

TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND

TROOPS OUT
NOW

SELF
DETERMINATION
FOR THE
IRISH PEOPLE
AS A WHOLE



Paper of the Troops Out Movement 30p

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The RUC~a law to themselves

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EDITORIAL

War of words

Press reporting of recent events in Ireland has highlighted the media's power to distort reality and mould public opinion. The process is as old as the struggle itself.

Crucial to an understanding of news reporting is the context in which it is set. This is why the initial reports of the SAS shootings in Gibraltar were framed by an Army press release. This press release described the 'defusing of a bomb' and an 'immediate threat to life'. It was invented to ensure that initial press reports would be unquestioning and the Army's preferred context established. This served to obscure the wider context; of the refusal to publish the Stalker/Sampsom report on 'Shoot to Kill', the shooting dead of Aidan McAnespie in unexplained circumstances, the release of Private Thain after serving only two years for the murder of an unarmed civilian, and the rejection of the Birmingham Six appeal. The fact was that there had been a serious change in the 'acceptable levels' at which the war against Irish nationalists could be fought. Any unease that might have existed about this escalation was swamped by the applause for the SAS action.

In Belfast army forts were decorated with soldiers banners offering 'Free Holidays in Gibraltar - apply here', 'SAS 3 - IRA 0'. RUC officers, amongst other abuses, were seen to spit on the coffins of the three killed in Gibraltar as they were escorted across the border into 'Northern Ireland'. It was in this context that the funeral in West Belfast took place. The attack by Loyalists can be seen as a direct result of the licensing and cheering on of the SAS that occurred, both in the press and in Parliament.

The response of the press to this attack was to again obscure its immediate historical context and revert to racist stereotypes. "ALL IN THE NAME OF GOD" shouted the *Mirror*, "Tribal violence flares at Ulster funeral" said the *Mail*. The *Star* saw fit to declare the IRA volunteers "were buried, as they lived, in violence and hatred". Not much room for any sympathy for the terror stricken people at the graveside. The courageous crowd that gave chase to the killer, thereby averting greater casualties, were labelled a "mob".

The deaths of two soldiers at the funeral of Kevin Brady, an IRA volunteer who was killed trying to protect mourners at the Milltown cemetery, provoked the most extreme racism. The press performed such remarkable feats of distortion that by the end of the day two soldiers who had driven a car at high speed into an entirely peaceful crowd of mourners, produced pistols and fired a shot, were being hailed as 'heroes' who 'showed remarkable restraint'. The crowd was characterised as 'barbarous', 'depraved', 'alien' and 'perverted'. Irish people were presented as savage, primitive beasts.

Reporting of this kind creates and condones hostility to Irish people in general, and to the struggle for British withdrawal in particular. Its effect is two-fold, contradictory and complementary. On the one hand British weariness with the war is compounded. This is reflected in opinion polls that show a clear sentiment for withdrawal.

However the overall effect is one that characterises the Irish as primitive and uncivilised. The inference being that the British in Ireland are 'different', 'better' and that they represent reason and order.

The *Sun* 'editorial' put it this way. "Should we pull our troops out of Ulster? Should we leave the fanatics on both sides of the religious chasm to wipe each other out?" 'No', they say, "that attitude is understandable. It is also wrong. The government cannot abdicate its responsibility for law and order in the province."

The press reinforces the image of Britain as the 'reluctant' but 'honourable' arbiter in a dispute amongst 'barbarous natives'. Unfortunately the racist sentiments of the *Sun* more accurately reflect the established consensus than the lame and contradictory appeals from the *Mirror* for a British withdrawal.

There are many people in England, Scotland and Wales who will not be intimidated by this latest torrent of abuse and racism. There are many who will refuse to be a party to distortion and injustice. In 1971 US Senator Hiram Johnson declared "The first casualty when war comes is the truth." The first truth we need to recognise to build an effective movement for a British withdrawal is that there is a war going on in "Northern Ireland".

Troops Out Movement

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

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

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

Troops Out Paper

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

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

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Censorship in Ireland

In both Britain and the 26 Counties of southern Ireland the relationship between the State and the broadcasting authorities is roughly similar. In both countries the broadcasting companies are supervised by Government appointed bodies. The Government does not exercise direct legal control. Both governments however have the legal power to stop, broadcasters from transmitting either specific programmes or any specified class of material.

When the conflict in the Six Counties of Northern Ireland intensified in the late sixties and early seventies, the Irish government brought its censorship powers into effect. In 1971 Jerry Collins of Fianna Fail invoked Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act, issuing a directive to RTE (the Irish State Broadcasting company) to refrain from broadcasting any matters that could be seen 'to promote or encourage any political objectives by violent means'.

A new directive in 1973 by the coalition government banned any interviews with paramilitary organisations and their political representatives. Neither directives banned the reporting or analysis of violent events, or the discussion of it on current affairs programmes, provided that members of these organisations were not involved in the discussion.

The result of these restrictions effectively means that the democratically elected voice of the nationalist community in the Six Counties is silenced. Irish journalists cannot interview legally elected Irish politicians on national radio or TV.

JENNY McGEEVER

It is out of this legislation that RTE announced its decision to sack Ms Jenny McGeever, on 21st of March this year. McGeever was covering the funeral procession of the three Irish people killed in Gibraltar by the SAS for the RTE radio programme "Morning Ireland". McGeever was on the scene at the border when Sinn Fein and the RUC were negotiating the entry of the funeral into the Six Counties. The alleged breach of Section 31 occurred as a result of a few words spoken by Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein and the start of a sentence by Gerry Adams. They were replying to a question as to what they felt about the confrontation with

the RUC. Their voices went on air before the RTE producers realised who they were. As soon as they did, the transmission was abruptly cut off.

SUSPENSION

The Fianna Fail government, in harmony with the other parties of the Republic, voiced their fury at such a breach of Section 31 as well as other coverage of the funeral, which they claimed verged on 'reverence'. On the same day RTE announced that Ms McGeever was being suspended without pay pending a disciplinary hearing. The hearing was arranged for the next day. McGeever appealed for an adjournment to allow her to prepare her case. RTE, bowing to political pressure, refused to adjourn and dismissed her for 'deliberate breach of Section 31'. They also started disciplinary action against both of the programmes' editors, but they have since been exonerated of any 'blame'.

UNION

The sacked journalist's colleagues failed to abide by their own unions policy of opposition to Section 31. This policy includes full backing for any member, victimised by the Act, including industrial action.

The Broadcasting Branch of the NUJ in Ireland is dominated by members of the Workers Party, who support Section 31. They adopted a position of 'qualified support' for Ms McGeever, on the grounds of 'mitigating circumstances', i.e., *"That the alleged breach was technical and not planned and that it arose from pressure of time, work and a certain amount of confusion in the mind of the reporter concerned."* With friends like this...

PURPOSE

The purpose of Section 31 is to censor any nationalist views that transcend the superficial rhetoric of the organisations of the state.



A picket outside RTE headquarters. Photo AP/RN.

COMMON CAUSE

If the media were allowed to report the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth to the population of the 26 Counties of Ireland, we might well see a different situation

emerging. This situation has been fearfully described by the *Irish Independent* newspaper as 'a subtly emerging suggestion that once again we in the Republic have some kind of common cause with those who wage the armed struggle in our name'.



Joe Kennedy in Belfast. Photo AP/RN.

Brit rude to Yank shock

American Congressman Jo Kennedy caught the flavour of British occupation on his visit to the Six Counties last month.

Kennedy was being shown around Divis flats in West Belfast by the local priest, Fr. Wallace. A soldier stopped the car they were travelling in and ordered them out in an abusive fashion. As Kennedy was objecting, the soldier grabbed him by the arm. 'Take your hands off me' he protested, only to be told to 'Sod off back to your own country'. Kennedy replied 'Why don't you get back to yours'.

The whole event took place in front of TV cameras and was very reminiscent of David Mellors' remarks to an Israeli officer in the occupied West Bank. Like the Junior Foreign Minister, Jo Kennedy is no radical. Just as Mellor refused to meet representatives of the PLO, Kennedy refused to meet members of Sinn Fein.

Later on his trip, Kennedy was treated to another example of sectarianism when an RUC man refused to shake his hand. The officer explained 'My overtime doesn't cover shaking Congressmen's hands.'

Defend the clinics

Internationally access to abortion is under attack, with women's hard-won rights being eroded in many countries. In Britain we face the threat of David Alton's bill which, if passed, will reduce the time limit for abortion from 28 to 18 weeks. In Ireland the anti-choice forces are well entrenched and on the offensive. Abortion is illegal in both the North and South of Ireland. Britain's 1967 Abortion Act has never applied to the six counties due to Unionist veto, and so any woman from the North wanting an abortion must travel to England. In the 26 counties not only is abortion completely illegal but now even to give advice about abortion is a civil wrong.

