

TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND

**TROOPS OUT
NOW**

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

Paper of the Troops Out Movement 30p

Vol.9, No.4, February 1986

The true face of the Ulster Defence Regiment



PLUS -

- THE MEANING OF THE BY-ELECTIONS
- STRIP SEARCHING • BLOODY SUNDAY
- HUNGER STRIKE SETTLEMENT
- CONSPIRACY TRIAL • EXTRADITION

Bloody Sunday

Editorial

'Somebody said 'Jesus, there's a young fellow shot'. It was young Gilmore. In the panic I ran. Pat Campbell said 'I'm shot' and so I got hold of him. Two young fellows caught a hold of him too. As I turned round somebody shouted my name. I don't know who it was. That's when I got hit.'

(Danny McGowan, who was shot in the leg and permanently disabled)

That was Bloody Sunday, Derry, January 30th 1972. 15,000 people were attending a civil rights demonstration calling for the ending of internment. Although the march was illegal – as all marches then were – it was peaceful and orderly. At the edge of the Bogside the Parachute Regiment had put up barricades to halt the march: it looked like the normal ending of a civil rights march – a few stones, a few arrests, dispersal. Instead, the Paras opened fire with live rounds.

The terror and panic of what followed still lives in the hearts of those who ran screaming for cover, unable to believe what was happening to them.

Thirteen people were killed on that day. One more died later. Twenty-nine were seriously injured – some of whom, like Danny McGowan, have been unable to work as a result.

That the shooting to kill into a mass of people was deliberate emerged much later. At the time it was covered up; the commanding officer received an OBE; and no soldier was ever charged with murder. The aims probably were to draw out the IRA into an open confrontation, and to terrorise mass protest off the streets.

In the first aim, Bloody Sunday failed completely (in fact, six months later, the British Government met with Provo leaders for secret talks in Chelsea). In the second aim there was a temporary success: people were terrified and forced into passivity; this in turn affected the republican military campaign and drove it into an impasse. But it was only temporary: by the end of the seventies there was again mass actions and by 1981 the hunger strikes of prisoners in Long Kesh were supported by the largest protests ever mounted by the nationalist communities.

THE NEW PHONE NUMBER OF
THE TOM NATIONAL OFFICE:
01-609 1743

The mass opposition to British terror and British rule is still there today.

MEANS AND ENDS – THE BIG LIE

Yet British politicians have not learnt. Surely, as we go into 1986, seventeen years are long enough to prove the bankruptcy of repression.

Evidently not. The Government – and indeed the Opposition – still talk about a solution in terms of 'greater security' and 'isolating the gunmen' (these apparently being the primary goals of November's Anglo-Irish Agreement). In this they are being dishonest to us. What about the 'gunmen' of Bloody Sunday? What about plastic bullet terror? What about the unending degradation of the constant strip searching of women prisoners? What about the vile abuse and physical assaults which are a normal feature of Ulster Defence Regiment checkpoints? What about the sham trials? What about the discrimination?

In fact the British state uses any means at its disposal, as circumstances demand. For example, in the last twelve months – from February 1985 to the end of this January – no-one in the North was killed by the Army or RUC (police); in the previous four years statistics show there was a clear policy to shoot dead suspected IRA members (and petty criminals and people who happened to be on the spot). Shoot to kill is a policy that can be turned off and turned on: last year it was turned off so as not to endanger the Anglo-Irish Agreement. In the next twelve months it could be turned on again in the interests of 'greater security' and to calm down the rebellious unionists.

Its own use of violence gives the lie to the British Government's claim that its policies in Ireland are designed to end violence. It is not the *methods* of the IRA that it really objects to – but their *goal*, and the goal of the nationalist people: self determination for Ireland.

In recent parliamentary debates unionist politicians and a minority of Conservatives have been honest about this; and a minority of Labour MPs have also been honest, supporting that goal. But for the rest, constructive advance has the door slammed in its face by the 'rooting out the terrorist' excuse for state terrorism.

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The Troops Out Movement



The Troops Out Movement is a movement in England, Scotland and Wales made up of people who believe that the cause of the 'troubles' in the north of Ireland is the continuing British presence there, both military and political. We believe that British troops are in Ireland not as a peacekeeping force, but in order to maintain British rule, and that their presence is the most serious obstacle to any progress towards peace. For over 15 years the troops have been occupying a part of Ireland, coercing and oppressing the nationalist people, maintaining the division of Ireland and ensuring that its people cannot unite to determine their own future.

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

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

TROOPS OUT

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

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

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Send to Box 10, 2a St Pauls Road,
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Mrs Nelly McCaughey giving evidence on what her daughter Brieghe Ann suffered in Armagh Prison. (Photo AP/RN)



Strip Search Tribunal

In Dublin on December 7th, eleven prominent people gathered to hear the evidence presented to a Tribunal on Strip-Searching in Armagh Jail.

The evidence presented included a medical submission read on behalf of psychiatrist Dr Ivor Browne, a legal case by Mary McAleese, lecturer at Trinity College Dublin and a political submission by Michael Farrell, author of *Northern Ireland - The Orange State*.

Other submissions included a presentation of the figures on strip-searching including a comparison with the figures for England and Scotland by the Irish Information Partnership. This last has recently been published by the IIP and points out that the figure for England is significantly lower than for N. Ireland and that the figure for Scotland, while slightly higher, should be much more so considering the higher turnover of prisoners in Scotland, if there was equality of treatment.

There were also submissions by ex-prisoners themselves. It was difficult to countenance the fact that such young women had spent such long terms in prison. Their submissions left no-one in any doubt as to the horror with which the women in Armagh face each strip-search nor as to the harm it does. Relatives of prisoners also spoke and one mother was so upset as to be completely unable to say more than a few sentences. The

Irish Council for the Status of Women and the Women Against Strip-Searches Group also made submissions.

The Tribunal itself was opened by Sean MacBride (founder of Amnesty International) and the judges included Irish MEP, Niall Andrews; British MEPs Christine Crawley and Michael Hindley; Matt Merrigan and Greg Maxwell of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions; Mamo MacDonald representing rural women; John Skelly TD; Nan Joyce, Travellers Rights Campaigner; Fr Dennis Farrell; Tim Pat Coogan, editor of the *Irish Press*; and Senator Flor O'Mahoney. The Chair of the judges Sylvia Meehan (head of the Republic's Equal Opportunities Committee) summed up their findings as follows:

- It is the judges' verdict that there is no security basis for strip-searching.
- Strip-searching contributes further to the alienation of nationalists in the North.
- It is degrading.
- It happens at a greater volume than similar practices in male prisons.

The Tribunal will produce a more detailed report of its findings but in the meantime it called on the Anglo-Irish Conference to put strip-searching on its agenda as a matter of priority.

The organisers plan to publish the submissions in the near future along with the detailed findings of the judges.

Irish language cuts & comebacks

BBC's Radio Ulster has cut Irish language broadcasting by 75% from its previous one hour per week to 15 minutes. The cuts made last December have provoked an immediate response from Méan - the Irish language pressure group, who have written to all the representatives of Belfast City Council requesting them to call an emergency meeting to discuss neglect of the language.

Méan chairperson, Gearoid O Caireallain said, "This is a complete reversal of the commitments the BBC gave our committee."

According to Méan, this is only one of the blows Irish culture has suffered in the North from the BBC, the Arts Council and the Department of Economic Development. "The Arts Council has revealed that not one penny of their £2.5 million budget was spent on the Irish language. This is in stark contrast to the provision of funds for the indigenous languages in Wales and Scotland," said O Caireallain. "Meanwhile, the Department of Economic Development has informed the Irish newspaper, *Lá*, that the Action Community Employment grants it had been receiving would be axed in January 1986."

However, the establishment of the first-ever Irish radio station, Radio Feirste, provides a much needed service for the Irish-speaking community; while further exposing the lack of Gaillige provided by the

major broadcasting authorities.

Radio Feirste commenced their full-time schedule at 12.01pm on January 1st. They will broadcast a selection of music with some notices, news bulletins and occasional interviews. The station, based at a mini studio in West Belfast is run by language enthusiasts, who for obvious reasons, prefer to remain anonymous.

Although the station is technically illegal, recent relaxation of broadcasting legislation in Britain has led to the establishment of several community stations. If their transmitter was seized, it could be replaced by a portable transmitter which can be operated from a moving car, thereby making it almost impossible to trace.

Pressure from Méan, the establishment of Radio Feirste, and constant lobbying from Sinn Féin has resulted in an unprecedented development within the BBC. In a letter to Sinn Féin Cultural Department spokesperson, Mairtin O Muilleoir, the BBC's head of programmes in the six counties, Arwel Ellis Owen, stated that the BBC have decided to employ their first-ever producer for Irish language programming. O Muilleoir commented, "If implemented, the appointment of an Irish language producer could lead to regular radio programmes and the first television programmes in Irish."

Radio Feirste transmits on Medium Wave, 208m, just below Radio Luxembourg.

More troops go in

The British Government recently announced that 550 extra troops were being sent to the north of Ireland. This is the first time since 1981 that the garrison strength has been increased and is a direct result of recent IRA activities.

Throughout December a series of mortar bomb attacks have severely damaged several RUC/British bases in the border areas. Combined with the IRA strategy of preventing repairs to such bases by threatening any local contractors willing to carry out such work, this has had a marked effect on British ability to patrol and control

areas of the countryside. The additional troops are to protect British Army engineers, who have begun construction work on the damaged bases.

Since 1974, British policy has been to replace British troops in Ireland with the 'local' forces; the UDR and RUC. This has reduced opposition to the war in Britain and helped to present the conflict as sectarian. The reversal of this policy, even if it proves to be only temporary, clearly indicates the continuing military capacity of the IRA, despite British claims to the contrary.

NEWS FROM IRELAND

Sinn Fein arrests Show Trials

A political attack

18 Sinn Fein members were arrested in dawn raids on December 28th last year. Seen in the light of the Anglo-Irish Summit and the January by-elections, this was a clear political attack on the organisation of Sinn Fein by the British Government.

Among those held was the elected Assembly member for Derry, Martin McGuinness, as were seven Councillors from Craigavon, Derry, Dungannon and Lurgan. Also arrested was Derry Sinn Fein organiser Gerry O'Hara. Apart from the 18 arrests, many other Sinn Fein councillors and members were simultaneously raided and searched by the RUC who concentrated on scrutinising Sinn Fein booklets, electoral registers and telephone numbers. The RUC also used Section 13 of the Emergency Provisions Act to place a number of people under house arrest.

In Strabane, Sinn Fein activist Margaret Boyle was taken from her home leaving her three young sons alone in the house. Fermanagh activist Ann MacDonald, who only recently was detained for two three-day detention periods, was again arrested, this time for seven days. She was hit around the head and in the stomach during interrogation. Also various attempts were made to sexually degrade her.

