

TROOPS OUT

Paper of the United Troops Out Movement

10p

Vol 2 no 2 Nov. 1978



**Manchester Martyrs: rescue of Fenian leaders
Support Anniversary Demo for Irish Prisoners 26 Nov.**

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

**TROOPS OUT NOW
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE IRISH PEOPLE
PRISONER OF WAR STATUS FOR IRISH POWS
REPEAL THE PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT
END MEDIA CENSORSHIP OF BRITAIN'S WAR IN IRELAND
UTOM**

The third national conference of the United Troops Out Movement was held in London over the weekend of October 21-22nd. Greetings to the conference were received from Republican News, the Central Relatives' Action Committee, and many other anti-imperialist groups. The most notable feature of conference business was the near absence of sectarian quarrels and the concentration on resolutions concerned with activity. Conference adopted a wide programme of anti-recruitment work, work in the Labour Movement (including a national tour by representatives of the Trade Union Campaign Against Repression (TUCAR)); with anti-racist groups and in the women's movement, and general propaganda work.

The structure of UTOM remains branch-based and decentralised, and a National Liaison system was adopted to take account of the branches and organisations in England, Scotland and Wales which go to make up the solidarity movement.

Delegates from Scottish solidarity groups and certain left groups attended and participated fully in the Conference, and, it is hoped, will either formally affiliate or work closely with UTOM in the immediate future.

Conference pledged support for the PAC demonstration in November in support of the demand for political status, and for the Bloody Sunday demonstration next January in London called by Sinn Fein. In addition, demonstrations and major national activities outside London were agreed.

The first session was addressed by Joe Edwards, from the National Executive Committee of TUCAR. He spoke of the important new initiatives undertaken by TUCAR both in the North and the South in defence of workers' rights, and how TUCAR offered an alternative perspective from within the Irish Labour Movement rank and file both to the bureaucracy of the ICTU and the Better Life for All Campaign's attempts to convince the British Labour Movement that the anti-imperialist struggle can be ignored.

Constructive suggestions were made to improve *Troops Out* and make it more informative and more representative of the national scope of the movement. There was justifiable criticism of the lack of adequate creche arrangements, and a certain air of desperation over the complexities of conference arrangements, but the overall feeling of the Conference was one of eagerness to get on with getting the troops out, using all the initiative, energy and talents which UTOM now possesses.

UNITED TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT

The United Troops Out Movement is a national movement based on a network of branches campaigning around the two demands

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

We work, in a non-sectarian way, with trade unions, black and anti-racist groups, women's groups, gay groups and any other sections of the community receptive to the two demands and the argument that their is an imperialist war going on in Ireland, and that no solution acceptable to the Irish people can be reached until Britain withdraws.



On his way home after speaking at the UTOM Conference Joe Edwards was held under the PTA at Stranraer, and as we go to press is still being held, now at Dumfries Prison. Police will probably go for an exclusion order. His crime? Speaking at an open meeting about precisely this kind of treatment of Irish trade unionists.

JOINING TROOPS OUT

If you want to join UTOM, or want more information about what we stand for, write to the new national address:
Box UT, c/o 2a St. Paul's Road, London N1. We will pass your query on to a branch in your area, if one exists. Otherwise we'll give you the info necessary to help set up a branch, or join as an individual member. There are UTOM branches in existence or being set up in the following places:

Barnsley	Hemel Hempstead
Basingstoke	Leamington Spa
Birmingham	Leeds
Bradford	Leicester
Bristol	Manchester
Canterbury	Oxford
Cardiff	Sheffield
Colchester	Swindon
Coventry	Wolverhampton
Harlow	

London Area:
Camden & Islington
East London
Haringey
Kilburn
South London
Southeast London
West London

For solidarity work in Scotland contact:
Glasgow: Irish Defence League
Edinburgh: Irish Solidarity Campaign
Tyneside:
Irish Solidarity Campaign

This list of branches and of other organisations in close touch with UTOM is not exhaustive. It was rushed out after the conference. More contacts next month.

TROOPS OUT PAPER

We would welcome articles, cartoons and ideas for the paper, from readers. For one-half page allow 400 words.

New writers should bear in mind that we cannot guarantee to publish everything we receive, so don't get demoralised. The Literature Collective continually cut each other's articles, so we know what it's like not to have material published.

Lit Collective

DEMO ON MASON'S HOME GROUND

Several hundred demonstrators converged on Roy Mason's constituency of Barnsley in Yorkshire on a demonstration on October 7, designed to start a campaign to get Mason dumped by the local Labour Party, and by the NUM.

Mason is a sponsored candidate of the Yorkshire Miners. But Yorkshire Miners' leader Arthur Scargill is a supporter of the left Labour Campaign for a Labour Victory, which calls for the troops to leave Ireland.

Among the speakers was Mr. Brendan Gallagher, who has been campaigning for his son's release from Long Kesh. Willie Gallagher's case was the subject of a

(censored) BBC TV play in August, and Brendan Gallagher intends to stand against Mason in the next election. UTOM has pledged to support his candidature.

The UTOM demonstration had support from many other groups. Pat Arrowsmith and a PAC representative also spoke. Although the numbers were not large by London standards, they were plenty to get the message across in Barnsley. The Home Soldier Home film was also shown, and the demo was reported in local papers.

The Barnsley demo marks the first, but by no means the last, of national UTOM demonstrations and activities centred outside of London, and one likely result is the setting up of a new UTOM branch in Barnsley.



RUC, backed up by Brits, busy polishing up their new 'neutral' image. In the background they face the Loyalists; in the foreground, Republicans.

1968 — 300 MARCH FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

"... he has been taken to hospital — there were maggots crawling from his mouth ..."

I overheard these words as I boarded one of the 16 coaches en route to Derry to a demonstration marking the 10th Anniversary of the Derry civil rights march 5.10.68. On that march 10 years ago the demonstrators were batoned and scattered in Duke Street by the Royal Ulster Constabulary. But I could hear no one voicing fears of a repetition of such brutality — Their conversations were about their kin "on the blanket" in H-Blocks, Long Kesh Prison, Belfast — 400 men who are protesting for political status.

DERRY TEN YEARS ON

1976 — THE FIGHT FOR POLITICAL STATUS

Prisoner of War Status was withdrawn at the whim of the British Government in September 1976, branding Prisoners of War as criminals. The first POW sentenced as a criminal was teenager Keiran Nugent. On entering H-Block he refused to put on prison uniform or do prison work. He was battered senseless, his clothes removed and put naked in a cell containing a mattress, blanket and slop-pot. He is now in his third year 'on the blanket'. This was how 'blanket protests' started.

THE FIGHT TO STAY ALIVE

Since September '76 Keiran Nugent and the 399 POWs who followed his example are suffering physical and mental torture each second of their lives. They are naked except for a blanket, bare cells except for a mattress and slop-pot. In March '78 the blanket men started a 'no wash, no slop out' protest.

In an attempt to break the men they are regularly dragged from their cells, indecently assaulted, beaten unconscious and thrown into baths of disinfectant. "... he tore strips from his blanket to bind his feet as he was suffering from cramp — they took his blanket away and he was left completely naked for two weeks ..."; a snatch of a conversation from the women in the seat behind.

