

TROOPS OUT



OF IRELAND

Vol. 13 No. 9
July 1990

75P

WAR

An ex soldier tells it like it is. Page 10

PEACE

Sinn Fein tries to build it. Page 13

NEGOTIATIONS

"We would like to see the British Government and the IRA adopt the precise line taken by us. There is nothing better than opponents sitting down to resolve their problems in a peaceful manner."

Nelson Mandela 2nd July 1990

TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT

The Troops Out Movement is a movement in England, Scotland and Wales made up of people who believe that the cause of the 'troubles' in the north of Ireland is the continuing British presence there, both military and political. We believe that British troops are in Ireland not as a peace keeping force, but in order to maintain British rule, and that their presence is the most serious obstacle to any progress towards peace. Ever since 1969 the troops have been occupying a part of Ireland, coercing and oppressing the nationalist people, maintaining the division of Ireland and ensuring that its people cannot unite to determine their own future.

We have been working as an organisation for immediate British withdrawal since the early 1970s. We have a number of branches in England, Scotland and Wales. These branches, working locally in whatever way circumstances allow are the backbone of the TOM. Membership or affiliation is open to any individual or group our demands:

- TROOPS OUT NOW
- SELF - DETERMINATION FOR THE IRISH PEOPLE AS A WHOLE

JOINING TROOPS OUT

If you would like to join the Troops Out Movement in campaigning for a British withdrawal from Ireland you can do so in a number of ways.

- ★ Join a local branch and get involved in activities in your area.
- ★ Become a national member of Troops Out and we will keep you posted of developments, send you our discussion bulletins and inform you about national events. You will also automatically get a sub to 'Troops Out'.
- ★ If there is no local branch near you we can help you form one. We can provide videos, speakers, leaflets and advice about booking rooms etc.

National membership is £16, unwaged £12 (includes paper sub) or £2 (no paper).

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Why worry where your next copy of Troops Out is coming from when you can have it delivered to your door. A Troops Out subscription will ensure that every month you receive the news and analysis of Britain's war in Ireland.

If you know anyone who is having difficulty getting a copy of 'Troops Out' why not suggest they take a subscription as well.

The rate for 10 issues is £10. If you would like to further support the struggle against misinformation on Ireland you can take out a 'supporters subscription' at a rate of £15 £20 or ?

TROOPS OUT
OF IRELAND

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Troops Out is now available on tape for people with sight disabilities. For further details write to P.O. Box 817, Camp Hill, Birmingham B11 4AF. or telephone: 021 773 8683/021 551 3166

Troops Out Paper

Troops Out is produced by a collective drawn from branches of the Troops Out Movement in London

Readers' views, articles and letters are always welcome (although we can't guarantee to publish everything that comes in).

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TROOPS OUT

OF IRELAND



Too little, too late, too often

David Waddington has finally publicly admitted that the Maguires convictions were 'unsafe and unsatisfactory' and can't be allowed to stand.

'Forensic evidence' tested by an 18 year old trainee has at last been accepted as unsafe. But Lord Donaldson, who heard their appeal was willing to accept this evidence and - he is now Master of the Rolls.

The Labour Party's answer was to demand an inquiry into the Birmingham Six and state that this vindicated their position on the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the Act which has allowed for the disappearance of countless Irish people into police cells and their re-appearance in courts for media show trials.

The Labour Party should be demanding the resignation of Donaldson, the release of the Birmingham Six and a full public inquiry into collusion between the police, the judiciary and the state. It should also address the question of the so called 'public interest' used to protect the judicial and political hierarchy from the findings of such inquiries.

The Labour Party's position on the PTA, as on all their policies on Ireland is also contradictory. Despite a policy to repeal the Act they've continually failed to vote against it, never mind campaign against it while in opposition.

Similarly, they state that they agree with a United Ireland... not by the will of the people of the whole of Ireland but only with the consent of the people in Northern Ireland - a gerrymandered state set up by Britain in its own interests to ensure the perpetual rule of the unionists. And, as with the Conservatives, Labour refuses to talk to the elected representatives of working class nationalists - Sinn Fein.

It is our job to ensure that doublespeak from the leadership of the Labour Party is exposed and that the campaign for British Withdrawal from Ireland on the basis of self-determination has the kind of mass support which governments know will not just disappear.

West London video

The west London branch of the Troops Out Movement has continued its series of public meetings with a showing of the recently produced video on censorship 'The Irish Question'.

Meeting at the local Irish centre, Aras Na Gael, the branch aims to provide a forum for anyone in the area to find out what is happening in the north of Ireland, and to offer a focus on campaigning for a British withdrawal.

'The Irish Question' begins with a brief presentation on the history of Britain's relationship to Ireland, before moving on to the specific question of censorship. The video unearths a store of material which will not now be shown to the general public, and also refers, perhaps more significantly, to those programmes which will never be made because of the atmosphere of caution in which broadcasters have been forced to operate.

The video draws two disturbing conclusions from the Broadcasting Ban - one, that the war will continue longer if accurate information about it is generally unavailable; two, that the quality of civil liberties in this country will be steadily eroded.

Local MP, Ken Livingstone features in the video saying, among other things, 'I suppose I am a typical Englishman. I used to know nothing about Ireland.' Perhaps the presence of West London TOM in the area will help to prevent another generation of 'typical Englishmen' growing up in the kind of ignorance that results in the delusion that the Irish people are unfit to run their own country.

Union News

The college lecturers union NATFHE came close to adopting a pro-withdrawal position at its annual conference last month.

The West Midlands Region proposed a motion that noted the discrimination and repression endemic in 'Northern Ireland' and urged immediate withdrawal of British troops as well as union affiliation to the Time to Go! campaign.

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Maguire convictions: 'unsafe' as a house of cards

Once the Guildford Four convictions were quashed last October, it was obvious that the towel would eventually have to be thrown in on the Maguire Seven. But behind the DPP's belated admission of defeat at the May Inquiry hearing lies yet another damage limitation exercise.

Annie Maguire, her sons Patrick and Vincent, her brother Sean Smythe, her husband Patrick, his brother-in-law Guiseppe Conlon (who died in prison in 1980) and family friend Patrick O'Neill were convicted of handling explosives in 1976.

They were named in the Guildford 'confessions' of Paul Hill and Gerry Conlon - now discredited as false. Guiseppe had travelled to London from Belfast to visit his son and the entire household he was staying with was picked up.

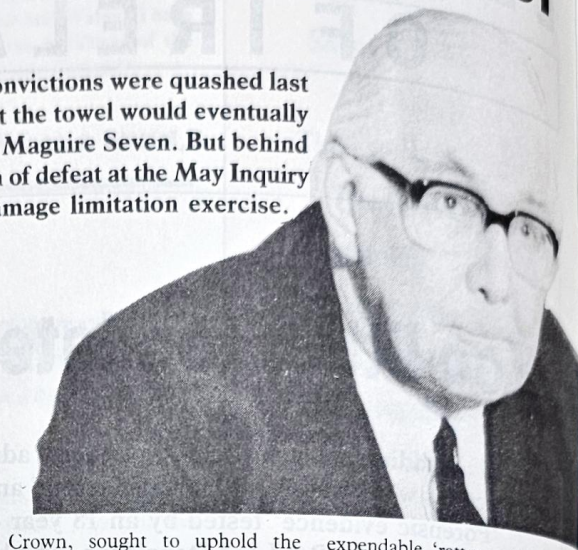
The sole evidence against the seven consisted of scientific tests on swabs from their hands purportedly revealing nitroglycerine.

The May Inquiry was established in the wake of the Guildford fiasco. Its purpose, in the long-running tradition of such inquiries into British crimes in Ireland, was undoubtedly to shore up some credit for the criminal justice system and the terror policies used against the Irish people over the past two decades. It will be long and drawn out over two years and is relatively toothless - with no power to subpoena witnesses or cross-examine judges. But its role is contradictory. Public confidence has been so shaken that sacrificial lambs are needed.

Battle

We may be witnessing the beginnings of an unseemly four-cornered battle between different wings of the establishment about who is to take the rap. Of the police, the DPP, prosecution counsel and the government's scientific establishment, so far it is the scientists who are being scapegoated. The judiciary, of course, are being kept well out of the way.

Not that the government scientists aren't heavily tainted in the whole saga. At the outset of the inquiry they, supported by the



Crown, sought to uphold the original case in its entirety. As it emerged, this involved fallacies that Counsel for the inquiry has suggested involved deliberate collusion to mislead the court.

The prosecution had claimed the forensic Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC) test on the Seven was 'specific and particular' to Nitroglycerine; that only one test had been conducted but that this was wholly sufficient. This one test was conducted by a 17-year old trainee scientist who refused to testify to the May inquiry. Scorn had been poured on the defence case that either explosives traces were planted or the test couldn't exclude the possibility of another substance than nitroglycerine being present, and that a confirmatory test was required.

During the inquiry the original scientific notebooks were produced. It emerged firstly that the TLC test may also produce a 'positive' result for another substance, PETN; then that the scientists would have been aware of this; that confirmatory tests were in fact conducted and that these showed negative results. None of this had been revealed at the trial.

The prosecution counsel and the police are claiming to know nothing about all this. Trial judge (now Court of Appeal head) John Donaldson has refused to testify - arguing this would undermine confidence in the judiciary. It appears that scientists are more

expendable 'rotten apples' than any of these pillars of the establishment. But there is a price to be paid.

Bias

Like the Guildford Four and other cases, this affair has exposed the enormous bias towards the Crown that exists in trials of Irish people on 'terrorism' charges. Convictions can be obtained with ease so long as prosecution evidence is regarded as sacrosanct, information is withheld from the defence, media prejudice is pervasive and judges and prosecutors directly collude in this process. Now not only convictions based solely on confessions, but also those reliant on forensic evidence are clearly open to doubt.

The DPP has categorised the convictions as 'unsafe', but on the wholly limited grounds that the forensic tests couldn't exclude 'innocent contamination'.

This is a euphemism for the collapse of the prosecution case like a house of cards and is nothing short of scandalous. Such statements can only be aimed at explaining away the whole affair as 'technical' and paying the way for a smear campaign based on an implication of guilt.

Against this, the momentum is stronger than ever for the release of the Birmingham six, the Broadwater Farm Three, Judith Ward and others. Now more than ever the pressure must be stepped up to ensure this happens.

Piers Mostyn

Shoot to kill - the movie

SHOOT TO KILL made by Zeith for Yorkshing TV and broadcast on 3rd and 4th June, was the best example of TV documentary-drama so far, gripping, clear and packed with high production values. As documentary-drama (directed by *First Tuesday's* Peter Kosminsky), it presented a dramatisation of events and persons inaccessible to an interview and footage format. But its dramatic style owed much to a paranoid thriller like *All The President's Men*.

