

TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND

**TROOPS OUT
NOW**

**SELF
DETERMINATION
FOR THE
IRISH PEOPLE
AS A WHOLE**



Paper of the Troops Out Movement 30p

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Sinn Fein visit Britain

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Sinn Fein pays its respects to an Irish Chartist leader: Belfast Councillor Alex Maskey lays a wreath on the grave of Bronterre O'Brien in London during the tour (photo: TOM).





EDITORIAL

The recent visit to this country of 8 Sinn Fein councillors marks the beginning of a new and public debate on how British people can get involved in the campaign to end British rule in Ireland. How they can support the Irish people's right to be united and free.

The councillors showed us that they have maintained wide support among nationalists living in the North of Ireland despite the continued efforts by Britain to undermine that support.

On the election of 59 Sinn Fein councillors in May 1985 the government announced that they would not be received by ministers even as part of council delegations. Loyalist councillors, encouraged by this attitude, disrupted council meetings whenever Sinn Fein spoke. They tried to bar them from committees and boards.

But attempts to exclude Sinn Fein from local politics as a means of reducing their popularity and effectiveness totally misread the nature of their support. That support grew out of the struggle of republican prisoners held in the British jails.

The tactic of clearing the streets of republican activists in the hope of de-politicising and diminishing support for the movement backfired. Resistance to British rule became stronger. The prisons became the hub of that resistance. Those on the outside took their strength from the prisoners' struggle. They became the symbol of republicanism.

The prisoners' resistance to the abuses regularly inflicted on them has inspired others to fight on. The conditions which they had to and still have to endure are highlighted in the centre pages of this month's paper.

The historic election of hunger-striker Bobby Sands to Westminster in 1981 gave the republican movement the additional dimension of electoral resistance to Britain's rule. A popular resistance which has grown.

Now the British and Irish governments are considering re-introducing internment. The intention would be to use it selectively, to cream off the republican leadership. Whatever the initial cost in suffering, such a tactic would strengthen the resolve of those committed to a united Ireland.

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 peacekeeping 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 ways circumstances allow, are the backbone of the TOM. Membership or affiliation is open to any individual or group supporting our demands:

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

TROOPS OUT PAPER

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

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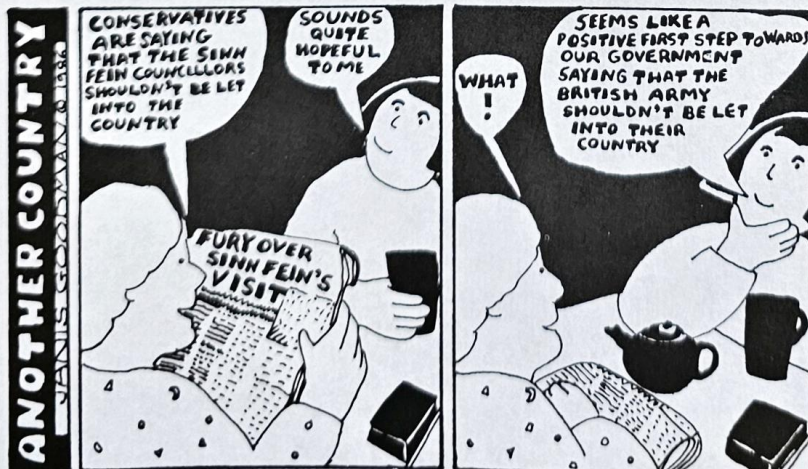
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Courtesy of Leeds Other Paper.

SINN FEIN COUNCILLORS TOUR



Francie Molloy, Tommy Carroll, Pat Traenor, Dodie McGuinness, Alex Maskey about to embark on their 6-day tour of London (photo: TOM).

The visit to England of 8 Sinn Féin councillors in late October was a resounding success. The tour which was facilitated by the Troops Out Movement, Labour Committee on Ireland and Irish in Britain Representation Group enabled the councillors to exchange ideas and information with their counterparts here.

Despite the predictable opposition to the tour from establishment circles and in particular some scurrilous reporting in local newspapers, many turned out to hear them speak and discuss mutual problems.

They were met by Labour groups, councillors, trades councils and community groups in Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Nottingham, Leicester, York, London and

Brighton. Public meetings held throughout the country were packed.

In London they were received by the full councils at Haringey, Hackney and Camden. They met with the Inner London Education Authority Labour group, a number of policing committees, the Irish Women's Centre and the Newham Monitoring Project.

The fact that such a large-scale tour was possible is a testimony to the changing perception of Britain's role in N. Ireland. Our job is to build on the success achieved by it. We thank the councillors for the work they put into making the tour possible. We cannot promise a lighter schedule the next time you come.

SINN FEIN COUNCILLORS VISIT LEEDS

"Fury Over Sinn Féin Visit" screamed the front page headline of the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, a few days before two SF councillors were due to speak in Leeds on 21st October.

But Councillors Teresa Holland (W. Belfast) and Jim McAllister (S. Armagh) received a warm reception from 100 people who came to hear them speak at a public meeting in the Leeds Trades Club.

The speakers, addressing their twelfth meeting in two days, nevertheless seemed full of energy and optimism – inspiring to their audience. To those who asked how they could help the struggle for freedom in Ireland, the reply from Sinn Féin was clear: "Join TOM! and if you're in the Labour Party, join the Labour Committee on Ireland! Work with whatever organisation you can to bring about British withdrawal from Ireland".



Liberal Councillor, Pierre Royan, delivers his blank message to Sinn Féin at Hackney Town Hall. Later Alex Maskey received a standing ovation from Labour members. (Photo: TOM)

Local government in Northern Ireland

The last year local elections were held on an all-Ireland basis was in 1920. Sinn Féin and other nationalist parties won control of 28 of the 32 counties including Fermanagh and Tyrone, two counties now within N. Ireland.

After Partition the Unionist government closed down all nationalist controlled councils and began reorganising local boundaries. Electoral areas were redrawn so that nationalist areas were won with a huge majority, thus rendering vast amounts of nationalist votes ineffective. Unionist seats were won with a small but effective majority. This process of gerrymandering was ongoing. Derry and Fermanagh were reorgan-

ised several times as population numbers shifted.

Voting rights were restricted to ratepayers and their spouses of which relatively few were Catholics. In 1945 when the Labour government extended the franchise in Britain to everyone over 21 years, Northern Ireland was excluded.

The emergence of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s forced the British government to extend the vote to all those over 21 years. The reduction in councils from 73 to 26 although resulting in an increased Nationalist representation still meant areas such as Dungannon and Fermanagh maintained a small Unionist

majority due to the way the boundaries are drawn.

Local government has continued to reflect the sectarian nature of N. Ireland. Only seven of the 26 councils have signed the Fair Employment Agency's 'Declaration of Intent' to provide equality of opportunity. Discrimination is practised in the areas of council employment, siting of new factories, denial of leisure facilities in nationalist areas and allocations to local health and social services, educational and library boards.

On the election of 59 Sinn Féin Councillors in May 1985, the British government announced that they would not be received by ministers

even as part of a council delegation. Loyalist councillors disrupted council meetings whenever Sinn Féin spoke. They also attempted to exclude them from all committees and boards.

Statistics of the Sinn Féin result at the local election in May 1985.

- * 59 councillors elected
- * 75,685 votes
- * 44% of the Nationalist votes
- * Chairpersons of Fermanagh and Omagh councils
- * Largest Nationalist grouping on 4 councils: Belfast, Omagh, Cookstown and Fermanagh.



RUC member Nigel Hegarty (centre) fires a plastic bullet at point blank range, killing John Downes (seen here behind the RUC man on the right). Photo: Pacemaker.

John Downes' killer walks free

It will have come as no surprise to people familiar with recent history in Northern Ireland, that a man walked free from Belfast Crown Court at the end of September even though he was seen by TV viewers throughout the world to shoot dead an unarmed man. The reason for his acquittal was that the killer had acted whilst wearing the uniform of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), and his victim was an Irish nationalist, John Downes.

It was on August 12th 1984 when, in a vain attempt to arrest Martin Galvin of NORAI, the RUC attacked a peaceful republican rally in Andersonstown. They drove into the crowd, who were cowering on the ground trying to shield themselves from volleys of plastic bullets fired by both RUC officers and British soldiers.

22 year old father John Downes was shot dead at almost point blank range by RUC man Nigel Hegarty. On that evening's television news, the world watched with horror. For once, the so-called security forces had done their dirty work in the full blaze of the world's media. Stung by the widespread condemnation which followed, the authorities reacted by charging Hegarty with manslaughter.

The charge was nothing but a cosmetic exercise, designed to present the RUC as an impartial force. This became clear during the court hearing when the prosecution presented a weak case, and Hegarty's lawyers were so confident of the outcome that they called no witnesses!

Whilst nationalists are jailed on the flimsiest of evidence,

and frequently on no evidence at all, Nigel Hegarty has walked away from the most public murder in years.

And yet, even had Hegarty been convicted and jailed, justice would still not have been done. For he was, in a sense, only doing his job — however repellent that job may be.

What occurred on that day over two years ago was not a few RUC men losing their heads, it was a planned and premeditated attack. The responsibility for the death of John Downes, and the scores of injuries inflicted on others that day, lies far higher up than the likes of Nigel Hegarty.

Ultimately, John Downes' blood is on the hands of the generals, the security mandarins, and the politicians in Whitehall and Downing Street.

