revealed one member had driven 161,250km to and from work and another had spent €17,500 on fuel.

AGSI Vice-President Antoinette Cunningham told of her horror at the claims after a motion for more assistance for officers was passed.

The sergeant said: "We're being bombarded with texts, emails and calls from officers detailing their hardships."

The shock claims were made before Commissioner Martin Call-

Commissioner . . Callinan

inan delivered his address yesterday. He told the packed room: "I want to assure you that I fully understand the difficulties they are experiencing and the fears and anxiety that brings."

Meanwhile, AGSI General Secretary John Redmond revealed Justice Minister Alan Shatter's anger after he was met with a wall of silence on Monday night. Mr Redmond said: "When I was escorting him out of the conference he said, 'So you're talking to me now'."

He said he hoped to have a more mature engagement at next year's conference.

"The man showed nothing but arrogance."
stephen.breen@the-sun.ie



ARROGANT

Garda rep lashes out at Justice Minister

BY **CATHAL McMAHON**
Crime Reporter
news@irishmirror.ie

JUSTICE Minister Alan Shatter was yesterday branded as "condescending" and "arrogant" by a top Garda rep.

In a speech at the AGSI annual conference in Sligo, general secretary John Redmond described how the politician was fuming after he was greeted with a "wall of silence" on Monday.

Mr Shatter was also angered after four sergeants and inspectors staged a walkout prior to his speech.

Mr Redmond added: "When I was escorting him [Shatter] out of the conference he said, 'So you're talking to me now'.

"He then said he hoped to have a more mature engagement at next year's conference.

"The man showed nothing but arrogance and a condescending attitude.

"This is the wall we have to climb when dealing with him."

Garda Commissioner Martin Callinan was also furious after the same group of officers staged a walkout while he was addressing them.

In a hard-hitting interview at the AGSI annual conference he said: "It's regrettable that has happened and I don't condone for a moment what has happened and it shouldn't have happened.

"Similarly the issues that were reported in the media yesterday when the minister was here, not for a moment do I condone that.

"Nor do I expect that from a member of sergeant rank or inspector rank in An Garda Síochána.

"That shouldn't have happened, it was inappropriate and I have indicated that to the president of the executive."

When asked if he would take disci-

plinary action he said: "I will have a look at that in the cold light of day. These are emotive times."

The four delegates Ted Hughes, Joseph Hanly, Pat Baldwin and John Foley caused a stir when they walked out as Mr Shatter rose to speak.

They repeated the action when Commissioner Callinan start to make his address last night.

The four claimed their members had voted to take the action and they stood by their move.

However, their own general secretary John Redmond has criticised the walkout saying it is a "step too far".

Earlier the conference heard cash-strapped gardai were sleeping in their stations because they can't afford to drive home

Dele-
gates
heard
how

officers in every county face ruin. They included one garda who could only afford sandwiches for his pregnant wife, another who went without heat for two weeks and others who were struggling with their mortgages.

Statistics from AGSI's conference at Sligo's Clarion Hotel also revealed one member had driven 161,250km to and from work and another spent €17,500 on fuel.

AGSI vice-president Antoinette Cunningham told of her horror at the claims after the group passed a motion for more assistance for stressed officers.

She said: "We're bombarded with texts and calls from officers detailing their hardships."





CANTWELL'S CHRONICLES

I thought burgers might buy me mercy – but my eldest's review of my drinking didn't mince words

HAPPY Meal demolished, I gulp back some coffee from the warm paper cup and steel myself to ask the big question.

'Do you think I drink too much?'

My eldest daughter brandishes a chip and gazes at me across the formica table, the fan whirring overhead with a 'tut-tut' and a chill breeze. It's judgment day.

I've asked my daughter here – to the salubrious surrounds of our local multinational fast food joint – to ask her this question, for several reasons.

One: Last week was Ireland's first ever National Alcohol Awareness Week and the words of Alcohol Forum chairman Pat Harvey are ringing in my ears.

