

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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EDITORIAL

Over the centuries, across the world, people have taken to the streets to express their views in public. It is a right that has to be fought for, and fought for again and again.

In Ireland, street demonstrations were the central tactic of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement in the late sixties. It revealed both to the Irish themselves and to the world the crudely sectarian nature of the ruling Stormont Government and led to the State being exposed as irreformable.

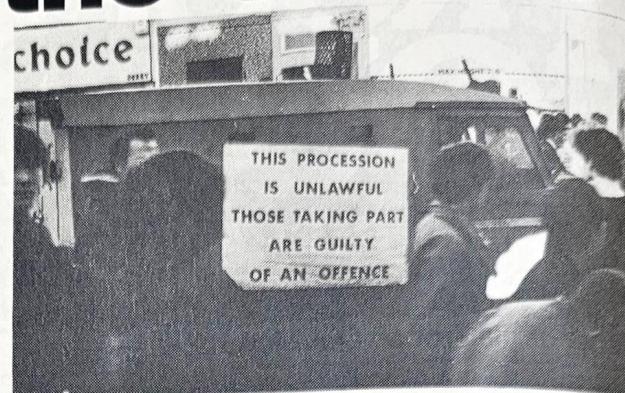
For it was one thing when the nationalists stayed in their ghettos, marching around the Bogside or up and down the Falls Road. It was quite another thing when they marched into the lovely clean 'Protestant' city centres. Then they were met with batons, water cannon and tear gas. The message was clear: know your place, you are not an equal citizen.

And even in their own areas there is a power struggle. Last August in Belfast the Irish were driven off the Falls Road by plastic bullets. One man, John Downes, was killed, scores of others received horrific injuries. One week later they returned and marched along the same route, even though they might have been scared or angry – and the Army and police stayed in the background.

In England a parallel struggle is now taking place. On 27th April a march was called in East London by the Newham Seven Campaign, against racist attacks and for the right to self-defence. 3,000 people attended, but when the march stopped for five minutes (as had been agreed by the police) outside the notorious Forest Gate police station, police snatc squads rushed into the body of the crowd and started making arrests.

It was done to disrupt. The whole march was halted until these people were released. Three hours later the police brought up reinforcements and kicked and beat people down the road, trampling on them and screaming racist abuse. What had been an orderly (and by then quite small) protest was dispersed by brute force.

It was an exercise in asserting power. The police brutalised this small crowd to show the black people of Newham their



British Government plans greatly increase police powers to ban demonstrations. Police in the Six Counties have had such powers since 1923, which have always been ignored. (Photo: Camerawork Darkrooms, Derry)

place – cowed and in the gutter.

However, the people of Newham didn't accept the gutter. Two weeks later they came back for another march, at least as large, determined to complete the route.

There was an absurdly overkill police presence – considering the march was going through friendly territory, its own community, and no trouble would be expected. Their role, as it turned out, was to wind up and provoke the demonstrators. Members of the Troops Out Movement on the march witnessed at least three flashpoints stirred up by the police, and only through the strength of the stewards were these situations defused.

Unfortunately at the very end of the march violence did erupt when the police, as a last resort, made gratuitous arrests and pent-up anger exploded. Riot shields, helmets and horses then appeared from nowhere and again the people were forcibly dispersed.

The need to claim that political arena of public protest in which everyone in the community can play their part is essential in the long battle for freedom and equality and human dignity.

The next weapon against the black community will be the divide-and-rule tactic. Already the local Newham press is trying to turn young people against old and Afro-Caribbean against Asian. It is trying to break the unity of the struggle.

But meanwhile another unity is being forged – as the meetings and delegations (described in this issue) between black people here and Irish nationalists attest.

The 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. For over 15 years 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 the demands:

TROOPS OUT NOW

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE IRISH PEOPLE AS A WHOLE

TROOPS OUT

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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Local Government Election Results

DISENFRANCHISED

A new electoral law (passed in Westminster but applied only in the North of Ireland) was designed to stamp out personation, i.e. voting more than once under different names.

Voters now have to produce identification, and the law defined which documents were acceptable. A UB40 was not. Medical cards were, but only those issued since 1972. Many people were disenfranchised as a result, and all the parties ended up protesting, although only Sinn Fein objected when the law was brought in. Ian Paisley plans to take the British Government to the European Court of Human Rights.

THE RESULTS

A system of proportional representation is used in these elections, for a total of 566 seats. Here are the numbers of candidates fielded and the numbers elected from each party.

The local government election of 15th May confirmed Sinn Fein as a significant political force — the fourth largest party in the North. President Gerry Adams issued the following statement.

'In 1981 the success of the IRA volunteer Bobby Sands in Fermanagh & South Tyrone was explained away by our critics as an emotional reaction to the Hunger Strikes.'

'In the Assembly and Westminster elections our detractors attempted to explain away our vote as being as a result of personation. Indeed the latest anti-Sinn Fein election law on identification brought in by Britain and supported by all the other parties as a measure of dealing with alleged Sinn

Fein personation has backfired.'

'We would now expect that Britain, having abysmally failed to explain away or suppress the support for republicanism, will now seriously entertain the thought of proscribing Sinn Fein. Sinn Fein's entry into the councils will now result in effective local leadership for nationalist people and their aspirations. It will also ensure that the SDLP's room for collaboration with Britain in any internal settlement is seriously curbed.'

Party	No. Standing	No. Elected
Official Unionist Party	248	190
Democratic Unionist Party	221	142
Social Democratic & Labour Party	169	101
Sinn Fein	91	59
Alliance Party	90	34
Others	161	40



Systematic Harassment

As at previous elections, whether local or general, Sinn Fein has had to contend with daily harassment from the RUC and the army. How many times has Thatcher boasted of her high regard for democracy? The six-county state is a contradiction to this in itself, but the daily arrests of SF candidates and supporters is a reminder that this government is ever ready to undermine its own rules.

These elections have seen a more sinister and systematic approach than in previous years. On April 16th Owen Carron, SF's director of elections, was hijacked by the RUC on his way to a meeting in Dungannon, and his papers copied. Significantly they contained names and addresses of all candidates, directors of elections and sponsors.

Since then people appearing on the lists have been picked up under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and kept under surveillance by undercover British soldiers.

Within two days of being elected as councillors, three Sinn Fein members were arrested, and one charged. They are representatives of Dungannon, Cookstown and Belfast.

Health Hazards

A one-day strike by ancillary workers at the Royal Victoria Hospital brought to light vicious cutbacks planned for the area. In West Belfast, described by the EEC as one of the two most socially deprived areas in Europe, the British Government is busy dismantling the Welfare State.

Cuts of £2½ million have been announced for the Royal Group of Hospitals, which serve the area. This is on top of cuts imposed last year of £1½ million. The staff shortage is already so bad that people are rung up at home and asked to come and care for their relatives in hospital as there are no nurses available. This is not a sectarian issue. Both communities are being hit.

The cuts also represent a serious attack on the unions, with the introduction of inferior working conditions. The unions are united in their opposition, and action has already led to laundry piling up in corridors as staff refuse to work new rotas.

Similar attacks will doubtless soon be made on what remains of the NHS in this island. Another case of British innovations being 'tested' on the people of the Six Counties?

Subversion through a Camera Lens?

A photography student from London experienced the notorious Castlereagh interrogation centre at first hand on a recent visit to Ireland.

Joe Boatman was photographing the commemoration march honouring Bobby Sands, who died on hunger strike four years ago on 5th May. Thousands had come from all parts of Ireland and from England and Scotland, to pay their respects.

Army and RUC (police) patrols and vehicles had been present in intimidating numbers. One RUC landrover drove up by Ms Boatman and she was asked for her press card and identity. She was then taken to the local police barracks where she was questioned as to whom she worked for. At this point she had not been arrested, but they refused to allow her to leave.

She was then formally arrested under section 12 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (power to arrest without warrant on suspicion), her films were taken from her and she was driven to Castlereagh.

There she was questioned on that day and the next, fingerprinted and photographed. She was not allowed to make a

phone call or contact a solicitor of her own choice. Although the police would not allow her to see a solicitor, they nonetheless pressurised her to choose one from their own list. Eventually she agreed — and found out later that this was a ploy to get rid of a solicitor whom a friend outside had appointed on her behalf.

The RUC told her they would send their interrogation notes and her photographs to the Director of Public Prosecutions with a view to laying charges. She was finally released, 20 hours after being lifted.

Joe Boatman said she knows she was treated lightly, because she is English and a member of the National Union of Journalists. During the period of her arrest, her college and Jeremy Corbyn, MP for Islington North, rang the RUC, and the NUJ sent a telex.

She is now suing the RUC for false imprisonment and wrongful arrest. The RUC still have her films — films, that is, of a public, orderly and solemn event. Her part in that commemoration was to record on film, and for that she was arrested under the Terror Act.

The Balance of Injustice

The Show Trials in Belfast are almost grinding to a halt, weighed down under their own contradictions. Almost but not quite. Over 40 people's futures hang in the balance of injustice in two trials presently taking place in Crumlin Road Courthouse.

The trials have no jury. They are mass trials. And the prosecution rests on supergrasses who have been granted immunity or light sentences and resettlement with a new identity and financial security.

The two current trials involve the supergrass 'Budgie' Allen (on alleged Ulster Volunteer Force loyalist activities) and Harry Kirkpatrick (on alleged INLA activities). Kirkpatrick has even incriminated his own sister.

CORRUPTED EVIDENCE CLAIM

Kirkpatrick's 'evidence' has been interrupted by adjournments. The first adjournment was at the request of the prosecution, claiming that two of their lawyers were sick. It then came out that the break had been used to iron out discrepancies in Kirkpatrick's statements. The defence then argued that his evidence was too corrupted to be heard and that the trial should be stopped.

The judge, Mr Justice Carswell, turned down the application on 10th May and adjourned the trial for another ten days.

