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BRITAIN AND THE STRUGGLE OF THE
IRISH FOR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE

The Day No News was Not Good News

On August 7th 1985 - over two years ago - news broadcasts on both TV and radio in Britain ceased for 24 hours. It was an unprecedented event in seven decades of public broadcasting in this country.

The cause of this remarkable event was an incredibly crude case of government censorship resulting in the banning of the BBC "Real Lives" documentary concerning the British-occupied area of Ireland. This in turn had provoked industrial action by broadcasters from both the BBC and independent companies, who had united to demonstrate their opposition to such censorship.

This was not the first example of censorship of the media on the issue of Ireland, but it was certainly a particularly blatant case, and it came at a time of growing political consciousness among many sections of workers in Britain in the wake of their experiences during the miners' strike of 1984-85.

What had been unacceptable to the government in the censored programme was simply that it contained an interview with an elected representative of the Irish people, Martin McGuinness, who had been allowed to reveal "too much" of the truth about Ireland and what Britain is doing there, as well as how the Irish people are resisting. The British Government has consistently tried to keep the truth about Ireland from the British people, and up to now it has, unfortunately, largely succeeded.

It is important that we do know what is going on in Ireland. Why is it that the British Government still rules over part of Ireland? (The six counties, often inaccurately referred to as Ulster or Northern Ireland.) What are British troops doing in Ireland? Who are they fighting, and why? .

Neither media images of violence and grief, nor earnest condemnations of the "terrorists" do anything to help the people of Britain discover what is really happening in Ireland, why it is happening, and what can be done about it. Many on the left in Britain have unfortunately done little better in either explaining the reality of the situation there, or in actually doing anything positive about it.

The result has been that while a majority in Britain would like to see the British Government and its troops withdraw from Ireland, there is little awareness among most of the real situation there, and attitudes are often characterised more by ignorance and prejudice than by understanding.

This has significantly limited solidarity in Britain with the Irish struggle for freedom and independence, affecting not only the struggles in Ireland, but also the struggles for peace and progress in this country. The statement by Marx that "A nation that oppresses another nation, cannot itself be free", is as true of Britain as of any other nation.

The aim of this pamphlet is to outline what is really happening in Ireland and why, and also what can and must be done here in Britain if real progress is to be made.

Ireland's present agony: the six counties today

The "men of violence"

The first thing that comes into most people's minds about Ireland and the troubles there is the violence. And there certainly has been plenty of that since 1969, with over 2,600 people killed and more than 25,000 injured. Many people would simply see the problem in Ireland as being how to deal with the "men of violence".

But even if we see the problem in Ireland in these terms, we need to be clear that we know who the "men of violence" are. The British media certainly has no

hesitation in simply pointing the finger of guilt at the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in particular and the Republican movement in general. They portray these organisations as being made up of criminals, psychopaths and gangsters, a bunch of cowards using terrorism in their thirst for power and violence.

But the idea that there has been some sort of epidemic of criminal insanity in the six counties since 1969, with all the sufferers joining the Republican movement, is complete nonsense. If we look at what is really happening in the six counties a very different picture emerges.

While it is true that the IRA and the Republican movement support the use of armed struggle, Republican violence is certainly not a matter of insane individuals or criminal gangsters united in a love of violence for the sake of violence alone.

Are we really to believe that the 10 Republican prisoners, who in 1981 underwent the appalling self-sacrifice and suffering of a hunger-strike until death, were merely cowardly criminals? And what of the 100,000 or more people who vote for Republican candidates at elections in the six counties?

Are we really to believe that tens of thousands of people have been duped by perpetrators of mindless violence. Of course not - the votes cast for Sinn Fein councillors reflect a deep political desire on the part of the nationalist community to have a political voice in the council chambers for the purposes of defending and advancing social and economic rights. It must be remembered that the whole history of the six counties has been one which has been bound up with denial of basic civil rights for Catholics and the political process of electing Republican councillors is an attempt to reverse that trend. There is also no question that the election of Republican councillors means denial of civil rights to Protestants rather it means attempting to create basic equality for all the Irish people in the six counties, irrespective of religious affiliation.

In truth the IRA, and the Republican movement of which they are part, are simply people struggling to free part of their country from foreign military occupation, and their whole country from foreign domination. Just as in the Second World War resistance forces fought the German occupation of Europe, so today in Ireland the IRA is fighting the British occupation of the six counties. We wonder what the response of the British people would be to the sight of Irish paratroopers patrolling the streets of Britain, imposing military and political rule from Dublin.

The military campaign of the IRA is a response to, not the cause of, the British military occupation. It is a response to the violence and repression directed against the Republican movement and the nationalist population as a whole in the six counties. In 1969, when the increased deployment of British troops to the six counties began, the violence was coming from the Unionists. The Provisional IRA had not even been formed.

So we come to the "men of violence" about whom the British media are so often silent when the men of violence who are at the heart of the problem in Ireland - the British military forces occupying the six counties and the Unionist terrorists who support them.

In the first few years of the "troubles" in the six counties, the vast majority of violence came from Unionist terrorists who, between 1966 and 1973, killed over 150 people, and from Unionist mobs which forced tens of thousands to flee their homes after attacks and intimidation. The openly expressed aim of the Unionist violence was to terrorise the Catholic community, which was seen as the main base of support for the Republican movement.

Murder, torture, and mutilation have all been features of Unionist terrorism. Perhaps the most notorious Unionist terrorist gang was the so-called Shankill Butchers, who tortured and killed 19 people in the space of 18 months, only eventually being caught

after their last victim managed to survive after being left for dead having been tortured, slashed with knives and strangled.

The entry of the British Army on to the streets of Belfast and Derry in 1969 did initially offer some protection to Catholic communities from Unionist mobs. But this was not the reason for the Army's deployment, and the true purpose soon became clear.

British forces began to add their own violence to that of the Unionists as they sought to implement the British State's policy for the suppression of the Republican movement and the growing unrest of the nationalist population which threatened continued British power in Ireland. (The details of this crisis can be found later in this pamphlet).

However much the British media and Government might seek to hide it, and however unpleasant it might be for us to admit, the truth about the violence of British forces in the six counties has to be recognised.

The record of British State violence includes:

- * Over 200 people killed directly by British forces since 1969;
- * 13 unarmed civil rights demonstrators shot dead by British paratroopers in Derry in 1972 when, according to the Derry City Coroner, "the Army ran amok ... I say without reservation - it was sheer unadulterated murder";
- * in 1981 alone 7 people, including 3 children, were killed by plastic bullets fired by British military forces;
- * numerous suspects, whether innocent civilians or armed and unarmed Republicans, brutally shot dead, without ever being challenged or given a chance to surrender, under the "shoot to kill" policy of the British forces in the six counties.

Mr John Stalker, chief constable of Greater Manchester police was effectively removed from his job after attempting to discover the truth about the shooting of Toman, McAuley and Burns in an ambush, conducted by the RUC Southern Region Headquarters Mobile Support Unit (HQMSU) on 11th November 1982. According to the Observer 12th October 1986, HQMSU "was essentially a death squad of two dozen men. Its six-man field teams operated in pairs of plain armour-plated Cortinas with only a sergeant in charge. The man in each front passenger seat carried a Sterling sub-machine gun. The one in the back had charge of the high powered Ruger rifle". On the 24th November 1982 Michael Tighe was assassinated in the same way by the same people. In May 1987 eight members of the IRA were ambushed and killed. Each dead IRA man had a single bullet wound in the back of his head in addition to other bullet wounds.

In the Loughall incident which led to the death of the eight IRA men, a civilian was killed and another seriously injured. If the Army knew about the operation, why was there no attempt to arrest them? These events graphically expose the myth that the security forces are there to maintain law and order. The policy is clear - state-backed assassination based on a shoot to kill policy - shoot first ask questions later.

In the three-year period 1971-74 alone, there were 2,000 complaints of assault and maltreatment at the hands of the police or Army, and this despite the obvious risks of such official complaints.

By 1975 nearly 800 court cases had been brought against the British Government over violence by their military forces, and 222 of these had already been settled with nearly £500,000 being paid out in compensation.

The European Commission of Human Rights found the British Government guilty of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment of prisoners in the six counties in 1976.

Dr Irwin, a police surgeon with the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), produced detailed evidence of 150 cases of injuries to prisoners of which he had personal experience and medical experts have confirmed that serious and lasting damage occurs to people subjected to the sort of psychological torture techniques the British Army admits to using in the six counties.

The purpose of this sort of violence by British forces is to defeat the Republican movement and intimidate the nationalist population in the six counties. This can be particularly seen in the treatment of Republican prisoners by British forces. Torture and brutality during interrogations are used to obtain "confessions" on which to convict Republicans. In the four months from January to April 1979 for example, no less than 86% of convictions for "terrorist" offences were based solely on "confessions" by suspects.

