

Ireland

INFORMATION FACT FILE

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The IRA's Armed Struggle

'Believing that the British government has no right in Ireland, never had any right in Ireland, and never can have any right in Ireland, the presence, in any one generation of Irishmen, of even a respectable minority ready to die to affirm that truth, makes that government forever a usurpation and a crime against progress.'

— James Connolly

The right of the Irish people to self-determination has been denied by imperialist British forces for over 800 years. The people of Ireland have never relinquished that right and have, throughout the troubled history of the island, been forced to take up arms to defend that right and to force the British to withdraw its armed forces and administration.

Today's IRA, Oglagh na hEireann (Volunteer of Ireland), are the latest in a long tradition of Irish revolutionary armies which have taken on the might of the British empire. The current phase of the Irish liberation struggle is the longest and the last. IRA spokespersons have said that armed resistance to imperialist rule will continue until Irish people are once again allowed to determine their future, until the British military apparatus and imperialist administrative machine is withdrawn from Ireland, and until all the prisoners of war are at home with their families again.

The path to peace in Ireland has and is being blocked by the British government. The IRA has always been willing, and has always shown itself willing, to hold talks without preconditions with anybody who has a genuine desire for peace in Ireland. Of

late this offer has not been taken up, though there have been talks between British government representatives, clergy and politicians of various persuasions at different times in the last 21 years.

Direct responsibility for the continuing war in Ireland lies with the British government and their war-machine. People, combatants and non-combatants, will regrettably continue to suffer the consequences of this war while Britain retains its imperialist intentions towards Ireland and the Irish people.

The IRA, in defence of the Irish people, have prosecuted a guerrilla war campaign against the British forces and their administration in Ireland, Britain and further afield. The success of this campaign has to be seen in context. The six occupied counties in north-east Ireland are the most militarised zones in the world, with the full might, finances and technology of the British being employed to prevent IRA Volunteers carrying out military actions against military, administrative and commercial targets. Coupled with this they have enforced repressive laws to coerce the nationalist people in the Six Counties into withdrawing their support from the IRA.

The continuing and increasing support enjoyed by the IRA, not only in nationalist



areas of the Six Counties but abroad as well, is an indication of the strength of conviction of not only the IRA, but the Irish people.

A propaganda campaign has been waged by the British government, through its embassies abroad, through favoured journalists and through state-imposed censorship, in an effort to hide the truth about Ireland and the IRA. To counter some of the blatant misrepresentations of its actions and its policies the IRA has given interviews to numerous newspapers and periodicals.

This information pack, through use of previous interviews and statements issued by the IRA, aims to further redress the balance away from Britain's misinformation campaign. The main activities, policies and aspirations of the IRA are outlined in the following pages.

'We will win and are set firmly to the task of achieving victory'

An edited version of an interview with an Oglai na hEireann GHQ spokesperson, first carried in *An Phoblacht/ Republican News* in June 1990.



Q: What is your assessment of current British strategy in Ireland?

A: We believe their strategy has shifted from the simple sloganising of 'we will defeat the IRA' to one of trying to undermine the will of our people and to demoralise our people. Direct-Ruler Peter Brooke said in November 1989 that the British cannot defeat the IRA. This is a statement of great significance in that no other British direct-ruler has before admitted to this fact.

However, it is important to assess his reasoning for this. His statement, after all, came with the obvious backing of Thatcher and the British war cabinet. If the British, with their massive army and limitless finances, cannot defeat the IRA then what is their strategy? We believe their present policy is one of using the notion of 'stalemate' and 'hopelessness' and 'futility'. What they are saying is 'Look, this war can go on for 20 years and we (the Brits) can stay and accept some casualties and put lots of republicans in jail — nothing will change so what's the point?'

They have shifted their strategy quite clearly from saying 'we are going to beat you' to 'you cannot hope to win'. In conjunction with this they have changed their frontline troops. Their policy of Ulsterisation, while interrupted and blocked on numerous occasions, nonetheless remains central to their policy and tactics.