Bombed out of home

Catholic homes are still being petrol bombed in continued loyalist attacks. The victims of these attacks have gone through untold misery. Adding insult to this misery is the attitude of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Families have to apply to the Housing Executive when requesting to be rehoused. Rehousing will only be granted on the grounds of sectarian intimidation which can only be confirmed by the RUC (police).

Gerry Adams, MP for West Belfast, has asked the Executive to accept an assessment from independent agencies rather than the RUC. 'This procedure inevitably works against isolated nationalist families as the RUC are often unwilling to confirm intimidation or, alternatively, to accept the sectarian nature of the intimidation'.

Numerous examples of this have occurred in recent months, including the case of a Belfast family whose home was destroyed by loyalist petrol bombers. The RUC refused to confirm intimidation.



Marine mayhem

Royal Marine Commandos drafted into the North Belfast area since October are intent on provoking confrontation with the nationalists living there. Their arrival has marked a sharp increase in the level of abuse and intimidation.

The antics displayed by members of the 'jewel' of British forces have even plunged to the depths of hurling stones at children; one child had to receive stitches in a head wound.

Martin Meehan, the son of a well-known republican, was picked up by the Commandos and severely beaten. They threatened to throw him to a crowd of loyalists drinking nearby. When he was eventually released from North Queen Street barracks he had to go to hospital where he received treatment for severe bruising.

It is not unusual to find them putting National Front

stickers on the doors of houses in the areas they are patrolling. All complaints made to their Lisburn HQ have been greeted with incredulity. We are after all talking about the 'elite' of the British army.

Early on Sunday morning 12th October a 16 yr old boy, Thomas Shaw, was savagely attacked by Marine Commandos. The youth was walking home from the casualty department of the Royal Victoria hospital around midnight. He was stopped by 4 Commandos who forced him behind a security hut at the entrance to the hospital. 'They kicked me stupid, punching me. One hit me on the face with the butt of his rifle and shouted "Die you fenian bastard you". They tried to trail me up to the laundry where it's dark. I started squealing. I can't remember anything after that'.

Recent weeks have shown a marked increase in attacks by Army and RUC on nationalists in Strabane, Dungannon, Newry, Belfast and Derry. Photo: TOM.

Supergrass case collapses

"Nobody's ever going to hand me back that year", said Patricia Moore on 13th October after being released from Maghaberry Jail. She and 18 others from Derry had charges against them dropped after the collapse of the Whoriskey supergrass case. She had spent 12 months interned without trial.

Derry Sinn Fein councillor Mitchel McLaughlin predicted this outcome: "I personally think in Angela Whoriskey's case there is no intention of taking her to court, her evidence against some people is so ridiculous" (*Troops Out*, July 1986). It seems that months of RUC tuition could not produce a witness with even the meagre credibility required in a Diplock court.

Patricia Moore's Maghaberry cell adjoined the unit occupied by Whoriskey, who is serving a life sentence with no minimum term specified. "It really added to the stress, to sit behind bars knowing that you're totally innocent. The Special Branch were going in most days with thick files and maps to school her to lie about me and everyone else."

But the supergrass policy continues. In the current Owen Connolly show-trial the three defendants have already been interned on remand for 2½ years.

No revolutions here, please

Earlier in the year the SDLP received \$73,161 from a group called the US National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) (see *T.O. May 1986* for further details). The NDI gets its money from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) a slush fund set up by Reagan, which in turn gets its money from the US government. The NDI's new chairman is former US Vice-President Walter Mondale. Introducing John Hume to an NDI dinner he was a little more forthright than perhaps his guest would have liked.

'In the mid-1970's, when I was in the Senate, revolutions took place in Portugal, Angola and Mozambique. Marxist governments came to power. The only means we had to influence the situation in a democratic direction was the CIA. By contrast, the West Germans had a more subtle means to exert influence on Third World governments. That is why NED and NDI are such a good idea.'

NEWS FROM IRELAND

The RUC - at first hand

Every year on 9th August nationalists commemorate the introduction of internment in 1971 with bonfires and barricades. A member of this year's Troops Out Movement Delegation describes his experience of policing in Belfast on that night:

At the first bonfire we met a couple of friends. We were walking towards the second bonfire when three Army trucks and one RUC truck came down the road. A brick was thrown, the trucks stopped and 10 to 12 soldiers jumped out with their guns.

I stood still as I did not know what to do. Tom ran up the road and was quickly pursued by the soldiers. He was jumped on and then thrown into the back of an Army truck. My attempts to ask why were met by a pointed rifle and a 'fuck off'.

Tom's friend had thrown the brick and he suggested going to the police station to admit doing so. His mate couldn't believe it and as we ran off down towards the centre of town he told us: "Them bastards would never believe a fucking word we say. You're mad."

Despite this we went to the Police/Army station. Getting in took some time. Inside there were trucks, armed vehicles, guns, soldiers and police everywhere. I did the talking. It took 5 to 10 minutes to get the policeman behind the screen to admit that Tom had actually been brought in. He was very suspicious of why we were there.

Eventually they confirmed Tom was there. There was then a long argument in which we said that Tom had done nothing and that we knew the person who had thrown the brick which had caused the trucks to stop. We tried to trade but it became apparent that this wasn't possible. Even if Tom's mate did admit to the 'crime', we were told Tom was still to be charged with 'riotous behaviour'.

We argued that it wasn't possible for Tom to be charged with such an offence. We were told: "but the police constable who brought him in has said this was so." (The Army had actually arrested him.)

Not knowing what to do I asked for the name of the 'arresting officer'. This request was constantly refused but finally the policeman pulled back the top sheet and shouted: "Look there's the name of the police constable who arrested him, what



does it matter anyway." THERE WAS NO NAME THERE!

Tom's friend and I laughed and at this point things got really nasty. We were told it didn't really matter which policeman signed the form. "Someone will sign it later" we were told. If we had nothing more to say we were to get out. Assistance was called for and from the yard outside two policemen and two soldiers came in. Guns were pointed. We tried to argue but left quite quickly. We were escorted towards the gates. The abuse was unbelievable and we were told to get away very quickly. We did.

When Tom came in the following morning he was covered with bruises, one of which was seeping with blood. They had charged him with being drunk and disorderly which carries an automatic six month sentence in the North of Ireland. He seemed totally unmoved by the whole experience.

Tom couldn't believe we had gone to the Police/Army station. Thinking back I wouldn't do it again.

British spies in the Republic

The Stalker affair has highlighted the involvement of the British secret services in Irish affairs. Stalker was about to expose not only the activities of the RUC death squad but also the existence of a highly placed spy ring in the Irish republic.

Ireland is a very open society with a very small counter-intelligence service. It is relatively easy for the British Intelligence services to operate there and they have fully availed themselves of the opportunity, particularly in the last 16 years. This takes the form of penetration of the Irish police, army and civil service, operating agents on the ground and the spreading of false information. All these activities are controlled by the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), sometimes known as MI6, though it may often be put into operation by MI5, the RUC's Special Branch or the Special Military Intelligence Unit.

Past SIS co-ordinators

in Ireland have included Christopher Ewart-Biggs, the British ambassador assassinated by the IRA outside Dublin, and Maurice Oldfield who died in 1984. Thatcher's appointment of Oldfield was at the time said to be to co-ordinate the army and RUC in Northern Ireland. But his primary task was to restructure the operations of the British intelligence services in Ireland which had been badly damaged by a serious dispute between MI5 and MI6 in the mid seventies. He developed the counter-insurgency tactic of 'super-grasses', streamlined the activities of the RUC and Army, and greatly increased the level of intelligence activity in Ireland.

His biographer, Richard Deacon, writes "But MI6's main success was in establishing agents inside the Garda, the Irish Army and Government departments. One of the most vital informants was a senior Garda officer. He not only provided information on the IRA but on the activities of the former Irish premier Mr Haughey and other prominent political figures".

It was the uncovering of links between the murders of Roddy Carroll and Seamus Grew in Armagh in 1982 and a spy ring in the Irish Republic run by a senior Garda officer whose codename is 'Badger', that made Stalker's inquiry so sensitive. 'Badger' and his network had arranged clearance for an RUC/military intelligence squad to cross over the border and kidnap Dominic McGlinchey. The operation

went wrong and was exposed in court when John Robinson, one of the RUC men accused of murdering Seamus Grew, revealed the operation and that he and his colleagues had crossed the border.

Stalker also found that the same people who ran that escapade were also involved with the Dowra affair in 1982. In this the RUC prevented a witness from crossing the border to attend a case in which the brother-in-law of the then justice minister Sean Doherty was accused of assault. The case was then thrown out amid suspicions that Doherty had colluded with the RUC to have his brother-in-law freed. But it is now clear that the whole affair was an operation to discredit the justice minister and part of a wider plan to undermine the Haughey administration.

(To be continued in next month's issue.)

Britain's Prisons in Ireland

Armagh, Long Kesh, Magilligan, Maghaberry are all prisons in the North of Ireland. Since they were built many republicans have passed through their gates. Prisoners have been beaten, locked away on their own for long periods, their bodies have been abused, they have been intimidated yet they have never cowed to the wishes of their captors. The next three pages describe the conditions they have endured and an overview of the current prison system in N. Ireland.

Is liberation a crime?

'Medium security' Magilligan Prison



The Northern Ireland Office is poised to implement a revamped penal policy which, they hope, will guide their prison administration into the 21st century. It will seek as its ultimate aim, the criminalisation of republican prisoners and the erosion of the de facto special status which exists in the republican wings of the Long Kesh H-Blocks. A central component in the strategy is the new prison complex at Maghaberry, Co. Antrim.