In 1984 the Southern constitution was amended to give the foetus rights equal to those of the mother. Following their amendment victory the leading Irish anti-choice organisation, The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) targeted the two Dublin-based pregnancy counselling services Open Line and the Well Woman Clinic for attack. The clinics' crime, in the eyes of SPUC, was to offer non-directive counselling which included discussion of the option of abortion. If a woman decided that she wanted to terminate her pregnancy the Open Line or Well Woman counsellor would then refer her to an abortion clinic in England.

THE HAMILTON RULING

SPUC took the clinics to court, saying the counselling service went against the 1984 constitutional amendment. The result of the legal action was a decision by High Court Justice Hamilton in favour of SPUC which made it illegal for any person or organisation named under the injunction to give any information which could lead to a woman procuring an abortion.

The Hamilton decision ended the counselling service of the two clinics and created an atmosphere of fear and self-censorship around the issue of abortion. In defiance of the High Court ruling Open Line director Ruth

Riddick publicly stated advice and information were available through her home phone number.

CLINICS CAMPAIGN

The Campaign to Defend the Clinics was launched in January 1987 to make sure information about abortion was still available and to agitate against the Hamilton ruling. The campaign's first step was to produce a fact-pack on abortion listing all the options available to women, which was then distributed to a range of groups throughout Ireland to spread the information as widely as possible. The campaign itself has spread beyond Dublin and there are now Defend the Clinics groups in Cork, Galway and Belfast. As the Belfast group says in one of their leaflets the aim "is to confront the politicians and have the ban on information lifted and in the meantime make the law unworkable by publicising the censored information."

Mary O'Carroll of the Dublin group says other campaign activities include leafleting and setting up information stalls in the streets, marches, pickets, public meetings, petitioning as well as printing postcards and T-shirts with the telephone number of the helpline the group has set up on them. O'Carroll says the street leaflet-

ing and petitioning is encouraging for the campaigners because "there seems to be a lot of support out there for us."

Probably the most important achievement of the campaign has been establishing telephone helplines in Dublin, Cork and Belfast which provide non-directive pregnancy counselling and information on abortion for women who want it. O'Carroll says that the self-censorship in the Irish media is such that when the campaign has staged pickets the helpline phone number has been tipped out of photographs printed in the newspapers. Despite the efforts of the campaign, the phone number is never listed by the media and the campaign itself gets minimal press coverage.

APPEAL DECISION

In February of this year Open Line and Well Woman launched a Supreme Court appeal against the Hamilton ruling. On March 16 the court dismissed the appeal, and upheld the High Court order restraining the clinics from assisting women leaving Ireland to have abortions. However the Supreme Court omitted the word 'counselling' from its ruling, "We are not letting the appeal decision affect our work. We are continuing to counsel women," says O'Carroll of the helpline's position. "The decision appears to mean counselling can go on now provided no information is given on abortion or travel arrangements or the numbers of clinics in England. It's a farce."

The women who do the helpline counselling are in defiance of the Hamilton ruling and could conceivably be hauled before the courts and if they say they will continue to

give information could face long jail sentences. O'Carroll says when Ruth Riddick offered her phone number as a source of information SPUC said they felt obliged to do something about it. In addition to legal hounding of counsellors, O'Carroll says SPUC may push for legislation spelling out the implications of the constitutional amendment and for the banning of the I.U.D. and the morning-after pill.

Support for the Defend the Clinics campaign from outside Ireland is very important, she says. It's helped the campaign to exchange information and make links like around the Fight the Alton Bill Campaign. O'Carroll says the Alton Bill is a serious threat not just to women in Britain because even though Irish women make up a small proportion of the women who have late abortions in Britain, that number more than doubled in the first six months after the Hamilton ruling. It is taking women longer to get the information and then the money together which means later abortions.

O'Carroll says besides opposing Alton it's important to raise awareness of the abortion situation in the Irish community in Britain. There should be more support available to the thousands of Irish women who come over each year to have abortions she says, like the exemplary work done by the London-based Irish Women's Abortion Support Group. "We need to start talking about abortion and break down the silence," she says.

Any financial or other assistance would be warmly welcomed by the campaign. Contact them at 6 Crow St. Dublin tel. 771974 or c/o Falls Women's Centre Falls Rd. Belfast tel. 327672 or via London Women's Abortion Support Group tel 01-251-6332.

Defend the Clinics take the message to the streets. Photo AP/RN.





Join delegation to Ireland this August

The 10th annual delegation to Belfast will be from August 12th to August 15th this year. Organised by the Troops Out Movement and hosted by Sinn Fein, the delegation will consist of around 120 people who will spend four days in West Belfast staying, meeting and socialising with local people and Sinn Fein activists.

The weekend of the delegation has a double significance for the Nationalist people of the Six Counties. August '14th is the anniversary of the sending in of British troops in 1969. A key event of the time in Belfast will be delegates' participation in the annual march commemorating the introduction of internment on August 9th 1971. 1988 also marks 20 years since the first demonstrations of the Civil Rights Movement.

HOSTS – LOCAL FAMILIES

Delegates will stay with local families. They may learn as much from their hosts as from all the workshops, meetings and tours of the weekend put together. Geraldine Egan, President of Birmingham Trades Council, said after one delegation. "It had been one thing to read about and discuss the situation in the North, it is another to sit with people who recount their experiences. The raids, the harrassment, the strip-searches, the torture; the total barbarity comes home".

"If ordinary people knew what goes on in Ireland the troops would be out. Public opinion would have them and the Government out. Until other miners and trade unionists have seen what we've seen I think everything will remain the same".

Miner after 1984 Delegation

FULL PROGRAMME

Delegates will be able to take part in a very full programme of events over the four days. Last year there included:

- Workshops: on Sinn Fein politics,

plastic bullets, prisoners in English jails, women, trade unions, and culture.

- Meetings: with Concerned Teachers, Sinn Fein Press Officers, Students Against Oppression, and Sinn Fein Youth.
- Visits to Divis Flats, Falls Rd Women's Centre, Milltown Cemetery, an Irish Primary School, an unemployed centre, and local bookshops.

In the evenings delegates can choose between any number of social events. From ceilis to Republican clubs, visitors receive an enthusiastic welcome, as in all their contacts with the locals. One delegate from the medical staff union ASTMS observed: "What is extraordinary to English eyes is the highly visible politicisation of ordinary people. It was astonishing to see how people came out of their houses and applauded us, simply because we had come to see for ourselves and to oppose the British army."

"It was an experience which has had an immediate impact on our consciousness and will stay with us for the rest of our lives."

20 delegates from Women Against Pit Closures after 1986 Delegation.

COMMON EXPERIENCES

The delegation is open to individuals and delegates who want to see and learn from the situation in Ireland. There are many common experiences which link those in struggle in both Ireland and Britain. The delegation provides the opportunity for recognising the connections and for an exchange of ideas with the Nationalist

people of the North.

Delegates are particularly welcome from trade unions, Irish organisations, women's groups, Black organisations, and lesbian and gay groups. Priority will also be given to those who will use their experiences on the delegation to work towards withdrawal from Ireland.

Most delegates will travel together from several main areas. Branches of the Troops Out Movement will organise passage by train or minibus to Stanraer and then to Belfast by ferry and coach.

"The thing that struck me most forcefully from talking to people as a Labour Party activist in this country was the despair with which they regard the Labour left in this country. And not just the Labour left but the Labour movement generally, and the total absence of any understanding within the Trade Unions of what's actually happening in the North of Ireland and what should be done about it".

GLC Labour councillor after 1982 Delegation

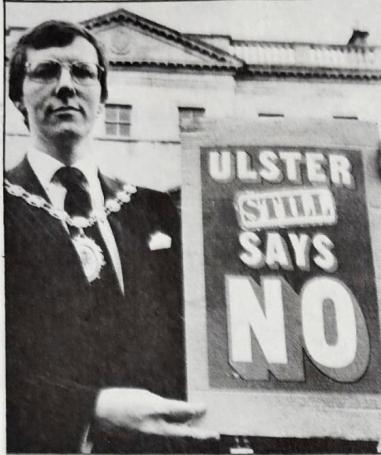
COSTS

All costs of the delegation are kept to a minimum and there are reductions for unwaged people. Potential delegates should consider the possibility of being sponsored by their trade union or other organisations to which they belong. Every year Troops Out branches raise money to sponsor a number of delegates who would otherwise be unable to join the delegation.

UPLIFTING

Some delegates may be surprised by the uplifting and inspiring effect participating in the delegation will have on them. Activists from Britain go to Ireland not only to see the cost of the British occupation of Ireland, But also to talk to and to learn from a people in struggle – a risen people.

Speaking at the recent funeral in Belfast of Kevin Brady, Sinn Fein member Danny Morrison explained: "We are ruled by liars and bullies and we are under anti-nationalist laws. But we are no longer second-class citizens, though our social and economic conditions remain unchanged. We are first-class citizens because we are striving for peace and a just society".



Peter Robinson. Photo AP/RN.