While the first evening focused on the undercover nature of an ambush by the RUC Special Support Unit, the following night concentrated on the position of the Stalker team and their frustration at subsequent RUC stonewalling. While deputy John Thorburn was the sole adviser on this film it is John Stalker who has provided the means for such a scathing film to be even considered.

The Stalker case is open for TV coverage because, as an English police officer, Stalker is a 'respectable' victim of state policy in Ireland. It also presents a fairly manageable story for dramatisation - the ambush, the cover up and the nobbling of the investigation. Could it be that the makers themselves identified with these investigators suffering restriction while trying to uncover what happened under British rule?

Drama

Criticisms of the film have mainly concentrated on the docudrama form itself - what counts as 'documentary'? What can be taken as evidence in a dramatisation? Weren't conversations invented for effect? etc. As drama this film has been

criticised for not probing the motives of principal (RUC) characters, nor giving a full enough picture of the 'jungle' that is the North of Ireland. This is partly defensive, reactions to an unpalatable picture (the Diplock Court scenes - *Guns n' Judges*; the RUC bugging of Stalker, and so on). But it also opens out into the whole issue of the conditions under which Ireland can be covered on TV.

About the docudrama form writer David Edgar has pointed out that while most drama deals in some fact (e.g. World War II as the setting for countless TV fiction), what docudrama can give us is an idea of "how (actual events) occurred: how recognisable human beings rule, fight, judge, meet, negotiate, suppress and overthrow" (1). This however is always a point of view, a vision of society and of life. But by claiming to be documentary the programme makers cover themselves with the TV code of balance - TV documentary is not supposed to present a vision but the 'facts'. In this case this means observing the consensus about Ireland that has been constructed in the British media since 1969.

SAS

In 'Shoot-To-Kill' it involved the actual omission of a crucial fact, namely that the Special Support Unit were specially chosen and then trained by the SAS in Wales (2) and are in keeping with the SAS strategy of eliminating unconvicted Republicans separately rather than in a general sweep such as Internment. Instead the films showed the RUC as sole source of the assassination policy thus observing the consensus that this is an internal sectarian conflict and encouraging the notion that these may have been a few Loyalist 'bad apples' (which did, however, include Chief Constable Hermon) or 'hard pressed peacekeepers' according to taste. This was Watergate without Nixon. By avoiding these connections the programme retained the liberal brief of TV not to directly criticise British policy (and in the process made a few RUC officers seem uniquely sinister).

Leaving aside the question of how many people watched the films to the bitter end, most reviewers found the drama unsatisfactory as it lacked an exploration of motives and circumstances. But programme makers will not make satisfying drama if they cannot explore the situation for fear of falling outside the bipartisan consensus. Technically under the requirements of overall balance the TV companies could broadcast alternative visions of 'British Ireland' such as adaptations of Alistair Renwick's novel 'Last night another soldier' or Danny Morrison's 'West Belfast'. It would do no harm to demand a wider range of good drama.

Mike Belbin

1. 'On Drama-Documentary' The Second Time As Farce David Edgar Lawrance and Wishart
2. The Stalker Affair Frank Docherty Mercier Press.

The motion was opposed by all the conference delegates from Northern Ireland, who put the usual argument that adopting the motion would split the union and that proposers were unaware of the daily realities of union life in the north. Other 'realities' were highlighted after the vote, by Robin Percival, secretary of the Derry branch who explained "Given the in-built Unionist majority, it means that branches like ours are excluded from the delegation to the AGM and so the nationalist vote is never heard there".

The vote was lost by 160 to 129 but supporters of the motion said there would be a determined effort to ensure that a similar motion would be on the conference agenda again next year.

The annual Congress of the GMB, one of Britain's largest unions passed a motion urging the next Labour Government to repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and calling for a full judicial review of the Birmingham Six cases.

Newsworthy

A small report in the Irish Post (16.6.1990) carried the comments of the bereaved mother of Robert Davies, the soldier killed in an IRA ambush on Lichfield railway station.

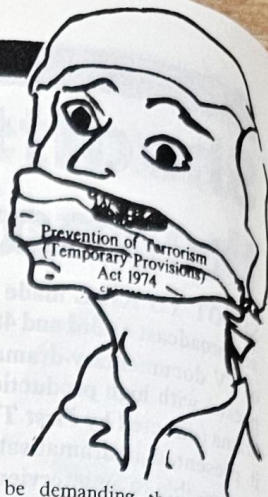
Mrs. Davies had a message she wanted to give to the people of Wales, and to politicians in England. "Don't blame the Irish. It wasn't the Irish who killed my son. It's not right that Irish people and Catholic people should feel guilty. We don't want that. Tell us why we are going through all this pain? If we knew, perhaps we'd understand it better".

Other members of Robert Davies' family echoed the point, "The IRA must be fighting for something", said the dead soldier's aunt, Christine Lewis, adding that "killing people isn't achieving anything. The Government is doing nothing, but we have got to talk to these people. We have got to find a solution. It's a solution we want - not more killings. This has gone on for twenty years. It would be lovely to think that Robert's death prompted the politicians to work something out!"

While many newspaper reports wallowed in the usual mixture of outrage, cliché and sentiment, the families' telling comments were found to be largely unnewsworthy.



Political harassment in Manchester



On Saturday 9th June, Michael Quinn, a Canadian citizen was held for four hours at Manchester's Ringway Airport under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).

Michael Quinn is the sixth guest of the Manchester Martyrs Commemoration Committee to be held under the PTA over the past 3 years. In May 1987, English born, Terry Harkin and Kevin McQuillan had been invited to address the Hunger Strike Commemoration in Birmingham on behalf of the Irish Republican Socialist Party. They are currently appealing to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg against their exclusion from Britain. Four of the North Staffs Miners Wives Group and two officers and four supporters of the Manchester Martyrs Commemoration Committee have also been detained under the PTA at Manchester Airport over the past 10 months.

Michael Quinn (representing

the Saint Peter's Social Justice Committee in Saskatchewan, Canada) had been accompanying Catholic priest Fr. Keith Heiburg, on a fact-finding tour in Northern Ireland, visiting republican and republican socialist organisations and community groups.

While in Manchester Michael Quinn had met representatives of anti-deportation campaigns, and observed the trial of 4 young men, charged with the racist murder of 14-year old Tahir Akhram.

Michael has returned to Ireland, before leaving for Canada later this week, where he and Father Heiburg will be holding a press conference about their experiences. Fr. Heiburg has already pointed out that the surveillance and repression in Northern Ireland is more severe

than Chile and El Salvador, which he has also visited.

Speaking on a Manchester radio station Michael Quinn told of his ordeal "I am certainly shook up by the whole event. I didn't expect to be treated like this, of course as a visitor." Michael will be contacting the Canadian Embassy about the incident.

Continuing their tour Fr. Keith Heiburg and Mike Quinn will be visiting Crumlin Road jail, presently the scene of protests by Republican and Loyalist prisoners for political segregation.

As a result of Michael Quinn's detention, and the continued intimidation by Manchester Special Branch, the Manchester Martyrs Commemoration Committee will

be demanding that the Police Authority order Chief Constable James Anderton to reveal the figures of those held under the PTA, and that the Police Authority launch a public enquiry into intensified Special Branch harassment and use of the PTA.

The immediate effect of this campaign of harassment has been to create an air of indignation in the community. The organising committee of the National Demonstration Against Immigration Laws and deportations (to be held in Manchester in October) has decided to add the issues of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Exclusion Orders to those of immigration laws.

Sectarian bias in car industry

Further evidence of widespread sectarian discrimination against Catholic workers in the Six Counties has been provided with the publication of the latest report from the British government's own Fair Employment Commission, formerly the Fair Employment Agency. The report shows the motor industry to be rife with sectarian bias.

The report examined the car industry in the Six Counties and found that in those companies examined, there was an aggregate workforce which was 81% Protestant.

Despite pious-sounding reaction to the report's findings from representatives of the car industry, about striving to redress the imbalance, the report itself showed that, as far as future trends are concerned, not much is set to change.

Of the nine companies included in the report employing apprentices, the report found that there were 122 Protestant and only 13 Catholic apprentices.

93% Protestant

Individual findings also show that in some of the major companies levels of discrimination reach proportions of 90% and over. The North's biggest company, Charles Hurst Ltd, for example employs a workforce which is 93% Protestant.

Reacting to the findings, Sinn Féin spokesperson on fair employment, Mitchel McLaughlin said: "This report, along with all the other similar reports by both the Fair Employment Commission and its fore-runner, the Fair Employment Agency, is indicative of how ineffective the British

government's anti-discrimination legislation has been. It is clear that they have neither the will nor the inclination to confront discrimination or create the conditions for equality of opportunity. What is needed is

affirmative action measures, with realistic time limits, to produce the required result, that is, a workforce which represents the religious breakdown of the community itself."



November 1979: British soldiers take over Whiterock Industrial Estate in West Belfast. It now houses a fort but once employed mostly Catholic workers

New campaign against censorship

A national day of protest against censorship and government secrecy has been declared by a new campaign of journalists, other media workers and civil liberties groups.

TIME TO KNOW has been launched by the National Union of Journalists with four other media unions and a wide range of voluntary organisations. And the day of protest will be on October 19.. the anniversary of the government's announcement of the Northern Ireland broadcast ban, the most serious single act of state censorship since the last world war.

The campaign's demands are for an end to formal censorship and government secrecy, and for freedom of official information and the public's right to know what is being done in their name.

At a time when the strangle hold on official information in Eastern Europe is crumbling, in Britain things are going in the the opposite direction. The campaign will concentrate on four areas of censorship and secrecy:

First, and foremost until it is lifted, the broadcast ban itself:

Secondly, all censorship on Ireland: throughout the 21 years of the current crisis in Northern Ireland there has been persistent government interference in broadcasting about it, and disinformation and lies in the press;

Thirdly, official secrecy: last year's Official Secrets Act tightened the noose round the disclosure of information on sensitive areas of government activity, making it impossible to report freely on them; and.

Fourthly, judicial censorship: restrictions imposed on free reporting by judges under Contempt of Court legislation and by police seizure of confidential material.

The broadcast ban was announced by the then Home Secretary Douglas Hurd on October 19 1988. On that day last year the NUJ organised a Day of Action in protest; **TIME TO KNOW** has grown from that and has pledged to mark the date every year.

The campaign will also raise censorship in the Republic of

Ireland, where Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act imposes a ban similar to that in Britain. The NUJ is taking legal challenges to both through the courts.

