


# LABOUR AND IRELAND

A magazine for British withdrawal

Inside: 'The Irish community comes out' by Paul Hill



- The Irish joke ●
- Death Squads ●
- SPUC defeated ●
- Time To Go! Year II ●

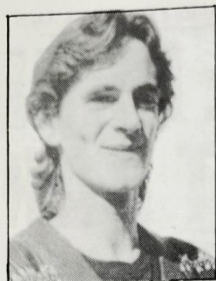
# GUILDFORD FOUR: FREED AT LAST



## Campaign mounts for Birmingham Six



# COMMENT



**N** EWS leaked out the day before, but nobody quite believed it until they saw the relatives bursting from the court. Tears and laughter. Screams of delight. Waving and shouting.

The relatives who had been spat at and spat out, but stood by the Four through fifteen lonely years. Relatives joined by friends and campaigners; by the London Irish off the sites in hard hats, by young ones in Celtic T-shirts or dressed for a day's shopping. It was a day to be there; to see for yourself. A great day for the Irish.

Behind the wigs they tried to talk as if it was a day like any other, but the Guildford Four have just bust a hole in the prison wall. The Birmingham Six are waiting inside. There is a queue of Black people and Irish people who must not be silenced.

**L** ABOUR are doing well in the opinion polls. Showing up the police and judges as liars is as good for the opposition as rows in the cabinet. But where was the Party in the Guildford Four campaign? It was a disgrace. After fourteen years of campaigning and less than a month before even the judges had to admit that wrong had been done, Kevin McNamara publicly told Paul Hill's uncle that Labour was not supporting the campaign because they didn't want it to become a party political issue. Is that going to be Roy Hattersley's excuse on the Birmingham Six too?

We've seen the policy review document. But what would Labour do in office? On plastic bullets, strip searching, the broadcasting ban, the PTA, there is clear policy and apparently unqualified commitment. All are backed by the TUC. If Labour wants the support of the Irish, it has to do better than present.

If Kevin McNamara was serious about getting to be the last Minister for Northern Ireland, he wouldn't have wasted his conference speech with a miserable attack on Ken Livingstone; he would have got on with the job of persuading the unions and the TV viewers that Labour is serious about winning peace in Ireland and getting a political settlement.

With 600,000 conference votes for withdrawal and the breadth of support shown through Time To Go!, it's time to stop the posturing and start organising inside the Party.

**LABOUR and IRELAND** is a magazine of news and discussion promoting British withdrawal from Ireland. We believe the denial of the right of the Irish people to self determination through partition, military occupation and abuse of civil rights is one of the greatest political and moral challenges facing the labour movement in Britain. Associated with the Labour Committee on Ireland, the magazine tries to act as a stimulating forum for political debate, whilst at the same time maintaining a campaigning voice.



# LABOUR AND IRELAND

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Police reputation in tatters:

# Birmingham Six next in queue for justice

**W**ITH THE RELEASE of the Guildford Four, attention inevitably switches to achieving justice for the Birmingham Six. The Home Secretary still refuses to re-examine the case despite the implication of key officers in the bombing investigation in the fabrication of evidence for other trials which has led to the disbanding of the West Midlands serious Crime Squad.

Over the years, families of prisoners arrested by the squad who protested their innocence, gradually persuaded people such as Clare Short MP that the cases were linked by more than the general inequity of the legal system. Short herself took up over fifty complaints in the face of press and legal indifference.

The first breakthrough in challenging the Crime Squad's fabrication of evidence was when Paul Dandy and three others were released after serving a year for allegedly shooting a security guard in 1987. A forensic test known as an EDA (electrostatic deposition analysis) showed two extra pages had been inserted into police notes after the interrogation had finished and another sheet had been 'lost'. It was these changes which secured the convictions.

Similar proof of police alterations to statements and other malpractices led to dropping charges or acquittals in at least ten cases by June 1989. In one case, the prosecution was abandoned after the defence demanded an EDA test.

Unsatisfactory evidence continued to be presented by the squad despite concern expressed by judges. To supporters of the Birmingham Six, it seemed incredible that the same squad and the same officers were still getting away with dishonesty, yet at least three officers who beat the Six during interrogation were still serving in the squad this year.

One of the prisoners, Paddy Hill, identifies the head of the squad, Ray Bennett, as the detective sergeant who beat him up and threatened to shoot him, although this did not secure a confession.

Hugh Callaghan, the eldest of the Six, claims that similar treatment was meted out to him by detective sergeants, Peter Higgins and Michael Hornby. All of these officers have been implicated in other cases.

Hornby, for example, was found to have removed a crucial file in an assault case against a defendant named Gerald Gall.

In 1987 Clifford Jones was acquitted of a jewellery robbery when EDA showed that extra pages were inserted into his statement. The judge called for an internal inquiry but no action was taken against Hornby, the implicated officer. The police have admitted that he was disciplined in 1980 after his investigation of a

shooting incident.

Chief Constable Geoffrey Dear demoted three Serious Crimes Squad officers in July this year for being 'sloppy', supposedly because of working long hours. He said there was no question of criminal offences having been committed.

Tory MPs were among those outraged at the suggestion that there was a trail of dishonesty leading back to the Birmingham Six. Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, replied to a question from Chris Mullin MP that eight of the fifteen officers who interrogated the Six had been in the squad, and some were still in post.

On 14 August the whole of the Serious Crime Squad and their CID management — a total of over fifty officers — were transferred to non-operational duties. Dear admitted that some may have to face criminal charges for theft and perjury.

The Inquiry now being supervised by the Police Complaints Authority and carried out by the West Yorkshire police will look at cases from 1986 to 1988 — from the introduction of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act to the start of taping interviews. But the police have not just been careless in following this or that procedure, or made accidental mistakes. There has been wholesale fabrication of evidence which was as much a crime in 1974 as today.

It did not start in 1974. One letter to the Birmingham Evening Mail complained of a prisoner being convicted for a minor offence in 1969 due to 'the willingness of magistrates and judges to believe outrageous things' when given as police evidence. An example was given of a witness who 'heard a ten shilling note drop into a till'.

Both the Hickeys and James Robinson, accused of the murder of Carl Bridgewater in 1979, and the Birmingham Six, had appeals pending while investigations into the conduct of Hornby and other suspect officers had already begun. Yet the men's solicitor, Gareth Peirce, was not allowed by the judge to bring this up in the appeal nor was she given the information she asked for.

The Home Secretary has absolute discretion to extend an inquiry, even to before the 1983 limit on the statutory powers of the Police Complaints Authority. By the end of August both Dear and the responsi-



ble civilian member from the Police Complaints Authority, Jeff Crawford, conceded that the inquiry into the squad's activities may have to be widened.

Internal police inquiries do not inspire confidence. In 1983 one of the officers who interrogated the Six, Brian Morton, was failed for assaulting a prisoner. Yet Adrian Dart, the officer who reported the attack, was ostracised and had his car vandalised, and he eventually quit the force. This is the only known case of a West Midlands officer speaking out against corruption.

The West Yorkshire force itself is currently investigating corruption in the Manchester Police — but Inspector Peter Jackson, whose complaints sparked the inquiry, has been suspended and is likely to stop giving evidence to protect himself in the event of court proceedings.

No-one can deny the Birmingham Six were brutally beaten after their arrest. Yet prison officers charged with assault were acquitted and the men have not been allowed to bring the police to court for assault as their denials were accepted by the judge in the original trial. Normal procedures involving recording the physical state of the prisoner, were not carried out when the Six first arrived at Winson Green, and conflicting records were

recalled at the prison officers' trial.

The local Birmingham campaign for the Birmingham Six has taken up the call by Mullin and Short for the Home Secretary to set up an independent public inquiry into the squad's activities, and to look at cases as far back as 1974. A petition was launched in Birmingham on 16 October by the two MPs and relatives of the Six which calls for the release of the prisoners and the quashing of their convictions. It is sponsored by the NCCL.

Short has already initiated an investigation into the squad with two law lecturers from Birmingham University, Andrew Saunders and Tim Kaye. Over sixty cases have already been referred to them and they intend to collect such a volume of evidence on police malpractice that there will have to be effective action.

Robin Corbett MP has consistently spoken out for the Six and others wrongfully imprisoned such as Martin Foran. But his call for a judicial inquiry met with some scepticism, given the record of most judges. All but a dozen of the forty or so officers' cases referred to the Department of Public Prosecutions had been dismissed by August — less than the of police involved in trials already thrown out for false evidence. ►

## FORMER MASTER OF THE ROLLS, LORD DENNING

**'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. This is such an appalling vista that every sensible person in the land would say that it cannot be right that these actions go any further.'** (1980, justifying his decision not to allow the Birmingham Six to sue the West Midlands police for assault.)

**'Wrongfully convicted prisoners should stay in jail rather than be freed and risk a loss of public confidence in the law.'** (21 February 1988)

IN AUGUST, Peter Brooke succeeded Tom King as the eighth secretary of state for Northern Ireland. Apart from an initial gaffe over interpretation of clauses in the Anglo Irish Agreement which was seized upon by loyalists as 'indicating their position', the man responsible for the Tory's disastrous 'diet of Worms' Euro election campaign has been little in evidence since.

IN SEPTEMBER, the High Court in Belfast heard allegations that loyalist trade unionists at Ballylumford power station in County Antrim threatened to walk out if Catholic workers were brought on site, and consequently, a Glasgow firm had been awarded a £1 million demolition contract even though Newry-based John Tinnelly Ltd had submitted a lower tender.

The Fair Employment Agency accused Secretary of State, Tom King of having issued a public interest immunity certificate (by which interests of national security override both fair tendering and equality legislation) in order to stop the agency investigating Tinnelly's claim that they had been discriminated against on religious grounds. In an affidavit made by the chair of the Glasgow company, Graham McWilliam, it was further alleged that religion was frequently introduced in meetings he had had with Northern Ireland Electricity staff and it had been made clear to him that there was a general belief that all Catholics were IRA sympathisers.

IN OCTOBER, the Fair Employment Agency announced that after an investigation into the employment practices of nineteen local councils outside Belfast, it had found flaws in recruitment policies affecting the religious composition of virtually every local authority.

NEXT MONTH should hopefully see publication of former intelligence officer Fred Holroyd's biography 'War Without Honour' which deals extensively with the horror of cross-border dirty tricks, surveillance and assassinations. It is not without humour when it comes to the goofier side of so-called intelligence operations, but like Paul Foot's expose of the framing of Colin Wallace, will most likely prove unpalatable for a media which can only take scandal in small doses.

▶ The Birmingham Law Society has condemned police practices and some of its members campaign prominently for justice for the wrongly accused. Some solicitors should be suffering a certain embarrassment having presumably acted for the police or failed to adequately defend their clients on cases, that at least in retrospect, are outrageous examples of police dishonesty and lies.

Large sections of the labour movement at local level and a few major unions like MSF and TGWU have called for justice for the Six along with Irish community and Black organisations such as the Indian Workers Association.

Some local journalists have also investigated prisoners' claims over the years, particularly local radio. In reality, the 'exposed' cases have been known for years.

What is new is the compilation of such cases and inescapable connections with officers of the Serious Crime Squad. In the case of the Birmingham six, the concern has been expressed now by the government of the Soviet Union and US senators as well as Amnesty International. The Irish Government which has

previously given sympathy but no commitment, declining to sponsor the men's petition to the European Court of Human Rights are now being asked to take concrete action. The Dublin government has issued a statement asking its Embassy staff in Britain to monitor developments involving the Serious Crime Squad and have criticised the restriction of the Inquiry to looking at cases post 1986. On 13th September, the Irish Foreign Minister, Collins met Douglas Hurd for an 'extremely serious discussion' about the Six. He was said to have got an assurance that their case would be looked at if the current Inquiry came up with anything 'new or relevant'.

This might be a hollow promise since the Police Inquiry could last eighteen months, but it contrasts with earlier denials that the Six could ever come into the investigation. Dublin is coming under pressure to gain public commitments from London, not just negotiation behind closed doors.

In the British Labour Party, shadow Home Secretary Hattersley, also a Birmingham MP, blocked the resolution supporting the Six remit-

ted to the NEC from the 1988 conference. As recently as July 1989, replying to a letter from Ken Gill (MSF) he said: 'I am afraid I can give you no commitment on a further review of the specific convictions, nor make any promises about further action on this matter when Labour comes to power.'

By the end of August, with public pressure mounting, Hattersley's position moved to saying the Party was generally in favour of independent public inquiries. In this instance he had every confidence in the police, but an inquiry might have to go back to include the Birmingham Six and Carl Bridgewater cases.