Maghaberry is the latest in penal technology – it cost over £40 million, and was to be the jewel in the crown of the six counties prison system. It has space for 600 male and 100 female prisoners but at present holds only the North's total female prison population of 25. They were transferred there following the closure of Armagh Gaol. Maghaberry is five years behind schedule for the acceptance of male prisoners although it is believed that the transfer of men there is imminent.

The six counties can boast four gaols: Crumlin Road, Long Kesh, Maghaberry, and Magilligan with a total population of approximately 2,000 prisoners. Before the current phase of the struggle Belfast's Crumlin Road Gaol, a stone-built 19th century edifice with the traditional 3-storey prison design, served as the statelet's only gaol. Now, three of its four wings hold remand prisoners awaiting trial; among them 80 republicans who will be processed through the Diplock courts. Its fourth wing holds non-political sentenced prisoners – known by the euphemism Ordinary Decent Criminals (ODCs).

Long Kesh is the largest gaol and it contains republicans segregated in certain of the infamous H-blocks. The prison also holds loyalists and long-term

criminals. It carries a high-security classification and is known by the British as: Her Majesty's Prison, The Maze Cellular. To nationalists it remains Long Kesh, or simply, the Blocks.

Magilligan, designated medium security, is on the North Derry coast and contains both republican and loyalist prisoners who are reaching the end of their sentences. It has a regime which is in many respects harsher than that in Long Kesh and the tensions within it have produced violent flashpoints in recent months. Loyalists have used hunger-strikes to protest against conditions. Republicans made their feelings known about the brutality and petty vindictiveness of screws in a louder and more direct manner by exploding a car bomb outside the homes of screws in a private housing estate in Limavady, Co. Derry. This saw an immediate and dramatic decrease in brutality against prisoners.

It is instructive to examine the reasons why Magilligan has many more restrictions on visits, parcels, association and education than the maximum security Long Kesh; why loyalists and republicans are forced into mixed wings and integrated exercise and association periods; why the British are prepared to face down a hunger-strike and allow violence between loyalists and republicans and prisoners and screws to continue; why, in short, the harshest regime exists in the North's only medium security prison.

The answer lies in British determination to enforce their policy of criminalisation and, with the opening of Maghaberry their use of Magilligan as a testing ground. It is certainly significant that the governor of Magilligan has been appointed to be the governor of Maghaberry.

A major plank of British policy in Ireland is to portray republicanism as a warped criminal conspiracy. Thatcher's notorious 'Murder is murder is murder' statement is an evocation of this. The policy entails that republican prisoners be dealt with in the same way and in the same conditions as all sentenced criminals. The 1981 Hunger-Strike, when 10 republicans died for the right to be treated as prisoners-of-war, was a reaction against this and its legacy has remained. The republican wings in Long Kesh have special status in all but name and it is so deeply entrenched that the British will not risk a protest on the scale of 1981 to remove it. However, with Magilligan and Maghaberry they see an opportunity to circumvent republican resistance.

With 50 per cent remission on sentences for all prisoners in the North's gaols, someone sentenced to, say, 16 years has to serve 8. If after 6 or 7 years in Long Kesh prisoners are transferred to Magilligan the British expect them to avoid protests so as not to risk losing any remission and jeopardising imminent release. This expectation has proved almost entirely groundless. Republican prisoners remain determined to resist criminalisation.

Maghaberry has been designed along the lines of the most modern prisons in the United States and is similar to Franklin Prison in Co. Durham, England. Problems making it secure and IRA warnings to building contractors delayed its construction but it is now receiving prisoners. When the women moved there in the spring the Northern Ireland Office propaganda machine went into full swing. Videos showing well-manicured lawns, cells comfortable almost to the point of luxury and giving the impression of a happy, relaxed environment were shown on local TV news programmes.

A closer examination shows that reality holds a different version. Small wings, some designed to hold as few as seven prisoners, and cells with their own washing and toilet facilities limit contact between prisoners. Remote-controlled doors and barriers limit contact between prisoners and prison staff. It is, in the words of Alan Crawford, a lecturer at the New University of Ulster, 'a de-humanising environment'. Maghaberry will aim to isolate and demoralise republican prisoners. Already the women there have found that the regime is as harsh as that in Armagh with strip-searching still a regular and unnecessary humiliation.

Britain's criminalisation policy is a long-term plan. Each step made will be carefully considered and ruthlessly implemented. But recent republican history teaches that each step the British make will entangle them in the thorns of a struggle they can never win.

Britain's Prisons in

Armagh and Maghaberry-Mairead Farrell's 10 years



Mairead Farrell

'I did a few university courses in politics and social sciences. I've learnt a lot of self discipline and the importance of strength and resolve. I really feel as if I've never been away at all since I got out and I'm going to continue my involvement with Sinn Féin, remain politically aware. Prison is really an experience I'd never have got anywhere else.'

Mairead Farrell, was recently released from Maghaberry Prison, Northern Ireland. Arrested at 19 she has spent the last ten years in prison, most of it in Armagh. Her story is very much that of Armagh and the women prisoners incarcerated there as a result of the war in Ireland.

Growing up in the Falls area of West Belfast, the many aspects of Britain's occupation — internment, the H Blocks, the constant army harassment — politicised her at an early age. She felt the only solution was a 32-county socialist republic. *'I suppose I've always believed we had a legitimate right to take up arms and defend our country and ourselves against the Brits' occupation. I wouldn't have gotten involved in the movement if I hadn't believed that.'*

She was also attracted to the Republican movement because she was treated equally with the men. *'I don't think sexism is rife in the movement, although that's not to say we are exempt from it either. I can't speak about the situation today but when I was involved, I was treated as an equal and so were the other women, you got doing what the lads did. It depended to what extent you were prepared to be committed. It wasn't measured by what sex you were.'*

She was arrested while on a bombing mission. One of her companions was shot dead and the other, Kieron Doherty was also arrested. She later stood as a candidate for Cork in the same Irish general election in which Kieron Doherty was

elected as TD for Cavan-Monaghan. He became the eighth prisoner to die on hunger strike in 1981.

POLITICAL STATUS

Mairead was the first republican woman to be imprisoned after the withdrawal of special category status. This meant she was not recognised as a political prisoner like those republican women in B wing. She was not able to participate in their well-organised educational classes and not exempt from prison work. She was deprived of free association all day.

Conditions in the prison were very bad. It was very old and A2 wing where remand prisoners were then held had previously been boarded up as unfit for human habitation. There were two toilets and two baths for upwards of thirty women. Each 9ft by 6ft cell was shared by two prisoners. Visiting conditions were also very bad, with no privacy.

After her conviction in December 1976, she was transferred to A1 wing and with three other republican prisoners began a no-work protest against the withdrawal of special category status. This escalated to a dirty protest in February 1980. The prison staff closed down all toilets, wash basins and baths. Cell windows were boarded up when the women tried to empty their chamber pots.

Conditions quickly became appalling. Chamber pots were overflowing and the walls of the small cells were covered in shit. It was a time of great tension in the jail. This was heightened when Mairead Farrell, Mairead Nugent and Mary Doyle began a hunger strike in protest at their loss of political status. This was called off in December when the British Government (falsely) agreed to the demands together with those of the hunger strikers in Long Kesh.

After 13 months the dirty protest was called off in March 1981, in preparation for the second hunger strike in Long Kesh. The next six months were a time of great sadness for the prisoners as they learnt of the deaths of the ten hunger strikers.

STRIP-SEARCHES

The appointment of Thomas Murtagh as prison governor in Armagh in 1982 marked a rise in tension and repression in the prison. It coincided with the 'supergrass' system. Women, remanded under this system, became the main victims of the new tactic of strip-searching, introduced without warning in November 1982. Six young women on their way to the weekly court remand hearings were forcibly held down and stripped naked.

Strip-searches were inflicted mostly on women leaving or entering the prison, in particular prisoners on remand, who have to appear in court once a week. For this they walked through a tunnel to the court accompanied by prison warders with no contact with the public. It was clear that strip-searching was being used to break the women's morale.

At first it was resisted by the republican women who refused to remove their clothes. A number were seriously assaulted while being forcibly stripped. Fearing that someone would be badly injured, the prisoners decided to remove their own clothes during the strip search. (The campaign against strip-searching was stepped up on the outside, particularly through the media.)

Another of Murtagh's innovations was the introduction of solitary confinement. For an offence under Rule 32 (good order and discipline), a prisoner got three days solitary, in a cell bare of any furniture and containing only a bible. Thus Mairead Farrell was put in solitary for having turned off a television without permission.

The H Blocks

Brendan McFarlane and Gerry Kelly were from Long Kesh in September 1983 because of a request by Britain to extradite them. The British Government appealed against the Court has recently reversed the original decision.

In this extract from a letter written in the paper, *NRC Handelsblad*, he describes the Dutch paper refused to print it.

Below we publish two poems written in the H Blocks.