1978 — 10,000 MARCH FOR AN END TO BRITISH RULE IN IRELAND

The march started across Craigavon Bridge and on to Duke Street and with the protection of the RUC was without incident. Along the route, each of the 8 or 10 steep-hilled streets leading up from Duke Street were well cordoned at the top by RUC, approximately 10 deep, their black uniforms shining like new laid tar as they swayed back and forth holding back the Loyalists. Some 200 yards down in front of the RUC was a line of British soldiers. On one street it seemed by the agitated swaying the RUC were having trouble holding it. The one line of British soldiers became two and further down the hill, from the bowels of the earth, and hidden from the Loyalists' view, appeared troops in full riot gear, their shields, helmets and weapons glittering in the sunlight.

"WONDER WOMAN" IN DRAG!

The 3 hour drive to Derry passed quickly and we were stopped only once when a self-conscious British soldier boarded to record the organiser's name and the number of people on the coach. He was told the organiser was 'us ourselves' (Gaelic: "sinn fein"). Another woman quipped "it is a Senior Citizens' outing" and "didn't that RUC woman outside bear an uncanny resemblance to 'Wonder Woman' — (black uniform and padded out with a bullet-proof jacket).

The RUC coped and the Army riot squad retreated until after the rally where eager for action, they charged into the dispersing crowd in the Guildhall Square firing rounds of rubber bullets. We had to run: a 60 year old man who didn't run fast enough was hit in the face.

"UP THE PROVOS"

The message of the speeches was clear. It can be summed up in the words of Kevin Agnew, one of the organisers of the original Derry Civil Rights march. "To those who claim things have changed, we say, open your eyes, face reality, today we have more repression than ever before. Hundreds of men lie naked in appalling conditions, every RUC barrack is a torture centre and hundreds of people are arrested and dragged off to gaol on trumped up charges. All of this is carried on to keep these Six Counties British. We are told by the scavengers of the SDLP that things have changed. But the flag that flies over this building is still the Union Jack and as long as that is so nothing will have changed. Ten years ago our battle cry was "We shall overcome"; today it is "Up the Provos".

COACHES ATTACKED

The Republican coaches were directed out of Derry and arrived safely at their destinations, with the exception of 5 which were directed thru the Protestant Waterside area by the RUC. These 5 coaches were stoned by Loyalists and all the windows were broken. Luckily the occupants suffered only minor injuries.

STONED RUC

Not so lucky were the 67 RUC who were injured that day by stone throwing Loyalists. The RUC on the hills not expecting to be attacked by Loyalists had neither batons or riot headgear — they just had to stand, linking arms 'getting stoned' until riot-clad reinforcements could get behind the Loyalists to disperse them.

Chris London UTOM

ARMY IN THE SHADOWS

Ten years ago, the disbandment of the B-Specials was one of the main demands of the Civil Rights movement. Ever since the foundation of the Orange Six County state in 1920, this paramilitary force had been the most feared instrument of Unionist one-party rule. Eventually in October 1969, the British-backed Hunt Report recommended the scrapping of the B-Specials and the force was disbanded soon afterwards. However, it quickly became apparent that this was a mere public relations exercise to calm the fears of the nationalist community and to improve an overseas image badly tarnished by the revelation that Britain had been benevolently overseeing a virtual police state in Ulster for half a century. Less than one year later, the old B-Specials were back in business, but under a new name: the Ulster Defence Regiment.

Today, with approximately 10,000 full-time and part-time members, the UDR is a regiment in the British Army carrying out extensive military duties. Its membership (97% Loyalist) also has scores of convictions to its credit for such offences as murder, armed robbery, and assault. *When we call for the withdrawal of the military, we must also demand that the British government disband this terroristic force.*

In retrospect, the creation of the UDR ought to be treated as one of the greatest comebacks in history, very much in the tradition of Lazarus's return from the dead. In 1970, just a matter of months after the Specials had been laid to rest with full military honours, a new paramilitary force appeared on the Northern Ireland horizon. Under British Army control, the UDR was intended to be religiously mixed and only lightly armed. One year later in August 1971, most of the few Catholics who had joined left with the introduction of internment. And as for being lightly armed, the UDR soon became equipped with self-loading sub-machine guns, Bren guns, and Browning machine guns mounted on armoured cars. This is an awesome array of weaponry which the B-Specials certainly never possessed in their heyday. Quite simply, the UDR has been deliberately expanded into a formidable army within an army, one whose potential for extreme action has too often been underestimated.

At first the UDR was mainly used in the manning of roadblocks, a task which enabled the British Army to concentrate on patrolling the nationalist areas of Ulster in massive strength. Soon along with the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the UDR began to function as a useful intelligence machine for the Army, especially in rural areas, where detailed local knowledge would be difficult for the Brits to obtain on their own. When the IRA revealed how the UDR was being used, the force quickly came to be regarded as a legitimate target for armed Republicans. The first UDR man was killed the day after internment in 1971.

Previously, even though the force was already ultra-Loyalist, the IRA had refrained from attacking the UDR, threatening members who did so with court-martial.

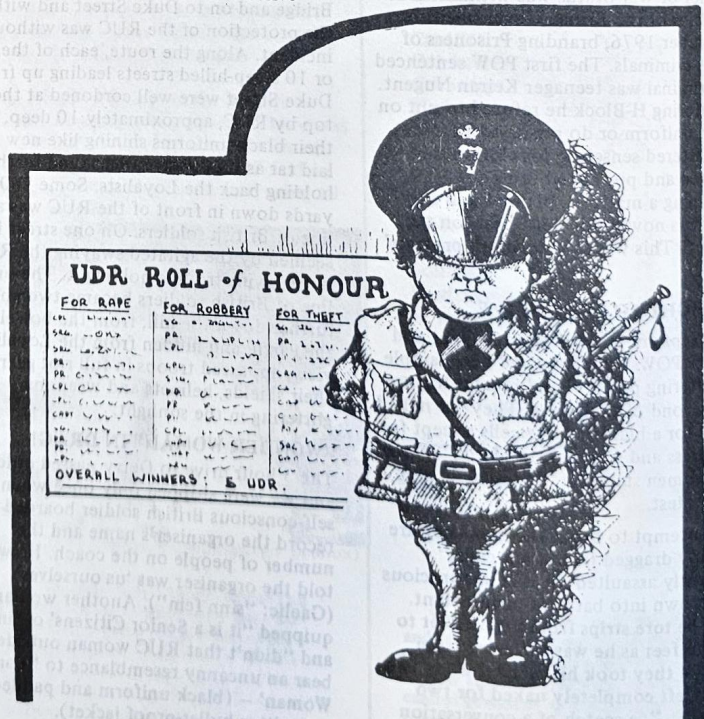
By January 1974, the UDR was 97 per cent Protestant. Over the previous two years, the force had been systematically infiltrated by the main Loyalist paramilitary bodies: the UDA and the UVF. Members of the banned UVF had little difficulty joining up. The Brit commanders of the UDR have been constantly looking for new recruits. *Since 1970 the force has tripled in size from 3 to 10 thousand men and women. This is a deliberate attempt to Ulsterise the conflict and reduce the pressure on the British Army.* But so far, the Brits have been unable to make the dramatic troop reductions they would dearly like to carry out. Nevertheless successive

British governments have bowed to Loyalist pressure, so that in 1978 the UDR is armed to the teeth with a formidable armoury.