For from spearheading the campaign for justice, the Labour front bench continues to drag its heels, and remains reluctant to commit itself even where practice of police and judicial malpractice is overwhelming. ●

**Anita Richards**  
*The Campaign for the Birmingham Six, led by relatives and friends, has branches in many large towns and can be contacted for more information and copies of the petition at Birmingham TUC, 7 Frederick Street, Birmingham.*

## New employment legislation treated with scepticism:

# No let up in campaign on discrimination

**G**OVERNMENT HOPES that the passage of the Fair Employment Bill in July would produce a reversal, or at least respite in the relentless pressure being exerted by the US 'MacBride principles lobby' have been dashed in a wave of accusations of parliamentary chicanery made by the Labour front bench and new initiatives that significantly raise the stakes in the battle for affirmative action against employment discrimination.

The new Fair Employment Bill, first introduced in the House of Commons in December last year improves existing (1976) legislation by putting contract compliance on a statutory footing. Employers who fail to adopt affirmative action measures can be penalised financially. Many will be required to monitor the composition of their workforces and some to monitor their applications.

Individual complaints about discrimination can be referred to a specialist Fair Employment Tribunal and there will be a new Fair Employment Commission. The FEC replaces the old Fair Employment Agency and has more investigative powers.

But after 18 committee meetings and almost eighty amendments, the Bill still stops well short of providing effective legal remedies or placing legal measures to deal with discrimination within the framework of a strategy for change. Labour's advisor and anti-discrimination law specialist, Christopher McCrudden accuses the Government of legislating in order to hoodwink its

American critics rather than applying itself to deal with discrimination.

The Labour front bench, having pursued a strategy of amending the Bill, was persuaded to vote for its Third Reading in the House of Commons on the understanding that further changes would be made before it passed into law. But when the Bill was considered by the Lords, these promises were reneged upon. Not only that, but the Government introduced surprise new amendments which weakened proposed legislation still further.

McCrudden points out that employers have been given a 'plethora' of defences to avoid incurring sanctions. Bosses will still be able to discriminate by preferring workers 'who are friends and relations of existing employees'.

An employee fighting a case of sexual discrimination can take the case to the courts for independent scrutiny, but no such scrutiny is available in the case of religious discrimination.

Establishing bodies like the Fair Employment Commission could on-

ly ever play a limited role in bringing about the scale of change which is necessary. Unemployment among Catholics remains more than double that among Protestants. The whole range of Government policies need to be examined to assess their impact on challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity. This means re-examining policy on location of industry and government offices, on investment, on education and environmental development.

Christopher McCrudden asks why the Government, having set out to tackle inequality, failed so dramatically? 'Why did it continue to defend unworkable aspects of the Bill? Why was considerably less attention given to devising an effective strategy for achieving change in Northern Ireland than was spent in attempting to head off pressure for change from the United States?'

The answer is clear: 'The major responsibility for these blunders must lie at the door of the Department of Economic Development (DED) in Belfast'.

The DED is charged of having 'singularly failed' to achieve a reduction of inequality in its ten-year life and of having 'ineptly' handled the process of legislation. And yet despite such criticism, it is the DED which the Government leaves in the driving seat. Now the Bill has been passed, the DED has responsibility for drawing up no less than seven sets of

subordinate regulations which give effect to crucial areas of legislation.

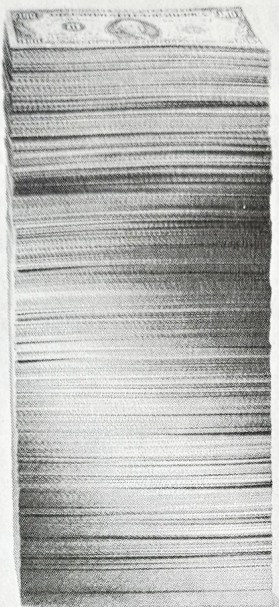
By introducing legislation, the Government has not silenced its American critics. As the cynical exercise blundered on, the MacBride principles campaign to make US investment conditional on anti-discrimination practices got stronger.

In June, Tom O'Flaherty of the New York-based Irish Political Education Committee revealed that documents obtained under the US Freedom of Information Act proved that the British government was funneling thousands of dollars through the DED to finance anti-MacBride lobbyists. Oliver Kearney of the Northern Ireland Fair Employment Trust estimated that £15 million has been provided over a two-and-a-half year period.

By the end of the month, the House of Representatives of the State of California had passed a legislative bill enacting the MacBride principles by an overwhelming majority of 42 votes to 20. Had this Bill become law, it would have truly been the 'jewel in the MacBride campaign's crown', bringing the majority of available US pension fund investments into line with the Principles.

However, after the state senate had approved the Bill, governor Deukmejian was persuaded to exercise his veto. He becomes the first elected politician throughout thirteen states across America to engage in such undemocratic action.

But it is a pyrrhic victory for the British government since the Governor openly cited the SDLP's policy of opposition to the principles to justify his decision. The SDLP, whilst covertly supporting the activities of the British Information



Services, has no official policy on the MacBride principles and publicly claims to have no difficulty with the principles — only with their possible consequences for disinvestment. Such open alignment with the British government will weaken the effectiveness of the SDLP's role aiding the British lobby as a 'neutral' party.

Further, it is a very short term vic-

tory since the governor Deukmejian is not standing for re-election in November and will almost certainly be replaced by a pro-MacBride candidate, making it only a matter of time before the Principles are represented and become law.

By next spring, strong campaigns in a further three states: Pennsylvania, Ohio and Maryland will be reaching a critical stage.

The British government is now lobbying to be 'given time' for the new legislation to produce results, but the bungling progress of the parliamentary Bill and built-in flaws have not inspired confidence or given it a breathing space.

Already the independent Investor Responsibility Research Centre is undertaking its own work on monitoring the effectiveness of anti-discrimination measures taken by US subsidiaries in Northern Ireland.

In Boston, Mayor Raymond Flynn has announced measures to re-examine city investments, removing money from companies whose Northern Ireland subsidiaries discriminate on religious grounds, and re-investing it with employers who are employing fair employment practices as advocated by the MacBride principles. City officials are also looking at how many of its contractors are owned by corporations doing business in Northern Ireland.

Chicago's mayor, Richard Daley is said to be considering similar measures, and in New York the strongly-tipped 'Jacksonite' mayoral candidate, David Dinkins is being already being pressed to make such a commitment on taking office. ●

Martin Collins

IN OCTOBER, twenty-year old single parent, Evelyn Evans was sacked from her canteen job for being Irish. A representative from her employers, Sutcliffe Catering who have a contract at the air traffic control base at West Drayton told journalists: 'After the (Deal) bombing we were told to move any Irish people who could be considered a security risk'.

Evelyn, who emigrated to Britain two years ago, had been employed as a £100 a week canteen supervisor for a month, but was told it would take three months for her security check to be completed.

She told the Sun: 'Just because I'm Irish it doesn't mean I'm a bloody terrorist. Does this mean that every Irish person living in Britain is a bomber? That's what it sounds like to me.'

AN EVE OF Tory Conference police appeal to members of the public to report anything suspicious led to five Irish construction workers being seized under the PTA by armed police in Cheltenham. A lead story in the *Daily Express* compiled from information supplied by the police portrayed the five as IRA suspects and 'Thatcher's murder gang'. All five were later released without charge.

A police source in Cheltenham bluntly told *Sunday World* journalist, Gery Lawless that the five who had arrived from Northern Ireland on 1 June to start work on building a conference centre in nearby Winchcombe, 'were arrested because a neighbour reported them for acting suspiciously... They were Irish. They were young. They had Irish accents. They were building workers staying in a hotel in Tory Cheltenham. They worked overtime and sometimes they even went into a pub at 9.30 at night — about the same time as people round here go to bed.'

The men's local MP, Eddy McGrady (SDLP) complained that police in Cheltenham had been 'totally unforthcoming' when he had made enquiries about the arrests. He accused them of 'improper use of the PTA against an innocent group of Irish workers simply because they are Irish.'

AFTER COMPLAINTS from the Troops Out Movement, the *Daily Mirror* has admitted 'it was a mistake' for its Ulster edition to publish a page three pin up of beauty queen Amanda Dyson posing with a plastic bullet gun just five days after 15-year old Seamus Duffy had been killed by the lethal 'crowd control' weapon. The newspaper still refuses to apologise publicly to all relatives of plastic bullet victims.

## Collusion claims vindicated:

# Inner Circle discovered

**C**ONCERN OVER death squads operating a twin-track policy — inside and outside the security forces, was given added impetus in October when the *Irish News* gave details of an 'Inner Circle' comprising present and past RUC officers dedicated to 'eradicate republican terrorism' as well as smashing the Anglo Irish Accord. The Circle claims to possess at least 233 files on nationalist sympathisers, and intend to use this highly detailed data in 'the battle for the survival of Ulster.'

If the information obtained by the *Irish News* is accurate, the Inner Circle has contacts in every division of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and all but one sub-division, as well as operating within the police headquarters. It is also apparent that these officers have contacts south of the border in the Garda.

On 25 August, Loughlin Maginn was murdered in his home in the mainly Protestant area of Rathfriland in County Down. He has become a statistic in the latest round of killings where the acquiescence or active assistance of the Crown forces has been in evidence.

During the eighteen months prior to his death, Maginn had been the

victim of continual harassment by the RUC and the Ulster Defence Regiment which has been documented by his solicitor, Rory MacShane. The day after he was murdered a UDR sergeant admitted that intelligence was passed to the loyalist paramilitary group the Ulster Freedom Fighters on a regular basis.

Vast quantities of data are collated by the British forces, and many people are identified as suspects on the most tenuous of grounds; the sergeant claimed that Maginn's was just one of the innocent deaths that resulted.

The reaction to the exposure of collusion between loyalist paramilitaries has been astounding. Whilst those

who live in nationalist areas have alleged collusion of this kind for years — their claims have been dismissed as paranoia. When their claims are found to be proven, journalists like David McKittrick of the *Independent* can write that these revelations should come as no surprise to the authorities, indicating that the press was well aware of what went on, but does not seem to have thought it worth investigating and reporting.

One of the most televised examples of sectarian killings in which the British authorities are suspecting of collusion was in murder of three mourners at the graveside of the Gibraltar Three — themselves victims of an SAS assassination. The attack took place in full view of army helicopters and the cameras on the Andersonstown barracks, yet loyalist gunman Michael Stone was only intercepted after he had been overpowered by local youths. He was found to be in possession of an RUC standard issue pistol.

At the subsequent funeral for ▶



Kevin Brady, mystery surrounds the failure of nearby RUC and army patrols to intervene and save Corporals Wood and Howe. One of the more plausible explanations is that the British forces did not know of the two soldiers' presence in the area and believed they were witnessing a loyalist assassination attempt on the Sinn Fein leadership.

Nationalist fears have been confirmed by former Irish Ranger and UDA supporter Albert 'Ginger' Baker, currently serving a twenty-five year sentence for murdering four Catholics. In a prison interview reported by Ken Livingstone, Baker alleges that the RUC regularly aids assassinations by handing over photographs and detailed files on nationalists. He also claims that the RUC have helped paramilitaries by and driving weapons through army checkpoints.

Baker says that loyalists are often tipped off when their houses are to be searched, and that a serving RUC officer was the second in command of a UDA battalion in 1972-73. He has promised to name officers involved.

The willingness of loyalist groups to disclose the existence of contacts within the Crown forces is founded in their wish to destroy the Anglo-Irish agreement. The deleterious ef-

fect this must be having on their intelligence networks is indicative of the high price they are willing to pay to prevent any contact with the Irish government.

Loyalist sympathisers have nothing but contempt for the Stevens inquiry into the security leaks. A representative of the Inner Circle told the *Irish News*: 'The stockpile of material which we have built up is highly accurate and is being constantly maintained at full operational level. There is no way that the Stevens inquiry will stop the information flow.' Such a remark is clearly intended to undermine the confidence of the Irish government in the ability of the British to curb sectarian activity in its forces.

Both the UDR and RUC are frequently said to be dominated by loyalists. The UDR, for instance, was set up in 1974 with the expressed aim of being religiously mixed, yet it was quickly infiltrated by loyalist paramilitary groups. Most Catholics left after the reintroduction of internment in 1971 and by 1974 its membership was over 97 per cent Protestant.

Collusion between security forces and loyalist paramilitaries has two basic advantages for the British

government. Sectarian violence provides the establishment with a cloak of respectability, enabling it to argue that the conflict is essentially one of religious intolerance with the British as peacekeepers. Secondly, the authorities can claim that sectarian violence is a reaction to, and inevitable consequence of the violence of the IRA — seeking to undermine community support for the Republican movement.