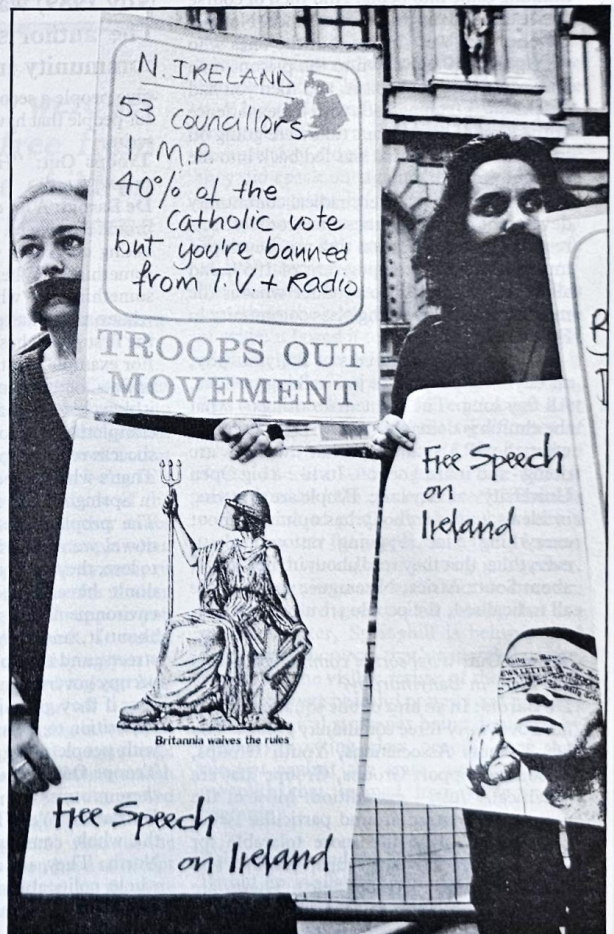
Organisations sponsoring the events of October 19 are the media unions: NUJ, the Association of Cinematograph and Television Technicians (ACTT), the Broadcasting and Entertainment Trades Alliance (BETA), the National Graphical Association (NGA) and Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (SOGAT).

Joining the unions are the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, the Campaign for Freedom of Information, Article 19, Index on Censorship, the National Council for Civil Liberties, the Television All-Industry Group on Censorship, International PEN and Charter 88.

There will be a major demonstration in London and others all round the country; an afternoon on censored films on Ireland at the National Film Theatre; and the Time to Know Show, a star-billing and hard-hitting variety show at the Hackney Empire.

On Saturday October 20 there will be a conference on the legal changes needed to guarantee open government and the public's right to know.

Details of all events will be announced over the summer.



The culture of

Troops Out: Have the events of the last twenty years radicalised the people of Ballymurphy?

De Baroid: Certainly. In the first instance the area itself was a transit camp, people just came in the front door and out the back door. That changed with the pogroms and the emergency and the relief operations that occurred afterwards, when people were forced to come together to organise, to feed, to clothe, to provide sanitation, to provide registers of who was coming in and who was leaving the area, and to organise defence. Initially it was very much an apolitical thing - a gut reaction, people trying to defend themselves. Some young people went off and joined the I.R.A., not particularly because they wanted to take on the British Army, or they were out for a United Ireland, but because they knew that sooner or later the loyalists attacks would come to their area. Then as time went on people began to see through what the state was doing first of all, then what the British were doing and then what Dublin was doing, and then the Church - people got a real jolt in Ballymurphy. And gradually a new thinking came into being. And then of course you had the whole prison experience. Not just the ones who were inside, but the ones who were going up and down to the prisons on a once, or twice weekly basis, and then you had the prisoners coming back with the experience of the kind of discussions that were going on in the jails - and all that was fed back into the community.

You also had the very radical community development programmes, that took off as a result of the organisation that was developed immediately after the pogroms of 1969, and all of that combined to produce what is the most radicalised working class community in Europe.

If you walk the streets of Ballymurphy, all day long people are just talking politics. All day long. The immediate things - what the church is doing, what the SDLP is doing, what the IRA is doing, what the Brits are doing - and it just goes on. Its like a big Open University - all day long. People are throwing in ideas, and everybody has opinions about everything that is going on and about everything that they read about in the papers, about South Africa, Nicaragua, and they are all radicalised, the people are all radicalised.

Troops Out: What sort of community groups are there in Ballymurphy?

De Baroid: In an area of one square mile you have over forty three community groups. You get Tenants Associations, Youth Groups, Prisoners Support Groups, Groups that are specifically Anti - extradition. Most of the groups are centred around particular issues or there to make life more tolerable for people, such as playgroups, mother and toddler groups, creches etc. There are educational programs going on in the area that



Ciaran de Baroid author of 'Ballymurphy' (reviewed *Troops Out* Nov 1989) was in London recently to speak at the Irish Book Fair. The author spoke to *Troops Out* about his book and about the community in West Belfast.

give people a second chance, literacy groups for people that have never learned to read and write.

Troops Out: "How much control do the people have?"

De Baroid: A lot of the groups that are there provide services. The stuff that requires taking control is when you want to change something. When you want to change something in which the government, or whoever else has provided or put it there in the first place, has no interest in changing it. For example - getting rid of seventeen blocks of flats, or stopping a motorway or whatever it may be. At that point, I think, it relies completely on people taking control and the success relies on people having that control. That's what happened in Divis, in Moyard, in Springhill and in Derry's Rossville flats. The people said - if you don't pull them down, we will. A lot of people have nothing to lose, they don't own their own homes, they don't have jobs, they live in a terrible environment. And they want to do something about it, and they go out, and they block streets, and they block motorways, and they occupy government buildings and they don't care if they go to jail. The whole culture of opposition to the state is inevitably linked in with people going to jail.

Troops Out: Do women play a major role in these groups?

De Baroid: Yes. They are the backbone of the whole community development in the North. They are also the backbone of the whole political struggle - there's no doubt about that - despite the fact their role is

written out very often and not acknowledged. All you have to do is look at the photographs of the hunger strike marches, and predominately the people marching up the Falls Road are women. And it is the same with the community groups - it is now predominately young women who are the activists in the community.

Troops Out: Has the Catholic Church supported any of the initiatives of the community?

De Baroid: It's the opposite. The church has baulked for years at the development of working class politics. What they try to do is subvert or parallel the community initiatives. The community opens up a thrift shop, the church opens a thrift shop. The community opens a cafe - the church opens a cafe. The community starts a tenants group - the church does the same. They had lost so much ground but now they are back with a vengeance and with state support. Generally the church, with exceptions like Des Wilson and Joe McVeigh, has no real base on the ground. There's a position of trench warfare between the hierarchy and the community groups because of the way the church is behaving, and also, because the communities have seen the catholic hierarchy throw their lot in with the British since 1969. People like Des Wilson and Joe McVeigh would have tremendous support in the community - and would be tolerated to a degree by the hierarchy, the state and the media. The church is trying to win back ground that it has lost, and knows that it has lost, and is supported by the state in this.

opposition

The Northern Ireland Office has pumped tens of millions of pounds into church coffers in the last two or three years to establish a system of church patronage, where the church hierarchy provides jobs for people. Silly one year jobs, but jobs nonetheless. The idea is that they can be seen as beneficiaries to the community and somehow this will help them win back the ground they have lost. Win it away from the republicans and radical political concepts.

Troops Out: Do Loyalist estates have strong community groups?

De Baroid: No. There are community groups in loyalist areas, but generally for every ten in a Nationalist area there will be one in a loyalist area. There's no tradition of that kind of organisation, and I think the reason we have it in the Nationalist areas is that there has been a history of repression and people have had to organise against that always. You had an atmosphere of underground activity always in Nationalist areas and that came through in the whole community development movement. The loyalists tried to rely more on the state to do things for

National Front? Why don't progressive elements in the labour party organise with the National Front on a class basis. It's not on the agenda at the moment, because people are very deeply divided by politics. I think Britain has to go, and inevitably they will go in the end. They have done so in all other colonial situations, regardless of what they left behind. And then we in Ireland will all have to sit down, and come to some kind of compromise about sharing this island first of all, and then I think, inevitably, those kind of issues will come to the fore when the whole national thing is cleared out of the way. When the whole British presence is removed, I think - I hope - that all Irish people can sit down and look at the real issues that confront them, especially working class people.

Troops Out: "What was your role as a community worker?"

De Baroid: In Ballymurphy I would have seen my role there as somebody who supported what was going on and who supported the initiatives of the people. And as well as that if there were issues that arose, and they did from time to time, which weren't

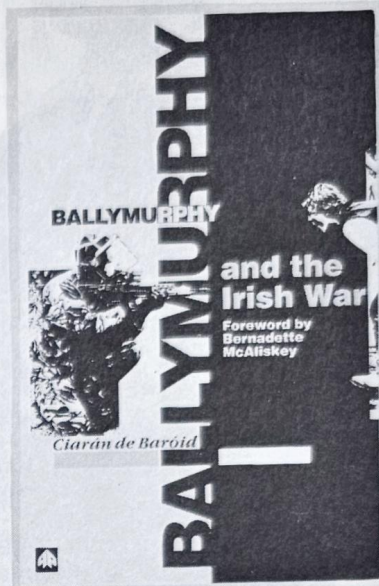
"Twenty years ago, adults in Ballymurphy were set on raising their children in a society free from British colonial repression. Today their children raise families of their own to the pulse of that same inherited goal"

them, because they see it as their state. so they give allegiance to their state, and their state provides them with police, and an army and jobs and community developments and everything else. You do get exceptions to that, but radical community groups are thin on the ground. The loyalists always tend to see themselves as a kind of elite because they have been led to believe this by their governments, even when they were living in exactly the same housing conditions in the Shankill say, as the Falls. The people in the Shankill saw themselves as better class citizens, and also they had more access to jobs of course. They would see their Nationalist neighbours as people who don't deserve full citizenship of their state.

Troops Out: The goals of the two communities seem irreconcilable - are they?

De Baroid: They are. People always say why can't people in Belfast organise on a class basis. There's a simple answer to that. Why doesn't the black community in Britain, for example, organise on a class basis with the

being tackled by other groups, and if we could provide the resources to do it, we would do it if we could - if it was part of the general process of what was going on. As well as that we saw our role as very much as being in a position to mobilise support outside of the area and outside of the north on other issues of a more political nature, for example when we were fighting the supergrass system, or against the house raids, or against the random beatings that were going on. I suppose you could call it human rights work. It would depend a lot on who was employing you - if it is the state you are supposed to keep kids off the streets, keep them out of trouble, hopefully keep them from getting involved in politics. You are not supposed to encourage people to burn down blocks of flats or smash them with sledgehammers. You are supposed to encourage people to negotiate with the Department of Employment. And if the D.O.E. says sorry folks - you have to accept that. That's the kind of attitude that the state would have and the church would have. What



was happening in a place like Ballymurphy was quite a radical program of political action which was frowned upon by the state and the church. You've had examples of where the state has pulled its funding out from groups, groups like Conway Mill and others, simply because they didn't toe the line and because they did speak out against injustices and did organise against British policies - and these groups were stamped on.

