

TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND



**TROOPS OUT
NOW**

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

Paper of the Troops Out Movement 30p

Vol. 11, No. 1, October 1987

British injustice



***Free the
framed
prisoners***

***Birmingham
Six &
Guildford
Four***

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- FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION
- BELFAST DELEGATION REPORT
- BRITAIN'S DIPLOCK DILEMMA
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EDITORIAL

Two years after the Home Secretary was forced to refer the case of the Birmingham Six for investigation, the men are to go to the Appeal Court on November 2nd. It is almost 13 years to the day since they were arrested, atrociously beaten and, in a glare of media hype, given life sentences for an event they had no connection with.

Recent signs pointing to the outcome of the appeal are not encouraging. The Devon and Cornwall police investigation into allegations of assault against the Six reads like a dress rehearsal to ensure Birmingham police officers all say the same thing in court.

Despite repeated television programmes, and intense pressure for a review into the Guildford Four convictions, it was only when even more evidence was recently produced that the Home Secretary referred their case for police investigation. At the same time there were attempts to smear the reputation of the research assistant of the Guildford Four Campaign. Clearly, there has been no change of heart in the authorities' attitudes to Irish framed prisoners.

The Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four and the Maguire family, are not isolated cases of injustices from the hazy past. They are part of a pattern of intimidation of the Irish community in this country. Alongside the use of show-trials and frame-ups the Prevention of Terrorism Act plays a central role.

And these frame-ups are continuing. Patrick McLaughlin is currently awaiting his appeal against a conviction for conspiracy on the flimsiest of evidence in 1986.

In early September carefully orchestrated press briefings by the Wiltshire police have meant that three Irish people held under the PTA in the vicinity of N. Ireland Secretary, Tom King's, country mansion have already been tried and sentenced by the media. The press treatment of these people is frighteningly similar to past treatment of the Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four, etc.

Three campers held under the PTA in different parts of the country quickly became part of a 'terrorist plot'. It was strongly implied they were found in possession of explosives. Immediately we were given the grounds for a conspiracy charge. As for their right to silence – the police gladly gave details on how the interrogations were going. Even so called quality papers like the *Guardian*, reported that the detainees were having difficulty in accounting for their movements.

The other show-trial and frame-ups to dominate the news headlines have been the cases of the Tottenham Three and the Broadwater Farm prisoners. These frame-ups have been part of the state's attempt to crush the resistance of Britain's Black community.

It is now two years since the Broadwater Farm Uprising of October 5th, 1985. On Saturday, 3rd October, a national demonstration has been called in London as part of an initiative to set up a national campaign for civil rights and justice in Britain.

The Appeal Court hearing for the Birmingham Six is important because six men have spent 13 years behind bars for something they did not do. If the framed men win the appeal it will be an important victory in countering attempts to intimidate Irish and Black people living in this country.

Troops Out Movement

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

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

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

Troops Out Paper

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

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

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Loyalist attacks increase

On Tuesday, September 8th, loyalist gunmen shot dead Patrick Hamill in the Springfield Road area of West Belfast. Hamill was watching television with his wife and two young children when the gunmen walked in through the open front door to shoot him three times in the head.

The following day the IRA killed a member of the Ulster Defence Regiment. Usually, when members of the security forces are killed in IRA operations, the authorities attempt to portray them as the victims of sectarian attacks against protestants. On this occasion there was no mention of the fact that Harry Sloan was a member of the UDR. The deaths of Patrick Hamill and Harry Sloan were directly linked as tit-for-tat killings.

The West Belfast Brigade of the IRA issued a statement maintaining that Sloan was a member of the UDR, it went on — "...tit-for-tat sectarian killings are totally unacceptable. They only help to reinforce Britain's false portrayal of the war in the Six Counties as a sectarian conflict rather than a colonial struggle for national independence."

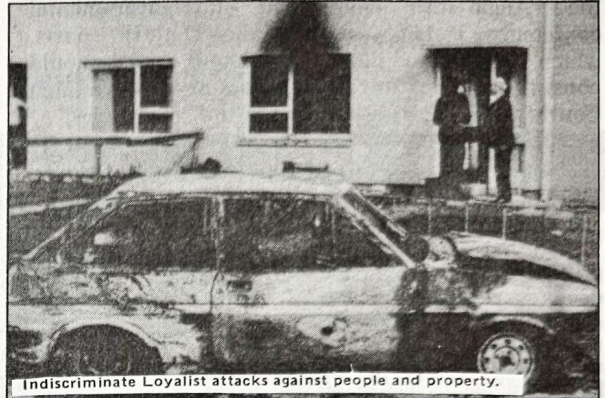
ATTACKS

Over the past months there have been a number of loyalist attacks on catholics. On 23rd August taxi driver, Michael

Power, was gunned down. On 17th July two catholics were injured by loyalist gunmen in two separate incidents. In May a Tyrone man, Dermot Hackett, was shot dead while on his bread delivery round. But, these are only the incidents which make the news headlines.

In mid-August *An Phoblacht/Republican News* reported that families living in the Springfield Road area, where Patrick Hamill was killed less than a month later, had been subjected to loyalist violence on two consecutive weekends. Throughout the six counties there have been reports of intimidation by loyalist gangs or by gunmen running amok in nationalist areas.

An indication of the size of the problem was provided by the N. Ireland Housing Executive when it published its annual report for the financial year 1986/87. The report noted a large increase in the number of people seeking housing transfers as a result of sectarian intimidation.



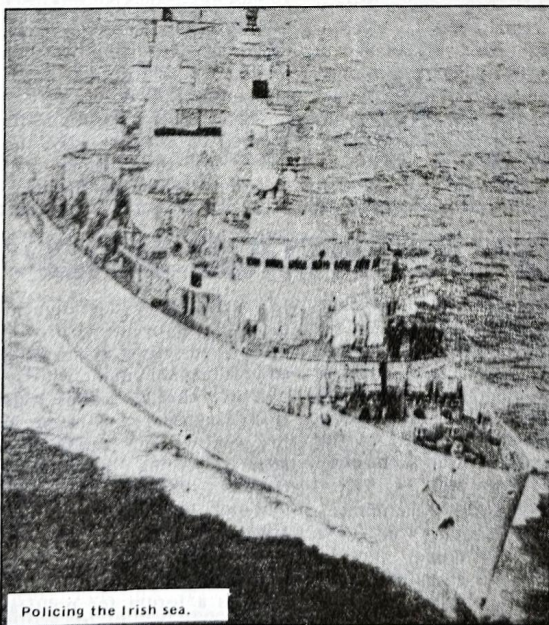
SECURITY FORCES

Included in these sectarian attacks by loyalist gangs there has been the involvement of members of the security forces.

In May a Royal Ulster Constabulary officer opened fire on a restaurant in Castlewelling. When Alex Maskey, Sinn Fein councillor, was seriously injured in a loyalist assassination attempt, it was revealed that there was an unusual absence of RUC patrols in the area immediately prior to the shooting. Also, his telephone had 'mysteriously' been cut off. Similarly, at the time when Patrick Hamill was killed, approximately 5.45pm, there was

no RUC activity in the area. Normally RUC patrols are much in evidence when the mainly loyalist workforce from Mackies factory leaves the predominantly nationalist area.

Following the Loyalist killing of Dermot Hackett the Bishop of Derry, Gerald Daly, and a group of 14 solicitors accused the RUC of complicity in sectarian attacks. They pointed to the fact that by repeatedly interrogating catholics the RUC sets people up as targets for loyalist gangs. However, it is evident that security force involvement in sectarian attacks goes much deeper.



Brittania waives the rules

Earlier this year the British Parliament passed the Territorial Sea Act extending Britain's territorial waters from 3 miles to 12. This includes the seas around the six counties and the tiny North Atlantic rock of Rockall, on which the British Navy erected a flag a number of years ago thereby claiming sovereignty over the rock and its surrounding resources of fish and minerals. Rockall is in fact closer to the coast of Donegal than Scotland.

Since the passing of the Act Irish trawlers have been subject to greater levels of harassment and on August 20th an Irish

trawler, the Diarmuid Anne, was 'arrested' by a British Frigate, ostensibly for exceeding the Black Pollack quota. Local fishermen see this as an excuse and regard the 'arrest' as an act of British aggression.

The extension of the territorial limit now means that Irish vessels have no neutral passage northwards through the Irish Sea to the Atlantic. People crossing the Irish Sea by Ferry may have noticed a side-effect of the Act in reduced duty-free shopping and drinking time which can only take place in international waters.

NEWS FROM IRELAND

On Tuesday 25th August, N. Ireland Secretary, Tom King, announced for the second time this year that non-jury Diplock Courts are not to be reformed. The issue of reform had been raised by the Dublin government and the Social Democratic and Labour Party at the Anglo-Irish Agreement intergovernmental conference. Dublin's case was that Diplock Courts, which sit with one judge and without a jury, should consist of three judges, like the Special Criminal Courts operating without juries in the 26 counties.

poor economic performance and harsh austerity measures. In the six counties Sinn Fein had made vast inroads into the SDLP's electoral support.