Interestingly, the UDR has a habit of losing its weapons. A new UDR battalion was formed in Craigavon during September 1972. By October, all the weapons in the armoury had been stolen without resistance by the UVF. In 1975, the North's biggest armed robbery occurred when the Magherafelt UDR camp was raided. Among the haul of 200 weapons seized were 35 Sterling sub-machine guns and 146 SLR rifles. This year, four men were convicted of the crime, one that was hardly noticed in the press. On the whole, the papers were wonderfully discreet, considering the fact that 2 of the guilty men were in the UDR.

Today the Catholic population has few illusions about the UDR. Four years ago, it was well known that this force was bent on mutiny if troops had been used to crush the Loyalist revolt of May 1974. In 1975 members of the Portadown UDR murdered 5 members of the Miami Showband in cold blood. And in June 1978, Hibernia, the Dublin newspaper, revealed a massive web of corruption and gangsterism in the South Derry UDR: Members of this force have murdered Protestants as well as Catholics.

The UDR is a potential rogue elephant that must be neutralised by the British government once it gives notice of withdrawal. The arms, equipment, transportation, and radio communications which the UDR possesses must be taken out of its hands. In a word: 'Disband the UDR' must be a key demand of UTOM.



Racism, Fascism & Ireland

At the second great carnival organised by the Anti-Nazi League in London in September, the platform was taken by a group from Belfast called 'Stiff Little Fingers'. Their representative began by declaring that although tens of thousands were prepared to march against white racism towards black people, scarcely anyone protested about 800 years of English racism towards the Irish. The UTOM has often made the same point, and the blindness of many anti-racists to this feature of Anglo-Irish relations will doubtless one day be regarded as one of the historical wonders of the world.

However, the same representative of the 'Stiff Little Fingers' group then went on to inform the Carnival that he had contemptuously thrown off a 'Troops Out' sticker which someone had attached to his clothing on the way in to the park. The troops, he said, were simply holding the ring. In Northern Ireland, Orange and Green sectarianism had to be fought, and the poor soldiers were just caught in the middle. Ironically, the next number they sang was called 'Law and Order' and contained the words 'There's no justice in our land'.

The UTOM clearly has a large job to do at future carnivals and at all anti-racist events. It has to raise the question of racism, not only in the context of Anglo-Irish relations, but also in the context of what is happening in the 6 Counties itself. For it is a monstrous lie to say that the struggle in the north of Ireland is between Orange and Green sectarianism.

SECTARIANISM

True there is sectarianism on both sides. But the reality of the everyday struggle is not pitched battles between the Orange Order and the Ancient Order of Hibernians (or the Ancient Order of Hooligans, as James Connolly called them). The reality of the 6 Counties is experienced day in day out by the Republican population who find themselves confronting a racist state and society. They confront it when they seek for jobs which are not available to Catholics; when they cope with overcrowded housing; and when they confront the RUC and the British Army.

The Northern state was founded upon the Protestant ascendancy and is in

business to maintain it. It depends for its existence upon the racialism of Loyalism and its supporters towards the Catholic Irish. In a 'racial' situation we are never dealing with a society in which two communities with equal opportunities and life chances seek to work together for the common good — the myth which the Community Relations approach seeks to foster. We are dealing, in Northern Ireland as in Britain, with a society in which different groups (who see themselves as 'ethnic' or 'racial' groups) stand in a relation of domination/subordination to each other; in other words a society in which one group exploits the other.

LEFT & RIGHT

Given this relationship, the militancy of the dominant community when activated towards the other tends to be of the right. The militancy of the subordinate community on the other hand tends to be of the left. Thus an escalation of struggle in the black community in Britain produces a growing number of left wing black militants, as well as organisations such as the ANL amongst those of the white population who solidarise with them. Similarly, in the 6 Counties in the Catholic community, the Republican movement grows strong and left groups are in evidence. Even middle class organisations such as the SDLP are reformist. On the other hand, a growth of 'white consciousness' in Britain benefits Nazi groups such as the National Front. And in the north of Ireland, the attempt to maintain a racist state leads to a near monopoly of right wing Loyalist groups on the Protestant side.

The absence of any significant movement among Protestants solidarising with the Catholic community's struggle against its oppression, is a direct consequence of the much more central role that racism plays in the state and

society of the 6 Counties. Those who imagine that the Republican movement, for instance, is 'sectarian' in the same sense as the Loyalists, should read the literature of 'Orange' and 'Green' and listen to their respective spokespersons.

PUBLICATIONS

Republican News, the Belfast Provisional Sinn Féin newspaper, has contained articles in support of anti-fascist workers in Spain and Portugal, the national liberation struggle in Zimbabwe, and the Palestinian resistance. In one article earlier this year, it declared that blacks in Britain were being made the scapegoats for economic problems '*much as the Catholics are made responsible for unemployment here*', and concluded '*Support given to the fight against racism and fascism in Britain is support gained for the war of national liberation in the north of Ireland*' (25.2.78).

'THE FINAL SOLUTION'

Loyalist publications, however, are racist in tone and substance. A few examples must suffice:

Louis Gardner, secretary general of Ulster Vanguard, in 'Resurgence of the Majority' 1972, praised the then governments of Greece, South Africa, Rhodesia, and Northern Ireland, and asserted '*When facing the agitation of the so-called civil rights movement, Ulster, like Rhodesia, had to face British persecution*'. Ian Paisley's '**Protestant Telegraph**' in 1967 told its readers to '*Watch the Jews*' and warned that the '*Papist Rome*' was '*rising to a grand crescendo with the Communists*'. **Loyalist News** has consistently demanded repatriation for the Irish workers in Britain, and in September '71 called for '*the final solution*' for the Republican population of Northern Ireland. Both **Loyalist News** and **Combat**, the UVF journal, have called for support for the National Front. The Woodvale Defence Association in its news sheets often called Catholics '*Indians*', which it obviously considered insulting, and referred to the '*Ardoyne and Clonard reservations*'. Clearly blacks and Catholics are both sub-human in this view of the world.

Many more examples could be given, but the point is surely made. The ideologies of the combatants in the Irish war reflect a material reality — the Protestant ascendancy, and the sectarian state which, with massive British support, maintains it. When that reality is appreciated by anti-racists in Britain, it will be clear to them that to take sides in the Irish war is one task, and an extremely important one, in the struggle against racism and fascism on both sides of the Irish Sea.

Richard Cheesman

A printing error in last month's article on the Labour Party and Ireland read 1977 for Callaghan's visit to the North instead of 1971.