In short front-line troops from the RUC and UDR, carrying Britain's war with back-up from regular British regiments, means that in England the racist attitude of 'it's only Paddies being killed' hinders the

development of a mass movement for withdrawal. Given the fact that every poll conducted over the last 20 years has recorded a majority of English people in favour of withdrawal, the importance, from a British point of view, of keeping that demand a latent one, cannot be overestimated.

Their strategy extends to the overtly political arena. Since the signing of the Hillsborough Treaty (which didn't gain a single iota for nationalists) the SDLP and the political parties in the 26 Counties have been left by the British with the odious task of supporting British policy in Ireland and copper-fastening partition. This can be seen most clearly in John Hume's contention that the British are now neutral in the conflict and are some kind of honest broker, holding the line while they wait for unionists and nationalists to sort out their 'tribal differences'. Also the various Dublin parties now spend more time debating the small print of extradition etc, than they do trying to fulfill the supposed objective of all Dublin governments since 1921 — the reunification of Ireland.

Q: Recent media speculation seems to have centred on the question of a debate within the Republican Movement on the possibility of a cease-fire. Is there any substance in these reports and can you envisage any set of circumstances in which the IRA would engage in a cease-fire?

A: The IRA are engaged in a military campaign against the British army and government, in response to their holding the

Six Counties as a colony by military means. We are an occupied territory. The British are and always have been the principal protagonists. If the British declare publicly, their intention to withdraw from our country within a specified period of time then and only then would the idea of a cease-fire be contemplated.

The IRA have always made it clear that they are willing to talk to the British at any time they show a genuine desire to bring about peace and democracy in Ireland. We demand the basic right of every nation to national self-determination. The denial of that right by armed might will always legitimise and give rise to armed struggle in pursuit of that right.

To answer your question bluntly, there is no truth whatsoever in media speculation about cease-fires being debated within the IRA or between the IRA and any other organisation.

On the question of debate amongst republicans, yes, there is debate on a continuous basis but the debate centres on the best tactics to prosecute the struggle and see it through to victory. We welcome support from our comrades in Sinn Féin and from any anti-imperialist group or individual. We do not and would not demand that those who support the right to engage in armed struggle must support every IRA action.

It is in the interests of the whole Movement and community that IRA operations function solely to undermine the will of the British to remain in Ireland. Quite simply, the deaths of innocent civilians are unacceptable; they are tragic in themselves and do not advance our cause or bring closer the day of victory. The IRA remains determined to do all in its power to avoid such deaths.

When the IRA have made mistakes we have admitted and genuinely regretted such mistakes and the resultant suffering. While not trying to diminish such mistakes, or our responsibility for them, it is nonetheless, worth pointing out that we have yet to hear a single apology or expression of remorse from the British over Bloody Sunday, shoot-to-kill, plastic bullet murders, torture in Castlereagh or any of their long litany of violent outrages.

Q: The British establishment and media have suggested that the IRA's European and English campaigns are evidence of their 'success' in containing the IRA and curtailing its ability to operate in the Six Counties, and that the campaign signals a shift to 'soft targets'. How do you respond to that?

A: The British would, of course, dearly love to limit the scope of the IRA to a certain



● In October 1984 the IRA narrowly missed wiping out the British government

area and specific targets. It would be a classic counter-insurgency tactic which, if the IRA were silly enough to fall for, would allow the British to concentrate all their resources on a very few areas within the Six Counties.

If truth be told the evidence points towards the fact that the crown forces themselves have been very much curtailed and contained in the Six Counties. They are the most heavily armed force in Western Europe. Their military machine includes the British army, the RUC and RUC Reserve and the UDR full and part-time regiments along with their considerable undercover forces. Take a walk round Derry or Belfast; they are continually reinforcing their fortified barracks, building underground bunkers, adding extra armoured plating to their vehicles, putting up extra mesh, building new and bigger blast walls and blocking off roads around their bases.