In keeping with his usual inability to take the initiative, Labour's Northern Ireland spokesperson Kevin McNamara decided to pursue the question of collusion only after it had been widely reported in the media; it is inconceivable that he was not previously aware of it.

Labour's statement on 2 October, showed McNamara apparently more concerned with the image of the 'security forces' than with the murder of nationalists: 'Nothing will enhance the standing of the security forces and the RUC more than a clean outcome to the Stevens investigation.'

The reinstatement of Corporal Cameron Hastie to the army after having received a suspended sentence for passing information to the Ulster Volunteer Force shows the worth of

an Irish life to the British state; he was described by Armed Forces Minister Archie Hamilton as 'a very fine young soldier'. One can only speculate if someone passing information on British forces personned to the IRA would likewise have received a non-custodial sentence.

Even Progressive Democrat leader Des O'Malley accused Northern Ireland Security Minister John Cope of hypocrisy over Hastie's return to uniform.

As we go to press, three men, including two UDR soldiers, have been charged with Loughlin Maginn's killing. A handful of other soldiers have been charged with minor ammunition offences and released on bail. Given the scale of the collusion between the British forces and loyalists that has been uncovered, such token prosecutions do little to allay nationalist concern.

Judging by the outcome of previous inquiries in the North, particularly that conducted by John Stalker, the Stevens investigation is bound to be perceived with some scepticism. Only a full, independent inquiry with wide-ranging powers will make any headway, but this would still be addressing the symptoms, not the causes. ●

Richard Vize

# Chemical giant blocked by green protests

**L**OCAL PEOPLE have forced giant US pharmaceutical manufacturer, Merrell Dow, to abandon its plans to build a £60 million chemical factory at Killeagh in East Cork. When operational, the proposed plant would have pumped 100,000 gallons of effluent into the nearby Womanagh river every day. The river, which floods frequently, services the cattle herds of local farmers who were concerned that flooding might also pollute pasture land. Several local pressure groups were delighted by their victory against the powerful Merrell Dow.

Opposition to the plant came from local farmers, small business people, many of whom depend on tourism, and environmental groups. Despite the company's commitment to pay damages in case of pollution, to set up a community committee to monitor the environment and to submit to the findings of independent experts should a conflict arise; local people were not convinced. They were perturbed by the refusal of Merrell Dow's parent company, Dow Chemicals, to allow the US Environmental Protection Agency to investigate the company's Michigan factory after a local river had been polluted.

Plans for the Womanagh Valley factory were first unveiled in late 1987. Objections to the site increased in mid-1988 after a South Tipperary farmer won damages against another American pharmaceuticals company, Merck, Sharp and Dhome. The Supreme Court found in favour of John Hanarahan, whose livestock and pastures had been polluted by waste from the company's Clonmel plant.

Merrell Dow say that their decision to pull out was not based on local opposition to the factory but was due to a merger with Marion Laboratories, another American company. They claimed that the merger altered their taxation status and rendered the 26 County 10% corporate tax rate not sufficiently advantageous financially. The Industrial Development Auth-

ority regretted Merrell Dow's decision 'and hopes that the company may consider Ireland for another project in the future.'

The IDA insisted that, were it not for the merger, Merrell Dow would have begun construction of the plant regardless of local opposition. A local opinion poll in June revealed that two out of three people in a 20 mile radius opposed the siting. Cork County Council were undeterred by this opposition and granted planning permission — subject to 27 stringent conditions. Merrell Dow agreed to pay compensation for any pollution which might ensue from the factory.

The Killeagh Pro-Industry Group campaigned for the siting of the factory, using reports from Eolas, the science and technology agency, and the resource and environmental management unit at University College Cork in defence of the environmental effect of the proposed plant. The Pro-Industry Group also argued that the factory was needed because there are 2,000 unemployed people in nearby towns of Youghal and Middleton. Merrell Dow claimed that the plant would employ 1,000 people in short term construction work and create 200 permanent jobs.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions said it regretted the company's decision not to proceed with the factory. A statement from ICTU noted: 'While congress believes that all steps necessary to protect our en-

vironment should be taken, it is of vital importance that a balance be maintained between industrial development, job creation and the environment.'

Ex-SDLP man turned Fine Gael MEP, John Cushman, blamed the government for not implementing EEC legislation: 'As someone who is conscious of the need to create employment, my real fear was that if the Merrell Dow proposal had proceeded there was a real possibility that more jobs could in fact have been lost in the fields of food production, agriculture and tourism.'

Roger Garland TD (Green Party) 'ecstatically' welcomed the decision, while Joe Sherlock TD of the Workers' Party described the decision as 'a blow to the many unemployed in the area who had pinned their hopes on the Merrell Dow project.' He added 'while Merrell Dow attribute their decision to outside factors, it is hard to believe that the largely ill-informed but well-financed campaign against the plant — waged by some local residents — did not influence the decision.'

The Womanagh Valley Protection Association described the decision as 'wonderful', despite facing legal costs of up to £400,000. The Concerned Citizens of East Cork and West Waterford issued a statement saying: 'We trust that the IDA will never again try to bring in any industry, especially potentially dangerous industry... without first consulting the community.' It criticised the IDA, 'which still invites toxic waste producing industries into our environmentally-based economy', and argued that this policy should be reviewed. ●

**Siobhan Crozier**

THE BRITISH have admitted that it was a Royal Navy submarine which was responsible for dragging an Irish trawler, the Contestor P, backwards for about ten minutes in the Irish Sea, just before midnight on 12 September.

The skipper and his four man crew were uninjured after the incident when a communications buoy which was being dragged by the submarine became entangled in the ship's fishing nets. The buoy became loose and was dragged aboard providing concrete proof of the fishermen's story.

The incident occurred in the East Skerries, close to the area in which the British submarine, HMS Porpoise dragged and sunk an Irish fishing vessel, the Shergla in April 1982. The submarine sailed on without attempting to rescue the drowning crew, and it was only by chance that they were spotted and rescued by a passing ship.

On this as on many other occasions, the Navy denied there were submarines in the area at the time. Only photographic evidence produced by the Isle of Man branch of the Celtic League which monitors submarine activity in the Irish Sea, forced the Navy to admit their responsibility and pay compensation.

The League's spokesperson, Bernard Moffat has a log of more than 100 deaths in the Irish Sea in calm waters where submarines may have been involved.

IN JUNE Euro MP, Niall Andrews, won a court claim for substantial damages against journalist Nell McCafferty arising from an article she had written in the Irish Press.

Nell's acerbic commentary focussed on a magazine interview in which Andrews advocated the legislation of brothels. Court reports read like an original piece of Nell's writing. In her defence, McCafferty pointed out that her article was 'obviously sarcastic'. When questioned by the judge whether this was indeed as obvious as she suggested, Nell replied 'I always presume intelligence in my readers'.

Asked about the use of the phrase 'in fairness to Mr Andrews...' which was used twice in the article, Nell insisted that she was again using journalistic sarcasm.

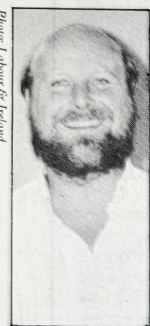
On the third occasion the phrase was used however: '...in fairness to us (women) he should be asked by the Fianna Fail party to resign or retract'. Nell said she was being deadly serious. She said she was not out to humiliate or offend Mr Andrews, but that she was 'hoping he would resign or retract'.

In reading the terms of the settlement, Counsel for Mr Andrews said it was now accepted by the Irish Press and Nell McCafferty that the article suggested that Mr Andrews had views and engaged in practices which were distasteful and immoral. These suggestions were untrue.



# 'There are few issues which can unite a whole community'

*WHILE IT IS WIDELY acknowledged that the Irish community must be an essential component, an authoritative voice in the withdrawal movement in Britain, the question of how to engage that community, who represents it and indeed, what it actually is, remains unanswered. Time To Go! has begun to create opportunities for a united approach: both the Gaelic Athletic Association and the Federation of Irish Societies have endorsed its charter. The support of newspapers such as the Irish Post and the London Irish News ensures that the Irish in Britain are kept informed of the campaign's progress at both local and national levels. MYLES CRUMMIE, general manager of Aras na nGael (the Brent Irish Centre), and an officer of the executive body of the GAA in Britain, speaks to Labour and Ireland about the role of the Irish community in mobilising support for British withdrawal.*



**M**YLES left Rathfriland, Co Down, seventeen years ago, lectured in economics and then worked with the British Refugee Council and the World University Service. Having spent a couple of years in Spain, he became active in the GAA on returning to London. 'Through that I got more and more involved in Irish community affairs', he says, 'I saw a lot of things that I thought were wrong and things that could be done. I had enthusiasm and thought that I could contribute, so when this job came up, I was pleased to be offered it. It provided me with the opportunity to get stuck into something I really believed in.'

Myles stresses the importance of professionalism in his work, both in the centre and the GAA. 'The GAA is totally amateur', he says, 'that can mean that it's conservative: even at the highest level of the association, if you mention the word professional, people will turn away. But in other ways, it's a very radical organisation.'

The GAA was founded 105 years ago, an athletics orientated organisation with the principle aim of fostering a national identity in Ireland. 'That identity had been eroded over the years with the English influence', Myles says, 'there was the loss of the language of course and the playing of the games had been more difficult. So the national association was formed with a view to fostering Irish culture and an Irish cultural identity through the promotion of Gaelic games.'

The message of the GAA reaches beyond sport. Myles notes that fostering the national identity involves taking a particular pride and interest in the language and the broad cultural base of Irish traditions. In Ireland in the past century, that aim has given the GAA a political dimension: 'The political aspect is less so nowadays in the south of Ireland. But in the north, the GAA is perceived by loyalist groups as an extension of the IRA.'

He cites the recent controversy in Craigavon council as an example of the loyalist attitude towards the GAA: 'For years, they had refused to allow the club to develop a piece of land. Eventually, it went to court and the club won damages from the council. That was significant because it was a loyalist council doing its best to counter the progress of a

GAA club.'

In the Six Counties, GAA enthusiasts have frequently found themselves on the political frontline whether they chose it or not. 'The British army's occupation of Crossmaglen Rangers Club is the most famous case', says Myles, 'it was extraordinary that central government allowed that to happen. It really brought the politics of the situation to the forefront of people's minds'. Myles believes that all organisations which attract people have an educative role: 'With sporting organisations, people tend to adopt a middle of the road attitude. A lot of people are keen to keep — as they perceive it — politics out of sport. My own opinion is that politics is very much within sport. The whole situation in South African is a classic example. You hear of people going off there to play and you think — how could they do it? But we know why — and they'll continue to do it.'

The GAA formulates policy on a range of issues. In London it has definite policies on the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six. 'The association deplores the fact that these travesties of justice have occurred and endeavour to play a role in trying to correct the wrongs that have taken place.'

'By and large, the main organisation has been very receptive to those ideas.' The decision to support Time To Go! demonstrates the breadth of the campaign's appeal, although Myles considers that mobilising the GAA's 10,000 members in Britain will not happen automatically.

'Where people are already involved in the extra-curricular activity of promoting Gaelic games, that takes up a lot of time and inevitably, you'll have large numbers of people who will sit back, listen to the debate and say, we support that, whether it's a donation or passing a motion.'

'But unless people at the top make an attempt to carry on the activities, the follow-on isn't there. The membership won't do it. It's very hard to educate them into doing things — as far as they're concerned, their aim is to organise the games, get players out, try to recruit players and raise money to keep their own club going. It's difficult to get them to do tangible things for other causes — as with probably 99% of most other organisations.'

Myles Crummie is nevertheless positive about the GAA's

potential input into Time To Go! 'Willing individuals will always be there, keen to do what they can to promote particular causes that have the support of the parent body.'

Massive emigration has virtually doubled the membership of the GAA in Britain in recent years. With members transferring from their county in Ireland to the county of residence here, the GAA provides a useful support network for new immigrants, often helping players to get jobs and find accommodation. The GAA promoted local Time To Go! groups internally and a large number of GAA members have become involved.

The recent surge of emigration has brought women back into the GAA. 'It has been gratifying to see the emergence of women who are the daughters of Irish parents involved in the GAA. About five years ago, we had the beginning of ladies' football! That's what they call it — although Myles says he has had frequent debates over the terminology: 'Regrettably, the leadership of the GAA tends to be a very male-dominated preserve. There are noticeable breakthroughs — there is one female member of the London County Board.'