At the outset of the current campaign for National Liberation, in the early '70s, normal rules of practice for due process of law were dispensed with and replaced by emergency legislation and an unashamedly political system, geared to deal with an insurrectionary situation. Mass arbitrary arrests of nationalists and republicans; torture in military interrogation centres; internment without trial for indefinite periods (which was employed for more than four years); special non-jury courts, presided over by a single Unionist, British-appointed judge; inordinately lengthy terms of imprisonment for offences of a political nature; 'confessions' of suspects extracted under torture, accepted as concrete evidence by the courts; 'evidence' from paid perjurers, uncorroborated, leading to the incarceration of hundreds of nationalists and republicans; special prisons (H-Blocks) where we were continuously subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment, kept naked and deprived of books, papers, radio, fresh air, exercise, recreation,

Ireland

MAGHABERRY

On March 19th of this year, Armagh was closed and the women transferred to a new purpose-built prison, Maghaberry. Conditions there are even more oppressive than in Armagh. A new regime of random strip-searching has been introduced. The wings and cells are smaller, the prisoners are locked up for 14 hours a week longer than in Armagh. *It's a very psychological prison, and strip-searching has continued. You're sitting in the leisure halls watching television, and the screws can see you clearly. They also sit in during association and we can't talk.*

Mairead was only strip searched once. This was on the day of her release. *'I felt like it was the final insult. It's designed as a psychological torture, as a way of intimidating. The only way to beat it is to mentally turn off. The screws even make remarks about your body.'*

Mairead's strip search lasted twenty minutes. She had to stand completely naked. *'They looked me up and down for a few minutes, they look all over your body. They told me to lift my feet one*

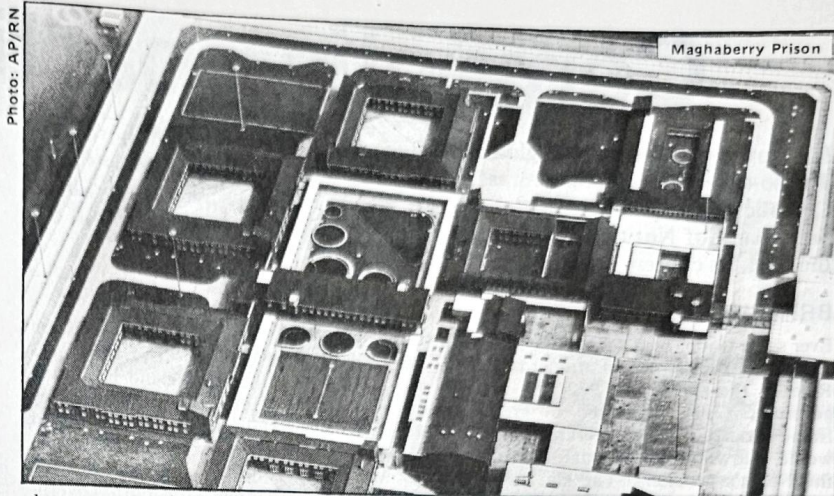


Photo: AP/RN

by one and she felt the soles for a few seconds. Then they asked me to hold out my hands and they feel all around the palms. They feel the inside and outside of your legs. You stand there nude and freezing while they feel every item of your clothing ... you know, shirt cuffs, or sleeves or hems on jeans in case you've hidden something. It's a very degrading experience.'

At Maghaberry, Mairead has left behind a prison which is tense and repressive. There is the fear that the

authorities will try and impose integration between republican and loyalist prisoners. This has led to serious trouble in other prisons. The whole system is geared to break down the women's belief in themselves and their hopes for a united Ireland. That it fails to do so is a tribute to the strength and courage of the women concerned and the communities from which they come.

This article is based on a long interview given by Mairead Farrell to the Irish news magazine Magill in October 1986.

s and political status

lly, with 36 other prisoners, escaped. Recaptured earlier this year in Holland and taken back to N. Ireland was refused. The decision and the Dutch Supreme Court decision and granted extradition. Taken by McFarlane to the Dutch national court, the conditions in Long Kesh. The

written by Gerry Kelly while in the 'H'

human contact, visits with family and friends, for a period of five years.

I personally spent 3½ years naked, on 24 hour per day lock-up, without furniture or bed (just a mattress on the floor and three blankets). On a number of occasions I was subjected to violent attacks by the Loyalist guards. After one particularly violent attack, I spent one week in hospital as a result of head injuries received. I've been hosed down with fire hoses and had my cell flooded on numerous occasions. Snow was shovelled through our broken windows as we slept, and air freshener and urine put in our food on occasions. I also spent regular periods in solitary isolation and was on a number of occasions forcibly held down and scrubbed from head to toe with rough deck-scrubbers. All this was inflicted upon me (and hundreds of other republicans) in an attempt to break my resistance to British attempts to force me to accept the label of common criminal as opposed to that of political

prisoner. I refused to renounce my republican ideals.

Both Gerry Kelly and myself are casualties of that Liberation Struggle which has continued, with little respite, for more than fifteen years. We have both been involved since we were teenagers, and are now approaching our mid-thirties. The British Government recognised the conflict as political in essence and accorded us political status after our capture. This status was later withdrawn because we continuously attempted to return to the Struggle on the streets — i.e. attempted escapes at various intervals.

PORTRAIT OF A SCREW

*Outside Cell 17
Of 'C' Wing, H-Block 8,
In the summer of 1982,
Grew a solitary daisy;*

*A spark of nature
Amongst all that concrete,
Tarmac and metal,
Fighting against the odds;*

*A faint yellow flicker
Pushing for recognition,
Seeking fame or notoriety
In a colourless world.*

*A screw on patrol
Sighted this 'blemish'
In the sacred 'STERILE AREA'*

And eradicated it!

The final outcome of the extradition proceeding against us will, I believe, rest on international political considerations. While I am not optimistic, I still retain a little hope that your [Dutch] Government may yet refrain from kicking an oppressed people in the teeth. It will be a sad irony indeed if the Dutch, who suffered so much under occupation themselves, are now to hand over those whose only crime is to resist occupation in Ireland.

H-BLOCK

Gerry Kelly wrote this poem in June 1978 when the 'no wash' protest had started. He was still in the 'cages' end of Long Kesh at the time with Political Status.

*When the world is the inside of a grey cube
Its atmosphere: putrefaction
Its mountains: body waste
Its plains: eroding bitumen
Its seas: urine
Its rain: industrial disinfectant
Its sky: an eternal florescent light
Its creatures: maggots and worms.*

*When the weather appears in uniformed
hate;
When the door to emotion is heavy steel;
When closed eyes bring the only freedom;
When 'relationship' means a hand or lone
hoarse voice;
When that world has one inhabitant.*

*Try then, to convince this gaunt example
Of man's inhumanity to man,
That God is just,
And man made in His likeness!*

Cementing partition - one

It is now a year since the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed at Hillsborough. The so-called 'new climate' created by its signing has left nationalists and Catholics living in the North of Ireland feeling more besieged. Here Chris Sutherland of Norwich Troops Out Movement assesses the background to the deal, its content and the present situation.

BRITISH POLICY

Ever since troops were deployed in August 1969 and the implementation of Direct Rule in the spring of 1972, the British government has attempted to create a framework of 'civil' government which would allow for an internal solution to the North's problems. The aim has been to establish peace and stability in a statelet which despite the decline of its shipbuilding, engineering workshops and linen mills, remains of crucial strategic importance to Britain and NATO (the Irish Republic is officially neutral). The methods adopted to achieve this stability have varied but the aims have been essentially the same: to neutralise the IRA, and to provide an internal solution to enable the North to continue its life-span, an aim shared to a large degree by the government in the South.

On each occasion, and there have been several attempts (1973/74 Power Sharing, 1975 Convention, Roy Mason's 1977 'Five Point Plan', Humphrey Atkins' 1979 'White Paper' on devolution, the 1980 Thatcher/Haughey Summits, Prior's 1982 Assembly, and finally the Hillsborough Agreement itself), the problem has been how to sell the deal to the unionists.

More importantly was the question of how to get the protestant majority to accept an agreement which they felt unable to comply with and considered against their better interests. The second major problem has been how to persuade the catholic minority into accepting that such an internal solution (either on integrative or devolutionary lines) would alter their second-class citizenship — indeed whether such an arrangement wouldn't just consolidate exactly those age-old sectarian abuses and discrimination, features which reach into the very bowels of Northern Irish society.

A third problem has been how to achieve both these things whilst waging war on the IRA at a time when large numbers of catholics clearly support them either as defenders of catholic areas and as 'Freedom Fighters', or through their political wing Sinn Fein. It has been the growth of the latter since the hunger strikes of 1980 and 1981, with their electoral interventions on both sides of the border, which has galvanised British and Irish governments into seeking some kind of accommodation with each other. In the North they have polled around 100,000 catholic votes on several occasions, and some 55,000 in the Irish Republic. The fear from the Southern establishment's point of view is of a war in the North creeping ever southwards. The fear from the British point of view

was articulated by the former Northern Ireland Secretary, James Prior two years ago when he talked of Ireland becoming a potential 'British Cuba' as a focus of increasing destabilisation not just within Ireland but throughout the British Isles.

When one considers the sheer cost of the present 'Troubles' for both governments, then a deal which may head things off becomes very attractive indeed. The 'Forum Report' of 1984 showed how the South had forked out some £1.1 billion in terms of the cost of policing the border and the economic consequences of partition between 1969 and 1983. This in a country which has one of the highest per capita debts in the world amounting to some IR£19 billion and an economic recession which has rivalled that of Britain's in the first years of the 1980s. The South now has an unemployment rate of some 250,000 in a population of just under 4 million, where 50% of the people are under the age of 30. The pressures speak for themselves.