When they come out of their fortresses it is to swamp areas with massive patrols and armoured vehicles. The RUC sit tight in their jeeps and armoured cars and seldom venture out. They are afraid to stop at traffic lights or junctions. In rural areas like South Armagh and large parts of Fermanagh and Tyrone they have been unable to travel by road for many years even after building their Orwellian spy-posts along the border.

Since the shooting down of helicopters they now come in waves of five and six at a time, with gunships now a feature of such patrols. At a time when the rest of Europe is boasting of demilitarisation of borders the British are increasing the militarisation of partition in their last shameful outpost. So it looks very much like the British themselves are not behaving very confidently about curtailing the IRA.

Of late they have again taken to the policy of the early 1970s, taking all possible steps to cover up casualties. They have blatantly lied despite eyewitness evidence of damage to vehicles and injuries or deaths of their personnel.

The point of these denials and lies, using a servile media to push their line without question, is to convince us and our people

that we are getting nowhere. More importantly they show that the British are well aware that such casualties are devastating to their overall military morale and weaken the political will to maintain such a costly war. So they cover up the cost.

The answer to the part of your question on Europe and England is that it is necessary, especially in a guerilla campaign, to attack the enemy on ground which you choose. To surprise the enemy, give them no rest, continually pressurise them and of course to hit them where it hurts, preferably at the central nervous system. A pertinent example of this is the attack on the Carlton Club in London on June 25th — the rest and recreation centre of the high and mighty, the hub of the higher echelons of the ruling establishment, a place outside Downing Street where the policy makers meet.

The IRA expanded operations to continental Europe and England for a number of reasons. The general one is to hit the enemy on as many fronts as possible and to stretch their resources and nerves. Another is that England is the 'belly of the beast' and that is where it hurts most.

The power-brokers in Westminster are not moved except by political pressure from their base or by direct pressure on themselves.

We stated after the Brighton bomb in 1984 when Thatcher narrowly escaped death:

"Today we were unlucky, but remember we only have to be lucky once, you will have to be lucky always."

The Carlton Club blast and the attack on the home of Lord McAlpine emphasise just how lucky they must always be.

On the wider aspects of our campaign in Europe and Britain while they occupy any part of our country, they and their soldiers, the instruments of oppression, cannot be allowed to relax or rest. British soldiers come to our country for short tours of duty. They kick down our doors, wreck our homes, imprison our people, terrorise our communities and shoot dead men, women and children with lead and plastic bullets. They then think they can go back to Germany or England or wherever and relax while another regiment takes over their role. They can't. Nor can their political masters.

Q: Evidence has mounted of the operation by the British of officially sanctioned death-squads. How do you view this and what if anything is the IRA response to such a campaign?

A: Death-squads have always been a feature of counter-insurgency warfare. Even when these death-squads have not been officially sanctioned the government, through its secret services, has always had some control or influence over their activities.

I don't feel I need to reiterate the evidence for the existence of death-squads. Suffice to say that the British, either through passing information to loyalists or actively participating in the activities of the death-squads, are involved in a murder

campaign with two aims — to eliminate political opponents, or others they view as a threat and to terrorise the wider nationalist community as can be seen from the 800-plus nationalists who have died at the hands of death-squads since 1969.

The IRA response to this campaign is to remove, whenever possible, those directly involved in instigating or perpetrating these killings and to be ever cognisant of the fact that a primary British concern is to portray the conflict here as a sectarian war. We have no intention of being drawn into futile sectarian conflict.

Q: Even though you say that the IRA is not at war with the Protestant community, many in that community would conclude just the opposite. What assurances can you offer to the Protestant people and what role do you see them as playing in a new Ireland?

A: Firstly, it is a nonsense to accuse the IRA of being at war with the Protestant people. We stand by the Proclamation of 1916 and the principles of Wolfe Tone in that we are fighting for freedom and democracy for all the people of Ireland, that is Protestant, Catholic, people of all religions and no religion. We are aware of our history and of the Protestant roots of Tone and many United Irishmen, and we number Protestants among our ranks throughout the Movement.