The purpose of the Agreement was to undermine Sinn Fein's strength in the six counties and to dissuade disaffected voters in the 26 counties from turning to Sinn Fein.

Ulster Unionism, once united in opposition to nationalist involvement in N.Ireland affairs, is now divided in its opposition to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. A task force commissioned by the Official Unionist and Democratic Unionist parties questioned the wisdom of Unionist strategy, or lack of it. Since publication of the task force report, *An End to Drift*,

Anglo-Irish Accord: no reform of Diplock

INJUSTICE

Established in 1974 Diplock Courts were introduced with one over-riding purpose in mind – the ending of internment without trial. Internment had caused considerable damage to Britain's international reputation, and had failed to seriously undermine the IRA's military capability. By the time internment ended in 1976, non-jury Diplock Courts had already proved to be effective institutions for the imprisonment of republicans. Diplock Courts have since become an integral part of the six counties judicial system.

Republican opposition to Diplock Courts has always focused on the inherent injustice of British rule in Ireland. No amount of tinkering with minor details is going to distract attention from that injustice. Therefore, why should the British government bother to introduce cosmetic reforms? Especially as the Republican Movement is going to be as resolutely opposed to three judges sitting in a British court instead of one.

Yet the Dublin government did not let the matter drop earlier this year. And the issue is to be raised at the inter-

governmental conference this October. Politicians have also linked Diplock Court reform to Dublin's Ratification of the European Convention on Extradition. For its part the British government is apparently unconcerned over the speculation as to whether reforms will be introduced. It has been necessary to keep up the pretence that the Anglo-Irish Agreement has something to offer northern nationalists.

It increasingly seems that this is no longer the case. The intergovernmental conference has only met twice this year, compared to eleven times in 1986. Following Tom King's announcement on Diplock Courts Seamus Mallon, Deputy Leader of the SDLP stated *'The Anglo-Irish Agreement is in danger of dying of boredom.'*

IMPLICATIONS

British imperialism has always had an all-Ireland perspective of affairs north and south of the border. The most recent all-Ireland initiative was the Anglo-Irish Agreement, signed in 1985. Garrett Fitzgerald's Fine Gael government entered into the Agreement with the 26 county electorate dissatisfied with the government's

The Dublin and Westminster elections of this year produced a mix bag of results for British imperialism. Sinn Fein did not emerge as a mainstream political party in the south. But, in the north, Sinn Fein consolidated its electoral position.

There is one more crucial factor to consider. The abortive attempt to isolate Sinn Fein has been extremely costly to the British government. Unionist politicians have been effectively alienated from Westminster rule.

The Unionist parties have refused to negotiate with the British government as long as the Anglo-Irish Agreement operates. In their view the Agreement is the first step to a united Ireland. Instead of formulating a strategy to challenge the British government the Unionists set about destroying the Agreement with all the charm of a bull in a china shop. Unionist MPs withdrew from the House of Commons, they resigned their parliamentary seats and after re-election claimed to have a mandate against the Agreement, Unionist councillors refused to conduct council business, and numerous threats were made against British betrayal.

The outcome of it all is that

any action on its recommendations has been suppressed by James Molyneux and Ian Paisley, the leaders of the OUP and DUP. And now we discover Frank Millar, one of the authors of that report, has left politics to take up a career in TV journalism.

The repercussions go much deeper. Disenchanted loyalists are looking to other methods to secure the privilege of a sectarian state. The steady rise in loyalist sectarian attacks is a disturbing indication of a change in loyalist thinking.

BRITAIN'S DILEMMA

It is time for the British government to re-assess the situation. Has the Anglo-Irish Agreement outlived its present usefulness for the British government? With the general elections out of the way, what has the government to gain by fostering discontent within Unionist organisations? On the other hand it certainly has a lot to lose. Any further escalation in Loyalist violence will inevitably lead to an improvement in Sinn Fein's fortunes, north and south of the border.

Two other developments need to be noted. Firstly, the leader of the Fianna Fail government, Charles Haughey,

CONWAY MILL: COMMUNITY CONTROL AND

People who have gone on the Troops Out Movement delegations to Belfast have reason to appreciate the Conway Mill. It is this community centre which every year provides the facilities in which workshops, discussion groups etc. are held and is the focal point for the delegation.

The delegation is just one of the events which is able to avoid of the open door policy of the Conway Education

Centre. This thriving community centre grew out of the Springhill Community house, situated in a part of West Belfast where the unemployment rate is one of the worst in Europe. It is housed in the old Falls Flax Spinning Mill, and is known by most of its users as the Mill.

Springhill House/Conway Education Centre between them are the focus of a wide range of activities developed as a response to local needs by

members of the local community. These range on the educational side from O and A level classes to access classes for the unemployed and classes for young people not attending school. A branch of the Workers Education Association is based at the Mill.

Local people began renovating the building in 1981 without any money and the Mill now has a canteen, three classrooms, a television room, a creche, and a theatre. Plans

for further development include improvement of the library and setting up a writing and reading Museum.

Three theatre groups (one Irish language) are based in the centre. The centre also attracts visiting theatre and cultural groups from El Salvador, the American Indian Movement, Nicaragua, as well as most European countries. The centre is also frequently used as a forum for political discussion and local people

whatever his political views may be, has a dislike for working with the English. Instead of forcing concessions out of the British government within the framework of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, he appears to be ignoring the Agreement as much as possible. Secondly, Ulster Unionists have said they are willing to enter negotiations with the SDLP

Ireland. The Republican Movement is placing itself in a position where any small slip by British imperialism can effectively be translated into an increase in Republican support.

courts

on power sharing if the SDLP abandons the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

From the outset one of the aims of the Anglo-Irish Agreement was to promote the SDLP. Now that the Agreement has brought Unionist politicians and the SDLP to the threshold of negotiations, why not shelve an Agreement which is already collecting dust on the mantlepiece?

However, the strength of the Republican Movement remains as the major stumbling block to the shelving of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Their strength does not rest solely on their electoral performances. Nor does it depend on the military capabilities of the IRA. Sinn Féin has demonstrated a willingness to develop a liberation strategy on the basis of what is happening in an all-Ireland context. The ballot box and Armalite strategy and the decision to take up any seats won in the 26 county elections have given the Republican Movement a higher profile. But, behind the scenes there is all the hard work, routine campaigning, and patience, associated with a liberation force which knows that history has sounded the death knell of British rule in



Belfast City Hall

Photo: Helen Dady

SELF-EDUCATION

use it as a focal point for enquiries into such areas as unemployment, education, death by plastic bullets, prison conditions, strip searching etc.

Conway Mill is a community centre run by local people to meet the needs of local people. It is an attempt by the people of that area of West Belfast to control their own education and social self help development. For this reason the British government opposes the

centre in every way possible. No funds are given to the centre and the N. Ireland office has withdrawn ACE funding (equivalent to Manpower Services) from any projects which operate in the centre or might in any way be beneficial to the centre.

The Troops Out Movement has launched an appeal in this country to support the Mill (see back page for details). Urgently needed is money for books for this year's A level

and O level courses, an Amstrad Computer and a security entry-phone system. Not content in withholding funds from this thriving community centre, the government has publicly labelled Conway Mill as a 'security risk'. This leaves them open to harassment by the army, and RUC as well as a target for sectarian assassination. Thus the urgent need to make this community centre with an open door policy as secure as possible.

TALKS ABOUT TALKS

On Monday, 14th September, Ulster Unionists broke their formal boycott of meetings with government ministers. N. Ireland Secretary, Tom King, was called into a meeting between N. Ireland Office civil servants and James Molyneux and Ian Paisley. The meeting produced no new developments.

A joint statement said "The purpose of these meetings has been to clarify the circumstances under which talks about talks might develop into wider ranging political negotiations." Another meeting is planned for October.

Patterns of Discrimination Action for equality

In the last issue we looked at discrimination in employment and showed how catholics still suffer massive disadvantage in N. Ireland. In this issue we look at the fight against discrimination and in particular how the MacBride principles have become a driving force for action in this area.

Discrimination against catholics has been an integral part of the N. Ireland statelet since its foundation and its elimination was the prime demand of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association in the sixties and early seventies. Through NICRA's agitation discrimination against catholics in jobs, housing and voting rights attracted world attention to the acute embarrassment of the British government. Under pressure the government pushed through reforms in voting rights and also some reforms in housing.

In 1973 a government report stated "the effect of unemployment on human dignity and family life, the humiliation that discrimination involves, and the destructive effect that it may have on the whole fabric of society, are such that all concerned should take positive and effective action to ensure complete equality of opportunity." In the fourteen years since then discrimination has flourished as the N. Ireland economy has collapsed. The various initiatives undertaken by successive administrations have been mere palliatives to alleviate pressure at various times to tackle the problem.