Efforts to pose it as a generous attempt to stretch out across the sectarian divide are exposed by the continued sectarian murder campaign and the attendance at funerals of the likes of John McMichael and John Bingham by leading Unionist politicians.

Jim Molyneaux, leader of the Official Unionist Party (OUP) has been making very conciliatory statements about power sharing and discussions with the SDLP and even the Taoiseach, Charles Haughey. Such statements would have been unheard of three years ago. But for the past two years Molyneaux and Ian Paisley have been fighting unsuccessfully the paper tiger of the Anglo Irish agreement and they are desperate to be involved in some sort of political momentum. One of the effects of that agreement has been to undermine the Unionists trust in the British government. The pro-Unionist daily the *Ulster News* in an editorial in April said that "The Northern Ireland Office should be seen as part of the problem, and not part of the solution." It went to argue that the British government was not interested in peace in N. Ireland because of the cost of reconstruction and called for Unionist and SDLP politicians to reach some sort of an internal (to Northern Ireland) political solution.

PAISLEY

Ian Paisley makes occasional noises threatening not to go along with this scenario, but his position as a hardline keeper of the Unionist Holy Grail has been considerably weakened. His failure, despite mobilising large numbers of loyalists on to the street, to develop any strategy which would undermine the Anglo Irish agreement has left him with little alternative. His position has also been weakened by having to welcome Peter Robinson back as deputy leader of his party within a few months of his resignation. Robinson resigned late last year because of the lack of support he got from Ian Paisley and the rest of the DUP leadership when he put forward similar proposals about power sharing.

Unionism - going nowhere fast

Unionism, that political philosophy built on the slogan 'No Surrender' continues to try to find some sort of future it can say yes to. The mainstream politicians are reluctantly considering some sort of power sharing while the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) vent their frustration in an upsurge of sectarian killings.

MOLYNEAUX

Jim Molyneaux's position has been strengthened by the disarray of the Campaign for Equal Citizenship (CEC). During the eighties the Official Unionist Party has been divided between those who felt the best way forward was full integration with Britain i.e. Northern Ireland would be just like Yorkshire, and those who felt that there should be a return to some sort of self government for Northern Ireland. The integrationists formed the Campaign for Equal Citizenship which pursued their case vigorously leading to a big argument at the 1986 OUP conference. Just before the 1987 general election, the OUP expelled Bob McCartney, the best known member of CEC. He subsequently stood on an integrationist ticket, and despite a good poll lost to the sitting MP James Kilfeather.

MCCARTNEY

This failure to win a seat created tensions within the CEC which eventually exploded in February of 1988 when Bob McCartney resigned. He had increasingly come into conflict with other members of the executive over strategy. These were also members of B&ICO (British and Irish Communist Organisation) a small but

active Unionist group who put their case in left wing terms. As well as helping found the CEC, B&ICO members also run the Campaign for Labour representation which argues that the Labour party should recruit and participate in N. Ireland elections. Bob McCartney's resignation left the CEC without a well known figure-head and little base in the Official Unionist Party.

PARAMILITARIES

Jim Molyneaux's position has also been strengthened by the weakness of the two loyalist paramilitary organisations, the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). The UDA suffered a serious blow when the IRA assassinated John McMichael their military leader last December. McMichael was also the public face of the organisation and there has been much internal dissension since his death. In March the 'supreme commander' Andy Tyrie was forced to resign and since then the organisation has been run by a seven man executive. This executive has not developed the political line which John McMichael had been arguing, in reality a form of power sharing, but did say they were going to step up activity against the



etting

IRA. Within twenty four hours they murdered Charles McGrillen a young catholic supermarket worker with no Republican connections.

The UDA has also had major internal difficulties because of the involvement of senior figures in racketeering and the seizure of a large cache of arms including rocket launchers and grenades by the RUC. The arms were part of a consignment brought in conjunction with the UVF. The UDA is believed to have lost all it's share while the UVF lost half theirs.

IRA ATTACKS

Arms seizures are not the only problem the UVF has suffered over the past couple of years. After a spell of sectarian killings in North Belfast the IRA assassinated John Bingham, the UVF leader in the area in September 1986. The following April they also shot dead his number two, William Marchant. In July of 1987 the IRA planned to assassinate the leader of the UVF in Belfast but he escaped. The accuracy of the intelligence information held by the IRA severely rattled them and has caused major internal difficulties as the attack on John McMichael created much mutual suspicion amongst UDA members over how the IRA got the necessary information.

The internal difficulties of the UDA and the UVF have not prevented them from carrying out sectarian killings though, and the shooting of Charles McGrillen heralded a week in which four more were to die as a result of sectarian attacks. Twenty four hours after his



Ian Paisley. Photo AP/RN.

death Michael Stone attacked mourners at Milltown cemetery, killing three, Kevin Brady, Thomas McErlean, and John Murray.

Both the UDA and the UVF denied that Michael Stone was a member, but the quantity of hand grenades and the type of handguns used showed clearly that he was not a lone operator but had been supplied by one of these organisations. His attack was a vicious escalation of the campaign of sectarian killings waged by the UDA and the UVF particularly since the signing of the Anglo Irish Agreement. The following day Kevin Mulligan died eight months after being shot by the UDA. His stomach was so badly damaged he was unable to digest his food and starved to death.

CRISIS

Unionism has been in crisis since the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement took to the streets twenty years ago. As the demand for civil rights developed into opposition to British rule, that crisis deepened. For the first time since the formation of N. Ireland in 1921 the argument was directly between the British government and those fighting for a united and free Ireland. The unionists were bypassed and only came into the argument when the British government wished to make use of them.

The decision by the government to go over their heads and try and make some sort of an agreement with the Dublin government (albeit about border security) was a particularly humiliating blow leading ironically to a strategy involving power sharing being advocated by Jim Molyneaux and the Official Unionist Party. It is ironic because it is being put forward on the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Civil Rights Movement, with whom the them Unionist government fought tooth and nail to avoid sharing any sort of power. It is also a type of solution which is twenty years out of date and is an attempt by a dying political movement to gain some credibility.

COMING EVENTS

SOUTH LONDON TOM / IRISH PRISONERS APPEAL

BENEFIT

The Screaming Ab Dabs

+ **The Popticians**

Saturday 21st May

Venue: The Old White Horse,

Brixton Road. Nearest tube: Brixton

Time: 8pm LATE BAR. £2 admission

EAST LONDON

EAST LONDON TOM

The C.P.I., The USSR and Ireland

Liberty Hall, 489 Kingsland High St. E8

May 3rd 7.30pm

LONDON

HARINGEY TOM

Video — Strip Searching —

Security or Subjugation.

Tottenham Library

30th May 7.30pm

LEEDS

LEEDS TOM

Jim McCabe (United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets)

The West Indian Centre, Laycock Place, Leeds 7

5th May 8pm

LONDON

UNITED CAMPAIGN AGAINST PLASTIC BULLETS

Picket of Downing St,

May 19th 12 noon



Unionists protest at summit meeting in Dublin. Photo AP/RN.

A protestant force for a

The RUC is an armed, paramilitary, sectarian force whose function is to defend the Loyalist position by maintaining the sectarian state and keeping the nationalist population in subjugation. This is why it was established and this is still its function today. The force is not an impartial peace-keeper between conflicting political factions, it is a major faction in the conflict itself. The RUC has its own political goals and is highly adept at manoeuvring to achieve them.

In much of the recent discussion about RUC reform, particularly following the Stalker affair, the impression has been given that the problem of the RUC is that it contains a number of "bad apples" who are being protected within the force. Many reformist figures say that it is difficult for the RUC to be acceptable to the nationalist community so long as the force contains the individuals who carried out the shoot to kill policy. This attitude completely misses the point.

The RUC is unacceptable by its very nature not just because of the actions of individual members. It has never been a normal police force in a normal state. Just as the northern Irish state was established on a sectarian basis so its police force was recruited as a sectarian force. Throughout its 76 year history the RUC has been condemned for its sectarianism in every decade. The RUC and the 'B Specials' have been to the forefront in sectarian attacks on Catholics consistently from the pogroms of the twenties right up to the attacks on nationalist funerals in recent years. Today the force is still 90% Protestant in its membership.

UVF RECRUITS

When the RUC was established in 1922 its members were quite blatantly recruited from the UVF of the day. The new force



was much more than just a name change from Royal Irish Constabulary to Royal Ulster Constabulary. The Loyalist establishment had already set up an Ulster Special Constabulary in 1920 because they were unhappy about the promotion of Catholics in the RUC and because they wanted to legitimise UVF attacks on Catholics. As Sir James Craig told the British cabinet,

... it may be advisable to see what steps can be taken towards a system of organised reprisals against the rebels, mainly in order to defeat them, but partly to restrain our own followers from acts which are regrettable and in a large measure ineffective...