He'd been in the media publicising a themed conference and events, and he'd thrown down the gauntlet to Irish parents – challenging all of us to ask our teenagers what they think of our drinking.

Mr Harvey reckoned that this could serve us up a curveball or two – and he denounced the impact adults' harmful drinking is having on children as a 'national scandal'.

The second reason I'm sat 'neath the Golden Arches on this particular Sunday, seeking a scolding, is that I'm in the grip of a certain amount of banal self-loathing. Yes,

I went out last night. And, yes, I tore the arse out of it.

I awoke with a jolt at 8.30am. Disorientated. Wondering why I felt like I was about to die. Confusion quickly supplanted by grim recognition... The sensation of having been kicked by a wild horse and hit over the head with a baseball bat was down to rather more explicable events – whether or not I

could remember them exactly, or at all.

Waking dreams of ice cold cola and a vast trucker's breakfast invaded the pounding of my head – and I troubled my imploding frontal lobe for the two hours that followed to try and piece together the complex jigsaw of the previous night's carousing. That sense of 'Now you're for it!' is all too familiar after a night on the tiles. I pulled

the duvet over my eyes, hiding from the disapproving world.

Of course, I've plenty of ifs and buts at my disposal in my defence. This is not a regular occurrence. A good friend was home from Australia, so celebrations were a must. I over-indulged – but I was ready to pay the price.

The third reason for McDonald's at this juncture is that I'm obviously hotly craving

salt and grease. The fourth – I'm hoping the 'treat' aspect will soften my eldest into being gentle in her judgment of my imbibing habits.

So here I am. Sunday afternoon, under the bare lights at Ronald's place. I've picked my moment – emotionally maybe moreso than wisely – to pop the question.

What *is* she thinking about my drinking?

The verdict is swiftly given – lock, stock and several smoking barrels. 'Well, dad, I do know when you've had too much to drink the night before.'

'How?' (I'm on the defensive... The answer hits like a freight train.) 'Because you are



very grumpy and don't want to do anything for the day, except goof around in your horrible tracksuit and

make us listen to Joy Division and other crazy bands like the Cocteau Twins.'

'But!' I say, 'It doesn't happen often — maybe once or twice a year.'

Her response — an eruption of laughter — echoes across the restaurant and out the glass doors.

Out of the mouths of babes... or something like that. It's almost as if she expects me to jump to my feet and declare: 'Hi, I'm Alan and I'm an alcoholic.'

Of course, I'm not. It's usually the odd beer or glass of wine with dinner. But my Saturday night was textbook binge drinking — and the optics of one drink with dinner sometimes stretching to three or four is something many of us might like to think about.

To use an unedifying phrase (not in petty revenge, or

anything) — one must consider the notion of 'monkey see, monkey do'.

For parents, protecting your children from the perils of alcohol abuse moves centre stage as they head for their teens.

It's easy for us to sit in judgment as we see young men and women splayed across our television screens, trashed, each weekend — engaging in anti-social behaviour.

But we need to move off the moral high-ground and wonder where the impulse to drink foolishly comes from.

In the sage words of the late US fitness guru, Jack LaLanne: 'If you want to change somebody, don't preach to him. Set an example and shut up.'

Of course, I'm not angling for the set-up of temperance groups country-wide. All things in moderation — there's nothing wrong with a civilised, sociable drink. We simply need to be aware, as Pat Harvey put it, that 'we are not at the top of the league of the heaviest drinkers because a few drink heavily, we are at the top because a lot of people take a lot of drink'.

Perhaps the level of comfort or discomfort we feel in broaching the issue of our

drinking with our own offspring is a pretty good yardstick for how we're getting on...



Uzi wouldn't have saved Garda Donohoe, says Callinan

Irish Daily Mail Reporter

GARDA Commissioner Martin Callinan has rejected claims that murdered detective Adrian Donohoe could have survived if he was carrying a submachine gun recently taken away from members of the force.