DISTINGUISHED CRITICS

As a result of the campaigning work of the Relatives For Justice in particular, the trials are being monitored by outside observers who have all been appalled at the falling away of international standards of judicial procedures.

A delegation from the South's Fianna Fail opposition party commented on 8th May, 'It's not justice in the normal sense. It's mockery of justice.' Gerry Collins TD stressed the context in which this mockery takes place: 'You can't solve the problem of Northern Ireland by just dealing with security problems in themselves: a political solution will have to be found and then the security problem will eventually diminish'.

US vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro visited the Budgie Allen trial at the beginning of May and she too

was highly critical. And Tony Benn, visiting both trials at the end of April, commented 'This is a deeply unacceptable system and it cannot produce a fair trial'.

EXTRAORDINARY BUILDING WORKS

Even the State doesn't trust its own system. At the end of April perspex security screens

were erected in the two court-rooms running between the public gallery and the well of the court. A cell below the courts has been wired up so that the court proceedings can be heard in the cell to enable the trial to proceed even with the defendants locked away out of sight.

when actually confronted by his victims. This happened at the Preliminary Enquiry (committal proceedings) with Harry Kirkpatrick, at which point the RUC waded into the defendants with boots and truncheons and the proceedings were abandoned.

Having done away with the jury having done away with corroborative evidence, it does seem logical that they should now try to do away with the defendants.



Protestors outside Crumlin Road Courthouse. (Photo: AP/RN)

The Mind of a Supergrass

The cross-examination of Harry Kirkpatrick began on 7th May, with Desmond Boal QC firing the opening shots.

Kirkpatrick admitted that prior to January 1982, he was a liar, a perjurer, a thief and a murderer. He admitted that he had no respect for the court or the oath he took to tell the truth. He stated that he would have killed Judge Carswell, the presiding judge, prior to 1982.

When asked why he was now giving evidence, Kirkpatrick said he wanted to tell the truth and sever all links with the INLA. It was suggested that he could do this without turning 'grass.

He claimed that this great change of heart took place between January (when he was arrested)

and March of 1982. He insisted that he had been offered no deal and despite having been sentenced to four life sentences he was motivated only by a desire to tell the truth! He tried to explain that the first step in the 'conversion' was his promotion to the rank of adjutant of the INLA's Belfast Brigade, when his active duty assignments lessened. Mr Boal suggested that this was ludicrous as now he had greater responsibilities, not less.

So what happened when Kirkpatrick was arrested? He said he did not even know why he had been arrested. He did not remember any interviews with the RUC, nor any statements he had made. Very curious, Mr

Boal remarked, considering the great detail Kirkpatrick was able to give about incidents concerning the defendants. But Kirkpatrick was not able to give any explanation for this sudden memory lapse. Was it because Kirkpatrick was trying to hide something, a deal perhaps? Kirkpatrick really could not say.

Harry Kirkpatrick, throughout the cross-examination, has become increasingly nervous. He refuses to look at Desmond Boal, and ends each sentence with 'My Lord'. He is unable to button his shirt and obviously has a flack jacket under his coat. He has been well prepared by the prosecution but appears to be breaking down on each successive trip to the court.

Black Irish SOLIDARITY

Over the last few years, especially since the uprisings among black communities in 1981, a number of black delegations have visited the north of Ireland from Britain. Connections have been made between the communities on the basis of the common fight against racism or colonialism and for self-determination. In April there was a delegation of Asian youth (see box). And below we print a report of a delegation of black people from many different organisations on May 10th-13th, written by one of its members, Judy Bashir.

- *Unemployment at 87%;*
- *Appalling housing – inhabited by 'more rats than humans';*
- *An absolute refusal to rebuild, improve or repair;*
- *Lack of health care;*
- *Control of people's lives through the DHSS;*
- *A blatantly racist education system, which seeks to keep people as undereducated as possible;*
- *The increasing erosion of the rights of a particular community and the constant use of force to intimidate that community;*

— The list could go on. This could quite easily be a description of Brixton, Liverpool or other areas of Britain where there are large black populations — but it's not. This is Ballymurphy, West Belfast.

When we returned, I was asked by another black worker who had not been on the delegation, what had been our purpose — what did we go FOR? I think that for both our own struggle in Britain and that of republicans in the north of Ireland and of Irish people in Britain, it is important to try and answer that question.

The Black Delegation, like any other was horrified and amazed at the ordinary day-to-day brutal intimidation of people by Britain's military forces — armed foot soldiers, their fingers constantly on the triggers of machine guns and plastic bullet guns, patrolling the streets, gardens and housing estates. This is rarely shown in the British media.

SAME TECHNIQUES OF SOCIAL CONTROL

However we were also struck by the many parallels between the techniques of social control of republican people in Ireland and black people in Britain; the sole aim of such techniques is to limit people's ability to struggle. Repression comes not only from the army and the

ASIAN YOUTH DELEGATION

34 Asian young people were hosted by Sinn Fein at the commemoration of the 1916 Easter Rising in April.

A speaker from the delegation, Sheera Johal, told a crowd in New Lodge, Belfast, how the Asian community lives under the fear of deportation, even though people had been encouraged to come when there was a labour shortage in Britain. Similarly Irish workers had come to build roads and industries. Together, 'we built Britain'.

Sheera said that, as in Ireland, black people who fought back were being criminalised. He stressed that the Asian community would not be intimidated but would resist by any means necessary. Whilst the imperialists have many powerful weapons, they cannot defeat a freedom movement which has the support of a determined people. This had been shown, he said, in Cuba, Vietnam and Korea.

A published report of the delegation is planned.

(Source: *Asian Times*)



Newham Seven banner at the New Lodge commemoration. (Photo: *Asian Times*)

RUC but also through a deliberate and systematic strategy to weaken and demoralise people both physically and psychologically.

As black people we have always supported the struggles of exploited and oppressed people, of countries struggling to free themselves from colonisation and imperialism. Yet we sometimes tend to forget — and therefore ignore — that Ireland was and remains Britain's first colony, and that the Irish people are also fighting for the right to self-determination and a socialist republic. We were also told in Belfast that the aspect of racism has tended to be forgotten.

As the north-east of Ireland is Britain's last remaining colony, it follows that methods to

repress and contain any sections of the community in Britain can be honed and sharpened with impunity in Ireland. When you visit the north of Ireland and actually see for yourself the extent to which this repression has already been developed, and when you remember the saying that 'What happens in the north of Ireland today happens in Britain tomorrow' then it is obvious that our struggles are inextricably linked.

As we were told by a Sinn Fein organiser: 'We need to move beyond expressions of solidarity to a realisation that we must all be actively involved in the struggle. That's the only political way left. Otherwise our backs will be against the wall.'

SELF-ORGANISATION AND UNITY

I think that seeing that for ourselves has made us realise the depth of our common struggle. We need to fight in Britain both to eradicate the oppression in Ireland and to prevent it from happening here.

We also noticed the level of self-organisation, unity and discipline, despite the repression, from which we have much to learn. And the way in which people focus their anger and activity on the oppressors, and do not feed on possible divisions within the community; for example, the families of informers are recognised as also being victims of the British. When, as will probably happen, methods similar to the 'supergrass system' are used against our own communities, we hope to recognise the Irish experience and not allow ourselves to be political pawns.

We all felt uplifted by the way in which the people related with the struggle of blacks in Britain — we were told by a nationalist 'We're the blacks of Northern Ireland'; and by the way in which they strongly identify with the words of Bob Marley; and how during the uprisings of '81 some Irish people thought 'At last, this is it', and were surprised that there was no follow-up. (They were also critical of the petrol bombs used — apparently people were using the wrong type of petrol bombs!)

However, despite the high level of involvement of women in both the Provisionals, Sinn Fein and other organisations active in the struggle, we couldn't help but notice that there's still a fair degree of sexism and to some extent racism within the community. While Sinn Fein are clearly committed to eradicating this, the lack of resources for education on these issues makes it difficult for them to be raised adequately — another strong reason for more delegations of women and black people.

Overall, however, despite the above, all of us returned feeling empowered having breathed in the strong breath of the spirit of freedom that permeates the air of all of West Belfast.

Sectarian Record of Local Government Democratic Process Undermined

The District Councils in the North of Ireland have been reduced over the years to virtually functionless bodies. History shows that the Nationalist population in the North has continually suffered at the hands of outright discrimination exercised by the Unionists.

The last time local government elections were held on an all Ireland basis was in 1920. The result was a landslide victory for the Republicans, who gained majorities in 28 of the 32 counties, including Tyrone and Fermanagh, now in the North. The next such elections were held after partition in 1924, and the extent of the gerrymandering in the North was massive.

Electoral boundaries had been redrawn in such a way that a Nationalist seat would be won with a vast majority, while Unionists were able to win more seats with smaller majorities and in so doing maximise their votes. In Co. Derry, for example, Magherafelt Rural Council had a Nationalist majority of 17-11 in 1920; the 1924 election saw a complete reversal, with Unionists taking the seats 18-11.

In addition, voting was restricted to ratepayers and their spouses. Although both sides of the community were affected by this particular restriction, the predominantly poor Nationalist population was again the worst hit. Housing was controlled by the local councils who were loath to build houses in case the balance set up by the gerrymandering would be upset. This also had the effect of driving some Nationalists out of the North in order to find somewhere to live. In 1943 a housing survey indicated that at least 200,000 new homes should be built; this at a time when there were only 323,000 homes in the whole of the North.

CENTRALISING THE POWERS

In 1970 the Macrory Report on local government was implemented, and the rural, urban and county councils were replaced by the present 26 district councils.