The key agency which was set up to tackle discrimination, and behind which the government has hidden its failure for so long, is the Fair Employment Agency (FEA).

FEA

The FEA was set up in 1976 with a brief to investigate recruitment practices, and to pursue individual complaints of discrimination. The legislation under which it was set up (Fair Employment Act, 1976) indicates the limitations of the agency. The legislation itself is weaker than that on discrimination in the 1973 N. Ireland Constitution Act. Individuals are not allowed to take action through the courts on specific instances of discrimination but must rely on the FEA to pursue the complaint.

The Act also made affirmative action to make discrimination illegal. The history of the FEA's work has been pathetic. Of the first 236 complaints of discrimination it only found in favour of 25. Their approach is so softly-softly that it is unclear from their reports exactly how many findings of inequality there have been. Individual complaints take at least two years to complete and the results are not made public.

The main 'teeth' of the FEA is the power to withdraw the Fair Employment

Certificate. The Certificate is granted to firms who sign a very vague and general declaration that they will not discriminate. Firms obtaining government contracts must have the Certificate — losing it would have obvious economic consequences. Despite an abundance of examples of discrimination, the Agency has never withdrawn a Certificate. Only seven of the twenty-six district councils in N. Ireland have signed the declaration.



The Civil Rights Movement in 1969: its demand to end discrimination is still being fought for today.

The FEA has shown little or no political will to combat discrimination and in one of its annual reports states "as the economy recovers, we can indeed expect little change in areas of inequality where employment opportunities are few". This is perhaps not surprising since the agency comes under the Department of Economic Development (DED). In its 1983 report the FEA found that catholics were underemployed and on lower wage scales in the Civil Service, the FEA's own overseer. The Civil Service has also been responsible for the development of the dual economy in Northern Ireland, under which predominantly catholic areas have been deprived of economic development resulting in levels of unemployment two and a half times as bad as protestant areas.

Last year the DED drew up a white paper for the N. Ireland Secretary, Tom King, on ways to tackle discrimination. The paper, which was cynical even by previous standards, said that arguments about the existence of extensive discrimination were "usually sterile and inconclusive... though there are instances of discrimination it is only one of a number of very complex factors which contribute towards enduring employment differentials." 'Complex factors' is a polite way of saying catholics do not like to work, will not apply to certain jobs, etc. The buzz phrase for their proposals for reform was 'multi-dimensional approach' or as later in the document 'cost-effectiveness'.

This approach involves merging religious, sex, and disability discrimination into one commission. The Equal Opportunities Commission would therefore be abolished and women would lose their right to have complaints of sex discrimination heard before industrial tribunals. As the paper put it, keeping a separate commission for religious discrimination might be a "drawback" because "some may press for progress also in relation to sex and disability".

In more recent years the Department of Economic Development has increasingly dropped its pretence that the FEA is independent and has been using it to try to combat the MacBride principles.

MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES

The MacBride principles are a series of

anti-discrimination principles initiated by Nobel peace prize winner Sean MacBride to guide US firms investing in the North of Ireland in fair recruitment practices (see last issue for details). They are modelled on US civil rights legislation and the Sullivan principles drawn up to prevent US companies from operating apartheid. They commit companies to take affirmative action to ensure that a fair proportion of minority workers are employed.

To date three states, New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts and four cities New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston have voted to use their funds in 23 US companies to pressure for the implementation of the principles in subsidiaries which employ 11% of the manufacturing workforce in the six counties. New Jersey, Michigan and Rhode Island are expected to follow suit soon.

And it is not just state or city institutions which are adopting this practice. A number of groups and individuals are setting up an organisation to buy shares in big companies so as to pressure them. At the moment the Irish National Caucus is attempting to get the Ford Corporation to adopt the MacBride principles.

BRITISH OPPOSITION

The British government is implacably opposed to the principles. They have lobbied extensively against them and have used people like Bob Cooper, head of the FEA, and John Hume of the SDLP to campaign against their adoption in the States. The government is opposed to the MacBride principles because they bring international attention to the fact that discrimination against Catholics is still extensive, even after fifteen years of direct rule. It is particularly embarrassing that the principles are based on measures used to oppose apartheid.

The principles were drawn up independently by Irish people and have set the parameters for the debate on tackling discrimination, rather than the British government's reform proposals. They carry the name of Sean MacBride, a well-known opponent of Britain's occupation of the North of Ireland, and have the support of a wide range of other opposers of British rule including Sinn Féin.

The situation occurs at a particularly embarrassing time for Britain. The government's strategy through the Anglo-Irish Agreement is to try to develop a Catholic middle class in the North. This could be

negotiated with and would help to contain Republicanism. This middle class would be developed with the help of US and EEC investment. It does not augur well for the development of this new privileged class if discrimination is seen to be rampant and its opponents force US and EEC capital to be careful where it invests.

TRADE UNIONS

The MacBride principles have not just been having an effect in the United States but also on this side of the Atlantic. In particular they have sparked off a big shake up in the attitude of the Irish Trade Union movement towards discrimination in N. Ireland. For years the unions had been paralysed in their inability to tackle the rampant discrimination against one section of the community. Traditionally the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) have adopted the policy of their northern subsidiary the Northern Ireland Congress of Trade Unions (NICTU). NICTU has been reluctant to deal with the issue for fear of losing its largely loyalist membership. In effect the so-called Orange Card has ensured Irish unions were silent on the issue.

In the past few years though a number of prominent trade unionists have confronted the issue. Inez McCormack (NUPE) was one of the initiators of the MacBride principles. Their success in the States and particularly their adoption by the AFL/CIO trade union federation there have encouraged other trade unionists to become active around the issue. Figures such as John Mitchell have taken up the issue as part of their wider duties as trade union leaders.

John Mitchell is the general secretary of the Irish Distributive and Administrative Union (IDATU), the fourth largest Irish union and one of the most aggressive in representing its members interests. Earlier this year he was reprimanded by the ICTU for criticising other unions for not doing their job properly. IDATU was threatened with expulsion from the ICTU as a result. At the annual conference in April Mitchell again repeated his remarks saying not only had the trade union movement failed in the basic areas of pay and employment but it had not made the least protest "against the repression of our people". His speech was warmly applauded by the 160 delegates present. But the ICTU went ahead with the expulsion of the union at the congress in June.

The other heated debate at the ICTU congress was around discrimination in the six counties and ways to oppose it. The executive had put forward its own proposals under the heading *A Charter for Equal Opportunities*. There was also a motion on the floor calling for complete support for the MacBride principles. Initially, delegates spoke as if the two proposals were counterposed. But Inez McCormack (NUPE) argued that the MacBride principles had highlighted discrimination.

"MacBride detonated the issue." She said the purpose of the MacBride principles and of the ICTU report was to address injustice and the question of how and when and by what means. The British government's proposals to counteract discrimination "gave us words but no timetable and no action." Many other delegates argued that both should be adopted. Joe O'Reilly of Meath Trades Council asked delegates to concentrate on the issues and not the politics of the people for or against the principles. "How can we say we've got a united trade union movement when a large proportion of our population is excluded from job opportunities?"

Eventually the ICTU proposals were adopted and the MacBride principles motion was remitted to the executive for discussion over the following year. For the first time in 20 years the ICTU is now committed to affirmative action programmes to reduce discrimination.

WHAT OF HERE?

The MacBride principles have been raised at various union conferences in this country. This year the NUR agreed to support the principles. The Labour Committee on Ireland is organising a conference in November to promote greater awareness in the trade union movement here of, and to develop opposition to, discrimination along the lines of the MacBride principles (see back page for details).

In September, MP Kevin McNamara, the Labour Party spokesperson on Ireland, put forward proposals to counter discrimination. He praised the MacBride principles as embodying "sentiments with which no person committed to equality could disagree". His proposals, which he called "the minimum elements which new legislation should contain if it is to be effective", include contract compliance, a statutory duty of employers to promote equality of opportunity, and a revamped Fair Employment Agency with stronger powers.

Meanwhile the government has given in to the angry reaction to its attempt to dilute opposition to religious and sex discrimination by lumping them all together to be dealt with by one commission. It has agreed that the N. Ireland Equal Opportunities Commission will remain. It is being forced to make minor concessions in dealing with discrimination, but its record of promises over the past ten years does not indicate that it is yet prepared to deal with the real issue.



The TOM delegation to Belfast this August was probably the most representative of all eight previous delegations. It included miners from Durham, Trades Council delegates from Birmingham, Leicester, Newport, Norwich, and Redditch, AUEW, and T&GWU delegates from Fords Dagenham, the Indian Worker's Association, Asian Youth Groups from Leicester, relatives and supporters of the Broadwater Farm prisoners, Labour Party members, campaigns against racism and fascism and peace groups. TOM members organised the groups covering all England and Wales. The seriousness and genuine interest of the delegates was noted and commented on by our Sinn Fein hosts.