The police chief said anyone who knew the facts about Mr Donohoe's killing outside a credit union at Lordship, Co. Louth, in January would know that the withdrawn weapon would not have helped him.

Mid-ranking gardaí are demanding the Uzi submachine gun be reissued to authorised detectives around the country. Inspector Walter Kilcullen, based at Lucan, Co. Dublin,

told the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors annual conference: 'Maybe that night, if he [Detective Donohoe] had an Uzi submachine gun, what happened might not have happened.'

But Mr Callinan said anyone 'equipped with the salient facts' would realise that an Uzi 'would not have made the slightest bit of difference'. He added: 'And I do think it was an inappropriate comment, particularly as that family is still grieving.'

Inspector Kilcullen, a senior member of the

AGSI national executive, said the Uzi had been used by gardaí since the late 1960s. Taking them away from officers was like telling traffic police to return their motorbikes and use Segways instead, he told delegates.

'The visual appearance of an Uzi submachine gun is more intimidating and powerful than a Sig handgun,' he said.

Delegates at the conference also vowed to resist any cuts to their pay or allowances, warning that cutbacks agreed under the Croke Park II deal were causing 'deep distress' to officers. Sergeant Kevin Bolger from Co. Wicklow said they had nothing more to

give. 'The camel's back is about to break,' he said. 'We cannot take any more.'

Mr Callinan also criticised four delegates from the Carlow/Kilkenny branch who walked out of the conference during Justice Minister Alan Shatter's address last night, and again when the commissioner got up to speak today.

'That shouldn't have happened,' he said. 'It was inappropriate and I have indicated that to the president of the AGSI executive.'

AGSI general secretary John Redmond distanced himself from the walkout, saying it was 'a step too far'.



Action against cops over Shatter snub 'a disgrace'



GARDA UNION BACKING WALKOUT FOUR

By BRIAN HUTTON

FOUR gardai who walked out on a speech by Justice Minister Alan Shatter are facing "disgraceful" disciplinary action.

The Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors said it was standing "four-square" behind the officers who have been summoned to a meeting with Assistant Commissioner Fintan Fanning this evening.

It is understood they will be warned that Garda bosses are taking their high-profile demonstration at the AGSI annual conference "very seriously".

The four, from the Carlow/Kilkenny division, staged a walk-out when Shatter got up to address the gathering and – in an unprecedented move – again when the Garda Commissioner Martin Callinan took to the podium.

Both Mr Shatter and Mr Callinan will discuss potential actions against the men following tonight's meeting.

Threatened

However outraged AGSI general secretary John Redmond angrily denounced any threatened measures against the gardai whom he said were simply representing their colleagues.

He fumed: "It is despicable to threaten those hard-working members with discipline for bringing the views of their membership to the attention of the national executive and the delegates of this conference."

"It is a disgraceful way to treat people who are trying to engage

with management on the welfare and pay and conditions of members, who are working hard day in and day out in rural Ireland. It is disgraceful."

Mr Redmond, who yesterday distanced himself from remarks by one of the protesters that they had no confidence in the commissioner, added: "They have nearly 130 years' service between them. And this one thing – doing something to bring on the welfare, pay and conditions of their members – then this is what they are threatened with. It is outrageous."

Mr Redmond said AGSI, which represents more than 2,000 mid-ranking officers, was offering the sergeants legal assistance.

Sanction is needed from Minister Shatter to take any disciplinary measures because they were acting in their capacity as AGSI representatives rather than as on-duty gardai. Potential action could include demotion, suspension and fines. However a source insisted that was "a bit down the line yet".

As tensions mounted over proposed pay cuts, Shatter hit out again at both the AGSI and Garda Representative Association.

He said: "Unfortunately there seems to be a confrontational approach adopted by these bodies in addressing issues rather than engaging constructively."