The political motivation behind the arrests was clearly indicated by the lack of

evidence presented by the RUC. Despite claiming that the detainees were being interrogated in "connection with serious crime", only one man was charged following the arrests. Dungannon Sinn Fein Councillor Seamus Cassidy was charged with "possession of an explosive substance". This impressive sounding charge was quickly misrepresented by the media, but it amounted to no more than a harmless UDR flare which Cassidy had acquired as a souvenir several years ago.

Derry Councillor Hugh Brady was questioned closely concerning his whereabouts on November 20th and 21st. The RUC must have been well aware however that Brady had been held in Castlereagh Interrogation Centre on these dates.

The concentration of arrests on people central to the Sinn Fein electoral organisation obviously indicates an attempt to disrupt their work of the by-elections of January 23rd. However, the Sinn Fein leadership has predicted such a crackdown since the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the primary aim of which is to minimise support for the Republican Movement. This is obviously to be achieved not only by the subtle carrot of limited reform within the 6 county state but also by the obvious stick of old-fashioned repression.

COST OF BRITAIN'S OCCUPATION

The number of people killed last year as a result of Britain's continued occupation of the North of Ireland was the lowest since 1970. Of the 56 people killed, 30 were members of the security forces (RUC, UDR, British army), 22 civilians and four members of the IRA. The RUC suffered one of its worst years: 43 deaths were claimed by the IRA. The army killed three members of the IRA (the fourth IRA member was killed in a premature explosion); the UDR and RUC killed two car thieves.

Tom King the Northern Ireland Secretary announced an extra £70 million over the next three years towards 'law and order' in the North. He made the following allocation:

1986-87 - £4,520 million
1987-88 - £4,680 million
1988-89 - £4,810 million

Harry Kirkpatrick the latest 'supergrass' has served his purpose. Another 27 nationalists are now into their second month of sentences ranging from eight years to life imprisonment. Some had already spent three years in jail just waiting for a trial.

Judge Carswell sitting alone in his juryless Diplock court meted out these savage sentences following an incredible piece of illogical reasoning. He described Kirkpatrick as 'a man of bad character and low moral standards' whose stated motives were 'a series of lies and evasions' and entirely 'selfish'. It was revealed in court that Kirkpatrick had committed perjury in two previous trials and had even perjured himself in front of Carswell. He had told lies and deliberately misled the court for days while in the witness box.

It was therefore all the more amazing that Carswell swept these major considerations aside and chose rather to concentrate on Kirkpatrick's demeanour while giving evidence. In praising his steadfastness under cross examination he congratulated him on his 'cool, composed and courteous' presentation of evidence. Hardly surprising of someone who had been schooled for three years by his RUC minders. When any crack appeared in the prosecution evidence an adjournment was immediately granted to iron out discrepancies. Senator Michael Higgins of the Irish Republic's Labour Party visited the trial: "watching Kirkpatrick at fairly close range, it seemed to me there was a very repetitive and rehearsed character to the manner in which he presented evidence. In fact he was the most rehearsed witness I ever saw in court."

The trial itself which lasted 102 days had not been without incident. Violence broke out regularly in the courtroom; it was not uncommon for defendants to appear in the dock with bandaged heads and other visible signs of injury. Defending solicitors walked out en masse on one occasion in protest at the way the trial was being conducted.

'The public finds it hard to understand why a man shown in court to be a liar can still be considered a credible enough witness to allow for convictions on the basis of his evidence alone.' Peter Archer, Labour Party spokesperson on N. Ireland.

The entire trial was conducted in a totally oppressive atmosphere, with the defendants surrounded by large numbers of warders and police.

The conclusion of this trial may yet herald the end of the 'supergrass' system in the North of Ireland in its present form. To date Angela Whoriskey is the only 'supergrass' who remains in the sidings. In addition to the mounting voices of protest from lawyers, politicians and pressure groups, the unpredictability of the 'supergrasses' themselves has been a significant factor in their decline. A number have retracted before ever getting to court while others have reduced the trials to such a state of farce that the judges have had little alternative but to throw the cases out.

The courts in general, and judges in particular, in colluding with the security forces have relinquished their so called independence and have done much to smash the belief that British justice is fair. They have merely underwritten the conveyor belt system of justice - arrest, detention, prosecution and sentence. The words of Seamus Mallon echo the sentiments of many, 'this preposterous warping of judicial process must not be allowed to continue'.

HARRY'S DEAL

What of Harry Kirkpatrick? No deal was made public in court. He himself is serving five life sentences imposed in 1983. The judge did not lay down a recommended term for the life sentences, so he can be freed at any time. Kirkpatrick has said to his family that he only expects to serve four years.

NEWS FROM IRELAND

No justice in these courts

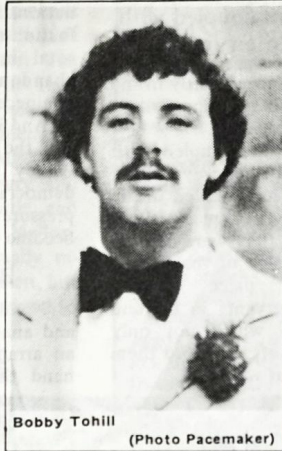
Hunger strikers win assurances

Bobby Tohill, one of those convicted on Kirkpatrick's evidence, started a hunger strike on December 19th, hours after being sentenced. He was joined a week later by Gerard Steenson and then Thomas Power. They demanded:

- an end to the 'supergrass' system;
- an early date for their appeals;
- an independent review of other cases based on accomplice evidence.

On January 6th Tohill, closely followed by Steenson and Power, ended his hunger strike in the firm belief that the demands would be met. A spokesperson for the Relatives for Justice Group said, *'The former hunger strikers stress that they take this action in good faith in the belief that the campaign will continue and the politicians and clergy who have promised change will ensure the implementation of what the prisoners are seeking.'*

It is no surprise that the frustration of the prisoners convicted under these farcical conditions should manifest itself in such drastic action. The case of Thomas Power underlines this. First arrested in February 1982 on the word of two 'super-



Bobby Tohill (Photo Pacemaker)

grasses' who retracted a month later, he was immediately rearrested on the word of two more, one of whom retracted. The other, Jackie Grimley, was so discredited when the case came to court that the trial ended in total disarray with all defendants being acquitted. No freedom for Power; Kirkpatrick was produced as a fifth 'supergrass'; thus Power has lingered in jail on the word of five different informers.

Four years in prison on remand, followed by a court

imposed life sentence on the basis of a 'show trial' inevitably led to this form of protest.

POLITICAL REACTION

The effect of the hunger strike on politicians representing different interests was immediate. Coming at such an early stage after the signing of the Anglo/Irish deal both governments were in a potentially embarrassing position.

The government of the Republic had to react positively as the use of 'supergrasses' has been one of the issues quoted as leading to 'nationalist alienation'. Peter Barry, the Irish Republic's Foreign Minister, called a meeting with Tom King, the Northern Ireland Secretary, expressing disquiet at these type of trials and the role of Diplock courts. The British government clearly wanted to avoid being plunged into handling a hunger strike, which had received such widespread support, just when its hands were full trying to placate the Unionists.

With the elections, forced by the Unionist MPs resignation, looming this was also an area which the Social Demo-

"My husband could rot in jail for 2½ years waiting for his appeal the way the Black defendants have. And then he could face the same system and could lose, even though in England, Kirkpatrick's evidence wouldn't be accepted."

— Cathy Tohill

cratic and Labour Party (SDLP) were not slow to exploit. Both John Hume and Seamus Mallon having been at the forefront of much of the publicity surrounding the hungerstrike.

Although the British government stresses that no deal was struck, it is clear that assurances were given. It has been reported that the appeals will be heard by June, a considerable concession viewed in the context of the defendants convicted on the word of Christopher Black who have had to wait 2½ years for their appeal.

The news of the abandonment of the hunger strike brought relief to both the relatives and the community, who have supported the prisoners throughout. But the fight goes on for justice for all those jailed under this system — a bigoted system under which nationalists are jailed while loyalists walk free.

OTHER INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Political fugitives fight extradition

The case of the three alleged IRA men arrested in Holland will shed some light on Britain's somewhat murky attitude to extradition.

Nineteenth century law established certain restrictions on extradition which have been accepted ever since as the international norm. In particular the law states: *"A fugitive criminal shall not be surrendered if the offence in respect of which his surrender is demanded is one of a political character"* (Extradition Act 1870).

This international legal principle was made to protect political refugees, to grant them asylum.

Recently, however, Britain — among other countries — has been trying to subvert this principle. Last year there was

an attempt to have the extradition treaty with the USA changed to permit political fugitives in the USA being extradited to Britain and Northern Ireland. This ran into fierce opposition — despite the 'climate' following the Beirut hijacking — and stalled in the Senate. The opposition came both from Latin and South American groupings who saw themselves under threat if the political asylum principle was undermined; and from Irish groupings. They argued that Britain would have to *"clean up their regime"* in the North of Ireland — that the calibre of the North's legal system is just not up to surrendering anyone over to it.

Another attack on political asylum came with the European

Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism 1977, which Britain ratified in 1978. Holland ratified it too.

This Convention disallows the political clause for certain offences: aircraft hijacking; attacks on diplomats; kidnapping or taking hostages; use of bombs, grenades, rockets, automatic firearms, letter and parcel bombs; and attempting or being an accomplice to any such offences. Other serious acts of violence or collective danger may also be put into this 'non political' category at will.

The Convention cropped up a lot around the Anglo-Irish Agreement, with Britain obviously putting pressure on the Irish Republic to ratify it. And yet Britain has not invoked the

Convention in the case of the three Irishmen arrested in Holland. The Convention has turned out not to be a practical enforceable law — it is more in the nature of a preparation for the future. For the Republic of Ireland to sign it at this stage, therefore, would be purely a symbolic act of submission.

Under the long-standing Extradition Act between Britain and Holland, the three men will be able to plead a political motive for their actions and their convictions (it is alleged that two of them are convicted prisoners who escaped from the H Blocks in 1983). The legal process would take at least a year since Dutch law permits an appeal up to the Supreme Court.

What direction for unionists

BILL ROLSTON, writing from Belfast, analyses the unionist response to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The ambiguity of the agreement coupled with the unionists' political bankruptcy and disunity point to an inevitable degeneration into sectarian violence.

By the time this article goes to press, 15 out of the 17 MPs in the Six Counties will know the results of the separate by-elections caused by their collective resignation over the Anglo-Irish Agreement of last November.

The chances are that most, if not all, of them will be re-elected, thus assuring the success of their tactic to use the election as a substitute for a referendum on the Agreement. In short, the electoral result will provide them with the mandate they need to oppose the British government in this matter. But, of course, they already know they have that mandate; an *Irish Times* poll on November 25, for example, showed that 75% of the North's protestants opposed the Agreement.