The weekend started with a welcome from the acting chair of Belfast Sinn Fein, Paddy McManus. He stood in for Alex Maskey who is still recovering after being shot in a loyalist assassination attempt. We all wish him a speedy recovery. Paddy was outstanding in his organisation, advice helpfulness and warmth. Nothing was too much trouble. The same applies to Fionuala McCaughley, without whose work behind the scenes the delegation could not have taken place.

Paddy gave an outline of the current situation. Particular mention was made of the new Public Order Act. We were warned to expect more direct attention from the police, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, than in previous years.

Events over the four days in Belfast included: workshops on Sinn Fein politics, plastic bullets, prisoners in English goals, women, trade unions, and culture; meetings with Concerned Teachers, Sinn Fein Press Officers, Students Against Oppression, Sinn Fein Youth; visits to Divis Flats, Falls Womens' Centre, Milltown Cemetery, West Belfast Forts Gaelscoil na bhfal (Irish primary school), unemployed centre and local bookshops.

The Troops Out Movement wishes to thank Sinn Fein for their hard work and hospitality in Belfast, especially to families who welcomed our delegates into their homes.

The highlight of the weekend (apart from the Sunday night social) was the Internment Commemoration March. Thousands marched up the Falls Road on Sunday afternoon in defiance of the new Public Order Act.

TOM Delegation to Ireland



Anti-internment march through West Belfast.

Trade union workshop

The importance with which Sinn Fein views trade union work was outlined by Daisy Mules, chair of the Sinn Fein Trade Union Department (now with its own national committee). She stressed that in the six counties Sinn Fein has limited trade union experiences because nationalists had experienced generations of unemployment and loyalist domination of unions. In the 26 counties trade union involvement is much more prevalent and Sinn Fein is working to get members to align their republican politics with their trade unionism.

The major problem that republicans face is that the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) constitutionally forbids discussion on Irish unity. It states this would be divisive in the movement because of its loyalist membership. A point to remember when British trade unions boast that unions are the only

non-sectarian organisations in Ireland.

Niall Donnelly of IDATU spoke of his union's campaign against the ICTU ruling. As a result the IDATU has been suspended from the ICTU, allegedly for calling USDAW an 'Uncle Tom Union' in the *Andersonstown News*, a pro-republican Belfast weekly paper (see pages 6&7).

Ronan Brady of Dublin Sinn Fein and a member of the NUJ talked extensively on job discrimination and the MacBride Principles (see pages 6&7). The delegation was encouraged to support the *Cause of Ireland* Conference on the McBride Principles in London on November 28th.

"The soldiers run up our street and back again. They won't let us play. Then they go all round there. All the time, every day. They won't leave us alone. They're not nice." — Clare Downs from Belfast, aged 4.

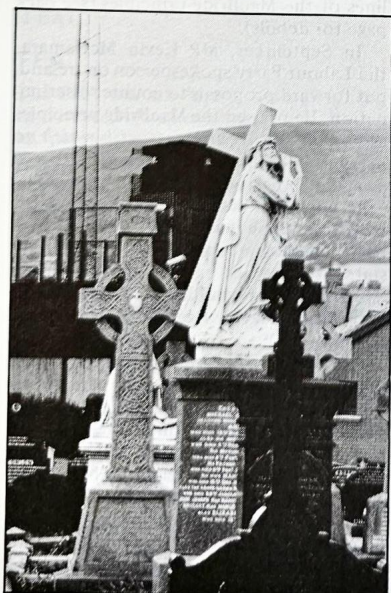


Photo: Photostatic Artists

Milltown cemetery under surveillance cameras.



Photo: Photostatic Artists

TOM speaker Wolde Selassie addresses the rally.



Photo: Photostatic Artists

Prisoners in English gaols

We learned in this session the lengths to which Britain will go to make families suffer in an attempt to undermine the determination of republicans.

There are 32 men and two women republican prisoners in English gaols. They are all kept as Category 'A' (extra high risk) prisoners in top security prisons.

Relatives spoke in detail of how families are being forced to serve the sentence alongside the prisoners. They stressed that most republicans were not complaining about their actual sentences or general prison conditions, but were asking the British Government to stick to their own rules. They are demanding the right to serve their sentences as near as possible to their own homes (Prison Rule 31), ie repatriation.

We heard examples of families traveling lengthy distances from Ireland to visit — only to be told that their relatives had been moved to another prison. We heard of people held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and then missing their visits. Often children are involved in these traumatic experiences.

Soldiers have been transferred back to Britain from N. Ireland to serve sentences received from N. Ireland courts. And loyalists have been transferred from Britain to N. Ireland. Why is it that the same rules do not apply to republican prisoners? The Government does not believe republican prisoners are entitled to basic human rights.

Plastic bullets campaign

One of the most moving experiences was when Emma Groves, blinded by a rubber bullet, and four relatives of people killed by plastic bullets related their experiences. The Ban Plastic Bullets Campaign was set up following the death of John Downes in 1984 with the sole aim of achieving a ban on plastic bullets.

Jim McCabe — wife Nora killed in 1981 whilst going to the shops. Shot in head from an RUC Land Rover. Incident filmed by American TV. No charges against police. In fact RUC officer was promoted.

Brenda Downes — made a widow at the age of twenty. Husband John shot dead in 1984 at an Anti-Internment rally which had been peaceful until the RUC rioted in an attempt to detain Martin Galvin of Noraid. John had been at the rally with his eighteen month old daughter.

Emma Groves — blinded by a rubber bullet fired by a soldier through her window. No-one charged. "The soldier who shot me has never been brought to justice. I couldn't get him into court — to

this day I don't know the name of that soldier. On the day I got compensation I cried. I didn't want money; I wanted justice."

Kathleen Stewart — son, Brian shot in 1976 while playing in the street. Buried on his thirteenth birthday. Army statement on TV said he was the ringleader of a rioting mob. Proved that no riot took place. A riot did start after the killing. The soldiers involved were promoted. "For killing children in Ireland you get promotion. They came to keep the peace with guns. If they came to keep peace, why are our children dead?"

Theresa Rowntree — son Colin, aged 11, shot dead. First to be killed by the 'safer' plastic bullets in 1971. Shot at six feet range. Court returned an open verdict. "If you saw the injuries you would do everything in your power to stop them. His injuries were horrific. Even the doctors were shocked. I couldn't look at him. His head was smashed to pieces. He was just a child, hadn't even gone to secondary school. It's 16 years later and they're still using them."

Harassment

Harassment of delegates by the security forces was a regular occurrence over the weekend. Some delegates were stopped and questioned on our arrival in N. Ireland.

We were threatened that we would be arrested if we participated in the 'illegal' march on the anniversary of internment.

The most extreme example came when delegates were gathering at Whiterock Leisure Centre for a guided tour around forts in West Belfast. Armed RUC men jumped out of three armoured Land Rovers (backed up by the Army) and pointed rifles directly at everyone while taking our names and addresses. We were told it was "routine policing". When we suggested it wasn't quite routine in Birmingham or Sheffield to have your name taken at gunpoint, one astute RUC officer declared "With people like you around it should be".

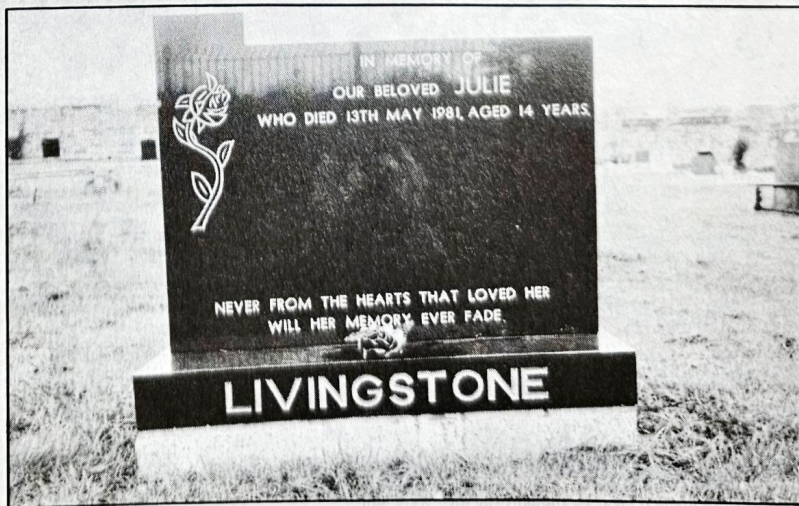


Photo: Photostatic Artists

Frame-up victims appeal

On November 2nd the six Irish men known as the Birmingham Six will go to the Court of Appeal to have their wrongful convictions overturned. It will be the third time in their thirteen year fight to have their innocence acknowledged that they have appeared in the Court of appeal.

