

IRISH REPUBLICAN PUBLICITY

BUREAU

We have been asked to release the following statement:

On January 12th next Merlyn Rees will rise in the British House of Commons to elaborate on the futility of the Convention and to explain to the British people the position, as he sees it, in relation to British presence in Ireland.

On February 10th, 1975 the Irish Republican Army and the British forces of occupation entered into a bilateral truce which, if given a strong positive response by Westminster, would have been instrumental in bringing peace at last to this troubled island. Mr. Rees and his Cabinet colleagues tragically refused to utilise what was indeed a signal opportunity to discharge their responsibilities to Ireland. Their New Year's message to the beleaguered people of the six-counties was one of irreparable disaster, as 1976 began in a blaze of anti-Republican propaganda, leaving one in no doubt regarding the ominous intentions of Mr. Rees on January 12th next. British arrogance will remain unchanged, continuing in her traditional subservience to Orange bullying, still unprepared to face up to the consequences of defying the menace she herself created. Britain would do well to remember the following:

- (a) For 50 years the British Parliament at Westminster supported the Unionist monolith at Stormont, ignoring widespread and blatant sectarian discrimination.
- (b) Westminster supported Brian Faulkner in his introduction of Internment without trial and the ensuing brutality which brought Britain to the Human Rights Court at Strasbourg.
- (c) Britain has tried direct rule which did not and cannot work. Her efforts to muster up a ghost Executive dominated by unrepentant Unionists failed. Her Sunningdale conspiracy with the Dublin Government, the Alliance party, the S.D.L.P. and a rump faction of Unionism, collapsed. The Convention, arranged as a last desperate effort to salvage something from the terrible mess created by Britain in Ireland, also came to naught.

While Britain engaged in such sterile and futile conjecturing, the Republican Movement has been maligned and repressed and prevented from putting its policies before the people. The federal solution proposed by Sinn Fein is still a basis for negotiation and reconciliation. The concept is a viable one and its implementation would greatly contribute to the solving of many of the problems facing all parts of this country.

But the three basic demands of the Republican Movement are vital and the continuing failure by the British Government to satisfy these demands is not only the stumbling block to Irishmen living together in peace and harmony, but ties Britain and the Crown forces to the same position which existed prior to February 10th, 1975.