Whilst in the North, the cost to the British exchequer/taxpayer has been enormous. This was revealed in Northern Ireland Secretary Tom King's announcement in January 1986 of spending targets from 1986-1989:

| | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1985 - 1986 | £4,270 million |
| 1986 - 1987 | £4,520 million |
| 1987 - 1988 | £4,680 million |
| 1988 - 1989 | £4,810 million |

With the North's once powerful industries in serious long-term decline, with protestant unemployment beginning to creep up (nearing parity with the always high catholic unemployment), with the social fabric torn by sectarianism and the cumulative effects of 17 years of conflict, some new political initiative was badly called for.

When the government in the South came up with their suggestions in the form of the 1984 Forum Report, all three main options (a unitary state, federalism, and joint sovereignty), were rejected out of hand by the British. But after mounting pressure, particularly from the United States, a much milder compromise in the form of the Anglo-Irish Agreement was reached. Rather than talk of some all-Ireland settlement, the two parties once again reached for a variation on the old theme of power-sharing, only this time using different labels and without any pre-conceived and self-limiting time-table, and in the sure knowledge that the unionists wouldn't be able to mount so confident a show of opposition as they did in 1974. Instead of fixed structures came a 'process' which even today is still unfolding.

The deal was aimed at establishing an 'internal solution' which would eventually end with a devolved form of power-sharing, but with safe-guards and guarantees for the entrapped nationalist minority. Their interests would be looked after by representations from the South. But this was to be consultative only. The South was given no executive function.

The other key aspect to the Agreement was the 'security' angle, in particular how to co-ordinate and step up the drive against the IRA from both sides of the



Democratic Unionist Party members protesting on 6th October in Dublin, the scene of the ninth intergovernmental conference (Photo: AP/RN).

year after the Accord

border. This was to be complemented by a third front in America where extradition (signed in 1985 and ratified in July 1986) would make it harder for pro-Republican groups to function; it would hit at activists engaged in fund-raising and arms procurement; it would gaoil fugitives on the run. The American aid package which accompanied the Agreement, some 250 million dollars over five years, accompanied the July 1986 Extradition Treaty being ratified by the Senate and Congress. 'Security' was the main thrust of the deal.

WHAT THE AGREEMENT SAYS

The Anglo-Irish Agreement laid down a framework rather than a blue-print for future political developments. As such, the fine-print and detail is evolving even as this was written, spearheaded as it is by the 'Inter-Governmental Conference' between the two governments.

In a joint Communiqué issued at the signing ceremony at Hillsborough in November, the following aims were declared:

'Promoting peace and stability in Ireland, helping to reconcile the 2 major traditions in Ireland; creating a new climate of friendship and cooperation between the people of the 2 countries; and improving cooperation in combatting terrorism.'

The parameters of the Agreement were laid out early on and in precise terms. Article (1) states:

- a) No united Ireland without the consent of the North's population.
- b) A recognition that this consent is not forthcoming at present; but,
- c) That if it does emerge, the 2 governments 'will introduce and support in the respective legislation to give effect to that wish'.

Article (2) set out the terms and conditions pertaining to the Inter-Governmental Conference, the body set up to oversee and service the Agreement, backed up by a 'Secretariat'. The Conference would concentrate on four main areas of policy:

- (i) Political matters; (ii) Security and related matters; (iii) Legal matters, including the administration of justice; (iv) The promotion of cross-border cooperation.

Section (b) of Article (2) then set out to describe the wish of both governments to move towards some form of devolved government for the North of Ireland, and that once powers were devolved, these would fall outside the remit of the Conference. There was nothing about creating the kinds of conditions which would eventually lead to the consent of the people towards an acceptance of a future united Ireland.

All mention of Irish aspirations towards a united Ireland in clauses (1) and (2) of the Republic's constitution had all but been abandoned. The government in the

Republic was so keen to get a deal on the North signed that the Irish premier, Garret FitzGerald was reputed to have offered the introduction of internment without trial in the South. Irish nationalism was effectively 'put on the back burner'. *'That is a matter for another generation'*, FitzGerald told Channel 4 News on 15th November 1985. The point was rubbed in when Mrs Thatcher, speaking to the loyalist *Belfast Telegraph* (17/12/85), told her audience that *"the people of Northern Ireland can get rid of the Inter-Governmental Conference by agreeing to a devolved government."* But just in case such devolution proved impossible in the short-term, as indeed it was anticipated it would, then Article (7) c) stipulated that the Conference would remain in operation. It would be a constant inducement for loyalist politicians to sit round the table to discuss an eventual form of devolution. To date, this has been the line of British policy: to ride out the protests and await all-party talks.

By far the most concrete statement of intent revealed the real purpose behind the deal. Article (9) on 'Cross-border cooperation on security, economic, social and cultural matters' carried with it sections a) and b). Section a) stated:

'With a view to enhancing cross-border cooperation on security matters, the Conference shall set in hand a programme of work to be undertaken by the Commissioner of the Garda Síochána and the Chief Constable of the RUC, and where appropriate, groups of officials, in such areas as threat assessments, exchange of information, liaison structures, technical cooperation, training of personnel, and operational resources.'

Within days of the signing of the Agreement, these exchanges were taking place.

ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT AND 'TROOPS OUT'

One of the main beneficiaries of the deal was the constitutionalist nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) who having lost ground to Sinn Féin in the 1981-85 period, began to be bolstered by the prospects for reform which the deal held out. Here at last seemed a chance for constitutional means to assert themselves under the protective mantle of the South. But would it?

Since the signing of the accord no reforms have been forthcoming. Reforms that seemed on offer in November have turned out to be mirages. A proposal to ditch the 'Flags and Emblems Act' which would allow for the flying of the Irish tricolour in catholic areas, all of a sudden became a matter under consideration. A review of the Diplock system and a reappraisal of the use of supergrasses was left unchanged apart from a few minor alterations.

Talk of reforms in the RUC and the flack they have taken from the loyalist backlash throughout 1986, has to be balanced against the hidden truths behind the 'Stalker' enquiry and the use of 'shoot-to-kill' tactics. Reference to reforms within the UDR, even of the force's disbandment, have been dismissed out of hand by the British.

Meanwhile the whole apparatus of the 'Prevention of Terrorism Act' and the 'Emergency Provisions Act' still singles Northern Ireland out from any seemingly 'civil' state — the bulk of it aimed at working class catholics and republican supporters. The use of plastic bullets is still in common usage in the North with fatal results. The visible and invisible discrimination continues unaffected by the Agreement. Unemployment amongst catholics is still double that of protestants. Catholics live in the worst housing, suffer from poorer amenities, and have a greater dependence on state benefits, though this doesn't stop them having money deducted under the 'Payment of Debt Act' for arrears. Catholics suffer a higher infant mortality rate and so on and so on: these are all confirmed by official government statistics and confirm that there has been very little substantive change in the condition of the North's entrapped minority since the 'civil rights' question first raised its public face in 1968.

Then there is the more visible sectarianism in the form of the triumphalist loyalist 'marching season' — that annual show of strength designed to keep catholics in their place as second-class citizens. Despite the pretence of police re-routing of marches, these still took place through the catholic areas. When catholics protested they were met with batons and plastic bullets. These were precisely the abuses the Anglo-Irish Agreement were designed to prevent! They are the kind of conditions which pre-dated even the rise of the Provisional IRA, and will continue to give form to their current struggle and the support they attract as a result. This means that the 'war' will go on, except that now, the Agreement marks a new phase of anti-Republican intensity which can only mean greater repression of catholics. It is a square which cannot be circled.

The role of British soldiers in Northern Ireland is to maintain and enforce this status quo, which is why the demand for 'Troops Out' must still be raised. Far from bring part of the solution to a settlement of the 'Troubles' they are part of the overall problem. Only when the soldiers go and the people of Ireland as a whole are given the right to sort things out for themselves, will there be any lasting peace. The Anglo-Irish Agreement merely reinforces the mould. It does not break it.

Chris Sutherland

Opening eyes in the unions

Camden Irish Workers' Group (CIWG), is a cross-union group of Irish people working in Camden which originally coalesced so as to raise the issue of the Prevention of Terrorism Act within Camden NALGO. They are now attempting to stimulate debate within Camden trade unions on views and aspects of Britain's involvement in Ireland. Here they outline their approach.

The task of getting Britain's exploitative relationship to Ireland even discussed within British trade unions is a notoriously difficult one. There are, broadly speaking, two separate aims in doing so:

- getting some kind of policy passed;
- creating space for discussion; this would include support for isolated trade union members who may be finding difficulty raising the issue at all.

These two usually but not necessarily differing aims give rise to differing tactics: straightforward anti-imperialist 'Troops Out' motions, or motions which highlight civil liberties abuses in Ireland. Some civil liberties motions only call for action on those particular issues, others point to British involvement as the underlying reason for the abuses.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

We realise that the tactic of raising civil liberties issues, such as plastic bullets and strip-searching, has advantages. It can be taken step by step — PTA this year, plastic bullets the next, perhaps British withdrawal the next — and may indeed result in policies being passed.

But, apart from the very length of the process, there is an important disadvantage. Unless the underlying reasons for the civil liberties abuses are spelt out and insisted upon, what can happen is that any demand for British withdrawal can be dropped in the process of attempting to 'get something passed' during a branch meeting or conference. So a great deal of energy may be expended merely on gaining a call for liberal reforms — ultimately self-limiting and ineffective.