The last time was in 1981 when Lord Denning made his now infamous statement refusing the men the right to sue the police for assault. "If the six men win it will mean that the police were guilty of perjury, violence and threats, that the confessions were involuntary and were improperly admitted in evidence; and that the convictions were erroneous. The Home Secretary would have either to recommend they be pardoned or remit the case to the Court of Appeal. This is such an appalling vista that every sensible person in the land would say: 'It cannot be right that these actions should go any further.'"

Last December Tom Clarke, a former Birmingham police man, told a *World In Action* television programme how he was present on the night the six men were held in Queens Road police station, and witnessed them being beaten. In response the Home Secretary initiated an inquiry by the Devon and Cornwall police. They have now made a report which is not available to the Six's solicitors although the statements are. The first reaction of one of the men was that the statements read like a

script. Quite clearly there had been no attempt to investigate the men's complaints of assault. The whole exercise was a rehearsal to ensure that all the police were going to say the same thing in court.

OBSERVERS

Despite widespread belief in the men's innocence the authorities are going to fight very hard to prevent the men from being released. Defence solicitors are finding it very difficult to obtain evidence such as custody records of the men's detention in Queens Road police station. The case is to be heard in a court with seating for only thirty members of the public. This means little more than the press and immediate relatives will gain access. The Birmingham Six campaign is trying to put pressure on the courts to have the case tried in a larger room as they expect many observers to attend. Already the TGWU and the NUM have said they are sending observers. The campaign will be running an information centre near the court for the duration of the appeal which is expected to last two weeks.

The campaign received a boost with the publication in

THE CASE OF THE BIRMINGHAM 6



Paddy Hill



Dick McIlkenney



John Walker

'The Home Secretary should certainly hold a retrial.'
Sir John Farr, Conservative MP for Harborough

Six Birmingham Irishmen have been in jail since 1974 for offences they did not commit. The suffering and bitter frustration they and their families have borne is incalculable. Unless massive public pressure is brought to bear, they will spend the rest of their lives in prison.

Hugh Callaghan, Paddy Hill, Gerry Hunter, Dick McIlkenney, Bill Power and John Walker were arrested in November 1974 in the wake of outrage that followed the bombing of two pubs in Birmingham. Twenty-one people were killed in the bombings, 102 were injured. Anti Irish feeling was fierce, and the Labour government took the opportunity to rush through the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which then Home Secretary Roy Jenkins described as 'draconian'.

The six were long-time Birmingham residents, working class men with families. Five were arrested within hours of the bombing as they boarded a boat for a short visit to Ireland. Forensic tests, which have since been conclusively discredited, suggested that two of them might have handled explosives. The men were savagely and repeatedly beaten by the police during two days of interrogation, and four of them signed false 'confessions'. The 'confessions' contradicted each other and did not match the evidence from the scene. The six were nevertheless convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment.

The six men were victims of hysteria and vengeance, not recipients of justice. They were convicted because they were Irish and in the wrong place at the wrong time. They, and their families, have consistently proclaimed their innocence. Please help to set them free!



Hugh Callaghan



Bill Power

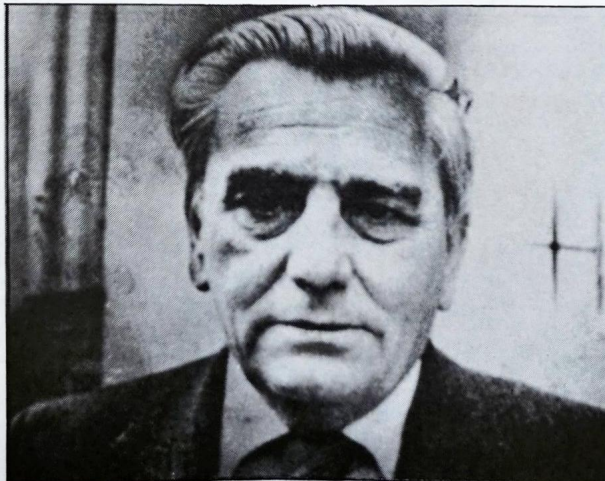


Gerry Hunter

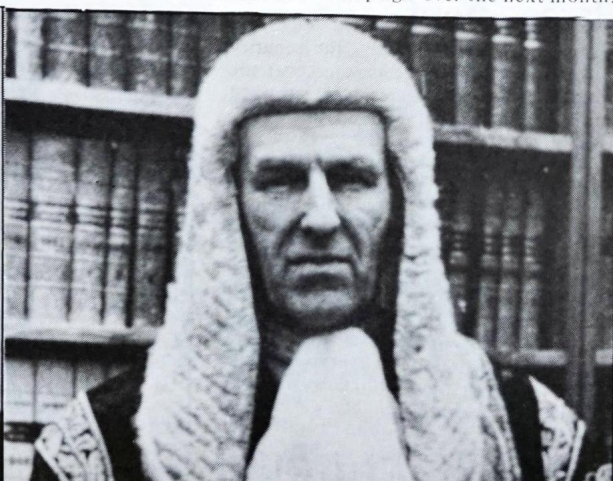
paperback of Chris Mullin's book *Error of Judgement* (see review). At the launch of the book in Dublin Mullin called on the Taoiseach Mr Haughey, or the Foreign Minister Mr Lenihan, to attend part of the appeal to "impress on the British government and also the judges just how seriously this issue is taken in Ireland. . .

Irish ambassadors around the world could be instructed to raise the issue in all the international forums where representatives of Her Majesty's government are to be heard posturing on human rights."

Meanwhile relatives of the Six in Birmingham have called for a massive letter writing campaign over the next month.



Detective Superintendent George Reade, who led the interrogation of the Birmingham Six, and Mr Justice Bridge, who presided at their trial. His



Letters to local MPs, the Home Secretary, etc., should emphasise three points.

- The unreliability of the forensic evidence against the Six.
- The fact that the 'confessions' were beaten out of the men and this has now also been claimed by a former policeman, Tom Clarke, who was present in the police station.
- The way the prosecution were willing to throw any type of evidence against the six men, in particular how the statement of identification by the bartender in New Street station was read out in court as evidence even though she had gone to the police and withdrawn it as unreliable.
- They should call for the release of the men and a public inquiry into their arrest and sentencing.

Basic details of the framing of the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four are available from TOM in two extended leaflets at 10p each + postage. For a detailed analysis of the Birmingham Six case *Error of Judgement* by Chris Mullin is available from TOM for £3.95 + postage.



"Croppie lie down": King Billy's big drum remains the symbol of Loyalist power.

Progress for Guildford 4

A delegation lead by Cardinal Hume was finally successful in forcing the Home Secretary to take some notice of the plight of the Guildford Four. The delegation presented even more alibi evidence than was previously available for both Paul Hill and Carole Richardson. Hurd referred the case to be reviewed by the Somerset and Avon police. The Guildford Four Campaign argued that there was sufficient evidence to at least refer the case to the Court of Appeal and this 'review' shouldn't be used as a time wasting exercise to take the pressure off the government.

The campaign has in the meantime received a number of messages of support from unions such as the TGWU, NALGO, and the Bakers Union. The campaign has compiled an exhibition and is available to speak at public meetings. They can be contacted at 131 Eastgate Buildings, St John's Way, London N19, Tel: 01-263 8750.

Exeter campaign steps up

As reported in February's issue of *Troops Out*, the Labour-led Exeter City Council plans to spend £60,000 promoting celebrations in 1988 to mark the 300th anniversary of the landing of William of Orange at Brixham, and of his subsequent reception in Exeter.

A motion, passed by the local Labour Party disassociating itself from the Council's proposals, and calling for the money to be spent on an education campaign about British rule in Ireland, has subsequently been disregarded by the largely right-wing Labour Party City Council group on the grounds that it was "ill-prepared and gave little time for 'proper

information' to be circulated amongst general management committee members".

The need for an effective campaign against the celebrations becomes more apparent. To co-incide with the celebrations the Orange Order plans to hold the triennial conference of its Imperial Committee in Exeter. The local organiser of the National Front has ex-

pressed his delight at the Council's decision. He is promising to bring loyalists and fascists "from all over the country to Devon" and to "bring the message of the people of Ulster to the people of Devon". Local NF activity has already been stepped up, with posters around the city exhorting local residents to "stand by loyal Ulster".

However, support for the campaign against the celebrations is also growing, with many local organisations and individuals calling upon the Council to reconsider its decision. Council meetings are regularly picketed and a petition demanding that the council withdraw its support has met with a good response.

As well as raising awareness of the danger that the celebrations will increase the incidence of racist attacks here, the campaign has also drawn attention to British imperialism's propping up of sectarianism in the six counties, and the need for a British withdrawal before any peaceful solution can be achieved.

PTA project

The West Midlands Prevention of Terrorism Act Research and Welfare Association (WMPTA), which monitors the operation of the PTA, is trying to discover the full extent of the use of the PTA.