Meanwhile, constant maltreatment of Republican prisoners is a deliberate strategy to intimidate and break the spirit of those who have dared to challenge the British state. There can be no other reason for treatment such as the regular strip searches of women prisoners, often carried out several times each week. This particular practice has been described by a former woman Republican prisoner at Armagh jail;

"It actually gets worse, and we believe, and I know from talking to other women, that there must be some similarity between what we feel and what a rape victim feels. Our bodies are actually being violated." (Linda Quigley in "Labour and Ireland" vol 2 No 5)

The report "A Christian Response to Strip Searching" produced by nine people including two Catholic priests, a Methodist, a member of the Church of Scotland and a Quaker, and published on 2nd April 1987 is a clear indictment of the "case" made by the security forces for strip searching. Leading Dublin psychiatrist Ivor Browne is quoted in the report as saying that he has

"long maintained that for women the closest analogy to rape is strip searching". Newry GP Seamus McAteer in the same report points out "Strip searching could result in long-term mental and physical trauma. And in cases where the practice was repeated time and time again, the upshot could be serious physical illness." The report concludes: "It is our advocacy that the practice of strip searching should go the way of torture and the treadmill and be deemed no longer acceptable by societies that wish to call themselves civilised.

Repression and dictatorship in the name of "democracy"

Although the British media and government constantly claim that British troops are in Ireland to defend democracy, once again the truth is very different.

When British troops first intervened on a large scale in the six counties in 1969, and indeed up until 1972, the area did have its own government and parliament at Stormont. In the rest of Ireland - The Republic, there was a government and parliament in Dublin.

The partition of Ireland into the six counties and twenty-six counties had initially been imposed on the Irish people by the British government against the wishes of the majority as expressed in the 1918 general election.

In that election 69.5% of the entire population, ie, of the whole 32 counties, voted for candidates who wanted an independent Ireland.

Since partition there has not been a single national election or national government in Ireland to allow the Irish people as a whole to decide on their future.

In the six counties any semblance of democracy has been removed. Despite regular elections, the political system there is wholly undemocratic and is designed to preserve political power for a foreign government and

the section of the population (the Unionist minority) that supported it. The main features of this system were:

- the principle of "one person one vote" did not exist. Property qualifications denied many people the vote, while giving others multiple votes. This generally worked against Catholics.

- political power was exercised exclusively by the Unionists, with the Ulster Unionist Party forming every government in Stormont during the half century from partition to 1972 when the British Government took over direct rule;

- electoral boundaries were deliberately drawn to ensure Unionist victories at elections in gerrymandering that the Government's own Cameron Report confirmed in 1969.

In a Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) pamphlet written by Desmond Greaves in 1969 gerrymandering is described thus: "In deciding how much of Ireland to cut off, Lloyd George's Coalition Government did not consult local wishes. Derry City, Fermanagh, Tyrone, South Down and South Armagh sent deputations stating that these areas wanted to remain in the separate Irish state. They were disregarded. Once the Unionists were in power they set out to make sure that these areas would not return councils opposed to partition. For this purpose they introduced gerrymandering.

"Thus while Derry City had a two-thirds anti-Unionist electorate, the ward boundaries were so drawn that two-thirds of the councillors were Unionists. The measures taken invariably strengthened the rich against the poor. Thus in local elections only householders are allowed a vote. This affects both Catholic and Protestant workers. Business men can have up to six votes for each business, according to their size. Obviously it was in the Unionist interest that their opponents should not have houses. Hence the discrimination in the allocation of houses. There are

council estates for example in Enniskillen where not a single Catholic lives. The Catholics are crowded into the poorest and most congested part of the town."

The legal system and security forces were not only bastions of religious prejudice and bigotry against the Catholic population, but were continually used for the political persecution of the Republican movement.

The Special Powers Act was in force from 1922 to 1972, and this gave the Stormont Government sweeping powers, including the right to imprison political opponents without trial. As long ago as 1936 the British National Council for Civil Liberties had described the Special Powers Act as "the basis of a legal dictatorship".

Although the six counties had its own government and parliament, it was still a part of the United Kingdom and under the authority of the British state. British military power was constantly available to support the position of the Unionists in the six counties and maintain British imperialism's domination of Ireland.

In 1969 it was the protests of the civil rights movement that had threatened Unionist power by challenging the lack of democracy outlined above. This provoked the active intervention of British troops on to the streets and into the countryside of the six counties.

Direct rule by the British state was established in 1972, with the abolition of the Stormont government. Many other changes have occurred since 1969, but the democratic right of the Irish people to govern themselves is still denied them by the British state and the political repression and restriction on civil liberties in the six counties has increased with an array of new "security" measures.

These "security" measures have meant:

- the British state employs a 30,000-strong security force to control the six counties.

- the area is subject to the Emergency Powers Act which gives the British Army sweeping powers over the civilian population.

- the British Government's internment policy in the early 1970s led to over 2,000 people being held in prison camps, such as the notorious Long Kesh, without ever being charged, let alone being brought to trial and convicted.

- the Prevention of Terrorism Act, since being passed in 1974, has been used as a means of political intimidation and control rather than as a security measure against "terrorism". By September 1980 nearly 5,000 people had been detained under the Act, but only 55 of these had been actually found guilty of Prevention of Terrorism Act offences; and in 1984 alone the National Council for Civil Liberties estimated as many as 45,000 people were stopped under the provisions of the Act while travelling from Dublin to Liverpool.

Convictions for "terrorist" offences have been obtained by the use of torture and, more recently, by the use of "super-grasses". This latter practice has already been largely discredited with many judges being forced to admit that "super-grasses" are nothing more than paid perjurers who would say anything for the bribes of the British state.

The Diplock Courts, which are used to try political offences in the six counties, deny suspects the right to a trial by jury, and instead have only a judge to decide on innocence or guilt. Not surprisingly the result is that the conviction rate in Diplock Courts is about 90%, or nearly twice as high as in courts with a jury.

Most recently the British Government has introduced the new Public Order Act (April 2nd 1987) which applies only in the occupied six counties. Under the terms of the Act, "the RUC will be able to arrest and eventually imprison for up to six months anyone taking part in a march for which they have not received seven days' notice. It also enables the RUC to demand the routes, numbers attending and names and numbers of bands taking part". (An Phoblacht, April 9th 1987). The RUC will also be able to "relocate any meeting, limit its length

and the numbers taking part, or even ban it" ...
"Whereas before, the law required the RUC to prove that a speech, article or poster or someone's behaviour was intended to stir up hatred or arouse fear, now anything "likely" to stir up hatred is open to prosecution" ...
"The Act also adds to the States powers to censor published written materials, sound or video recording, and broadcasts".

If further evidence were needed of how little the British state respects democracy in Ireland it is demonstrated in its attitude to elected representatives of the Irish people who are members of Sinn Fein.

Although for decades the British State quite happily dealt with the Unionists elected by blatantly undemocratic procedures, they now refuse to have anything to do with Sinn Fein members elected by a vastly more representative electoral system, ie, the proportional representation system now used in local council and assembly elections in the six counties.

Religion and politics

Another of the claims of the British media and government is that the British forces are in the six counties to try to keep the peace between hostile religious communities, with British government policy being to promote religious harmony. But again the reality is somewhat different, for the British state is not a peacemaker in Ireland nor is the conflict in the six counties a religious one.

It is vitally important for people in Britain to understand the true nature of the conflict in Ireland, since the idea of it being a "religious war" is one that is deliberately cultivated by the British state to conceal its real policy and role there.

The reality is that on one side is the British state, supported by the Unionists in the six counties, who are fighting for the continuation of British imperialism's domination of Ireland, while on the other side are the Nationalist population, Irish Republicans,

Irish Communists and other progressive forces, who are fighting for a united and independent Ireland, free of British occupation and domination.

It is true that the Unionists in the six counties are largely Protestants, while the Republicans are largely supported from among the Catholics. However, the reasons for this are partly historical (as will be shown later in this pamphlet) and partly the result of the deliberate policy of successive British governments to promote religious sectarianism and conflict. This issue of religious beliefs should not obscure the fact that the dispute in Ireland is not over religion, it is over the national future of the country: whether it should remain divided and under British domination or whether it should achieve its independence, freedom and national unity.

The policy of the British state in the field of politics in preserving the political supremacy of the Unionists among the Protestant population, has already been mentioned, but this policy of discrimination and privilege between one religious community and another in the population of the six counties has also extended into the fields of social and economic policy.

In jobs, discrimination by employers, including public corporations and private firms receiving government grants, has led to unemployment among Catholics being three times as high as among Protestants, and to those Catholics with work being largely in low paid and low-skill jobs. The massive extent of discrimination is revealed in the government's own Fair Employment Agency (FEA) report for 1982. This report for instance showed that Harland and Wolff, one of Belfast's largest employers and owned by the British government, did not employ a single Catholic as a skilled fitter nor in any similar trade, despite about a third of the city's population being Catholic.

Officially, since 1981, firms in Northern Ireland who tender for government contracts must hold an equal opportunity certificate issued by the Fair Employment

Agency. In the first 18 months, 997 firms had signed the declaration of principle and intent which is necessary to achieve the certificate by March 1984 6,335 companies had signed, giving some hopeful pointers towards the alleviation of discrimination. However, the reality is somewhat different - it appears many companies are signing merely to get contracts without any real intention of implementing anti-discrimination policies. Kevin McCorry, a leading Northern Ireland lawyer had this to say recently in an article entitled "Discrimination - Case Studies" (Unity, Belfast, 8th November 1986).