PURPOSE OF AGREEMENT

Some commentators have expressed surprise at the vehemence of the unionist reaction to a deal which has about as much substance as the fictional emperor's new clothes.

The deal's importance is firstly at the level of ideology; the agreement says so little that it can in fact be made to say whatever is appropriate in the circumstances. Hence its tremendous propaganda value, particularly in the US where the belief that 'something good' is happening can be used to isolate republican support and thus help to bring about in reality what Thatcher, FitzGerald and Reagan could all happily define as 'good', namely, the isolation of republicans within Ireland. This latter objective is the second, but certainly not secondary, purpose of the Agreement.

UNEASY BEDFELLOWS

So, why are the unionists so opposed? — to the point of accusing Thatcher of 'treachery' (Paisley), 'prostitution' (Robinson) and even 'rape' (Rev. William Beattie, DUP). The relationship between the unionists and successive British governments since civil rights has not been an easy one.

The British disarmed the RUC and disbanded the B Specials in 1969, and the unionists responded by rioting and, ironically, killing the first policeman to die in the current struggle.

In 1970 the British government took away the powers of local councils, most of which were unionist, and in 1972 removed the Stormont government itself.

The British initiative of power-sharing in 1974 met with enough unionist opposition to kill the experiment. So, unionists have grown to be suspicious of British

governments, and are consequently in the paradoxical position of opposing Britain in the name of British identity.

This general suspicion, coupled with an Agreement designed to convey as little substance as possible, has resulted in the unionists smelling a rat where one does not exist. In addition, they were deliberately excluded from any of the negotiations which took place between politicians and civil servants in London and Dublin, a move which not only insulted their pride, but convinced them even further that the rat was real.



'Constitutional' unionists storm the gates of the Intergovernmental Conference

(Photo AP/RN)

In such an atmosphere it does little to present rational counter-arguments. Why should Thatcher have done a U-turn on this matter when she has not on any other? One year earlier she rejected the Forum Report out of hand; it is unlikely, therefore, that she would be behind moves to unite Ireland surreptitiously. But, by excluding the unionists, Thatcher has in effect taken a stance of 'Mother Knows Best'. If the spoiled unionist children cannot get it together to deal with FitzGerald in order to isolate the IRA, then she will do it for them. To unionists, used to doing things for themselves, this was the ultimate insult. Their response is clear and simple and brooks no rational argument: 'Ulster Says No'.

DIVIDED GOALS

The problem is that there is little basis for a viable alternative in such a slogan. As the Northern Ireland branch of the Confederation of British Industry informed the unionists in January, the slogan is worse than useless; it is economically suicidal. Investors will not invest in the North until they know what it is the unionists want.

And that is the hard one. William Beattie sees an independent Ulster now as inevitable, while his party leader Paisley

argues: 'I don't see any future for Ulster nationalism'. Harold McCusker leads the faction of the unionist family which sees total integration into Britain and the abandonment of devolutionist aspirations as a necessary price to pay for survival.

And if strategic unity is missing, tactically the unionists are even more unclear. Paisley and Molyneux urge the use of democratic and legal means only. But the pressure is bound to increase as these become quickly exhausted.

BRITISH RESPONSES?

No doubt Thatcher is both surprised and annoyed at the unionist reaction to an arrangement which, if it works, will hand the unionists what they claim to

want. It is unlikely, though, that she has any contingency plans to face up to large-scale unionist rebellion in a way that Wilson did not do in 1974. It is also highly unlikely that she can be pushed into doing a 'General Belgrano' on the unionists, even in a fit of anger.

Yet, if rational argument by herself and assurances such as those by Tom King that the border is here to stay 'into perpetuity' do not work, she has only one of two options — to withdraw from the Agreement unilaterally, or to attempt to speed up the process whereby the Agreement delivers what she wants it to deliver, namely, the isolation of republicanism.

It is probable that even the latter would not please the spoiled unionists, who would want to have achieved that goal by themselves.

Given that, there seems to be only one way forward. Waiting in the wings are the armed Ulster Defence Association and the recently formed Ulster Clubs.

The real possibility is that — when the long marches are over and the Northern Ireland Office ministers are scared to appear in public any more and the MPs have been re-elected, and still Thatcher has not changed her mind — these forces will move to centre stage.

The by-election results

"There is no consent from the majority for this agreement". So said the triumphant Dr Ian Paisley following the re-election of 14 Unionist MPs to Westminster. The by-elections had been forced by the then 15 unionist MPs resigning their seats in protest against the Anglo-Irish agreement. The Official Unionist Party MP, Jim Nicholson, lost his seat in Newry and Armagh to the Social Democratic and Labour Party member, Seamus Mallon. Whether the unionists will actually re-occupy their seats remains to be seen, but questions remain as to the background to these elections.

THE UNIONIST SIDE

Why did the unionist MPs call for the election as a referendum for or against the Anglo-Irish agreement? Apart from the fact that it was already well known that a large majority of the unionist population does oppose it (opinion polls and mass demonstrations in Belfast have underlined that), the electoral tactic was a nonsense. The electorate were not asked to cross a ballot paper saying yes or no to the Agreement, but to put a cross beside a particular candidate standing for a particular party.

The only significant party fighting the by-elections on a pro-Agreement platform was the SDLP. The SDLP is a nationalist party — for which even the most pro-Agreement unionist would not vote anyway. In four constituencies, the unionist parties had to put up a bogus candidate (all four called 'Peter Barry', the name of the Irish Republican Foreign Minister) in order to ensure a by-election took place at all.

On a technical point, the unionists actually lost the referendum, as they called it. The percentage of their votes taken as a percentage of the total electorate — including those who did not vote — fell short of the required amount, as per previous referenda held on the devolution of Scotland and Wales. The unionist vote as a percentage of the N. Ireland electorate (excluding the 2 constituencies where there was no by-election) was only 43.9%.

The 4 marginals

The results for the major parties in the four constituencies contested by the nationalist parties are given below. The figures in brackets are the number of votes cast for the same parties in the 1983 general elections. (NB: The 1983 figures for the unionist parties represent the combined DUP and OUP vote on that occasion. This time the unionist vote was not split in this manner.)

NEWRY & ARMAGH		
Seamus Mallon (SDLP)	22,694	(17,434)
Jim Nicholson (OUP)	20,111	(18,988)
Jim McAllister (SF)	6,609	(9,928)
FERMANAGH AND SOUTH TYRONE		
Ken Maginnis (OUP)	27,857	(28,630)
Owen Carron (SF)	15,278	(20,954)
Austin Currie (SDLP)	12,081	(9,923)
MID ULSTER		
William McCrea (DUP)	23,695	(23,240)
Danny Morrison (SF)	13,998	(16,096)
Adrian Cotton (SDLP)	13,021	(12,044)
SOUTH DOW		
Enoch Powell (OUP)	24,963	(24,436)
Eddie McGrady (SDLP)	23,121	(20,145)
Frank McDowell (SF)	2,936	(4,074)

This only shows that there was an element of a game to the by-elections, with it being unclear which set of Parliamentary rules were being played.

So why did the unionists force these by-elections? On the surface they seem only to have come full circle back to Parliament, minus one of their crew. But behind the Paisley rhetoric a more sinister answer lies. They return to Parliament with 'a mandate' — Ulster says no. Thatcher, playing under different rules, says yes and apparently spurns the democratic will of the electorate. The unionists have now exhausted their democratic avenues, the argument runs: they now have a moral right to resort to other means.

So far the paramilitaries have held their fire, except for one murder. It is to be feared that in the coming months their guns, primed by the politicians, will be used more frequently.

THE NATIONALIST SIDE

In the 4 seats where nationalists are in or near to a majority, there was a genuine contest within the voting constituency. The SDLP are for the Agreement while Sinn Féin are against it.

It was not as clear-cut as that, though. The SDLP represents 'constitutional' politics (in fact impotent in the North), while Sinn Féin supports 'physical force' politics, inasmuch as they uphold the right of the IRA to wage guerilla war. This is where the SDLP is to be criticised from a withdrawal point of view. Their claim to support a united Ireland is not backed up with any strategy. So they sow an illusion which renders people passive and therefore only prolongs the suffering.

Although divided on these issues, nationalists are united in their opposition to unionism which has treated them as second-class citizens whether it be in the matter of political power or of emptying dustbins. Therefore many would in this instance be inclined to vote for whichever candidate was likely to unseat the unionist MP, as happened in Newry and Armagh.

Nationalist attitudes to the Agreement are inevitably more laid back than unionist ones. They do not see the Agreement as any loss, rather more of the same with a possible bonus of some reforms and maybe an all-Ireland dimension.

This is the explanation for the fall in Sinn Féin votes and the rise of the SDLP this time round.

This is not, as many would have us believe, 'a massive defeat' for Sinn Féin, because Sinn Féin measures its growth as a popular, rather than electoral, party — through campaigns and street work for people's needs, and against repression which people suffer at the hands of British civil servants, British soldiers and British controlled police and UDR. Their opposition to the Agreement needs time and exposure to win support.

For the SDLP it is one more MP at Westminster; for them and the British government, a seal of approval for the Agreement. The propaganda: a rejection of violence, a vote against the IRA; constitutional politics work.

Take the above factors into consideration; take the propaganda with a pinch of salt.

Overheard in Parliament (during the debate on the Agreement)

"Stormont did many good things. It preserved law and order in the Province when the Free State, as it then was, was ravaged by revolution. It preserved law and order when the second world war came on. It was in many ways successful; but it, inevitably perhaps, put order ahead of justice."

JULIAN AMERY, Conservative

"I confess that I have always found the Irish, all of them, extremely difficult to understand."

Former Prime Minister,
EDWARD HEATH, Conservative

"The agreement is humiliating to Britain because by its terms it states that we can no longer, unaided, provide fair government for all our people."

IVOR STANBROOK, Conservative

"The Republic of Ireland is a foreign country. Although it will be unable to do anything, the Republic will have a say."

HUMPHREY ATKINS,
Conservative,
former N. Ireland Secretary

"From now on, we shall be plagued by Spain demanding a role in the affairs of Gibraltar, Argentina demanding a role in the affairs of the Falklands, and so on. Even Jamaica, India and other states will now have a precedent for demanding the right to be consulted about the grievances of their citizens in the United Kingdom."

IVOR STANBROOK, Conservative

"I have seen terrible things in Crossmaglen, Ballymena and West Belfast, and I have often despaired that there would be any hope of our getting out of this bloody morass. But whenever I feel that way, I consider the ordinary, normal things in Northern Ireland: the glorious countryside, the hard-working population, the devotion of the RUC."

SIR ELDON GRIFFITHS,
Conservative

Much of the publicity surrounding the Anglo Irish Agreement has centered around the idea of reforms to stop the 'alienation' of the nationalist community. The Ulster Defence Regiment is suggested as one of the areas capable of reform. Such an idea is farcical. The Ulster Defence Regiment and reform are a contradiction in terms. They are as much an integral part of the N.Ireland statelet as oppression, sectarianism, imprisonment and death.