The Association has nationwide rota of solicitors on 24 hour call to give legal assistance/advice to anyone

held under the Act or to their relatives.

The WMPTA is asking for anyone with past experience of the operation of the PTA to contact them with details. All personal information will be kept confidential.

Contact: WMPTA Project, PO Box 817, Camp Hill, Birmingham, B11 4AF. Tel: 021-733 7362.

Strip searching- keep up the pressure

There is a danger that strip-searching will come to be seen as something which is or can be made acceptable. In the last issue of *Troops Out*, Sal Jenkinson argued that those who seek to legitimise strip-searching as having some security value are missing the essential political purpose of it.

As part of keeping the pressure up in the campaign to stop strip-searching, a conference has been organised in London for Saturday 5th December 1987. The aim is to bring together all those bodies that have expressed their condemnation of this degrading and inhumane practice and, through a programme of speakers and workshops, look at practical and effective ways to publicise further the reality of strip-searching and take steps to end it.

While locating the increase

of the abuse as starting in Armagh Prison, with strip-searching used routinely against Irish republican women, the Conference will also look at how strip-searching is now being employed against political activists and black youth here. Strip-searching also occurs increasingly at ports of entry, carried out by immigration and customs officials, and at police stations in this country.

The Conference is being organised by the Association of London Authorities and the London Strategic Policy Unit. Send your leaflets, posters, articles and resolutions to and obtain further details from:

Police Monitoring and Research Group
Middlesex House, 8th Floor,
20 Vauxhall Bridge Road,
London SW1.
Tel: 01-633 5944.

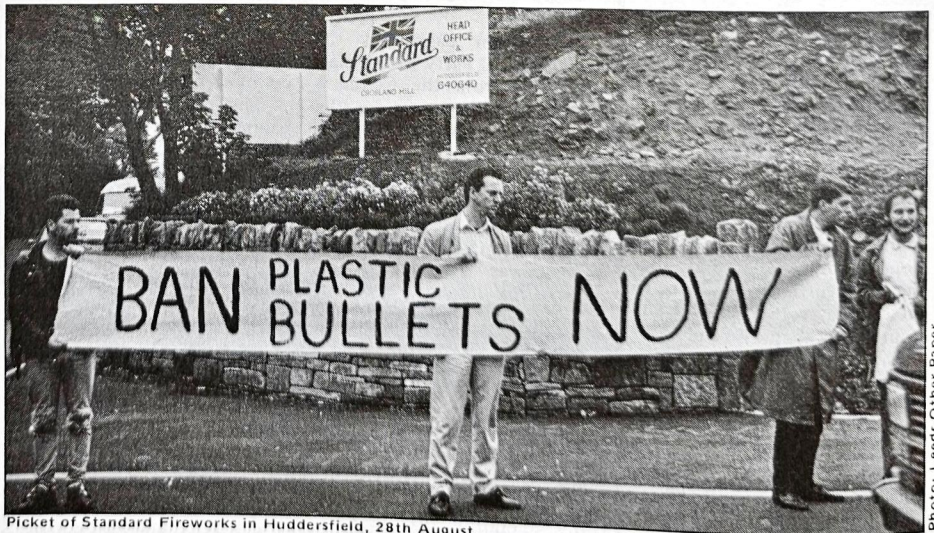
Amnesty International: *"Strip-searching entails cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment when it is carried out with the deliberate intention of humiliating or degrading prisoners."*

Plastic bullets pickets

August 28th saw pickets outside the Headquarters of Standard Fireworks in Huddersfield and that of its subsidiary, Astra, in the centre of London. Standard's other subsidiary, Brocks, manufacture the Plastic Bullets that have claimed the lives of sixteen people in the six counties to date.

HUDDERSFIELD

Over 40 people including members of the TOM, IBRG and LCI, leafleted the workers at the Standard Fireworks Factory at Crosland Hill on the outskirts of Huddersfield, while Archie Livingstone, whose 14 year old daughter Julie was killed by a plastic bullet in 1981, attempted to see the manager. The manager refused to meet Archie, who had travelled from Belfast to attend the picket, saying he hadn't the time. Mrs Fellows, the Branch Secretary of the unionised workforce (GMB) said she could not comment on the picket or on the issue of Plastic Bullets.



Picket of Standard Fireworks in Huddersfield, 28th August.

LONDON

The same day 30 people including members of TOM attended a vocal picket of Astra

Fireworks, 162 Regent St., called by the Wolfe Tone Society and the United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets. It was pointed out that as fireworks are banned in the six

counties the only time people come into contact with the company's product is when it's fired from a gun. Seven of the sixteen people killed were children under the age of 15.

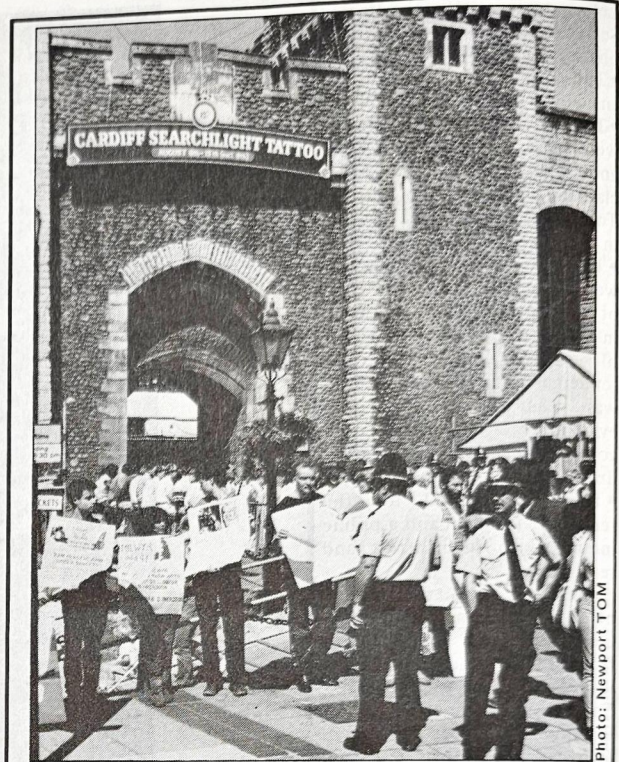


Photo: Newport TOM

Cardiff Tattoo

South Wales members of the Troops Out Movement picketed the recent British Armed Forces Tattoo in Cardiff. The protesters gave out leaflets which highlighted the role of the British Army in the six counties.

"The tattoo glamourises the armed forces. We think people need to know the truth - that the British Army acts as a force of occupation and not as peace-keepers in the north of Ireland."



Downing Street picket to hand in Wakefield prisoners' relatives' petition.

Wakefield protest

Irish republican prisoners Hugh Doherty and Nat Vella have been locked into a cycle of protest and punishment with Wakefield prison authorities over their visiting conditions (see *Troops Out*, July 1987).

During August a petition from relatives of both prisoners was handed in to Mrs Thatcher at Downing Street. It pointed out that the visiting conditions imposed in Wakefield showed "utter contempt" and were in "complete contradiction" to the Home Office's own guidelines that proper respect and sensitivity be shown for the maintenance of family life.

Soon after the Downing Street petition was handed in at a picket attended by Jeremy Corbyn MP, Hugh Doherty was transferred to Long Lartin prison. There his family was able to see him for the first time in over a year.

But, as the petition pointed out, "given the apparent inability and unwillingness of your government to ensure decent visiting conditions or to enforce its own regulations, the only solution to this matter is the immediate transfer of Irish political prisoners to prisons near their homes".

Prisoners' birthdays

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

HARRY DUGGAN 338638
HM Prison Albany, Newport,
Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS

October 31st

ROY WALSH 119083
HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Road,
Market Harborough,
Leicestershire LE16 7RP

November 1st

LETTER

No compassion

Here *Troops Out* reprints from *Andersonstown News* a letter from Mary McArdle. *Troops Out*, February 1987 carried an account of a visit to Maghaberry Women's Prison and an interview with Mary.

I am a Republican prisoner currently serving a gaol sentence in Maghaberry Women's Prison. I would like to bring to the notice of your readers the recent events surrounding my application for compassionate parole to attend my mother's funeral.

Two months ago I applied for parole to visit my mother in hospital, thinking that if they turned down the application, they would at least see fit to grant me an escorted visit to see her. I was refused on the grounds that my mother wasn't ill enough!

My mother died from that same illness on July 29th and I applied for compassionate parole to attend her funeral on Friday, July 31st. My application was taken and processed on Wednesday evening and for the next day and a half I was asked a barrage of questions, like who my parish priest was, what time the funeral mass was at, and also what chapel the funeral mass would be conducted at. As my family were leaving the prison on Thursday, a prison chief told them that she did not think there would be any problem with me being granted parole. At 10.35pm on Thursday night, my cell door was opened and a prison officer informed me that my request for compassionate parole had been refused, and quipped "you weren't really expecting it anyway".