Bill & Ben, the I.R.A. men



Typical Loyalist News racist cartoon

The Falls Road

GOVERNMENT PLANS BACK

From a distance they look just like London black taxis, and inside is the familiar sound of a throbbing diesel engine. But there the resemblance ends. For this is the Falls Road in Catholic West Belfast, the main artery of the area, running from the City Centre (Castle Street) and the Divis Flats to the outer estates of Andersonstown and Twinbrook. The taxis are battered and worn and packed out with up to a dozen people at a time. These are "People's Taxis" — the Belfast Black Taxi Service.

Pat is a Falls Road Taxi man. As he drives along his route he explains what the People's Taxis are all about.

*As I roamed out through Belfast Town,
Around by Castle Street,
A' seekin' transportation,
A young man I did meet.
They said his name was Cosgrove,
Some called him Desperate Dan,
For he risked his life ten times a day
As a Falls Road Taxi Man.*

"The Falls Taxi Association (FTA) began in 1970. It was formed to give ex-prisoners and ex-internees employment when they were released. When I was released from prison, there was no such thing as getting a job. It was a case of: 'Where have you been these past 3 years or four, and your last employer was 3 years since — where have you been? In jail. Don't call us, we'll call you.' Employment in this area is slim enough anyway. So it started off with two taxis in 1970. Now there are 350 taxis on the road, some of them with two drivers, and a good half of the drivers are ex-prisoners. With garage and office staff, the FTA gives employment to some 500 people. The FTA is the single largest employer in West Belfast without government assistance.

"Look at the congestion down here in Castle Street. We shift between 10 and 15 thousand people from here every night. It's the only means of transport available to the people. People won't wait around for the Ulsterbuses. The day of the buses is finished — unless the government can get rid of the taxis. But we're fighting back and giving them a run for their money."



Castle Street.

*Well I put two bob into his hand
I climbed inside the car,
Well that was all they charged us
For travelling near or far.
With 14 other passengers we made a noble
As we set out for Sawyers (?) with the Falls*

"The taxis are a lot cheaper than the buses. We see it a benefit of the people whereas Citybus is a purely business people along the road. Whereas the buses work from stop taxi anywhere and get of anywhere. It's only a question of like that. (A passenger has just rapped twice with a coin on Pat's head.)

"There was never an effective bus service along these campaign. But we have personal contact with the people lot of the time you'll be driving your neighbour downtown.

"When the taxis started, the government thought it would just peter out. Their attitude was that the people knowledge and the experience to develop the business. B effective service in 1971-2. The Corporation withdrew p through Republican areas where riots and gun battles we the need of the people that got them started. It just caus how effectively they were run the government decided t out of business.

"You see these yellow no-parking lines: they've exte to prevent the taxis stopping here and loading, but as yo no notice of them.

"The Army have a vendetta against the black taxis. T special forms to be filled in by the drivers when they sto name, registration of taxi, where they've come from, the the taxi at the time etc. But we've refused to sign them.

"There's often sing-songs in the evenings in the back of anarchic when they've been drinking. When they are sing everyone starts to sing louder. The Army just look in an you on as if to say, what am I supposed to do with this? their war manuals to deal with situations like this.

"At the moment the government are trying to stop u is not legal. But we have the exact same insurance schem Black Taxis aren't legal, neither are they.

"At present we are running a poster campaign to det taxis."

*Well when we reached the Whiterock Road
On the floor we had to lie.
The tracer bullets from the tanks
Were lighting up the sky.
Above the din a man called out
O please stop if you can.
"You'll have to use your parachute" cried*

"We've had drivers killed by being rammed by Britis the sectarian murder campaigns there were a few instan I think it soon sunk home to the Loyalist organisations were vulnerable, so too were the taxis on the Shankill. that you don't attack them.

"Marxist Perspective on Ireland"

Weekend school, organised by the Student Movement Campaign on Ireland. National speakers, a Marxist analysis of struggle in Ireland, discussion on Republicanism, Loyalism, the struggle in the T.U.s, Women's oppression, case for Troops Out Now, etc. 4/5 November, Sussex University, Brighton. Train from Brighton Station to Falmer. Accommodation. Social.

DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH 26 November

2.30pm Speakers Corner

- * Solidarity with Irish P.O.Ws!
- * P.O.W. Status and Amnesty for Irish Political Prisoners!
- * Brits Out of Ireland!

Called by the Prisoners Aid

Road Taxi Man

S BACKFIRE

de a noble band,
with the Falls Road Taxi Man.

We see it as a people's service for the
ly business arrangement. We pick up
from stop to stop, a person can board a
question of knocking on a window —
th a coin on the glass partition behind

ong these roads even prior to the latest
he people, we are part of the people. A
r downtown.

ought it was just a novelty and that it
e people running the taxis hadn't the
business. But they really became an
threw public transport from routes
battles were daily occurrences. It was
just caught on. When it was discovered
decided to harass them and put them

y've extended these for over half a mile
but as you can see, the taxi drivers take

k taxis. They have recently introduced
they stop them, giving the driver's
from, the names of the passengers in
gn them and they are giving up.

back of the taxi. People get a bit
y are singing and the Army stops us,
ook in and shake their heads and wave
with this? They don't get instructions in
this.

to stop us by saying that our insurance
nce scheme as Ulsterbus — so if the

gn to detail why people need black

rock Road,

ute" cried the Falls Road Taxi Man.

py British Army Saracens. And during
w instances of taxis being fired on. But
isations that while the Falls Road Taxis
hankill. So there came a tacit agreement

WITH IRISH P.O.W.s

ember

corner

Ws!

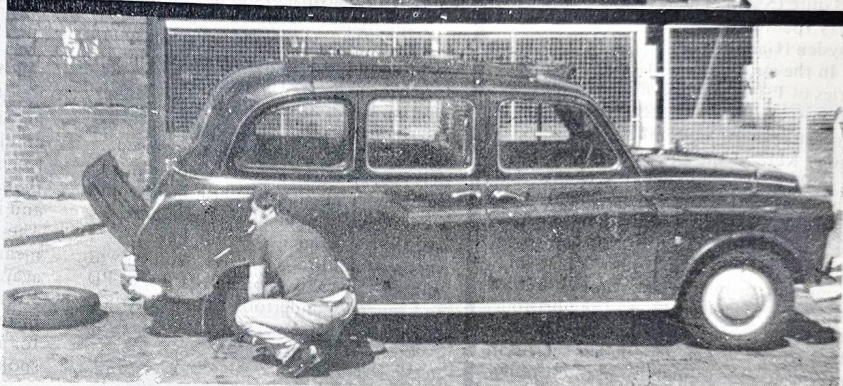
ty for all

rs Aid Committee

Marble Arch



Taxis loading.



Mending punctures.

"The main problem at the moment is the punctures from the state of the roads after the internment week anniversary riots and burnings. I've had five this week one lad had 11 in three days. Look — there's another puncture victim.

"At times we've been forced into the situation where we've had to put up road blocks with the taxis against Army harassment. At times it just got so bad that we decided to block the road with the taxis. The other day the British Army beat up a woman and a child, so we blocked the road at the bottom of the Whiterock to let them know that we won't stand by and let them harass people.

"Roy Mason and Commander Creasey know they can't push the taxis about. Black taxis are here to stay.