Troops Out: As a community are the people of Ballymurphy proud of themselves?

De Baroid: Oh yes, very much so. This is something the book did - it added to the sense of pride. It boxed it together. People suddenly realised, god we did all those things, this is the sum total of our achievements, our efforts. The consistent line was "I lived through a lot of that, I never realised the significance of what we were involved in until I saw it written down, and saw what it led to, and what it came from and the consequences". There is a real sense of pride, the book has been a morale booster for people, something I never considered when I was putting it together. And the achievements are a morale booster. When Moyard gets pulled down, that's a morale booster, Springhill is being pulled down at the moment, that's a morale booster. People see the visible results of their efforts. And these were peaceful protests and just very astute political strategies being deployed by ordinary working class people. And they succeed against the state, against the big monolith that seemed immovable in the beginning.

Ballymurphy and the Irish war, by Ciarán de Baróid is available from the Troops Out office, price £8.95.



A soldiers story

I left school at sixteen and went straight down to the recruiting office. One month later I was in the barracks. I remember how proud and glad I was. A real soldier at last. But it was not quite the triumph I had expected. There were hundreds of others like me. How would I be marked out in that mass, me the hero from back home?

I was with the infantry and a few months before our first tour we started to get special training. There were two weeks in a mock village (tin City) and in one of our classrooms there was a model of our patrol area: streetnames, houses, strategic points for IRA ambushes etc. You had to learn them by heart. Then we had slide shows on suspected persons, hundreds of them. We divided them within the group, 50 each. Everybody in the area was basically suspect, it was a catholic area. Some were on the top 30 list, 'the IRA men'. This was backed up by all sorts of Intelligence; job, employers, friends, pub, gambling, imprisoned, and task within the IRA; bomber, driver, courier, electronics. You knew everything. One was divorced, the other gay etc. You could harass them with these details when you stopped them. You had to make them feel they had no privacy we were told, stop them as often as possible, give them a hard time, show them that we were always close behind.

Riot Control

We also trained in riot control. You learnt a few things, like intimidating a crowd by battering the shields, or operating a snatch squad. But the reality was different. In Northern Ireland the game was all about cracking skulls. You went into a crowd, hit a few demonstrators on the head so that the others ran. They never told you to do so at briefings, but the general mood was "beat their heads in as long as you don't get seen".

Searching a house is very simple. Upstairs, then downstairs. You open everything up: from the smallest room to the pile of children's clothing. You have to keep an eye on details; is there any loose electrical gear about, an abnormal amount of petrol or washing powder (used as a sticking agent in petrol bombs). Anything like that would be reported to Intelligence. Most of the searches are unnecessary. The official line is that its only carried out when there is "hard" suspicion of an arms dump for example.

That's a lie. There are blanket searches where you cordon off a whole area and search every house. It's not selective, it's just part of the overall intimidation. Almost every morning we stood somewhere knocking; five or six in the morning, everybody out of bed, parents, children in bare feet, us in our heavy boots

There are 10,000 British Soldiers in the north of Ireland. This month the Troops Out Movement has organised a major public meeting in which ex soldiers will speak about their part in Britain's war in Ireland. To the general public soldiers are often presented as reluctant heroes, rarely in the news except as casualties, faceless and voiceless. Troops Out presents here an exclusive description from an ex-soldier of what life in the army is like. The author wishes to remain anonymous.

and with machine guns. Sometimes we picked the wrong house, but we were the only ones to laugh about it.

From our point of view there was always an easy solution to the "troubles". The politicians should give us just one month and then we'd finish the bastards off.

Hearts & minds

There's not much left of any campaign "for the hearts and minds". HQ staff like it but to the squaddies on the ground it was always bullshit. You can't try to "have a chat" when you keep pulling people in. Most soldiers enjoy that power, stopping anyone and they had to obey. Once we stopped a man in a car, took off two of the wheels and left him. Just because his name was the same as a known IRA member.

The feeling of being a target is always there, day in, day out and its impossible to concentrate, to stay alert for five weeks. You do all the usual things to protect yourself on patrol, stay near children as cover, see a mother with a pram and walk next to her. You'd be crazy not to.

Overcrowded quarters, damp, suffocating artificial light living in underground steel armoured concrete holes. It was the most miserable, depressing part of my life.

When we do take a hit, the patrol is called back so that they cannot take revenge. But the rest of the company is still on the streets, and they know what to do. I remember one incident where we beat up a young man going to work. He hadn't done anything wrong, except being a catholic and in our way.

Spying

On my second tour I got nine months of special preliminary training. Survival and spying/observing. I was trained to work in 'difficult' situations. In Belfast I was often 'dropped' at night with three others to sneak into a derelict house and set up for a week. Sometimes it would be to observe one house, photograph everyone going in and out. It was nerve-wrecking; never appear by the window, never make a noise, leave no trace of our presence, pissing into plastic bottles. We'd have to bore holes for our one inch spy glasses and we'd have infra-red nightglasses. Local army patrols might pass through the area but

contact was dangerous because the IRA monitor patrol patterns and any change might draw notice to us. The greatest fear was that some idiot would pop his head in "just to see where those blokes are".

Ballymurphy was the one area where this sort of work was impossible. The area was closely knit and the people very much on the ball, they got wind of us a mile away. They observe any army movement and warn the IRA. We kept away from there. Despite the feeling of perhaps getting caught like rats in a trap, I found it tremendous, I was twenty and already a spy. Thinking back, I was silly and naive, risking my life for a few pictures.

Ambushes

The same 'hide' tactics were used for ambushes. Intelligence might get word of an IRA operation and we would 'dig in'. One we were waiting for an IRA mortar attack, waiting to blow them. We were a killer group. As soon as they were there we were to open fire, but they never showed up.

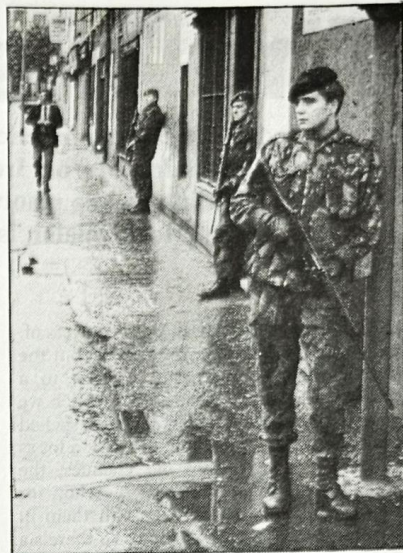
The yellow card rules governing opening fire are just seen as a joke. If you followed

them you'd be dead. You just empty your gun and then when you're arrested, as you usually are when there are casualties, you give them the usual, bla bla bla you had no choice, you were in imminent danger, the other one pulled his gun etc.

On another occasion we were staking out a weapons dump in bushes. We were waiting for the man to collect the stuff. After 24 hours sitting waiting, suddenly a car arrived on the spot. A man got out and entered the 'killing zone'. He'd be dead, but because he went for a pee we decided to grab him. It saved his life. We jumped on him with our balaclava faces and he was almost scared to death. He was completely innocent and it turned out there were no weapons on the spot either!

S. Armagh

The rural guerilla is much more professional than the urban guerilla. Very cautious and very dangerous. They have the firm support of people in the area, and infiltration is more or less impossible. In Belfast or Derry an



attack may last no more than 10-15 seconds, in South Armagh it's a real fire fight, that can last for minutes. IRA attacks are made with military precision and incredible ingenuity. They know their area, it's their home. Ambush spots are chosen where they know your jeep has to go through a bench or a ditch in the road that will unsettle your aim and that's when they take you.

Crossmaglen is the centre of the area, a village of 1,500 people and it's almost a no-go area for the army. Almost all transport to the camp is made by helicopter, morale is a big problem there. Crossmaglen was the most miserable and depressing part of my life. Overcrowded quarters, damp, suffocating, artificial bunker light, living underground in steel armoured concrete holes. Never any let up; 24 hour border patrol; four hours rest, four hour village patrol, eight hours rest, and up again for patrol. My mind and body were wrecked, I would shake uncontrollably, and everyone drinks. The stress is incredible, mates were wounded, two were killed. You never seemed cautious enough. South Armagh is bomb and booby-trap country. The idea of walking past a car and getting blasted to bits was terrifying, worse than bullets in Belfast or derry. There were days that you had only one thing on your mind "Not today! Shoot me next week, or next month, but not today. Please give me these last three days before I can leave for home". This begging might last for 2-3 days and then on other days you would feel invulnerable. Some people go mad. Some pretend to go mad just to get out. The only thing the army offers you is a Padre, who would pass through once a month and say "Everything alright boys?" Any tour in Northern Ireland is mentally and physically exhausting. That's why they don't exceed 4-5 months and then they leave you for a couple of years.

Back home I get the impression people don't understand, or don't want to hear about it. The army is already a world apart, Northern Ireland is a far away planet. Even to my wife I told very little. Nobody knows that I'm still 'looking for snipers.' I've left the army but the army is still within me.

The Irish Question

In the second article in our series looking at questions that arise about British withdrawal from Ireland, Gerry Maclochlainn looks at how the conflict may be resolved, and what Sinn Feins part in it will be. Gerry Maclochlainn is a representative of sinn Fein in England.

Sinn Fein itself is engaged in a process of debate within the community about the steps needed to take this struggle to a resolution. Many of the areas in which we want to move into have already been spelled out but it's still a process of discussion for as we take a step forward our enemies, the British Government and those who, for whatever reason, collaborate with them in Ireland take steps to counter us so there's a constantly changing situation.