Ulster

A History

Since it was set up in 1970 the UDR has reflected both the forces of domination and the forces of occupation in N.Ireland, very much in the tradition of its predecessor the B Specials. At the beginning some Catholics joined the UDR, with the encouragement of some SDLP politicians. However, the sectarian nature of the regiment soon became apparent and between 1970 and 1972 the initial 18% Catholic membership fell to just 4%.

PARAMILITARY INFILTRATION

As the membership grew rapidly so did the infiltration by members of Loyalist paramilitary groups like the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). This was encouraged by sympathetic officers in the regiment, right up to the commander – a Brigadier seconded from another British army regiment. He stated publicly in October 1972 that no action would be taken by him against members of the UDR who were also members of the UDA. David Miller, commander of 5 UDR (South Derry) in the mid seventies, said in an interview that if he sacked his members for belonging to loyalist paramilitary groups, he'd be left without a regiment.

After an initial opposition to the regiment in a fit of pique at the disbandment of the B Specials, loyalists – particularly those involved with paramilitary groups – soon began to find UDR membership very attractive indeed. Because members were soldiers rather than police (as in the Specials) the training in the use of arms was of high calibre; the UDR armouries provided a good supply of arms; the regiment had access to a good supply of intelligence; and it gave ample cover for sectarian activities.

Since it was set up, over 35,000 people have received training in the UDR, five times its present membership of 6,500. As a former officer in Derry told the *Irish Times* in October last year 'There are a lot of men who have used a gun in this province – probably there's nowhere else in the world outside Israel with so many men capable of bearing arms. And once you've handled the army's SLR [rifle] you can operate any kind of weapon, the Armalite or the Kalashnikov.'

But it was not just for the training that the UDR proved so valuable to the Loyalist paramilitary groups. In a raid claimed by the UVF in October 1972, 83 rifles, 21 machine guns and 3,000 rounds of ammunition were taken from the UDR

armoury in Magherafelt, Co. Derry.

This was followed in November by the 'disarming' of thirteen UDR sentries while on duty in Belfast, and many more such raids.

The largest haul was in a second raid on the Magherafelt armoury on June 6th 1975 when a total of 320 guns, 9,500 rounds of ammunition, grenades and a rocket were taken. Four members of the UDR were convicted of this robbery and all four claimed membership of the UDA.

The UDR also has proved a good source of information on nationalist people as well as good cover to carry out sectarian attacks, robberies and murder. To catalogue the known involvement of UDR personnel in killings, bombings, assaults, sexual attacks and robberies would require far more space than is available here. Despite the enormous bias in the courts to the 'security' forces and the reluctance of the police to move against members of these forces, the conviction rate of members of the UDR is twice that of the population at large in N.Ireland for what are described as serious crimes. Though convictions of members are only the tip of the iceberg, a few examples illustrate the history of the regiment.

NOT YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD SOLDIER

• **Derrygonnelly, Co. Fermanagh**
Bernie McGovern was returning home late one night last December. Outside his house a UDR patrol stopped him. They showered him with abuse and then started on death threats. Terrified, McGovern ran off – the UDR soldiers fired live rounds at him as he fled.

• **Donagh, Co. Fermanagh**
Paddy Foster, a member of Sinn Fein, was stopped at a UDR checkpoint near his home on 4th January. Six weeks previously he had been severely beaten up by the UDR. This time the soldiers ran alongside his car, hammering at the doors and windows. One shot was fired at the car.

Later that evening, Sinn Fein councillor Hugh O'Neill and others went to investigate and make a complaint. The UDR soldiers then fired two shots in the air. The RUC arrived on the scene, not however to arrest the UDR but to attack the group trying to make the complaint.

The UDR advertises for sensible killers



7-62 mm Light Machine Gun.

7-62 mm Self-Loading Rifle.

9 mm Browning Pistol.

LEARN HOW TO USE THESE AND STOP SENSELESS KILLINGS.

It'd be sheer lunacy to put the likes of these in the hands of anyone but a professional soldier. We don't hesitate to issue them to farmers, solicitors and factory workers. The men of the UDR. The fact that they're part-time makes them no less professional. In their spare time, they go through a training programme as tough as that of their Regular counterparts. Getting fit, map reading, and battle tactics are included, of course. So is a thorough grounding in the use of weapons. It's nothing if not intensive. And even when we've knocked the raw recruit out of you, we keep you up to scratch. You'll spend entire weekends on the range, mainly with self-loading rifles and light machine guns. Some of you might even be good enough for Blaisy, home of the world's most famous shooting competition. Right now, you probably couldn't hit a bull from three feet, let alone a bull's eye. Give us a few months and we'll have you pumping twenty rounds into the target from three hundred metres with deadly accuracy. To achieve that, we're asking for a few hours of your time each week. It'd be enough to make a senseless killer give up for good.

Enquiries and details about the UDR should be sent to: UDR Recruitment Officer, 17, Park Road, Belfast, Co. Antrim BT12 8BA. Or phone Belfast 100.

Name: _____
Address: _____

ULSTER DEFENCE REGIMENT

Defence Regiment

of Sectarianism

HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

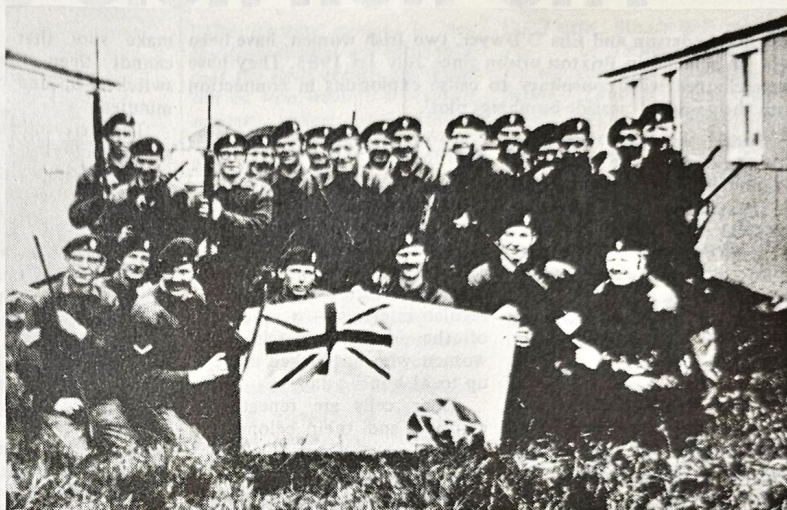
In 1975 occurred what is perhaps the most notorious killing involved UDR personnel. The Miami Showband, on their way home after a show were stopped near Newry by an unofficial UDR roadblock. Two former members of the UDR were killed when a 10lb bomb they were trying to load surreptitiously into the back of the group's van exploded prematurely. With that the others in the roadblock opened up with their guns killing three members of the band. One of the machine guns used came from the first raid on Magherafelt armoury.

The two killed in the explosion, Boyle and Sommerville, former members of the UDR and active members of the UVF. Death notice for the two men appeared in the papers from several UDR companies and UDR members attended their funeral, marching in the UVF guard of honour. Three members of the UDR were later convicted of the murder of the Miami Showband members.

In two different trials in 1978 and 1979 seven members of 5 UDR were convicted of five murders, armed robbery, assault, bombings and some were convicted of the second raid on the Magherafelt armoury. 19 others were involved with that raid, including other members of 5 UDR, but they were never charged.

In 1984 two journalists were about to publish stories on the activities of UDR personnel in Drumadd Barracks, Armagh. The police were forced to act, and they quickly charged 13 UDR soldiers with a long series of sectarian attacks and killings. In January 1985 one of these, Geoffrey Edwards, pleaded guilty to the murder of Peter Corrigan, a Sinn Fein election agent in 1982, six attempted murders, causing an explosion and possession of firearms. All these events had been claimed by the Protestant Action Force (PAF), a loyalist paramilitary group involved in sectarian killings around Armagh, and Co. Down. Edwards had been a full time member of the UDR for seven years. He refused to say which other members of the regiment had been involved with him, though he did say that he used information supplied during UDR briefings to track his victims.

Edwards was seen as a hero within his company. A report in the *Observer* newspaper quoted a part time officer as saying that his actions were seen as 'an act of war, a matter of pride' and that morale had gone up when it was realised that a member of the UDR might be involved in the attacks.



"IT WAS A TERRIBLE SCENE"

A year ago Paul Kelly was killed by the UDR. He and four other teenagers were driving a stolen car on the outskirts of Belfast when they were spotted by a UDR patrol.

What happened then was described by an eye-witness: *"I heard the shots, there were many bursts of gunfire — and I heard shrill screams amid the confusion. The screams sounded as if they were from girls, but I understand the boys in the car were very young. My wife and I put out all the lights and lay on the floor listening to the police radio frequencies. All hell broke out and it was panic stations. The UDR were running about. It was a terrible scene."*

Paul Kelly was shot dead. Two others suffered gunshot wounds and two were injured as the car went out of control and crashed.

The Ulster Defence Regiment had decided to impose the death penalty for the crime of joyriding. None of the soldiers ever faced criminal charges from this incident.

LARGEST ARMY REGIMENT

The sectarianism of the UDR is not unique but is the crudest expression of the sectarianism of the N.Ireland statelet. Like that statelet it is controlled directly by the British Government. The UDR is the largest regiment in the British army, and its command structure is an integral part of the command structure of the army. It is only different in that all its members are recruited in N.Ireland, and its part-timers can resign at will.

It has two main functions. One is intelligence gathering. Its members are asked to use their jobs as drivers, postmen, milkmen, to gather information on their nationalist neighbours. Its centralised command structure ensures the efficient delivery of information from the ground to British Intelligence.

The other function is to be in the forefront of Ulsterisation. In 1972 Lord Carrington called for the regiment to be expanded to 10,000 members in order to allow other British army regiments to return to Britain or NATO bases. But it is only since Ulsterisation began in 1976 that the UDR has begun to replace some

other regiments. This freed these regiments for duty in other places, and reduced the political cost of Britain's occupation of Ireland. Deaths of UDR soldiers produce nothing like the reaction to deaths of British born soldiers produced in this country.

It is this role of being thrust (willingly) into the forefront of Britain's war in Ireland, coupled with the criminal and sectarian activities, which account for the high fatality rate in the UDR.

The 'reforms' now being touted for the regiment — a member of the RUC on every patrol, two weeks training for the officers in Sandhurst — would be funny if the situation was not so serious. Such reforms would not even begin to undo the harm this regiment does in the North.

Another suggested 'reform' is that the UDR be discontinued in its present form, as an Army regiment, and in its place the RUC reserve would be expanded. This would bring things back full circle to the B Specials.