We stand squarely against oppression no matter who it affects. Contrary to British propaganda, we are involved in a war of national liberation and not a religious war. We are totally disinterested in the religion, colour or creed of our enemy. If they are instruments of oppression then we must face them in struggle.

I sincerely reiterate our previous calls to unionists and loyalists to abandon the philosophy of colonialism. What marginal privilege there is for working-class loyalists is gained at the expense of working-class nationalists. They must realise that Britain, when it suits, will drop them like a hot potato. The Six Counties is the rubbish tip of British rule. In economic crisis it is the first to suffer and the last to recover, if at



● A British border spy-post



all. The loyalist/unionist population has no real power unless they join with the rest of the Irish people. In that position of unity we, the people of this island, will shape our own destiny and democracy, free from outside influence.

Q: Twenty one years into the struggle do the IRA still retain the morale and the personnel to prosecute the war?

A: Not only do we retain the morale and personnel, but the commitment and dedication of our men and women activists has deepened. The Volunteer of today is much more politically aware than ever before. Also our older Volunteers, now in their 30s and early 40s, have 20 years of experience behind them. The stamina and dedication of activists never ceases to amaze me. Many have suffered long terms of imprisonment and often torture, relationships have suffered and broken up, most live on or near the poverty line, loss of relatives and friends at the hands of the British and the loyalists has been common, yet they are solid in their work towards victory.

Recruitment of new Volunteers has never been a problem. It is in fact the work of recruitment officers to sift through the



numbers who wish to join the IRA. Many are turned down for various reasons. We have in fact no need to go seeking recruits, people from all walks of life come to our organisation.

I welcome this opportunity to place on record the very high esteem in which all our Volunteers and their families are held. They could so easily have chosen other paths which would have led to 'normal' lives but their selflessness and dedication to ensuring future peace and democracy has led them to lives of much hardship. They are the salt of the earth.

Volunteers come from the community and are part of the community; our suffering is no different than the suffering of the entire nationalist community and it is for us a very proud boast to say that we belong to the nationalist people, the risen people.

Q: What are the current intentions of the IRA and do you retain the weaponry and support to see through such a programme?

A: This of course is always the question which cannot be fully answered. Others besides our supporters will read this interview, so I know republicans will understand that we cannot go into specific tactics or intentions for the future. Actions speak louder than words and we stand upon our actions.

However, we can say that we intend to sap the British will to remain in our country and we have the ability to do so. We will fight the British on as many fronts as is logistically possible at any time. What is very basic to all anti-colonial wars is that this is our country so we are not leaving. The British have everything to lose through continuing the war, we have everything to gain.

The cost of this war on the British at every level should not be underestimated.

Our tactics will ensure there is no respite. Besides the high financial cost of maintaining their presence and guarding a vast array of potential targets, this war does and will continue to play havoc with their nerves and their lifestyles. It is in their power to end it, should they fail to do so, they must bear the consequences.

The support of our people is obvious in that we could not survive or increase our operations without it. With our support, our weaponry and the calibre of our Volunteers and activists we will win and are set firmly to the task of achieving victory!

Our victory will be a 32-County Republic which "guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens". Our victory will be the removal of the British presence from our country and in doing so we set the solid foundation for true democracy and a lasting peace in our country, denied for so many centuries by British occupation.



● The Tory's exclusive Carlton Club after 1990 IRA bomb attack

IRA warns collaborators

To clarify the position as to who they regarded as legitimate targets in the administration, maintenance and building of British military installations, the IRA issued the following statement:

"We are not prepared to allow these oppressive institutions to function unchallenged. They are part of the war-machine and those who assist in any way will be treated as part of that war-machine and therefore must expect to suffer the consequences."