Many local government powers were transferred to central government, and, when Stormont was abolished in 1972, these powers were passed to Westminster. To this day the government has either retained them or farmed them out to appointed — not democratically elected — committees. Regarding crucial issues like health and social services, education and library boards, the council is merely invited to sit in. It has only a consultative role in planning roads, housing and conservation. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive, a statutory board, is financially dependent on the Department of the Environment, which also retains policy-making powers on housing. Policing is controlled by the Secretary of State for N. Ireland, Douglas

Hurd, via the Northern Ireland Office.

Powers that councils do have include the provision and siting of public leisure, sport and community facilities and the control of funds to local community groups. They also nominate representatives to the statutory public bodies. Yet even such limited powers are operated in a sectarian way by those councils with loyalist domination — for example, by withdrawing rubbish collection in certain areas, or refusing to maintain leisure facilities.

UNIONIST OR NATIONALIST

It is against this backdrop of sectarianism that the local District Council elections are held in the North of Ireland. The elections are fought not on local issues but on the issue of Britain's right to occupy the North.

On the Unionist side, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), led by Ian Paisley, vies with James Molyneaux's Official Unionist Party (OUP). The DUP's manifesto includes such reactionary demands as the end to Sunday opening, an end to grant aid to the Catholic Gaelic Athletic Associations, the maintenance of the Flag and Emblems Act (which makes it an offence to fly the tricolour in the North) and the end to building more leisure facilities in republican areas. The OUP's manifesto has a similar flavour, while both are universal in their calls to 'Smash Sinn Fein'. But the underlying message of both is that 'Ulster is British'.

Also included in this camp is John Cushnahan's Alliance Party, which argues

for the maintenance of the six-county state but at the same time tries to unite all sides with unrealistic and woolly slogans like 'Pull together not apart'.

The Nationalist vote is mainly divided between John Hume's Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) and Sinn Fein, led by Gerry Adams. The SDLP, who in 1973, are behind the banner of constitutional nationalism. At present that means rubbing shoulders with the two major parties in the South, Fine Gael and Fianna Fail. Both Haughey and Fitzgerald have recently visited Derry to help Hume canvas for votes. The New Ireland Forum report (already rejected by Thatcher), on which much of their credibility rests, figures prominently in their manifesto. Since the first elections the SDLP has, in the main, been ignored by loyalist dominated councils and, where they do hold the balance of power, they have been compliant with Unionist wishes.

Sinn Fein, apart from four council by-elections, has not stood in these elections before. Sinn Fein stands firmly in support of the IRA's right to wage war against Britain. They are under no illusions that Britain can be talked into withdrawing from the North in the present climate, nor that a state which has been built on injustice can be reformed. Sinn Fein challenges the basis of the State itself, in addition to campaigning for the basic rights of people to proper housing, jobs, health care and social services.



Belfast's City Hall

Brendan Curran, Newry Candidate— Getting the People More Involved

Gerry Adams, delivering the oration at the annual Easter Sunday commemoration in a wet and windy Milltown cemetery in Belfast, outlined the strategy of the Republican Movement in fighting the local government elections which were held on May 15th.

Adams indicated that in the council elections 'the Sinn Fein votes will consolidate our support in selected areas and put a new local leadership — a middle leadership — into the role of building, propagandising and organising. We will not maximise our vote in this election, that is not our objective. But we will build a better and more coherent organisation so that the eventual defeat of our political opponents will have a deeper basis and an irreversible and longer term effect.'

In the run-up to the elections Troops Out went to a town which has been at the forefront of the resistance of the Nationalist people to British rule. The town, Newry, has recently seen two devastating attacks on the RUC followed by mass arrests and constant harassment of Republican activists. It is against this background that Brendan Curran, a 29 year old former Republican prisoner, stood as a Sinn Fein candidate.

Newry Sinn Fein operate a full-time advice centre from a small terraced house not far from the town's main shopping street and it was there we spoke to Brendan.

What do you see as the significance of this election, both locally and for the Republican Movement as a whole?
In Newry it is 65 years since there has been an elected Sinn Fein candidate and we're still, more or less, faced with the same problems — unemployment, the discrimination because you're a Catholic and so on. As far as the Council itself is concerned — the bureaucracy, jobs for the boys — nothing has really changed. For the Movement in general it means that for once as a whole they can get into the Councils, put forward for the first time the Republican point of view, the Nationalist point of view, use the resources of the Council, give the ordinary people their entitlement. Especially in the city councils which have been dominated by Unionists.

What will, for Sinn Fein, be the main issues of the election campaign?

There will be a national manifesto — the Republican aims, Republican policies, which are widely known. We will have a local manifesto for the Newry and Mourne area. In country areas there are a lot of agricultural problems but for Newry it will be more town problems (DHSS, housing etc.)

On a local level our manifesto is just going to be what it has always been since the early 80s, when Sinn Fein started its Advice Centres, the



only party which the ordinary working class people can turn to. We'll be channeling the people to stand up for themselves and that's going to be a theme of this whole election. Instead of us representing people we'll be helping the people to get what they're entitled to themselves, by going about it themselves, to get them more involved.

What will be your working relationship with the other Nationalists on the council?

Like everything else, if it benefits our people we'll work with them. We'll work with anyone if it results in the betterment of the people we represent.

Could you say something of the recent arrests of Sinn Fein activists?

I was arrested four weeks ago and it was totally to do with this election. They weighed up who were possible runners for this election. While being interrogated they told me that they had no charges for me, they had no intention of charging me. They just brought me in for a talk, to try to 'wise me up'. They said: 'You're getting married, you're going to have a family. For God's sake stop this now. You're in a great position to help us. Whenever

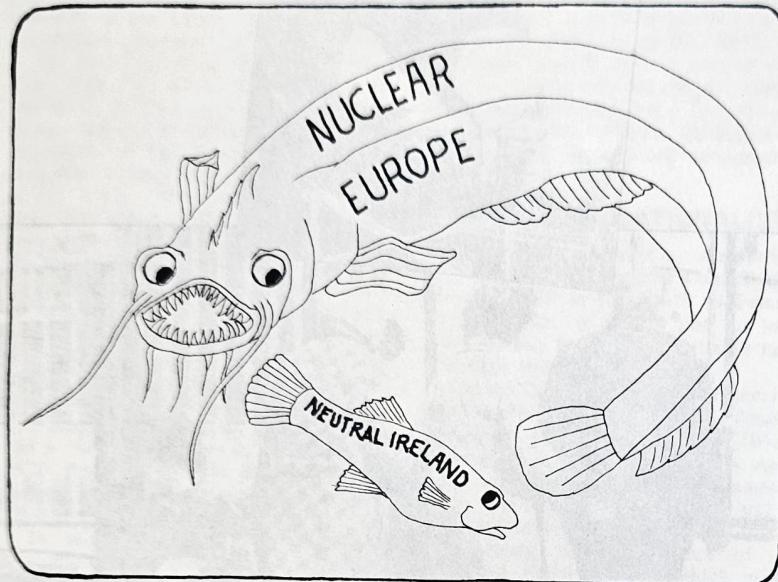
you're elected you will be above suspicion and you can help us and keep us informed.'

Since the recent attacks on the security forces in the Newry area Republicans have been coming under an awful lot of pressure from the RUC. After the mortar bomb attack in Newry it seems the police were just given the go-ahead to do whatever they wanted. But, in general, even regardless of these recent successful attacks on the RUC, the arrests and harassment have been going on. They happen every morning at six o'clock or five o'clock and it's the same doors that get kicked in. It's become a way of life and people don't even pass any remarks on it down the street. It's just: 'Who's away in this morning?' or: 'Is it a 3 day or a 7 day?' That's all the comment that passes. It's become the accepted thing.

Is confidence high for the elections?
Well, it's new ground. A lot of the parties that are in at the moment have got in on Republican votes. Locally, I'm very confident. On a national basis I think we'll do well. We are a young organisation as far as elections are concerned. We're bound to make mistakes, but we'll correct them too.

South of Ireland — Neutrality

Plans to increase the EEC's political powers towards European political unity receive very little interest in Britain. It is very different in Ireland. The North's future is threatened by Britain's nuclear interests. The South's foreign policy of neutrality is threatened by Europe's plans, and by the interests of US and transnational capital.



When Spain and Portugal join, the vast majority of western European states will be members of the EEC. The move to form a large economic block to compete commercially with America and Japan and other parts of the world, has led to a revival of the idea of a European union. The differences between the US and European countries both inside and outside NATO, has meant that this political union is also increasingly seen as a military union.

Ireland's neutrality is at present maintained by diplomatic means rather than

by a large internal army as in Sweden. Its economy is very dependent on British and European markets. It is no surprise therefore that the pressure on Ireland's neutrality comes from those advocating European Union and from Britain's occupation of the six north east counties.

Late in June the combined reports of Irish Senator Dooge, and Italian Euro-communist, Mr Spinelli, will be released by the EEC. The reports call for the drafting of a new treaty for European political union and the withdrawal of the power of member countries to veto EEC decisions.

This union would maintain a common defence and foreign policy for the EEC. In reality what is being proposed is a revival and extension of the old Western European Union. The implementation of these policies would make a farce of Ireland's position of neutrality.

BIG BUSINESS AND BIG NATIONS

The report, in the name of greater democracy, will also recommend giving some real powers to the EEC Assembly (parliament). As a small country, Ireland has only a tiny number of seats and its voice would be totally overwhelmed. According to the CND magazine *Sanity*, the overwhelming majority in the European Assembly voted in favour of a series of resolutions over the past two years on arms procurement policies, integrated defence for EEC countries, and security cooperation between member states, glossing over any distinction between the EEC and NATO. It shows the trend in this direction.

Attempts to persuade Ireland to drop its position of neutrality, also come from less public organisations, such as the Bilderberg Group and the Tri-Lateral Commission. Both organisations have a similar membership — Big Business men and right wing politicians.