No amount of tinkering will reform the UDR. The Regiment must be completely disbanded, as part of a total British withdrawal from Ireland.

The hell hole of Brixton

Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer, two Irish women, have been held on remand in Brixton prison since July 1st 1985. They have been charged with conspiracy to cause explosions in connection with the so-called 'seaside bombings plot'.

During this time they have been kept in a confined unit within the prison and subjected to treatment that is clearly designed to intimidate and demoralise them. A major part of this continuous harassment has been the use of strip searches — the same tactic as that used against women in Armagh prison.

The purpose of their treatment has nothing to do with security but is part of a campaign to break the two women, in whatever resistance they are showing to the authorities and to leave them in no fit state for

their trial.

As well as strip searches, other methods of harassment are in operation. The exercise space they have been offered is a closed-in, short corridor with prison officers standing at regular intervals — a mockery of the idea of exercise for women who are locked up for up to 21 hours a day.

Their cells are repeatedly emptied and their belongings tipped into the corridor; their cells are left looking 'as though they have been wrecked instead of searched'. Their cells are even 'checked' at night, and to

make sure that the women cannot sleep the lights are switched on and off every 15 minutes.

This treatment has been carried out consistently despite periods of illness during which they have been unable to get proper medical treatment.

Because Ella and Martina understand this tactic they are more able to fight against it. But they need our help in making their situation generally known, so that the authorities cannot carry on in this way behind locked doors.

Below, Martina Anderson describes in a letter precisely what has been going on — day after day — behind the locked doors.

New Appeal

A new group has been formed to support the Irish prisoners in Brixton — organising support activities, lobbying and raising money for a High Court case about prison conditions 'so that the women can put some thought into their own defence instead of merely maintaining their sanity'.

So, if you are able to help, contact:

IRISH PRISONERS APPEAL
c/o Lambeth IBRG,
245a Coldharbour Lane,
London SW9 8RR
Telephone (daytimes):
01-274 7700 ext. 36

Letter from Martina Anderson

I shall give you a calendar type list of strip searches for November. It began on Monday 4th: Ella had to endure three strip searches and one cell search, I was subjected to three strip searches and one cell search. On Tuesday 5th we had two strip searches each. Wednesday 6th: we had one strip search each. Thursday 7th — I had two strip searches, one cell search and a cell change, Ella had two strip searches. Friday 8th: on that day Ella had three strip searches (two in six minutes) and one cell search. I also had three strip searches (two in 25 minutes) and a cell search. Saturday 9th: we had one strip search each. Monday 11th: we had two strip searches each. Tuesday 12th: we had two strip searches. Wednesday 13th: we had two strip searches each. Thursday 14th: we had two strip searches each. Saturday 16th: we had one strip search each. Monday 18th: we had one strip search. Tuesday 19th: I had two strip searches and a cell search. Wednesday 20th: Ella and I had one strip search each. Thursday 21st: Ella had one strip search, I had three strip searches, one cell search and a cell change. Friday 22nd: I had two strip searches. Saturday 23rd: We both had one strip search. Monday 25th: Ella had one cell search and a strip search. Tuesday 26th: Ella had one strip search, a cell search and a cell change. Wednesday 27th: Ella had two strip searches and again a cell search. I also had two strip searches and a cell search. Thursday 28th: Ella and I had two strip searches each. Friday 29th: We lodged complaints to a member of the board of governors. Saturday 30th: Ella and I had one strip search each.

That should give you an idea of the daily harassment which we have to endure in this hell hole.

From December 2nd till the 27th, Ella had 21 strip searches, four cell searches and two cell changes. I had 23 strip searches, six cell searches and two cell changes.

STRIP SEARCHED WHEN ILL

On Wednesday 11th December, Ella had a strip search, cell search and cell change that morning. After they had finished they sent for a medical officer as Ella wasn't feeling well. He gave her some medication and she went to bed at approx 11.30. We heard her ringing the bell from 1.10 — she wasn't feeling well and wanted out to vomit. They refused to answer her call and left her vomiting into a bucket. At two o'clock her

cell door was opened and they took her out of bed to perform another strip search and her second cell search of that day.

This happens regularly here when someone of us would be sick. I as you know suffer from migraine headaches and there have been times when I've been very ill and hardly able to walk, but nevertheless they have taken me from my bed to strip me and search the cell. At times they have taken one hour 15 minutes to carry out the search.

We would usually on a good day spend 18 hours alone in our cells and 19 at the weekend. Recently we have been spending up to 21 hours locked up. As you can see, the few hours we get out is spent with strip searches, cell searches and cell changes.

COMPLAINTS UNRECORDED

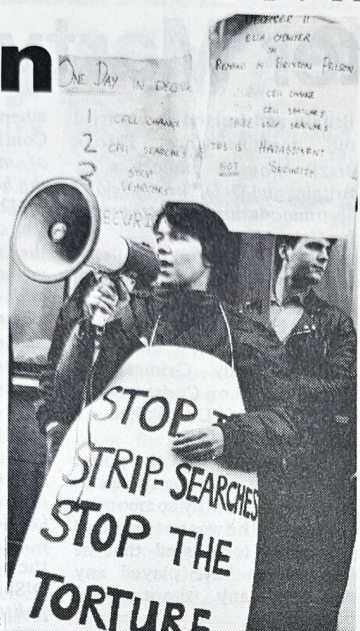
On 3/1/86 we put in an application to see the governor. At approx. 10.40 the head governor Joy Kingsley came to see us. I informed her that I wished to make a complaint about the lack of association. I was amazed when she started telling me how lucky I was to be in this prison and not any other one (I hate to think what other prisoners are going through). I asked her to try and solve the problem and not have us complaining to the public outside; we are only looking for basic human rights; I asked did she enjoy us having to take such measures all the time before something gets done.

She replied that I was being insulting and guaranteed me that nothing would be done to solve the situation. Before, we have complained about conditions here, but when enquiries were made they have said we didn't. So I kept trying to ask her to write down what I had said and that I had made a complaint. She said she would write down whatever she felt like and not what I ask her to. She wouldn't let me finish and kept saying, 'Be off with you, be off with you'.

I will sign off now since I have a few more letters to write but we'll write again in a few weeks with an update on conditions. Everyone here is keeping the best under the circumstances and we would like to wish you all a happy New Year, so till next time, take care

Slán,
Martina

Prison



Picket of the Home Office

Photo
Joanne O'Brien/Format

Relatives tour

Relatives of women being strip searched in Armagh and Brixton Prisons toured England during November last.

They spoke to groups about the degradation of the state's tactic and vividly expressed what it means in everyday reality.

The tour was organised by London Labour Women's Committee. The London Armagh Women's Group and Troops Out Women's Group organised for Martina Anderson's sister Isobel to join the tour to speak on behalf of Martina and Ella O'Dwyer, who are both being held in Brixton Prison.

Glasgow march

The Glasgow Campaign against Strip-Searches held a march and meeting in Glasgow on Saturday November 30. Our main purpose was to highlight the continued use of strip-searches in Armagh Jail in the North of Ireland.

We had chosen to march in November as it was the third anniversary of the introduction of strip-searching in Armagh. Strip-searching is just one of many ways in which women's bodies are used to humiliate and harass them.

Sadly we were unable to confine the day to protesting against the strip-searches in Armagh. Strip-searching as a form of harassment is now widely used in Scotland and Wales. One of our speakers was from Faslane Peace Camp, and she described how three women from the Peace Camp had been strip-searched in a Glasgow police station following their arrest in September. Two members of our group were also left without their clothes overnight in a Glasgow police station after they had been arrested for spray painting.

PRISONERS' BIRTHDAYS

Please send cards and letters to these prisoners on their birthdays. Many of them spend long periods in solitary confinement. Don't forget the number.

ANTHONY CLARKE 726381
H.M. Prison, Love Lane, Wakefield, Yorks WF2 9AG

February 11th

RONNIE McCARTNEY 463799
H.M. Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics. LE16 7RP

February 25th

ELLA O'DWYER D25135
H.M. Prison Brixton (see below)

March 3rd

The following six prisoners are on remand in Brixton, suffering particularly harsh conditions. Their trial is due in May. Please send messages or cards.

MARTINA ANDERSON D25134
ELLA O'DWYER D25135
PATRICK MAGEE B75881
THOMAS MAGUIRE H24029
GERARD McDONNELL B75882
PETER SHERRY B75880

H.M. Prison Brixton, PO Box 369, Jebb Avenue, London SW2 5XF

Emergency Law renewed

"The message tonight is that the Government are convinced that the fight against terrorism can be won without draconian security policies and without departing from the rule of law. But it will be necessary to provide the security forces for another six months with the powers that are included in this instrument."

Thus the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act passed through its six-monthly review in the House of Commons on 15th January.

The powers of the Act include: internment (although this is not used at the moment); trials without juries for some cases; minimal rights to bail; powers to arrest without a warrant; and the admissibility of confession evidence.

Normally there is a ritualistic quality about these renewals, but the Anglo-Irish Agreement of last November aroused higher expectations this time. Tony Benn conducted a spirited sniping at N Ireland Secretary Tom King to get him to admit that, well, no, the Irish Government had not been consulted through the Inter-governmental Conference about the renewal of the Emergency Provisions Act. But King was sure that they had been "informed courteously of what was happening". All grist to the mill of Benn's argument that the Agreement has merely internationalised the status quo.

Peter Archer led the Labour opposition to the Emergency Provisions Act. First, it constitutes an unacceptable erosion of civil liberties. It was first introduced in 1973 (replacing its look-alike Special Powers Act) and was supposed to be temporary. Its continuation on the statute books year after year conditions us to accept it as a norm — for example, the new Roskill proposals for no juries in fraud cases are creeping in in its wake.

Secondly, Archer argued, the Act brings the law into disrepute and is therefore counter-productive: citizens cannot be expected to be law-abiding when they see that justice does not prevail in the law courts.

Pressed on the question whether a Labour Government would introduce jury trials in

the North, Stuart Bell replied yes — or rather, he almost replied yes. To be precise: "A future Labour Government would have no difficulty in pronouncing that they would move towards jury trials as quickly as they could in the context of the situation in Northern Ireland." Other Labour MPs were more forthright: "This appalling Act should be taken off the statute book. It does nothing to solve the problems. Ireland under British occupation, especially Northern Ireland, has never been ruled without military control over the people and a total lack of democracy" (Martin Flannery). The renewal of the Emergency Provisions Act was passed 116 to 62.

Although the Emergency Provisions Act was renewed as a matter of course, one amendment was made to it. This amendment reduces the range of offences called 'scheduled' ('terrorist') which are not eligible for jury trial.

Research has shown that about 40% of cases heard in the no-jury courts have nothing to do with so-called terrorism, do not have a political motive or political nature. The amendment was supposed to redress this.