In their statement the IRA warned:

"Building contractors who are engaged in either construction or repair; those who are engaged in maintaining British army, UDR and RUC barracks and all military installations; those who are responsible for installing and maintaining machines such as computers for gathering information and decoding machines; those in the civil service; fuel contractors; caterers and food contractors; transport companies; petrol companies; cleaning contractors; and anyone else who takes on Ministry of Defence and/or NIO contracts in these installations."

They said:

"There will be no further warnings. Anyone withdrawing their services from these places should do so publicly. Trade unions should recognise the dangers that



● Lisburn Road RUC Barracks demolished by an IRA bomb

their members face by being employed in military installations and should advise their members to seek alternative sites of employment.

"Those who continue to refuse to take heed of this warning are in effect collaborating with our enemies and shall be treated as our enemies."

Sectarian attacks

It is important to understand the extent to which the British control and influence pro-British, loyalist terror gangs.

Killings by pro-British death squads will always be a feature of this conflict because they suit British attempts to portray the war as inter-communal conflict. They are also an

attempt to demoralise the nationalist community.

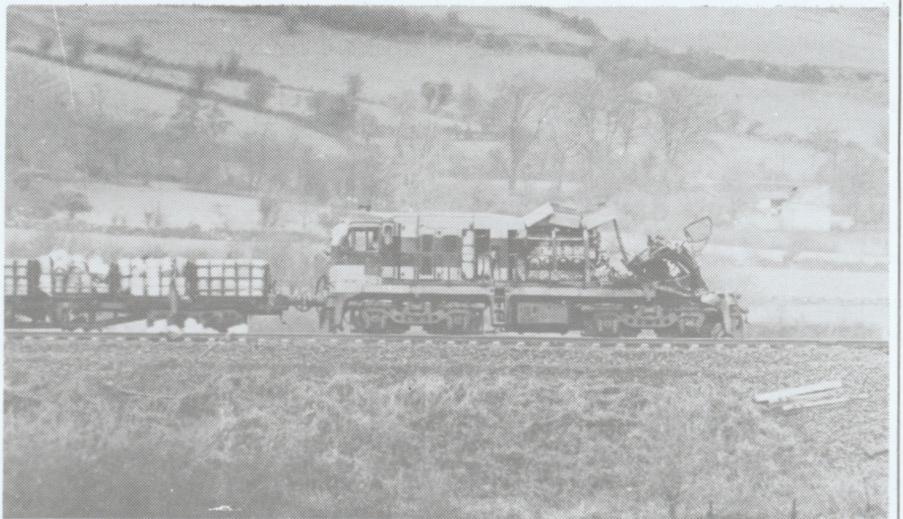
Whilst not allowing ourselves to be drawn into a sectarian war, which is against everything we stand for, we in Oglagh na hEireann reserve the right to take appropriate action against those who murder or organise the murder of nationalists. Our ability to target these people has been demonstrated and we will continue to do so as circumstances dictate.

Forcing them onto the tracks

The IRA has stated that it has no intention of permanently closing the cross-border rail link but is using attacks to draw out British forces from their fixed positions in South Armagh.

For the past 19 years the IRA has been waging an unequal armed struggle against the same British crown forces. On occasions it has disrupted rail communications between Derry and Coleraine, Ballymena and Antrim, Bangor and Belfast, Belfast and Portadown and, of course, the cross-border rail link. There has always been a military objective behind these attacks.

In order to bring British troops out of their fixed, secure positions the IRA decided to disrupt the cross-border rail link on the principle that the British government, rather than have its authority and writ undermined, would order the securing of the line. This would involve the movement of large numbers of troops and the deployment of bomb-disposal experts on clearing operations which would leave them vulnerable to IRA attack.



In an interview with AP/RN in August 1989 the IRA said:

"The disruption of the railway is aimed at forcing the British army out of its spy-posts in South Armagh. In other areas where the tactic has been used, it is our aim to tie down large numbers of troops and bomb-disposal experts who would otherwise be deployed in

nationalist areas.