"The non-industrial Civil Service is the biggest employer in Northern Ireland. A Fair Employment Agency investigation found a number of irregularities. The agency found that there were wide variations between the proportions of Catholics in different departments and under-representation at key policy-making levels. In 1973 there were 7 Catholics in the post of assistant secretary or above, out of a total of 83 (8.4%); in 1983 there were 8 out of 119 (6.7%). In other words, in ten years thirty-six additional posts were created, thirty-five of which went to Protestants."

"Early in its life the FEA began an investigation into the engineering industry. Shorts Brothers plc was included in this investigation. The agency found 3% of Shorts' 7,000 employees were Catholic. An affirmative action programme, of uncertain status, was agreed in May 1983. It did not include either monitoring of the workforce, or the setting of goals and timetables. Instead it concentrated on monitoring applicants and appointments."

"In November 1982 the FEA reported on its formal investigation into the Northern Ireland Employment Service (NIES). The investigation began as one into senior management grades only.

The agency found that a maximum of 4% holders of such grades were Catholics, and over 91% were Protestants. At this point the FEA might have been expected to find failure to afford equality of

opportunity. Instead it increased the scope of the investigation to cover the inner grades and apprenticeships. It found that for craft apprenticeships, applications and appointments followed the religious proportion of the population. But for other posts it found that Catholics were 44.7% of total applicants and 35% of successful applicants.

In light of continuing discrimination on the ground, the McBride Principles take on added significance and importance, and therefore we urge British trade unions to campaign for their proper implementation.

THE McBRIDE PRINCIPLES

"In light of decreasing employment opportunities in Northern Ireland and on a global scale and in order to guarantee equal access to regional employment the undersigned propose the following equal opportunity/affirmative action principles:

1. Increasing the representation of individuals from under-represented religious groups to the workforce including managerial, supervisory, administrative, clerical and technical jobs.
2. Adequate security for the protection of minority employees both at the workplace and while travelling to and from work.
3. The banning of provocative religious or political emblems from the workplace.
4. All job openings should be publicly advertised and special recruitment efforts should be made to attract applicants from under-represented religious groupings.
5. Layoff, recall and termination procedures should not in practice favour particular religious groupings.
6. The abolition of job reservations, apprenticeship restrictions and differential employment criteria which discriminate on the basis of religious or ethnic origin.

7. The development of training programmes that will prepare substantial numbers of current minority employees for skilled jobs including the expansion of existing programmes and the creation of new programmes to train, upgrade and improve the skills of minority employees.

8. The establishment of procedures to assess, identify and actively recruit minority employees with potential for further advancement.

9. The appointment of a senior management staff member to oversee the company's affirmative action efforts and the setting up of timetables to carry out affirmative action principles."

In housing, Catholics in the six counties have been forced to live in some of the worst housing conditions in Europe as a result of both the discriminatory policies of Unionist-controlled council housing departments and the attacks and intimidation by Unionist mobs that forced tens of thousands of Catholics to flee their homes.

While Unionist paramilitary organisations such as the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) have been allowed to operate legally despite their responsibility for intimidation and terrorism against Catholics through the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) - a UDA front for terrorism and murder, Republican paramilitary forces have been made illegal and ruthlessly suppressed.

In the security forces themselves, sectarianism has increased. The RUC and the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR), which made up a large part of the military force of the British state in the six counties, are both almost entirely drawn from the Protestant population of the area. Many members of the security forces are also members of Unionist organisations, including those engaged in terrorism, and there are now in fact several hundred members or ex-members of the security services serving prison sentences for terrorist crimes. One of the worst such crimes was the massacre of the Miami Show Band in August 1975. In this incident a UDR patrol stopped the minibus the musicians were

travelling in on an isolated road, ordered them to leave the vehicle, and then opened fire on them with machine guns, leaving three dead and two wounded.

The conspiracy of silence in Britain

All too often it seems that people in other countries actually know more about what the British state is doing in Ireland than do people in Britain. For instance it was not until the European Commission on Human Rights found Britain guilty of the maltreatment of prisoners in the six counties that most of the British media were prepared even to mention the issue.

At the time of the hunger strikes by Republican prisoners in the six counties in 1981, while there were more than ninety different European newspapers condemning Mrs Thatcher's handling of the situation, there was scarcely a word of criticism in any of the British press. When the hunger striker Bobby Sands died, hundreds of thousands demonstrated around the world (and in Iran they even named the street containing the former British Embassy after him), but in Britain itself the few demonstrations that did occur attracted little mass support.

One of the main reasons for this contrast between the condemnation of the British state's occupation of the six counties by progressive opinion across the world, and even from some governments friendly to Britain, and the lack of any widespread criticism in this country, is the massive amount of propaganda and censorship that exists here over the issue of Ireland. The very fact of this persistent suppression of the truth is itself subject to censorship and restriction by the media.

Government censorship and intervention in the media on this issue of the six counties is in addition to the bias and distortion in favour of the British government that is to be expected from a media controlled almost entirely by the ruling class.

Back in 1971, when this process was just beginning to be perfected, the ITV broadcaster Jonathan Dimbleby and some 200 other journalists and broadcasters met to protest about what they described as "the intensification of censorship on television, radio, and the press coverage of events in Northern Ireland". Since that protest more than 36 television programmes concerning the six counties have been banned, censored or delayed, and in August 1985, 14 years after that original statement broadcasting workers were still having to take action in protest against Government censorship, as described in the introduction to this pamphlet. Even songs by the Beatles were banned from the radio, such as John Lennon's "Sunday Bloody Sunday" and Paul McCartney's "Give Ireland Back to the Irish". More recently the noted political song writer Maria Tolly faced opposition from the record manufacturers who attempted to censor her LP "Voices" which contains songs sympathetic to Irish independence.

The History of Ireland: 800 years of interference from Britain

An understanding of the situation of Ireland today is impossible without knowing how that situation came about, and this means looking back far beyond 1969 to the history of Ireland.

Ireland: the first British colony

The history of British interference in Ireland begins over 800 years ago. It is a history that began with violence, and for century after century violence was continually to be its hallmark as Ireland was systematically exploited for her material wealth and strategic value to the British ruling class.

In 1169 the English king, Henry II, sent mercenaries to Ireland to seize land and plunder and to force the local population to accept the authority of the English Crown.

In the next few centuries a large area around Dublin was cleared of Irish people to provide for English settlers. The area became known as "the Pale" (from which came the expression "beyond the pale") and was used as a base for English power over the whole country.

In the sixteenth century the forces of Henry VIII put down an Irish rebellion against the English Crown in a military campaign that included the slaughter of all the inhabitants of the Irish town of Maynooth.

In the seventeenth century Cromwell led British forces in another campaign against Irish rebels. This brutal campaign devastated Ireland and included the massacre of men, women and children in the towns of Drogheda and Wexford.

At the end of the eighteenth century the suppression of the United Irishmen's rebellion left between 25,000 and 50,000 Irish people dead at the hands of the British state.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the military repression of Ireland was formally legalised by the British state in a series of Coercion Acts, which were enforced by their permanent occupation of Ireland by the British Army.

But the interference from Britain not only brought Ireland the violence of war, it also created and then continually reinforced sectarian religious conflict within the country. In the seventeenth century large numbers of Protestant settlers from England and Scotland were encouraged to move to Ireland. The majority settled in the north-east of the country, in Ulster, on land seized from Irish Catholics in a process known as the "plantations".

By the end of the eighteenth century the ordinary Irish people suffered as serfs to the landowning classes. Their wretched plight was achieved through the application of the Penal Laws, described by Edmund Burke as "a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment

and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man".

Westmoreland, HM Lord Lieutenant in Ireland, was quick to see the advantage of such a situation. In a letter to Pitt in 1792 he suggested that English rule could be maintained with a "Protestant garrison ... in possession of the land, magistracy and power of the country; holding their property under tenure of British power and supremacy, and ready at every instant to crush the risk of being conquered".

The British ruling class hoped by this policy to create a section of the Irish population that would support the continuation of British rule in Ireland. Protestants were given a privileged position throughout Ireland in an effort to maintain their allegiance to the British state and their separation from the rest of the Irish population, who were largely Catholic.

A system of discrimination against Catholics in all areas of life was established in Ireland by the British state. The Penal Laws were passed in order to deny Catholics political and economic power in Ireland in a system of discrimination similar to apartheid in modern South Africa.

In land ownership, while in 1641 59% of land in Ireland was owned by Catholics, by the mid-eighteenth century this had been reduced to only 7% as a result of land seizures and the impact of Penal Laws which prevented Catholics buying land or passing it on in their wills.

Catholics were excluded from the army, the legal profession and teaching, and from becoming members of parliament.

Catholics were not allowed to vote.

The practice of the Catholic religion had numerous restrictions placed on it, and there were other measures to eliminate Irish culture.

This discrimination between different religions, then as now, has nothing to do with religious beliefs themselves but rather was, and still is, a class policy

designed to serve the interests of Britain's rule over Ireland. A clear illustration of this is the historical reality behind the hero of the "Protestant cause" in Ulster, King Billy (William of Orange), whose battles in the seventeenth century are still celebrated by Unionists. In fact at the time "King Billy" was fighting these battles he was actually an ally of the Pope and the Catholic hierarchy in Rome, involved in a wider power struggle across Europe.

Religion nevertheless continued to be used by Britain as a weapon in Ireland. In 1795 the Orange Order was formed as an organisation of Protestants who opposed the growing struggle of the Irish to be free of British rule. The Orange Order became a focal point of religious bigotry and prejudice against Catholics, and a stronghold of reactionary ideas.