"They say the taxis are run by a mafia but we're controlled by democratic general meetings and an elected committee. The people involved are all working class people who are taking the initiative and finding out that you don't have to rely on major firms to make a living. There are all sorts of community run projects starting up as people become — for want of a better word — more politically aware. The time is coming when even local government won't function here. The taxis are a sign that it has no control over the people."

So we all shook hands and said farewell
To the Falls Road Taxi Man.

The song "Falls Road Taxi Man" is on the record England's Vietnam by The Men of No Property (Resistance Records).

MIDLANDS CONFERENCE ON
BRITAIN'S INVOLVEMENT
IN IRELAND

11 November
Birmingham

A broad-based, educational conference with a wide range of speakers and topics. Sponsors from Irish organisations, Trades Councils, Trades Unions, Labour Party branches, Women's Groups.

For details write to: Robin Wilson, 65 Woodville Rd, Birmingham 14.
Or phone Mary Pearson 021-773-8683.

"New era in Irish solidarity
work in Scotland"
DEMONSTRATION IN SUPPORT OF
IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS,
GLASGOW, NOVEMBER 18.

MERSEYSIDE AGAINST THE P.T.A.

Merseyside trade unionists have now staged two pickets outside the Liverpool city centre police, Bridewell, after a 'spate' of detentions of Irish trade unionists.

The campaign to scrap the 'Terror' Act is hotting up in the city since Liverpool Trades Council – which called the pickets, supported by members of the Merseyside UTOM branch – condemned the use of the P.T.A. in Liverpool.

In the early New Year prominent Irish trade unionist Phil Flynn was arrested and detained in the Bridewell, when UTOM staged a protest picket.

In March, the branch lobbied all local MPs to have the Act repealed. Three local MPs voted against renewing the Act in Parliament in March: they were Michael McGuire (Skelsmersdale and Ince), Bob Parry (Scotland F-xchange) and Eddie Loyden (Garston).

In the autumn, a particularly blatant series of P.T.A. arrests of Irish trade unionists sparked off the Trades Council protests: On 10 September dock worker Paddy Kelly, from the New Lodge area of Belfast, was detained at Speke Airport while returning from a government sponsored training scheme. Belfast dockers, members of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, staged an immediate protest march through Belfast and a strike which brought the port to a standstill. This action reached a peak on the 13th when striking dockers sealed off Stormont and stopped thousands of civil servants getting to work. On Thursday the 14th Paddy Kelly was deported.

A week later Liverpool T.C. condemned the P.T.A. The chairman of the Council's Transport Committee, Ian Williams, said: "This Act has been one of the blots on the labour movement. We have been quiet about what is happening in Northern Ireland. It is time we put on record our opposition to the P.T.A. Any arrests made should be met with pickets and demonstrations."

The next day the first T.C. picket took place after the detention of four more Irishmen.

On the Saturday, Liverpool Trades Council held a second picket at the Bridewell. Three of the detained dockers were released after questioning with no charges preferred, but the fourth was deported.

Liverpool Trades Council is now organising a conference on the whole operation of the P.T.A. on Merseyside. And Merseyside UTOM has published a short guide to the act, demanding that this most repressive piece of legislation passed in modern Britain outside wartime be scrapped. A spokesperson for the branch was interviewed on local BBC radio and the commercial City radio station after the pamphlet came out.

Repeal the Terror Act costs 15p + 7p postage; bulk orders of 10 or more are 15p each, postage included. Available from the Secretary, Merseyside UTOM, Box UTOM, c/o 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool 1.

FEMINISM IN THE NORTH

Troops Out has not paid enough attention to the women's movement in the North of Ireland, and how it relates to women in the fight to get the Brits out. In the next issue we hope to have a major article from the Women & Ireland group which will argue for support from the women's movement, as they have been doing successfully within the Socialist Feminist groups here. In the meantime, we are publishing short extracts from the latest issue of the Workers Research Bulletin about the history of the movement in the North. The history is not an 'objective' account; it was written by women engaged in the double struggle to get rid of Britain and to push women's demands within the resistance movement. We hope it will win support and understanding from women in Britain

"While American and English students and radicals demonstrated against the Vietnam War and women were realising that brutality was not only the bombing of Vietnamese villages but also the denial of basic rights for women... the north of Ireland was reverberating to the sounds of thousands upon thousands marching for civil rights... The issue was discrimination against Catholics... The discrimination that existed against women... was simply not recognised; perhaps, given the situation, could not be recognised. The most determined feminist would have been unable to raise the question of women; it would have appeared politically divisive. Women who wanted to be active joined NICRA or PD and generally undertook the most tedious tasks..."

FIRST TRY

"In the North in 73 and 74 attempts were made to bring women's issues to the fore... Yet despite several conferences, little progress was made in the building of a united movement which could seriously challenge the reactionary nature of the two states in Ireland. Feminists still found it difficult to relate to the war in the North... Yet it was becoming increasingly obvious that as long as women ignored the anti-imperialist war, those who were most politically active, the anti-unionist women, would remain hostile to feminism because the women's movement had shown no solidarity with them in their struggle..."

ADVANCES

1975 saw the formation in the North of the Northern Ireland Women's Rights Movement and the Belfast Socialist Women's Group... The approach of the NIWRM to the woman question was to abstract the question of women's oppression from the reality of Imperialist oppression...

"A minority of women in NIWRM believed there was little to be gained in simply trying to broaden the perspective of the movement; it was essential that there should be a movement which would be both revolutionary and anti-imperialist. These women formed the nucleus of the SWG."

"In 1975 and 1976 the women's movement in the North was clearly

beginning to establish itself. A woman's group was set up in Coleraine, which monitored legislation. A socialist women's group was formed in Derry in Easter 1976... Other women begun the lengthy process of establishing a refuge for battered women... in Belfast. A refuge was later set up in Derry

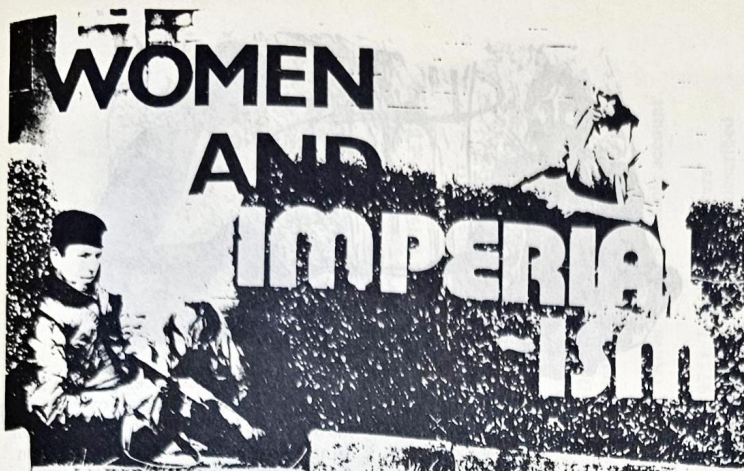
PEACE PEOPLE CHALLENGE

"A serious challenge, not only to the anti-imperialist struggle, but also to the credibility of the women's movement in Ireland was posed by the emergence in the summer of 76 of the peace movement and its two charismatic female leaders... The NIWRM saw the Peace People as the means by which they could speak out against the support women in Britain had given to the Troops Out Movement and instead to 'oppose all violence and press for a Bill of Rights.' [while] the SWG spoke out strongly against it..."