The Bilderberg Group was started as the American Committee for a United Europe in 1954 by the CIA. Presently funded by big business, the group promotes European unity and closer cooperation between the US and Europe on economic and military affairs. The Taoiseach, Garret FitzGerald, was severely criticised in Ireland for attending this year's conference of the group in May. It was his fourth time attending an annual conference of the group.

The Tri-Lateral Commission was founded by Nelson Rockefeller and

The Cornerstone of Foreign Po

Irish neutrality has its origins as deep as the struggle for independence and freedom. In the late 18th century Wolfe Tone (a founding figure of Irish republicanism) was advocating a policy of keeping out of European wars. In particular he wrote a pamphlet saying Ireland had no interest in the quarrels between England and Spain.

In 1914, the Irish socialist leader, James Connolly, founded with Countess Markievicz and others the Irish Neutrality League. Neutrality was a very live issue at the time, particularly with Britain's threat to conscript Irish men for its army. A huge banner hung across the front of Liberty Hall, the headquarters of the TGWU in Dublin, proclaiming 'We serve neither King nor Kaiser'.

As the government of the newly formed Irish Free State began to develop

a foreign policy, neutrality became its cornerstone. Joining the League of Nations in 1924 distanced Ireland from Britain and the Commonwealth's foreign policy. In 1932 the Irish premier, Eamon De Valera, became president of the Council of the League of Nations and used his presidency to condemn Italy's invasion of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and Japan's invasion of China. He set the tone for Ireland's policy for the next ten years which was to stress the independence of small nations and promote their ability to play a positive role for peace.

SECOND WORLD WAR

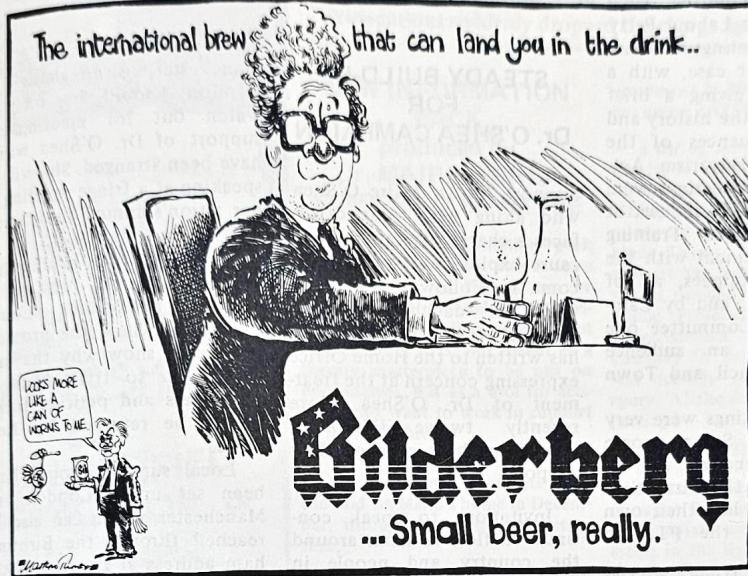
In 1938 under pressure from the Irish government, Britain left the ports of Lough Swilly, Bearhaven and Cobh which they had held even since the formation of the Irish Free State in 1922. In the years running up to the war there were a series of large rallies demanding the maintenance of Irish neutrality and when World War II began the Irish government reaffirmed this policy.

There was tremendous pressure on Ireland to join in the war, particularly from Britain and the United States. At one stage Churchill offered the return of the occupied six counties in return for Ireland's entry into the war. However the mass of the Irish people supported neutrality and De Valera stood firm. In

under Threat

Henry Kissinger to secure the interests of the trans-national monopolies that operate within three important areas of the capitalist world. (Tri-lateral = America, Japan and Europe.) The commission has its own branch in Ireland which promotes its policies amongst the elite. It is at present putting a lot of energy into trying

All of the above represent some of the pressure on Ireland's neutrality. However, public opinion in Ireland is very much in favour of maintaining neutrality. A recent poll showed that only 25% of the people were in favour of joining a military alliance and 64% were against.



Irish Times comment on FitzGerald's foreign policy.

to persuade the government to join the plan for European unity, which would lead to the dropping of neutrality.

In April the previously dormant Irish Council of the European Movement advertised for the full time post of Executive Director. It is a branch of the International European Movement founded in 1948 and funded by the CIA. The chairwoman of the Irish council is Katherine Meehan, a special adviser to the Taoiseach.

BRITAIN'S MILITARY BASES

A very direct affront to Irish neutrality is the presence of foreign, i.e. British, troops on its soil. Not only are they present but they have a nuclear capacity. A hollowed-out mountain in South Armagh serves as a store for nuclear weapons. The army is closing the top security prison, Magilligan, near Derry, and acquiring large amounts of land around it. It already owns 1,500 acres

Ireland was not able to join the United Nations until 1955 because of opposition from the Soviet Union. This was because Ireland had remained neutral during the war. When Frank Aiken became Minister for Foreign Affairs he promoted policies which included disarmament, peace-keeping, admission of China into the UN, and military disengagement from Central Europe. Aiken's 'Disengagement Plan for World Peace' won immediate support from small nations in the United Nations and helped line up Ireland's interests with other former colonies of the big powers.

AGAINST NUCLEAR SUICIDE

Ireland played a very important role in the forming of various anti-nuclear resolutions, which eventually became the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty adopted by the UN in 1968. Replying to criticisms from Britain and the US for this line, Aiken said 'I am neither pro-British nor

and is acquiring another 500 acres. So worried are local people that it will be used to stockpile weapons, that in April they petitioned the N.Ireland Office to keep the prison. A £1m road-widening scheme to Magilligan Point has already begun. Some reports say that it is to be a nuclear missile base for a submarine tracking station, but others point out that the preparations are similar to those when the cruise missile base at Greenham Common was begun.

There are also a large number of radar and microwave stations in N.Ireland, most noticeably at Bishops court, Co. Down. Bishops court, along with seven other radar stations in Britain, make up Britain's air defence system, and as such is part of the NATO air defence system, which links radar stations from Turkey to central Europe to Norway to Bishops court. All this makes Ireland - which is a non-nuclear zone (except for the part Britain occupies) - an unwitting target in any future conflict.

It is not only on land that Ireland's neutrality is impinged. There is a huge amount of British and US submarine traffic along the northern, eastern and south-eastern coasts. The submarines first began to use the south-eastern Irish sea in large numbers in 1981. Since then there have been numerous accidents with fishing trawlers, resulting in the sinking of seven, with all hands lost. In only one case has the submarine involved been traced. In 1983, HMS Porpoise sank the Irish trawler Sharega.

Though the main threats to Irish neutrality come from both the European Union concept and Britain's occupation of the N. East of Ireland, it is the latter to which people in this country must address themselves. We should be campaigning for the withdrawal of our armed forces, complete with their paraphernalia of guns, tanks, computers and cruise missiles. The removal of this hostile force from Irish soil will greatly enhance the ability of the Irish people to determine their own future and thus withstand pressure on their neutrality.

pro-American, anti-British nor anti-American in foreign policy. I am just pro-Irish and anti nuclear suicide.'

However Ireland's entry into the EEC in 1973 has put considerable strain on Ireland's neutrality. Successive Taoiseachs (prime ministers) have emphasised an orientation in foreign policy towards Europe rather than the United Nations. The present Taoiseach, Garret FitzGerald, is particularly pro-Europe, and unenthusiastic on neutrality.

However the issue has become again an important topic in Ireland, and a majority of the people firmly support it. All progressive political groupings from Sinn Fein to the Labour Party and CND are campaigning for Ireland to remain neutral. Sean MacBride, the only winner of the Nobel and Lenin Peace Prizes, along with Irish CND, are campaigning for the principle of neutrality to be enshrined in the Irish constitution.

Policy

1941 he declared: 'A small country like ours that had for centuries resisted imperial absorption, was bound to choose the course of neutrality.'

POST WAR COLD WAR

When NATO was formed in 1949 Ireland refused to join because it would compromise the country's sovereignty and the government would not enter an alliance with a state which upheld the partition of Ireland. A year previously Britain, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Holland formed the Western European Union (WEU) to oppose the Soviet Union. Ireland refused to join this also and worked with Sweden to ensure that the constitution of the Council of Europe would contain no military or defence clauses.



MAIRE O'SHEA HITS
HARINGEY!!

Towards the end of April Máire O'Shea spent two days speaking at five meetings in Haringey and Camden, and returned to Birmingham with £150 in cash and promises of action in support of the campaign to get the charges of conspiracy dropped.

Haringey Troops Out Movement managed to rush Máire around all these meetings largely by asking for time at events which were already set

up. One public meeting was at the local community centre with speakers from the Irish in Britain Representation Group and from Haringey Independent Police Committee. Time was given at two Labour Party constituency meetings for Máire to speak on her case, with a TOM member giving a brief background on the history and general consequences of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The other two meetings were organised at TOM's request at Haringey Women's Training Centre by agreement with the workers and trainees, all of whom attended; and by Camden Women's Committee one lunchtime for an audience mostly of council and Town Hall workers.

All the meetings were very well attended. Some people were clearly hearing the information for the first time whereas others had their own experiences of the PTA to contribute.

Haringey TOM

Support for Máire O'Shea

Contact:

Dr Máire O'Shea Support Campaign
c/o 448 Stratford Road, Birmingham B11 4AE.
Tel. 021-773 8683.

**STEADY BUILD-UP
FOR
Dr. O'SHEA CAMPAIGN**

Support for Dr Máire O'Shea, who along with four others faces a charge of conspiracy to cause explosions, continues to come in. Following a meeting with her daughter Deirdre, Cardinal O'Fiaich of Ireland has written to the Home Office expressing concern at the treatment of Dr. O'Shea. More recently twelve Edinburgh councillors have pledged their support.