However, it was aptly described by Peter Archer as being welcomed "as a fish in a desert welcomes a solitary raindrop". Certain types of robbery are descheduled, for example, but not robbery involving the use of firearms. But this is the largest category of purely criminal cases that end up in the no-jury courts.

If this amendment represents the new-look post-Anglo-Irish Agreement policies, it is disappointing in the extreme. It does not touch on the very serious undermining of judicial process which the Emergency Provisions Act perpetuates in the North of Ireland. It completely ignores the political situation in which the law functions in the North and of which it is supposed to be part of the solution.

Also disappointing were the contributions from Liberal-SDP Alliance MPs Stephen Ross and Robert McLennan. They both argued for the continuation of no-jury trials and against descheduling on any larger scale.

More Manchester Martyrs in co

Every weekday since January 14th, four convoys have set off from Strangeways Prison in Manchester to that city's Minshull Street Crown Court. Each consisting of about a dozen motor-bike outriders, half a dozen police cars, and an armoured van, the convoys race through Manchester with sirens blaring and lights flashing. Overhead a police helicopter hovers.

One of the convoys takes Dubliners Billy Grimes and Patrick Brazil to their trial — the other convoys are 'decoys'.

Manchester Crown Court itself has been turned into a fortress for the trial. Armed police marksmen are clearly visible on the roof of the building, while a massive police presence outside seals off the surrounding streets.

One unlucky motorist returned to his parked car during the first week of the trial to find that the police had blown the door off it because one of their dogs had mistakenly sniffed it!

Manchester's top security courtroom has been sealed from the rest of the building, and everyone entering has a rigorous physical search in addition to the use of metal detectors and electronic equipment. The names, home addresses and dates of birth of anyone going into the court are recorded by the police.

Inside the court itself, the Judge has an armed police detective sitting beside him, while the defendants are screened off from the rest of the court by bullet proof glass.

66 year old Dr Máire O'Shea of Birmingham, 43 year old William Grimes of Dublin, and 34 year old Patrick Brazil of Dublin have all pleaded not

guilty to a charge of conspiring together and with Daniel Ryan and Peter Jordan to cause an explosion in the UK.

Dr O'Shea has also denied failing to disclose information to the police under the PTA, and Billy Grimes has denied possessing explosives.

On the eighth day of the trial, Billy Grimes changed his plea to guilty to both charges. He was then remanded back for sentencing.

61 year old Peter Jordan of Bristol admitted conspiracy, and is in custody awaiting sentence at the end of the trial.

The Judge, Mr Justice Mann, told the jury: "*You are no doubt already aware that a high level of security surrounds this court, but you must not draw any inference as to the guilt or otherwise of the accused. It is in no way associated with these three defendants.*"

THE PROSECUTION CONSPIRACY

The prosecution case, extensively reported in the media, is that Daniel Ryan in Dublin 'masterminded' a plot to blow up an SAS officer over the Christmas holiday in 1984. The Crown says that Peter Jordan carried out intelligence-gathering on the target; Billy Grimes was the link between

Britain and Ireland and carried out reconnaissance; Patrick Brazil brought explosives to Britain; and Dr O'Shea provided accommodation and transport for Grimes.

The court heard details of the extensive interrogations all the defendants underwent in Liverpool's main Bridewell following the arrest under the PTA of Billy Grimes and Patrick Brazil on Christmas Eve 1984 and of Dr O'Shea on January 5th 1985.

Billy Grimes told the police that he had been instructed to come to Britain by someone in Dublin who he was not prepared to name. He insisted that he was not to have played any part in any shooting or bombing.

The target of the alleged conspiracy was 52 year old Lt Col Brian Baty, who served in the British Army from February 1951 to October 1984. Lt Col Baty told the court in a statement which was read out, that he served with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, the SAS, and the Parachute Regiment.

In March 1977, his statement continued, Lt Col Baty had to give evidence in a Dublin Court

when as an SAS Squadron Commander in N Ireland, "*eight of my men had strayed over the border.*"

The Prosecuting barrister Rhys Davis QC told the jury on the trial's opening day: "*This is not a political trial, but what is said about someone's political views may assist us.*"

Going on to suggest that Dr O'Shea must have known that Daniel Ryan and Peter Jordan were conspiring, the Prosecutor said that the three had known each other since being in the Communist Party many years ago and "*they shared a political ideology.*"

When interrogated by police, the Crown continued, Dr O'Shea "*made no secret of her political views, favouring a united Ireland and seeing Northern Ireland as being occupied,*" and declaring her membership of the Irish in Britain Representation Group and the Troops Out Movement.

Out of 36 seats in the courtroom, 31 have been allocated to the press. But as is usual in such trials, most of the media disappear after the first day or two of the prosecution case, reappearing only for the end of the trial.

Ethnic minority rights The Irish in Britain

Birmingham Council has now recognised the Irish as an ethnic minority.

This formal move — by a 58-48 vote — gives a visible status to England's second largest Irish community. In particular, the motion supported research "*to examine in more detail the use by the police of powers under the Prevention of Terrorism Act*". The Chief Constable will be invited to a meeting to further this research.

Islington Borough Council in London is also to consider strengthening its already strong support for the Irish. Its Race Relations Committee was addressed in January by Islington Irish in Britain Representation Group and the Irish in Islington Project: they called for a complete ban on the use of plastic bullets,

Now that plastic bullets are in the pipeline for use in British cities, what had previously been closed minds are now open to hearing about the Irish experience — or rather, the *British* use of these weapons in the North of Ireland.

The motion before Islington Council also asks that Brocks fireworks be banned from all Council or Council-funded displays (Brocks Pyrotechnics is involved in part of the production of plastic bullets); and that the Council undertakes work to inform people about the true nature of plastic bullets.

And in South London, the Lambeth branch of NALGO has voted to set up an Irish workers' group within the union. This follows the same move by Brent NALGO.

WIDESPREAD CONCERN

Despite the fact that it is being held virtually in private, the trial of Dr Máire O'Shea and two Dublin men has aroused great public interest. The first day of the trial saw public protests in Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield and elsewhere calling for the charges against Dr O'Shea to be dropped.

Dr O'Shea's trade union ASTMS, whose national conference last year unanimously agreed to support her, has had an official observer in court every day apart from the first one — when the Special Branch excluded them.

The Irish Embassy in London had an official observer in court during the first two days, but after that they said they would monitor the trial through the Home Office!

The case is being followed closely in Ireland, with the Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas particularly interested. Among the prominent public figures in Ireland who have declared their support for Dr O'Shea are: Sean MacBride; Senator Michael D. Higgins, Father Paul, Father Murray, Father Flannery, Professor Kader Asmal, Tim Pat Coogan, Michael Farrell, Neil Blaney TD, Neil Andrews TD MEP, and Joe Costello of the Prisoners Rights Organisation.

Conspiracy trial?

DEFENDING HER LIFE

When the defence case opened, Máire O'Shea was able to describe in full the open political activities which have filled her life. She has been committed both to advances in psychiatry and to Irish unity.

Dr O'Shea came from Ireland to England in 1952. She was a member of the Communist Party and the Connolly Association, involved in the civil rights movement. The jury was given an education about the discrimination which sparked off the civil rights movement. Later on she worked on an Anti-Internment committee in St Albans — again, she explained what internment meant, adding that it

was when "the British authorities waged war on the nationalists".

More recently, she explained, she joined the Troops Out Movement and the Irish in Britain Representation Group, of which she is president.

Dr O'Shea pointed out that this political commitment often led to her putting people up at her house. Sometimes it was ex-patients, other times it was people who came into town for meetings or conferences. Accommodating people "was no big event". No one had ever asked her to provide a 'safe house' or had spoken to her about planning bombings etc: had they done so, she clearly stated, she would have refused.

TAKING TO THE STREETS

At the start of the trial, protests were held around the country. In Coventry, for example, a lunchtime picket was held in the shopping precinct.

Members of the Troops Out Movement and the Women & Ireland Group handed out leaflets pointing out the injustices of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Conspiracy Laws. Banners were hung over walkways and placards displayed drawing attention to the case of Máire O'Shea.

The next morning graffiti had mysteriously appeared in numerous subways around the city centre: "Free O'Shea" and "Whose Conspiracy? Police Conspiracy".

and plastic bullets

The Chief Constable of the West Midlands has been invited to undertake a bit of re-education on the subject of plastic bullets.

Two visitors to Birmingham in January are well able to supply him with the hard cold facts. They have suffered too much to exaggerate. Emma Groves was blinded by a rubber bullet in her home in 1971, and Brenda Downes is the widow of John Downes who was shot dead by a plastic bullet in front of the world's media in 1984.

From the United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets in Belfast, the two women wrote to the Chief Constable, Geoffrey Dear:

Dear Mr Dear,

We read with alarm your recent comments in the papers regarding the use of plastic bullets and the fact that you are personally advocating for them to be used in mainland Britain.

We the undersigned are victims and relatives of victims of these lethal weapons; and as we will be in England during the week commencing Monday 27th January, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and discuss the issue more thoroughly. We were amazed to read that in your opinion the injuries received by plastic bullets were grossly exaggerated.

Fifteen people have died in Northern Ireland, seven of them children, and many many more have been horribly injured.

These are facts, Mr Dear, not exaggeration, and the courts have already paid out thousands of pounds in compensation to the innocent victims and their families. It is a matter of public record that at some of the inquests, the coroner has found the victims to be totally innocent and that plastic bullets had been fired when they were uncalled for and unjustified.

These are but some of the facts and we look forward to providing not only you but the unsuspecting British public with many more.

Yours sincerely,
Emma Groves
Brenda Downes

Your Letters

BRIXTON GREETINGS

A Chairde,

Please let me thank you for helping to make Xmas 1985 that much more like Xmas. The Xmas cards we got sent to us must in part be thanks to your excellent paper's highlighting of our treatment.

People who shall remain nameless, for now, gave of their time and finances to send us each in a parcel for Xmas day and Boxing Day — which contained home cooked meals. This generosity does not go unnoticed by our dear ones also — as they too feel the warmth of such acts of friendship and solidarity.

The beer in the parcels meant we could toast the festive tide but we also toasted your good health and future. May your paper continue to grow in circulation. May the collective solidarity of the left be a reality sooner rather than later, and the common good supersede individual greed. Thank you from all of us and a very very revolutionary new year. Keep up the reporting on injustices; may the demonstration and rally in London on Feb 2nd reflect a keener awareness and commitment to a British withdrawal from Ireland. As a hunger strike in the H Blocks reminds us of our work ahead let us echo those words we used to cry in defiance — and as a promise — "Tíocfaidh ar lá" (our day will come).

Yours,
Gearoid mac Domhnaill
on behalf of Ella O'Dwyer,
Martina Anderson, Patrick Magee, Peter Sherry, Tom Maguire . . . , Brixton Prison.