The difficulty in reaching working class women and relating to their immediate problems is one which all women's groups encounter... In NI this gulf is compounded by the fact that women in ghetto areas face daily harassment and intimidation by the B.A. on a scale unimaginable in middle class areas... Differing answers on where best to organise in order to forge the link between the women's question and the struggle for socialism in Ireland... led to the dissolution of the SWG in May 1977.

The Belfast Women's Collective which emerged from the remains of the SWG saw the priority as being to work with small groups of militant women around key issues such as child care and unemployment, while maintaining an anti-imperialist perspective. Work within the RAC continued to be an important part of their activities.

However some of the women most actively involved with the RAC felt that the anti-imperialist struggle takes its most intense form in the resistance of the nationalist areas in Belfast and that it is in these areas and thru organisations such as the RAC that they should work to raise "issues relating to women in the anti-imperialist struggle." In April 1978 those members of the BWC who wished to work exclusively inside the nationalist areas split to form Women Against Imperialism. The two now function as separate groups.



Interview with 2 members of Women Against Imperialism

Q: Could you give us some background to the split?

A lot of people saw the split between the Belfast Women's Group and our group as being in some ways negative, because you need a united women's movement. In some ways it was good, it had its positive aspect. We now have two women's papers dealing with some similar and some different aspects and we work in different areas, which I think is really good, because no group is going to be able to take up all the issues, so in one way I think it's healthy...

Mostly the split was because the women over here in West Belfast have borne the brunt of British imperialism. So we thought it was necessary to build some sort of group in these areas. . . . The women in Andersonstown when we discuss things like contraception, child care, were very interested in that but they also wanted to take up the actual needs. . . . whereas we might have had it in our heads as to what were the aims of the women's movement, they felt that it was the other way around, that we had to respond to the needs of the women in the area.

That was one of the main differences. The main difference was the republican movement — whether you work with Sinn Féin, whether you work with women working within it, or whether you try and reach a lot of women outside the Republican movement. And you have to make the choice in that sense, that your resources are so small, and we believe that the working class women, and the women in the Republican movement are at the vanguard of the struggle so we believe in working with them. . . . Some people said we were coat-tailing the Provisionals, we were submerging ourselves, going into republicanism. . . .

RAISING WOMEN'S ISSUES

Not only that . . . but to raise issues of child care and abortion and contraception . . . the majority of women in these areas have some relations inside, so they see

Brits as what's putting them down, you know. . . . we can raise these when we realise and understand with them about the British — how that aspect overrides all the rest . . .

You can talk about abortion, etc., but contraception hasn't really been raised in the area. We've got a few family clinics, but they're not widely known, people still won't go to them, they're still a bit taboo. . . . Women in our group have worked for a year, two years in the RACs and have shown that we are actually working with the people, so in some ways it is easier to raise women's issues. But even so there's the example of the Marty Forsythe (a Republican drinking club in Turf Lodge).

THE PICKET

Before we even held a picket of the club we wrote and asked them to raise the issue of women membership and women being allowed in on Sunday afternoons. . . . We were told in no uncertain terms to get lost — and that's putting it very very politely. So then we decided to hold a picket. . . . We got a lot of abuse from the men there, but the women in the area, although they supported us in what we were doing, they were really afraid, I would say, to come out onto the picket themselves, because they knew that as soon as they were on the picket they'd be barred for life — we were all barred for life anyway . . . it's the only social club in the area, it's a club that all the women go to from the area after the meetings on the Saturday, Sunday nights to meet their friends . . . so a lot of the women on the picket were from different areas, but not from Turf Lodge, which of course was used against us . . .

NOT TRIVIAL

Now the Marty Forsythe club is named after Martyn Forsythe who was killed — and the girl who was along with him then came to the second picket with us . . . she didn't want to be used as any sort of propaganda for us, or anything, but it was the fact that she was a woman, and she just wasn't allowed in. . . .

But although a lot of people argue, well that's a very trivial thing — membership of the clubs — in the end the

Republican News printed it, which more or less endorsed what we were doing. It did cause a lot of discussion within the Republican movement, and a lot of women took sides . . . and it raised the whole question of women in the struggle . . . so in that sense it was important . . .

There aren't that many Republican clubs now who don't let women in.

PROTESTANT WOMEN?

Q: The argument's brought up in Britain that the women's movement ought to support all women in the north. . . .

That argument's brought up here and it's also brought up down South when we had the women's conference in Dublin, that you're not talking to Protestant women, and surely Protestant women are oppressed. The thing is that there's no way we could go and talk to Protestant women — once you identify yourself with the nationalist struggle there's no way that you can go and walk down the Shankill Road. . . .

Q: Where are you based now?

We have a women's centre in Ballymurphy. Sinn Féin — that's another step which is in some ways very significant — gave us some of their rooms to have as a women's centre a few months ago and we hope eventually it will be used by other women's groups, and also an advice centre, basically for battered wives . . . that's another thing we're hoping to work on. There's one refuge in Belfast. And there's an awful lot of batterings in West Belfast, and a lot of women would not travel over to the area where the refuge is . . . besides the refuge is full already. . . .

Our own group has run quite a few socials, actually going through each area in West Belfast. And the theme is women and brutality. We get a woman who's been, say, through Castlereagh, talking about her experiences, the way she was brutalised, and someone from the women's aid talking about battered wives and the refuge, and trying in that way to get women familiar that there is a refuge to go to. . . . The women's aid centres do take women from both sides. . . . I don't know what the percentage of Protestant women would be . . . there isn't a problem about whether it's Catholic or Protestant women, they all came together because they had been battered — sharing their own experiences. . . .

It was brilliant, because we had two women from the refuge at a meeting we had this week — I think they were both Protestants — neither of them had ever been up the Falls Road before, and they all came into the Ballymurphy Community Centre and had a drink, that was really great, you know.

We're not averse to working among Protestant women, it's just the practical problems. If you're ever able to get in contact with them all the better . . . if it arose, we could see what their ideas are. It's not a question of exclusion. . . .

Women Against Imperialism's paper *Saor Bhean* (Free Woman) is available from 52 Broadway, Belfast 12. So is *Women's Action*, the paper of the Belfast Women's Collective.

57 years on a 'verbal'



The trial of Bosco Doherty by a no-jury 'Diplock' court on November 21st 1977 lasted two hours. No evidence was produced to verify any of the charges yet when police produced what they said was a verbal statement from Doherty the judge sentenced him to 16 years for causing an explosion, 14 years for possession of explosives, 12 years for possession of documents likely to be of use to terrorists (these 'alleged' documents were never produced in court), 10 years for the content of the documents and 5 years for membership of the IRA. Doherty had always denied making any statement to the police; he had certainly signed no statement, as the police themselves verified by their claim that he made a 'verbal'.

WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION

The only witness called by the prosecution — the owner of the shop Doherty was supposed to have blown up — stated categorically that Bosco Doherty was not one of the young men who had come into his shop the day of the bombing. The witness said three times in court that he had never seen Doherty before in his life.

FORENSIC EXPERTS FIND NO EVIDENCE

The RUC said they found no forensic evidence to connect Bosco with the bomb — there were no fingerprints on the fragments and no traces of explosive on his hands or clothes.

Bosco's mother, Lily Doherty, explained in detail what happened from the day her 18-year old son was arrested at 5.20 a.m. January 29th 1977.

"He was taken out of bed and not allowed to get properly dressed — he was only wearing shoes and trousers. We had to throw a coat out after him. He was arrested under Section 10 of the Emergency Provisions Act. They took him to 'Piggery Ridge' (the army base behind the Creggan Estate) and then handed him over to the RUC that same morning.

REQUEST FOR SOLICITOR DENIED

The family were not allowed to see him. He was not allowed a solicitor even though he had repeatedly asked for a

solicitor and a doctor. On Tuesday at 9 p.m. we were finally allowed a visit — it was about 40 hours later.

RUC INTERROGATION

When the family got in to see him he had a black eye and was totally disorientated. He didn't know the time of day. His hair was soaking as if he had been dropped in a bath of water. His hands were scratched and red and there were marks on his wrists. We found out later they had tied his wrists. His eyes were rolling in his head — every question he was asked had to be repeated twice.

At that time there were no charges preferred against him. On Wednesday he was supposed to appear in Court at 10 a.m. — he finally appeared in Court at 4.50 p.m. That was 64 hours later. He was charged with causing an explosion in June 1976, with being a member of the Provisional IRA and having documents likely to be of use to terrorists. Bosco was on remand in Crumlin Road for ten months.

SPECIAL BRANCH BLUNDER

The Special Branch statements were all conflicting — they all had different stories. Bosco's statement was supposed to have said the bomb was in a green bag, one Special Branch man said it was a brown bag, the forensic expert said it was a white satchel and the shopkeeper said it was a box.

It was unbelievable, but it's happening every day. Bosco's solicitor then asked the RUC to produce the documents they claimed he had. They couldn't produce the documents in court.

MENTAL BREAKDOWN

When Bosco was sentenced he classed himself as a Republican prisoner of war and went straight on the blanket. He was on the blanket for six months before he had to come off after mentally breaking down.

He was in deep shock. When we went to see him we found him completely unaware of his surroundings and complaining of severe pains in the head.

The beatings occurred after he came off the blanket, after he broke down and was in deep shock. He was in H8 at the time — it's a rehabilitation block. When

we saw him about a week later he kept staring and was shaking all over. We could hardly get a word out of him. Then on June 8 he got a very bad beating from four screws. Two other boys — Willie Gallagher and a boy from Andersonstown, Belfast — were beaten the same day.

Then my daughter and a friend of his saw him the next day, he kept saying, 'I'm bad, but you should see the other two. They're far worse'. After that visit he was sent into the prison hospital.

EXPLORATORY SURGERY

I was very concerned about him and phoned the welfare officer who said he had been transferred to the Royal Victoria Hospital. So we went to the Royal Victoria in Belfast. When we got there a nurse told us he had just been transferred to the Musgrave Park military hospital. When we went to the Musgrave Park they refused us admittance. So we had to come again. They telephoned us and told us an 'appendix' operation had been performed on Bosco. We found out later that it was not an operation for appendix at all but was purely exploratory surgery. It was more or less that there was nothing wrong with his appendix but since they had him opened, they took them out anyway. He developed complications after that operation — he had leakage from the bowels. He was having blood transfusions, a throat and nasal drip and a glucose drip.

We were phoned again, this time by the Northern Ireland Office, who said two of the family were to go to the hospital because Bosco was seriously ill. When we saw him we noticed that the left side of his chest was badly swollen. There was a Special Branch man sitting listening so he never said anything about what had happened. We were never given a medical report on Bosco's condition.

We constantly asked to speak to someone in authority but there was never anyone available. I have sent a letter from my husband and myself to the Northern Ireland Office — on July 23 — outlining the events and I still haven't had a reply.

Willie Gallagher's case and Bosco's case are not isolated. We feel as if our hands are tied. We get harassed daily.

Even my parents, who are old-age pensioners, nearly 70, get their home raided all the time."

(Condensed version of an article which was published in Newsline 22 Sept 1978 -- Mrs Doherty's statement is reprinted here in full).

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN IRELAND? How to find out

If you want to know what's really going on in Ireland, the last place you will find out is in the British media. But there are a number of papers and bulletins that are fairly easy to obtain this side of the Irish Sea, either through newsgroups or by subscription. Here a member of the Literature Committee provides a brief guide to the most useful publications.

Anti-imperialist papers

Republican News. Weekly. 12p + 7p p&p or £10 per year from 170A Falls Road, Belfast 12. Paper of the Belfast Republican Movement, very widely read in the nationalist areas. The paper Mason is trying to destroy — essential reading for activists.

An Phoblacht. Weekly. 10p + 7p p&p or £8 per year from 44 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Paper produced by Provisional Sinn Féin in Dublin.

Starry Plough. Monthly. 12p + 7p p&p from 34 Upper Gardiner Street, Dublin 1. Paper of the Irish Republican Socialist Party. Well-produced left Republican paper. *Socialist Republic*. Monthly. 10p + 7p p&p from Connolly Bookshop, Avoca Park, Andersonstown, Belfast. Paper of the recently merged People's Democracy and Movement for a Socialist Republic.

Irish Free Press. Fortnightly. £2.50 per year from 52 Broadway, Belfast 12. Duplicated news sheet.

Feminist Papers

Saor Bhean. Bimonthly. 10p + 7p p&p c/o 52 Broadway, Belfast 12. Paper of the Women Against Imperialism group.

Women's Action. Bimonthly. 10p + 7p p&p, c/o 52 Broadway, Belfast 12. Paper of the Belfast Women's Collective.

Bulletins

Belfast Workers' Research Bulletin. Quarterly. 60p + 20p p&p from Workers' Research Unit, c/o 52 Broadway, Belfast 12. Produced by a group of Belfast socialists, this is packed with essential information and each issue concentrates on a different topic. The latest issue is called 'Women in N. Ireland'. It is well worth the price.

Ireland Socialist Review. Quarterly. 30p + 15p p&p from 60 Loughborough Road, London SW9. Contains detailed analysis of the Irish situation, aimed at the British Labour Movement.

Irish papers available through your newsgroup

Irish Post. Weekly. 10p. 'Voice of the Irish Community in Britain'. Middle-of-the-road, but gives regular space to solidarity activities. Should be informed about all UTM events: 2-4 The Broadway, Southall, Middx. 01-572-2058.

Irish Times. Daily. 15p. Irish liberal paper with thorough coverage of events north and south. Now pro-withdrawal and covers UTM events.

Irish Press. Daily. 10p. Paper historically linked to Fianna Fail.