The Orange Order has been used not only as a weapon against Irish nationalism, but also against the struggles of Irish workers generally. Employers and landowners have always held the leading positions in the Orange Order and they have spread the ideas of private ownership and class collaboration to the workers and labourers who make up the bulk of the membership of the organisation. The Orange Order continues to spread the influence of reactionary and even fascist ideas today, particularly within the Unionist movement in the six counties.

The Unionist movement itself was established in the late nineteenth century as a political movement that supported the "union" of Britain and Ireland, through which the British state claimed the right to rule Ireland. The contrast of the reactionary nature of the Unionist forces in the six counties and the progressive nature of the Republicans was illustrated in 1985 when the South African ambassador to Britain visited the six counties. While all the Republicans and other progressives refused to meet him, the Unionists went ahead and met this representative of the apartheid system.

ECONOMIC DISLOCATION

Immense economic damage has been done to Ireland as a result of the interference of British imperialism. The British ruling class has looted the wealth of Ireland and devastated its economy over the centuries, both agricultural and industrial development have been distorted by exploitation from British imperialism. The result has been the most appalling suffering for the Irish people. By the nineteenth century the people of Ireland had been reduced to the most abject poverty. The 1841 census found that half the rural population in Ireland lived in mud huts, with little or no furniture, and dependent on a single source of food: potatoes.

There were many famines in Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but it was the Great Famine of the mid-1840s that had the most profound impact on the development of Ireland. This famine was a mass catastrophe of the horrific proportions we see today in parts of Africa, although the Irish never benefited from the sort of international aid that is now sent to such famine areas.

While the images of famine today can be brought directly into our homes on our TV screens, the horror of the famine in Ireland in the 1840s obviously cannot be shown in this way, nevertheless the following quotation from The Times (London) of Christmas Eve 1846 gives some indication of its true nature; (this was part of a report from the magistrate of Cork, Nicholas Cummins, of a visit he made to the village of Skibbereen).

"On reaching the spot I was surprised to find the wretched hamlet apparently deserted. I entered some hovels to ascertain the cause, and the scenes which presented themselves were such as no tongue or pen can convey the slightest idea of. In the first, six famished and ghastly skeletons, to all appearances dead, were huddled in a corner on some filthy straw ... I approached with horror, and found

by a low moaning they were alive - they were in fever, four children, a woman, and what had once been a man. It is impossible to go through detail. Suffice it to say, that in a few minutes I was surrounded by at least 200 such phantoms, such frightful spectres as no words can describe, either from famine or from fever. Their demoniac yells are still ringing in my ears and their horrible images are fixed upon my brain. My heart sickens at the recital, but I must go on. ... The same morning the police opened a house ... and two dead corpses were found lying on the mud floor, half devoured by rats ... in another house ... the dispensary doctor found seven wretches lying unable to move, under the same cloak. One had been dead for many hours, but the others unable to move either themselves or the corpse ..."

This famine devastated Ireland as never before. In five years 10-15% of the population died of starvation or disease - in other words well over a million people! Another 10% of the population were forced to flee the country to escape the famine, most having to leave for ever in journeys to the USA and Australia.

While hundreds of thousands of Irish people were dying each year during the famine, the British ruling class continued to take wealth out of Ireland and even continued to export food from the country. Even today, few Irish people can forget or forgive this episode in Irish history.

The devastating impact of the Great Famine, as well as the continuous effect of British imperialism, can be seen in the population statistics for Ireland.

1841 - 8 million people, and increasing.
1851 - 6.5 million people.
1900 - 4 million people.

Even today the population of Ireland is little more than 5 million.

In the Republic, while the government has become more independent of Britain, the country's economy remains dominated by British and other foreign transnational corporations and crippled by the loss of its industrial base in the six counties. The way in which partition has affected economic development can be illustrated by the following quotation:

"No country has all its industries evenly spread over its surface. On the contrary, some industries grow up in some areas, and others in others. Thus Britain builds no ships of any size south of the Mersey. She has no sugar beet factories north of it. Such specialisation or division of labour between different districts of a country binds it together, by making the parts interdependent and creating the practical necessity of unity as a nation."

"Ireland, like Britain, has for many years had certain districts devoted to certain pursuits. The west breeds cattle, the east raises them, the south engages in dairying. Light industries of various kinds grew up (when allowed by imperialist laws) in the different towns of Ireland; but the vital engineering and textile industries came to be centred in the Belfast area. This is no more surprising than the centring of cotton in Lancashire or hosiery in Nottingham. But it means that by cutting off that area from the rest of Ireland, the country is deprived of the ability to make things with which to make things ... Britain created Ireland's dependence on the north but now she has taken the north away." ("The Irish Case against Partition", Desmond Greaves)

Irish resistance: the development of Irish nationalism

Resistance to British imperialism and colonialism has been a constant feature of Irish history since the first invasion by Britain in 1169. But it was the United Irishmen's rebellion in 1798, led by Wolfe Tone, which was probably the first genuine mass nationalist struggle. The non-sectarian character of Irish

Republicanism was well illustrated in this particular rebellion since Wolfe Tone himself was an Irish Protestant, and one of the strongest areas of support for the rebellion was in Ulster among local Protestants.

The 1798 rebellion was however brutally crushed by the British army, which in Ulster was aided by the Orange Order, and tens of thousands lost their lives. The British state nevertheless recognised the growing power of Irish nationalism, and within three years of the rebellion had abolished even the loyal government of Protestant landowners in Dublin and replaced it with direct rule from Britain, under the 1800 Act of Union.

Resistance did not end, and while even the moderate demands of Irish nationalists from the landowning class were rejected, radical Irish nationalism - Republicanism, was developing further through organisations such as the Fenians and the Irish Republican Brotherhood. It was after the failure of the final attempt of the Irish Nationalist Party to obtain Home Rule for Ireland through constitutional action in the British parliament, that Irish Republicanism became the main force in the struggle for Irish freedom and independence.

The final failure of the Irish nationalist Party had come about in 1914 after the British Liberal government had actually passed a third Home Rule Bill through the House of Commons. The British ruling class was determined to prevent Home Rule for Ireland in spite of this.

With the passing of the Parliament Act of 1911, which prevented the House of Lords from stopping the introduction of a Home Rule Bill (an Act could now become law if it passed the Commons three times in one Parliament), British imperialism had to resort to encouraging Protestants in Ulster to threaten rebellion against such a measure should it become law. A paramilitary organisation, the Ulster Volunteer Force, was set up using and drawn from the Orange Order and the Ulster Unionists, aided by elements within the British Conservative Party.

T A Jackson, in his book "Ireland Her Own", describes the level of intimidation used against protestant working people to go along with the plot originated "in the inner councils of the English Tory-plutocracy" (page 372). "In Ulster the first move was to secure a mass of signatures to a covenant, pledging resistance to Home Rule. In the circumstances it was not difficult to obtain 500,000 signatures in a short time; but nothing was left to chance. Employers let it be known that failure to sign the Covenant might have 'consequences' for those who failed. Landlords passed the 'List' to tenants; customers did the same to tradespeople. Orange factionalists saw to it, in the Belfast shipyards, that those who did not sign, promptly, were run off the job as Papists".

So much for modern-day cries of no truck with a united independent Ireland without the consent of the "majority" in Northern Ireland. This display of naked intimidation and threat is a measure of the reality of British rule in Ireland through its Unionist proxies.

The final and decisive move was made by a section in the British Army officer corps in Ireland, who refused to enforce Home Rule against Unionists in Ulster and staged the so-called Curragh Mutiny.

Needless to say, the end result was that Ireland did not obtain Home Rule. As Lenin observed at the time, "the noble landowners of Britain tore the British constitution and British law to shreds, and gave an excellent lesson in class struggle".

Only two years later Irish republicanism was to mount a struggle within Ireland itself to force out the British ruling class. This came with the heroic Easter Rising of 1916, involving forces of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, the Citizens' Army, and sections of the Irish Volunteers. Among its leaders was the great Irish Marxist and trade union organiser James Connolly. Connolly had already taken a principled stand as had Lenin in opposition to the First World War, and had called for its transformation into a war against the workers' real enemy - their own ruling class.

Unfortunately many other leaders in the nationalist movement in Ireland did not have Connolly's vision, and they held back from supporting the Easter Rising. The result was that although Irish nationalist forces gained control of an area of Dublin and courageously held it for a week, in the end they were unable to resist the savage assault of the British forces, who used naval guns as well as artillery to cold-bloodedly bombard Dublin city centre. The leaders of the Rising who survived the fighting, including a badly wounded Connolly, were brutally executed by the British state, and thousands of Irishmen and women were imprisoned or exiled.

The tide of Irish resistance however could not be quelled, and two years later the leading party of Irish Republicanism, Sinn Fein, won a sweeping victory in the general election of 1918. The party gained 73 of the 105 Irish seats in a British parliament that contained MPs from both Britain and Ireland. On a platform of immediate independence for Ireland, they elected representatives, set up their own independent parliament and government, the Dail, and reaffirmed the 1916 Declaration of an Irish Republic.

Many elected Irish MPs were however in British jails, and the British ruling class still had no intention of granting independence, whatever the democratic decision of the Irish people might be. They turned instead to their traditional tactic of military repression, now combined with preparations to partition Ireland, splitting the Irish nationalist movement and the Irish working class.