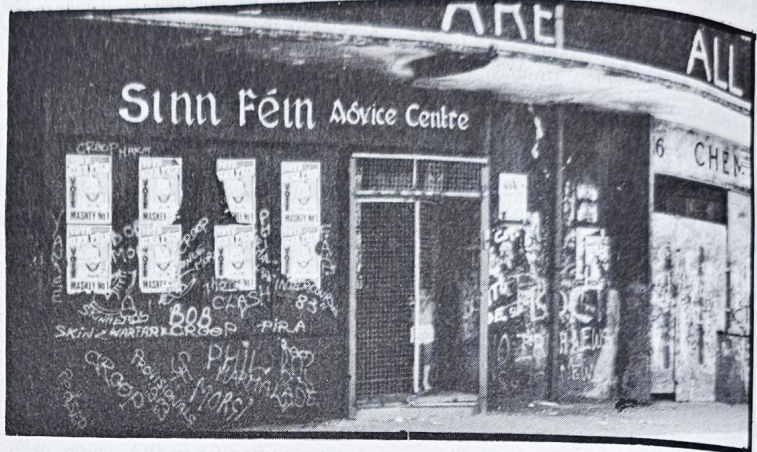
We're now in a very fluid and difficult situation and I can't give you a tactical or strategic map of what Sinn Fein will do or what form the Irish struggle will take over the next period except to say very generally that we know what we have to do and what the resolution of this conflict is.

Most people here in Britain would probably think of the resolution of the conflict as the end of the IRA's armed struggle. I know that most people who would come to a Troops Out Movement educational would not see it that way. But many may see it as the end of armed conflict in general - an end to British armed activity, an end to IRA activity and an end to loyalist activity and so on. But the conflict is much more than the armed struggle.

The conflict is one which will only be resolved when Ireland can begin the process of building a free and independent nation within a world which respects the development of free nations allowing them to break from all the constraints on their development imposed by their colonial past.

The resolution can only come about in that way and therefore is not only some distance away at this moment but is probably also some distance away from the end of armed conflict in Ireland. This is a personal view but I would think that long before the Irish people are in a position to gain complete control over their own destiny Britain may well decide to withdraw from Ireland leaving something short of full independence. In those sort of circumstances it would be difficult to envisage how or indeed why an armed struggle would be taking place. It is likely that you would find a different form of struggle taking place in a neo-colonial Ireland.

So to Sinn Fein, the conflict taking place in Ireland arises from the denial of the Irish people's right to self determination. All the problems that exist in Ireland flow from that, be they the lack of jobs and opportunities for Catholics in the north of Ireland or the massive emigration suffered by Irish people. These all come from the fact that the Irish economy cannot be constructed in the interests of the Irish people and that cannot



begin to happen until Britain withdraws from Ireland and allows the Irish people to start to resolve its problems in its own way.

That's how the republican movement looks at the fundamental solution to the problem. The armed struggle taking place in Ireland, in Britain and Europe on behalf of the IRA, the armed struggle that the British are engaging in Ireland, Gibraltar and other places is a symptom of the basic problems existing in Ireland and between Britain and Ireland. The armed struggle is not the only form of struggle taking place in Ireland only one aspect of it. As a member of Sinn Fein I am going to talk about the unarmed political struggle taking place as opposed to the armed political struggle.

The republican movement is seeking to build resistance to British oppression and the British occupation of Ireland. It seeks to republicanise such opposition as exists, because opposition can take many forms: people will struggle for the right to fish their own fisheries; to speak their own language, for the right to live in their own country without having to go abroad to find work. They will fight for all sorts of rights in different ways and may see them as being unconnected. The republican movement will attempt to politicise and republicanise this so that people will see it in the context of the colonial oppression of Ireland.

Of course, as we do that our enemies will seek to undermine that process. They will seek to isolate us from mainstream political activity and divert republicans from close work with the majority of people and in so doing seek to continue to distort Irish political life in order to continue their presence. They will do that through local agencies as much as possible - be it through the loyalist, unionist

community crudely bought into a pro-British position with partition, a Catholic middle-class brought into partnership through the Anglo-Irish process or by direct collaboration with the 26 County Government.

Electoral Challenge

Since the hunger strikes the republican movement took up a challenge that many people had been throwing at it since the present phase of the struggle broke out in the late sixties and early seventies. Despite all the criticisms we would have of the gerrymandered electoral system in partitioned Ireland, we decided to enter into electoral politics and to begin an electoral struggle.

The early eighties then saw the emergence of a very clear defined electoral base for the republican movement inside the six counties. In the twenty-six counties we haven't achieved much more than a toe-hold, but I never really expected fast results there. I think we are seeing there the results of mistakes going back many years and politics established in Ireland since partition.

For many years the republican movement failed to carry out any consistent attempt to build a political movement there. That's not a criticism of the many good people who worked hard in the movement. Clearly at least for the past twenty years there have been other problems and other imperatives facing republicans.

The resolution of the conflict

It is true - and I don't see how it could have been seen any other way - that the military defence of the nationalist community was seen as the most important task to be faced in Ireland. But you can't solve the question of the security of the nationalist population in the six counties and the British presence

a Sinn Fein view

purely through a national liberation struggle based in the nationalist working class in the six counties. It can only be resolved through the mobilisation of the masses of the Irish people in a struggle for their democratic rights.

That raises a whole series of questions, particularly for republicans who may have been used to conspiratorial or semilegal politics. Republicans just have to learn how to move into that area of broad, open, democratic politics.

We drew the conclusion that we needed a very broad-based, antiimperialist, united front in Ireland, to take up all the issues facing people who come into conflict with imperialism. Even when it is not seen that way it has to be explained that the problems are a direct result of the underdevelopment of the 26 county economy, its relationship as a peripheral state to Britain and in turn to the EC and as a state which has been held back for many generations.

In the 6 counties itself, we had to adjust to the position that we found ourselves in. We had achieved some electoral successes there.

The nationalist community, in the most deprived working class communities in the six counties and in the poorer farming areas, where the armed struggle is at its height and where British oppression is felt at its most, Sinn Fein has emerged very clearly as the major political party. For example in Belfast, Sinn Fein is the largest political party, ahead of the DUP, the SDLP, the Alliance Party, the Workers Party and all the other also-rans.

Sinn Fein has done its work and built a strong political base in many working class areas in the north but it has had to sit back and assess the situation; that the nationalist community and particularly the more oppressed sections of the nationalist community on their own cannot defeat British Imperialism. As I said earlier, the masses of the Irish people have to be mobilised.

They already, in one way or another, express their desire for national independence. They may vote for the SDLP in the north maybe because of problems they have about armed struggle, about the type of Ireland they want to see, or about what they

think is achievable or realistic, but they would still be committed to Irish reunification and independence. Similarly in the 26 counties, every measure of public opinion has shown the desire for independence to be very strong still.

Armed struggle essential

What we have to do is prevent the republican movement being isolated in line with British strategy. Our strategy for peace must be brought in and discussed seriously. As well as being involved in broad based struggle we also have to make it clear that armed struggle is only one aspect of the resistance in Ireland.

The armed struggle is an essential form of struggle in the six counties because Britain made it essential. It's not because anyone on our side chose it to be; Britain has made it clear that it will react to nothing but violence. It's clear that over the past twenty years it has been the armed struggle of the IRA which has forced the situation on time after time.

The Anglo-Irish agreement itself, for



The Irish Question

example, was a result of the IRA's campaign against British imperialism in Ireland. Whatever people may say, it's the armed struggle of the IRA that has been the cutting edge over the past twenty years.

It's also true that on some occasions the armed struggle of the IRA may have had a negative effect on the overall struggle when some aspects of it are looked at. But the reality is that over the years it has been the armed struggle that has moved things along.

What we intend to do is build an unarmed political strategy that goes alongside the armed political strategy and which ensures that in future you won't get the SDLP's and the John Humes' rising to power on the graves and gaolcells of Irish Republican volunteers, the graves of young children killed by plastic bullets.

We have to make it clear that we desire peace more genuinely than anyone; we didn't bring the gun into Irish politics, we want to take it out. That's what our strategy for peace is all about and we have to push that and make it clear that we are not the aggressors, just as Nelson Mandela was able to do in South Africa.

Isolating Sinn Fein

When we were learning those lessons, the Brits were also learning theirs. If you look at what the Brits have done since 1982 it's been one rule after another aimed at restricting our political activity. The electoral laws were

changed with identification procedures designed to discriminate against young working class people; you had the shoot to kill introduced to intimidate the nationalist community; you had the supergrass episode designed to undermine confidence in the republican movement; you had the introduction of censorship to prevent Sinn Fein getting its views across on the broadcast media. Of course you also had the major strategic change of the Anglo-Irish agreement, brought in consultation with the 26 county government and the SDLP.

The real significance of the agreement, however, was that it arose from the challenge in the early eighties culminating with the near victory of Sinn Fein over the SDLP in the 1983 general election. At that point, the SDLP and the 26 county government realised that something drastic had to be done if Sinn Fein was to be prevented from emerging as the representative of majority nationalist opinion in the north and making breakthroughs in the south. In the first instance they struck a partnership through the Irish Forum, where they came forward in some form of united front demanding from the Thatcher government a unitary Irish state. The minute Thatcher refused this they immediately backed down and took whatever she was prepared to offer i.e. the Anglo-Irish agreement.

This had to be sold to the SDLP and 26 county government supporters in Ireland and



America. They said it was something which would end the nationalist nightmare in the six counties. Catholics would live under improved conditions and a pragmatic unionist leadership would be forced to do a deal with the nationalist community; a new partnership would emerge and the stepping stones to a united Ireland would be made.

Harmonising repression

I remember when it was brought in that many people believed the Brits were going to give some major compromises. There might be some changes in sectarian work practices. There might be some move on the Birmingham Six - We are still waiting for that! We thought there might be some improvement in the nationalist community's conditions because we thought this would be needed to stabilise the situation. What we weren't counting on was the crass surrender



of the 26 county government and the SDLP of any and all the positions they held during the Forum and of any pretence at being opposed to Britain's interests in Ireland. The result was that the British government didn't have to concede anything of significance.

All we have seen is a harmonisation of repression; we're moving towards the implementation of extradition. Fortunately the campaign over the Guildford Four and the Free State government was forced to pull back from the implementation. But the move is on and Irish people will be routinely handed over to the British state for show trials and all that goes with it. Irish people have continued to be murdered by plastic bullets. All the talk of the UDR being disbanded (the SDLP call) or being reformed (the 26 county call) and even the claimed agreement that UDR patrols would be accompanied by the RUC; all of this has been dropped. In fact the conditions facing the nationalist community have got worse since the Anglo-Irish agreement.

There has also been an agreement to keep Sinn Féin out of political action. Sinn Féin is excluded from meetings of those parties, from access to the airwaves and from any discussion on the way forward. This whole thing about Sinn Féin having to renounce violence before it can be involved in discussions has all been invented over the last few years. It should be remembered that Gerry Adams, long before he had won a single vote in a British election, was released from prison and flown to London for talks with the British Conservative government. The deliberate strategic decision to exclude Sinn Féin came after they went out and won an electoral mandate not before. Despite all of this however, Sinn Féin has maintained its base. They have succeeded in preventing our growth in the north and stopped us making a breakthrough in the 26 counties but we have held what we'd won.