Myles is convinced of the potential for the involvement of the Irish community in Time To Go! 'I think it's the classic campaign to unite people', he says. 'It's a matter of striking that chord which will motivate — and there are probably very few issues which will motivate a whole community.' He comments that a section of the Irish community here will perhaps feel that it owes its living to Britain. 'It's not my opinion but some people think that', he says. 'They're afraid — they've heard about this PTA — and they're worried, so they don't really get involved.'

Myles identifies the funeral of Michael Gaughan in the mid-70s as the last major event which brought the Irish community out on the streets. It took place a few months before the PTA was introduced. 'During the hunger strikes, there were vigils in Trafalgar Square and Kilburn Square — those were issues that motivated people. But the Gaughan funeral was the last major thing that brought thousands of people out onto the streets. The PTA has engendered definite fear. The system has engendered fear that if you're involved, your name goes down on the file. People wonder how that will affect them.'

He believes that fear can be gradually overcome, 'but there needs to be motivation, an issue that is so plausible to the Irish community that they cannot resist it, or fail to appreciate its point, therefore they can't just ignore it.' He questions why 100,000 people will converge on Roundwood Park for the Irish festival every year and yet will not turn out for issues which greatly affect the community. 'People are frightened — but you also have to ask — are they concerned? Do they feel genuine concern, or are they happy enough just to bury the head and say, let's not worry too much about that.'

The issue must be made attractive, Myles thinks. 'You've got to market it in a way that people cannot resist', so that 100,000 people might converge not for a family day out, 'but to show solidarity with people who've suffered at the hands of the system': the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six; the fact that 20 years later, troops are still in Ireland, people are still being killed and will continue to be killed, and that will always be the position until somebody in power makes that decision — enough is enough, and we must make a declared intention to withdraw.'

'That will not happen until the political lobby is there', says Myles. 'Time To Go! has focused a lot of attention among politicians, trade unions and so on. Yet it has to get to the heart of the Irish community and make the issue so irresistible that the 100,000 who go to Roundwood Park will be prepared to say, today they've called a festival up in Finsbury Park for Time To Go! and I'm going up there —

because it's important. There are no easy answers as to how you arrive at that situation but somehow or other you have to get people to take that stand.'

Myles Crummie observes that there are still large numbers of Irish people who will switch off when the subject of the Six Counties is raised. 'It's something that Irish people should be taking an interest in. We keep talking about the Irish community and I often wonder just who we're talking about.'

To reach the Irish in Britain, he believes that it is essential that Time To Go! should not come across as a campaign of which people will be frightened. In this respect, he considers that the initiative so far with the trades unions have been very constructive. When your union actively supports Time To Go!, it suddenly doesn't seem dangerous to argue that British withdrawal from Ireland and self-determination for the Irish people is the only sensible scenario for peace.

Evaluating the political progress of the Irish in Britain, Myles cites the Livingstone-led Greater London Council's inclusion of the Irish as an ethnic minority as a watershed. 'That was progress of a monumental nature and I don't think we'll ever see its like again', he says. 'It just came at the right time, in so many respects, it was the beginning of serious debates on Irish issues. A lot of people were beginning to respect their Irishness and actually saw themselves as being different — and proudly different.'

'Regrettably, with some of the more established Irish organisations, there was this feeling that by declaring themselves as ethnic minority, they saw themselves as being equated with black and Asian people — and they couldn't handle that', says Myles. He acknowledges racism within some sections of the community. 'That has always amazed me because they're the one group we should be having close co-operative relationships with. They were a downtrodden minority, crapped on from a height by society here, by governments here, and the same thing was happening to Irish people.'

'One wonders whether the church had a role to play in all this', Myles comments, 'but suffice to say that the debate was embraced by people of a progressive mentality who said, yes, we're different and it is important that we emphasise that difference. And so, organisations made moves to get community centres like this one, to come together to promote Irishness as an issue. Other people — and this is beginning to come out now — obviously misused the whole thing, saying, we're Irish, an ethnic minority — but only while the GLC is dishing out the lolly.'

'The whole notion of the ethnic minority unit and the work of the GLC members like John McDonnell and Ken Livingstone was tremendous', he says. 'I don't think they'll ever know just how important their role was in fashioning people's way of thinking. This centre could never have happened without the GLC — it never would have come about. If it hadn't, then there was an opportunity lost for places like this to promote Irishness and Irish culture — not just to Irish people but to as wide an audience as possible — ensuring that whatever racial stereotypes exist in people's minds can be diminished. It's a long, slow and very hard struggle but without centres like this it would be very hard to achieve. Operated properly, Irish centres will very much show the positive aspects of Irish culture and hopefully, move people away from racial stereotypes.'

The cultural dimension is crucial to the success of Aras na nGael and Myles believes that the centre should expand into the widest possible range of activities and facilities: 'What is it that motivates people to get involved in Irish dancing, Gaelic sport, playing an Irish traditional instrument?' he asks. 'If you take all those things together, you've a huge diversity of people actively involved in learning elements of Irish culture, and it's very important for them to be afforded



● Hurling in London

that opportunity.'

Myles Crummie believes that this potential to explore the diversities of Irish culture is one of the many legacies of the GLC which could not be eradicated by its abolition. The centre is flourishing and stands out as an example to other Irish centres which have been allowed to deteriorate into commercially motivated enterprises, no more than a bar and a dance hall with the emphasis firmly on bad country and western music.

'It's very complex this idea of communities', says Myles. 'Because we're different, we talk about the community, yet it's a very diverse community. That's my point about Time To Go! It has this unifying potential, that it could actually bridge the barriers within the community. What is the community? None of us can claim to represent 'the community'. We represent aspects of it and views that are held by people within it.' To involve the Irish community, Myles considers that Time To Go! should look to Irish culture: 'The cultural aspect is the common denominator within the community — there's a respect for the culture, a respect for our language and for our traditions.'

'The majority of Irish people can share a cultural bond which is all-encompassing through language, through theatre, music and dance. They can have respect for that and derive joy from it even if they're not participating — not everybody can get up on stage and play good music — but

they can participate in the type of atmosphere which it engenders, which is intrinsically Irish — it's certainly not British, not the English way of doing things.'

'That acts as the bond to you and your fellow people. So when a concept like Time To Go! gets introduced into this forum, it's attractive — certainly much more attractive than just shooting off, troops out. Time To Go! is a much wider campaign but within the Irish community it has to model itself on those staged objectives, really getting people to take more interest in the fact that they are Irish.'

Myles remarks on the great incentive to make Time To Go! 'respectable' in the sense of the campaign being a secure environment in which Irish people can articulate their political aspirations. 'I'm not saying that it isn't respectable', he says, 'but one way to achieve that is to take a leaf out of the cultural book.'

'There's a thing that exists within the Irish way of doing things — an *Scoralocht* — a kind of choreographed show, all in Irish. It might involve some storytelling, then move on to an exposition of Irish dancing, Irish music, culminating with a really lively session to get people going. All it takes is somebody to hold the whole thing together — if you speak in Irish, not everybody will understand, but if you speak in both languages, people will be aware of the existence of the Irish language. If you're of a non-Irish background, you're going to realise that the Irish are different.'

*HAVE YOU heard the one about the Irish Evel Kineval? He's going to jump over twelve Englishmen on a steamroller. He's on his fifth attempt...*

## Is it just 'the way they tell them?'

**T**HE 'HARMLESS' Irish joke has long been a feature of English culture. For centuries the untamed, the un-intelligible and un-washed from across the water have been the butt of the superior British sense of humour. And what's wrong with that? According to JOHN MALONEY, second generation Irish, socialist musician and alternative comedian, Irish jokes are 'a vital component of Britain's justification for its occupation of Ireland' and 'a vile form of racism'. Jane Denholm risked an encounter with the 'angry young accordianist'.

'Even if you don't want to think less of someone, subtle changes in language alter your perceptions of them. It's subliminal. It gets to the point where people hear the word 'Irish' and start thinking about terrorists, and mad ignorant bombers. Word association is a very subtle way of conditioning people, but it is conditioning nonetheless.'

Maloney comes from a political family and easily lapses into his onstage routine: 'My mum's a strong unionist!... trade unionist I should say!' He grins awkwardly. 'She's not one of them, she doesn't have a blue nose. And my dad was a shop steward for COHSE. They lived through that whole 'no blacks! no dogs! no Irish! thing as people who came to this country in the 1950s to do the jobs the British people were too proud to do having won the war.'

John is first and foremost a classically trained musician, but his stage act combines dazzling accordian play with a stream of one-liners and repartee with the audience. Caustic observations are a trade mark and Maloney has been known to offend left wing audiences with what he describes as 'a few home truths'.

'I couldn't sit down and write a routine about getting on the bus. It's not my style or discipline. There are some real

hypocrisies on the left about Ireland. I ask people why Nicaragua is far more trendy than Ireland?' On stage he explains that the Irish haven't got good enough T-shirts and suggests renaming the country NicaraguEIRE. 'I'm discussing political realities not ludicrous myths.'

John Maloney left the Labour Party two years ago, feeling that the policies he believed in were being diluted to the point of non-existence. He is scathing about the party's Irish policy: 'It's terrible, it's ridiculous — so status quo. There's no positive initiative at all.'

The attitude of whole chunks of what passes for the British Left to events on their own doorstep cannot be explained as anything other than reflecting the wider malaise in British culture. 'England doesn't really have a cultural identity — it has been too busy going into other people's countries and destroying theirs' he quips.

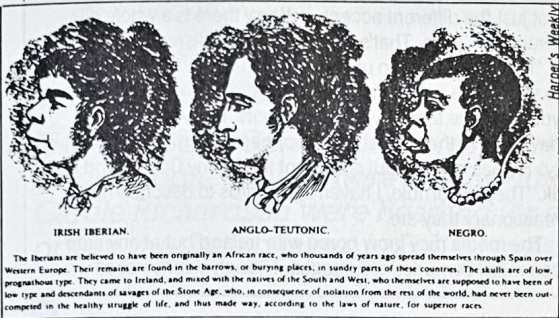
Looking at the origins and history of the Irish joke, it is clear that the 'joke' forms part of a much wider anti-Irish prejudice which for centuries has been conveniently and deliberately fostered for political ends, with frightening success.

The earliest documented evidence of this long legacy can

be found when Gerald of Wales' reported to the English King Henry II, describing his visits to Ireland in 1183 and 1185. Gerald's 'History and Topography of Ireland' brims over with a now familiar English intolerance of another culture.

He regarded everything about the Irish as inferior from the way they planned their economy to their manner of dress and concluded that the Irish were a 'filthy people, wallowing in vice...It is only in the case of historical instruments that I can find any commendable diligence in the people.'

His observations are in a classically colonialist mould. But the combination of contempt for a hopelessly inferior colonised culture, with a willingness to acknowledge less important artistic skills, in this case disguises an ulterior



The Iberians are believed to have been originally an African race, who thousands of years ago spread themselves through Spain over Western Europe. Their remains are found in the barrows, or burying places, in sundry parts of these countries. The skulls are of low prognathous type. They came to Ireland, and mixed with the natives of the South and West, who the mariners are supposed to have been of low type and descendants of savages of the Stone Age, who, in consequence of isolation from the rest of the world, had never been out-competed in the healthy struggle of life, and thus made way, according to the laws of nature, for superior races.

motive of undermining the widespread view of Ireland at the time as a centre of Christianity and civilisation. His work was to influence English attitudes for the next seven centuries and was often quoted as fact.

In her book 'The Same Old Story' which is a history of anti-Irish racism, Liz Curtis explains how the derogatory stereotype of the Irish was kept alive as the English unceasingly fought to subjugate the Irish.

As English domination was frustrated by Irish resistance,



the 'simple savage' stereotype was further embellished to give the Irish a violent, rebellious, and idle nature. The most severe and brutal English actions were justified in the name of civilising this barbarous and backward people.

In 1574, the Earl of Essex's forces slaughtered the entire population of Rathlin Island — 'some six hundred people. A member of the expedition remarked: 'How goodly a deed it is to overthrow so wicked a race the world may judge: For



Scientific racism as portrayed in the American magazine Harpers Weekly

© Punch cartoon of the Fenian rebellion

The rise of revolutionary Fenianism in the 1860s provoked a wave of racism. In this 1866 Punch cartoon, Sir John Tenniel shows Britannia stamping on rebellion and protecting Hibernia from the Fenians

my part I think there cannot be a greater sacrifice to God.'