When the formation of the USC was announced the head of the UVF wrote to all Belfast battalions saying

There is no reason why the UVF should not furnish all the numbers required... enrolment forms could be collected from any suitable centre, e.g., UVF battalion headquarters, and sent in bulk.

It was this USC which formed a large proportion of the RUC in 1922 and one section of the USC the 'B Specials' continued as a local Loyalist militia until 1969 when it was replaced by the UDR.

The RUC and 'B Specials' acted as the strong arm of the sectarian state throughout its history. An Orange lodge specifically for RUC men was established in January 1923 and it was generally believed that membership was necessary or at least helpful for advancement in the force. The RUC was openly identified with the Orange Order, not a situation likely to encourage many Catholics to join the force. In 1936 the National Council for Civil Liberties criticised the RUC for being manifestly biased and accused them of *having an attitude of aggressiveness which easily degenerates into abuse and intimidation, or in extreme cases into police terrorism.*

In 1969 the RUC and 'B Specials' along with Loyalist mobs attacked Catholic areas so heavily that the British Army was sent onto the streets partly in order to protect Catholics from the RUC. Following the outrage over the RUC's reaction to the Civil Rights campaign an attempt was made to reform the force.

The Hunt committee made a number of recommendations including the disbanding of the 'B Specials', the establishment of a police authority and the demilitarisation of the force by the removal of revolvers, rifles, machineguns armoured



RUC attack pall bearers at Derry volunteers' funeral. P

cars and other weapons and by relieving it of military duties. A London policeman Sir Arthur Young was appointed Chief Constable to implement the reforms.

UNREFORMABLE

Although the RUC was temporarily disarmed it proved impossible to reform. Many of the Hunt recommendations were never implemented or were circumvented. One of Young's more symbolic reforms was to introduce blue uniforms as worn by all police forces in Britain. This proposal caused such a reaction that there was a near mutiny among RUC officers in Derry and the idea was quickly dropped.

The RUC was transformed during the seventies, though not in the way that the Hunt committee intended. Throughout the period the force was expanded and upgraded beyond all recognition. The ending of internment, the setting up of the Diplock courts and the extraordinary powers contained in the Emergency Provisions Act and the Prevention of Terrorism Act all meant a much greater role for the RUC.

PARAMILITARY POLICE

The British Government policy was summed up in the phrase 'Normalisation, Criminalisation, Ulsterisation'.

Since they could not win the war they tried to redefine it. The violence was downgraded from a war to mere criminal activity. In order to maintain this pretence, use of the army and military

protestant people



Photo AP/RN.

methods was replaced by use of police and courts. Internment was replaced by the conveyor belt system of arrest... seven day detention... interrogation and torture in Castlereagh... Diplock court appearance... to HMP The Maze (cellular) as Long Kesh was tastefully renamed.

Under Kenneth Newman specialist units and Regional Crime Squads were set up. A special interrogation centre was opened at Castlereagh to provide a steady stream of confessions which made the 94% conviction possible in the Diplock courts.

TORTURE

With the new role for the RUC came a new confidence regarding how far it could go and how much it could get away with. Shortly after Castlereagh was established it became public knowledge that its purpose was to torture people into signing confessions. Whenever there was any public criticism of this torture the response of the RUC was not any easing off in torture but massive and sustained attacks on the critics.

SMEARS

A more laughable claim was that very serious injuries were being self-inflicted in order to discredit the force. The ruthlessness of RUC propaganda was shown when a police doctor in Castlereagh, Dr Irwin exposed torture and asserted that it was impossible for many of the wounds to have been self inflicted. Within hours of Dr Irwin's allegations being broadcast the RUC began to

circulate smears about the doctor claiming that he had a grudge against the force because his wife had been raped and the RUC had failed to charge the soldier responsible. The RUC press office did not hesitate to publicise this traumatic experience in order to silence Dr Irwin.

Even after Amnesty International investigated 78 cases in 1978 and found that "malreatment had taken place with sufficient frequency to warrant an inquiry" the torture still continued. It was almost a year later before the Northern Ireland Office grudgingly published the Bennett report and made some moderation of practices in Castlereagh.

SHOOT TO KILL

Far from being chastened by publicity of the torture the RUC's response was to refine its methods in Castlereagh so that beatings were replaced by more effective psychological pressure and the use of supergrasses. At the same time the RUC death squad, the SAS trained Headquarters Mobile Support Unit was operating its shoot to kill policy (or as John Stalker describes it, not so much a written down policy, more a shoot to kill tendency), shortcircuiting the need for any trial. These RUC killings in the winter of 1982-3 were just a heightened phase of a consistent RUC policy of attacks on nationalist people. Since 1969 over 48 innocent people have been killed by the force.

HERMON RULES

When John Hermon replaced Kenneth Newman as Chief Constable in 1980 he refused to meet politicians to discuss security. Simultaneously with his appointment the primacy of the RUC was reaffirmed by the appointment of Sir Maurice Oldfield to co-ordinate intelligence and smooth over disagreements between the army and the RUC. Since that time John Hermon has come to dominate security policy to such an extent that he does not so much implement government policy as dictate it. It was very clear for example that the Secretary of State did not even know what was going on much less take decisions either in relation to the shoot to kill investigation or the recent RUC manipulations of funerals.

The RUC operates today as a military force in many areas, it does not police at all in the normal sense but goes in as an invading force. It arrives heavily armed in flak jackets and armoured land-rovers to pick someone up for questioning, ready to quell any local resistance with plastic bullets. With its special legal powers of arrest and interrogation it does not need to have the type of links with the community necessary to carry out an investigation. For most RUC members the only contact with the population of nationalist areas is through the lens of a surveillance camera or the sights of a gun.

POLICE STATE

The phrase 'police state' is a glib one that can easily be thrown about with very little meaning but in the north of Ireland it is a very harsh reality. Not just in the sense that the population are heavily policed but also to the extent that the RUC are directing public policy in many areas in the name of security. Policing in the six counties is a testing ground for measures which are then adopted in Britain just as Kenneth Newman put his RUC experience to use in the London Metropolitan Police. This applies not just to riot control tactics but to much more fundamental areas. The 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act for example contains many provisions borrowed from the Emergency Provisions Act and the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Speaking at a Troops Out Movement meeting in Leeds last month Ken Livingstone pointed out "Britain has the most extensive apparatus of spying on the population of any nation, no military dictatorship has such a sophisticated system. This has never been debated in parliament."

As the RUC has been given more power in order to carry out Britain's dirty work the force has developed into an equal partner in deciding security policy with the government. When the RUC acted as the front line in holding in check Loyalist opposition to the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the force gained a great deal of leverage with the British Government. This leverage was obviously used to protect members from prosecution in the shoot to kill saga and used so effectively that it seems the RUC tail is wagging the British government dog.



Cover-ups and dirty tricks

Ken Livingstone speaks out for troops out

On Friday 25th March 1988 Ken Livingstone MP spoke to 350 people at a public meeting organised by the Troops Out Movement at Leeds Trades Club.

There was standing-room only before the meeting began. After the lively meeting, one of the organisers from Leeds Troops Out Movement commented: "This was one of the biggest public meetings to be held in Leeds in recent years on any subject — and it is certainly the biggest on Ireland. It shows that not everyone is taken in by the anti-Irish propaganda of the British media, and the large turnout from Irish people shows the respect which Ken's outspoken views have earned him within the Irish community. Recent events in Belfast have only made British withdrawal even more urgent. Ken Livingstone is one of the few British politicians to recognise that to end the war you need a political solution — a solution based on removing the root cause, the British presence."

Livingstone dealt at length with the work of the undercover 'security services' in Ireland.

"With Fred Holroyd, the former MI6 officer, and Colin Wallace, the former MI5 officer, we now have access to the knowledge about what was going on. Holroyd was in charge of MI6 operations in South Armagh over several years. He worked side by side with Captain Robert Nairac, and he saw Nairac come in one day with the photographs of the body of John Francis Green, a republican volunteer who has been assassinated the night before in Southern Ireland by a team of loyalist paramilitaries led by Robert Nairac.

Equally, and this is something I have confirmed with Merlyn Rees, Robert Nairac actually provided the guns and bombs for the loyalists who went out and killed the Miami Showband — simply because they wanted to unleash a wave of sectarian violence to end the ceasefire that was taking place at that time between the IRA and the Harold Wilson Government.

The information now being revealed by Colin Wallace is also important, because he wasn't



just any old MI5 officer. If you go back over old video tapes of Heath, Wilson or Callaghan flying in, walking around, visiting the troops. Its quite remarkable that there at the elbow of all of them was Colin Wallace. Colin Wallace was employed on a team called Clockwork Orange, to forge documents to discredit the Labour Government. They nearly pulled it off, Labour only won the October '74 election by one seat. They then set out to replace Wilson with someone more

acceptable to MI5, and they chose James Callaghan. At the same time, Edward Heath was replaced by Margaret Thatcher.