"Our attacks on the railway have stretched British forces and have undermined the authority of the administration which can't even keep the trains running. More importantly, they have opened up more possibilities for attacks on those troops engaged in clearing the tracks, and will continue to do so."

Ingenuity and resourcefulness

In reply to a question in AP/RN in August 1989 asking could the IRA keep pace with the military surveillance, technology and weaponry of the British forces, the IRA stated that:

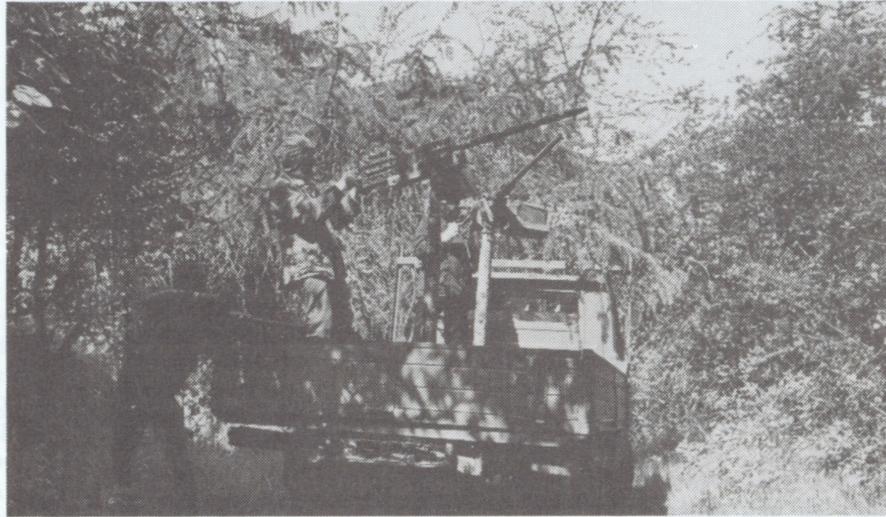
"The British government will continue to pour in vast and unlimited resources and the best technological expertise in an effort to combat and frustrate the activities of Oglaiha na Eireann.

"The extent of their military machine is colossal and extends well beyond the

thousands of heavily-armed troops, tanks and armoured cars clearly visible on the streets of nationalist areas. Behind this visible presence there is also a frightening level of covert surveillance.

"As the struggle has shown our Volunteers have been able to penetrate every security measure employed by our militarily superior enemy.

"Our ability to continue doing so for as long as is necessary has been admitted by British military chiefs who are all too aware of the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the enemy they face in the IRA."



Informers given amnesty

In August 1990 the IRA, after approaches from a group of concerned people, decided to declare another amnesty of limited duration for those who were involved in giving information to the various branches of the British crown forces, allowing them to come forward without harm coming to them.

On people giving information to the crown forces they said:

"Such information has led to the death or

imprisonment of IRA Volunteers and civilians in the past. While this is abhorrent and unjustifiable we also understand that those who give information to the British forces are often victims themselves, people whose vulnerability is used most cynically by the crown forces to trap them into informing on their neighbours and fellow nationalists.

"Remember, history shows that you will inevitably be caught, with most regrettable but necessary consequences.

"Anyone caught touting will be executed."

On prison warders

The most recent statement by the IRA on prison warders read:

"Those who participate in the physical and mental torture of our imprisoned comrades cannot expect to escape the consequences of their action."



Tackling the hoods

In the past the IRA has tackled the anti-community activities of youths in nationalist areas. These activities range from so-called 'joyriding' to thefts and burglaries, physical and sexual attacks, the peddling of drugs in an organised fashion, and the 'fencing' of stolen property.

These activities have inflicted enormous suffering and caused fear and hardship, particularly to the most vulnerable sections of the community. In dealing with the problem the IRA stated:

"Our primary objective is the pursuit of armed struggle and we regard our involvement in dealing with the anti-community problem essentially to be a diversion — though unfortunately a necessary one — from that.

"What we are saying now is that, until such time as local communities can handle the problem themselves, we have an obligation to them to be as consistent as possible.