The minister added that members of the force had to understand that reforms are implemented in the public interest.

Meanwhile the GRA said it would **NOT** be inviting Mr Shatter to its annual conference next month. It is the first time any garda association has not invited the minister to its annual delegation.

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**A sign of the times . . . garda
outside Leinster House yesterday**



**Pay cuts protest . . . members of the Garda Representative
Association are angry at proposed reductions to their wage packets**



COP ON CALLINAN

BY **PAT FLANAGAN**
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THE Garda Commissioner has been accused of using the threat of punishment to "silence criticism" from officers angry about cuts to their pay.

Martin Callinan's decision to take disciplinary action against four sergeants who walked out while he was addressing the force was branded "disgraceful" yesterday.

The Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors said it was despicable officers were being punished for voicing their opposition to cuts to their pay and conditions.

Yesterday it emerged Justice Minister Alan Shatter had sanctioned disciplinary action against

the four sergeants who twice walked out of their association's annual conference this week.

Commissioner Callinan has also demanded an investigation into Gda Frank Greene who confronted Taoiseach Enda Kenny in a Co Meath supermarket, while off-duty, over pay cuts.

AGSI general secretary John Redmond strongly condemned the decision to discipline and investigate officers.

He added: "We are four-square behind them. It is despicable to threaten those hard-working members for bringing the views of their membership to the attention of the national executive and the delegates of this conference.

"It is a disgraceful way to treat people trying to engage with management on the welfare and pay and conditions of members who are working hard day in and day out in rural Ireland."

The officers involved have been summoned to a meeting with Assistant Commissioner Fintan Fanning - the Garda human resources boss - this evening. They twice walked out of the

annual conference in protest, when

the Garda Commissioner and Justice Mr Alan Shatter got up to address the gathering.

Sinn Féin's justice spokesman Padraig MacLochlainn slammed the decision to discipline the gardai involved

He added: "It is alarming to see a moderate organisation like the ASGI being forced to become so radical. But then again the Justice Minister came to the conference like a bull in a china shop."

Spokesman for the Carlow and Kilkenny sergeants who walked out of the conference, Joe Hanley, said they had been mandated to take the action.

They could now face a range of sanctions including fines, suspension or even a reduction in rank for exercising their right to protest.

Fianna Fail justice spokesman Niall Collins described the relationship between the Gardai and Minister Shatter as "unhealthy".

He said: "This was unnecessary and will do nothing to repair or restore the

relationship between the minister and the Garda representative associations."

Mr Shatter said he was glad his wife was not with him for the dinner during the AGSI conference.

Hitting out at members, he added: "I don't think their conduct could be described as courteous or reasonable."

Leading figures in the force revealed outraged gardai are on the verge of an all-out revolt with superiors and the Justice Minister.

Relations between top brass and rank-and-file officers deteriorated further when it emerged the Commissioner had also demanded a report into an incident involving the Taoiseach and an off-duty Garda in a Co Meath supermarket.

Mr Kenny was confronted by Gda Frank Greene when he was canvassing in Ratoath village last Monday.

Gda Greene, who is based at Dublin Airport, told the Taoiseach he

felt his Government was "singling out" shift workers.

He added: "Now I'm entitled, as far as I'm concerned, for unsocial hours

allowance because they are unsocial.

"I didn't cause the economy to collapse, yet I feel I'm being singled out."

Gda Greene now faces an investigation even though he was expressing his opinion as a member of the public and was not on duty at the time.

Last night it emerged Mr Shatter below, has been told he is not welcome at the upcoming Garda Representative Association conference.

General secretary PJ Stone revealed that for the first time in their history they would not welcome a minister at the event.

And members of the GRA executive board will meet next week to decide if they will also ban Commissioner Callinan.

Sources indicated they are "unlikely" to invite him.

A spokesman said: "This will be the first time a Justice

Minister has not been invited to our conference.