So began the Anglo-Irish war that raged until the summer of 1921, between the guerrilla forces of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), and the massive military forces of the British army, which included auxiliary forces such as the notorious "Black and Tans".

The "Black and Tans" were responsible for a series of brutal atrocities in this period, including:

- On September 20th, 1920, looting and burning four public houses, damaging 49 other houses, and bayoneting to death two "suspects" at Balbriggan, County Dublin.

- On September 21st, 1920, killing four people, including a young boy.

- On November 21st, killing 12 people, and injuring more than 60, by firing indiscriminately into a crowd at a football match at Croke Park, Dublin.

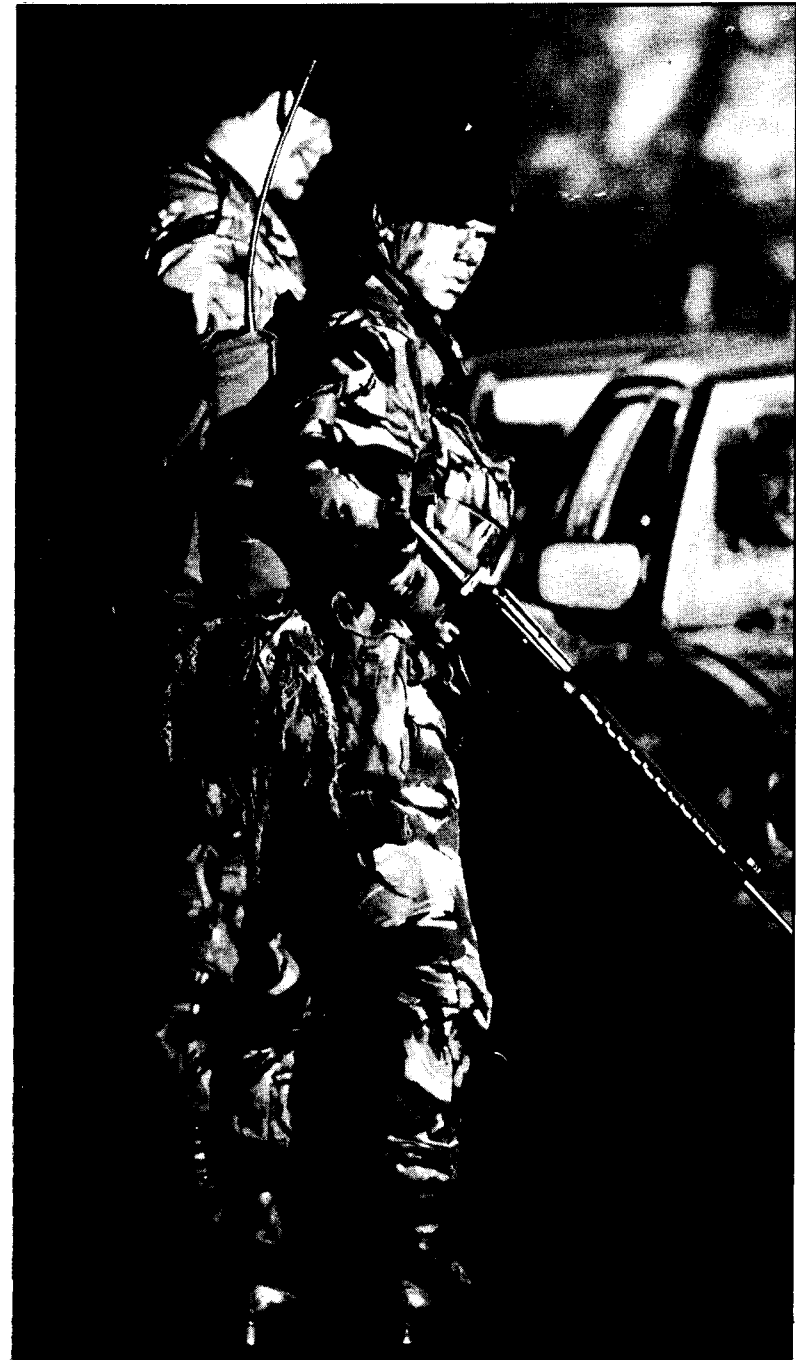
- On December 11th 1920, looting and burning the town centre of Cork.

There were many other examples of brutality, torture and murder of "suspects" by the "Black and Tans", as well as mass intimidation and repression of the Irish people by British military forces.

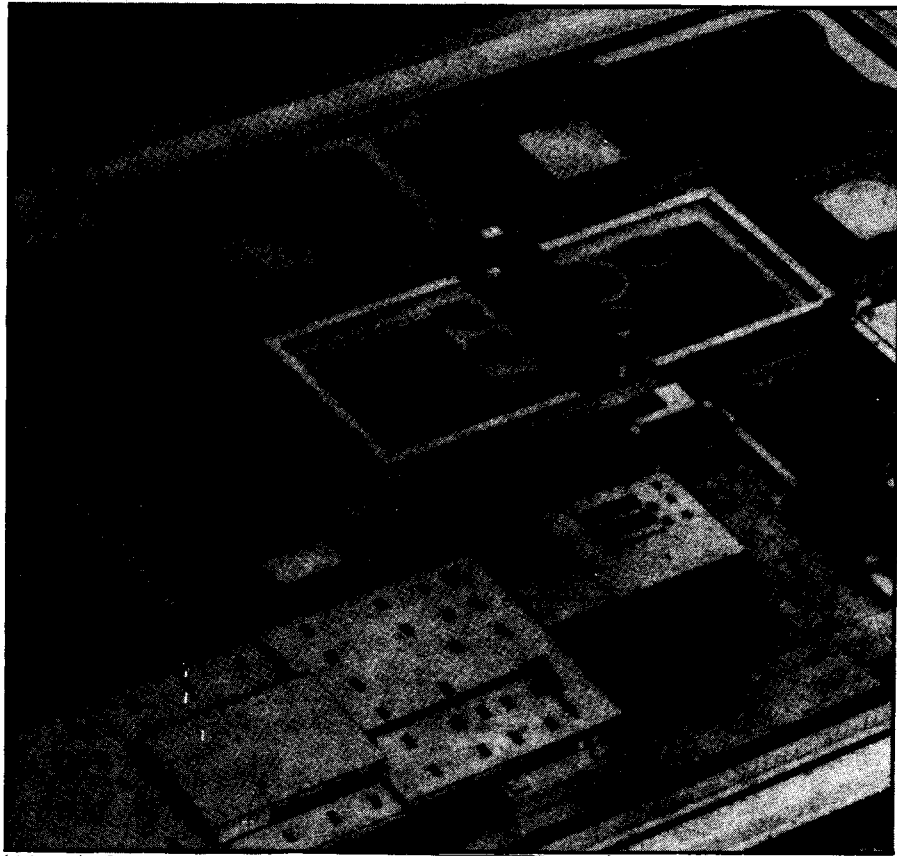
The war was halted in 1921 after a truce was declared, with the British government agreeing to negotiate with the representatives of the Dail over the future of Ireland. But instead of Irish freedom and independence, the negotiations simply opened a new chapter in Ireland's torment - partition.

Threats by the British government to renew the war with even greater ferocity, combined with an offer of a degree of self-government to two parts of a partitioned Ireland, produced the betrayal of the Irish cause by elements in the Irish nationalist movement. The result was the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, which partitioned Ireland between the six counties and the twenty-six counties, each with their own government prepared to collaborate with British imperialism.

Just as James Connolly had predicted, partition produced a "carnival of reaction" on both sides of the partition line in Ireland. In the twenty-six counties there was a savage civil war between those who supported the Anglo-Irish Treaty, led by the capitalist and landowning class and armed by the British state, and those who opposed the Treaty, the genuine Republicans, who now found themselves unable to defeat the combined forces of Irish reactionaries and British imperialism.



Britain out of Ireland!