BRITISH WITHDRAWAL

Our motion approaches British trade unionists on the basis that British ruling class interests and the British state create discrimination, gross inequalities, repression and the criminalisation of dissent in the

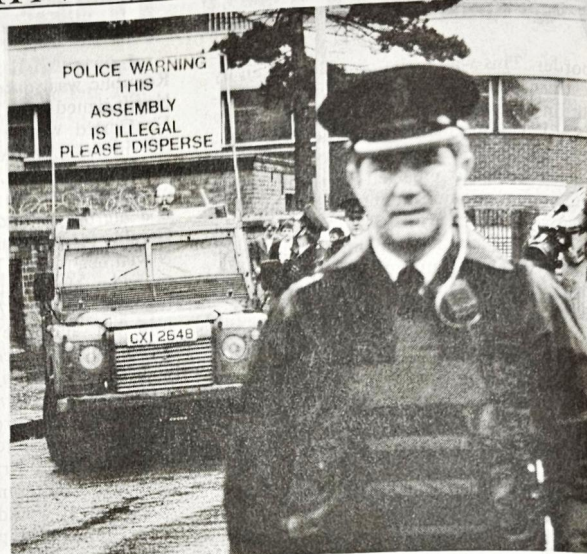
North of Ireland. In addition, sectarianism is a specific historical reality which is consistently manipulated in order to divide working people, and trade unions within the North of Ireland are some of the institutions which contribute to that manipulation.

However, this is not a moralistic approach, nor an appeal to the kind of liberal conscience which passes motions that deal with forms of oppression in other countries but apparently require no intervention. Rather, the argument is that the trade union movement in Britain must open its eyes to its own direct link with what is happening in the North of Ireland, which is very different from offering support from the sidelines.

Ultimately, we are seeking support on grounds of enlightened self interest. Sectarianism divides workers in the North of Ireland just as racism divides workers in Britain. A trade union movement which does not see this and persists in its failure to learn from its collusion with imperialist exploitation is ill-equipped to cope when criminalisation tactics are turned against it, as in the miners' strike and at Wapping.

The crux of our approach is the attempt to demonstrate that the issue for British trade unionists is not 'Ireland' but 'British withdrawal'. We well know that this will be vigorously opposed in trade union settings, much more than motions dealing with civil liberties. But then we are trying to address the nub of the matter by exposing the nature and base of the imposed state in the North of Ireland, rather than the forms that the repression takes within it.

Initially, our motion will be put to Camden NALGO on 25th November. Support for and discussion of our approach would be gratefully received. CIWG can provide copies of our motion to any trade unionists. Write to: Ann Godfrey, Camden Social Services Area One, 28-30 Theobalds Road, London WC1.



Belfast, 1986: Will notices like this soon be a familiar sight in Britain?
Photo: Martin Shakeshaft

More police powers

Most people involved in organised protest activity assume that there exists in Britain a legal right to demonstrate. No such right exists in law. The Public Order provisions soon to be enacted will further increase police powers.

The assumption behind the provision is that protesters are always a minority of the population and therefore necessarily infringe the rights of the majority by congregating in such a way as to obstruct the majority's freedom of movement. In this way any and all demonstrators are automatically seen as marginal, and potentially if not actually criminal.

The policing of demonstrations in the recent past has been clearly based on such thinking, arising from assumed popular support for military-type interventions. From demonstrations as tiny as those outside the Old Bailey during the bombing trials of the summer to events as huge as those at Wapping, police have intervened to limit the size, duration and place of meetings at or even before the meetings have begun. The authority quoted has been obstruction laws. Police actions have overwhelmingly and repeatedly been repudiated by courts' refusal to convict, but the waste of time and public money involved plus the humiliation suffered by the police has not been enough to prevent them from continuing.

The Public Order provisions also make organisers liable to pay heavy fines if any demonstrators breach conditions laid down by police and even liable to pay the costs of policing demonstrations in certain circumstances. This echoes the way in which the responsibility for the deaths of Kevin Gately and Blair Peach was attributed not to their killers but to the demonstrators.

Public and legal tolerance of invasive policing methods which criminalise sections of the community is unequalled in Europe. One of its sources is the enthusiasm with which Britons have greeted the policing of the minority community in Northern Ireland. The escalation of weaponry and policing tactics there over the last 17 years has led the British to believe that death by plastic bullets is the appropriate penalty for being on the streets. That same weaponry and policing style is on our streets already and just about to be enshrined in law.

An article in this paper exactly a year ago described the content and implications of the new provisions and the history of public order policing, but no effective campaign to prevent their becoming law has emerged. The only form of resistance left to us now is to continue to organise and protest.



Dunnes striker held under PTA

A striker from Dunnes Store in Dublin was detained for an hour under the Terror Act at Birmingham airport last month. Brendan Barron, who has been picketing the store since 1985 after refusing to handle South African goods, had been invited here to address anti-apartheid movement meetings and meet the Birmingham Trades Council.

He was the only passenger to be detained from the flight. Police demanded to see the text of his intended speeches. They even went to the extent of questioning him closely about some spare batteries he was carrying for his hearing aid.

Clearly frightened by this experience he informed the West Midlands PTA Research and Welfare Association. Alan O'Dwyer of the Association said 'Brendan Barron was shocked and intimidated by

his experience. He intends to make representations to the Irish Embassy, the Dept. of Foreign Affairs in Dublin and the NCCL.'

EXCLUSION

Francis McNamee was arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act on 15th October after visiting his brother Gilbert, held on remand in Brixton prison. Three days later he was served with an exclusion order and sent back to N. Ireland, internally exiled to what is technically part of the same country.

In an earlier statement Francis had highlighted the sensationalist reporting and disproportionate security surrounding his brother's case, "bound to sway the impartiality of any jury, especially an English jury where anyone Irish is on trial".

Support for Frame-up victims

A Dublin public meeting on 16 October heard representatives of all the major Irish parliamentary political parties call for the release of the Birmingham Six, framed 12 years ago on bombing charges and jailed for life. The Irish campaign for their release includes posters on hoardings throughout the country demanding 'justice for the Birmingham Six' in 3 foot high letters.

Following the publication of Robert Kee's book *Trial and Error* (Hamish Hamilton, £10.95), 210 MPs from all parties have signed a Westminster motion calling for a review of the Guildford Four case. Detective Inspector Peter Imbert played a major role in the Guildford frame-up: he is now a senior Scotland Yard Officer, tipped as a possible future RUC Chief Constable.

The London Birmingham Six Campaign may be contacted by writing to 49 Stamford Road, London, N1 4JJ.

Whatever we (English) decide to give to Ireland we must give it. It is now worse than useless to promise it. I will say here once and for all, the hardest thing that an Englishman has to say of impressions of another great European people; that over all these hills and valleys (of Ireland) our word is wind, and our bond is waste paper. G.K. Chesterton, poet and novelist, 1919.

'The nationalist majority in the county, not withstanding a reduction of 336 in the year, stands at 33,684. We must ultimately reduce and liquidate that majority. This county I think it can safely be said, is a Unionist county. The atmosphere is Unionist. The boards and properties are nearly all controlled by Unionists. But there is still this millstone around our necks.'

E. C. Ferguson, Unionist MP, speaking in Enniskillen in 1948.

Prisoners' Birthdays

Please send cards and letters etc to prisoners, especially on their birthdays. Let them know they are not forgotten. Don't forget to use the number.

ROY WALSH 119083
HM Prison, Gartree, Market Harborough, Leics, LE167RP

1st November

SEAN KINSELLA 758661
HM Prison, Love Lane, Wakefield Yorkshire, WF2 9AG

5th November

PAUL NORNEY 863532
HM Prison, Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX

11th November

BRENDAN DOWD 758662
HM Prison, Frankland, Brasside, County Durham

1st November

ANDY MULRYAN 461576
HM Prison, Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ

11th November

JAMES BENNETT 464989
HM Prison, Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ

4th December

LIAM BAKER 464984
HM Prison, Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ

6th December

HUGH DOHERTY 338636
HM Prison, Love Lane, Wakefield, Yorkshire, WF2 9AG

7th December

NOEL GIBSON 879295
HM Prison, Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX

11th December

NOEL JENKINSON PICKET

Leicester prison was the venue for a picket on the 12th October to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the death of Noel Jenkinson.

Noel Jenkinson from Co. Meath was sentenced to 30 years imprisonment at Winchester in 1972. He spent the whole of his time in prison isolated in the security units of either Leicester or Parkhurst where there were no other Irish PoWs. He was badly beaten twice and on one other occasion was unconscious from blows received from behind in Parkhurst in November 1975; he was subsequently held in solitary confinement under rule 43 until March 1976. He was found dead in his cell on 9th October 1976 just hours before he was due a visit from his wife.



LETTERS

We welcome contributions and feedback from our readers. Please send your letters to this address:

Troops Out, c/o Box 10, 2a St Paul's Road, London N1 2QN.

Dear TOM,

It was the same day that you wrote your letter that I was taken from Risley to Strangeways ready for the trial to begin on 14th January. Conditions were very bad in Strangeways but once the trial had started and my guilty plea was given I was taken away to Armley Prison. Armley Prison was also pretty grim. At Strangeways and Armley there were some really vicious screws who got together with National Front members who were in both prisons.

On 3rd February I was taken back to Strangeways, ready for the end of the trial, and was given back my 14 year sentence on 6th February. That same day I was taken back to Armley.

I was restricted to writing only two letters per week. My property got all mixed up during the various moves and it took me a long time to get things more or less into reasonable order again.

On 17th June I was taken from Armley and brought here to Long Lartin where, although it is a top security place, conditions are very much better.

Here I'd like to thank you for the coverage and support in the paper. I'm sure you know how much it means to a prisoner.