When the IRA negotiated a ceasefire with the Labour Government while Merlyn Rees was the Secretary of State, which lasted for months, that was a cause for concern in MI5, because a lot of them had this strange view that if Britain pulled out of Ireland it would become the Cuba of the North Sea — which seems to me another excellent

reason for pulling out of Ireland — and they didn't want to see anything that would show any credit to the IRA. Therefore they did everything possible to undermine it by sectarian violence.

If Thatcher is serious when she talks of all honest citizens co-operating to bring the guilty people to justice, some of the biggest murderers are actually walking the streets of this country and are most probably still serving in MI5 and have got away with it for years because it is Thatcher herself leading the cover-up.

There is not the slightest doubt that Airey Neave [Thatcher's Campaign agent in the '70s] knew at least the outline of what was going on. We have to be asked to believe that he never revealed or reported any of that to Margaret Thatcher. Well you can make up your own mind what credence you give to that possibility.

Eight days before his assassination in 1979 Airey Neave was preparing the next stage of the dirty tricks operation. He actually asked to see a former member of MI6 who had been involved in electronic surveillance. They met in the Cumberland Hotel, and Airey Neave told him that he was assembling a team of former MI5 and MI6 officers, who would be prepared to take action in the event that a Labour Government was re-elected in 1979 — and their prime objective was to prevent Tony Benn becoming leader of the Labour Party and Prime Minister of Britain. That officer had not the slightest doubt that Airey Neave was talking about the possible use of violence to prevent Tony Benn becoming Prime Minister."

Livingstone closed with an attack on the media and a call for withdrawal.

"The message we have to come back to every time is we want Britain out. We want the Irish to resolve their own development without the British presence. Because that's a powerful argument, because it actually resonates with the majority of people in Britain. Fleet Street's primary role is to prevent it ever being put forward."

We welcome contributions and feedback from our readers. Please send your letters to this address:
Troops Out, PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH.

Still hoping to say goodbye

Far more people in Britain want British Troops to be withdrawn from Northern Ireland than to stay, and for every one that wants Northern Ireland to remain part of the UK two disagree. These are the main findings of a recent MORI

poll published in the March edition of *The Economist*.

Under a heading "Still Hoping to Say Goodbye" the report can only give heart to readers of *Troops Out*. Not that there has been any major

shift in our direction since *The Economist* last polled over 2,000 people in 'mainland Britain'.

There hasn't. The main move in opinion since 1984 has been towards the

'Don't Knows'. But it yet again gives credence to what we have been saying for a long time, even though it is often hard to believe, and is supported by poll after poll, that a large proportion of British people want to leave Ireland.

TROOPS OUT

Exactly half of the respondents want British Troops to be withdrawn. 21% favour the TOM position of immediate withdrawal. Another 29% think that the troops should be withdrawn within a set time period.

Q. There has been a lot of discussion recently about whether or not Britain should withdraw her troops from Northern Ireland. In your view, do you think Britain should:

	1984	1988
Withdraw troops immediately	22	21
Withdraw them within a pre-set time period	31	29
Keep them there as long as the violence continues	38	35
Don't know	9	14



Photo Birmingham TOM

OPTIONS

The number of people who said unequivocally that the Six Counties should remain part of the UK has decreased a little to close to a quarter. Those wanting a union with the Irish Republic or an independent state have also dropped a little although jointly these number almost half of the respondents.

	1981	1984	1988
Union with the Republic	18	21	19
Independence	37	31	29
Remain part of the UK	29	30	27
Don't know	16	18	25

* * * * *

MONEY

Only 6% think that Britain should continue to spend as much in Northern Ireland as at present. The editorial in the same issue of *The Economist* agrees with this and asks, "Why continue annually to pour into the province over £1,000 more public money for every one of its ungrateful, (sic) people than is spent on the average Briton?"

	1984	1988
More	14	6
Less	37	29
About the same	40	52
Don't know	9	14

* * * * *

WELCOME

Interestingly the number of 'Don't Knows' has increased in all the questions. *The Economist* suggests that this is because of declining interest. However, it may also be due to increasing confusion brought about

by the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

Polls like this are always welcome because they show the views of the electorate which are not being voiced by any of the political parties. And who said Mori Poll is a Tory voter.

Camden TOM

Impartial Amnesty shocks Thatcher



When three unarmed IRA members were killed by the SAS in Gibraltar in March justification for killings centred, initially, on the claim that it saved lives and in addition; "the terrorists made moves which suggested to the security forces that their own lives were in danger." (Geoffrey Howe) Later it emerged that the three were unarmed and no bomb was found in the area. Amnesty International noting this wrote to the British Government requesting further information. Mrs Thatcher's reaction, mirrored by the rest of the rest of the category people who they

Conservative Party, was to slam their request as a 'disgrace'.

Amnesty's request centred on the fact that "there are a number of circumstances which suggest that the three were deliberately targeted by the security forces and killed without challenge, and no attempt had been made to capture them." Amnesty was neither passing judgement or criticising the actions.

Amnesty International's primary activity is on behalf of "prisoners of conscience" which they define as men and women imprisoned throughout the world for their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language and religion. "This role extends to the examination of "extra-judicial execution" (ie killings outside of the law). The organisation is by no means 'left-wing' or 'radical' as its constitution excludes from the category people who they

describe as ever having used or advocated violence. Thus with certain notable exceptions, such as their May 1978 report on the ill treatment of Republican prisoners on remand, they have been remarkably silent on the abuse of Human Rights in Northern Ireland.

THATCHER'S STANCE

The Financial Times took a rather more sombre view of Amnesty's request and slammed

Mrs Thatcher. "She is also resorting to something unpleasantly reminiscent of the stock response of every Third World dictator who has ever been embarrassed by Amnesty's." (2-4-1988)

Sickeningly the majority of Labour MP's have trailed behind Amnesty. Little support was given to Eric Heffer's questioning of Geoffrey Howe in Parliament. The Financial Times remarked: "Amnesty is certainly doing its job in raising these questions... and which should perhaps have been asked more insistently by... the parliamentary opposition..."

TV serves the State

'Either one is on the side of justice in these matters, or one is on the side of terrorism.'

It was with these words that Margaret Thatcher launched her campaign to gain possession of BBC and ITN film footage of the funeral of IRA volunteer Kevin Brady at which two undercover soldiers were killed. These are not the words with which she demanded the RUC hand over those elusive tapes John Stalker wanted in order to establish the circumstances surrounding the killing of Michael Tighe. Presumably neither did she quote herself 'a crime is a crime is a crime'. The refusal of the RUC to hand over the tapes passed with her silence.

GESTURE

The demand by the RUC for the untransmitted footage of the various film crews must be seen as more a gesture to assert their authority than an attempt to garner useful evidence. The funeral was being filmed by high resolution cameras from helicopters; this is apart from the video cameras that continuously monitor the streets of Belfast. Both the BBC and ITN

stated that they had no film of the killing, the untransmitted material was of the funeral before the soldier's car drove at it. Initially both stood firm and maintained that if the film was wanted a court order would be necessary. The following day the RUC went to the offices of the BBC and ITN, asked for the film in question and were given it. They asked for it under the provisions of the

Prevention of Terrorism Act (Section 11), the Northern Ireland Emergency Provisions Act and a section of the Criminal Law Act that applies only to Northern Ireland - all of which make it a crime to withhold 'alleged' evidence.

NOT NEUTRAL

The reasons the BBC initially put forward for their refusal to hand over the material were based on two issues. Firstly that by handing over the material their journalists and film crews would be placed at risk: by being perceived as 'agents of the state'. Secondly that their ability to cover events and thereby expose 'the terrorists' would be severely hampered. They did not maintain that they are neutral observers - rather that free access was the best means to expose and thereby defeat 'terrorism', and police use of their film would hamper free access. Margaret Thatcher, however, is on record as believing that 'terrorism' feeds on the oxygen of publicity - take away the cameras and you take away the problem.

In this case Margaret Thatcher won out largely as a result of the outrage worked up by the BBC and ITN coverage of the funeral. The NUJ has criticised the decision to hand over the material on the basis of the risk to the safety of their members and the threat to media independence the decision represents. The BBC and ITN could have done what the RUC had done and destroyed the tapes.

Benn puts the Bill in

A proposal for a British Withdrawal from Ulster was announced by Tony Benn on the 28th of March as he stepped up his challenge to Kinnock's right wing leadership of the Labour Party.

In direct defiance of Party policy he introduced his Northern Ireland 'Termination of Jurisdiction Bill', which gives January 1st 1990 as the final day of British rule in Ireland. "British Imperialism in Northern Ireland has brought only tragedy and violence" said Benn, "a firm decision to withdraw on a fixed date must be taken now."

The Bill is based on the wording of the legislation which led to the British withdrawal from Palestine in 1948. It only says at this stage that it will make provision 'with respect to the termination of Her Majesty's jurisdiction in Northern Ireland and for purposes connected therewith.'