"We recognise that punishments do not provide a solution in themselves. It is not a path that we wish to go down, and whenever possible we employ less publicised non-physical forms of deterrent or restraint. The reality is that we do not have — and the community does not have — the resources to provide comprehensive and long-term solutions."

LOW-LEVEL INFORMERS

Recent years have shown that the RUC has targeted young people involved in anti-community behaviour to become low-level informers. In a statement the IRA pointed out that:

"Youths getting involved in anti-community activities should realise that not only are they assisting the Brits indirectly by oppressing their own communities, but that they leave themselves vulnerable to direct recruitment by the RUC as informers.

"We have treated such low-level touts relatively leniently in the past, but there is every possibility that some may face execution in the future. We advise anyone currently involved in passing on information to come forward to us voluntarily."

Paying tribute to our dead

The IRA agrees that people should have the right to bury their dead in peace but following numerous vicious attacks on nationalist-/republican funerals in the last few years they warned the crown forces:

"If you want to bury your dead in peace then keep a dignified distance from the funerals of nationalists and republicans."

In a lengthy statement issued on Thursday, April 16th, 1987, the IRA said it had taken a decision not to fire shots over the coffins of Volunteers in the precincts of churches in future but that it reserved the absolute right and duty to honour Volunteers "in full soldierly fashion".

The decision, the statement added, had been taken after careful examination of the situation "and having analysed the various possible RUC and British army responses. The IRA will always pay full tribute to its Volunteers who made the supreme sacrifice and will not be deflected by mischievous and

dishonest criticisms from those whose only concern is to prop-up British rule in Ireland".

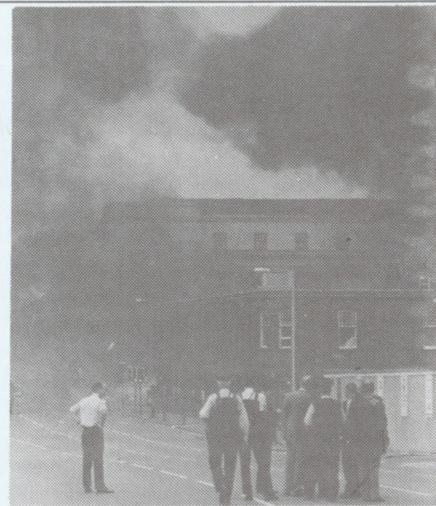
Those who condemned republican funerals as "propaganda coups" the statement added, were "liars" as there had

been no attempt made by the IRA to make political capital from the deaths of Volunteers. It continued:

"On numerous occasions we have paid our final tribute in quiet graveyards or at deserted republican monuments, free from the glare of publicity. The violence and the media hype are a direct result of the British government's decision to interfere with our



●IRA Volunteers honouring Volunteer Kevin McCracken in 1988



Destroying normalisation

Political and economic interests in the North, in line with General Frank Kitson's counter-insurgency strategy of normalisation, have, at the behest of and in collaboration with the British government, tried to promote a facade of normality in the Six Counties and abroad.

In a campaign which costs the British government millions of pounds each year the IRA have placed, and have given warnings, of car bombs near

commercial, administrative and business premises. The target of this campaign is, and has been, the demolition of the normalisation policy and to hurt the British Exchequer economically.

In a message after one such attack the IRA said:

"Our message to those political and economic interests is that they will not be allowed to ignore the reality of daily crown forces repression and home-wrecking throughout nationalist areas, a reality far removed from the glitter and tinsel image they promote."

No safe haven

The ability of the IRA to strike at British targets abroad has demonstrated a resourcefulness and an expertise that few commentators have been willing to admit the IRA capable of.

In an interview with AP/RN (February 23rd, 1980) an IRA spokesperson outlined the strategy behind the attacks on the Continent.