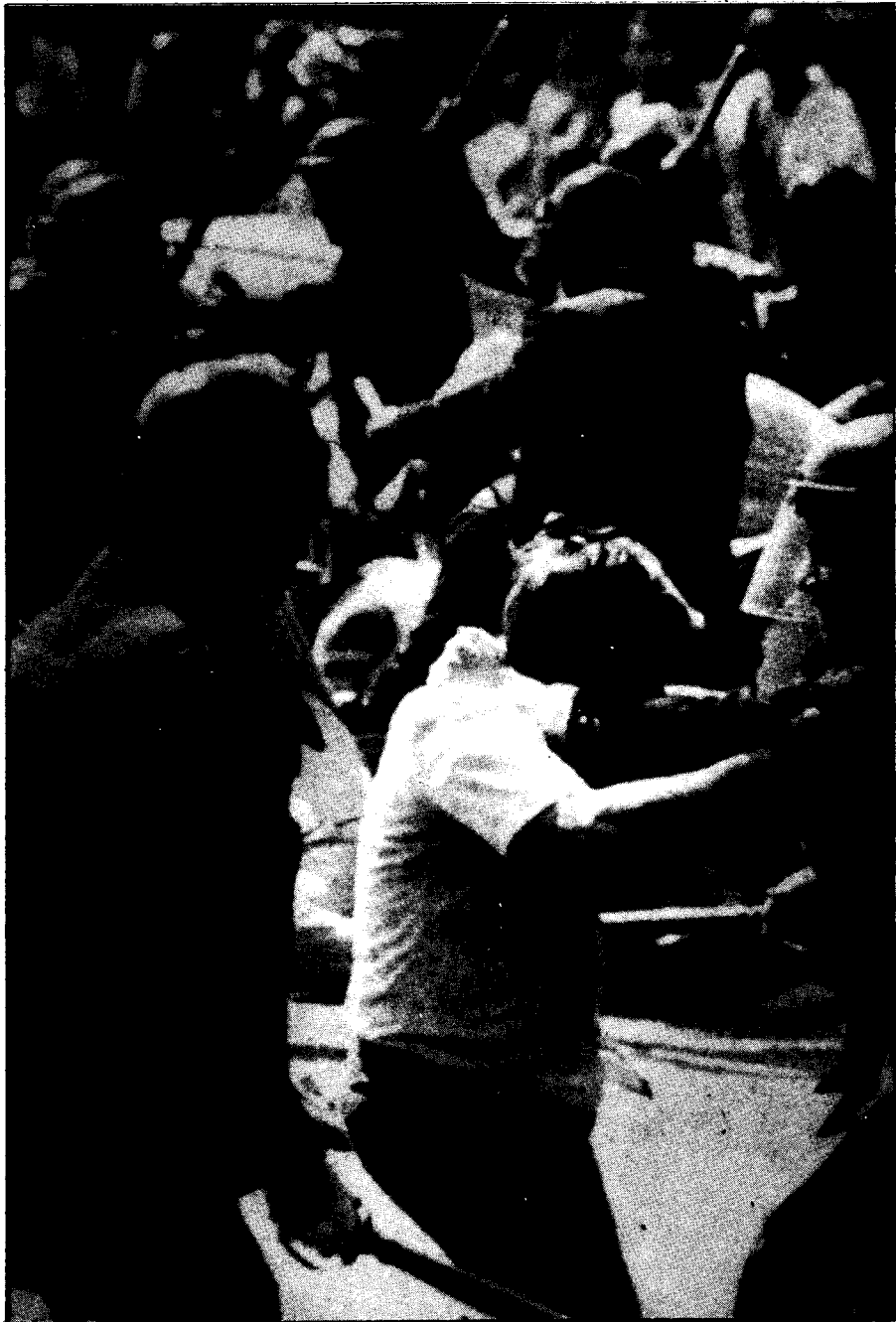
(Above) OPPRESSION: the £33 million Maghaberry Prison, Moira, Co. Down.
(Below) RESISTANCE: an International Women's Say protest outside Armagh Jail.



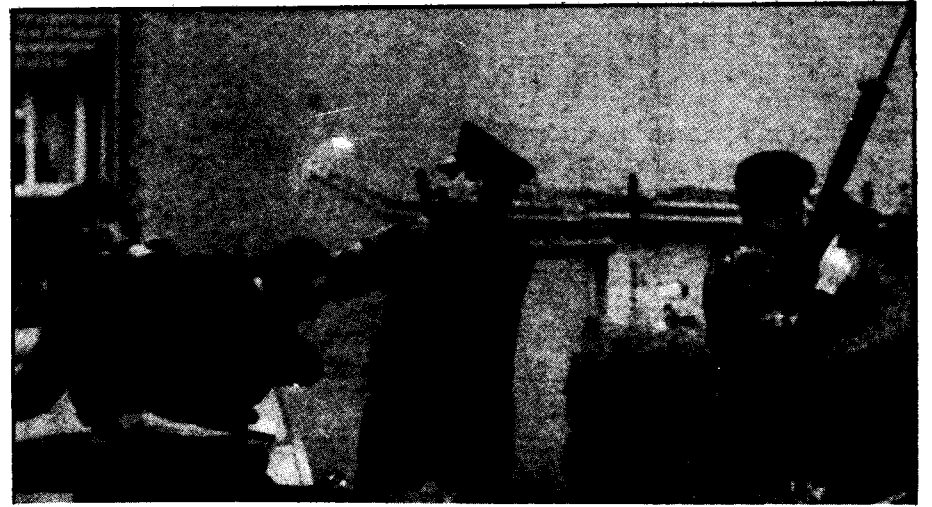
(Right) OPPRESSION: Kevin Mullin of Co. Tyrone, the victim of a rifle butt assault by an eight-man UDR patrol.

(Below) RESISTANCE: Nationalist women confront RUC men and British soldiers during a mass raid of their homes at Divis Flats, Belfast.





OPPRESSION: RUC men attack mourners at the funeral of a young Nationalist.

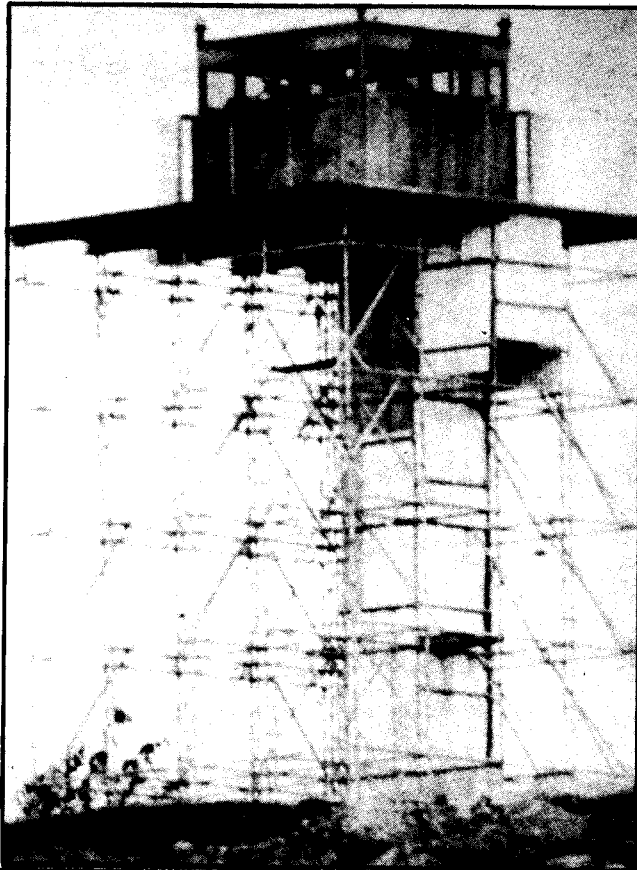


(Above) OPPRESSION: Nationalists assaulted by RUC on the morning of 12 July—the day of the biggest Orange Lodge marches—a British soldier stands guard nearby. (Below) VICTIM: Local people go to the aid of Pauline Ward after she was struck by a plastic bullet fired by the RUC.



(Right, and below)
OPPRESSION: a typical
British Army watch
tower.

In Derry, mourners
attending a Nationalist
funeral are charged by
baton-weilding RUC
men.



In the six counties, the British state simply handed the area over to the Orange Order to rule in its name. The six counties remained part of the United Kingdom, and in the first year after partition alone, 232 people were killed, thousands wounded and tens of thousands forced out of their homes and jobs, as the Unionists and Orange Order launched a terror campaign against the Catholic population in the area. This campaign in the six counties was an attempt to destroy the Republican movement, just as Irish reactionaries were also attempting in the twenty-six counties.

The partition of Ireland did not take place because the people of the six counties wanted to become separate from the rest of the country, nor is it maintained because of their wishes either. Back in 1916, when partition was being considered by the British government, Prime Minister Lloyd George stated clearly in a letter to the Unionist leader Edward Carson, "We must make it clear that ... Ulster does not, whether she wills it or not, merge with the rest of Ireland".

Similar sentiments have been expressed since then.

"It is essential for strategic reasons that some part of Ireland should remain part of His Majesty's Dominions. ... So far as can be foreseen, it will never be to Great Britain's advantage that Northern Ireland should become part of a territory outside His Majesty's jurisdiction. Indeed it seems unlikely that Great Britain would ever be able to agree to it even if the people desired it."(Cabinet Secretary to Prime Minister Attlee in 1949).

These views reflect the fact that the sole purpose of partition was and is, to allow British imperialism to continue to dominate Ireland and to serve the interests of the British ruling class, irrespective of what anyone in Ireland might want.

In the six counties, religious discrimination and political persecution have been constant features of the Ulster Unionists' rule of the area, and its economic and social development has been stunted and distorted by its position as a British colonial

territory divided from the rest of Ireland. Unemployment, poverty, poor public health and bad housing have been features of the six counties ever since partition.

In the 1960s a civil rights movement developed in the six counties. The movement came at a time of economic crisis for both parts of Ireland, and a political crisis developed that threatened the whole position of British imperialism in Ireland. As so often in the past the response of the British state was a traditional one with the protests being met by a combination of police repression, Unionist terrorism, and finally the active intervention of British troops on the streets of Belfast and Derry, in 1969.

An indication of how this crisis developed is illustrated by the following outline of some key events of the period:

May 1965: the Belfast Trades Council holds a conference on civil rights, representing an important advance in the development of the civil rights movement.

February 1967: Republicans, communists and other progressives form the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA), to campaign for equal rights in voting and in housing, and for an end to police repression.