Mr Benn, who has described his bill as a "timely initiative" says he wants it to become effective by 1990. However there is little chance of the Bill progressing further because of hostility both from within the Labour Party and from the Tories. The Bill is sponsored

by the Campaign Group of Labour MPs, who are supporting Benn's bid to wrest the Labour Party leadership from Kinnock. Among its supporters are Ken Livingstone, Bernie Grant and Dennis Skinner. Mr Benn said that the Anglo-Irish Agreement, like other policies imposed by the Westminster Parliament, has failed. A firm decision to withdraw on a fixed date must be taken now, if serious negotiations about the future are to begin, as they must, between the representatives of all the communities in the north and the Republic.

Kevin MacNamara, Labour's spokesperson on Northern Ireland slammed the Bill calling it 'stupid and looney' and saying that it is 'contrary to Labour Party Conference decisions, contrary to Trade Union wishes, contrary to the wishes of the majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party'. If this is so, perhaps Labour should bend an ear to what people are saying in the polls.

Fascist support for loyalist bigotry

This year Australia celebrates a bicentenary, next year France celebrates a bicentenary. Perhaps spurred by the desire not to be left out of the tourist booms that these centenaries are designed to encourage, Chesterfield is this year holding a tercentenary. As in Australia however, not everybody in Chesterfield will be celebrating.

The Labour controlled council has decided to spend £23,000 to mark the 300th anniversary of an invitation which was issued from a house near the city. The invitation was to King William of Orange from the Earl of Devonshire, as part of the plot to overthrow the catholic King, James II, and replace him with his daughter Mary and her husband. Viewed from an English perspective William of Orange is an uncontroversial figure, long since lost in the mists of time.

In Ireland however, where he is better known as 'King Billy', his memory has been kept alive by the Orange Order - an organisation of working class and ruling class protestants united by the notion of protestant supremacy. Every year 'King Billy's' victory at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 is celebrated by the Orange Order, with marches designed to show that Protestant supremacy still rules OK. The Loyalist marching season, centred around commemoration of the events of 1690, is associated with an increase in sectarian attacks and the intimidation of nationalist communities. The massive Lambeg drums, an invariable feature of these parades, were designed to instill fear in the nationalist communities. In the six counties of Northern Ireland William of Orange is the symbol of loyalist extremism and anti-catholic bigotry. In recent years British fascist groups have participated in these parades.

FASCIST SUPPORT

The Orange Order is planning to celebrate the anniversaries of 1688 in England, 1689 in Scotland and 1690 in Ireland. As detailed in the last issue, large events, for which the National Front and British National Party have said they are mobilising, are already planned for Exeter, where the Orange Order will holds its AGM in September. Large Orange Order parades which

seem certain to attract British fascist groups are being planned for Chesterfield, while other activities are planned for Norwich and Hull.



Fascist demonstrators show the loyalists' true colours.

Not flying the flag

Scottish police have been accused of having a partisan and sectarian attitude after they refused to allow Irish tricolours to be flown at a major Easter commemoration in Dumbarton. Despite the fact that a recent parade by the Apprentice Boys of Derry displayed UVF regalia through the town, police officers insisted that the march could not proceed with the Tricolour flying. A spokesperson for the march said "it is difficult to understand why such restrictions are placed on us and are not applied to Orange parades." The organisers pointed out that Dumbarton is a predominantly Catholic town with many Irish born living locally.

In a separate incident, Birmingham City council refused permission to fly the Tricolour over the City Hall on St. Patrick's Day. They said that "in the light of recent events it would be more politic not to fly the flag."

Plastic bullet campaign targets producers

West Yorkshire Against Plastic Bullets (WYAPB) are planning the long slow build up to a national demonstration calling on Standard Fireworks to terminate the production of plastic bullets.

WYAPB point out that Standard Fireworks control the production of plastic bullets in this country and that these bullets have been responsible for 16 deaths in Northern Ireland, seven of whom have been young children. The demonstration is planned for Saturday 8th October and will be in Huddersfield, the home of Standard Fireworks. The date marks the 20th anniversary of the Civil Rights march in Derry that was batoned to the ground by the RUC in front of TV crews from all over the world. On that day 77 civil rights marchers needed hospital treatment, mostly for bruises and lacerations to the head. 20 years later only the technology has changed.

OFFICIAL BACKING

The celebrations are being organised by the Mary and William Tercentenary Trust and have Foreign Office backing.

The publicity material is published by the Central Office of Information and printed by Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Labour councils supporting the celebrations cannot be unaware that William of Orange is not some historic relic but a living symbol of Britain's continued occupation of Ireland and the idea of protestant supremacy. Neither can they be unaware that the planned celebrations will be a focus for fascist activity in 1988.

If the celebrations go ahead as planned then many people in these towns are likely to experience the intimidation that is an annual event during the marching season in the north of Ireland.

WYAPB is made up of local groups like Troops Out, Labour Committee on Ireland, Irish in Britain Representation Group and the Direct Action Movement. For further details contact them at PO Box B20, Huddersfield, Yorkshire.

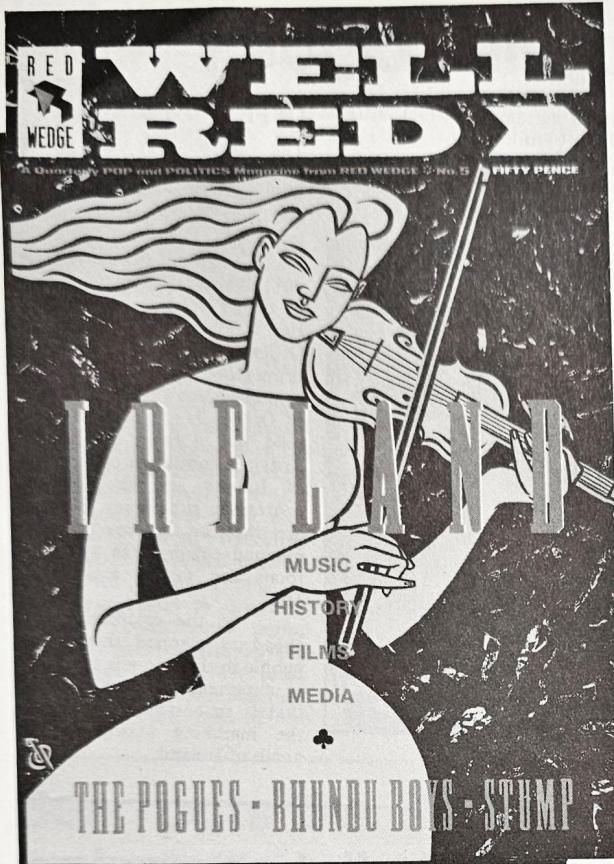
Prisoners' birthdays

Please remember to send cards and letters to the prisoners. Let them know they are not forgotten and make sure you use the number.

Joe O'Connell 33865
HM Prison Gartree, Market
Harborough, Leicester, LE16 7RP
15th May

Patrick Magee B75881
HM Prison Leicester, Welford Rd
Leicester LE2 7AJ
29th May

REVIEWS



WELL RED

50p

Well Red is the quarterly journal of the Red Wedge organisation. It calls itself "a magazine of pop and politics" and the current issue has a special emphasis on Ireland.

Some readers will be relieved to see a refreshing absence of anything about Ireland's best known pop icons, U2. Instead the weird and wonderful band of musical miscreants known as STUMP get a major feature. STUMP have played benefits for Irish solidarity organisations, and declare themselves to be very concerned about the level of ignorance amongst English people about Ireland.

There are also useful descriptions of other Irish bands such as The Hothouse Flowers, In Tua Nua, The Dingo Babies and St Vitus Dance. The Pogues inevitably get a big look in, with Spider Stacy, the tin whistle player, talking to the NME's David Quantick.

While I would recommend the magazine to readers I found the mixture of 'Pop' and 'Politics' a touch superficial and contrived. There is a potted history of Ireland from the 5th century to the present, which is attractively laid out and a good idea, but it contains too many glib historical generalisations to be comfortably digested by this reader.

eg. "PARTITION . . . Ulster, with the support of the Protestant majority there, remained British. A civil war broke out in the South between those Pro (Free Settlers) (sic) and Anti (Republican) partition, which the latter lost." Obviously it is difficult to condense 800 years of struggle into 4 pages but I have seen it done better elsewhere.

Things improve with articles on the life of James Connolly and on Irish literature, featuring Brendan Behan's *Borstal Boy*. There are two further features concerning Ireland. One concentrates on the media, while the other deals with the erosion of civil liberties. The article on the media opens with the statement "British complacency about the situation in Northern Ireland is compounded by the refusal to discuss all sides of the question." It is ironic then, that nowhere in *Well Red* is the case for British withdrawal put, nor is any mention made of organisations campaigning for withdrawal, such as Troops Out. This omission tends to reinforce a liberal myth that all one needs is an 'understanding' of Ireland and its history for the situation to change for the better.