Invitations to speak continue to flow in from around the country and people in Bristol, Tyneside, Aberdeen,

Manchester, Birmingham and London should be on the watch out for meetings in support of Dr. O'Shea which have been arranged. She will be speaking at a fringe meeting of her union's annual conference, ASTMS, in June.

The committal hearing has been set for 1st July at the Central Magistrates Court, Liverpool, where the prosecution must show why the case should go to trial. Lists of supporters and petition forms should be returned by June 22nd.

Local support groups have been set up in London and Manchester which can also be reached through the Birmingham address at the top of the page.

More Terror Act Arrests

A FAIR TARGET?

Travelling in and out of this country is a hazardous business for some people. If you are black, chances are you could be questioned and detained as a suspected 'illegal immigrant'. If you are Irish, or travelling to and from Ireland, you could be held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act as a suspected 'terrorist'.

**SHEFFIELD COUNCILLORS
HELD UNDER PTA**

Two Councillors returning separately from a housing conference in the six counties were detained by the Special Branch at Manchester Airport and questioned for between one and two hours. Cllr Tony Damms was held on Friday 26th April and Cllr Sheena Clarke, who had stayed on in Ireland to visit friends, was held on Sunday 5th May.

When Cllr Damms was detained, the Sheffield TOM was able to advise his friends and family on the best thing to do and who to contact once it became known that he had been held. The Sheffield Director of Housing and Joan Maynard MP rang the airport to find out what had happened

and both received denials that Tony was being held. The steady stream of phone calls did however undoubtedly help to get Cllr Damms released relatively quickly. Although he had been on a Labour movement delegation to Ireland earlier in the year Tony Damms had not had anything else to do with Ireland or its politics.

He was questioned about whether he knew people in Sinn Fein, the Labour Committee on Ireland, TOM or the IRA. He was also asked if he had ever taken part in demonstrations, what his views on a united Ireland were, what he thought of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and even what his religion was. A private letter to his wife which

he had not yet posted was opened and after reading it the police criticised him for referring in it to Derry rather than Londonderry.

Some members of Sheffield TOM spoke to Tony after his release and it was clear that the experience had been a great shock to him and that it had shown him the sort of harassment which Irish people have to put up with.

Cllr Sheena Clarke, a member of the LCI, returned to England a few days later. Since Tony's detention family and friends of Sheena were alert to the possibility of her being held as well and therefore went to meet her at the airport. The barrage of enquiries was quicker to happen this time and after questioning her on whether she had attended demonstrations, taken part in pickets of prisons etc she was released after one hour.

As with the vast majority of those held under the PTA, these two Cllrs are totally innocent of any crime and

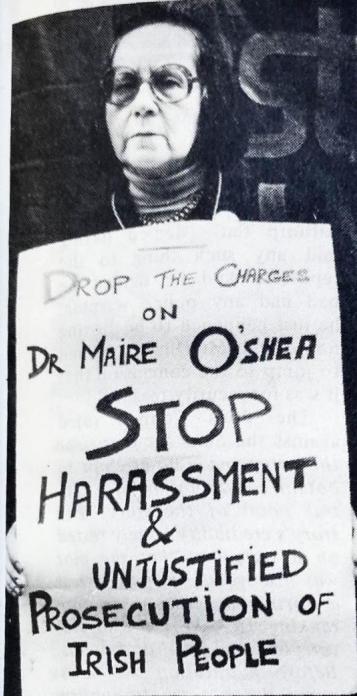
are the victims of the British Government's policy of harassment designed to frighten off those who appear to be taking an interest in what is going on in Ireland. The police have claimed that these detentions were spot checks. This is obviously untrue as they were both addressed by name when first stopped.

Cllr Damms and two other Sheffield Cllrs had already received some petty harassment at the hands of the RUC when they returned to the Belfast conference having been over to Sheffield for an important Council meeting on 24th April. Arising from this incident the Sheffield Housing Committee and the Sheffield Council are lodging official complaints about the RUC's behaviour.

The events have meant that in Sheffield there is now a new awareness of the issues surrounding the PTA and the possibility has opened up of TOM working more closely with the local Labour movement on this issue.

Increases

Photo: Joanne O'Brien/Format



While Máire remains 'free' on £50,000 bail, her four co-defendants have been in prison since their arrests on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Another man from Birmingham, Peter Lynch, arrested under the Terror Act around the same time was refused permission to apply for bail on May 10th.

A sixth defendant, Belfast seaman William Gallagher, was released on April 18th when the Director of Public Prosecutions suddenly dropped the charge against him.

NEW INFORMATION PACK produced by Dr. MAIRE O'SHEA SUPPORT COMMITTEE

This excellent information pack consists of loose A4 sheets in a plastic folder, so that it can be added to and updated as the campaign requires. The cover sheet explains that it is 'not meant as a literary masterpiece to be put on bookshelves, but as a tool for activists who want to work in support of Máire O'Shea'.

Topics covered include:

- the chronology of events since the raid on Máire's home in December, through her arrest and detention;
- the widespread support Máire has received from the trade union

movement in Birmingham and from her union ASTMS;

– a *list of supporters* of Máire in the labour and trade union movements, political parties, MPs and MEPs, women's organisations and numerous other groups of different kinds. The pack points out that this support has been absolutely essential in persuading the Director of Public Prosecutions to take the *unprecedented* step of releasing a Category 'A' prisoner on bail. (She was actually removed from Category 'A' the day before the court hearing.)

– a chronology of *developments at the Stratford Road Day Centre* where Máire worked as a psychotherapist. She has since been sacked. These details are particularly interesting in the light of the fact that the Stratford Road Day Centre was pioneered by Máire and provided a

special facility for Asian people which was unique in Britain. Máire has also for many years fought for patients' rights. After a court case in which she was involved last November the local Health Authority was held to be in contempt of court. It was not long after that that her house was searched and a filing cabinet containing confidential files on patients was broken into.

full details of the powers under the *Prevention of Terrorism Act*, statistics on its use, and of the arrests over Christmas;

– an article (reprinted from *Troops Out*) explaining the insidious nature and history of the *conspiracy laws*, under which Máire is charged. Under them, the onus is on Máire to prove herself innocent, not on the prosecution to prove her guilty – a complete reversal of the norm. This proof is made even more difficult because the police persist in refusing to provide any evidence to substantiate the charge (conspiracy to cause an explosion)!

– information about the campaign with suggestions for action and a model resolution;

15 A4 pp. 50p each pack inc. postage (but donations also needed) from the Dr. Máire O'Shea Support Ctee, c/o 448 Stratford Road, Birmingham B11 4AE. Tel. 021-773 8683.

TOM Slams Police Chief

West Yorkshire Chief Constable Colin Sampson has been slammed for producing a 'sloppy, bland and complacent' report on the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The Troops Out Movement, which initiated the debate on West Yorkshire County Council, says his report presented to the Police Committee on 24 April ignores the fundamental issues.

But the group welcomed the

fact that the issue was being discussed at long last, and said that the Chief Constable's figures on arrests under the Act confirm that the legislation is used to harass, intimidate, and spy on people. Of 172 PTA arrests in West Yorkshire, only two people were charged under the Act.

DEPUTATION TO COUNTY COUNCIL

On February 21st a Troops Out Movement delegation to the full meeting of the County Council had outlined their criticisms of the PTA and asked members to consider 10 suggestions of ways to oppose the Act. On February 27th the Police Committee discussed the delegation and decided to raise the issue with the Association of Metropolitan Authorities (AMA), and in the interim asked the Chief Constable to report on the issue. This report was noted by the Police Committee on 24th April, and the Committee is now awaiting a response from the AMA

before discussing the Troops Out Movement's suggestions in detail.

TONY HARRIS OF LEEDS TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT SAID:

'We welcome the Police Committee's discussion of the notorious Prevention of Terrorism Act, although it is strange that it took a delegation from us for them to get around to it. I would have thought it was part of their job, to keep tabs on what the police in the County get up to.'

'Having said that, the Chief Constable's report is not an adequate response to the points we raised. It is sloppy, bland and complacent.'

'The figures show that only 2 of the 172 people arrested under the Act in West Yorkshire were charged under the Act. That is a clear indictment of this legislation and the police use of it.'

'The Prevention of Terrorism Act allows the police to interrogate people for up to seven days. Anyone who has ever spent a couple of hours in a police cell will know that having to spend seven days there, or just the threat of it, is horrific. Yet

under the PTA the police don't even have to suspect that someone is involved in any specific offence.'

'The Act has manifestly failed to stop political violence. But it has been successful in its true purpose: the harassment of the Irish community in this country and the stifling of legitimate public debate about the situation in the Six Counties of N Ireland.'

'We urge West Yorkshire County Council to take up the suggestions we made in our delegation which sparked off the debate, including making a declaration against the PTA, researching its effects in West Yorkshire, and demanding the release of people arrested unless they are immediately charged.'

Troops Out readers in West Yorkshire are urged to write to County Council leader John Gunnell (County Hall, Wakefield), urging him to take some action on the issue.

TOM branches elsewhere and other concerned organisations are urged to approach their County Councils about the Prevention of Terrorism Act – a delegation can generate valuable publicity even if it goes no further.

1,000 JAILED EACH YEAR

On the subject of immigration laws, the horrific statistics are that over 1,000 people are imprisoned each year under the Immigration Act of 1971.

They do not get a trial, or any sort of hearing, yet many of them spend a year or more in prison. Liberal peer Lord Avebury introduced a Bill on 9th May to allow for bail pending a hearing.

TRADE UNION NEWS

CAMDEN IRISH WORKERS

A group of first and second generation Irish workers have recently come together within Camden NALGO to form the Camden Irish Workers' Group. The main focus of the group is both to force attention on racism against Irish people living and working in Camden and also to take up the issue of North-East Ireland; the continued occupation by Britain and the resulting oppression. We believe that trade unions in this country have avoided all of these problems for far too long.