"At present about half the British army units in the North are on 18-month tours, billeted in places like Aldergrove and Palace Barracks. The other half — those in the real

frontline — are on four-month tours. Between tours all of them are either stationed in Britain or overseas and here they think they can rest from the dirty work they've been doing, and the 'hard time' they've had in Ireland. Being stationed on the Rhine is a plum job for them.

"Well, we intend to harass them the way they've been harassing and killing nationalist people. They think they can forget about Ireland until their next tour but we intend to keep Ireland on their minds — so that it haunts them and they do something about not wanting to go back.

"Overseas attacks also have a prestige value and internationalise the war in Ireland. The British government has been successful in suppressing news about the struggle in the North. With its huge propaganda machine administered by ambassadors and officials, one example being Peter Jay when he was in America, it can spread a rosy picture which does much to undermine the

people's sacrifices and completely ignores the people's suffering.

"But we kept Ireland in the world headlines, our struggle is kept in the news, and sooner or later an expression of discontentment, probably from the English people rather than from the army, will snowball and the British government's ability and will to stay, which we are sapping, will completely snap."



IRA no threat to 26-County state

All IRA activities are geared towards the successful completion of the struggle for independence which was thwarted by Britain foisting partition on the Irish people and setting up a sectarian state in the Six Counties.

All IRA Volunteers are under strict instructions, under General Army Order No 8, not to come into conflict with the armed forces of the 26 Counties. They are not the enemy. Many republicans have gone to Portlaoise and other prisons in circumstances where their freedom could have been assured had they adopted the same aggressive attitude to the gardai that they instinctively have towards the British army and RUC. Of course, there have been exceptions and some violent confrontations which have resulted in fatalities. But these incidents are seen as exceptions by most fair-minded people.

General Army Order No 8 was reaffirmed by the IRA in Convention no later than September 1986.

By suppressing republicans and recognising British rule in the Six Counties Dublin governments have perpetuated the conflict rather than helped resolve it.

The IRA offers no threat to the 26 Counties other than the change which would occur anyway, whosoever brought it about, between the transition from a 26-County state to a 32-County state.

"We desire peace desperately but Britain uses the gun to refuse us that basic justice. Peace could be achieved so much more quickly and with the minimum loss of life if the cause of the violence — British interference — was confronted domestically, diplomatically and internationally with the demand for a British withdrawal from Ireland."

Evacuate your families British forces told

Warning British forces in November 1985 to evacuate their families from the Six Counties the IRA said:

"No longer can we tolerate the ridiculous situation where British soldiers can come into nationalist areas, raid and systematically wreck homes, harass people, make arrests and then retire to the comfort of their families."



STAY CLEAR

In August 1990 thousands of posters signed by Ogligh na hEireann, were put up in nationalist areas calling on people to stay clear of the crown forces.

The posters carry a photograph of a British army foot-patrol and the outline of an IRA Volunteer at a detonator and they read "Stay Clear — Isolate the Enemy — Keep Them in Fear".

After displaying the posters Ogligh na hEireann issued the following statement:

"The IRA's first consideration when planning any military operation against British crown forces is the safety of the population in the immediate area. In the recent past our Volunteers have had to withdraw from ambush positions, cancel operations or remain in position for prolonged periods because of the proximity of civilians to targeted crown forces personnel, vehicles and installations. Naturally this greatly increases the chances of our Volunteers being captured or killed and material or weapons being discovered."

"We realise that as the present war situation has lasted for 20 years now the presence of crown forces in our areas has become part of the so-called 'normal routine'. This has led to a situation where many people simply ignore their presence unless they are harassed or inconvenienced. It must also be recognised that the crown forces are specifically trained on how best to use the civilian population for cover and tend to feel relatively safe when civilians are about."

"The IRA therefore appeals to people to be aware of this situation and to be aware of the presence of crown forces. We would ask you not to linger near any of their installations, keep clear of their vehicles and, if possible, go in doors when they are in your area."

"Remember, there is a war in progress and you can contribute significantly to its successful conclusion by simply observing these common sense precautions. Stay clear — keep them in fear!"