After Oliver Cromwell and the Battle of the Boyne, most of the power in Ireland finally lay in the hands of the new Protestant land-owning class, largely sympathetic to the English. To consolidate colonisation another repressive tool was developed and used — that of the suppression of indigenous culture. A series of penal laws were passed against Catholics denying them education, the vote, religious freedom and government jobs.

English ruling class notions of the Irish were mirrored at popular level in music halls and in Irish joke books. In 1749, the Joe Miller book of 'Teagueland Jest and Bogland Wit-ticisms' was prefaced with the words 'The Bulls and Wit-ticisms that too frequently drop from Irish mouths have made them the discourse and entertainment of all sorts of companies. Nothing more recommends Teague and his countrymen than their natural stupidity.'

This is how British rulers justified their actions in Ireland and explained them at home. At a time of great Irish poverty — due largely to British economic policy, the stupidity of the Irish was a most convenient excuse.

Through the 18th and 19th centuries, direct parallels can be drawn between British activities in Ireland and

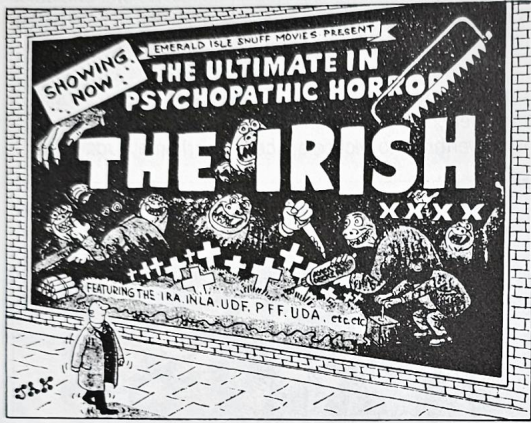
John Maloney in thoughtful pose

• Cummings in the Daily Express (1970): stuck in the middle?

elsewhere in the world. The indigenous populations of India and Africa too, were derided as simple, and backward and in need of 'civilising' exploitation. Anglo Saxon supremacy was attributed to racial superiority and noxious theories surfaced about race and character which placed Anglo Saxon at the top of a hierarchy, blacks at the bottom and Celts and Jews in between.

Attitudes to Ireland and emphasis on certain manufactured and mythological national characteristics varied with events. The rise of the Fenian movement provided a spate of vicious cartoons in the press which depicted, the Irish as monstrous, ape-like anarchists. Sir John Tenniel, best known for his delightful illustrations of 'Alice in Wonderland' was responsible for many of the worst examples of these. The genre was to resurface in the 1970s, with the tradition

• The controversial Jak cartoon which led to the GLC stopping all advertising with the Evening Standard



carried on by the likes of Cummings and Jak for the right wing tabloids.

Such cartoons may have appeared less frequently after Partition, but re-emerged whenever politically expedient — as in attacking Irish neutrality during the Second World War. Racism has never been cited solely around colour, when emigration was at its height in the 1950s, Irish immigrants seeking jobs and homes, experienced blatant discrimination alongside Blacks.

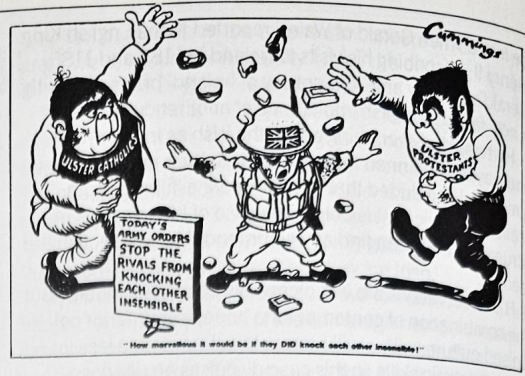
This seam of latent and not-so-latent anti-Irish racism was lurking ready to be tapped when British troops were sent into Ireland in August 1969 and violent confrontation became inevitable. Once again, the media especially the press immediately identified with and assisted the British authorities by resurrecting stereotypes and presenting a warped and biased picture of what was going on.

Once again, Britain was absolved of responsibility for 'the Troubles'. Its troops were presented in a neutral, 'peace-keeping' role trying to keep the naturally stupid and war-like Irish from killing each other.

It is no mere coincidence that in the highly sensitive 1970s, which saw an upturn in violent activities on all sides, gave rise to an increase in demand for and supply of damaging anti-Irish humour through prominent television comedians such as Yarwood, Tarbuck, Monkhouse and Emery. The all-Irish Dave Allen show was favourite viewing. As pressure from black and Asian lobbies successfully cleaned up the acts of major comedians, the racist content of their routines was supplemented by Irish jokes. Michael Macguire, writing in the *Islington Focus* describes it as 'the acceptable face of racism' in Britain.

The Irish stereotype provides stock material: 'It's only a bit of fun' they say, 'there's no offence intended and anyway, don't the Irish themselves tell Kerryman jokes?'

John Maloney concedes that Kerryman jokes exist and regrets the urban chauvinism which gives rise to them.



'Kerry is such a different world to Dublin and the North. It's not just the different accent, in Kerry there is a whole different way of life. That's what breeds the disrespect.'

'There has to be an underdog in comedy: Somebody has to slip on the banana skin. Everybody does it in comedy, you just have to pick your scapegoats. But you shouldn't have to give them a nationality or name them after a county. He has nothing but contempt for Jimmy Cricket and his ilk. They're horrible, I haven't got words to describe how reactionary they are.'

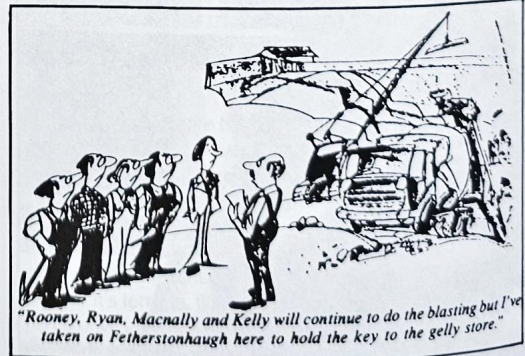
The media may grow bored with Ireland but at any time can recall centuries-old images. Though clearly not as



"I think this chap's call should have priority—he has an Irish accent!"

maligned as republicans, right wing loyalists such as Ian Paisley have been derided as caricatures, as much for their Irishness as for their policies.

As long as 'it's all a joke', readers and viewers can be persuaded that the 'Troubles' are not worth bothering about. Uneasy statistics which illustrate the depth of anti-Irish



"Rooney, Ryan, Macnally and Kelly will continue to do the blasting but I've taken on Fetherstonhaugh here to hold the key to the gelly store."

discrimination in jobs and housing which still exist in this country can be ignored.

The media-fostered anti-Irish hysteria of the early 70s directly led to a climate in which civil liberties could be thrown out of the window. The Prevention of Terrorism Act was rushed through parliament; the Guildford Four, Birmingham Six, McGuire family, and Judith Ward, and dozens of others later, could be convicted of something they did not do. They were simply guilty of being Irish in the wrong place at the wrong time. ●



# The Irish community comes out

by Paul Hill



*THE IMAGE of Gerry Conlon leaving the Old Bailey alone was striking and made people think, where are the other three? Paddy Armstrong and Carole Richardson were heading for a secluded place, while I was in a prison van, being taken to Belfast to another prison and another court.*

**I**HAD AN INKLING that something was happening in Albany Prison when I was told to pack a small kit. I thought that meant that I was going into solitary confinement. At the reception, I sensed a change in the staff's attitude. They were friendly, bought me coffee, asked how much sugar I wanted. Normally, I'd be locked in a little box in a van and they wouldn't speak.

A security officer arrived, I queried what was happening — he was very unforthcoming but friendly in a cagey way. 'I've had nothing but aggravation from you for fifteen years and now I know why', he said, 'this could be the big one.' The inmates collected together some tobacco to give me.

I was on a bit of a high. A Tactical Firearms Unit escorted me all the way Brixton Prison. On the ferry from the Isle of Wight they had Hackler Kosh assault guns. They spoke to me about football which was very unusual, they would normally be silent, staring. Try and sit in the back of a prison van, handcuffed, from Albany the whole way to Durham Jail, knowing that you're going into solitary — they're staring at you with intense hatred, you're staring back, in silence for three hundred miles. Most of them are ex-servicemen and here's this 'IRA' man.

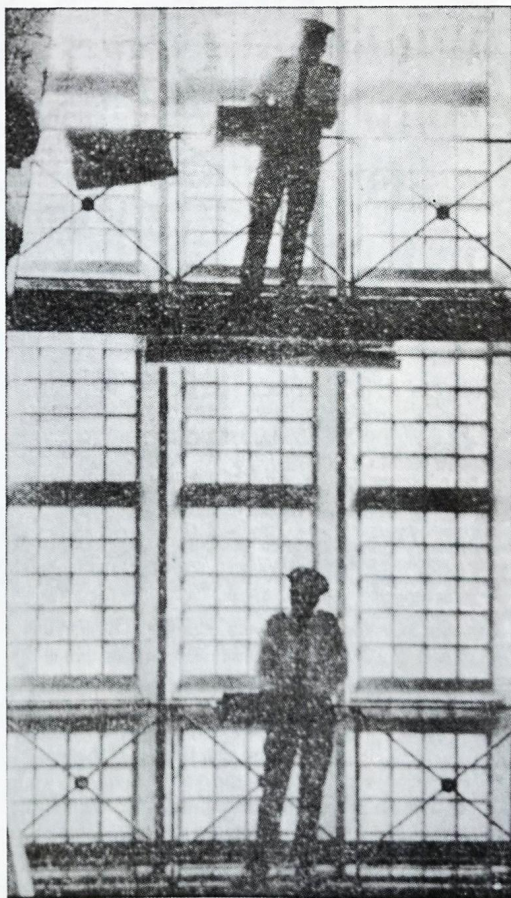
In the past I had been assaulted by prison officers while I was in Wandsworth, on the same night as an assault on a member of the Birmingham Six. Later, when I was in prison in Hull, I pressed charges for serious assault and got £1,500 compensation. I have spent 1,465 days in solitary confinement. I have been beaten up many times by prison officers and strip-searched before and after every visit. When my wife visited me, I was strip-searched forty times in two weeks!

So, their behaviour towards me on this occasion was very different. They were a bit quizzical with me, asking, 'Where do you think you're going?'

I thought it was bureaucracy, something to do with the appeal. When I got to Brixton, I'd just missed Gerry — he was in reception, were were being processed one at a time. Paddy was there, he was rather tense, he grasped me and said: 'Something's happening!' I told him to sit down: 'Let's not

run riot in our minds and have to crash down afterwards.' Then I saw a prisoner who is in for a bullion robbery, he told me: 'You're going home on Thursday!'

I had to lean against the wall, I was dumbfounded. 'Are



● Prison officers keep watch in Leicester jail



● Tears and joy: Peter Macdiarmid's photo says it all. Gerry Conlon with sisters, Bridie and Ann outside the Old Bailey

you positive?' I asked him. I had to sit down and think. I always knew that it would happen but I imagined that it would be through the procedure of a court and we would have time to prepare for it.

I was travelling in that van, still totally unaware that legal history was unfolding around me. Our hopes had been raised too many times in the past — the highest point was when we heard that the Balcombe Street men had confessed to the Guildford and Woolwich bombings in 1977. I thought, this is it, I'm home. An independent forensic scientist examined the whole pattern of the bombing campaign — it was a scientific fingerprint, he studied the modus operandi

of the bomber. He had a chronological list of every bomb including Guildford and Woolwich.

The list was served against them at their committal but another list was served against them at their trial with Guildford and Woolwich missing. The forensic scientist said that the Bomb Squad told them to remove it, while the Bomb Squad claimed that the Director of Public Prosecutions had told them to do it. The problem is that the DPP is not an individual, it's a state body — they cannot be made accountable because they alone control the method of prosecution.

When that happened in 1977, we really dropped. I per-

sonally thought, they'll never admit it. They had the 'out' to let them off the hook but they did nothing, they hampered it totally. That's the sort of pitfall that I thought of when I saw Paddy. I wasn't hopeful but then I had come from the blunt end of the prison system, whereas Paddy had come from the more moderate end.

My daughter has only seen me in prison conditions until now. I have spent stretches of 56 days in a row in solitary when I didn't talk to a soul and when I came out I couldn't listen to what people said, or concentrate. But I got through it because of the support of my family and all those campaigning on my behalf, and on behalf of all the other innocent people in prison. It is true that a lot of people in prison are innocent. In the north of Ireland, 70 per cent of people in prison are there because of confessions, and they have been pushed through the no-jury Diplock courts.