"In February the executive voted no confidence in the minister. It would be difficult to invite him in light of this."

GRA members are considering walking out if Mr Callinan is invited to address the conference. A source added: "Members would have to be tied to their seats to stop them walking out."

Yesterday around 50 members of the association staged a pay cut protest outside the Department of the Taoiseach in Dublin.

PJ Stone attacked Mr Kenny over claims representatives had walked out of public sector talks, adding: "The Taoiseach was disingenuous on Monday when he blamed us for walking out.

"We see current proposals as blatantly unfair. How our Taoiseach can see this as fair is simply baffling.

"Any public servant working nine to five and earning up to €65,000 will not have pay reduced while a garda earning €38,000 will suffer a substantial cut."

Irish Mirror Comment: Page 8









We have a right to be angry over cuts

By **JOHN REDMOND**
AGSI GENERAL SECRETARY



WE will continue to oppose pay cuts and the key message from conference this year centred on a strategy to achieve that aim.

The Carlow/Kilkenny branch were mandated by their members and they executed their right to protest by withdrawing from conference.

We understand their protest against Minister Shatter who has treated our members with great disdain and disrespect. Members were left reeling after his address on Monday.

In relation to the walkout before the Commissioner's address, it is not AGSI's policy to support a motion of no confidence in the Garda Commissioner. However, we respect their right to protest.

On Tuesday night the Commissioner was warmly received by delegates and they appreciated the fact he addressed our concerns directly with us.

It is not the view of this association that we don't have confidence in the Commissioner.

However, we would disagree he has any right to investigate or prosecute our members who are elected to voice the frustration over severe pay cuts. I am disappointed Minister Shatter continues to rebuke and criticise his

members who are down-trodden by a minister who continues to disregard the concerns of their force.

At the heart of the issue is our unique position in the public sector.

We should never have

been forced into general public sector pay talks. We should never have had to

protest, rally and withdraw goodwill. But we have had no choice.

An Garda Síochána is in a unique position. We undertake a job whereby we are expected to put the lives of the citizens we protect before our own. But more than that we cannot protest and represent our views on a level-playing field with other members.

We have contributed savings and are well placed to contribute to change but nobody is listening.

We believe strongly that pay cuts are not necessary.



Walk-out gardaí avoid 'outrageous' threats of action

By **Jennifer Bray**
and **Ali Bracken**

FOUR gardaí who walked out on speeches by Alan Shatter and the Garda Commissioner will not be disciplined, while top gardaí blasted that threat of action as 'outrageous'.

It emerged yesterday that the Justice Minister sanctioned disciplinary action against the four mid-ranking gardaí who walked out during the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors conference in Sligo.

The Gardaí in question were mandated by their division to show their lack of confidence in

Mr Shatter and Martin Callinan.

The Garda Representative Association is now considering the unprecedented move of not inviting Mr Callinan to its annual conference. The union, which represents 11,200 rank and file gardaí, has already confirmed Mr Shatter will not be invited to attend the Co. Mayo event in April.

Around 30 members of the GRA staged a protest outside the Office of the Taoiseach yesterday against proposed public sector pay cuts.

Defending his part in Monday night's walk-out, Sgt Joe Hanley, of Tullow Garda Station, said of the threatened disciplinary action: 'It is an extreme step to take, we were mandated by our

members to do it. It wasn't an easy thing to do, but we felt that the opinion from the ground is that somebody needs to make a stand and we've done it from the Kilkenny/Carlow division.'

The mid-ranking officers have been summoned to a meeting with Garda Assistant Commissioner Fintan Fanning today.

However they are not expected to face suspension, a fine or a reduction in their rank.

A source said: 'They have been insubordinate, but we do not want to fan the flames any further. They are not expected to be fined or disciplined.'

John Redmond of the AGSI yesterday hit back at the threatened action, calling it 'outrageous' and 'despicable'.