Brooke Admission

Very interestingly because the Sinn Féin base has survived, we find the latest moves of the British include a pitch for the republican base. This is peculiar when you hear so much about Sinn Féin having no base or being very small. But the statement made before Christmas by Brooke, in which he hinted at Sinn Féin being involved in talks if it would renounce violence, was an acknowledgement of several things; he acknowledged publicly that eventually the republican movement would be involved in any solution; he accepted that the IRA could not be defeated militarily and said as much. He accepted that the present stated policy of defeating terrorism, as he referred to it, was doomed to failure and that sooner or later they hoped the republican movement would surrender and Britain could negotiate with them from a position of strength.



'Our Day Will Come' reads the platform banner at the Sinn Féin conference.

This is itself significant for people in Britain and I want to say a few words about it. Basically this means that every British soldier who's sent to Ireland from now on is not being sent to win a war. He's being sent there to fight and possibly die in order to improve the bargaining position of the Tory government when they eventually do a deal in Ireland. That's what Brooke said; sooner or later negotiations will take place and republicans will be involved in those negotiations.

Unionists talks

This was yet another shock for the unionists and, I think, it might well have whipped them into the discussions which appear to be going on at the moment. I can't say whether or not the unionists are preparing to make some concessions or not but any concessions being discussed will not go any way towards resolving the basic problem. Such concessions are merely to try and get the Unionists to wake up and realise that sections of the Catholic middle-class are as loyal as they are and to get them to overcome their sectarian bigotry and allow the Catholic middle-class in on the game.

The problem for the unionists of course is how to sell this to the Protestant working class. Their part of the partition deal was that they would do o.k. out of it, that they would get any jobs going and so on. With the continuing struggle over fair employment you find the Brits trying to square a circle. What they hope to get from it all is some form of devolved administration, with the SDLP in partnership with the Unionists, which will lead to a further Ulsterisation of the situation and a further apparent distancing of Britain from responsibility for the conflict.

Republicans, though, have faced such initiatives before and we're quite confident because our struggle has set the pace for the best part of the past 20 years and we'll continue to do that. We think that the attempts to isolate us have failed already and, I think, Brooke's statement before Christmas was an acknowledgement of that.

Mass Struggle

We are continuing with our electoral strategy and we believe we'll progress from here as we did in the last local government elections where Sinn Féin increased its vote in Belfast and Derry. Sinn Féin is moving forward in the areas where it is getting its work done. We intend to avoid the dangers of seeing

only one or two aspects of this struggle to the exclusion of others. In the early days it may be true that the struggle was seen primarily as a military struggle, we won't make the mistake of seeing this now as just being two-pronged, armed struggle and electoralism. This is a struggle which must involve masses of people. That means a broad front and to turn that into something real this means bringing more people into political activity and campaigning.

In the months ahead there's going to be a lot more popular activity taking place on human rights and all the issues which flow from denial of national self-determination. We are going to challenge the SDLP on the ground: Where are the benefits they've got for the nationalist community? Where's the fair employment they promised? Where's all the American money they're getting? What are they doing with it? In the 26 counties we're going to try to broaden that out into the broader democratic struggle relevant to the working class and democratic forces there. We intend to build a mass, popular struggle over the next couple of years and we're confident in the steps we've taken towards that.

Our way then of resolving this problem is to continue closing down Britain's options one by one as we have done so far. The Anglo-Irish agreement hasn't beaten the republican movement, they're now looking for a new one, talking of a revamped Stormont and devolution. It might all be window dressing but we intend to close down that option as well.

We intend to challenge the existing leaderships in the nationalist community and the 26 counties. We want to know what the others are promising to deliver and when they're going to deliver it. It's a fairly long haul in front of us but we are confident.

Following the statement from Nelson Mandela on talks between the IRA and the British Government Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams said:

'Sinn Féin recognise and our party has consistently stressed the need for dialogue aimed at establishing peace and justice in Ireland.

'As Sinn Féin leader, I am prepared to co-operate with and to engage in talks aimed at initiating and facilitating a peace process.

'I call upon Mrs Thatcher to respond positively to Mr Mandela's call and for Mr Haughey to endorse it and to support a peace process.

14 years of resistance in a British gaol

PATRICK HACKETT, recently released from jail in England, was seriously wounded in a premature explosion in London in 1976 while on active service with the Irish Republican Army, losing an arm and a leg. Found guilty by a British court of conspiracy, possession of explosives and causing an explosion, he was sentenced to 20 years on each count, all to run concurrently. Over the past 14 years he has been through Brixton, Wormwood Scrubs, Wakefield and Parkhurst prisons.

AP/RN: Can you tell me what happened to you directly after the explosion?

Patrick Hackett: The explosion happened on March 1st, 1976. I was taken to St Stephen's Hospital in Fulham, London, and was kept there for about two months. At the beginning of May I was taken to court and remanded to the hospital wing at Brixton Prison.

During my time in hospital the police interrogated me on and off for about six weeks. The first fortnight to three weeks was intensive interrogation.

AP/RN: What form did the interrogation take?

PH: I was lying in the hospital bed. The doctors were out of the room and there was nobody around. It went on for hours and hours, non-stop. They would grab me by the throat and beat me in the face. On one occasion as I turned my head they hit me on the nose and this caused a heavy nose bleed. They got a bit worried at this. On other occasions they would grab the stump of my severed arm and squeeze and twist it. The stump of my leg was wrapped in bandages and it was covered in blood and pus. Obviously during the interrogation the bed covers used to get knocked about and it was exposed. On one or two occasions one of them would take a biro pen from his pocket and start stabbing it. They also staged mock executions.

This type of interrogation would go on from early evening well into the small hours of the morning and my whole cycle was messed about. I would sleep all day and be up all night under interrogation. So I was totally disorientated.

All the time they kept threatening to kill my mother and my sisters. They also told me that as soon as I got into prison they would inject me with dirty needles. They kept shouting the same questions at me continuously. I had to block this out of my mind so I started singing republican songs as loud as I could. This had a great effect as I could not even hear what they were saying.

It was nearly a week before I was identified. It was then that my family came over to see me. The nurses called my people and said that the police were killing me. I was in a private room but there was public wards just a few yards away and the patients were saying that they could not sleep with the screaming and roaring coming from the room at all hours of the night. The nurses told my family that they knew what was going on but that there was nothing that they could do as orders had come right from the top that they were not to interfere.

AP/RN: How did conditions vary in the different English jails you were in?

PH: The two worst were Brixton

and Wakefield. In Brixton they don't give a damn because they have a constantly moving population - people on remand. Also what made conditions worse for me was that I was on my own, isolated all the time. At least if you're on a wing with your mates they will back you up. But a hospital wing is the worst part of a prison to be in. The authorities - the governors - are really the bosses there, whereas on the wing you would get lots of solidarity and they can't take liberties with you.

While in Brixton I kept getting an awful lot of pain with the stump of my leg. I thought that this was natural because of the amputation. It swelled right up eventually. I couldn't even sleep. I found that I wasn't comfortable in the wheelchair so I would struggle over to the bed. After a while I found that I wasn't comfortable in this position so after another half hour's struggle I would get back into the wheelchair.

Somebody got a TV and put in the hallway. They opened the doors in our cells and the gates. We found that if we pushed right up to the gate we could see it so this night we were watching the TV and someone said "There's an awful smell around here". I put my hand down at the stump found something wet. I asked them to turn on the light. As soon as they turned it on I moved the wheelchair back and there was a massive pool of thick blood and pus that had come out of my leg. The prison staff got worried at this. They charged in and cleaned up the mess and immediately gave me pain-killers. They had not given me pain-killers up to this even though I had asked for them. I got a lovely night's sleep that night.

After this incident I told them that there was something wrong for me to get this infection but they just turned around and said "You've been picking at it".

During an incident with a prison officer I threw a cup of cold tea over him and they sent me to the block. I was sitting in the block one night and I felt something sharp in the stump of the leg. I thought it might be the chip of a bone that was causing the infection so I kept working it out. It was a halfpenny coin that had been in the wound since the explosion. I showed this to the doctor and told him that I would have to have an X-ray to make sure that there was nothing else in there but he never even gave me a plaster.

Following the riot by prison officers in 1979, I commenced a blanket protest in the New Year. I was then totally isolated. I didn't get exercise or anything but was kept banged up 24 hours a day. They left me for a day or two on D-Wing. Then they made me go over to the segregation unit on A-Wing at the opposite end of the prison - that's a distance of about 300 yards. I only had a sheet on me that night. They made me walk across the yard. It was freezing cold weather with ice on the ground and I was forced to walk in my bare feet. On my journey across the prison I encountered what I can only described as an obstacle course. There was an old furnace in the yard for burning rubbish and the ground around it was covered in broken glass. While trying to manoeuvre myself past this I cut my foot. I never received a iota of medical attention for this injury.

When I got to the segregation unit they shoved me into a freezing cold cell. They must have deliberately left the windows wide open all day. The windows were out of my reach. When I asked an officer to close them he replied "Close them yourself". I was then forced to climb onto the metal frame of the bed in order to close the windows. But the wood in the window frames was warped and they were jammed. I spent a miserable night in this cell. I could hear the wind whistling all night through a gap of about one inch between the sliding windows and the frame, and as a result, it remained awfully cold.

After a couple of days in this cell I was able to make it quite comfortable. I managed to stick paper into the gap in the window and so block out the draught. A couple of days later I was moved to a new cell.

When the weather turned mild, I was moved yet again, this time to a cell known to us in the segregation unit as the oven. This was a cell with hot pipes running the full length of both the side walls, and another running from floor to ceiling. In mild weather, the heat in this cell is unbearable, sweat pours off you even while lying naked on the bed, so in order to mitigate this extreme heat I covered the pipes with old newspapers. When the screws discovered this, however, they informed me that this was against prison rules, their excuse was they attracted cockroaches. This would have been understandable if it were not for the fact that every wing in Wormwood Scrubs in and

always has been alive with cockroaches.

On the morning of the last Tuesday in May 1980, the screws came to my cell door and unlocked it. They then called out "Hackett, put down that pot". At this stage, I had absolutely nothing in my hand and the screws knew this. They then ran from my door and came back with fire buckets full of water. Two officers then took up throwing positions on either side of my doorway and called out: "OK you Irish bastard, you want to play games?" Naturally, after hearing those taunts, I saw red and reached in under my bed and got the chamber pot. One of them then swung back with the bucket as if he was about to let go, and simultaneously, I let go the pot. The screws then threw bucketful after bucketful of water into my cell. One officer also threw a basin of hot water and disinfected over me. He wasn't satisfied with drenching me and everything in my cell, he also threw two empty buckets, one of which missed me and landed on my bed, the other bucket I managed to deflect by using my chair as a shield.