After my euphoric release on bail, I was met by a very large crowd who shared the momentous event with me which sort of repaid what I had missed the day before. I felt absolutely ecstatic to grasp my daughter. For the next couple of hours, until I reached the sanctuary of the North London family home, I was carried along on a roller-coaster of emotion.

My daughter carried a bottle of champagne the whole way — I had taken six pain-killers because in Belfast, somebody squeezed me and cracked against my broken cheekbone. It was like an electric shock, like when your tongue touches a battery terminal. So I was afraid to mix the champagne with the painkillers, I thought I might be falling around. We saved it and opened it when we arrived in London.

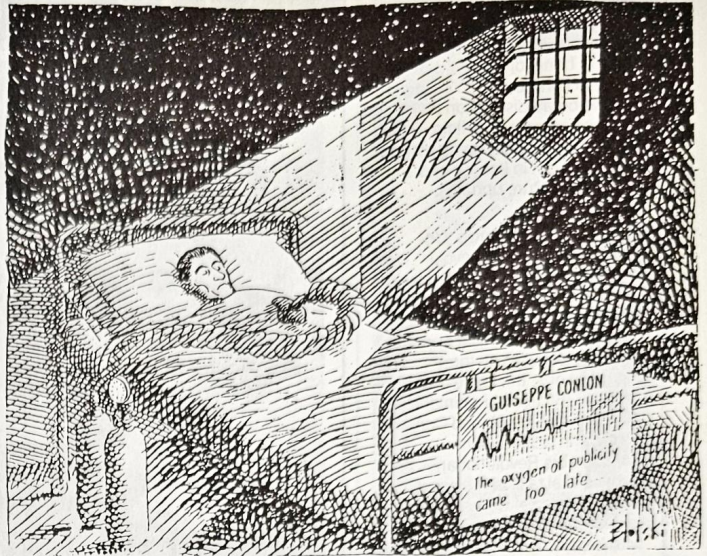
Eventually, I hope that it will be abundantly clear that the Prevention of Terrorism Act was designed as a means of terrorising the Irish community in Britain. Ironically, within two weeks of our arrest the entire Irish community knew that we were innocent. This is the strategy of the state when it is has been attacked, it attacks the sea and makes it impossible for the fish to swim in friendly waters. They disturb the water so that the fish is eventually pushed out, as long as that fish remains, the water will be attacked by the state.

The Americans used napalm against innocent Vietnamese people, they tried to make life so uncomfortable for the local people, that the people resisting would get no succour from the local indigenous elements — in our case, not indigenous but immigrant. In the early days, the Irish community were petrified to say that they supported us. Petrified. Except for Sister Sarah Clarke, a 60-year old Roman Catholic nun who was seen as such a security risk that she was barred from every prison in the country. That was the extent of the paranoia, the mechanism by which they were attacking the Irish community.

I completely endorse the fight for the release of the Birmingham Six, and I can certainly see parallels between our experience and that of the Broadwater Farm youth. It is a state attack on a community in line with Brigadier Frank Kitson's book on 'Low Intensity Operations'. I left Winston Silcott in solitary confinement in Albany when they moved me last week. They put people in solitary for so long in prison to try and make them dependent on the system.

My sentence was not just a sentence for me but a sentence for my family — I was moved 51 times altogether. I think that they have had to let us go because of the whole situation they are in in Ireland — I think it is a form of damage control. I have followed all the struggles while I have been in prison: I followed the strike of the miners, who are the salt of the earth, and could see that this was another state attack on a community that I could identify with.

The press in the past few weeks have been paying a debt incurred by the anti-Irish racism generated by the press en-



● Giuseppe Conlon, Gerry's uncle framed with the Maguire family in the 'bomb kitchen' trial, died in prison

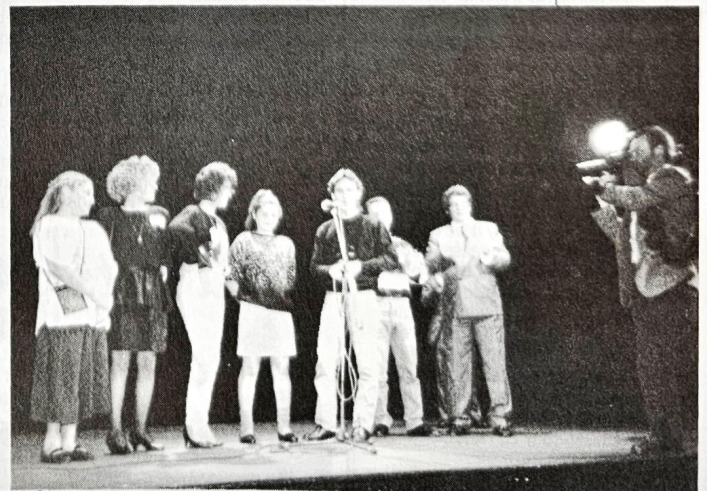
masse, which enabled the state to unmuzzle itself, totally and absolutely unchallenged, against the Irish community. You can imagine how it felt in those days to be in the very belly of the state — in prison. If it was bad on the street, how horrific was it in the darkest dungeons where we languished?

That strategy worked so effectively and so efficiently that it was only years later, when certain sections of the Irish community tentatively came out and spoke on our behalf and questioned the injustice. It built and built when people saw the brave stand being taken by the few. It built into a volcano which uncapped on Wednesday on the doorstep of the state's strongest institution — the Old Bailey. Literally thousands of people cheered our return from the belly of the beast.

We hope that we have breached the wall and that the Birmingham Six will come through the hole. At the moment, it's damage control — it's everybody's duty to ensure that they don't shore up the hole in the wall, so we can ensure that the Birmingham Six will eventually emerge. Then, perhaps, we can finally smash the wall — once and for all. ●

*The above article originally appeared in edited form in City Limits magazine. Thanks also to Newsline for additional material.*

● Paul Hill and family are joined on stage by relatives of the Birmingham Six



Everywoman magazine has agreed to sponsor a Women's Time To Go! conference to be held next spring. The organisers hope to bring together a wide range of contributors to initiate a unique broad discussion on Ireland amongst women in Britain. Details of the event are still being planned but watch out in Labour and Ireland for future updates.

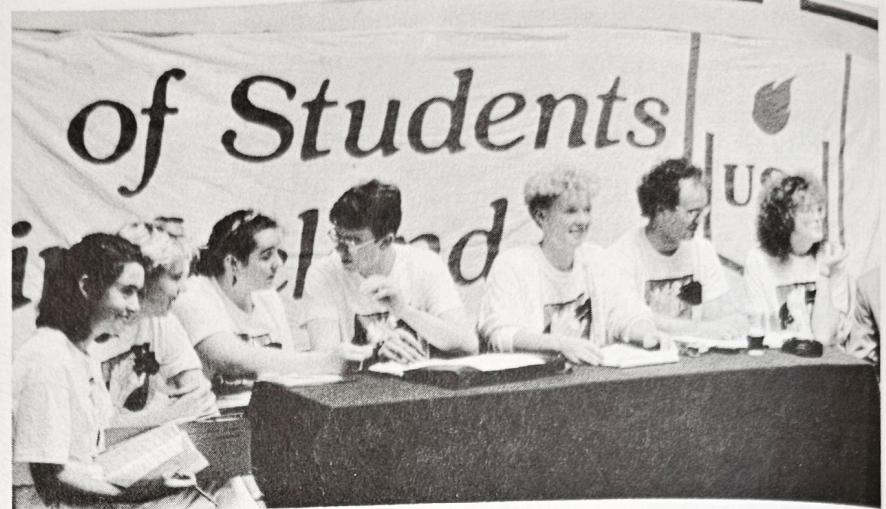
Margaret Ward's 'Unmanageable Revolutionaries' is being reprinted by Pluto Press at £7.95. The book which got rave reviews in Labour and Ireland when it first appeared in 1984, focusses on three organisations: the Ladies Land League (1881-82), Inghinidhe na hEireann (1900-14), and Cumann na mBann (1914-). Unmanageable Revolutionaries performs a vital task in rediscovering the true place of women in the unfolding drama of struggle; it is alive with lessons for the Nineties.

AT a well attended AGM on 28/29 October, the National Abortion Campaign agreed to make campaigning against efforts to reduce the upper time limits for legal abortion its immediate priority. The decision is in response to attempts by anti-abortionists to hijack the forthcoming parliamentary legislation on embryo research by moving amendments to reduce the upper time limits. A reduction in time limits also has some support from the government, and has even found initial support from normally pro-choice Labour MPs.

Attaching anti-abortion amendments to a government bill in this way guarantees them a vote, which means that tactics previously employed against private members bills on abortion will not be effective. Diane Abbott MP, speaking at the conference, urged campaigners to begin now the campaign in defence of the present laws and, in particular, to tackle the confusions amongst MPs over the significance of a 24 week ruling: 'unless we begin now to say no to 24 weeks, that there is no consensus on this, and that we are defending the law as it stands, by January when we have the wording of the bill, we will find ourselves defending 24 weeks against something even worse.'

Patricia Ireland, Executive Vice-President of the U.S. National Organisation of Women, reminded delegates of the similarities with anti-abortion tactics in the U.S.: 'The anti-abortion movement works globally. They have decided to focus for emotive reasons on late term abortions, but they will not stop there. If successful on 24 weeks and in shifting the climate they will be back until they reverse abortion rights completely.'

A meeting to establish an umbrella campaign against any reduction in time limits is being convened for Saturday 25 November.



## Abortion publicity row goes to Europe

**S**TUDENT LEADERS were described as 'jubilant' when, in a surprise judgement, a case against them brought by the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC), was thrown out by the Dublin High Court.

In 1988, four students received letters from SPUC asking them for an undertaking not to publish abortion information in their 1988-89 welfare manual. They ignored this and were taken to court by SPUC.

In September 1988 Justice Mella Carroll ruled that SPUC had no legal standing to seek an injunction from these individual students since such an action is a function of the State and not that of a private organisation.

At the start of the new term in October, the students' union distributed their welfare manual, which alongside a range of information gave students the names and addresses of abortion clinics.

Meanwhile SPUC went to the Supreme Court, challenging the earlier decision against them. Their appeal was heard in November 1988 although judgment was not given until July 1989. The Supreme Court reversed the original decision and referred the case back to the High Court where it was heard early in October.

After a two day hearing in the Dublin High Court, Justice Carroll referred the matter to the European Court of Justice. She also threw out



contempt of court proceedings taken by SPUC against the four student leaders from Trinity College because of the lack of evidence against them.

The Union of Students of Ireland had been concerned that if the students lost in the High Court, SPUC would systematically pick off other college unions who published such abortion information.

The role of the students' unions in Ireland in providing information on abortion is not just confined to students. The USI receives telephone calls from concerned women all over the country. Since the Hamilton judgement in 1987 prevented the Dublin Well Woman Centre and Open Line Counselling (since closed) from including in non-directive pregnancy counselling services the names and addresses of UK abortion clinics, the work of students' unions has become even more important.

Karen Quinlivan, USI's women's rights officer who is only too aware of this, said 'no matter what SPUC's intentions, we will never turn women away.'

The students were represented in court by Senator Mary Robinson SC, who agreed to act free of charge. She argued that the matter was one for European Community law because it raised the issue of whether information about services in one Community country should be available to citizens of another member country. Judge Carroll ruled that the question of the right to disseminate information was not an issue in the Supreme Court judgement of 1988 against the Open Line Clinic and Well Woman Centre and in order to seek clarification of the legal position she was requesting the European Court give a ruling.

It will be at least 18 months before the European Court is able to deal with the matter. In the meantime, students plan to carry on distributing information. Union of Students in Ireland Education Office, Martin Whelan, said after the case, 'against all odds we have stopped the march of religious fundamentalism.' Jane Denholm

# SISTERHOOD & SOLIDARITY

## A millstone around the necks of women

**W**OMEN in the North of Ireland face appalling conditions of poverty, unemployment and bad housing, but on top of that, they suffer the effects of unique legislation giving the authorities power to seize what little income they have in order to pay off debts to the State. The origins of the Payment for Debt Act lie in the history of the civil rights movement.

Internment was introduced in August 1971 resulting in the arrest and detention of 432 people who were held in prison camps without being charged or standing trial for any offence.

The response of the nationalist community was to launch a campaign of civil disobedience. Owner occupiers ceased to pay ground rent, self employed people stopped paying income tax. Dog, radio, and television licences were not paid, neither were fines. But by far the biggest impact was made by public sector tenants who withheld rent and stopped paying arrears.