October 1968: a leftist, largely student-based organisation, People's Democracy, is formed following a series of civil rights demonstrations broken up by police baton charges and attacks by Unionist mobs.

November 16th, 1968: 15,000 people march to Derry city centre despite police opposition, to protest against the violence and sectarianism of the RUC and B-Specials (an auxiliary police force), and against the local council which was Unionist-controlled, despite most of the town's population being nationalist.

January 1969: a People's Democracy march from Belfast to Derry is ambushed by a Unionist mob, including many off-duty B-Specials, and many marchers are injured, some very severely.

January 5th, 1969: the Belfast-Derry marchers arrive in Derry. In response the RUC go on a rampage through the Bogside, a working-class Catholic area of Derry, attacking people, destroying property and painting Unionist slogans on walls. This provoked the residents of the Bogside to set up barricades to keep out the RUC and B-Specials. "Free Derry" held the police at bay for a week, before the barricades were taken down.

Spring 1969: police and Unionist mobs continue attacks on civil rights demonstrations, and Unionist terrorists step up intimidation of the Catholic population.

April 1969: Bernadette Devlin, a member of People's Democracy, was elected as MP for Mid-Ulster, on a 90% electoral turnout. The same month the Belfast Water Works was hit by bombs, which were blamed on the IRA. In fact the bombs had been planted by the Unionist terrorist group the UVF in an effort to provoke the British government into action in support of the Unionists, and this did happen since reinforcements were sent to the British army garrison in the six counties.

August 1969: the political crisis reaches a new height, as the Derry Citizens' Defence Association sets up barricades in the Bogside in anticipation of an attack by police and Unionist mobs. In the "Battle of the Bogside" that follows, the area is successfully defended despite the police use of CS gas and even armoured cars. The defeat of the RUC and B-Specials in Derry provokes the British government into deploying the British army in order to maintain Unionist authority in the six counties and so defend the position of British imperialism throughout Ireland.

August 1969: the response of Unionists in Belfast to the defeat in Derry, was a rampage through nationalist areas by police units and Unionist mobs. In two days of violence 10 people were killed, 145 injured, and nearly 200 homes burned, with the dead including a 9-year old boy and an off-duty British soldier killed when police armoured cars raked working class nationalist housing areas with machine gun fire.

So we come to the situation described at the beginning of the pamphlet, with the military occupation of the six counties by the British state maintaining partition and the position of British imperialism.

The way forward

The facts of Ireland's history can surely leave no doubt that interference from Britain has been, and remains at the heart of the problems in Ireland. It is this fundamental truth that must act as a basis both for achieving a genuine solution to the problems of Britain's continuing interference in Ireland, and for exposing false solutions, whether offered by the ruling class or even by certain elements of the left.

Government "initiatives"

The policies of successive British governments over the last decade, whether Conservative or Labour, have been basically the same in relation to Ireland, since they have been designed to achieve the common objective of maintaining British imperialism in Ireland. Both have also been equally keen to conceal this objective behind a smokescreen of apparently more "worthy" objectives such as protecting "peace" and defending "democracy".

A whole variety of tactics have been employed (many described at the beginning of this pamphlet), but the cornerstone of the policy has remained the military

occupation of the six counties and the repression of the nationalist population there. "Criminalisation" policies have been used in an attempt to disguise this repression as simply security measures aimed at terrorists.

A deliberate policy of "Ulsterisation" has been used in the areas of both military and political activity during the last decade. "Ulsterisation" in the military arena has to a large extent simply been a cynical attempt to reduce British casualties at the expense of more casualties to locally-recruited Unionist units, by increasing the size and role of the RUC and the Ulster Defence Regiment (which is a specially-created unit of the British army). "Ulsterisation" in politics has meant the creation of the Northern Ireland Assembly, but its purpose is simply to act as a sop to the Unionists and is an exercise in public relations for the benefit of international opinion which is critical of Britain's continuing role in the six counties.

Another crucial part of government policy has been the massive flow of grants and aid from Britain to the six counties in order to prevent the complete collapse of the economy there. When this expense is added to the cost of the military occupation itself the true monetary cost to the British taxpayer is enormous. Back in 1979 the Daily Express estimated the annual cost at £1,000 million, and now the cost is thought to be about twice that, or around £4 a week for every family in Britain!

These kind of policies by the British government can never bring a solution either for Ireland or Britain. Such policies are simply a recipe for continuing repression, violence and economic collapse. The British army itself admits that it has no hope of military victory. A secret document prepared by the British Defence Intelligence Staff, that was intercepted and published in 1979, concluded, "violence is likely to continue while the British remain in Northern Ireland."

NATO ambitions in Ireland

British imperialism has long regarded Ireland as crucial to its military strategy, and in more recent times NATO as a whole has come to see the country as vital to its military strategy directed against the socialist countries of Europe. This has meant that both British and NATO military strategies have become involved in the issue of the partition of Ireland.

A British Commonwealth Relations Office report in 1951 stated that the six counties "... should remain part of the United Kingdom and the UK defence system ... A United Ireland ... which was neutral ... would be a major problem in the defence of the United Kingdom and in the support of Western Europe". This view remains just as strong today. British Vice-Admiral Sir Ian McGough stated in the May 1982 issue of International Relations, "the strategic importance of Ireland ... can scarcely be exaggerated".

The maintenance of partition and the British occupation of the six counties has been particularly important to the strategic aims of British imperialism and NATO because of the neutralist position of the government and people of the Republic. While the Republic has remained outside the alliance NATO installations have been established in the six counties. As the military and political crisis in the six counties has developed, there has been speculation about a NATO "solution" involving the ending of partition in return for the integration of a united Ireland into NATO.

In October 1984, Mr Mates a Conservative MP and chairman of the Inter-party Committee of Westminster MPs on Irish affairs informed an Irish audience in Dublin:

"You're asking Unionists if they are prepared to give up their allegiance to their sovereign and their association with the United Kingdom. That might be difficult, but if enough wanted it we might give way. But if you say that you don't want anything to do with

Western defence, you're actually asking them much more than to give up their allegiance to their sovereign. It has to do with two totally different attitudes to Western defence. Neutrality was at the heart of your Irishness, but it was alien to Britain and to the Britishness of Unionism. There you have a stumbling block twice the size of any other".

In 1985 the Dooge and Spinelle reports, both from the EEC, contained elements of this idea. The Dooge Report made no secret of its objective, saying, "The aim of European Union is indeed the cohesion and solidarity of the countries of Europe within the larger framework of the Atlantic Alliance", (the Atlantic alliance being NATO).

The relevance of these reports was emphasised by the EEC meeting in June 1985 in Milan. At that meeting Garrett FitzGerald, Prime Minister of the Republic, gave his support to a conference aimed at establishing a common foreign and security policy for all EEC countries, which would implicitly involve the Republic in NATO's military strategy.

The signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement at Hillsborough and the ratification of the Single European Act (SEA) on May 26th have further undermined Irish neutrality and genuine independence.

Firstly the Anglo-Irish Agreement has been registered at the United Nations as an internationally binding agreement between the sovereign governments of the Republic and Britain, as Article One of the agreement recognises that:

"The two Governments

- (a) affirm that any change in the status of Northern Ireland would only come about with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland;
- (b) recognise that the present wish of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland is for no change in the status of Northern Ireland;

(c) declare that, if in the future a majority of the people of Northern Ireland clearly wish for and formally consent to the establishment of a united Ireland, they will introduce and support in the respective Parliaments legislation to give effect to that wish."

This in effect recognises the right of Britain, an imperialist power, to occupy the sovereign territory of an independent nation. Here it must be understood that Article Two of the Irish Constitution states:

"The national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its islands and the territorial seas."

Secondly the passing of the referendum for the Single European Act was described by the Communist Party of Ireland's northern paper, Unity, on the 30th May 1987 thus: "the passing of the referendum will now permit the Government to ratify the Single European Act, committing Ireland to the process of European integration and closer foreign policy ties with the NATO states of the EEC."

26 Years before the SEA was enacted and 24 years before the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed, Lord Windlesham, an Irish peer, speaking during the debate in the House of Lords on Britain's original application for EEC membership said:

"One has only to look at the map to see that the situation of Ireland, to the extreme west of the whole organisation, gives it a special position. Cobh has probably the finest inland anchorage in the world ... the old naval base at Haulbowline in Cobh harbour still exists and is in excellent order.

"Then there is the great airfield at Shannon, the furthest west of any airfield or airport in Europe. Its potential for expansion is enormous, unlimited and incomparably greater than anything which exists in Northern Ireland ... Then there is the projected Shannon deep sea port which if developed will take tankers of 100,000 tons and more into the Shannon, which in times of war might be of enormous importance and value, and again would be situated to the extreme west of the whole NATO set up."

No clearer example can be given of the strategic and military importance of Ireland as a whole to imperialism's war plans and it is these plans which predominantly preoccupy the minds of the British and US governments - they are interested in their relationship with the whole of Ireland and not just a part of it.

There is also another aspect of the Anglo-Irish Agreement and indeed all the "initiatives" emanating from the British government, and that, of course, is to do with making sure that progressive politics in Ireland are defeated. More than once have individuals within British ruling circles warned of the dangers of Ireland becoming Britain's Cuba. Such fears have already prompted the report by the Independent Study Group commissioned by the Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies. Entitled "Britain's Undefeated Frontier - a policy for Ulster" and involving leading back-bench Tories in its production, this report demonstrates once again the far-sightedness of the British ruling class. (For those who would doubt this we need only refer to the Ridley and Miron reports which were prepared 12 years before the Tories took on the miners).