Already we have gained marginal success by passing a motion of support for the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, through the Camden NALGO branch. We will now be pressing for a comprehensive policy on withdrawal in line with other London NALGO branches such as Newham.

On June 4th we are holding a meeting in Bedford House,

125-133 Camden High Street, NW1 at 6.15pm for NALGO Irish workers in Camden.

From here we hope to make links with other trade union branches in Camden to enlarge the group and create a strong local group to represent Irish people both here and in the occupied North-East of Ireland.

Camden Irish Workers

NALGO CAMPAIGN FOR A UNITED IRELAND

On Saturday 27th April branch representatives of NALGO met for the second time to co-ordinate a national NALGO Campaign for a United Ireland. NALGO annual conference will be taking place at the beginning of June in Blackpool.

We hope that a composite motion on Ireland will be discussed and passed. There will be a fringe meeting in Blackpool arranged to discuss the motion. All enquiries to Martin Sachs at Newham NALGO. Tel. 01-472 1430, ext. 3373.

ext. 3373.

Liberation Festival

On the same day as last month's appalling fire tragedy at Bradford City Football Club, Saturday May 11th, in that same West Yorkshire city there was a day of solidarity and hope for hundreds of people.

Bradford Liberation Festival showed that freedom struggles continue around the world. Speakers from the African National Congress and the Nicaraguan Rural Women's Association represented the struggles from furthest afield; while black and anti-racist activists in Bradford brought the struggles nearer home.

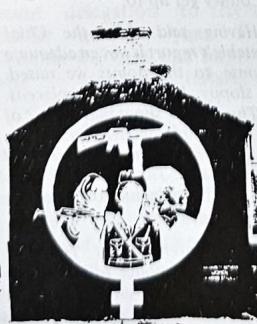
And, showing the benefits of hard work by small numbers of people throughout the lean years, the Irish struggle had its place at

the Festival. There were stalls from TOM and the Connolly Association, an exhibition and a workshop provided by TOM.

The event also saw the launch of the new TOM national leaflet: *'If you're talking about Racism, Imperialism, Repression or Resistance - you're also talking about Ireland'*, which was well received. Copies are available at 60p per 100 post free from TOM, P.O. Box 353, London NW5 4NH.

A Bradford branch of TOM is hopefully being formed in the near future. Any *Troops Out* readers in the area who are interested can contact TOM, Box 1969, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2.

If you're talking about racism, imperialism, repression or resistance



— you're also talking about Ireland

WHAT THE PAPERS SAID!

THE GUARDIAN

LYING IN THE SUN

had told them the story as printed.

The police flatly denied there was any IRA kidnap plot to their knowledge. Viscount Althorp flatly denied having said any such thing to the reporter. And he denied he had had any police warning; he just happened to be moving house and 'Mr Higgins seemed to jump to the conclusion that it was for security reasons'.

The Press Council ruled against the *Sun*: *'In particular the paper made no attempt to obtain corroboration of a central point of the story. The story's credibility largely rested on a statement that the plot was discovered after the arrest a fortnight earlier of a top-ranking IRA Provo, who was carrying vital "war" documents. Before publication the newspaper did not try to confirm whether such an arrest had been made. It had not . . .'*

It all makes you wonder who you can believe these days.

TIME TO GO

The majority of Londoners are in favour of British troops being withdrawn from N. Ireland.

At a recent phone vote conducted by London's local radio station, LBC, 65% of callers agreed with the motion that 'The British army serves no useful purpose in N. Ireland'.

PRISONERS' BIRTHDAYS

Please send cards, letters and reading material to Irish political prisoners, especially on their birthdays. Let them know they are not alone and have support. Please don't forget the number.

REPUBLICANS IN
ENGLISH JAILS

BOBBY CAMPBELL
B32954

H.M. Prison, HMP, Hull,
North Humberside

CON McFADDEN

130662
H.M. Prison, Love Lane,
Wakefield, Yorks. 19 June

PAUL HOLMES

119034
H.M. Prison, Albany, Newport,
Isle of Wight 22 June

GERRY CUNNINGHAM

132016
H.M. Prison Long Lartin,
South Littleton, Evesham,
Worcs. 12 July

SEAN HAYES

341418
H.M. Prison, Albany, Newport,
Isle of Wight July

BRIAN KEENAN

B26380
H.M. Prison, Welford Rd,
Leicester 17 July

ARMAGH PRISONERS

SIOBHAN O'HANLON
(remand) 23 June

MAIREAD NUGENT

C Wing 23 June

ANN BATESON

C Wing 7 July

ROSIE ARMSTRONG

C Wing 13 July

Address: Armagh Women's Prison,
Armagh, Ireland.

Your Letters

NOT ALL ITALIANS ATE UP ROYALS

Dear Troops Out,

You've got to admit it, our Royal Family have got guts.

They don't shirk Britain's war zones, what with Prince Andrew doing his bit in the Malvinas, and Princess Anne doing the honours at under-age pageants in Enniskillen and post-adolescent (more or less) wotsits in Lisburn Army HQ just outside Belfast.

But it was the heir apparent that had the really hard time – and that was on *holiday* would you believe. First of all there was the embarrassment when Mummy said no to Mass with the Pope, but worse was to

follow.

Charles and Di were all set for Evensong at All Saints Anglican Church in Rome on 27th April and there's this bleeding great IRA demo. Well, they had to call it off didn't they? No prayers for the Royals.

And then there was the banquet. I kid you not, a Christian Democrat MP refused the invite – a *Christian Democrat*! You know what he said? 'When I hear what Britain is doing in Ireland, I lose my appetite.'

Yours,

Tax exile, San Remo

Travelling far and wide, from Oman to Skegness, Troops Out member Henry Blythe Smythe brings us these searing tales of top-level diplomacy....

WHO DARED GOT CAUGHT

Dear Friends,

Do you remember I told you last month about the daring SAS Col. Richard Lea getting caught with his palms well greased in Oman? Well, the poor chap was hauled before a court martial last month in SAS London HQ, Chelsea Barracks. Our intrepid reporters in (some of) the free press duly reported that the brave Richard had taken home with him secret papers which might have been of use to those ruffians in the IRA. A nice little smoke screen. Col. Lea had a whole pile of documents which proved not only lucrative for him, but most useful to the American arms dealers competing to satisfy the Sultan of Oman's voracious appetite for arms to put down the liberation forces in his own country.

M16 agents burgled Lea's house in Kent and, lo and behold, the local bobby investigating the burglary discovered and immediately recognised the importance to national security of these papers. Well done, Plod.

Such infighting by our intelligence services is often the only reason these people are ever exposed in their dirty goings on. I am told the infighting between M16, M15, Army Intelligence, and RUC Intelligence (if you will excuse the misuse of the English

language) was particularly bad in N. Ireland when Merlin Rees was Supremo there. This explains why he can never give a straight answer about anything since he left.

His successor Roy Mason never had such a problem. For Roy believed in neither Intelligence or intelligence. If you can haul them out of their beds, beat the shit out of them, lock them up and throw the keys away, then why bother gathering intelligence? This policy and his way of strutting about Belfast in his imperial white suit, swinging his cane, enamoured him to the ordinary soldier or RUC officer. Now ever since the Labour government fell, despite his obvious leadership qualities, Roy hasn't been very often in the news. Despite extensive searches in my local reference library, I have only been able to find three areas in which he has featured.

For a while after his fall from grace, Roy could say nothing but that he was the most wanted man in the world by the IRA, and his life was under continuous threat. I last heard of him doing this to a group of fishermen at the end of Skegness pier, while they were trying to tell him about their decimated industry and the subsequent hardship to them and their communities.

We welcome contributions and feedback from readers.

Please send your letters to this address:

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



H. B. S. (second from right) at Ascot.

to produce his preposterous car, had been recovered. Slight snoring and murmurs of next business. (After all, what's £77 m. when you spend six times as much annually keeping the nationalist community repressed? The worst of it is that De Lorean is a bloody colonial who came over here, fleeced us and is now cocking his nose up from across the Atlantic.)

But then from amongst the nearly empty benches rose a giant amongst Pigmies, the bold Roy Mason. Addressing the minitude (is there such a word?) Roy made a vigorous defence of his part in setting the project up. 'It was worth doing and worth fighting for. It could not be taken from us (him and his fellow ministers) or from John De Lorean that this investment had a number of positive achievements to it'. Quite right, Roy. What price the disappointment of 2,000 people who were promised jobs? Why quibble because the price of a few hospitals ended up in the pockets of a cocaine dealer?

Roy then went on to tell how he regretted nothing and would do the same again in similar circumstances. I think he meant it.

It's enough to drive you to a snorter or three of brandy.

Henry Blythe Smythe



Bringing the issue to the public notice: literature display and poster exhibition organised by East London Troops Out Movement at this year's May Day Festival, Victoria Park. TOM will have a stall at many of the local community festivals this summer – Watch out for us!

REVIEWS

ORANGE

By John Howlett, Hutchinson £8.95 (hardback)

The war in N Ireland has produced some incredibly trashy and racist fiction on this side of the Irish Sea – and not all of it has been published in British newspapers masquerading as journalism. Much of it has been published in novels, with titles like *Harry's Game*, *Forgive the Executioner*, *Bitter Orange* and *Hooligan's Rant*.

John Howlett's new novel *Orange* is not quite in the same league of trash – but neither is it the earth-shattering piece of work the publishers predictably claim.

The book is a fictional account of the response of loyalists to a pending British withdrawal from Ireland. But from this important and worthwhile subject matter, the novel descends into standard thriller-fare as a thousand faceless loyalists take a couple of hundred Catholics hostage in Liverpool city centre.

The fears, insecurities and sectarianism that has led loyalists in the real world to kill Catholics at random in the Six Counties are not really addressed in this novel.

The orange captors are just as wooden as their captives – they are not real people with real thoughts, feelings and motivations.