On 28th July the Lord Chief Justice Lord Lane, sitting with MacPherson and Nolan, refused me leave to appeal against the length of sentence. As things stand my earliest date of release is 5th May 1994 - just after my 70th birthday. I am at the moment in the middle of a string of disappointments and frustrations trying to get my present legal position and other important things sorted out. Trying to get a new solicitor, trying to get some money back which the Special Branch are still holding, trying to find out my Category A status etc.

You may be interested to know that one of the Court of Appeal judges who sat for my case on 28th July - Macpherson - was a commander of the 21 SAS regiment from 1962-65! What a bloody farce, for him to act in 'judgement' on my case. The judge who sentenced me, Mann, was 'part-time legal assistant to the Foreign Office 1954-56' which to me suggests connections with the intelligence services. Soon after my trial he was promoted to the Appeal court, and one of his first sittings was with the boss himself, Lord Lane. They know how to rig the bench to get the results they've predetermined!

You are aware that there are several republican prisoners here in Long Lartin and it was not very long ago that we said goodbye to Dickie Glenholmes. I'm continually amazed at the great spirit of the

republicans serving very long sentences, and of the framed prisoners such as Conlon and Walker.

It's good to see a more vigorous campaign for the release of the Birmingham Six and Guildford Four etc., but obviously, even if they were released tomorrow, nothing could compensate for the years of injustice inflicted on them.

I'm keeping in reasonably good health and spirits, and once again say very many thanks for the support of good friends and comrades.

With all best wishes,

Pete Jordan

Long Lartin No H22338,
South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs.
WR11 5TZ

Plastic Murder

Dear Troops Out,

On the 12th August 1984 John, myself and our baby Claire attended the Anti-Internment march. It is, as everyone in nationalist Belfast knows, a peaceful rally, a family affair with women and children a common sight, until we reached St. Agnes. John wanted to hear the speeches so he left us to go up to Connolly House while I and our baby waited beside the chapel. We waited for about half an hour until the shooting started, when everyone panicked I was brought into someone's house. It wasn't until I got home about an hour later that I was informed that John had been hit, and had been taken to hospital.

When I got there they didn't even know if John had been admitted, there was that many casualties, men, women and children, some of them had been transferred to other hospitals. I was asked for a description of John and I was then informed that he was dead. These were the events as I remember them on that day. It wasn't until much later that I saw the video which was carried on all the news programmes that night. I saw a peaceful rally attacked by police. I saw John run across the road and attempt to defend the people who were being attacked. It was a police riot which was witnessed by the world's media. The RUC were issued with instructions to use maximum force to arrest Martin Galvin, who would have been subjected to a mere fine.

Due to the coverage on television a hastily arranged RUC press conference was called. They then stated that John had been killed by a ricochet and that he had been throwing stones. It wasn't until much later that, on the evidence of the video, they changed their story and charged the RUC man Hegarty with John's murder, later

reduced to manslaughter. This made any further coverage of the day and John's death sub judice, thus silencing the world's press who were rightly shocked and outraged, by what had happened that day.

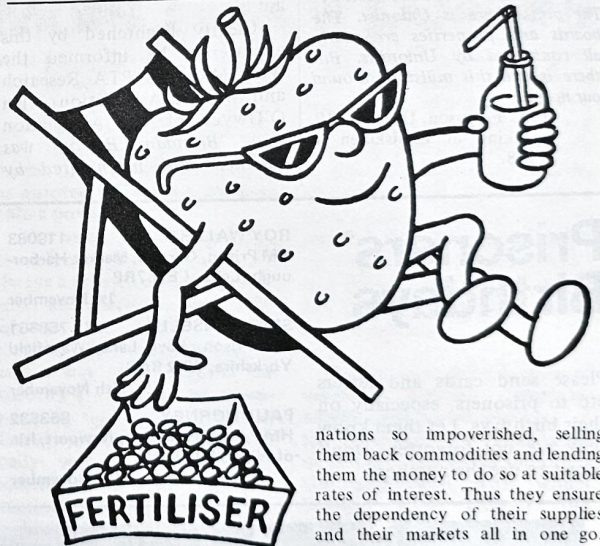
For two years I was never informed of any developments in the case against the RUC man, nor did I know the date of his court appearances. On returning from holiday recently with my mother and daughter I learned that Hegarty had been acquitted. That the judge had said that the police had been under stress. What was never explained is why they were there at a peaceful rally heavily armed with the British Army in reserve. Why it was necessary to attack at the rally and fire plastic bullets at people who were sitting on the road. Why Hegarty who was heavily protected fired point blank at John who was no more than five feet from him.

Why was there no independent witness to the events of that day? Why did police witnesses sit in court with typewritten statements while their colleagues gave evidence?

The outcome of the trial came as no surprise to me, as did the stoney silence that has accompanied it. The Catholic church in the form of Bishop Cathal Daly seems to have forgotten the whole incident and John Hume and Peter Barry, the architects of the fair deal to Catholics (Anglo/Irish) agreement, have yet to utter one word on the outcome of the trial. Maybe they are afraid to rock the boat. The use of plastic bullets goes on, and according to Police Chairman Wright it seems that the carnage will continue. Sixteen people have been killed, hundreds injured, some permanently, by this weapon of 'minimum force'.

Brenda Downes (Belfast)

REVIEWS



CROPS AND ROBBERS

15 minutes animated film
Leeds Animation Workshop

Crops and Robbers is a new film explaining the material base of imperialism, the world-wide control of commodity production which creates political control of peoples and nations.

I know you are not supposed to address such an important complicated subject in a mere 15 minutes, let alone in cartoon form. But it just so happens that it works. The explanation is clear and the seriousness is enhanced by the wit, not undermined.

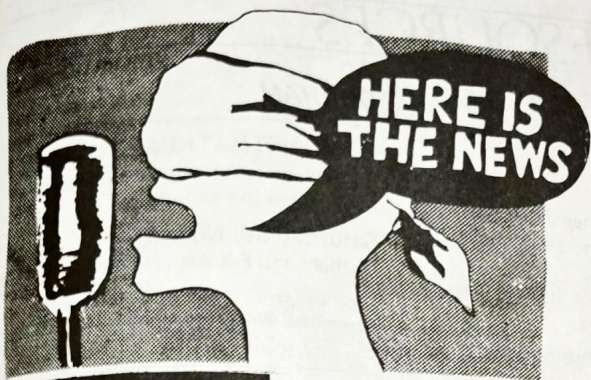
First the European powers invade other nations by force of arms, wreck their natural economies and institute cash crops to suit their own needs at their own prices. Then - in the age of neo-colonialism - they can bestow largesse to the

nations so impoverished, selling them back commodities and lending them the money to do so at suitable rates of interest. Thus they ensure the dependency of their supplies and their markets all in one go. What a wonderful self-perpetuating system this imperialism is! And how unfortunate that it is threatened by an alliance of revolting people from all parts of the world - the optimistic note on which the film ends.

Ireland comes into all this as a case in point. It is both a colony, and a European area of revolution which has to be bought off with the fruits of conquest (the American potato). An important dimension of the film is to include the aspects of oppression and inequality in Europe and the USA etc, and thus to involve us too in the solution, the destruction of imperialism.

Leeds Animation Workshop is an independent women's collective. *Crops and Robbers* is available for hire or to buy, on 16mm film or video. Contact 45 Bayswater Row, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS8 5LF.

Sarah Grimes



SEPTEMBER

8th
The Ulster Clubs announce their intention to picket the homes of people who collaborate with the Anglo-Irish agreement.

9th
The appeal of eight people from Derry convicted on the evidence of supergrass Robert Quigley begins in Belfast.

10th
David McVeigh is executed by the IRA for being an RUC informer. Tara, a loyalist paramilitary group, states it will carry out attacks on targets in the Republic.

11th
The IRA carry out a rocket and gun attack on Derry Police HQ.

12th
United States Airforce announces plans to extend its option to buy 48 Sherpa aircraft from Shorts in Belfast by 60 days.

14th
The IRA kill John Bingham, a top UVF member who is described as having been involved in the murders of five Catholics in Belfast. An IRA member is killed by the British army.

16th
Raymond Mooney, a Catholic, is killed by the Protestant Action Force in retaliation for the killing of John Bingham two days earlier. The PAF also claim responsibility for shooting a man in the leg in Bangor, Co. Down.

17th
A Catholic civilian, Joseph Webb, is shot dead by the loyalist UVF in Belfast.

18th
An Agreement is signed in Dublin to set up an International Fund to administer the aid package negotiated through the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The money is \$120 million from the USA over 3 years, \$1 million per year for 10 years from Canada and NZ\$300,000 from New Zealand. More is expected from Australia and the EEC. Three-quarters will go to the North, one-quarter to the Republic. The fund will set up two investment companies to channel money into private enterprises; some money will also be available for voluntary and public schemes.

Monthly unemployment figures for N Ireland are the worst ever: a total of 130,000, or 19.2% of total workforce. This is an increase of 11,700 from a year ago. And in the first week of October three factories

close in the North with job losses of over 400, thought to be due to 'political instability'.

19th
Tory MEP Sir Frederick Catherwood proposes devolved rule for N Ireland, in a speech at Queen's University Belfast. He suggests round-table talks between the parties in N Ireland (except Sinn Fein), with meetings of the Anglo-Irish Agreement suspended meanwhile. Unionist politicians reject the proposal unless the Agreement is totally suspended. This in turn is rejected by London and Dublin.

22nd
A former loyalist supergrass, James Williamson, is interviewed on a Granada TV 'World in Action' programme. He describes how the RUC pressurised him: "They would put forward names and suggest that they were there as well. I would argue that the people weren't there and they would just press the point that they were."