The fact of the matter is that whether I was expecting parole

or not is irrelevant as both myself and my family were led to believe throughout the whole process that there was a possibility that my request would be granted. My family were in constant contact with the Northern Ireland Office and the prison authorities, sometimes several times an hour, right up to the time of my mother's burial, yet they were not informed of the refusal up until a few hours before the funeral.

As yet I have not been officially informed as to the exact reason for the refusal but it was hinted that it was because I had under six years of my sentence served. That explanation is seen as the mere excuse it is when one considers how some of my comrades in other gaols have also been refused compassionate parole even when they are in the last years of their sentences.

I know the real reason, as do most other people who have witnessed such malevolence in the past both from the Northern Ireland Office and their counterparts in the prison administration. The real reason is because I am a Republican prisoner of war who like all Republican PoWs in British and Free State gaols are forced to endure not only the vindictive attitude from the NIO towards PoWs but also the victimisation of the PoWs' families. Indeed it is at a time of bereavement when families are at their most vulnerable. Just as my family were last week.

Mary McArdle

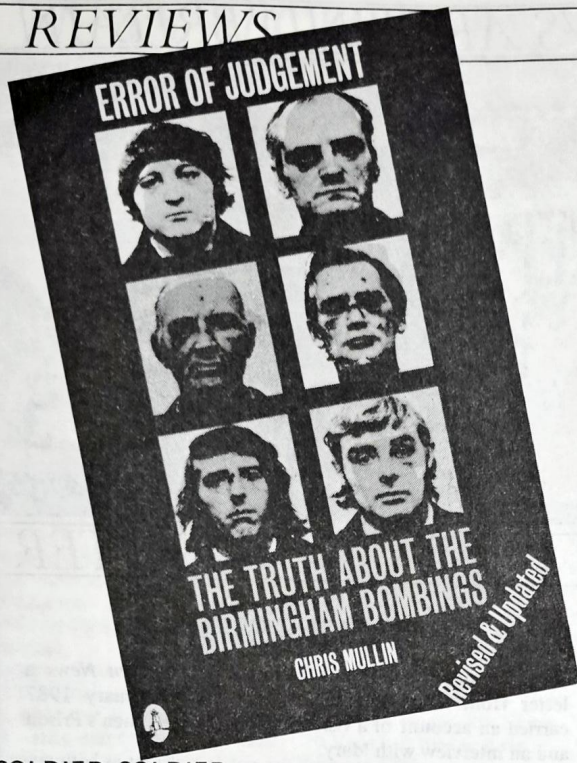
• Messages of support can be sent to Mary McArdle, HM Prison Maghaberry.

News from Scotland



Photo: Clydeside TOM

International Day of Solidarity with the Irish Struggle, a summer march in Glasgow organised by the Scottish Bands Alliance and Clydeside TOM.



ERROR OF JUDGEMENT

Chris Mullin
Poolbeg, £3.95

We have learned about it from the press, we have heard politicians refer to it, it has been described as a 'classic', and now, we may be able to afford the paperback edition of Chris Mullin's *Error of Judgement*.

In a word this book is about injustice. Not the injustice of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act or the Criminal Justice Bill. The interrogation of the six Irishmen, who have become known as the Birmingham Six, took place before the PTA was introduced onto the statute book. The men were tried long before the government introduced repressive measures which deny people the right to a fair trial. Quite simply, *Error of Judgement* is about the revenge British justice exacted from the Irish community for the Birmingham pub bombings of 1974.

Keeping strictly to the facts, Mullin relates the inconsistencies between the State prosecution's evidence and the men's allegations that they were forced to make confessions under extreme duress. He

draws attention to the inconsistencies between the different men's statements: discrepancies between the men's confessions and forensic evidence; and the unreliability of some of that forensic evidence.

Mullin goes on to interview some people who claim they were responsible for the bombs. Each one states that none of the convicted men had anything to do with the explosions.

The complete picture adds up to a condemnation of the manner in which six men were brutalised and convicted to serve life sentences for something they did not do.

The British legal system has changed almost beyond recognition since the Birmingham Six Show Trial in 1975. Many more people have suffered beatings and false imprisonment by a government which turns a deaf ear to demands for human rights.

Error of Judgement is essential reading for any person who wishes to discover the lengths to which the British state is willing to go to impose its own brand of 'Law and Order' on people living in this country.

Vivien Graham

SOLDIER, SOLDIER

Tony Parker
Coronet, £2.95

Written by a pacifist, *Soldier*, *Soldier* aims to describe the British Army through the eyes of soldiers (of all ranks) and their wives.

Tony Parker was given the full co-operation of the Ministry of Defence and the Royal Anglian Regiment for his exercise. He repays their trust by going to extreme lengths to be objective. Apart from the introductory chapter the book consists wholly of interviewees' statements. There is no commentary whatsoever.

By relying on soldiers' statements, questions on the role of the Army as an oppressive force are neatly sidestepped. Emphasis is placed on soldiers' perceptions of their 'work'. Where issues of a controversial nature are mentioned, blank spaces point to the interference of MoD censors. We are left to ponder over the *Boys Own* world of the British soldier, the deference of the squaddie to his officers, class prejudice in the Army, and the soldiers' wives' dissatisfaction with being married to the Army.

The odd maverick soldier does occasionally get a word in. Concern is expressed at the Army's role in the six counties and opposition to the regiment's guarding of the perimeter fence at Greenham. And it is the soldiers' attitudes to these two Army operations which provides the most revealing insight into the British Army. It is acceptable for the Army to use force in Ireland, a foreign country in their own words, but it is an entirely different matter when it comes to confronting British women in England.

Vivien Graham

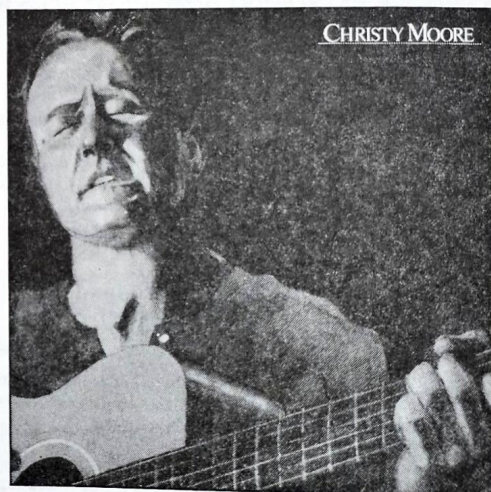
UNFINISHED REVOLUTION

Christy Moore
WEA Records

This is the first Christy Moore album since *Ordinary Man* two years ago but is well worth the wait. There are no startling changes of direction and the music is largely predictable, but that in no way means the songs are safe and unchallenging. Many are directly concerned with the state(?) of Ireland today, and the picture they paint is unrelentingly grim.

Christy has specifically chosen to highlight the work of young Irish songwriters on this album, and six songs come from this source, all previously unrecorded. The title track is a slow atmospheric piece relating the struggles in Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Ireland by viewing them through the eyes of individual women caught in their midst. *'The Biko Drum'* is a stirring, if somewhat obscure, anthem to the opponents of apartheid whilst among the others *'Natives'* stands out as a thoughtful comment on the damage that imperialism has done, even in some of its more benign manifestations.

The three self-penned songs will be of special interest to established fans. *'On The Bridge'* is a homage to Republican women prisoners and their supporters in their campaign to end strip-searching. The instrumentation to *'Derby Day'* is slow and lush, but the lyrics paint a devastating picture of poverty and tragedy exacerbated by the greed and unconcern of the ruling classes, represented by both church and state.



But for me *'The Other Side'* is the highlight of the album, perhaps the best song Moore has ever written. Going beyond the bounds of the straightforward 'protest' song, a form he has already mastered, Moore surveys his island. He sees reactionary clergy intimidating their flock, frightened British soldiers in watchtowers, women forced to travel to England for abortions, and the youth emigrating to look for work, like *'refugees dispersing far and wide'*. The last verse implicitly links the economic and social devastation in the 26 counties to the continuing war in the north by using the imagery of war to describe the plight of Irish emigrants who, *'shackled by illegal status, keep their heads down beneath the Brooklyn Wall'*. A great song.

Another highlight is Moore's cover of the Pogues' song *'A Pair of Brown Eyes'*. Those familiar with the original will be pleased to know that no futile attempt is made here to emulate its whisky-soaked grandeur. Instead this version is as sober as a song with such lyrics can be, and there is a rare wistful beauty in its lonely tale, perhaps summing up again the plight of the emigrant.

Many will find the 'folk-rock' backing jaded, and it is true that at times when the singer is not fully to the fore the music can sound impossibly dated. That said, the situation is saved by the quality of Moore's voice and the obvious integrity of the songs. A highly recommended album.