On the face of it John Howlett's book touches on two areas that TOM needs to pay more attention to: Ulster Loyalism, and how Britain is actually going to go about withdrawing from Ireland. Sadly, the book teaches us nothing about either subject.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about the book is that it was written at all – that is, a British novelist has actually thought about Britain getting out of Ireland. But for real insights into the war, it seems we must continue to rely on Irish writers alone.

By Tony Harris

IRISH NEWS, BRITISH STORIES

Produced by Faction Films on video
Distributed by The Other Cinema

Using extracts from British television – news and political soap opera – set against Northern Ireland backdrops, this film draws sharp contrasts between the pro-establishment media reports and the actual events.

The emphasis is upon the emotive images used to describe the situation in Ireland and the way in which that news is packaged to produce a confusing, unconnected set of statistics and events.

The mainstream news we read and hear today chooses its phrases in anything but an objective and neutral way. Starting with the premise that the British army is a

'peacekeeping force' and that the British government is looking for a peaceful solution to the Irish problem, the British media then must make reports in a manner which asserts the premise.

Phrases such as the well known 'terrorist activity' and 'men of violence' are used to suggest that a handful of individuals without popular support are seeking power for themselves by wilful attempts at destabilisation. Violent action is shown as apolitical or 'extremist'.

Britain began colonising Ireland in earnest in the late 17th and 18th centuries, securing its interests during the industrial revolution. During this time (and of course since) the British press justified Britain's actions against Ireland – in general – by misinformation and lies, and – in particular – by portraying Ireland as a place that required civilising. The film demonstrates this by a selection of old *Punch* style cartoons shown in sequence, which portray the Irish characters as animals or with Neanderthal features, while clean, upright and beautiful (?) figures are seen to reprimand or guide them. The viewer is brought forward with a bump by an equally racist modern *Jak* cartoon at the end of the sequence.

Similarly, excerpts from recent television plays show how the myths are sustained as cold, calculating, criminal masterminds plot the next bomb or assassination, or hard-faced men fanatically expound theories.

A significant portion of the film concerns a 'World in Action' production shown last year. That production attempted to discredit Gerry Adams and Sinn Fein in an effort to alienate support in Britain and Ireland.

But by interviewing Nationalist politicians, *Republican News* workers and people in the street, the film shows how it is the British government that is the cause of the problems, how the army is the aggressor and how the majority of people in Ireland work to maintain their culture and obtain their right to self-determination.

This is a film worth seeing, though the structure is at times confusing with TV extracts appearing mid-interview and on occasion without acknowledgements, which upsets the perspective now and then.

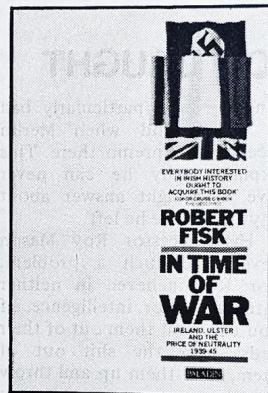
Gerry Adams gives a brief outline concerning partition and the political attitude of the 26 Counties, but apart from that and the cartoon sequence there is no history. As a film about the role of the media in the colonisation of one country by another it is successful, but more political analysis of the Irish situation is needed.

Perhaps pace could have made way for more history and analysis?

Jeff Roberts

IN TIME OF WAR: Ireland, Ulster and the Price of Neutrality 1939-45

by Robert Fisk,
Paladin Books, £4.95.



This book undoubtedly provides some of the most useful historical information on Ireland in the run up to and the course of the Second World War.

But as the author makes clear, there could have been a lot more if he had not been denied access to certain government files of the period in both parts of Ireland. As

it was the Public Records Office in Belfast closed some of the materials he had used to the public when he completed the book.

And revelations there are many. Details about the secret British Government offer of a 'United Ireland' to the Irish Government in the South in 1941, the hint of a large British spy network in the South, unofficial military co-operation between the British and Irish governments of the time, a carefully orchestrated economic boycott against the South's economy to pressure the Irish Government into allowing the Royal Navy to use Irish Ports, and plenty more.

Fisk's book is not more sympathetic to the Republican Movement and he outlines the activities of a minority of IRA activists who helped the Nazis during the war. More interestingly he reveals the existence of a secret Dublin group of fascists who hoped to be Hitler's 'Fifth Column' in Ireland when, as they hoped, the Nazis would invade Ireland. This little group were very anti-republican and had amongst it Fine Gael and Fianna Fail party member and a number of policemen!

The book is mainly taken up with the diplomatic activity between Dublin and London, sometimes concentrating on the character of De Valera to an excessive degree. It is useful to note the methods the South of Ireland government took to contain dissent there during the war, with restrictive Press Censorship and greater 'legal' powers to curb republicans, which has echoes of today's regime.

The best parts of the book are about the North and expose the Unionist system for what it was during the war. The contempt with which the Unionist Government treated many of their own working class supporters comes through when you read of how Belfast was bombed by Germany and the inadequacy of Air-Raid Precautions taken at the time. At one point, the Government was more concerned with a statue of Edward Carson, than their own citizens! Typical too that the North's equivalent of the Home Guard was recruited on the usual sectarian basis and put under the control of the notorious B-Specials, thereby ensuring that Nationalists couldn't get hold of any arms.

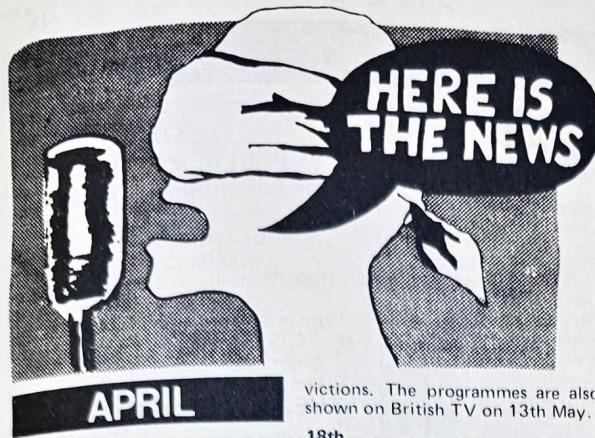
There are many themes developed in the book about the South's neutral stand in the war, some of it a bit thin on detail and dubious in content. It finishes on a very brief piece on the current debate on Irish Neutrality. On the whole it is a good chronicle of the period concerned. Like his other book *Point of No Return* (1975) about the Ulster Workers' Council General Strike of May 1974, this book will probably remain a 'standard' for some time to come.

Mike Dixon



The Prisoners Book Resource was set up to collect second-hand books and current political/radical literature for the use of republican prisoners in Armagh jail, the H Blocks and the Long Kesh cages. We're also hoping to get books into Portlaoise prison in the 26 Counties. Our main financial headache is transporting them. If anyone is travelling to Ireland (preferably Belfast or Derry) during the next few months and can help us, please contact the TOM office and leave us a contact phone number – even if you can only take a few!

PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH. Tel.: 01-250 1293.



APRIL

12th
RUC Constable Nigel Hegarty is charged with the manslaughter of John Downes – killed by a plastic bullet at last August's internment commemoration march. He is granted bail.

The Cork office of the Gay Rights Movement complain that their mail is being intercepted by the Post Office.

British soldier Mark Trotter is charged with the murder of a Catholic man, Martin Love, in Enniskillen on Easter Monday. He joins a UDR man charged with the same murder.

15th
Peter Archer (Labour Party spokesperson) requests an emergency debate on the Government's decision to run down N Ireland's gas industry. The speaker of the House of Commons refuses.

16th
Annual Conference of Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions: Chairperson Inez McCormack of NUPE condemns proposed cutbacks of £4½ millions in social and health services, particularly since 60% of those in employment work in the public services.

Vicious treatment by RUC in Newry: Patrick Blair is arrested and interrogated. He is strangled until he loses consciousness three times, kicked in the testicles, slapped around the head and has a bullet pressed into his ear. He is then released without charge.

17th
European Parliament votes in favour of the Dooge Report by 201-51. The Report analyses steps towards European Union, starting with economic convergence and excluding defence (to begin with). The next step is an intergovernmental conference to draft a new European treaty. See p 8-9.

In Belfast Douglas Hurd stresses that the current Anglo-Irish talks exclude any 'joint authority' for the North. British sovereignty is not up for negotiation. The South's role is to 'reach an agreement' (on Britain's terms evidently). Hurd shows his usual colonial mentality: 'If the Southern interest could be expressed rather more methodically that might be an advantage. At the moment it is rather intermittent and controversial. I do not think it works very satisfactorily.'

RUC representatives attend the Garda Association Conference in Donegal and receive a standing ovation.

RTE (26 Cos TV) shows a two-part programme on the frame-up of the Maguire family in 1974, thoroughly revealing the injustice of their con-

victions. The programmes are also shown on British TV on 13th May.

18th

William Gallagher, one of the 6 people charged in Liverpool with conspiracy to cause an explosion, is released after the charge against him is dropped. He has been held in prison for three months.

19th

Arthur Scargill visits Dublin to express NUM's thanks for Irish workers' support during the strike – they raised an estimated £250,000. He also visits the picket of Dunnes Stores where workers are on strike for refusing to handle South African goods.

20th

INLA plant two incendiary devices in Dunnes Stores; provokes controversy with strike supporters. A conference in Rome of the International League for Rights and Liberation hear ex-Armagh prisoner Brige Brownlee, Richard Balfe MEP and Bernadette McAliskey; motions are passed condemning show trials and strip searching. Meeting in Belfast by United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets outlines its work to date and calls for unity among anti-unionist parties on the issue. Speakers from Sinn Fein, SDLP, IRSP and PD express their support.

25th

Rioters over the proposed visit of a New York police band to attend a hunger strike commemoration in Bundoran, Co Donegal, later this year. Foreign Affairs minister Peter Barry calls it 'an affront to the Irish Government and people', Justice minister Noonan 'an insult to our own police force'.