The Northern Ireland government responded on 12 October 1971 with the first reading of the Payments for Debt (Emergency Provisions) Bill. This Act was to stay in force until 'six months after the end of the emergency that had caused its enactment'. The governor of Stormont was given the power to determine when this emergency was over. This power was transferred to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in 1974 and eighteen years later the Payment of Debt Act still remains on the statute book as 'emergency' legislation.

A new report by the Committee on the Administration of Justice, 'Debt: an emergency situation?' looks at the scope and the working of this legislation.

The Payment for Debt Act allows direct deductions from income support to pay for current rent and fuel bills as well as any arrears. Direct deductions can also be made from other benefits such as invalidity benefit, retirement and widows pensions, child benefit, unemployment and sickness benefits.

The Act is used to make direct deductions from people working in local or public authorities. It is also used to withhold other payments to individuals from public bodies: student grants; court awards against government departments; improvement, repair, home loss, disturbance and redecoration grants from the Housing Executive, can all be withheld in part or in whole.

The legislation does not place any limits on the amounts that can be taken from a person's wages or benefits. There is no provision for appeals. No notice has to be given of a decision to deduct money from benefit and no account is taken of people's financial circumstances.

The scope of the Act was extended several times in the 1970s. In contrast the 1980s has seen the transfer of many of the powers of the Act into ordinary legislation. In 1980, legislation was passed to allow deductions to be made directly from supplementary benefits towards fuel consumption, rent and rates arrears. In April 1988 this provision was extended to other social security benefits, although the provisions on the PDA for benefit deductions remain more exten-

sive. The Government has recently widened its powers of direct deductions for the collection of the poll tax.

CAJ pamphlet looks at and rejects the arguments for the retention of the Payment for Debt Act: The Government says that ordinary judicial methods are not adequate to recover public debt and it remains vulnerable to a rent and rate strike. However, a 1985 review of the ordinary judicial powers for the recovery of debt found that in 40 per cent of cases full debt recovery achieved within a year. Partial recovery was obtained in a further 20 per cent of cases. It is interesting to note that the Government declined to use the powers given it under the Payment for Debt Act to take action against those Unionists who refused to pay rates in protest at the Anglo Irish Agreement.

The Government's second argument is that public debt is such a problem in Northern Ireland that it requires special powers to deal



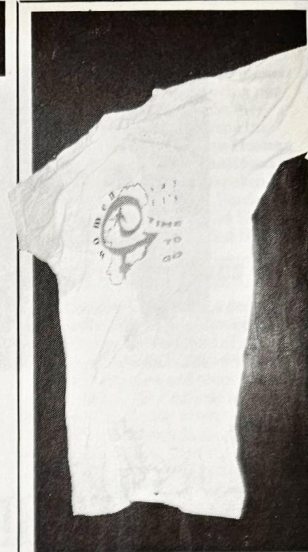
with it. In fact the situation is not much worse than in Britain: rent arrears in the North of Ireland are much less than in many London boroughs. In any case, high rent arrears generally tend to reflect social and economic deprivation which is above average in Northern Ireland.

The CAJ pamphlet argues that the Payment of Debt Act should be repealed: Women's groups in Ireland have been making the same point for many years.

The Act is a massive affront to civil liberties. It was introduced as emergency legislation to combat a rent and rates strike which has now been over for more than twelve years. It is another case of emergency legislation which has become a convenient device to deal with ordinary civil matters. The fact that the state authorities find such powers convenient and have incorporated them into ordinary legislation give further ground for concern. It is time to redouble the call for the immediate repeal of the Payment of Debt Act.

Kate Foley

'Debt: An emergency situation?' is available price £2.00 from CAJ, 45 Donegal St, Belfast BT1 2FG (0232 232 394)



Women's Time To Go still have some of the popular T-shirts left. The design incorporates the logo of Time To Go! with the women's symbol, set against a map of Ireland. The design is printed in purple against a white background. All T-shirts come in fashionable extra large size. If you would like to order a T-shirt send, £6.00 (incl post & packing) Cheques and postal orders made to 'Time To Go!' can be sent to Clare Short MP (TTG), House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1A 0AA.

OVER ONE HUNDRED women from all over Ireland attended the Sinn Fein Women's Department second annual conference in November. The first session looked at repression in Northern Ireland, hearing first hand accounts of both obvious and hidden repression. The second session: 'the politics of profit', looked at the development of Ireland as a pollution restriction and tax haven. Terry Moore of Sinn Fein said: 'Partition has left us with two statelets, neither of which can survive economically in their own rights, and rely on international capital to survive.'

In the afternoon Mairead Keane, Anne Speed and Bernadette McAliskey described Ireland's 'fragmented and divided' women's movement. A session on prisoners looked at the treatment suffered by republican women prisoners in Northern Ireland jails. The final session heard councillors Dodie McGuinness and Lilly Fitzsimmons talk about the difficulties of their political work and called for more women to become political involved.



# NELL McCAFFERTY

Writes in *Everywoman*

**“Ireland is not at all what it seems”**

*“The fact that everyone will know something about you, and the assumption that we are all governed by the same conservative ethos, is a seeming recipe for claustrophobia, repression, oppression and depression. The few Irish people who are Protestant, Jewish, agnostic, atheist or lapsed find themselves in the same stew.”*

*“The war in Britain’s last remaining colony, Northern Ireland ... paradoxically poses the only hope we have of a secular, multi-denominational nation.”*

Nell McCafferty, the writer with “the softest heart and most savage intellect in Ireland.”: for the latest on Ireland, North and South of the border, follow her new monthly column in *Everywoman*.

## Everywoman

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# CAMPAIGN

## BIRMINGHAM SIX

Exposure of fabrication of evidence by the **West Midlands Serious Crime Squad** has failed to secure an enquiry into the **Birmingham Six** case, although the Home Secretary has admitted that several of the officers responsible for interrogating the Six are implicated in the scandal. The prisoners have consistently maintained that their false confessions were obtained through beatings and threats.

The Birmingham Six campaign has launched a **petition** calling for an immediate independent public enquiry into the conduct of the Serious Crimes Squad and for all cases in which the disciplined officers were involved, including that of the Birmingham Six, to be re-opened. Copies of the petition are available from Birmingham Trades Council, 7 Frederick Street, Birmingham B1 3HE.

Following the release of the **Guildford Four**, activists should take advantage of the favourable atmosphere to mobilise around the campaign for the release of the Birmingham Six.

- Collect money at meetings and social events and send it to the campaign.
  - Take a resolution to your next ward, constituency or branch meeting calling on the Home Secretary to release the Six, and collect money at each meeting until they are released.
  - Write to the Home Secretary and the local media expressing your support.
  - Pressurise your local MP, irrespective of their party, to actively support the campaign.
  - Arrange pickets of courts and police stations to raise awareness, collecting money and signatures.
  - Approach local church and community leaders and lobby places of worship.
  - Picket visits by any government member irrespective of their position.
  - Pressurise the Shadow Home Secretary, Roy Hattersley, to call for the prisoners' immediate release.
  - Take the campaign to Christmas shoppers, reminding them that not all families will be together during the festivities.
  - Organise media coverage of everything you do.
- Your support is vital. If this opportunity is not seized, the Birmingham Six will have to wait several years before their next chance, in the **European Court**.

## BROADCASTING BAN

The first anniversary of the imposition of the broadcasting ban fell on 19 October, and was marked by the presentation of a petition organised by the **Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom** at Downing Street. At an NUJ rally at the Dominion Theatre a year of action was launched which will seek to raise public awareness of the issue. Details and publicity material are available from Acorn House, 314 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP (Phone 01 278 7916)

## LAWYERS

An **international group of lawyers** are calling for a full public judicial inquiry into the background of remarks

made by former Home Office Minister, **Douglas Hogg** which implied prominent Northern Ireland lawyers defending nationalists had IRA sympathies. His remarks were widely thought to have led directly to the murder of solicitor **Pat Finucane** by loyalist paramilitaries.

The **National Council for Civil Liberties**, the **International Association of Democratic Lawyers** and the **Paris Bar** were all represented in the team drawing up a report on conditions under which members of the legal profession work in the North.

SDLP councillor **Alban Maginness** described an 'incredible anxiety and tension amongst the legal profession'. Hogg's remarks created 'a widespread degree of alarm which still exists today'.

## TRADE UNION CONGRESS

The annual **Trade Union Congress** meeting in Blackpool, overwhelmingly endorsed a **NALGO** moved resolution condemning the **Prevention of Terrorism Act** as a violation of civil liberties. In the composite motion, Congress noted that 'for twenty years, the presence of large numbers of British soldiers has not brought an end to sectarian violence, government repression and human suffering in Northern Ireland.'

'...Congress believes that these problems are political rather than military and thus require political solutions...Congress does not believe that increased military activity, tighter security, special judicial procedures or the removal of civil liberties offer any hope of stabilising a just and peaceful society for the people of Northern Ireland.'

NUJ deputy general secretary **Jake Ecclestone** spoke to the section of the resolution calling for the withdrawal of the broadcasting ban on the grounds that 'restrictions on freedom of speech limit understanding of the problems of Northern Ireland, are an interference by the government in the statutory duties of broadcasters and are in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights.'

At a fringe meeting organised by NALGO in support of the resolution, union president, **Rita Donaghy** was joined by NUPE's Northern Ireland officer, **Inez McCormack** and **Clare Short MP** who spoke on the wider implications of civil liberties issues and the importance of the Time To Go! in highlighting the call for British withdrawal from Ireland.

## PARTY CONFERENCE

Press coverage of the **Irish debate** at Labour Party conference was dominated by the party leadership's denunciation of LCI's invitation to Sinn Fein leader, **Gerry Adams** to address its Monday night rally against the broadcasting ban.

On the Wednesday of conference, 500 delegates, observers and local students attended an LCI sponsored 'Time To Go! Irish night' held in the Top Rank Suite with the **Oyster Band**, **John Maloney**, **Staffs Miners' Wives Choir** and many 'walk-on speakers'.

On the conference floor, 600,000

votes were cast in support of a **composite resolution** calling for British withdrawal from Ireland within the lifetime of one parliament. This vote reflects the **success** of Time To Go! in the unions and illustrates the maintenance of **support** for British withdrawal in the constituency parties.

The reasoned argument of mover **Jayne Hawley** from Sheffield Hillsborough CLP contrasted sharply with a clumsy, ill-timed and ill-thought out speech by party spokesperson **Kevin McNamara** who started with tabloid-style bloodbath hysteria and ended with an abusive attack on defeated NEC candidate Ken Livingstone which provoked barracking from throughout the hall.

A Parliamentary Labour Party fringe event at the opening of conference reflected the demise of front bench policy initiative. Neither billed speakers, **Dick Spring** nor **John Hume** showed up, leaving **Kevin McNamara** alone to rail against **Gerry Adams** and deal with his now-traditional audience of **hecklers** from the loyalist Campaign for Labour Representation.

## LCI YOUTH

The first **Students Say TTG!** conference will be held on November 12 at **Sheffield University**. Aside from presentations by Time To Go! initiator, **Clare Short MP** and the Women's wing of TTG!, there will be a host of workshops looking at the Birmingham Six case, censorship, strip searching and recent allegations of collusion between security forces and paramilitaries. Delegation fees have been kept to a minimum and publicity material is available from Simon Jennings at NUS (Phone 01 272 8900)

The LCI's youth officer, **Douglas Jewell** is updating the mailing list and would like to hear from anyone who is not receiving youth mailings; please keep him informed of changes of address. The Youth trade union officer, **Jennifer McCarey**, is compiling a list of all youth members who are in a union. Please send details c/o Heather Mitchel, 64 Elderslie St, Glasgow.

## GIBRALTAR

Relatives of the three IRA members shot dead in **Gibraltar** are petitioning the Irish government to investigate the

truth surrounding the killings. Revelations by the Spanish police have shown the version of events given by the British forces witnesses at the inquest to be false, and the case is being pursued by the relatives because they believe the killings contravene the **European Convention on Human Rights**. **Amnesty International** has been one of the groups outspoken in its criticism of the shootings. Further details from Mary Savage, 14 Downfine Gardens, Turf Lodge, Belfast BT11.

## LCI CONFERENCE

The **Labour Committee on Ireland's** 1990 annual conference will be held over the week end of 24/25 February. Submissions to the conference discussion and plans to relaunch the LCI next year are being published in the members' newsletter. Deadlines for resolutions and nominations will be sent out at the same time. There is still plenty of time to join, but there is a cut off date if you wish to vote. If you are a member or affiliate, but are not receiving your mailings make sure the membership secretary has your correct address by sending it to the box number.