Having said that, this issue of *Well Red* is very welcome in that it is obviously trying to put across some of the issues in a lively and accessible way.

Nick Del Rio

WORKING TOGETHER TO END STRIP SEARCHING

LSPU £1

This short booklet was produced by the now defunct London Strategic Policy Unit, (LSPU). The major part of the work features speeches made at a Conference last year held in London. In addition, the pre-conference information is included. The Conference itself was well attended with over 300 delegates and has paved the way for the establishment of the 'United Campaign Against Strip Searching'.

It may be thought that printing a booklet which 'simply' repeats the major speeches of a conference is a little unimaginative, but because of the varied nature of the speakers it is, in fact, highly informative and very interesting. With 16 speakers including women who had been strip searched, campaigners, legal and medical experts it is clear that a genuine attempt to discuss the political nature of strip searching was made.

Strip searching is now being used with increasing regularity. Its use as a method of further oppression on Irish women Republican prisoners was preceded in the late 70's by the virginity testing of young Asian women coming to

CROSSFIRE

BBC Television

A year ago *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, apparently on the basis of inside information, predicted that the £1 million five-part BBC series *Crossfire* would be 'one of the most ill-informed, ridiculous and anti-Irish drama series ever transmitted.' They were right, but they failed to guess that the series would also be grindingly tedious.

The author John McNeill, an Englishman and reportedly a 'former Home Office computer expert', evidently knew nothing about Irish politics. He claimed the series had 'no political message' and was 'just a thriller'. But in fact it carried a crude anti-Irish message in its plot and characterisation.

The story featured an English computer buff called Freddie - you could tell how reasonable he was just by looking at his brown cord jacket - who went to Belfast to help the ignorant RUC track down an IRA unit who had hijacked a milkfloat (!) and planted milk-bottle bombs on the doorsteps of British housewives.

The RUC, who after nearly two decades had not yet mastered the subtleties of computerisation, were represented by an officer with the unlikely nickname of Daisy (had the author misunderstood the name Désiré?). World-weary, likeable though bigoted, and interpreted by the actor with a slightly camp air, Daisy had unwise habits such as eating fish and chips every night in the same restaurant in front of a plate glass window.

Britain. It has now been extended, as the conference speakers demonstrated, to include black women in prison and on Broadwater Farm, peace campaigners and young women imprisoned for drug offences.

The sheer horror of being strip searched is described by Susie Granic who states: "When forcibly stripped naked we are stripped not only of our clothing, but of our dignity and sense of ourselves."

The booklet suffers from the fact that it does not have any reports from the workshops which were held throughout the Conference. As a result we are unable to find out whether the two Trade Union speakers, from ASTMS and COHSE, were willing to recognise that strip searching is part of the British oppression of Ireland. This will need to be argued within the newly formed United Campaign Against Strip Searching.

Working Together to End Strip Searching is only £1 and can be obtained from Green Ink Books, 8 Archway Mall, London N19. Tel: 01-263 4748. For more information on the United Campaign Against Strip Searching contact Patrick Sikorski, c/o Association of London Authorities, 36 Old Queen Street, London SW1.

Mark Metcalf

The IRA were a most curious collection of characters, ranging from elderly secondhand book-sellers to middle-aged thugs and young desperadoes, who were plentifully equipped with liquor, slovenly habits and curious accents: 'Slanter!' said a member of the 'army council' as he raised his glass and vainly tried to pronounce the Irish equivalent of 'cheers'.

In this scenario, it wasn't the British army or RUC who killed people with plastic bullets - it was the IRA, who killed hero Freddie's Catholic girlfriend with a plastic bullet to make it look as if the Brits had done it. Geddit?

There was some publicity a year ago when it emerged that the series had been delayed on orders from the BBC's Northern Ireland controller, who ordered that several scenes should be reshot. According to one of the actors, Tony Doyle, the BBC showed the film to RUC officers and then amended it to meet their criticisms. Doyle told the Sunday Press, 'In one line I said "The IRA has safe houses in Belfast." I had to change that to "The organisation has bridgeheads in Belfast." They are of the opinion that there are no safe houses in Belfast.'

A small change that speaks volumes, since it suggests that the IRA are a force external to Belfast, and not part of the nationalist community, and also that the 'security forces' are in control of the situation. Doubtless such subtleties were lost on the author, and even if he understood them, he wouldn't care.

Liz Curtis



FEBRUARY

26th

John Hume calls for talks between the SDLP and the Unionist parties, but is rejected by Unionist leaders.

28th

The Garda (Irish police) discover an arms cache containing some guns and 20,000 rounds of ammunition in the Bellivor area of Meath.

29th

IRA volunteers Brendan Burns and Brendan Moley are killed near Crossmaglen, Co Armagh, when the bomb they are handling explodes prematurely.

General James Glover, former head of Intelligence and commander of British troops in Ireland, says on the BBC Television programme *Panorama* that the IRA could never be defeated militarily and might continue its campaign until partition ended.

MARCH

1st

A car bomb attack on a UDR man in Cookstown, Co Tyrone, fails when the device falls off the car.

2nd

The Irish Taoiseach (PM) Charles Haughey rules out making any proposals on devolution in N. Ireland, thus threatening the all-party consensus on Anglo-Irish affairs in the Dail (Irish Parliament).

3rd

The body of IRA Volunteer Brendan Moley is found at the scene of the explosion that killed him four days earlier. No explanation is received from the British security forces about how his body came to be left there.

Finbar Cullen, John McCann and Martina Shanahan are committed for trial charged with conspiring together and with persons unknown to murder NI Secretary Tom King between May 1st 1987 and August 31st 1987. A second charge of conspiring to murder persons unknown is dropped as the magistrate considered it 'too vague.'

4th

Seven Irish people are detained by the police in London under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). They include a brother, a sister and a friend of Martina Shanahan, who were in London to attend her trial proceedings. Deirdre Whelan, Martina Shanahan's sister,

and three others are later served with exclusion orders, despite a request not to do so from the Irish Government.

5th

IRA Volunteers Brendan Burns and Brendan Moley are buried in separate funerals in Co Armagh. British security forces put on a massive show of strength at both funerals and attack mourners on several occasions.

6th

IRA Volunteers Mairead Farrell, Daniel McCann and Sean Savage are killed by an SAS unit in Gibraltar while on active service. They were unarmed at the time, and eyewitness accounts say that no attempt was made to arrest them. The British release a statement saying that a car packed with explosives had been found nearby. This was later shown to be false.

8th

Explosives are found in a car at Marbella by Spanish police. Meanwhile British PM Margaret Thatcher rules out any special enquiry into the Gibraltar killings. Irish Taoiseach Charles Haughey says that his Government was greatly perturbed by the shooting of three unarmed Irish people.

There is widespread rioting in Belfast for the third consecutive day.

A 1,600lb bomb is found and defused by the RUC near the border on the main Newry-Dundalk road.

Ken Livingstone MP uses parliamentary privilege to name two civil servants, Peter England and J.R. Imrie, as linked to the Kincora Boys Home homosexual scandal. His call for an independent inquiry into the scandal is again rejected by Margaret Thatcher.

10th

Over 60 British Labour Party MPs sign a motion denouncing the Gibraltar killings as 'an act of terrorism' and 'tantamount to capital punishment without trial'.

David Payne, a senior UDA member, is refused bail in Belfast accused of possessing a large quantity of guns and ammunition.

11th

Andy Tyrie resigns after 15 years as leader of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA). Tyrie had come under attack within the organisation for his failure to combat corruption. A car bomb placed under his car earlier in the week had been claimed by the Loyalist Peoples's Reaction Force, although Tyrie at the time

blamed Republicans for the attack. The UDA say his decision to go had been taken by mutual agreement.

The RUC call on the families of Mairead Farrell, Daniel McCann and Sean Savage to give a public undertaking that their funerals would take place 'within the rule of law'. If this was given, the RUC say they 'would respond accordingly'.

13th

A statement issued by the families of the IRA Volunteers killed in Gibraltar calls on the 'British forces to permit us dignity to bury our loved ones in peace'.

14th

IRA Volunteer Kevin McCracken is shot dead by a British Army patrol in the Turf Lodge area of West Belfast.

The bodies of Mairead Farrell, Daniel McCann and Sean Savage arrive at Dublin airport. The cortege then takes four hours to drive north to the border, with several thousand mourners lining the roadside. A heavy RUC presence surrounds the cortege from the border to Belfast.

IRA Volunteers fire a volley of shots over a memorial to their comrades killed in Gibraltar in a street off the Falls Road. A statement later says that the IRA 'has now paid its honour to its fallen volunteers' and indicates that there will be no paramilitary display at their funeral.

At a press conference the UDA announces that it is going to step up 'anti-IRA' violence.

British security forces discover a large amount of explosives in a house in Derry. No one is arrested.

15th

Charles McGrillen, a 25-year old Catholic, is murdered by a loyalist murder gang. He had no paramilitary connections.