A Bill is approved in the Dail to give voting rights to British citizens living in the 26 Cos (this follows a referendum).

27th

IRA launch a mortar attack on a British Army observation post at Jonesboro, Co Armagh; 2 of the 8 mortars explode, no casualties announced. The day before, the IRA in Derry mount a rocket attack on a RUC patrol.

29th

Tony Benn and Jeremy Corbyn MP visit the show trials in Belfast, and commit themselves to repeal the Emergency Provisions Act. Benn: 'I don't think people in Britain have any idea what's happening. The sight of a mass trial with uncorroborated evidence, with no jury, is really a tremendous shock.'

Cases are brought in the 26 Cos court by two women claiming that the Government has failed to implement EEC directive to outlaw sexual discrimination in social welfare. Namely, that a married woman's unemployment benefit is

less than a married man's or a single person's.

30th

Garret FitzGerald and Peter Barry pay a 4 hour visit to Derry, availing themselves of the newly reopened Aer Arann flight from Dublin to Derry. They are escorted around by the SDLP, on whose behalf they are seen to be canvassing for the local government elections. Predictable Unionist outrage – 'Dr FitzGerald seems to think he can walk in and out of Northern Ireland as if he owned the place'.

MAY

2nd

Illegitimacy Bill published in the Dail. Its main clauses give inheritance rights to illegitimate children, and defines as not illegitimate children of void or annulled marriages.

Paisley leads a loyalist band parade through a nationalist housing estate in Cookstown, accompanied by an RUC escort.

Unemployment in the North rises to an April record of 21%. In the South it is 17%, a slight drop from March.

3rd

In 26 Cos, Labour Party annual conference endorses the New Ireland Forum Report, upholds neutrality, and supports coalition with Fine Gael (but only by a small majority). It is critical of some of its economic policies.

5th

Loyalist gunmen pass through peace line into nationalist Ardoyne (in North Belfast) and spray passers-by with automatic fire. One man is seriously injured. They are arrested later.

One of the biggest ever hunger strike commemoration marches is held in Belfast, on the fourth anniversary of Bobby Sands' death. Garret FitzGerald tours USA and Canada. He stresses the value of the Anglo-Irish talks with no outside intervention but hopes that in the event of a settlement economic aid will be forthcoming from USA, Canada and EEC. Expresses the usual attacks on 'terrorism' and 'support for terrorism'.

7th

Peter Barry addresses a Fine Gael meeting in London, arguing for tough security even without political progress; claims that a measure of success will be when more nationalists feel able to join the RUC without betraying their nationalism. Peter Archer of British Labour Party is more progressive in calling for political progress above all.

In the European Parliament Fianna Fail MEPs Gene Fitzgerald and Eileen Lemass protest against strip searching but it is ruled that that is out of the EEC's jurisdiction. The next day Mary Banotti (Fine Gael) gets the same reply when she raises the question of investigating the PTA.

In the Dail, Peter Barry lodges a claim against the British Government for £116,060,000 in damages to public property caused by the British Army's cratering of roads and bridges along the border.

Fabian Society submits a report to Labour Party's policy Committee on N Ireland: disband the UDR, end shoot-to-kill policy and use of plastic bullets and supergrasses, repeal the Emergency Provisions

Act and Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Two members of the UDR are convicted for firearms offences in UVF-related actions. One is jailed, one gets a suspended sentence for possession of a gun (Bobby Sands got 14 years for the same conviction).

In local government electioneering, the Official Unionists petition Douglas Hurd that a separate council should be set up in Derry to cover the (Protestant) Waterside area. Derry had long been gerrymandered to produce a Unionist Council even though they were a minority of the population; evidently they are now feeling the pinch under a nationalist council.

8th

Fianna Fail delegation to the Kirkpatrick show trial, consisting of Gerry Collins, Rory O'Hanlon and Martin Mansergh. They describe it as a 'corruption of justice', 'like show trials in a totalitarian regime' and call for a total rethink: 'As long as there is a political problem there will be a security problem'.

10th

Battle of words between Garret FitzGerald and opposition leader Charles Haughey: Haughey accuses him of going for an internal solution for N Ireland ('it is not a problem for Britain and Ireland basically. The solution has to be found in N. Ireland'), and for selling out neutrality by attending the Bilderberg Conference (see pp 8-9). FitzGerald denies the charges. He also criticises the UDR during the trip, much to Hurd's annoyance.

Republican prisoner John Smythe, granted £25,000 for eye injuries caused by an accident in Long Kesh, is then sued by the Northern Ireland Office. He has to hand over all the money to the widow of the policeman whose killing he was implicated in.

12th

Many houses damaged in Poleglass when an IRA bomb explodes as the Army is trying to defuse it.

Sinn Fein candidate Martin O Muilleoir wins a Glor na nGael prize for promoting the Irish language (as does West Belfast as an area). The prize is presented to him by 26 Cos President Hillary.

Massive new shopping and office complex planned for Belfast city centre. It is to be developed by British firm John Laing at an estimated £40 million. The firm has been given 'assurances' that the security situation is OK.

15th

Local Govt. elections in N.Ireland. Douglas Hurd announces that, however many seats Sinn Fein wins, ministers at the Northern Ireland Office must not meet any SF clrs or any Council delegations which include SF clrs.

26 Cos. Government proposes to Britain that the Diplock Courts in Belfast should have a panel of three judges, one from the South; and that the Special Criminal Court in Dublin should have a panel of three judges, one from the North; and that there should be no more supergrass trials. Next Anglo-Irish summit (scheduled for June) delayed until the autumn.

16th

New police powers in Britain to suppress and limit marches, demonstrations and pickets are announced in a Government white paper.

COMING EVENTS & RESOURCES

TROOPS OUT DELEGATION TO BELFAST, 9-12th AUGUST

The delegation will coincide with the annual demonstration in Belfast marking the introduction of internment in 1971. It will also enable delegates to see for themselves what British rule means in practice, as well as how the nationalist people continue to live unbowed after 16 years of war.

Though glad of anyone's interest, the TOM this year is encouraging representatives from various specific groups to go. There will be sections for delegates from the labour movement, black groups, women's groups, peace groups, gay and lesbian groups and Irish organisations. We wish to promote links of solidarity and comparable experience between people of the nationalist community and people struggling for freedom and peace in England, Scotland and Wales.

Delegates will be able to meet representatives from Irish trades unions, women's groups, housing associations as well as a range of political and community activists. With the co-operation of Sinn Fein there will be workshops on issues from the Irish labour movement to Irish language and culture. There will be a women's workshop.

All delegates will stay as the guests of local people.

We will also be protesting at British occupation by picketing local British Army forts and RUC barracks.

If you want to go, either as a delegate from an organisation or as an individual, please contact us as soon as possible. Closing date is 19th June.

TOM, PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH.
Tel. 01-250 1293.

LONDON
MEETING
for NALGO Irish workers
in Camden
(see article)
Bedford House,
125-133 Camden High Street, NW1
TUESDAY JUNE 4th, 6.15pm

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.

ENGLAND	Tyneside
Birmingham	York
Brighton	LONDON AREA
Bristol	Camden
Cambridge	East London
Colchester	Haringey
Coventry	Islington
Leeds	Lambeth
Leicester	West London
Manchester	SCOTLAND
Merseyside	Aberdeen
Northampton	Edinburgh
Norwich	Glasgow
Nottingham	WALES
Oxford	Cardiff
St. Albans	Swansea
Sheffield	

To: P.O. Box 353, London NW5 4NH.
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*.

LEEDS

PUBLIC MEETING

on the Prevention of Terrorism A

Speakers include:

Dr. MAIRE O'SHEA

SHEENA CLARKE,

Sheffield Councillor arrested under the PTA

IBRG

(Irish in Britain Representation Group)
at LEEDS TRADES CLUB, Savile Mount

Called by Leeds Anti-PTA Group,
Box 26, 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2

TUESDAY 25th JUNE, 8pm

LEEDS

VIDEO SHOWS

Wednesday 12th June:

'IRELAND'S HUNGER STRIKE'

Made by the H Block/Armagh Campaign during the 1981 hunger strike, this film traces the history of republican prisoners' resistance

Wednesday 10th July:

'BATTLE FOR ALGIERS'

The Algerian liberation struggle against French imperialism, portrayed in 'Battle for Algiers', has much in common with the struggle in Ireland.

A classic film.

DOWNSTAIRS at the TRADES CLUB,
SAVILE MOUNT, LEEDS 7

Admission 50p

The last of a third season of films organised by Leeds Troops Out Movement, Box 1969, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 3AW

Both films start at 8pm

BIRMINGHAM

PUBLIC MEETING

held by the
Labour Committee on Ireland

Speakers include:

CHRISTINE CRAWLEY MEP

Dr. MAIRE O'SHEA,

recently arrested under the 'Terror Act'

GODFREY WEBSTER (LCI)

ROBIN CORBETT, MP for Erdington

Bar Admission Free

at ST. MARY'S & JOHN'S SOCIAL CLUB,
Gravelly Hill, Erdington, B'ham

MONDAY 3rd June, 7.30pm

BIRMINGHAM

EDUCATION & DISCUSSION

MEETING

Organised by Birmingham TOM

'REPRESSIVE LEGISLATION
AND THE LESSONS FROM
IRELAND'

at the

CENTRE FOR THE UNEMPLOYED,
448 Stratford Road, B'ham
(more information: 021-773 8683)

MONDAY 10th JUNE, 7.30pm

BIRMINGHAM

CAMPAIGN MEETING

of the MAIRE O'SHEA
SUPPORT COMMITTEE

at CENTRE FOR THE
UNEMPLOYED,
448 Stratford Road, B'ham

Meetings are
on alternate Tuesdays,
ie 4th June, 18th June etc
and start at 7.30pm