When the screws finished throwing water that mornin', my cell door was slammed shut and I was left in those appalling conditions with the cell flooded to a depth of about one inch, until late afternoon.

Shortly after my 28 days punishment had expired I was transferred to Wakefield, and when I arrived, because I refused to come off the blanket protest, I was sent to the segregation unit, which is what they call the 'special control unit'. It consists of an entire wing - F.Wing. It's completely separate from the rest of the exercise yard; it is self-sufficient and even has its own private exercise yard; it's like a prison within a prison.

The wall opposite our cells was painted white with weird designs in darker colours on it, and at night, powerful lights were shone onto this wall, so that at night it never became really dark in our cells. I spent over four months in the segregation, and while I was there, I experienced constant and very irritating noise. It was only turned off during sleeping hours. The noise sounded like a boiler constantly turning over, and from time to time, the rhythm of the noise would vary slightly - sometimes it sounded like hissing steam, and other times, it would sound like a radio - that high pitched tone which you hear when you're not exactly on

the station.

As I mentioned previously, I arrived in segregation on July 15th, 1980, and I was to remain there until November 18th, 1980. I was placed on report every week and received seven days loss of all privileges, except newspapers, on every occasion.

When they talked about solitary there they meant exactly that - I was kept in complete isolation. If I happened to see another prisoner, which was extremely rare, we were not allowed to speak. In fact, on two occasions, I was warned by a screw to stop singing and whistling in my cell.

While I was on punishment, which was the entire length of time I spent in the unit, my bedding - blankets and sheets - had to be placed outside my cell every morning at 7am to be returned again at about 7pm. Weekends - Saturday and Sunday - were a little different, about 8am to 4pm. There was no heating in the cells, and for the first couple of months, I had only one small hand towel to keep myself warm during the day. I complained of the cold on numerous occasions but the only answer I ever received was "You've got a uniform in your cell, put it on". During this period, I would very often have to spend the entire day walking up and down my cell in order to keep warm. Sometimes, if the day was especially cold, I would shove newspapers into the window-frame where the panes of glass were missing, in order to block the draught, but when the screws saw this, they would immediately come in and take them down. Ragain. The excuse was that "the paper was a fire hazard" or that it was "against prison rules".

On October 1st, 1980, my blanket was returned. I was transferred to the hospital wing on the evening of November 18th, 1980.

On the morning of the 18th, because I had been receiving a lot of harassment from the screws, I refused to make up my bed, refused to mop out my cell, and refused to attend adjuration. I threw the artificial leg off and told them that they were going to have to carry me around in future. The number one governor then had a meeting with members of the segregation staff, and that evening, I was transferred.

All through my stay in the segregation unit, I received constant harassment from the staff there. What this usually consisted of was anything from giving me the smallest portion of food



available, to singing "It's a long way to Tipperary" outside my cell on each occasion I lost remissionary.

AP/RN: With such horrific injuries, how did you adapt to life in prison?

PH: Obviously there are limitations. When I first saw the artificial leg I was disgusted. But I realised after a while that it was the only way of getting around so I had to strap it on. I was exercised on my own.

AP/RN: What are your opinions on the extradition to Britain or the North of Irish people wanted for political offences?

PH: No way should they be handed over. You have the cases of the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four, which I mentioned. On that alone nobody should be sent over.

AP/RN: What are your opinions now on the conflict and the republican struggle?

PH: The war against Britain has

got to continue until they leave Ireland. There has been too much suffering, and too many people locked up for too long to stop now. The only way that peace will come in Ireland is when the British are forced to leave and Irish people can be allowed to come together and sort out their own problems.

AP/RN: Do you have any message for the Dublin government, on what they should be doing for Irish prisoners in Britain?

PH: Yes, they should ratify the agreement on the repatriation of Irish prisoners.

AP/RN: Finally, how does it feel now that you are home?

PH: It's fantastic, I don't know myself. It's very novel at the moment. I'm going around meeting all my friends and relatives and the Sinn Feiners and that. The only sad part about is that I wish that Ella O'Dwyer and all my comrades were out as well.

Troops Out, July 1990, Page 17

Prisoners Birthdays

17th July

BRIAN KEENAN B26380
HMP Long Lartin, South
Littleton, Evesham, Worcs.
WR11, Worcs. Wt11 5TZ

23rd July

THOMAS QUIGLEY,
B69204 HMP Full Sutton,
York YO4 1PS

2nd August

STEPHEN NORDONE 758663
HMP Gartree, Leicester rd,
Market Harborough, Leics, LE16
7RP

12th August

PAUL KAVANAGH L3188
HMP Full Sutton, York, YO4
1PS

Please remember to send prisoners
birthday greetings. Make sure you
use the prisoners number.



Lives at risk in Belfast prison

Prisoners currently held on remand in Belfast's Crumlin Road prison are warning that the forced integration of Republican and Loyalist prisoners there is creating a dangerous situation. Republican POW's have called for renewed public support to end the present policy of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO).

Forced integration, which is not implemented in any other prison in the Six Counties, has left Republicans vulnerable to assaults and threats. It has also led to a situation where prisoners are confined to their cells for periods of up to 22 hours with the loss of access to the exercise yard, the gym and the canteen.

In one incident, a prisoner was stabbed twice in the neck by Loyalists and was seriously injured. The following day, two more Nationalist prisoners were attacked while prison warders looked on and refused to intervene. The response of the prison authorities to such incidents is to lock up Republicans with loss of 'privileges' while allowing Loyalists to remain on association and recreation 'privileges'.

Calling for an immediate end to the forced integration policy, a spokesperson for the POW Department said that the NIO could not guarantee the safety of any prisoner in the jail: "What is

absurd is that the NIO who are well aware of what is going on, are refusing to rectify the situation. They know that what is needed is for Loyalist and Republican prisoners to be housed in separate wings. This would allow remand prisoners to settle down without the danger of the prisoners in the next cell making an attempt on their lives. The NIO and the prison administration have the resources to solve this problem, they should not wait until a prisoner is seriously injured or killed before taking action"

Secretary of State Peter Brooke has publicly refused to end the policy of forced integration, thus escalating the tension within the jail. In May, Loyalist prisoners staged a roof-top protest which was stormed by riot police. The Ulster Freedom Fighters said that it would take "the strongest possible measures" against prison officers. Since then, a number of homes of prison officers have been attacked.

□ *Prisoners' Newsletter, July 1990*

Belfast Comment

Recently the British Labour Party launched its new glossy policy review document 'Looking to the Future'. I'm always suspicious of glossy brochures. A simple rule of thumb; the bigger the con the heavier the gloss. Anyway I decided to have a look inside this suspiciously glossy document to see what the good old British Labour party had planned for us in dear old Ireland.

Well what's this now? A promise to use 'all lawful means' to defeat terrorism'. 'All lawful means' sure what more could we ask for. The only problem is that I seem to recall that internment without trial, interrogation at RUC holding centres, house searches, supergrass trials, no jury courts, and all the vast array of repression which is used by the British Government in Ireland are completely within the laws of the British Government. They after all went to the bother of specifically creating laws to ensure that all the things which they wanted to do on us were within their laws. And even when they were found out doing things which they hadn't bothered to invent a law for, they wery simply went back and invented a new law which not only said it was lawful for them to do it, but which also said that it was lawful for them to have done it even before they invented the law which said that it was lawful for them to do it!'. So if you rub the gloss off the phrase 'all lawful means' you will discover that it reads 'by whatever means suits the British Government at any particular time'.

But do not despair, there is more. The glossy Labour party document pledges to terminate 'counterproductive' measures such as 'strip searching', 'the use of plastic bullets' and the Prevention of Terrorism Act'. My problem here is with the word 'counterproductive'. There's not even a gloss on it. The argument is not that these methods are an affront to human rights, that they have caused death, misery and hardship to many innocent people and that therefore they should be done away with. No, the argument used is that they are 'counterproductive'. Presumably then, in the view of the architects of the British Labour Party policy review document the requirement is not that these aspects of the repressive apparatus be done away with, but that they be replaced with more efficient or productive repressive measures to help maintain Britains rule in Ireland.

But hold on, look at this, the new glossy Labour Party policy review document promises that the Labour party once in power will 'enact legislation to bring about a united Ireland!'. Happy days, what more could we ask for! The good old Labour Party, we all knew they would come up trumps in the end... But wait, there's more... 'if a majority in the north of Ireland voted for it'. Its the dreaded loyalist veto, all glossed up and looking like Democrats reborn.

"But thats not too bad" do I hear you say? "Surely you can go out, and by rational discussion and reasoned argument, convince a majority in the north of Ireland to vote for a united Ireland". This of course requires us to ignore the fact that 6 County state was set up specifically to ensure by a massive gerrymander that there would never be a majority for a united Ireland within its boundaries. It requires us to forget that the entire raison d'être of unionism since the foundation of the state has been to ensure that there would never be a majority for a united Ireland with-in northern Ireland. That the unionists have engaged in the most thorough campaign of anti-catholic discrimination and gerrymandering to ensure the same end. That they introduced an array of the most draconian repressive legislation which was the envy of the South African regime, and that where necessary they have used (are using) imprisonment and murder against the catholic population rather than countenance a united Ireland.

In reality, allowing the Loyalists a veto over any movement towards a United Ireland means that there will be no movement and the problem will continue unresolved.

Funnily enough one of the most astute appraisals of the Labour Party policy was given by leading Unionist John Taylor. He described the Labour policy on a united Ireland as "a fudge" and said that the Labour Party was laying down conditions which it knew would never come about.

"This is really a very dishonest exercise, a devious approach to the problem, giving the impression to the nationalist community that they are in favour of a united Ireland. It is the usual English double-talk"

That seems a fairly accurate assessment to me.

I told you, never trust a glossy document.

Fergus O Hare

One day at a time....

May



14th The Royal Army Educational Corps HQ in Egham, S.E. London, is damaged by, an

IRA bomb. Secretary Peter Brooke proposes a new British-Irish Agreement to replace the Anglo-Irish Agreement and suspension of the Anglo-Irish Conference while talks take place with the unionist parties about devolution. He offers no suspension of the secretariat at Mayfield (officials from the British and Irish civil services) which the unionists had also demanded, and he insists that there will be a guaranteed role for the Irish government in any new Agreement.

The British government admits that the Ministry of Defence made "inaccurate statements" about Colin Wallace and his revelations about army dirty tricks in N.Ireland and Britain.

15th Eleven members of the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) receive honours for "gallant and meritorious service" from the Queen.