Ned Mallin

14th
The leaders of the two Unionist parties, James Molyneux and Ian Paisley, hold a brief meeting with Paisley from the NIO. Although officials as no more than 'talks recognised as no more than 'talks about talks', it is the first such official contact since the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

Kevin McNamara is appointed shadow spokesperson for Northern Ireland. He was involved in the Civil Rights campaigns of the 1960s.

15th
There are two separate cross-border incursions by Royal Navy Marines in Carlingford Lough. On both occasions a Navy gunboat sailed right up to a crowd of people on the Irish side and unfurled Union Jacks.

16th
The Intergovernmental Conference set up by the Anglo-Irish Agreement meets in London.

17th
In separate incidents, two Catholics are seriously injured by sectarian attackers in Belfast. The UFF (Ulster Freedom Fighters) claims responsibility for the first incident.

19th
A British soldier is killed by an IRA sniper attack at Belleek, Co. Fermanagh. Reports suggest that the shot was fired from the Republic's side of the border.

22nd
The NI Fair Employment Agency exonerates nationalist-led Derry City Council from Unionist claims of religious discrimination in employment.

23rd
William McGrath, a 46 year old Catholic part-time member of the UDR, is killed by the IRA in West Belfast.

The IRA explode three bombs in Derry and also launch a gun attack on police headquarters.

In the House of Commons, Tom King says that the efforts of the security forces were continuing to yield satisfactory results.

26th
Two 300lb landmines are defused by the RUC after the IRA abandoned them and issued a statement giving their whereabouts.

A ton of explosives and 1000 rounds of ammunition are discovered by Irish detectives near Dundalk.

Stephen Roche wins the Tour de France.

29th
Norman Kennedy, an RUC constable, is killed in his home at Ballymena, Co. Antrim, by the IRA.

30th
Three former NI Secretaries, James Prior, Humphrey Atkins and Roy Mason, are all given life peerages.

Oliver Hughes, who was seriously injured when British bullets passed through his car during the Loughall Ambush, calls for a public inquiry into the incident. Hughes, whose brother Anthony was also in the car and was killed in the attack, was unfortunate enough to chance into the indiscriminate firing line of the attack.

An £11 million programme to demolish and replace the Unity Flats complex in Belfast is announced.



AUGUST

2nd
Local farmers using a mechanical digger reopen a road crossing the Fermanagh-Monaghan border that had been closed by the security forces earlier in the week.

3rd
A Belfast inquest jury holds that IRA Volunteer James McKernan, shot dead by a British soldier last year, was not surrendering at the time. This finding contradicts the evidence of several civilian witnesses.

5th
Three men are charged in Belfast with planting a bomb in the city's Smithfield Market five days previously.

Kevin McNamara, British Labour Party spokesperson on N.Ireland, calls for reforms in the Diplock Court system and a gradual return to jury trials.

6th
In *AP/RN*, the newspaper of Sinn Féin, an IRA spokesperson says that the IRA would never again make a truce with the British, rather they would talk and fight at the same time.

An unarmed youth is shot and seriously injured by the RUC in the passenger seat of a stolen car in Belfast. According to witnesses, no warning was given by the RUC, who proceeded to handcuff the injured man to the steering wheel, even though he was bleeding profusely from the stomach.

11th
The Unionist Party leaders have more 'talks about talks' with NIO officials in London.

Statistics reveal that 338 people were detained in N.Ireland under the PTA during the period April to June last year. 75 were later charged with criminal offences.

13th
The only Community Advice Centre on the Twinbrook estate in West Belfast has its funding withdrawn by the NIO because of alleged, but unspecified, links with republican paramilitaries.

Figures show that the number of people out of work in N.Ireland in July was 127,927, 18.6% of the working population. This was an increase of 2,377 from the previous month.

17th
A part-time UDR man's car is destroyed when a bomb planted by the IRA explodes prematurely.

18th
More 'talks about talks' for the Unionist leaders and NIO officials.

21st
The IRA warn a 16 year old from Derry to leave N.Ireland within 24 hours because of his activities as an informer. The IRA, who held the boy for 24 hours before releasing him, say they had only spared his life because of his age. At a Sinn Féin press conference, the youth admitted acting as an informer.

Two British soldiers are injured by an IRA bomb in Andersonstown, Belfast.

23rd
A 30 year old Catholic, Michael Power, is killed by gunmen from the UFF (Ulster Freedom Fighters), while driving his family to church. The dead man had no connections with the Republican Movement.

24th
The British Government confirms that it is planning to build two pressurised water nuclear reactors in North Wales, just 80 miles from the Irish coast.

24th
The Dublin Government denies reports that Britain has already rejected the idea of three judges sitting instead of one in the Diplock Courts.

25th
NI Secretary Tom King says that Britain is 'not at present persuaded' of the benefit of having three judges sitting in Diplock Courts.

26th
Two off-duty RUC men are killed by the IRA in a Belfast bar. 18 ungs and several thousand rounds of ammunition go missing from a UDR barracks in Co. Down. It is assumed that they are in the hands of loyalist paramilitaries.

27th
A UDR member appears before a court in Dundalk, in the Irish Republic, accused of illegal possession of a gun.

29th
Official Unionist paramilitary candidate Rev. Robert Coulter calls for the setting up of a loyalist 'eyes and ears' army to amass intelligence on republican paramilitary groups to assist the security forces.

30th
Three Irish people are detained in the west of England under the PTA. They were arrested near the home of NI Secretary Tom King.

SEPTEMBER

1st
Eamonn Maguire from Dublin is executed by the IRA for informing to the Gardai (Irish police).

2nd
Unionist MP John Taylor says that the IRA campaign is good for Unionists as it has drawn the community together.

3rd
The British Liberal Party supports the idea of joint courts with sitting judges from both sides of the border.

An inquest finds that Keith White, the first Protestant to be killed by a plastic bullet when he died last year, was stoning police at the time.

4th
Two RUC officers and four civilians are injured, none seriously, in an IRA grenade attack on an RUC Land Rover.

5th
Two men and one woman, all Irish, are charged in Wiltshire with plotting to murder NI Secretary Tom King.

7th
Alliance party leader John Cushnahan announces his intention to resign from politics.

8th
An English Catholic living in West Belfast is killed when loyalist gunmen break into his home. The victim was not politically involved.

9th
The IRA kill a man in West Belfast, saying he is a member of the UDR. This is denied by the RUC and the British Army.

10th
In one of two shooting attacks on the British Army in West Belfast, a British soldier is seriously wounded by the IRA.

The Alliance Party backs the call for a new law requiring election candidates to make an oath condemning political violence.

The US Ambassador to Britain, rejects the MacBride principles as 'well intentioned but unacceptable'.



The Annual anti-Internment Demonstration in Belfast on August 9th.

Photo: Photostatic Artists

COMING EVENTS & RESOURCES

FREE THE BIRMINGHAM SIX MEETINGS

BIRMINGHAM, Wednesday October 21st, 7.30pm

Speakers: Clare Short MP, Birmingham Six relative, Indian Workers' Association, Troops Out Movement.

Chair: Birmingham Trades Council President.

Summerfield Community Centre, Dudley Road, Birmingham.

For details of other meetings, telephone the Troops Out Movement office on 01-609 1743.

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MANCHESTER MARTYRS COMMEMORATION MARCH AND RALLY Sunday 22 November

Speakers invited include: Sinn Fein, IRSP, Prisoners Relatives Committee, PoW Campaign Committee, Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign, Bands Alliance.

More information from Manchester Martyrs Memorial Committee, c/o Grass Roots Books, Newton St, Manchester 1

LONDON

CONFERENCE FOR TRADE UNIONISTS "IRELAND: CAUSE OF LABOUR? Employment Discrimination in Northern Ireland: The Origins, the Facts, the Future"

28 November 1987

The Camden Centre, Bidborough Street,
London NW1 (opp. St Pancras station)

For delegates' pack and further information,
contact 'Ireland: the Cause of Labour?',
BM Box 5335, London WC1N 3XX

MANCHESTER

CONFERENCE:

"HEARTS AND MINDS – THE IRISH IN BRITAIN"

Saturday 14 November, 10am–5pm

*Organised by Irish in Britain
Representation Group*

Speakers include: C. Desmond Greaves,
Dr. Máire O'Shea, Moy McCrory,
Patrick Reynolds, Gearaid MacGherailt
Seminars include: History, Education,
Welfare, Anti-Irish racism, Women,
Mental health, Drama and Literature

Manchester Town Hall

Further information from Manchester IBRG
c/o Grass Roots Books, 1 Newton Street,
Manchester.

LONDON

THE IRISH QUESTION AND AND THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT

National Consultative Conference

Chair: Jimmy Knapp, NUR

Speakers: Matt Merrigan

Clare Short MP

Anthony Coughlan,

(Irish Sovereignty Movement)

Donald McIntosh (NALGO)

Saturday 24 October, 11am

Credentials from the Connolly Association,
244–246 Grays Inn Road, London WC1

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