24th
RUC Constable Nigel Hegarty is acquitted on a charge of manslaughter. Hegarty shot John Downes with a plastic bullet during the Internment Rally in Belfast, August 1984. The case was heard in the no-jury Diplock Court before Justice Hutton. Republic's Foreign Affairs Minister Peter Barry addresses the UN General Assembly: the Anglo-Irish Agreement aims to promote peace, stability and reconciliation between the 'two traditions' of the North and between Britain and Ireland; it gives the Republic's Government the right to speak on behalf of the North's nationalists. Barry also condemns apartheid in South Africa and calls for sanctions, and expresses concern about UNIFIL, the UN peace-keeping force in S Lebanon which includes contingents of the Irish Army.

British Home Secretary Douglas Hurd, speaking in Bonn, announces proposed changes in British law to make extradition easier: in particular, to remove the need to establish a *prima facie* case against the accused.

25th
Announcement by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive that they will demolish the whole of Divis Estate (except the tower block which has an Army observation post on the top!). This follows a 13-year campaign by tenants against the appalling conditions. Rossville Flats in Derry are also to go.

26th
A British soldier and a UDR private are jailed for life for the murder of a Catholic civilian, Edward Love, in Enniskillen in April 1985.

30th

Amnesty Report calls on Britain to set up an independent judicial inquiry into shoot-to-kill incidents. This is turned down.

OCTOBER

Labour Party Conference: a motion on British withdrawal from Ireland and rejection of the Anglo-Irish Agreement is heavily defeated. Tony Benn calls for a review of the Birmingham Six case, and Conference votes for a judicial inquiry into Stalker affair. Sinn Fein councillor Tommy Carroll addresses a fringe meeting.

6th
Ninth session of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference in Dublin. There is no progress on the judicial system or reforms of the 'security' forces in the North. The British side promises that it will repeal the Flags and Emblems Act. There is discussion of introducing a 'human rights declaration' — to cover the whole of Ireland! This clearly shows the neo-colonial relationship, for in reality human rights are an issue specifically in the North, but Britain refuses to legislate on that.

A Catholic home in Lisburn is petrol bombed — one of scores of such incidents during this period.

There are incendiary attacks on Republic-owned shops in Belfast by loyalists. More attacks on the following day in other parts of the North.

A UDR soldier is shot dead by the IRA in Co Tyrone.

7th
In Dublin, the court case starts against the Open Door Counselling and the Well Women Clinic. The case is brought by SPUC and concerns the legality of informing women about the availability of abortion services abroad. It follows the amendment to the Republic's Constitution to 'protect the life of the unborn'. The case continues until 11th, and judgement is expected in late November.

Northern Ireland Committee of ICTU launches a campaign against sectarian attacks and intimidation at workplaces — meaning loyalist threats against Catholics and IRA threats against any business or worker who services or supplies the British Army, RUC and UDR.

At the Old Bailey Thomas Maguire is acquitted on a charge of conspiring to blow up a Blackpool soldiers' pub. The 'evidence' against him came from an informer.

8th

Conservative Party Conference does not debate N Ireland. At a fringe meeting OUP leader Molyneux speaks against the Anglo-Irish Agreement, backed by dissident pro-unionist Tory MPs. At another fringe meeting later Tom King speaks for the Agreement and lays into the Republic's Constitution for its claim over the whole of Ireland.

Acting against the unionist boycott of Council business, the N Ireland Office authorises a one-day permit for Council officials in Belfast to pay out grants to community groups. This follows protests from such groups, including those from Protestant areas, pointing out hardship and danger to children.

12th

An RUC member is killed by an IRA mortar in West Belfast.

13th

The Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Hume, calls on the Home Office for an appeal for the Guildford Four (frame-up). A new book by Robert Kee also questions the conviction of the Guildford Four and the Maguires, and a delegation of Irish politicians makes representation on behalf of the Birmingham Six. On Oct 16th, Home Secretary Hurd says he will 'reconsider' the Maguire case.

In the cases in N Ireland involving Derry supergrass Angela Whoriskey, charges against one of the defendants are withdrawn by the DPP and she is set free, after a year in prison. Charges against 12 more are dropped in the following days.

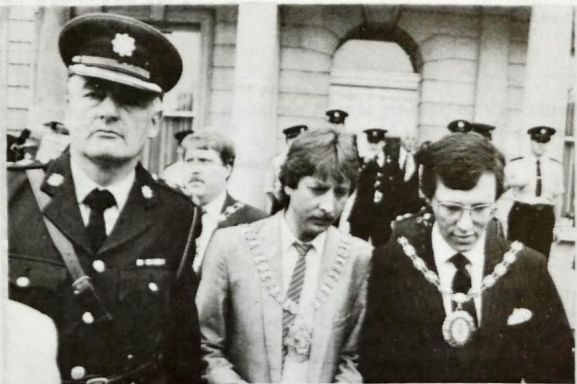
14th

The IRA hold a secret convention to decide policy: they reaffirm a commitment to armed struggle against British rule in the North, and decide in favour of Republican candidates standing for and taking their seats in the Dail (parliament in the Republic). Sinn Fein will debate same issue at their conference in November.

DPP decides not to bring charges against the RUC member responsible for the death of Keith White, who was killed by a plastic bullet while taking part in a loyalist rally in Portadown last Easter.

16th

The loyalist UDA shoot dead a 76 year-old Catholic civilian, Kathleen Mullan, and her son Terry in Co Down. They claim the man was in the IRA, but this is universally recognised to be untrue. In the immediate area, at least 20 Catholic families have been driven from their homes this year as a result of loyalist intimidation and attacks.



DUP members Sammy Wilson and Peter Robinson in Dublin to picket the Anglo-Irish Conference.

Photo: AP/RN

COMING EVENTS & RESOURCES

YORK

FREE THE BIRMINGHAM SIX

Public Meeting with Chris Mullin, author of *Error of Judgement*.
Organised by York TOM.

Friday 14th November, 7.30pm
Priory Street Community Centre, York.

BIRMINGHAM

PUBLIC MEETING ON THE BIRMINGHAM SIX

Speakers: Chris Mullin, author of *Error of Judgement*; Claire Short MP; Maire O'Shea, PTA Victim; Relative of one of the prisoners.
Organised by Birmingham TOM, supported by LCI.

Tuesday 18th November, 7.30pm
Digbeth Civic Hall

JOIN THE TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT

Below is a list of towns and districts in England, Scotland and Wales where we have TOM branches or contacts. If you want to join through a branch or as an individual, please fill in the coupon provided, and send it to PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH.

ENGLAND
Birmingham
Brighton
Bristol
Cambridge
Colchester
Coventry
Leeds
Leicester
Manchester
Merseyside
Northampton
Norwich
Nottingham
Redditch
Sheffield

Tyneside
York

LONDON AREA
Camden
East London
Haringey
Hillingdon
Islington
Lambeth
West London

SCOTLAND
Glasgow

WALES
Newport

I would like to join/be sent information about the Troops Out Movement.

Name

Address

Membership of a branch costs £6 (£2 unemployed) payable through the branch. Individual membership is £10 (£6 unemployed) which includes a subscription to *Troops Out*.

LONDON

CARRAIG AGUS AN FHARRAIGE

A Festival of Irish Women's Culture: Music, dance, drama, literature, crafts, film, video, exhibitions.
Presented by the London Irish Women's Centre at various venues.

25th October-15th November.

LIWC, 59 Church Street, N16.
Telephone 01 249 7318.

IRELAND: BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

EVENING COURSE

Presented by East London TOM with The Workers' Educational Association.
Starts Monday November 3rd 7.30

Fortnightly at:
Liberty Hall, 489 Kingsland Road, E8.

MANCHESTER

MANCHESTER MARTYRS MEMORIAL MARCH

Sunday 23rd November

Assemble 12.30, Longsight Market, Dickenson Road, Longsight, Manchester

Indoor Rally 3pm UMIST, Oxford Road, Manchester

Demonstration Committee: PO Box 13, Levenshulme PDO, Manchester M19 3BG

London mobilisation: Box 158 (MMMC), Hatfield, Herts

Coaches will leave from N. London at 7.30am.

DURHAM

DEMONSTRATION

To demand repatriation for Republican prisoners in this country

Saturday 8th November

Durham and Frankland Gaols

Organised by Clydeside TOM, Glasgow POW Committee, West of Scotland Band Association

BENEFIT TOUR



MARIA TOLLY
with speaker from the campaign to free the Guildford Four

BENEFITS FOR THE TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT:

Tuesday 25th November, 8pm
The Mermaid, Stratford Road, Sparkhill, BIRMINGHAM 11
Plus Irish dancers and floor singers

Wednesday 26th November, 8pm
Merseyside Trade Union Resource Centre, 24 Hardman Street, LIVERPOOL

Friday 28th November, 8pm
Leeds Trades Club, Savile Mount, LEEDS 7

Saturday 29th November, 8pm
Broomspring Centre, Broomspring Lane, SHEFFIELD

Buy your tickets today

TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT

Promoter: D. Seery,
Cabin 'Y' 25 Horsell Road, London N5

10001

WITH - DRAW



1st: TRIP FOR TWO TO IRELAND
PLUS £50 CASH

2nd: Republican Prisoners Craft Work
and 3 prizes of A Bottle of Irish Whiskey
Draw will take place on Monday, 1st December, 1986

Tickets 25p Each