In the EC parliament the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Gerry Collins, criticises the deal to reprocess W. German nuclear waste at Sellafield. He also reiterates the call to set up an EC nuclear inspectorate (always vetoed by France and Britain).

The Church of Ireland (Anglican) Synod votes to allow the ordination of women as priests and bishops.

16th An army sergeant is killed by an IRA bomb at a Territorial Army office in N. London.

At the Cannes Film Festival a film about murder and cover-ups by the army and RUC in N. Ireland receives its premiere. "Hidden Agenda", directed by Ken Loach, scandalises some of the British film critics who try to have it excluded from the festival. Others, however, support its showing.

A republican prisoner in the H Blocks, Joe Simpson, is awarded £7,500 compensation; he had been beaten unconscious by prison warders after recapture in the mass escape of September 1983.

The European Commission on Human Rights rules that the Dublin Well Woman clinic has an admissible case against a Supreme Court ruling that prohibited abortion information in March 1988. The case will now be investigated by the Commission.

17th The Stevens Inquiry is completed and a summary of its report is published. Stevens is the deputy chief constable of Cambridgeshire and was appointed in September 1989 to investigate collusion between "security" forces and armed loyalist groups. The report concludes that collusion does exist but is "neither widespread nor institutionalised". His inquiry has led to the arrest of some 100 loyalists and 28 members of the UDR. No RUC member has been charged despite the recovery of 2,600 documents originating from the RUC.

28th Two Australian civilians, Stephen Melrose and Nicholas Spanos, are shot dead by

the IRA in Roermond, Holland. The IRA says they were mistaken for British soldiers and it "deeply regrets the tragedy."

Brooke continues his negotiations with a meeting in Dublin with Haughey and Collins.

29th Republican prisoner Patrick Hackett is released from Parkhurst and flown to a rapturous welcome in Ireland. He served 14 years in English jails, 11 of them on a blanket protest.

June

1st

A British army recruit is shot dead by the IRA at a railway station in Lichfield, Staffordshire.

The RUC claims there are "inaccuracies, distortions and misrepresentations" in a TV drama documentary called "Shoot to Kill". It is made by Yorkshire TV and is screened on 3rd and 4th June - but not in N.Ireland.

2nd

A British army major is shot dead by the IRA in Dortmund, W. Germany.

There is a picket of Albany and Parkhurst jails, in memory of Michael Gaughan, who died on hunger strike in 1974 in Parkhurst.

4th

A civilian, Patrick Boyle, is shot dead by the loyalist Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) at his home in Annaghmore, Co. Armagh. The UVF says he was not the intended target.

The thirty-third person to be charged with the killing of two British army corporals at a funeral in March 1988 appears in court in Belfast. Most of the preceding thirty-two were convicted and imprisoned, mainly on the basis of a very poor quality video filmed from a British army helicopter.

A delegation and protest take place at Derry City Council in support of segregation for republican prisoners in Crumlin Road jail, and in opposition to the inhumane conditions and warder brutality there.

9th

A Territorial Army barracks in N. London is damaged by an IRA bomb; some students partying in the building are injured.

11th

In Belfast the inquest is held into the death of IRA member Kevin McCracken, who was shot by a British soldier in March 1988. The DPP has already ruled out a prosecution, the inquest jury make a complaint that the soldier is not present at the inquest and that there is no explanation of the discrepancy between the soldier's written statement that "he pointed the gun at me" and the fact that McCracken was shot in the back (his weapon was unloaded too).

In W. Belfast a squad of British soldiers attack young people in a park and pedestrians, beating up two civilians (hospitalised) and injuring two others with plastic bullets. They are cross because the Scottish football team did badly in the World Cup.

12th

The EC Court of Justice rules that the government of the republic is acting illegally by restricting cross-border shopping: people from the Republic have to stay for at least 48 hours in the North before they can bring back shopping.

In Hampshire the former home of Robert McAlpine, former deputy chairperson and treasurer of the Conservative Party, is bombed by the IRA.

13th

Terence O'Neil, who was prime minister of N.Ireland 1963-69, dies at the age of 75.

18th

In the Upper Bann by-election, Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) candidate David Trimble wins with a majority of 13,849. Second is the Social Democratic and Labour Party candidate, third is Sinn Féin; the Conservative party candidate-fighting its first Westminster seat in N.Ireland - trails way back with 1,038 votes.

Greenpeace reveals that at least one ship per month travels up the Irish Sea bringing nuclear waste from Italy and Japan to Sellafield.

21st

The May Inquiry opens in London. Sir John May, a retired appeal court judge, was appointed to investigate the Guildford Four convictions and the related convictions of the Maguire family and friends: one of them, Giuseppe Conlon, died while serving his sentence, the other six have completed their sentences and seek to clear their names. The first part of the Inquiry deals with their case first, which depended entirely on forensic evidence.

Dublin City Council passes an all-party motion urging the Taoiseach (prime minister) Charles Haughey to take action on Sellafield before the end of his EC presidency in June.

In Blackpool the conference of NUPE votes for eventual British withdrawal from Ireland, but then backtracks in confusion. Its N.Ireland offices receive threats from loyalists once the news gets out in an exaggerated form. It does, however, agree to support the campaign for the release of the Birmingham Six.

In Cannes, Ken Loach's film "Hidden Agenda" wins a runner-up award.

22nd

In London a young Irishman, Kevin Barry O'Connell, is arrested after a car chase and is charged with possession of firearms.

There is more violence and punishment in Crumlin road jail in Belfast, where the authorities are trying to impose an integrated regime on loyalist and republican prisoners.

A report for the Bank of Ireland shows that the war in N.Ireland costs the Republic IR£78 million per year and Britain IR£358 million - mainly in military and policing expenses but also in lost tourism and investment.

Talks take place between Peter Brooke and unionist leaders James Molyneux and Ian Paisley, who say afterwards that they are "very well satisfied". And two days later Brooke meets the SDLP leadership, who are also satisfied.

26th

There is an interdenominational religious march in Dublin to pray for peace in N.Ireland. An estimated 10,000 attend.

A large rally in Cookstown, Co. Tyrone, commemorates the hunger strike of 1981.

There are riots in E. Belfast in support of loyalist prisoners in Crumlin Road jail and the campaign for segregation.

5th

Brooke reveals some of the content of his negotiations. There will be two parallel sets of talks, one dealing with devolved government within N.Ireland, from which the Republic's government will be excluded; and one dealing with the relationships between Britain and Ireland, and Ireland North and South, in which the Republic's government will be included. Partition rules OK?

An RUC notebook is found in the street in Newry and handed to a Sinn Féin councillor: it contains names of nine people listed as republican "suspects", and detailed diagrams of their houses.

6th

A retired RUC reservist, James Sefton, is killed by an IRA bomb under his car in N. Belfast; Ellen Sefton, his wife, is injured and dies the next day. Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams condemns the killings.

8th

A leading member of Sinn Féin, Sean Keenan, is shot and wounded by the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF, code name for the Ulster Defence Association) at his home in W. Belfast. There are suspicions of collusion, arising from the loyalists' ability to escape from an area normally intensively patrolled by RUC/army and overlooked by a military base.

At the Old Bailey, London, Nicholas Mullen is shot guilty of conspiracy to cause explosions and is sentenced to 30 years. It is alleged that he provided safe homes and false documents for an IRA team whose flat in S. London was raided in December 1988. A co-defendant, Eamon Wadley, is acquitted.

14th

At the May Inquiry dealing with the Maguire case, counsel for the DPP announces that their convictions are "unsafe and unsatisfactory". Consequently the Home Secretary announces that the case will be referred to the Court of Appeal with a recommendation from the DPP that the convictions be quashed. This appeal will take place when the Maguire section of the May Inquiry is completed. The announcement follows weeks of evidence showing that the Defence Research body which carried out forensic tests had poor methodology, failed to make all its findings known at the trial, and possibly misled or deceived the defence team.

A British army training centre near Hanover, W. Germany, is damaged by an IRA bomb.

Official unemployment figures for N.Ireland in May are 96,064, 13.8% of the workforce. "Seasonally adjusted", they are the lowest for 8 years.

Eire - An Sli Chun Tosaigh Commhdhail Idirnaisiunta

This International Conference - the first of its kind in Belfast - is being called to discuss the future of Ireland.

It is assumed that the British government having failed to create a democracy in Ireland must be replaced by structures of government which will ensure that Ireland is democratically governed and able to take its proper place in the modern world.

This International Conference will discuss structures of democracy in which the rights of minorities will be protected and the full potential of all our citizens realised.

It will discuss Ireland's place in the modern world and the political, economic and military issues it faces. Speakers from a number of countries have been invited to address the Conference on the main issues. Responses and contributions will be invited from delegates and visitors.

It is appropriate that this International Conference should be held in the centre of Belfast which has seen so much resistance to democratic reform and yet was the birthplace of one of Ireland's greatest democratic movements.

The International Conference is being convened by SPRINGHILL COMMUNITY HOUSE Ltd. an Educational charity founded in 1972 and based in Belfast.

IRELAND THE WAY FORWARD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

PROGRAMME

Thursday 9 August 1990

- 6.00pm- Registration, Welcome and Introduction of International Delegates.
- 7.00pm- Britain can withdraw peacefully: Naomi Wayne co-author of Northern Ireland - The Political Conflict
- 7.30pm- Delegate Forum
- 8.00pm- It is Time To Go: Liz Curtis Author of Ireland-The Propaganda War
- 8.30pm- Delegate Forum
- 10.00pm- Close

Friday 10 August 1990

- 10.00am- Independence and Constitutional Government for the post-Colonial State. Ira Glaser Executive Director of The American Civil Liberties Union
- 10.30am- Delegate Forum
- 11.30am- Economic Re-structuring of Post-Colonial Ireland: Raymond Crotty Author of Ireland in Crisis.
- 1.00pm- Lunch break
- 2.30pm- Human rights - The Foundation of Democracy Bjorn Cato Funnemark, Chairperson- The Helsinki Committee on Human Rights.
- 3.00pm- Delegate Forum.
- 4.00pm- Servants or Masters?-The Civil Authorities in post Colonial Ireland. Bernadette Mc Aliskey-Civil rights Leader.
- 5.00pm- Delegate Forum

Saturday 11 August 1990

- 10.00am-10.30am The Constitutional Experience - A case Study. William M.Lafferty. Professor of Sociology Oslo University.
- 10.30am-11.30am Human Dignity in a Multi-Denominational Ireland. Desmond Wilson-Community Priest and Author of An End To Silence
- 12.00pm-1.00pm- delegate Forum
- 1.30pm Buffet Lunch and informal discussion in Conway Mill.