'We are absolutely four-square behind those members,' he said. 'It is despicable to threaten those hard-working members with discipline for bringing the views of their membership to the attention of the national executive and the delegates of the conference.'

'It is a disgraceful way to treat people trying to engage with management on the welfare and pay and conditions of members, who are working hard, day in and day out in rural Ireland.'

Mr Redmond said the four sergeants were elected representatives for the AGSI and were doing what they had been mandated to.

'These are four very honourable, senior members of the Garda organisation,' he said.

'They have nearly 130 years' service between them. And then this is what they are threatened with. It is outrageous.'

Mr Redmond said the AGSI was offering the officers legal assistance.

He added: 'It is not AGSI's policy to support a motion of no confidence in the Garda Commissioner. However, we respect their right to protest. There is nothing to investigate as far as we are concerned.'

Mr Callinan has also sought a report into an incident involving Enda Kenny and an off-duty Garda in Co. Meath. The Taoiseach was confronted by the member of the force while canvassing in Ratoath on Monday.

The commissioner confirmed: 'I've already sought a report.'

Speaking of the walk-out, he added: 'These are emotive times, particularly at the association conferences, but showing disrespect to the minister of the day and commissioner of the day is not on as far as I'm concerned.'

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'Disgraceful way to treat them'

'We respect their right to protest'



THE VIEW OF ONE SERGEANT

'I BOUGHT my home in 1989. I am familiar with hard times. Ten years ago, rather than move at a time the Government were telling me things were OK, I put an extension on my home.

'I went to the bank, and the first thing they asked me when I asked for a mortgage was, was I sure that was all I needed?

'They wanted to give me more. I was prudent and careful. I made sure I could pay within what I was earning ten years ago, allowing for a four per cent rise in interest rates.

'Now I have difficulty ensuring my utility bills are paid because

I have taken a 20 per cent cut to my gross take-home pay. I pay my mortgage, I have a child to put through college, I have a grandchild living at home with me, and a son in secondary school. I drive one car.

'My wife works, and her money puts food on the table. There is no extra cash, no fancy holidays, no trips.

'If I get another pay cut, in all likelihood I will be out of my home. I was not cavalier, I did not over-extend, I did everything within my means and I simply can't afford a pay cut.

'Simple as.'



Protest: At Leinster House



WALKOUT COPS BACK CALLINAN

By CATHAL McMAHON, Crime Reporter THE four gardai who walked out on Garda Commissioner Martin Callinan have escaped punishment after apologising and retracting their comments.

The sergeants caused a stir when they left the room as Commissioner Callinan and Justice Minister Alan Shatter rose to speak at the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors (AGSI) conference in Sligo.

Ted Hughes, Joseph Hanly, Pat Baldwin and John Foley said they were mandated by their members to make the move. They went on to say they had no confidence in Commissioner Callinan and his office.

But after six hours of talks at Templemore garda training college, Co Tipperary, yesterday the four withdrew their comments.

A garda statement confirmed that the matter had been resolved. It added: "The four representatives of Kilkenny Carlow branch of the AGSI indicated that they meant to cause no offence to the Commissioner.

"They personally have full confidence in the Commissioner of An Garda Síochána. The Commissioner enjoys the full confidence of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors."

The spokesman insisted that the four members "regret" that this whole matter has



▲ **SPEECH** Callinan

▲ **MINISTER** Shatter

been played out publicly. He added: "All parties consider the matter now resolved and look forward to continuing to serve the community."

Commissioner Callinan had earlier indicated that he was willing to let the four officers away without discipline so long as they apologised.

He said: "I have made my comments very clear in that respect and this is a time for cool heads and it is a time for appropriate reflection on what happened."

Earlier in the Dail Mattie McGrath TD said that what was happening with the four sergeants was totally unacceptable.

Mr McGrath said it was like living in a military junta to have four gardai summoned to Templemore for disciplining.



[illegible]



Late-night talks: The four sergeants being driven away after meeting