RTE (Irish Television) suspend, and later dismiss, a journalist, Jenny McGeever, after an interview with Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein was broadcast. This contravened Section 31 of the Irish Broadcasting Act.

16th

Three mourners are killed when at least two loyalists make a grenade and gun attack on the funeral of the three IRA Volunteers killed in Gibraltar. The attack was made at Milltown cemetery after the funeral procession, the largest demonstration of republican support since 1981, had passed peacefully in the absence of a visible presence from the RUC. One of the attackers, Michael Stone, is captured after mourners give chase. He is later taken for questioning by the RUC.

Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams alleges RUC collusion in the attack. Those killed were Kevin Brady, John Murray and Tommy McErlean.

The IRA later name Kevin Brady as one of their Volunteers. There is later widespread rioting in West Belfast.

Kevin Mulligan, a Catholic shot by the UDA last year, dies in hospital following a relapse. He had no paramilitary connections.

17th

IRA Volunteer Kevin McCracken is buried in Belfast. Republicans provide their own tight security as British security forces again keep their distance. The funeral passes peacefully.

A large haul of weapons and explosives believed to belong to the IRA is discovered by Gardai in Co Cavan.

18th

Gillian Johnston, a Protestant, is killed by the IRA and her fiancee, Stanley Leggett, is seriously injured in Co Fermanagh. In a later statement, the IRA admit and apologise for the attack, saying that they had wrongly believed that Leggett was a member of the British security forces.

19th

Two British soldiers, Corporal Robert Howes and Corporal Derek Wood, are killed at the funeral of IRA Volunteer Kevin Brady after they had driven a car at high speed towards the funeral cortege. One of them draws a gun before they are captured and beaten by mourners. Shortly afterwards they are killed by the IRA.

21st

RUC Constable Clive Graham is killed by an IRA sniper in the Creggan area of Derry.

Michael Stone is charged in court with six murders, including the three deaths at the funeral in Belfast.

British and Irish television companies turn down requests from the RUC to had over untransmitted film of the events surrounding the death of the two British corporals.

The gate to Sinn Fein Councillor Brendan Curran's home is found booby-trapped with a grenade.

23rd

BBC and ITV back down and hand over untransmitted film to the RUC. A formal request was made that cited various laws but no court order was involved. RTE later accedes also.

The RUC issue a statement that indicates they will now abandon low-profile policing of republican funerals.

24th

An opinion poll in *Fortnight* magazine reveals that over 80% of Catholics in N. Ireland do not believe that the Anglo-Irish Agreement has made any difference to the nationalist community.

25th

The Anglo-Irish Conference meets in London. The atmosphere is described by the Tanaiste (Irish Deputy PM) Brian Lenihan as 'positive and constructive'.

It is revealed that British Attorney-General Sir Patrick Mayhew has agreed to provide his Irish counterpart with some evidence to back up extradition warrants. This had been a major stumbling block preventing further extraditions.

28th

Tony Benn introduces a Bill in the House of Commons to end British Rule in N. Ireland by 1990.

RESOURCES

"Ireland unseen will never be at peace. The fools, the fools, the fools they have left us our videos."

Ireland on video

Below we list the videos that are available from the Troops Out Movement. In addition we also recommend some other programmes and indicate where they are available from. The hire fee from TOM is £10/5 for funded/unfunded organisations, plus £1.50 for postage. For further details about any particular video contact the TOM office, PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH.

Annie Maguire. 60 minutes.
Framing of the Maguire family.
Birmingham 6. 50 minutes.
The Black and the Green. 40 minutes.
Informers.
The Shooting of Nora McCabe. 30 mins.
Plastic bullets cover up.
One Man's Word. 50 minutes.
The Supergrass Trials.
PDF (Prisoners' Dependents Fund).
Republican prisoners welfare work.
Planning. 20 minutes.
Labour planning for state control.
Plastic Bullets: the Deadly Truth.
60 minutes.

IRISH NEWS: British Stories (1984)

Faction Films (80 minutes, colour)

Using clips from current affairs and drama programmes, and employing unusual visual techniques, the film examines the way news from the north of Ireland is handled on British TV. It includes an interview with Gerry Adams MP about media representation of the republican movement, focussing on Sinn Fein's electoral victories in 1983 which came as a shock to some because the depth of feeling within the nationalist community is never adequately covered by the British media.

Available from *The Other Cinema*, 79 Wardour Street, London W1V 3TH and *Faction Films*, 28-9 Great Sutton St, London EC1.



THE CAUSE OF IRELAND (1983)

Director: Chris Reeves (104 minutes, colour)

Using archive film, interviews, songs and contemporary footage the film considers the causes and effects of divisions within the working class in the north of Ireland since 1968, and challenges Britain's continued presence. The IBA cut sequences showing land-owner Bill Montgomery fox-hunting in County Down, an interview with NI CBI chief Richard Gordon and sections of the commentary, before allowing transmission on C4. The uncensored version, winner of the 1983 Tyne Award, is available.

Platform Films, 13 Tankerton House, Tankerton St, London WC1

Strike Against Apartheid: The Dunne's Store Strike. 21 minutes.

Taking Liberties. 60 minutes.

Policing the Miners Strike.

We Ourselves Speak. 110 minutes.

Sinn Fein tell their own story.

Gerry Adams at Oxford.

Gerry Adams at Hornsey Town Hall.

Sinn Fein Ard Fheis 1986: Motion 162-the Abstentionism Debate. 30 minutes.

The Creggan.

Life on a nationalist estate in Derry.

The Last Hunger Strike. 60 minutes.

The Story of Mickey Devine, IRSP hunger striker.

Shoot to Kill. 45 minutes.

Suspect Community.

The use of the Prevention of Terrorism Act in Britain.

Plastic Bullets Ban Them. (Includes information pack.) 15 minutes.

Provisional Government (Sinn Fein women).

If You Didn't Laugh You'd Cry. Lives of women in nationalist Belfast.

Real Lives.

Documentary featuring Martin McGuinness (SF) Banned by the BBC.

The Patriot Game. 93 minutes B/W.

The Funeral of Larry Marley. 40 minutes.

THE SHOOTING OF NORA McCABE.

(B&W 30 mins.)

33 year old Nora McCabe was the eleventh person to be killed by plastic bullets. The film tells of how she was killed and the subsequent attempt at a cover-up by the RUC.

THE IRISHMEN: an impression of exile (1965)

Director: Philip Donnellan (50 minutes, B/W)

Made for BBC but never shown, the film lets migrant labourers from the rural west of Ireland tell their own story. Includes specially written songs by Ewan MacColl.

Available from *Information on Ireland*, PO Box 958, London W14 0JF.

HANG UP YOUR BRIGHTEST COLOURS:

The Life and Death of Michael Collins (1972)

Director: Anthony Thomas (with Kenneth Griffith)

Michael Collins was hero and villain for both the republican movement and the British Government. In the struggle for independence 1916-21, he was IRA Director of Organisation and Intelligence. He led the pro-Treaty forces, armed by Britain, in the bitter civil war that followed and was killed in an ambush by former republican comrades in 1922, in his native Cork.

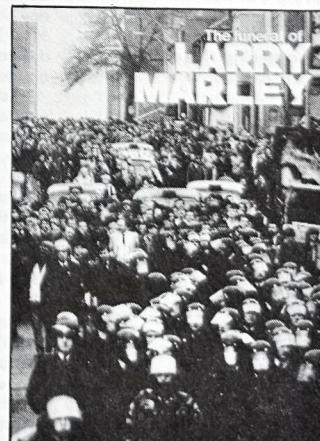
Welsh actor Kenneth Griffith was commissioned by ATV to make a film of his choice. His treatment of the Michael Collins story touched a raw nerve in the British Establishment, exposing the cruelty and hypocrisy of British imperialism in Ireland with quotes from leading political figures of the time. Sir Lew Grade banned transmission in Feb 1973.

The film was locked away in Grade's private safe, and then consigned to the National Film Archives unshown.

Copies of the film are held by ITC, Cullum House, North Orbital Rd, Uxbridge, Mddx, UB9 5BL, Tel: (0895) 832571 and the BFI, 81 Dean St, London W1, Tel: (01) 437 4355.

THE PATRIOT GAME

Excellent analysis of the war in Ireland 1968-78. Succeeds as no other film has in capturing the spirit of popular resistance to British imperialism in the nationalist ghettos. Cuts through the view of the 'troubles' as being an insoluble conflict between 'religious extremists', and shows that the Provisional IRA is far from being the 'sectarian terrorist' organisation that the British state portrays it to be.



THE FUNERAL OF LARRY MARLEY (1987)
Made by Republican Publications, Belfast (40 mins, colour)

A powerful account of the funeral of an IRA volunteer from the Ardoyne district of Belfast, when for three days the security forces tried to prevent thousands of republicans from honouring their dead. It contains an interview with Larry Marley recorded shortly before he was killed.

Available from TOM, PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH.