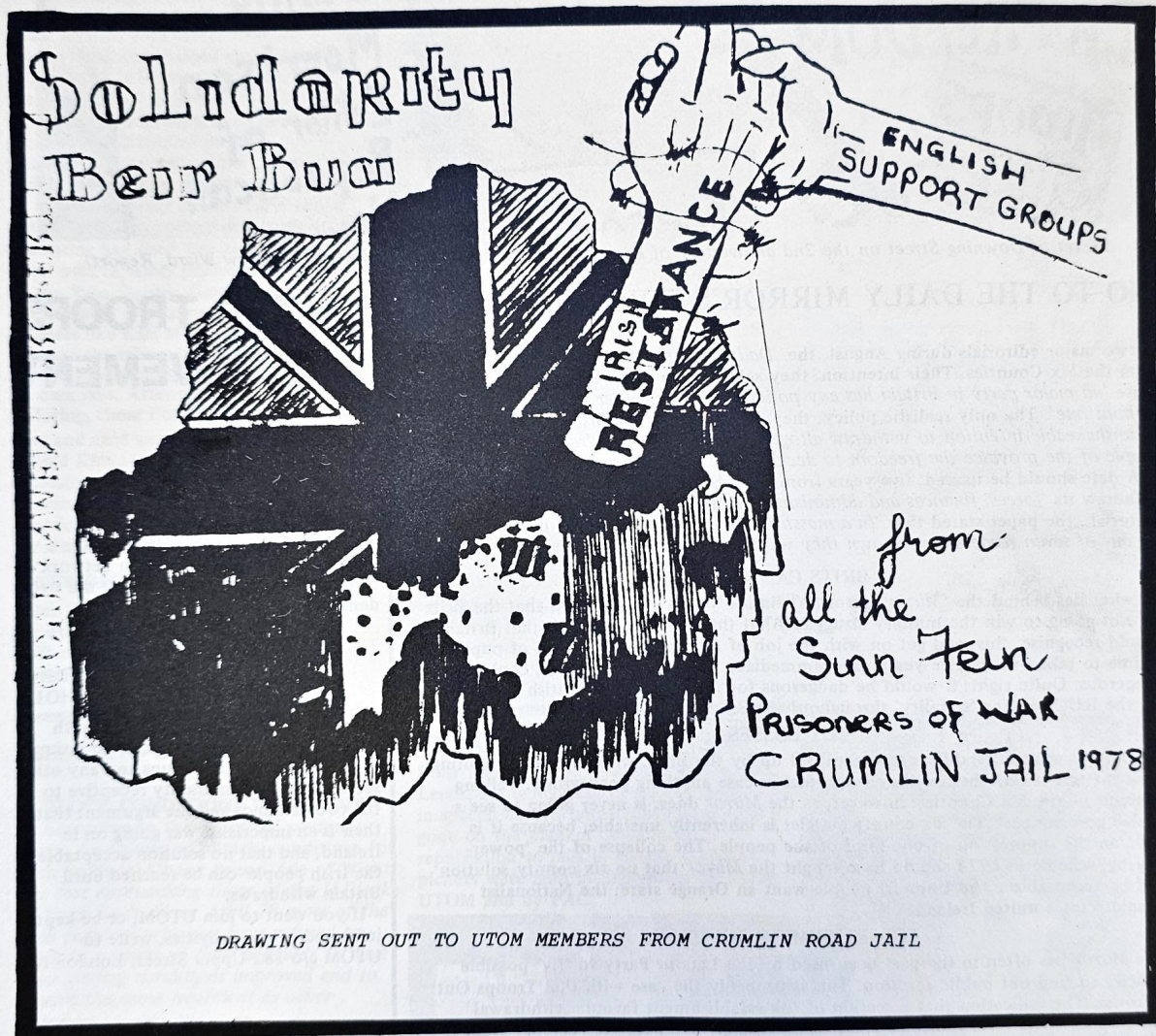


TROOPS OUT

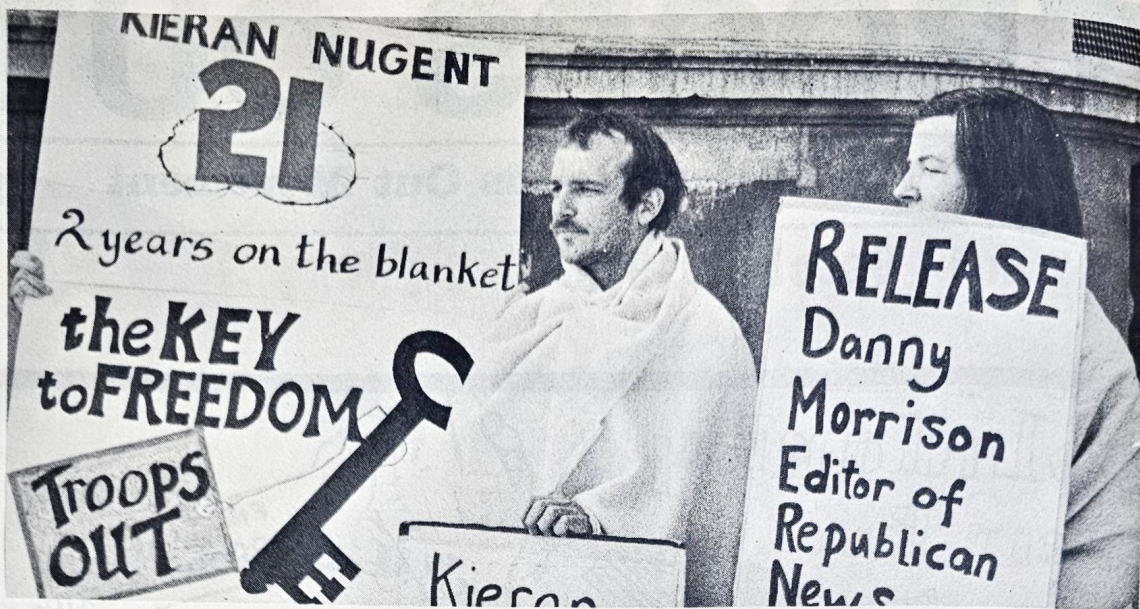
Paper of the United Troops Out Movement

10p

Vol 2 no1 October 1978



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



Picket of Downing Street on the 2nd anniversary of Kieran Nugent's fight 'on the blanket'. (Andrew Wiard, Report)

NO TO THE DAILY MIRROR'S FIVE YEAR PLAN

In two major editorials during August, the *Daily Mirror* called for British withdrawal from the Six Counties. Their intention, they said, was to make Ireland an issue, because 'no major party in Britain has any policy for Ulster, other than to carry on without one'. The only realistic policy, they continued, 'is for Britain to announce its unshakeable intention to withdraw altogether from Northern Ireland. To give the people of the province the freedom to decide what their future is to be'.

A date should be named, five years from now, by which time Britain should withdraw its 'forces, finances and administration'. In the week following the first editorial, the paper stated that 'In a massive *Mirror* postbag over the past few days, six out of seven readers have shown they want to end Britain's involvement in Ulster'.

BRITS CAN'T WIN

So what lies behind the *Mirror* editorials? Basically it is an admission that the Brits are not going to win the military struggle. What the *Mirror* is saying is that Britain should recognise this, and get on with the job of setting up some form of puppet regime to take over in five years time. Immediate withdrawal, they say, could be dangerous. Quite right; it would be dangerous for the interests of British business, for the RUC and for 'stability' throughout the 32 counties of Ireland.

CUT LOSSES

The *Mirror* wants a 'stable government' set up by the Brits, with the troops waiting until the last minute before they leave, just in case anything goes wrong. Talking in terms of the Six Counties, however, as the *Mirror* does, is never going to see a 'stable government'. The six county statelet is inherently unstable, because it is built on the suppression of one-third of the people. The collapse of the 'power-sharing' scheme in 1974 should have taught the *Mirror* that no six county solution will be acceptable. The Unionist people want an Orange state; the Nationalist people want a united Ireland.

ESTABLISHMENT DIVISIONS

The *Mirror* has often in the past been used by the Labour Party to 'fly' possible policies to find out public reaction. This is probably the case with the 'Troops Out' editorial. The indication that a section of the establishment favours withdrawal must be welcomed. So too must the overwhelmingly sympathetic response from *Mirror* readers, most of whose letters showed far more concern for the long-term interests of the Irish people than did the *Mirror*, a majority recognising that Britain had no right to be in Ireland.

NO PUPPET REGIME

But we must be clear that we oppose the *Mirror*'s plans for a Brit-backed puppet regime with formal independence. We deny the right of the British to have any say whatsoever in the future of Ireland. An independent Ulster offers nothing but increased divisions to the Irish people. Only when the Irish people as a whole are free to determine their own future, and when the Brits have been forced to leave without imposing a neo-colonialist solution, will progress be made in Ireland. We unequivocally oppose the *Mirror*'s five year plan, and demand the immediate withdrawal of British troops from the Six Counties. This is the only credible position for people who regard themselves as socialists and anti-imperialists.

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.

If you want to join UTOM, or be kept informed of our activities, write to UTOM c/o 182 Upper Street, London N1



TROOPS OUT

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

The Prison Wars of Irish Republicans

Although the H-Blocks of Long Kesh are at last being widely publicised, it may not be so well known that the prisoners are following in a long and powerful tradition. The actions of Irish Republicans in jail, and the outside support for them, has long been a major element in the progress of Ireland's national struggle.

INHUMAN TREATMENT

A hundred years ago it was the turn of the Fenians. They mostly came from the masses of 'mere Irish' and were treated with a peculiar savagery by the Victorian penal system. Earlier 19th century risings had been led by gentlemen, who could be comfortably photographed even when inside Kilmainham jail (Except for Robert Emmet who was chained and hanged.) But in 1865 at O'Donovan Rossa's trial, the Crown Prosecutor described Fenianism as 'socialism in its most pernicious and wicked phase' — meaning that it involved the 'redistribution of property'.

As with popular Labour Party causes today, British hypocrisy was rampant. Gladstone had shed 'hot and sincere tears' over far-away prisoners of the King of the Two Sicilies. Gladstone was considerably embarrassed when campaigners like Karl Marx and his daughter exposed the inhuman treatment of Irish 'treason-felony convicts' held in his own jails. After many years of suffering, those Fenians who were still alive and sane were expelled from the United Kingdom (an early form of PTA exclusion order), but British cruelty rebounded as many of them went to America or Australia and prepared the way for the Easter Rising of 1916.

A NEW BEGINNING

After the Rising failed, memories of the executed leaders could hardly have sufficed to sustain the national position. It was the organisation of the Irish

Republican Prisoners Dependents' Fund which first inspired further resistance by co-ordinating humanitarian and political activity, leading ultimately to the fight of 1919-21 which so nearly defeated the British forces.

During that war when the prisoners fought for rightful status, the British authorities reacted with familiar brutality. One man died after force-feeding, others died on hunger strike. Another was kept naked in a specially built cell and confined in muffs, something worse than a strait jacket, because he would not wear prison clothes.

SHAMEFUL DUBLIN RECORD

Following the treaty of 1922 which partitioned Ireland within the British Empire, the Irish Free Staters copied their British masters and even at the height of the civil war they refused to admit that captured Republican soldiers were prisoners of war. There were jail riots and battles; internment was followed by an attempt at criminalisation; for the prisoners only the battleground had changed.

Dublin governments have their own shameful history, which explains their recent silence over Archbishop O'Fiaich's remarks and Amnesty's report. In the 1930's, Maud Gonne MacBride had still to campaign for Irish prisoners, just as she had done for the Fenians in her youth. De Valera's administration was just as keen as Stormont and Westminster to suppress

Republicanism by attacking rights of prisoners, and once more in Dublin there were campaigns and hunger strikes and naked men kept in cells for years and who died. A prison doctor later admitted that he would not keep a dog in such a manner.

LEARNING FROM HISTORY

Internment in the '40's led to the border war of the late 50's—and so to the events of today. The men in H-Blocks are keeping to the hardest tradition of Republican prisoners. The Relatives Action Committee is a significant successor to the IRPDF.

Prison defiance has taken varying forms over the last one hundred years, but always British repression has led to further generations of resistance. The old song

We love them yet,
We can't forget

The felons of our land represented a sentiment that was already an integral part of Ireland's tragic history. A felon's cap might be 'the proudest crown an Irish head can wear', but only in the context that those who fought for Ireland's freedom were not convicted criminals, no matter how charged, tried and sentenced in a British court.

If Mason and his men will learn nothing from that history, there are now growing numbers who can, both here and abroad. Who can see to that support the political or military status of Irish Republican prisoners is an essential way forward to winning true freedom for all the Irish people.

IRISH PoWs IN ENGLISH PRISONS

H-BLOCK CONDITIONS IN ALBANY

According to the prisoners' welfare group An Cumann Cabrach, conditions for Irish PoWs in Albany Prison, Isle of Wight, 'are fast approaching those of the H-Blocks of Long Kesh. Since April 78 most of the Irish political prisoners have refused to work in support of their demands to have their visiting conditions improved and to receive the same treatment as other prisoners...

'The cells in which they are held have been bare of furniture since early May... The PoWs have to sleep on a mattress on the floor, eat their meals sitting on the same. There is no water or toilet facilities in the cell... Following their July protest they were sentenced to a further 56 days solitary confinement...'

The actions of the PoWs in Albany are an example of how the struggle is carried on within the prisons. The tactics may be different from those used outside, but the struggle is the same.

ON THE BLANKET IN WAKEFIELD

Four Irish PoWs in Wakefield Prison, near Leeds, are being held in sensory deprivation in special control units. They have now gone on the blanket demanding repatriation to jails in Ireland. Support pickets were held in September by Leeds UTOM and by PAC.



Part of Leeds UTOM blanket protest, 2nd September (Leeds UTOM)

■ ONE YEAR OF 'TROOPS OUT' ■

Troops Out is now one year old. The year of its existence has seen increased activity in Britain in solidarity with the Irish people. Circulation of the paper has doubled. UTOM branches have been formed in many new parts of the country, and existing branches have grown. They have been taking our demands onto the streets through blanket protests, pickets of Army Recruitment Centres, prisons and the media. British army publicity exercises over this summer, such as the Royal Tournament, the Birmingham Show, and the Colchester Tattoo have met with lively opposition from UTOM members and other groups campaigning for troops out.

Troops Out activity is now carried on consistently in places where there has been none since the days of internment and Bloody Sunday. It is the many local branches which are the main strength of UTOM. The PAC and Sinn Fein demonstrations in London in July and August reflected the upsurge in support for the Irish struggle in Britain, as did the August march in Glasgow.

This month, on October 7th, there is a national UTOM demonstration in Barnsley, the Yorkshire constituency of Roy Mason, which will be bringing home to Mason our opposition to British Imperialism in Ireland, and to demonstrate to the Irish people that they do not stand alone. The march has been organised by UTOM groups in Barnsley, Bradford, Doncaster, Huddersfield, Leeds and Sheffield, who have called for all groups opposed to British imperialism to take part.

UTOM groups have also been active in anti-racist activities — in Brick Lane, Birmingham, Southall, the Coventry area and elsewhere, selling literature, distributing leaflets to make the connections between racism against the black population and racism against the Irish — both stemming from Britain's imperialist role — and to win anti-racists to a Troops Out position.

Talks have recently been held with Irish solidarity groups in Scotland and in Britain, and with certain left and student groups to explore the possibilities of building further. Our national conference in October, in London, will take this forward.

The message to the British Government is clear: the pressure is on. We are not going to let the campaign fizzle out. We are going to continue protesting in greater and greater numbers. Marching by the thousands, or picketting by the dozens, we are preventing the Government from making Ireland the forgotten war.



UTOM picket in August outside BBC Television Centre in protest at the censoring of TV play about Willie Gallagher

APPEAL

The two UTOM comrades who highlighted the conditions of Irish prisoners in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh by throwing shit at MPs come up for trial at magistrates court in London in October.

Yana Mintoff (also a member of SWP) and John McSherry took this action in an attempt to break through media silence, and the action has met with enthusiastic response from relatives of prisoners in Long Kesh and from others active in struggle in the Six Counties.

It is expected that fines and court costs — if they are found guilty — may amount to several hundred pounds. We would be grateful for any contributions, however small, to these costs.

Cheques and PO's can be sent to Troops Out (Literature Committee) clearly marked for this purpose.

Dear Friends,

I feel I have to send you and your movement my thanks for your efforts on behalf of my people, especially my own son who is now ten months in Hell Block and on the no-wash protest.

It is most distressing to watch a young boy who was one year ago bouncing with youth now hardly able to speak and looking like an Asian prisoner of the yanks.

However his spirit and staunch determination to stand fast against the evil regime headed by the little midget mouthpiece Mason certainly helps to give many feelings: sorrow, anger, but above all pride in my people and my son and his brave comrades.

When we told him about your protest among those great men of the people in the House of Commons his eyes lit up and his comment was 'Magic Sound.' And that in H Block terms is praise indeed.

I feel I must let you know the great feeling it gave me to see the famous manure bomb affair having more success than poor Guy Fawkes.

Slan.
B.

BIRMINGHAM SOCIAL FRI. 27 Oct.

To raise funds for Midlands Conference on Britain's Involvement in Ireland

IRISH BANDS - DISCO

Emerald Pub, Coventry Rd, Small Heath 8pm
Buses 8,58,60 from city. ALL WELCOME!

UTOM NATIONAL CONFERENCE

21 & 22 October

City Polytechnic, London

A working conference to build the United Troops Out Movement.

Groups and individuals interested in working with UTOM should write for invitations to attend and further details.

UTOM, 182 Upper Street, London N1

THE LABOUR PARTY AND IRELAND

Within the British labour movement and specifically within the British Labour Party, there has always been a reluctance to accept as permanent the division of Ireland. The origins of the Northern state and its association with Tory threats of army mutiny and civil war, have left a lasting impression. Consequently, there is often unease at any developments which appear to commit the Party against eventual Irish re-unification.

TWO NATIONS REJECTED

Several years ago, a document was produced by the Research Department at Transport House which supported the two nations theory and attacked Connolly and Larkin. It was quickly rejected as a basis for discussion by Labour's National Executive Committee. Instead the NEC set up a working group to study Northern Ireland and produce a report.

OMINOUS DEVELOPMENTS

When this report finally saw the light of day earlier this year it contained a proposal to set up what

would in effect have been a new region of the British Labour Party in the Six Counties. The Organisation sub-committee of the NEC promptly threw out this proposal. Even right wing MPs such as John Cartwright were not prepared to accept the possibility of the Labour Party appearing to endorse permanent partition by setting up their own organisation in one part of Ireland.

Ominously, however, letters have been appearing during the summer in papers such as *Tribune* demanding that the Labour Party should do precisely this. A resolution for the Annual Conference at Blackpool in early October also calls for the NEC to organise in 'Northern Ireland as in the rest of the UK'. Significantly, it comes from the Amalgamated Society of Boilermakers, Shipwrights, Blacksmiths and Structural Workers — all jobs almost entirely held by Protestant workers in the Six Counties.

DYING PARTY

When James Callaghan visited the North of Ireland in 1977, he spoke at a number of meetings in Belfast with the object of trying to inject new life into a dying Northern Ireland Labour

Party. This party was independent of the Labour Party in Britain, though, against much opposition, it did manage to negotiate a grant from the British party. It had consistently supported partition since 1948. Callaghan's view was that, although it was clearly a Protestant party which had its counterpart in the SDLP in the Catholic community, nevertheless it should be propped up if alone had links with the trade union movement in the Six Counties.

FUTILE MOVES

Now that the NILP is no longer dying but dead, with its rotting carcass exuding demands for 'greater security' during the Loyalist strike, it has been quietly left to the maggots of the Two Nations Brigade by its former imperial supporters. The debate now centres on the question of the British party itself setting up its own organisation in the north. This is as futile as the previous object. The labour movement as a whole should pressure the Labour Party to move in a different direction, and demand the complete withdrawal of British imperialism from the Six Counties, leading to self-determination for the Irish labour movement and the Irish people as a whole.

Richard Chessum
Leamington Spa UTOM

BMA HYPOCRISY

The British Medical Association conference in August unanimously condemned the 'use of psychiatry to persecute dissidents in Russia'. Dr James Cameron, Chairman of the BMA Council, said it was 'detestable that medicine was being perverted for political reasons...'

Predictably, these ethical feelings did not extend to prison conditions suffered by political prisoners within Britain and the Six Counties. Although Britain has not, as yet, risen to the more sophisticated techniques of the Soviet Union in psychiatric and drug misuse, a much more crude savagery is being perpetrated on Irish political prisoners in particular, including sensory deprivation and the conditions in the H-Blocks. There is an ironic silence from the BMA about the inhuman conditions meted out to Irish political prisoners, and the involvement of doctors in maintaining and supervising these conditions.

The time is well overdue for the BMA to include Irish and other political prisoners in their ethical standards.

IRSP ARRESTS AT RALLY

Three members of the London support group of the IRSP were arrested on 10 September when they and members of Sinn Fein attended an anti-racist rally in Trafalgar Square organised by the three bourgeois political parties.

'We felt it was disgusting and hypocritical that these hack politicians should pontificate about racialism and civil rights while hundreds of young Irishmen and Irishwomen were being kept in the stinking conditions of the hellholes in the North...'

After calling for troops out, the abolition of Long Kesh and freeing of prisoners — in which they were joined by many anti-racist demonstrators —

Tony Mac Neill, Cornelius Powell and Jimmy Scanlon were arrested and held in Cannon Row police station for about five hours. Their banner was confiscated as 'police evidence'.

They appeared at Bow Street Magistrates court on 11 September and were remanded till 2nd October.

Their arrests 'demonstrate the customary partiality of the British police against Irish political activists — of which the Notorious PTA is the most obvious example. It has its counterpart in the 'Sus Laws' which are used to keep down the black communities in this country: indeed we feel it appropriate to have been taken while demonstrating our opposition to racialism in this country for we suffer under the same jackboot!'

DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH IRISH P.O.W.s

26 November

2.30pm

Speakers Corner

Marble Arch

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

Called by the Prisoners Aid Committee

BRITS VS IRISH P

The Brits vs. the Irish people: that was how the situation in the north of Ireland impressed itself on us when we toured the film 'Home Soldier Home' in the war zone in August.

The struggle permeates every aspect of life. The young woman we were staying with had her husband, a *Republican News* worker, in jail on remand on trumped up charges. Her first baby was only six weeks old when her husband was arrested. Her 18 year old brother was in his tenth month in H-Block. Her five year old brother was taken on visits to Long Kesh and has long since learnt to hate the British Army and the RUC.

Feeling for the prisoners runs high in the Catholic ghettos. The people of Belfast turned out in strength for the march on the anniversary of internment. Some 8000 marched to the rhythm of accordion bands through West Belfast beneath great banners strung across the road; 'SMASH H BLOCK', 'STONEMASON WILL NOT BREAK THEM'.

Armoured cars were everywhere, and troops in riot gear. Giant khaki earthmoving machines were brought up in a vain attempt to clear the massive bonfires built by the kids. The rioting escalated as the bonfires were lit, and bottles and sticks were hurled at enemy vehicles. That night the army came under fire in several parts of the city.

SAFE HOUSE

The next day we were taken to a 'safe house' in West Belfast where *Republican News* workers were holding a meeting. The radio was tuned to the local commercial station, Downtown. Every half hour someone would lean across and turn it up for the news bulletins.

Everyone in Belfast listens to the news at every opportunity. It is not the same as the news we get in Britain. Whatever the bias and the lack of analysis, every arrest, every shooting incident, every politician's statement about the situation is catalogued.

The curtains were drawn and through a chink a constant watch was kept for Brit patrols. A patrol moved up and down the street outside for about fifteen minutes, and everyone held their breath. The Brits moved on. A sigh of relief: 'They're looking for rioters.' No need to go over the back wall this time.

Danny Morrison, a young man in his early twenties and the Editor of *RN*, was at the meeting. He had successfully kept out of the Brits' way since the December raids when he was held briefly. He talked about the problems of organising when many of the revolutionary Republicans are forced to operate underground.

Now of course he is in Crumlin Road jail, remanded on the same ludicrous charges of 'membership of the IRA' and 'conspiracy to pervert the course of justice' as the people who were picked up in the April raids on *Republican News*.



Belfast, August 8th. Start of the 8,000 strong march on the 7th anniversary of internment.

UNDERGROUND

One of the staff explained to us how *RN* has to be produced as if it was an illegal paper, although it has never been formally banned.

Articles from different sources are assembled in a safe house for compilation. The photographers are forced to burn their negatives after making prints—they have learnt from experience, because hundreds of negatives (and thousands of pounds worth of photographic equipment) have been seized in recent months.

The harassment has been constant since last December. Papers are seized from shops and from paper sellers. The kids who sell the papers have now organised themselves so that some of them watch for Brits while the others sell. They have developed an elaborate code of whistles to warn of approaching patrols and have their own 'safe houses' to run into.

ENDURANCE

Despite all the pressure the paper still comes out and the Republican population is as militant as ever. The strain people live under is intense, and the suffering of the prisoners' relatives in particular is surpassed only by the suffering of the prisoners themselves. Yet everyone swears they will never give up.

We saw something of the endurance of the prisoners' families when we visited Long Kesh.

To see the Kesh is a tremendous shock for 'foreigners'. The massive, stark concrete walls encircled with barbed wire contrast viciously with the green of the countryside around. Watchtowers manned by machine-gunners break the wall at intervals. Soldiers patrol with snarling alsatians.

A half-hour visit to a prisoner can occupy almost a whole day. There is first the journey in a minibus - 40 minutes from West Belfast but much longer for relatives from Derry or country areas.

When you arrive you are processed through a series of dreary prefabricated waiting rooms. You are searched all over, any silver paper is removed from cigarette packets, and you are allowed only four safety matches.

You are taken in a bus round the bumpy perimeter to the last waiting room. When we went this was full of people, many with restless children.

WAITING

Relatives of blanket prisoners had been waiting for as much as two hours. They are kept till last. The 'blanket men' who take the monthly visit (some, like

PEOPLE — a trip to the war zone



ersary of internment.

been refused parcels, and the only newspapers they get are given them by loyalist prisoners.

But Gerry told us morale is high—despite the fact that most anticipate that they will end up 'on the blanket' because they won't get a fair trial in non-jury courts.

By the time we left, the blanket men were being brought in for their visits. We saw a blanket man ahead of us. He was tall, unnaturally thin and his skin was dead white. He was unsteady on his feet and he supported himself against the wall with his hands. His hands were covered with yellow sores. Every so often he stopped to smile and wave as visitors in other boxes cheered him.

NOT COWED

During our time in Belfast we saw for ourselves how two major prongs of Brit strategy are failing: the attempt to silence *Republican News* and political activists, and the attempt to 'criminalise' the prisoners.

* * *

When we travelled on to Derry we saw a third major aspect of Brit strategy in operation. In Belfast the army had been very visible because extra troops had been drafted in for the anniversary of internment. But in Derry we scarcely saw a patrol save in the City Centre where soldiers ambled up and down guarding token RUC men.

Instead, there was the interminable hum of helicopters overhead. These are linked by radio to SAS men in unmarked cars below. Thoroughly spooky. The idea is of course to take the pressure off the population as a whole and go for 'selected targets'. Two young Derry men, Colm McNutt and Denis Heaney, have been among the recent unarmed victims of the SAS assassins.

But this strategy of terror-by-stealth is not working either. Two days before we arrived an SAS man met his end at the hands of the IRA—an event which gave rise to much rejoicing. And the people are far from cowed. When the 'mini-Motorman' was launched against Derry Sinn Fein a week later, two factories downed tools in protest and several days of rioting followed.

Kieran Nugent, have never taken a visit because they refuse to put on prison uniform (for it) are seen in tiny rooms called 'boxes'. The visitors to remand prisoners have to pass through the corridor between these boxes to get to the cubicles at the far end. When they see the 'blanket men' they clap and cheer. So to prevent this show of solidarity the prison authorities make the remand prisoners take their visits first.

We were visiting a remand prisoner. Eventually his name was read out. We joined a queue of people to file through a glass corridor lined with screws which led under the huge concrete wall.

We went through a no-man's-land of corrugated iron and barbed wire into another prefabricated hut. Once in the visiting cubicles we had to wait for nearly half-an-hour. A screw sat on a pedestal above us and others slouched up and down.

At last Gerry came. He had been inside for 10 months. Other remand prisoners have been in for as long as 22 months. They are refusing to wash in solidarity with the blanket men, so Gerry's hair was all greasy.

The regime is hard. The prisoners are locked in their cells all day except for an hour's exercise and meals. They have



Belfast, August 9th, anniversary of internment. A bus burns.

HOME SOLDIER HOME FILM TOURS

Home Soldier Home will be showing in the following areas in October and November. See local papers for details, or contact addresses given below.

YORKSHIRE TOUR

Sunday 1 October to Saturday 14 October
(Leeds UTOM c/o Leeds Other Paper, 30 Blenheim Terrace)

SOUTH LONDON UTOM

Monday 9 October
(UTOM, 182 Upper Street, London N.1)

MIDLANDS TOUR

Sunday 15 October to Tuesday 24 October
(See Separate Midlands Tour ad)

SOCIALIST STUDENTS ALLIANCE TOUR

Monday 16 October to Friday 10 November
(Redmond O'Neill, 328/9 Upper Street, London N.1)

OXFORD POLYTECHNIC SOCIALIST SOCIETY

Wednesday 25 October to Friday 27 October
(Socialist Society, Oxford Poly Students Union)

MIDLANDS CONFERENCE ON BRITAIN'S INVOLVEMENT IN IRELAND

Saturday 11 November
(Birmingham UTOM, 76B Digbeth, Birmingham B56 6DY)

If you would like to book Home Soldier Home, write to: Home Soldier Home, c/o Information on Ireland, 1 North End Road, London W.14.

Cost: £10 per single non-commercial showing + £3.50 postage

£15 per showing by students unions and other grant-aided bodies + £3.50 postage.

Special rates for block bookings

UTOM MIDLANDS TOUR

- Monday 16 October** Lunchtime. Birmingham University Students' Union with UTOM & ex-soldier speakers
8pm. Women only showing at Gay Centre, Allison St, B'ham, organised by Selly Oak Women's Action Group
- Tuesday 17 October** 7.45 pm. Martineau Teachers Centre, corner Bristol Rd/Priory Rd Edgbaston. Joint UTOM/Socialist Teachers Alliance meeting. Discussion on Army recruitment in schools. Speakers from UTOM, STA + ex-soldier.
- Wednesday 18 October** Leamington and Coventry. Further details from Birmingham UTOM, 76B Digbeth, Birmingham
- Thursday 19 October**
- Friday 20 October** 2.30 pm. Leicester Polytechnic Students Union.
7.30 pm. Leicester University. UTOM & ex-soldier speakers at both.
- Monday 23 October** 7.30 pm. Aston University Council Chamber, Students Union, Gosta Green. Organised by B'ham Poly Socialist Students Alliance & Aston University Socialist Unity. UTOM and ex-soldier speakers.
- Tuesday 24 October** 7.30 pm. Redditch Trades & Labour Club, Bromsgrove Rd, nr Town Centre (venue to be confirmed)

Arrangements are being made for showings in Wolverhampton, Worcester, Kidderminster and Bromsgrove Contact Birmingham UTOM at address given above for details.

British Soldiers Speak Out on IRELAND



available from:
Information on Ireland
1 North End Road,
London W14
30p + 15p p&p
10 copies for £2 + 80p

a chara,
I was at work the other day driving a bus when this lad gets on. Anyway, he asks me! where I got my Troops Out badge from, which I told him. It turned out that he was home on leave from the occupation forces in the Six Counties. I got out one of the papers I carry, Troops Out papers, and asked what he thought of the article re the ex-Brit soldier and his views on whose was the blame re violence. He admitted to me that in his opinion the army were responsible for a lot of the violence and he agreed they should not be there. Of course he did not give me his name and asked me not to quote him.

He then asked me if I had a spare Troops Out badge, I gave him my one and he promptly put it on and also had two papers off me. These I gave him free of charge as I was delighted at his response.

So now since then I have had one or two Asian comrades ask me for the same badge. I shall enclose £1 for as many as you can send me and I shall give them away to my comrades of the job. Well, you can imagine the publicity they get when one-man bus drivers wear them every day. Anyway, enough said. I await your reply.

is mise -
a Midlands contact

TROOPS OUT badges

15p + 7p p&p

'TROOPS OUT'

10p + 7p p&p

bulk orders 10p each

INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL-Preliminary Hearing

A panel of judges from various countries will hear evidence collected by the International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland on Nov. 8-10th. This preliminary hearing will be followed by a week of action, during which all supporters of the Tribunal are urged to publicise the existence of the Tribunal, and to get support for it. It is hoped that at least one of the panel of judges will be able to speak at meetings around the country during that week.

The Tribunal has support from several CLPs, trades councils and trade union branches as well as individuals in this country, and from a number of Irish organisations and individuals, and others from Europe, the USA and elsewhere. For a full list of sponsors, for more information, and for donations and messages of support, write to International Tribunal c/o 182 Upper Street, London N1.

Badges: Anti-NUCs; Women's; anti-RUC; Castlereagh, H-Block and others available from
'Just Books'
7 Winetavern Street, Belfast.
25p each + 7p p&p

HANDS OFF IRELAND No.5

The latest Irish Bulletin of the Revolutionary Communist Group is an uneasy mixture of very good articles and analysis floating in an alphabet soup of denunciations of every group which is not RCG or PAC.

UTOM is denounced by name on pages 3, 11, 15, and 22. We are 'reformists and opportunists' peddling our 'wretched commodities' along with the Observer, Amnesty, the IMG, SWP, CPGB, the Militant, the BLFAC, NCP, Uncle Tom Cobbley and all. When we are not marching for PoW status—we are 'saboteurs' intent on wrecking the solidarity movement.

The International Tribunal comes in for particular attack. The language of many of the articles seems designed to drive people away from Irish work, rather than drawing them in. But enuff said. Read it and make up your own minds.

AZ

Available from RCG Publications, 49 Raiton Rd London SE24 OLN price 25p + 10p postage.

Also available: Revolutionary Communist No. 8. Main article: 'Ireland: Imperialism in Crisis 1968-78'. 50p + 15p postage.



TEN YEARS of STRUGGLE

Reprinted from IRISH FREE PRESS, Belfast

It was 10 years ago that the first Civil Rights marchers hit the towns and villages of the North of Ireland. They were demanding the reform of the Six County State — the end of discrimination against Catholics in housing and jobs, one man, one vote, the end of gerrymandering. The first marchers, mainly Catholic and Protestant middle class liberals, wanted the same standard of 'justice' as prevailed in the 'rest of te kingdom'

rest of the United Kingdom'. They deliberately did not raise the question of the border so as not to antagonise Protestants.

BACKLASH

The response of the right wing Unionists to those rather mild demands was to unleash the police and Paisleyite mobs against the marchers. Several marchers were killed and many wounded. However, some members of the bourgeoisie (the O'Neillites) realised and were prodded by the British government to realise that some 'paper reforms' were needed so that the entire corrupt system would not be endangered.

The right wing backlash to the Civil Rights Movement culminated in the pogroms in Belfast and Derry in August 1969 when hundreds of Catholic houses were bunt to the ground. At this point British soldiers were sent onto the streets, ostensibly to protect the Catholics, but in reality to protect private property and prevent the sectarian state from complete collapse. This has been their role ever since.

SMASH THE STATE

The pogroms of August 1969 convinced many people that the Northern state was unreformable, that the Civil Rights Movement had outlived its usefulness, and that the State must be smashed. The leaders in this radical movement

were the Provisional Republican movement who began an intensive campaign of armed struggle, which eventually put into question the very state itself. When internment without trial was introduced on 9th August 1971 the entire Catholic population was alienated and a process began which toppled the sectarian government of Stormont and led to Direct Rule by the British.

However the government is only one institution of the state; the police, the army, the judiciary, the economy all remained in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Thus the struggle to smash the entire state had to continue.

OUT WITH THE BRITS

This is essentially the position today. This year has seen a revival of the people's morale through the mass activities of groups like the RAC and TUCAR. The struggle of men and women 'on the

blanket' for political status has crystallised the demands of the anti-imperialist people: the removal of the British presence militarily, economically and politically. This movement, much more radical than the early Civil Rights Movement, must be intensified and expanded. The only people who can drive out the British imperialists are the Irish working class, united and strong.

Simple lessons

*Simple lessons cut most deep.
This lesson in our hearts we keep:
Persuasion, protest, arguments,
The milder forms of violence,
Earn nothing but polite neglect.
England, the way to your respect
Is via murderous force, it seems;
You push us to your own extremes.
You condescend to hear us speak
Only when we slap your cheek.*

from 'Butcher's Dozen'

Derry, August 1978. British soldiers and officer caught in riot in Sackville Street following the Apprentice Boys parade. (Derry Journal)





Section of the August 27 Coalisland to Dungannon march on the 10th anniversary of the first civil rights march. Organised by Tyrone RAC. 10,000+ in attendance, 5 times the numbers 10 years ago. (IFL)

The tenth anniversary of the first civil rights march was commemorated on Sunday 27 August with a march between Coalisland and Dungannon in Co. Tyrone. Along this route the first ever civil rights march in Ireland made its way on Saturday 24 August 1968. Then an estimated 2,500 walked the five miles between the two mid-Ulster towns.

RESOLVE UNBROKEN

The turnout in 1968 included Gerry Fitt and Austin Currie, soon to form the SDLP. In 1978 these prime opportunists were nowhere to be seen. However, at least five times as many people marched in 1978 as in 1968: powerful evidence that in the ten years intervening the resolve of the nationalist population has not been broken.

WIDE SUPPORT

The scene before the start of the march clearly indicated the strength of the turnout. Buses were still arriving from many different parts of the Six Counties: Derry, Strabane, Omagh, South Armagh, North Antrim, Lurgan, Ballycastle, not to mention many different areas of Republican Belfast, and from Dublin.

In the approach to the 3.30 start, a dozen bands were striking up and going through their repertoire. It was an

impressive sight, as was the number of banners fluttering overhead: The Trades Union Campaign Against Repression, the Relatives Action Committee, Sinn Fein, the IRSP, Peoples Democracy, the Irish Independence Party, even the Irish Communist Party (but no sign of the 'Sticks' — the Official Sinn Fein).

POLICE UNDER COVER

Shortly before 4pm the march swung out of Coalisland. Five miles is a long way to walk. But spotting the large number of RUC and UDR men concealed in bushes and long grass about 50 yards from the roadside helped to make the time go quickly. Whenever these lurking spies were sighted, people lost no time in making their views abundantly clear.

MASON DENOUNCED

After 2½ hours of marching, the procession wound its way into Dungannon

where it came to a halt in the central square of the market town. There, a platform had been erected from which Bernadette McAliskey, Frank Maguire (Westminster MP for Fermanagh-South Tyrone) and Miriam Daly (chairperson of the IRSP) were among the speakers who addressed the crowd.

Each of these individuals is a seasoned fighter against British domination in Ireland, and their speeches were all the better for that. But perhaps the most impressive contribution was the one from Brendan Gallagher, father of the 48-day hunger striker, Willie Gallagher. 'I am neither a politician nor a public speaker', were his first words. But that did not prevent him from going on to eloquently denounce Mason and the British Government for the way his son had been framed and sent to rot in jail.

Leaving the market square late that Sunday evening, it was clear that we had taken part in the most successful demos in Ireland during this decade of resistance.

Cornelius

DIARY OF EVENTS

JULY

- 19 British soldier killed near Dungannon.
- 20 European Investment Bank to give £20m for development of Cork harbour; £10m for major roads in South.
- 25 N.I. homosexuality law to be brought into line with British law in 3 months; requires vote of Parliament. Follows on case taken to Strasbourg claiming discrimination. Woman Republican prisoner in Armagh beaten by screws. British soldier killed; 3 civilians injured.
- 27 Irish Supreme Court rules birth control pamphlet cannot be censored, but leaves Censorship Board's powers intact. Customs being used to confiscate contraceptives. Provisional statement to *Magill* magazine suggests possibility of renewed bombing campaign in England.
- 29 N.I. Pig Marketing Board to close Inniskillen and Cookstown Unipork factories (940 jobs). Courtaulds to close tyre yarn department at Carrickfergus plant (255 jobs).
- 31 Mason announces new US owned factory at Bangor, Co. Down. Also says BSC will order 119,000 ton carrier from Harland & Wolff.

AUG

- 1 Archbishop O'Fiaich statement after visit to H-Blocks: *inhuman squalor, stench and filth; prisoners cannot be treated as ordinary criminals.*
- 2 RUC reservist killed in Ballymena, Loyalist stronghold. Paisley attacks Mason claim to be defeating the IRA: *'It is clear from this attack that the IRA can operate at will...'*
- 3 US De Lorean Co. to build £65m car assembly plant in Twinbrook, West Belfast. Eventual 2000 jobs promised. State gives 50% grant for purchase of land, building and plant. To use 'local' subcontractors: Michelin tyres from N. Belfast; wiring from US company in Derry; silencers from US company in Belfast. State support worth £60m. Eire govt. offered £37m.
- 7 Raids on SF and other activists in Belfast. 24 arrests. TUCAR activist held; PD/MSR Andytown premises raided and internal files seized.
4 H-Block prisoners to take case against Britain to European Commission, alleging inhuman and degrading treatment.
- 8 7th anniversary of internment. 500 extra troops flown in. Thousands march in Belfast; more marches next day, including Derry.
- 11 Plainclothes undercover Brit killed in Derry.
- 12 Apprentice Boys march, Derry; 10,000.
- 13 2000 in London internment march.
- 14 Derry city buses start running again.
Irish Times: since Diplock courts set up in 1973 1000+ charged each year with serious offences. 1969 prison population: 600; 1978 3,000.
Daily Mirror 'Troops Out' leader on 9th anniversary of troop arrival.
- 15 Brits to recruit 4000 more men; among other reasons 'to increase the pool of units available to undertake emergency tours in N.I. and elsewhere'.
- 17 Child Poverty Action report: 75% more child poverty in N.I. than in Britain.
Soldier killed by car bomb.
- 19 Bombs at British bases in W. Germany.
- 20 Ex-UDR man killed; Willie Gallagher's father held in Liverpool under PTA; prevented from appearing on TV.
S. Irish economy reported to have fastest growth rate in EEC.
- 21 PTA statistics: 3375 detained; 132 expulsion orders.
- 22 RUC/Army raids on Derry SF. 7 arrests. 3 days of rioting follow. All 7 released. Censored version of *Legion Hall Bombing* shown on BBC.
N.I. unemployment: 13.5% (twice UK average) and on increase.
Shackleton enquiry recommends retaining PTA (to nobody's surprise), but removing police powers at ports to detain people over 48 hours without higher authority.
- 25 SLP policy document calls for immediate troop withdrawal.
Wives of 6 men convicted for Birmingham pub bombs granted November High Court preliminary hearing of civil action to establish husbands' innocence.
- 26 Brit officer shot after Co. Meath wedding.
- 27 10,000 march from Coalisland to Dungannon on 10th anniversary of 1st civil rights march.
- 29 W. Belfast strikes in support of Willie Gallagher; he ends hunger strike; NCCL calls for new appeal hearing.
- 30 extra Brit battalion to be based in North on a 'resident' basis; RUC strength now more than double 1969 numbers: 2800 then; 6000 now.

SEPT

- 1 Two visiting US congressmen call for political status.
- 4 SDLP calls for end to Diplock courts.
- 6 UVF man gets 15 life sentences for 1971 McGurk pub bombing.
Gerry Adams, Belfast SF, released after over 6 months on remand-judge says no case to answer on charge of IRA membership.
- 7 TUC Congress calls for govt to ensure no violation of human rights in the North of Ireland.
- 8 *Republican News* editor Danny Morrison arrested and charged.
- 12 S.I. govt. rejects reforms to safeguard prisoners' and detainees' rights.
- 15 Kieran Nugent starts third year 'on the blanket'.
- 18 RTE opinion poll: majority (55%) of British want immediate or phased troop withdrawal.
- 19 Mason starts new round of talks with 'major political groups'.

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.

BARNSELY DEMONSTRATION

Bring the struggle home to Roy Mason!

A national demonstration in the constituency of the Northern Ireland Secretary

Saturday 7 October Assemble 12.30

in Rock St. (off Sackville St), Barnsley, South Yorks.

For details: UTOM, c/o 182 Upper St, London N1



IF THE TROOPS COME
OUT THERE'LL BE A
BLOOD-BATH!

WOMEN IN JAIL IN NORTHERN IRELAND

A new leaflet on remand and protest prisoners in Armagh Jail has been brought out by Fr. Dennis Faul, detailing conditions of the women there.

There are now 26 women protesting for political status in Armagh. We hear less of them because of the hundreds of men 'on the blanket' in such appalling conditions in Long Kesh and Crumlin Road but they are being subjected to similar harassment because of their protest.

Protest prisoners are isolated from the other prisoners. They are locked up 21 hours a day, refused weekly visits and parcels, and lose all remission for their refusal to do prison work. The food is 'brutal' and many have lost weight.

GET TOUGH POLICY

There appears to be a new 'get tough' policy on the part of prison staff. On 29 August the Governor came to the cells, read out the charge and punishment for refusing to do prison work as usual, but was accompanied by 8 screws and 3 P.O.s who systematically pulled and punched a number of women.

On 9 May in A Wing (remand prisoners)

WOMEN AGAINST IMPERIALISM

Women against Imperialism (a new group formed by women who were involved in the Belfast Women's Collective), recently had their premises in Ballymurphy raided by the Brits. Posters were stolen, literature and leaflets destroyed, duplicators smashed and ink spread all over the floor. The premises are to become a Women's Centre

after minor disturbances 56 P.O.s in riot gear with shields and batons rushed the women, throwing them into cells and locking up 25 of them. In the following weeks they were only allowed ½ hour a day in which to bathe, exercise or wash clothes.

The leaflet quotes statements alleging ill-treatment in Castlereagh RUC Interrogation Centre and Strand Road RUC Barracks, including beatings and threats. This treatment usually resulted in the women, unable to take any more, signing statements.

PRESSURE

Recently two US congressmen on a visit to Belfast called a press conference for political status for prisoners, during which they referred to Monica Craig in Armagh (serving 7 years for IRA membership). She suffers from anorexia nervosa and despite months of pleading on her behalf there had been no response from the N.I. Office. She was released within hours of the press conference. Pressure from certain quarters seems to have some effect.

used for meetings and as an advice centre. The women say: 'This type of senseless vandalism by the Brits is not going to stop us'.

The Belfast Women's Collective publish a paper, Women's Action, and the Women Against Imperialism group are planning to bring out a paper. For copies of both, and for more information, write to 52 Broadway, Belfast.

SINN FEIN REPRESSION CONTINUES

Three days of rioting in Derry helped secure the release of 7 men, five of them Provisional Sinn Fein officials, arrested in raids on 22 August.

The five officials named by Sinn Fein were John Johnson, chairman; Danny McDonough, vice-chairman; Stephen Doherty, secretary; Mark McLoughlin, treasurer and Barney McFadden, organiser.

About 200 uniformed and plain clothes RUC men, with British Army cover, arrested the seven men and raided the Sinn Fein offices in the Creggan, Bogside and Brandywell districts of Derry, taking away office equipment and documents.

CONTINUATION OF 'TOUGH' LINE

The raids and arrests are a continuation of the tactics used against Provisional Sinn Fein in December of last year and April this year when arrests and raids were made in Belfast in an attempt to silence *Republican News*.

On 8 September, *Republican News* editor Danny Morrison was arrested, held in Castlereagh, and charged with membership of the Provisional IRA.

This is the latest example of Mason's determination to break the political wing of the Republican movement. Predictably it has met with complete lack of outcry by the bourgeois press. The extent of the people's anger in Derry also went virtually unreported.