SWISS HELP

A Chairde, comrades,

After a long period of setbacks and trouble, the Ireland Solidarity Committee Switzerland (ISCS) is re-organised. Many of our members had been arrested or had left us.

But we now have a strong and active base for our Committee with plenty of energy for effective work for Ireland.

There are many people in

Switzerland with a great interest in Ireland and its struggle for freedom and justice. To get these people active we need your help: I am writing for information on the reality of the struggle in Northern Ireland.

Please let us know what is going on — send us new papers, magazines, pamphlets and any other publications. Any information or help you can give us would be greatly appreciated.

We send you greetings and wish you every success in 1986.

Ireland Committee Switzerland,
L. Griessmann, Altmoostrasse
19, 8157 Dielsdorf.

UNITY OF OPPOSITES?

Dear Sir or Madam,

American interventionism all over the world is a form of jingoism, which means militant chauvinism. The Nazis used jingoism before the last war. Mrs Thatcher was voted into Parliament in 1983 because of the jingoistic build up after the Falklands war. It is obvious that Britain and America are suffering from the incurable disease of historical blindness — especially the United States who are galvanising Fascism by uniting rightwing forces against socialism.

Again, Mrs Thatcher's resolute and speedy signing of an agreement with Prime Minister Garret FitzGerald of the Republic of Ireland: was she pressurised by America?

It does seem that Mrs Thatcher has stepped on a hornet's nest. I wonder if she understands anything about the phenomenon of nature 'The Unity of Opposites'? Like negative and positive in electricity, they join together, and give light. Up until the signing, there was one main enemy — the IRA. Now we also have the militant section of the loyalists as an enemy. Will there be a basis for the 'unity of opposites'? Will they start to realise that they all belong to Ireland, and only an independent socialist Ireland will really solve their problems?

Yours sincerely,
Tom Hopkins (retired miner),
Caerphilly

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

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

REVIEWS

OURSELVES ALONE

by Anne Devlin

Royal Court Theatre Upstairs

What first struck me about this play was its affection for Irish people struggling in the North of Ireland. I say this not because I think all drama should be affectionate but because it is so rare on this topic. Most 'N Ireland' plays exhibit responses running from distant distaste to clinical interest towards their subjects.

Ourselves Alone shows three sisters of different ages living and participating in the struggle against the British occupation in Andersonstown, Belfast, to be exact. *Frieda* who wants to leave and become a popular singer, *Josie* an IRA courier trying to get straight her relationship with a married IRA OC and *Donna* whose husband is in Long Kesh. The play succeeds in presenting 'universal' problems of women relating to men and families without denying that these are here taking place within the particular situation of anti-colonialist war. Though while the women are presented empathetically in their different plights, the republican men are shown to be mainly uptight bigoted or shadowy 'god-fathers'. Where does analysis of patriarchy begin and Brit stereotypes end?

Into this situation comes Joe Conran, of Irish descent but of British Army officer-class background. He is now an internationally known left-wing sociologist and he is in Belfast to try and join the armed struggle. One intellectually riveting scene is where he has to convince Josie — and the audience of course — that he is not a Brit spy. Is he faithful to his Irish sisters and brothers or to his British family? We are not given an obvious answer in this scene's very two-cornered debate.

Meanwhile Frieda leaves to go and live with a member of the Workers Party who turns out to be as frustrated as he is committed. This is a drama of people who see no immediate end to the struggle but recognise the necessity for continuing it. As someone pressuring for British withdrawal I can accept the universal element in that. Simon Curtis directs all these changes of tone and scene with striking aptness and Anne Devlin is well served by a versatile cast.

In the second Act the play gets even deeper into the tangled emotional lives of the three sisters and threatens to become the war's first soap opera. But finally Joe Conran has made his choice and the play affirms that nothing and nobody, lovers or sisters, can escape the British presence.

Mike Belbin

Ourselves Alone is at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, Sloane Sq, London SW1 until February 8. Box Office 01 730 2554.

WORDS AT WORK by Fionnbarra O'Dochartaigh

Articles on Anne Devlin and the Rising of 1803; William Thomson, economist pioneer of socialist thought; P. H. Pearse, the 1913 Dublin Lock-Out and 1916 Rising; and James Connolly.

£2 incl. p&p
From: PO Box 24, Derry,
TB48 6AZ, Ireland

PLANNING

Housing Redevelopment in Derry Video by Derry Video Collective

This thirty-minute video looks at the effects of the redevelopment of the Brandywell district of Derry on the local community — and the extent to which redevelopment plans are influenced by military ('security') decisions.

It interviews three local residents and a planner/architect, supplemented with footage of estates and army manoeuvres.

As in most redevelopment schemes, no consideration was given to the effects on the local community. The Brandywell has traditionally had a strong community spirit and network. However, in the name of progress and redevelopment, over 200 families were uprooted and moved into new housing estates in Shantallow and Cairnhill.

The people felt isolated and closed off. Many were pensioners, destined to live for only a few years after the transfer. Much of the new housing and flats was badly built and designed. As one resident put it, "A new slum is nice for the first year, but the defects quickly begin to show — dampness, cracks, asbestos. . ."

The video makes the point that people who have to live in the

houses should have a say in the design and planning of new developments — that planners never consider local people's wishes.

In addition, the video shows that — as in other new housing developments in the six counties — there is evidence that military and 'security' dictates have had a major influence on the scheme. For example: creating only one entry and exit road from estates; blocking off streets but ensuring that the ramps could be crossed by army landrovers and tanks; building unnecessarily wide roads through housing areas in the Bogside (to make it hard to barricade them).

Peter Moloney, the architect/planner who is interviewed on the video, draws parallels with the redevelopment of Paris after the Commune.

Although this military aspect to planning is the most important part of the video, it is covered without sufficient depth: the examples given are quite sketchy and not very effective in converting the uninitiated. The video is useful if accompanied by more detailed information and examples from other areas of the six counties.

Maura Farrelly

This video is available for hire from The TOM: PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH.

TOM's national raffle

1st Prize: TWO PLANE TICKETS TO
IRELAND AND £50 SPENDING MONEY

Plus many other prizes for runners-up

The Troops Out Movement is organising a national raffle to raise desperately needed funds for our campaigning work on the Prevention of Terrorism Act, plastic bullets, informers and all aspects of repression which result from Britain's presence in Ireland.

At present we have information pamphlets on trade unions, prisoners, the media, and the Ulster Defence Regiment prepared — but not enough money to print them.

We urgently need donations. If you have any cash to spare, please send it to the TOM Office at PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH.

Or better still, take out a standing order to: the Troops Out Movement, a/c no. 50504051, at the Co-operative Bank, Islington, 08-90-33.

Raffle tickets are available from the TOM Office. We hope you can help us continue our work.

terence mac swiney memorial lectures

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22 January - 5 March 1986

22nd January, 7.30

• IRISH EMIGRATION by Donall Mac Amhlaigh

29th January, 7.30

• ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS by Fr. Des Wilson

5th February, 7.30

• INSURRECTION IN IRISH HISTORY
by C. Desmond Greaves

12th February, 7.30

• WOMEN IN IRISH HISTORY by Margaret Ward

19th February, 7.30

• GAELIC IRELAND by Nollaig Ó Gadhra

26th February, 8.00

• IRELAND IN BRITISH
POLITICS

by Seán MacBride

5th March, 7.30

• IRELAND AND
ENGLAND — A
TURNING POINT?

by Prof.
Liam de Paor



Terence MacSwiney

For further information, phone 01-633 1571

NOVEMBER

18th
Extradition Order against John Gerard O'Reilly is made at Limerick. He is charged with conspiracy to murder and conspiracy to cause explosions. His defence against the order is on the viability of 'supergrasses' and on technicalities.

19th
Annie Maguire speaking at Leinster House asks TDs and Senators to pressure British Govt for an appeal in her case "and I hope they will also bear in mind the Birmingham 6 who are currently serving life sentences and who can do nothing for themselves in prison".

20th
Swiss Federal Supreme court orders a bank in Zurich to disclose information re a numbered account allegedly containing IRA funds collected from the Tidey kidnapping.

21st
Kurt Konig, a caterer supplying the RUC, is shot dead by the IRA. The State of Massachusetts accepts MacBride Principles as law, following New York city earlier this year.

22nd
Following the Anglo-Irish agreement an opinion poll in the Republic shows that 59% approve, 29% disapprove, 12% no opinion.

23rd
Thousands of Unionist supporters demonstrate in Belfast against the Anglo-Irish agreement.

24th
According to an *Irish Times*/MRBI poll 51% of people in the Republic are satisfied with FitzGerald's leadership.

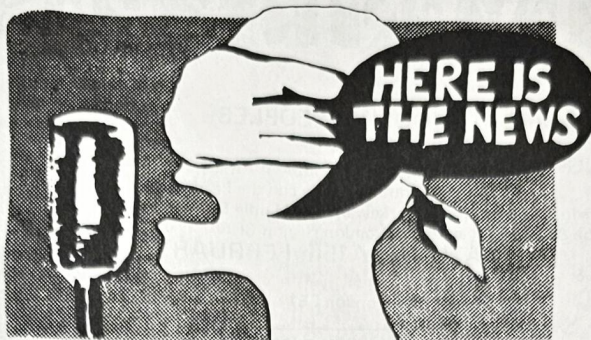
25th
DUP member Rev William Beattie tells Lisburn council that an independent North of Ireland was inevitable following the Anglo-Irish agreement. He states that law and order will break down, and if Sinn Fein and members of the IRA did not flee from the North they would be "kicking up daisies from 12 feet under".

The IRA issue a statement threatening to kill senior staff of building companies in N. Ireland unless their companies cease construction work for RUC.

26th
Bowing under pressure the Lord Mayor of Belfast John Carson an Official Unionist announces he will not invite Tom King or any Northern Ireland Office minister to the city hall in future. This follows his appearance with King the previous week when an angry Unionist protest erupted.

Peter O'Loughlin appears at Lambeth Magistrates court charged with conspiracy to cause explosions at Chelsea Barracks earlier this month.

27th
Anglo-Irish agreement is approved in Parliament by 473 votes to 47. Paisley and Robinson - leader and deputy leader of the DUP - resign their seats. 13 Labour MPs and 20 Tories joined the 14 Unionists in voting against the agreement. Shorts, the Belfast plane makers, start operations in their new plant the former De Lorean car factory. Although Catholics are expected to make up part of the 230 workforce, the new factory will undertake relatively 'low technology' jobs. The opportunity to train for better paid jobs remains with the



Protestant dominated workforce in the East Belfast factory where the bulk of the 6,500 workers are employed.

28th
3 large building companies in N. Ireland stop work on building RUC stations following IRA threats.