## WANTED!

Labour and Ireland's **editorial board** is looking for another volunteer to take on the role of **advertising manager**. The work can be done from home and will require commitment for a minimum of two evenings a month. Keeping in touch with publishers and other potential advertisers can be **demanding**, but also **extremely interesting**. We are looking for a well organised person and previous experience is not essential. If you are interested or would like more information, please telephone Martin Collins on 01 249 3626.

With sadness we learnt recently of the death of **Christoir Mac Craith**. The mainstay of **Labour and Ireland** sales in the **East Midlands**, Chris could be seen at **Miners' galas** in Mansfield with the Irish Post over one arm and Labour and Ireland over the other. He will be greatly missed in the labour movement and Irish community.

# MEMBERSHIP

## Join Labour's withdrawal movement

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Note: Membership of Labour Women for Ireland automatically entitles you to LCI membership with no extra fee.

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# LETTERS



We like your letters, but prefer them short!  
**LABOUR and IRELAND,**  
LCI BM Box 5355,  
London, WC1N 3XX

## IMPACT

Your June editorial (L&I 26) really does overstate the impact of Time To Go! A widespread sentiment for British withdrawal does exist, and has done for many years; but it does not reflect either a 'movement' or a positive feeling of withdrawal can be accomplished. Entrenched chauvinism means that the task of changing labour movement policies or building the withdrawal movement should not be oversimplified.

A campaign with strong roots cannot be built by deliberately evading and fudging every key question emerging from Ireland. How to get the troops out? In whose interests? When?

Failure to answer these questions has led the TTG Charter to disgracefully pander to chauvinism (eg 'huge drain on resources' or 'Britain... part of the problem' etc).

The Labour Committee on Ireland has uncritically followed this path and even refused to abide by its AGM decision to organise an anti imperialist contingent on the 12 August march. Such actions are vital in cutting against the notion that it is in Britain's 'national' interest to pull the troops out or even that it can be done at her leisure.

Socialists should be giving a clear lead in building a Troops Out campaign... but how? Firstly by explaining the central lesson of the last twenty years — that Britain will not peacefully quit Ireland, but will need to be forced out. Our role in Britain is to argue for working class action to hasten that end — action against media censorship, against transport of military supplies etc.

Labour and Ireland creates the illusion that a Labour government committed to withdrawal would do so. Only a working class action campaign could hold such a government to account.

Secondly, by explaining that withdrawal would be in the interests of Ireland's democratic right to determine the six counties and in the interests of British workers. There is no British 'national' interest — withdrawal would be a blow against the British ruling class in favour of British workers. That is why it is so important to fight chauvinism.

How long do we wait? For good old British parliamentary procedure to run its course, or does the immediate relief of repression on Catholic areas demand we act now and say *it's time to go now!*

Bernie McAdam, Workers Power

## CONTRADICTORY

The June editorial (L&I 25) contradicted the theme of the issue. While the front cover promoted the question 'HOW?'; your 'comment' said that 'qualifying the kind a withdrawal we advocate is simply not necessary'.

In fact such qualification is essential. Withdrawal by Britain from its colonies has varied considerably over the extent to which the British establishment could divide and destabilise its former colonies, leaving them open for neo-colonial exploitation.

Whatever British government is forced to withdraw from Ireland, its policy options should be restricted by public opinion, ie electoral considerations, to a process of disengagement that enables the various representatives of the Irish people to decide the form of transfer of sovereignty of the six counties.

To mobilise a mass movement for withdrawal that can restrict the establishment's room to

manoeuvre requires that the main demand unites all who desire British withdrawal for whatever reasons and also enables anti-imperialists to maintain the initiative. To keep the kinds of withdrawal that are in the interests of the Irish and British peoples ie we must answer the question 'How?'.

The demand for British withdrawal as opposed to 'Troops Out', meets both these criteria. This should be our main demand supplemented by promotion of the progressive means by which withdrawal can be achieved.

Brett Kibble, Glasgow

## ANGER

I am writing in anger to illustrate the type of behaviour that our communities are being subjected to by the forces we are expected to accept as representatives of 'law and order'.

At 10.00pm on 26 May, Anne McNally was at home in Moyard watching television with her husband when a neighbour banged on the front door shouting that the soldiers were beating her sixteen year-old son, Jim. They were all around him, kicking and punching. Anne protested that her son was doing nothing, but the next thing she knew, she had been hit at point blank range in the left breast by a plastic bullet sustaining horrific bruising. Her son required stitches for head injuries. Later the same night in Ballymurphy, Patrick Doherty was chatting with friends while waiting outside a Chinese carry out. He was suddenly shot in the face with a plastic bullet and later needed seventy stitches. Witnesses say this attack by passing Royal Anglian soldiers was totally unprovoked.

As for the pat response 'make an official complaint and it will be investigated' — when Patrick was released from hospital he

did report the incident to police at the Royal Barnsley RUC station. As he was leaving he was arrested 'for questioning'.

Both Anne McNally and the Doherty family are personal friends of mine and I can vouch for them as people of the highest calibre. Neither were involved in disturbances when the murderous attacks on them took place.

It is laughable to us here when we hear of a 'reformed' RUC and 'impartial' security forces. Reality is a combination of sectarian bigots and racist thugs patrolling our streets with a licence to do what they please.

In the past we requested a visit from members of the Anglo Irish Secretariat when homes in this area were being wantonly destroyed under the guise of arms raids. On that occasion we heard no more and nobody came. Once again we have asked for representatives of the Secretariat or members of the Irish government to come and visit, to see for themselves and talk to victims and witnesses of these ongoing violent assaults against the civilian population.  
Ciaran De Baroid, West Belfast

## INTERESTING

Working on the history of the Hayes Labour Party, I came across an interesting speech by Miss Cobden, daughter of the great free trader and co-founder of the Anti Corn Law League, Richard Cobden.

Speaking to the inaugural meeting of Uxbridge Liberal Women, she reported a visit to Ireland 'in the late stirring times (which had) left very distinct impressions of misery upon her mind'. In July 1887, Miss Cobden had participated in a deputation conveying 'the first message of sympathy from English to Irish women'. It was the first event of its kind and the message presented to Dublin's Lady Mayoress was signed by nearly 50,000 sympathisers.

Cobden reported that while she was in Ireland, 'the fact of persons being English marked them as objects of suspicion to be tracked by the police'.

'The chief residences of the Constabulary were very numerous all over the place and these buildings were fitted up in a manner which fully illustrated the system of tyranny that was being practised. Windows of these houses had iron shutters in which were small holes through which, from the inside, they could fire upon the people'.

She also noted that 'flourishing districts had been de-populated, towns had been desolated. Trades one after the other had been crippled and crushed by English self interest. Local justice had been twisted and perverted so as to be scarcely recognisable'.

Cllr Michael Walker, Hillingdon



• Turkish workers assemble for 12 August march

# Time To Go! marches on

**I**N ONE YEAR, Time To Go! has captured the imagination of a new generation of campaigners and has significantly broadened support for British withdrawal from Ireland. By its approach of combining an argument for the principle of disengagement with an open-ended commitment to discuss 'how?', Time To Go! has enabled more hesitant supporters to become actively involved and greatly increased the movement's accessibility.

The feeling at the end of the year is very much one of unfinished business. Much of the potential of the campaign, represented by broad sponsorship for the Charter has still to be translated into practical activity. Many of the successful meetings and rallies have now to be followed up to create organising centres and focal points around which a movement of protest can be turned into a movement for change.

The initial list of one hundred Charter sponsors gave a clear message about the campaign. It was reaching out to people from a wide range of political backgrounds and sought to involve concerned people from all walks of life.

On the political side, most parties of the left were involved to a greater or lesser extent in the year's activities, and a hesitant start has been made on working with supporters in the Liberal Democrat and Green parties. In the future, the campaign will build links with Scottish and Welsh nationalists.

One of the most notable successes of Time To Go! has been its appeal to women and young people through the women's and student movement. The campaign has made itself open to groups and individuals who have previously felt excluded from the struggle for Irish re-unification by the leftism and shallow analysis of some of the groups involved.

Women say Time To Go!, launched with a fundraising concert by Michelle Shocked in the spring, has won a high profile in the campaign and its success has been reflected in a much higher proportion of women at Time To Go! events compared with previous Irish solidarity events which have been seen as macho and male-dominated. The broad appeal of the campaign ensured that National Labour Women's Conference — now strengthened by a much stronger input from trade union women — was won to re-affirm its support for withdrawal and affiliate to Time To Go!

Student campaigners have been able to build on, and consolidate the change in the policy on Ireland by the National Union of Students in 1986 from 'peace, jobs and progress' to an unequivocal position supporting the right of the Irish people to

determine their own destiny. Support for Time To Go! has become a source of unity for the overwhelming majority of student pressure groups, allowing many local students' unions to become involved and keeping the national executive engaged even at a time when it is under considerable attack from the Government. Several student events are being planned for the coming year.

Support within the Irish community has been enhanced by the backing of the traditionally non-political Federation of Irish Societies and the Gaelic Athletic Association.

There have been all too few links with the Black community so far. Although some organisations, such as the Indian Workers Association, Labour Party Black Sections and Black Action have been involved for some time, much closer co-operation is needed. It will be important for the future of Time To Go! that there is a backbone of autonomous organisation running through its activity.

Much further progress can be made in the cultural field: Time To Go! should be involving people from the whole range of creative and performing arts. Film director, Ken Loach contributed a 15 minute presentation of the aims of Time To Go! which was broadcast on BBC 2 in the spring. The art world is well represented in the list of Charter signatories and the by far the most successful fundraiser of the year was an auction of works of art donated by artists from all over the world.

The presence of ex-British soldiers at Time To Go! events attracted con-

siderable attention and provoked an interesting media angle. By discussing the motivation and feelings of the British troops on the ground, a hitherto little known aspect of the conflict has been opened up for public debate.

The most significant progress for the withdrawal movement has been made in the trade unions. Traditionally, the issue of Ireland has been kept out of union business, yet Time To Go! has begun to turn that around. Although there is still a reluctance to allow resolutions to go full distance onto conference agenda papers, the campaign promoted rallies and meetings at twelve of the most important union congresses.

The National Union of Miners discussed Ireland for the first time ever and adopted a sympathetic position on a number of civil liberties issues. The Bakers Union executive have formally affiliated to the campaign and will be discussing the issues at 1990 conference. The local government workers' union, NALGO decided at its conference to support the campaign and promoted on its behalf a fringe meeting on Northern Ireland at Trades Union Congress, supporting a civil liberties motion jointly with the journalists union, NUJ which commits the TUC to oppose both the broadcasting ban and the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The support already achieved means that British withdrawal from Ireland can be presented in the labour movement as a decidedly less

marginal issue in the coming year. Broad Left-type pressure groups will be lobbied to ensure that backing for policy resolutions is won at an early stage and organisation for fringe meetings placed in the mainstream of the unions' debates.

The message for the Labour Party activists should be clear: where Time To Go! has been placed at the centre of our work, dramatic progress has been made. More than half of the 600,000 votes for British withdrawal from Ireland registered at this year's Party conference, came from the constituencies. Yet this support has yet to be organised either through active involvement in pressure groups like LCI, or through affiliation to Time To Go! There is a new spirit of unity around TTG! which involves broader sections of the Party and can be brought together.

Those who have tried to undermine the Time To Go! campaign have demonstrably failed in their attempts to build a substantial withdrawal movement in Britain. By harnessing new forces, Time To Go! offers the first realistic opportunity of building a movement sufficiently powerful to force the issue of Ireland into the centre stage of British politics.

The Time To Go! Show in June was only a start in the necessary raising of the intellectual level of debate about British withdrawal from Ireland beyond narrow sloganising. It is the case, that whilst the principle of British withdrawal from Ireland represents more than the sum of civil liberties issues arising from Irish partition and British occupation of the North; there is an urgent need for this question to be placed firmly in the centre of the human rights agenda in this country.

By engaging in an international debate, it will become clear that civil liberties abuses in both Britain and Ireland are inter-connected with a monstrous denial of a fundamental human right — that of the rights of nations to self-determination: a right enshrined in United Nations charters and taken for granted in the context of international concern with decolonisation.

Such a discussion means seriously coming to grips with the revisionist 'two nations' school of Irish history gaining currency from advocates as diverse as Garret FitzGerald and the Workers' Party. No doubt, such an approach will offend those sections of the British left currently using the demand for self-determination as an ideological label badge to justify their abstention from Time To Go!

In this country it will take popular support of historic proportions to get Britain out of Ireland. Supporting British withdrawal is the concrete expression of supporting the right of the Irish to self determination. Time To Go! is the chance we need. ●

Richard Vize





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