Irish Independent. Daily. 10p. Linked to reactionary Fine Gael party.

Hibernia. Weekly. 25p. Voice of the Dublin professional class. Curious mixture of business reports, dense literary criticism and some hard-headed political reportage. Northern coverage can be useful but is often somewhat cynical in tone.

—. Monthly. 44p. 14 Merrion Road, Dublin 2. New glossy with left leanings. Has useful articles on Republicanism.

Some Background reading

Alternative White Paper on Ireland. 15p + 10p p&p from Troops Out (Literature Ctee), 2a St. Paul's Road, London N1. Published by TOM in 1974. Perhaps still the best short guide to the role of Britain in Ireland since 1968.

British Soldiers Speak Out On Ireland. 30p + 15p p&p from Information on Ireland, 1 North End Road, London W14. Excellent new pamphlet containing articles by ex-soldiers. Includes material on the history of the British Army in Ireland and its record in other colonial wars.

Northern Ireland — The Orange State by Michael Farrell (Pluto Press 1976). Detailed history of the northern statelet, with useful reading list and short biographies of main personalities.

The Protestants of Ulster by Geoffrey Bell (Pluto Press, 1976). Very readable and illuminating study.

Divided Ulster by Liam de Paor (Penguin 1970). Good basic account of Six County history from colonization in the 17th century to the latest outbreak of war in 1969.

A History of the Irish Working Class by P. Berresford Ellis (Collanz 1972). Very useful and readable study starting from Celtic society. Well worth getting, though the last few pages are inadequate because he fails to grasp the link between the British presence and the continued divisions in the northern working class.

James Connolly: Selected Writings ed. Peter Berresford Ellis (Penguin 1973).

Selection of Connolly's most representative writings with a good introduction.

Internment by John McGuffin (Anvil 1973). Incisive study of the use of internment in Ireland from 1916-1973, with chapters on political prisoners, the role of the media, etc.

The Guineapigs by John McGuffin (Penguin 1974). Describes the British use of torture in Malaya, Cyprus, Kenya and Aden, and details the infamous experiments in sensory deprivation on 14 Irishmen in 1971.

The Rise of the Irish Trade Unions by Andrew Boyd (Anvil 1972). Readable account of Irish trade unionism from the 1720s to 1972.

The Point of No Return by Robert Fisk (Deutsch 1975). The Ulster Workers' Council strike of May 1974 — which the British Army refused to break — described by the Times' former Irish correspondent.

IRELAND SOCIALIST REVIEW No. 3

An important source of informed, non-sectarian articles. New issue just out. Will be reviewed in next *Troops Out*. Single copies: 30p + 15p postage. Bulk copies 25p each. Available from: 60 Loughborough Road, London SW9.

BARMY POSTERS

Clever coloured (red & brown on buff) A3 posters taking off Army Recruitment ads. 25p each (plus postage). A4 version (black & white only) 2p each (1p to UTM branches). Manchester Anti-Recruitment Campaign, c/o 178 Waterloo Place, Oxford Rd., Manchester 13. (Cheques made payable to 'MAR Campaign')

WORKERS' RESOURCE BULLETIN No. 5 — Women in N. Ireland

Statistics, articles, interviews, covering the position of women in the North. Written by women active in the women's movement and the anti-imperialist struggle.

De Lorean: The Facts Behind the Bullshit
From Workers' Resource Centre, 52 Broadway, Belfast 12. Subs. £1.50 per year (for 4 issues). Bookstore distribution through PDC, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1. 40p in Ireland, 60p outside Ireland.

MARX AND THE MANCHESTER MARTYRS

The Prisoners' Aid Committee have chosen November 26th as the date for the major demonstration in support of Irish Political Prisoners. The date is the anniversary of the execution of the 'Manchester Martyrs' in 1867. This article looks at the history of this event, its effect on the British working class, and its significant impact on the political thought of Karl Marx.

The summer of 1867 saw a major reorganisation of the Fenian organisation in England. As a result Captain T. J. Kelly was elected chief executive of the Irish Republic. But a few weeks later, probably as the result of a police informer, he and another major figure, Captain Deasy, were seized by police on the streets of Manchester.

On September 18th, in a major Fenian military action, the police van in which they were being transported from court to gaol was ambushed by 30 armed Fenians under a railway arch and Kelly and Deasy liberated. They were never recaptured. In the course of the action a policeman was killed.

The response of the police to this blow was to round up large numbers of Irishmen in Manchester, and eventually, on very dubious evidence, charge 5 men with murder. One of them had absolutely no connection with the event; he was nonetheless convicted and only much later granted a free pardon. The other four were convicted too and three, Allen, Larkin and O'Brien sentenced to hang.

TRIAL

Their conduct at the trial was a proud defence of republican principles. As Allen said: "I want no mercy - I'll have no mercy. I'll die as many thousands have died, for the sake of their beloved land and in defence of it". O'Brien called on the people to: "Look at what is called the

majesty of the law on one side, and the long, deep misery of a noble people on the other. Which are the young men of Ireland to respect: the law that murders or banishes their people, or the means to restrict relentless tyranny and ending their misery". The trial ended with the most stirring remarks of all. "I have nothing to regret, to retract or to take back. I can only say: God Save Ireland!". And as the Times reported, the other prisoners all called out "in chorus and with great power: "God Save Ireland".

The interlude before their gruesome and public execution was brief. But the case aroused major working class sympathy throughout Britain. A monster petition was collected and submitted to the Commons and a massive torchlit procession was held at Clerkenwell Green.

MARX

It was also this incident that first turned Karl Marx to sustained work on the Irish question.

Contrary to what is often thought, Marx did not always have a wholly correct position on Ireland. As he himself later admitted: "I long believed it was possible to overthrow the Irish regime by way of English working-class ascendancy. This is the position I always represented in the New York Tribune. A deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite."

The incident of the Manchester Martyrs caught Marx in the mid-point of this transition in his ideas.

It found him at a difficult time in his life. His daughter Eleanor describes how he was anxiously awaiting the reception of the newly published *Capital*. He felt that the cause of the Manchester Martyrs required him to "hurl revolutionary thunderbolts", yet he hesitated to do so and thus present the readers of his work with an opportunity to dismiss him as a demagogue.

Such hesitation was reprehensible. But Marx was not in the long-term a figure with feet of clay. He learned from events. And so angered with the "insipid and vacuous resolutions" and lack of action by the International Working Men's Association (The First International), he rapidly launched himself into a major campaign for an Amnesty for Irish prisoners and freedom of Ireland from England.

He formulated the standpoint of this campaign which he had come to after much struggle and experience as follows. "I have become more and more convinced - and it remains a matter of driving the point home to the English working-class - that it can never do anything decisive here in England until it makes a decisive break with the ruling class on its policy on Ireland, until it not only makes common cause with the Irish but actually takes the initiative in dissolving the Union. . . . And indeed this must be done not as a matter of sympathy with Ireland but as a demand based on the interests of the English proletariat. Otherwise the English people will be kept in tether by the ruling classes, because they will have to establish a common front with them against Ireland. . . . A people which subjugates another people forges its own chains."