29th
Anglo-Irish agreement comes into force following its ratification by both governments. In the Republic the Dail endorses the deal by 88 votes to 75 while the Senate agreed by 37 votes to 16. Capt Gordon Hanna, member of the UDR, is killed by an IRA bomb in Kilkeel, Co Down.

30th
Edward Joseph Taggart is shot by the IRA in the Divis Flats complex, Belfast. The IRA state he was shot in the legs for anti-social behaviour. Other injuries were received during a scuffle resulting in his death.

DECEMBER

2nd
RUC Chief Constable Hermon and Garda Commissioner Wren meet in Dublin, the first such meeting since Feb 1983.

British army shoot and wound a man at a check point near Cullenbrone Forest. He was returning from duckshooting. Belfast City council suspend business for another month in protest at the Anglo-Irish agreement.

3rd
Tom King speaking in Brussels creates a furore by stating that "for all practical purposes and into perpetuity there will not be a united Ireland". Govt sources quickly distance themselves from these remarks.

4th
In Parliament King issues a statement regretting his remarks the previous day. James Shannon who was extradited from the Republic to N. Ireland in July 1985 goes on trial in Belfast charged with the murder of former Stormont Speaker Sir Norman Stronge and his son James in 1981.

5th
Brendan Burns is released from Portlaoise Prison where he was being held pending extradition to N. Ireland. His release follows the quashing of the warrants by the QJ Justice of N. Ireland. Fair Employment Agency announces that Catholic jobless rate remains 2 1/2 times greater than those of Protestants.

An IRA bomb explodes in Toombridge, Co Antrim causing widespread damage.

7th
2 members of the RUC are killed by the IRA at Ballygawley RUC station, the station is badly

damaged.

9th
Recruiting leaflets for the illegal Ulster Volunteer Force are on open display in Shorts aircraft factory.

11th
First session of the joint Inter-Governmental Conference takes place at Stormont Castle, Belfast. Among items decided was an increased gardai (police) presence on the border, a code of conduct for the RUC and the accompaniment of the UDR by the RUC at checkpoints and where contact with the public is expected. During the conference the RUC clash with Unionist demonstrators outside Maryfield House. 38 RUC are injured.

4 RUC members are injured when the IRA launches a rocket attack on the RUC station at Tynan, Co Armagh.

12th
European Parliament approves the Anglo-Irish deal by 150-28 votes. During House of Commons debate on N. Ireland King gives the following statistics for 1985 - 495 people charged with serious offences; 216 weapons, 2,826 rounds of ammunition and 7,706lbs of explosives recovered.

13th
Seamus Shannon is cleared at Belfast Crown Court of murder charges. Shannon, extradited from the Republic to the North in 1984, is the second such person to be cleared following extradition - Dominic McGlinchey being the first. Both cases relied on fingerprint evidence. Shannon has vigorously denied any involvement.

17th
All 15 Unionist MPs resign their seats in the House of Commons in protest against the Anglo-Irish agreement.

18th
All 27 defendants charged on the word of 'supergrass' Harry Kirkpatrick are jailed by Justice Carswell (see article).

19th
A former British soldier Samuel Mathers is jailed for life at Belfast Crown court for the murder of Sinn Fein vice President Maire Drumm 9 years ago. Mathers, a member of the UVF in 1976, made a full confession. Bobby Tohill one of those convicted on the word of Harry Kirkpatrick starts a hunger strike (see article).

20th
Fair Employment Agency warns Shorts to employ more Catholics or it would withdraw its equal opportunity certificate; of the 7,000 workforce 92%-97% are Protestants.

21st
Desmond O'Malley Limerick TD (MP) and former Fianna Fail

Minister of Industry and Commerce announces the formation of a new party in the Republic - Progressive Democrats.

23rd
Patrick McLaughlin appears at Lambeth Magistrates court charged in connection with 2 bombs found outside Chelsea Barracks on Nov 12th.

24th
Gerard Steenson joins Bobby Tohill on hungerstrike. Owen Carron, former Sinn Fein MP, is charged with possession of a rifle and ammunition.

28th
Eighteen Sinn Fein members are arrested in dawn swoops by the RUC (see article).

29th
On BBC's *Review of the year*, London Police Chief Sir Kenneth Newman warns that plastic bullets could be fired in Britain for the first time in 1986.

30th
Peter Barry, the Irish Republic's Minister for Foreign Affairs, tells Tom King that the 'Supergrass' system should go. An extra battalion of 550 British soldiers are sent to N. Ireland, the first increase since the hunger strikes of 1981.

JANUARY 1986

1st
2 members of the RUC are killed by an IRA bomb in Armagh City centre.

2nd
Thomas Power joins Tohill and Steenson on hunger strike. UDA leaders Andy Tyrrie and John McMichael join young Unionists protest march from Derry to Belfast.

3rd
British Govt announces intended changes in the Emergency Provisions Act to allow trial by jury for 'non-terrorist' offences.

6th
The 3 hunger strikers end their fast.

10th
It is reported that a special Garda task force has been assigned to the border areas.

The 3rd meeting of the Anglo/Irish conference takes place. Administration of justice in the North is high on the agenda.

The British army begin rebuilding an RUC station in Ballygawley, Co Tyrone which was destroyed by the IRA in December. Contractors have refused to undertake the job due to IRA threats.

15th
The trial involving Peter Jordan, Maire O'Shea, William Grimes and Patrick Brazil begins in Manchester.

16th
Dutch police arrest 3 Irish men in Amsterdam. Two of those arrested, Brendan McFarland and Gerard Kelly escaped from Long Kesh prison in 1983. A quantity of arms and ammunition are seized. Member of the UDR is killed by an IRA bomb in Co Tyrone.

British soldier is seriously wounded by a sniper's bullet in West Belfast. British soldier blinded by an IRA bomb in 1983 receives a record £250,000 compensation for his injuries.

20th
A UDR base at Dungannon is damaged by an IRA mortar attack, 2 UDR members are injured. The British army and the IRA exchange fire at Crossmaglen. No one is injured.

COMING EVENTS & RESOURCES

LONDON

IRISH PRISONERS' APPEAL PUBLIC MEETING: STOP THE STRIP SEARCHING

Speakers:

Isobel Anderson (sister of Martina Anderson)
Mike Fisher (solicitor of Martina Anderson &
Ella O'Dwyer)

Linda Bellof (Lambeth Councillor, black &
women's rights activist)

IBRG

Irish Prisoners Appeal

Chair: Sabina Sharkey (Irish co-opted member,
GLC Women's Committee)

WED. 5th FEBRUARY, 7.30

County Hall, SE1 (tube: Waterloo)

EAST LONDON IRISH WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Workshops on PTA, religion, young and old
Irish women, first and second generation.
Free food.

Women only.

SAT. 8th FEBRUARY, 1-8pm

St. Bartholomews, Navarre Road, East Ham E6
(East Ham tube)

Social (women and men) in Swan pub,
Stratford, 8-12pm
with Women's Ceili Band

JOIN THE TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT

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

ENGLAND
Birmingham
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Leicester
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Tyneside
York
LONDON AREA
Camden
East London
Haringey
Islington
Lambeth
West London
SCOTLAND
Aberdeen
Edinburgh
Glasgow
WALES
Cardiff
Swansea

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

Name

Address

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

STRUGGLING PEOPLES CONFERENCE

Sessions on Ireland, Southern Africa, Central
America, Southeast Asia and the Pacific, Africa,
Iraq/Iran/Turkey and the Middle East.

Organised by London Region CRS

SATURDAY 15th FEBRUARY

9.30-4.30

County Hall, London SE1

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BIRMINGHAM

IRISH NEWS: BRITISH STORIES, A SERIES OF VIDEO SHOWS

'Irish in England' & 'One Man's Word'

on Feb 3rd

7.30pm, Trade Union Resource Centre,
7 Frederick Street, Hockley (Bus, 96)

and Feb 4th

1.00pm, Unemployed Centre, 448 Stratford
Road, Sparkhill (Buses, 24, 31, 32, 90, 92)

'Strip Searches' & 'Same As It Ever Was'

on March 3rd

7.30pm, Trade Union Resource Centre
and March 4th

1.00pm, Unemployed Centre. Organised by
Birmingham TOM

LEEDS

Thurs March 6th The Yorkshire Premiere of the film ANNE DEVLIN

by Pat Murphy

8pm at the

Hyde Park Picture House,
Brudenell Road, Leeds 6

Presented by Leeds Animation Workshop.

BEYOND THE SHORE — The Irish within Us —

an 80 page anthology of poetry by first
and later generations living outside Ireland

Price £3.30 including postage from

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Abington Vale,
Northampton NN3 3NG

or order it from your local library.
ISBN 0 851 06710 9

**THE NEW PHONE NUMBER OF
THE TOM NATIONAL OFFICE:
01-609 1743**

STOP THE STRIP - SEARCHES

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY DELEGATION TO ARMAGH

March 7-10, 1986

The Picket's History

For the last seven years a picket has been held
outside the Armagh women's prison in solidarity
with the women political prisoners inside. The
first picket, in 1979, organised by Irish women
from Belfast Women Against Imperialism and
by Dublin women, was violently attacked by
the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and 11
women were arrested and charged.

The next year, 500 people from Ireland,
Scotland, Wales and England and all around
the world gathered to picket outside the jail.
This illustrated the great support for the
prisoners, their relatives and the Irish people
as a whole against the response of the sectarian
security forces to a peaceful demonstration.

The Aim of the Delegation

We want to show support for the Irish women
prisoners on International Women's Day,
support their relatives and protest against
British repression and occupation. The delegat-
ion is not to be seen only as an opportunity to
go and 'have a look at Ireland', although it is
a chance to learn so that people can be more
effective in campaigning on their return.
Women delegates will be allocated places on
the basis of their willingness to learn while on
the trip and to spread the word on their return.

Who Can Come?

The delegation is open to all women. The
Armagh picket is mixed but the daytime
events on the Saturday may be women only.
If you know very little about what is happening
in Ireland, please take time beforehand to find
out — we can supply you with a booklet and
names of local groups on request.

What Is The Cost?

The *approximate* cost will be £80 to cover travel
by train and ferry, food and accommodation
and our administration costs.

For More Information, Contact

Brighton Women & Ireland, Prior House,
Tilbury Place, Brighton BN2 2GY
or, Sheffield Women & Ireland, c/o Common-
ground, 87 The Wicker, Sheffield
or, Glasgow Women & Ireland, c/o Women's
Centre, 48 Miller Street, Glasgow.

Other Ways Of Contributing

Without coming on the delegation, you can also
contribute a lot. You can:

- Sponsor a delegate who is unwaged or badly paid
- Sponsor a delegate from your group
- Fundraise amongst your friends or group to pay someone's fare
- Offer to look after a woman's child/children so that she can go
- Organise a solidarity action where you live for women and Ireland — use our videos, pamphlets, bookstall, exhibition
- Invite someone who goes on the delegation to speak to your group after she returns.