The report pointed out that the aim was to mobilise "middle class nationalists, the Dublin government and the Unionists into a framework which would provide the greatest possible resistance to republican terrorism". the report states that an "attempt should be made to meet much of the political aspirations of the Irish Republic (sic) as are unequivocally consistent with Britain's obligations to Ulster." It continues "... we hold that the only available way of doing this is to increase, as far as possible, co-operation based on the mutual recognition of sovereignty between the Irish Republic and the United Kingdom as a whole."

Pointing to the IRA campaign of 1956-62, the report states that this was "... a signal failure because London and Dublin were united in wholeheartedly opposing it and in particular because internment was in operation on both sides of the border." "... adding

that the reproduction of those conditions would be enough to defeat the IRA today ..." The report provides an alternative which envisages the Dublin government being "willing to extradite those accused of terrorist crimes and to establish close and uninhibited co-operation between its own security forces and those of the United Kingdom."

"If this is done, it would be possible to defeat the IRA without reverting to such a contentious measure as internment." The report goes on to say "... it is clear however, that this degree of co-operation will not be forthcoming, nor will the co-operation of Nationalists in the North, unless they are bought by political concessions.

So there we have it, cold bloodedly set out, the maintenance of the British presence is to be cemented on the basis of drawing into collaboration elements of Irish political life (the most pro-imperialist sections such as Fine Gael), including the Dublin government, on a smokescreen of reform. Britain is under the whip of US imperialism to cement Irish territory within NATO and is also running in fear of Sinn Fein and all progressive political activity within Ireland. In The Times 26th November 1985 the editorial on the Anglo-Irish Agreement ended thus: "The urgency of the need for the Government to mount the most vigorous defence possible (of the Anglo-Irish Agreement) lies in the high price of failure. Provisional Sinn Fein wait in the wings to exploit any collapse. It is they, and not the Official Unionists or Dr Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionists, who will be the real winners if the agreement falters or folds. The Government now has a stake in the simple preservation of its modest rapprochement with the Republic. It does not have to promise that great things will emerge in the future as a result of its signing. What it must see, understand and act on, is the vital importance of its survival."

The Anglo-Irish Agreement is an imperialist agreement, it is an attempt at an imperialist solution and therefore must be rejected. Any initiative if it

is to have any chance of securing a degree of lasting success must start from the premise that Britain has no right to make territorial claims on any part of Ireland's territory and that the whole of the people of Ireland must be included, not just a part.

"FALSE TRAILS"

While there are many people on the left in Britain who do give genuine support and solidarity to the struggle for Ireland's liberation, there are also elements who do not, or who though expressing verbal support, actually pursue policies that in reality undermine the struggle and serve the interests of British imperialism.

Some elements on the British left for instance hold much the same view of Ireland as the ruling class, in the sense that they believe there are two nations in that country, a Protestant nation and a Catholic nation, and therefore partition is a correct policy in order to separate these "nations". In fact partition does not separate the people of different religions in Ireland since there are both Protestants in the Republic and Catholics in the six counties.

The first president of the Republic was a Protestant and some of the most outstanding leaders of Irish national movements for freedom and independence have been Protestants; there are no examples of Protestants being persecuted in the Republic because of their religion - they are seen as Irish citizens first and last. But more importantly, Irish people of different religions are in no sense members of different nations.

The reality is that there is one Irish nation, of both Catholics and Protestants, and the vast majority of people in both Britain and Ireland recognise this. As an aside, it would be interesting to ask the fans at a football match between England and Northern Ireland who they actually support; Catholics and Protestants

alike we are sure are shouting for Northern Ireland as rather than for England - an implicit recognition that they see themselves as Irish, first and foremost.

It is British imperialism that has constantly sought to build barriers between people of different religions in Ireland. Now, the greatest of these barriers is partition itself and the continued presence of British imperialism in the six counties.

It is these barriers that have helped to preserve the feeling among many Protestants in the six counties that they have more to gain from serving British imperialism than from supporting Irish nationalism. This in no way makes these Protestants into a separate nation, and once British imperialism has left Ireland both religions in the six counties will be able to realise their destiny as part of a free, united and independent Ireland.

There are forces at work within the Labour movement here in Britain who profess to be supporters of Irish freedom, but whose position is nothing more than what might be described as labour imperialism. The position of all genuine progressives must begin from an understanding that Ireland first of all must have the right to self-determination and real independence. Post independence developments and the method of reunification can only be conducted by the Irish people as a whole once Britain has gone. Yet the Militant Tendency (otherwise known as the Revolutionary Socialist League - operating secretly within the Labour Party) argues for the creation of a party of labour, uniting Protestant and Catholic workers as a first step to achieving a united Ireland. Secondly, the Campaign for Labour Representation in Ireland actually argues for the British Labour Party to be organised in the occupied six counties, (this particular campaign is basically tied up with the Irish political party, the Workers Party).

The main weaknesses of these two positions are that it is partition itself and the continued occupation of the six counties by British forces, with consequential

underpinning of the Unionist veto over ending partition, which are the greatest barriers to uniting the working class there. Campaigning on social and economic issues is of course extremely important and in this respect there are many progressive trade unionists - particularly communists - at work in the six counties who are doing this day in and day out. However, as long as partition remains work on social and economic issues alone cannot unite them totally, for first of all they will have to be united on the very thing that divides them - partition.

As for creating a party of labour, Militant should understand that there is already one in existence - the Northern Ireland Labour Party, and even though ineffective, it could of course be revived if there was the basis for its revival.

In his book Irish Nationalism, Sean Cronin had this to say (p 182):

"Although Nationalism in rural Northern Ireland is conservative, in Belfast and Derry it has a strong socialist content. The Social Democratic and Labour Party, successor to the old Nationalist Party as the parliamentary representative of the Catholics, has as its goal to 'organise and maintain in Northern Ireland a socialist party' and proposes 'the public ownership and democratic control of such essential industries and services as the common good require.' There was always strong Connolly socialist sentiment among Catholic workers in Belfast. The founders of the Republican Labour Party broke with the Northern Ireland Labour Party in 1949 on partition. Various strands of republican labour politics represented the working class Nationalists of Belfast, their ideology fashioned by economics and politics. They dismissed the old Nationalist Party as a collection of 'Green Tories'.

"Because of the constitutional issue, Labour was weak and divided in Belfast. Out of a House of Commons (Stormont) of fifty two members, Labour of all shades never managed to win more than a half dozen seats.

Labour was thought weak on the border question by the Protestant working class, and the Unionists made the most of this suspicion. A book on Northern Ireland (John Sayers - The Political Parties and the Social Background) published in 1955, has this sentence: "The Protestant workmen never quite forgets that since the Plantation the Roman Catholics have been the principle threat of undercutting in the labour market." During the Second World War an ultra-loyalist section broke with the Northern Ireland Labour Party to form the Commonwealth Labour Party. In 1949, the NILP's parliamentary representation was wiped out. The cause of the split and of the electoral debacle was the same: partition. This one issue so frightened the NILP that it would not support civil rights in 1968 and Paddy Devlin, its chairman, resigned." It may also have been missed by Militant that the biggest union in the six counties - the ATGWU is affiliated to the Irish Labour Party.

The position adopted by the Campaign for Labour Representation is out and out pro-imperialist politics. How can a solution be found to a problem which revolves around the physical occupation of one country by another, on the basis of importing political parties from the occupying country. In any case the position of the British Labour Party is supportive of the Anglo-Irish agreement which recognises in international law the continuing division and occupation of parts of Irish territory.

It is clearly not a question of counterposing one against the other ie, campaigning for unity on social and economic issues before campaigning on the national question or its reverse. Rather it is a question of understanding what is central - which is clearly from the point of view of the British labour movement, recognising that no developments can in fact take place without pressure on our part, against our government, (for it is done in our name), for withdrawal so that the basis for a normalisation of all economic and political life can be laid.

There are others on the left who rather than call for an immediate end to the British state's occupation of the six counties, call instead for the democratisation of the six counties with, for example, a Bill of Rights and an assembly elected by proportional representation. Such a process, they claim, would pave the way for the uniting of the people within the six counties, and thus form the basis for ending British rule there. While some call for the withdrawal of British troops to barracks, they condemn the IRA for creating obstacles to the uniting of the people of the six counties and to the building of a solidarity movement in Britain.

Here two main points are missed:

Firstly, talk of democratisation in the six counties ignores the wholly undemocratic nature of partition itself. The pamphlet "A United Ireland - A Working Class Demand" produced in October 1986 by Trade Unionists for Irish Unity and Independence said, "The line drawn across the map of Ireland in 1920 had no historical basis. It does not conform to the boundary of the Irish province of Ulster, three of whose nine counties are in the Republic, the other six comprising Northern Ireland. Thus, to equate 'Northern Ireland' with Ulster is false. Furthermore, two of the North's six counties have nationalist majorities and the remainder have substantial nationalist populations. There is no distinctive physical feature delineating a border. In fact, it was a political division, the idea being to carve out an area sufficient to contain a unionist majority and then to regard that majority as sacrosanct. Britain conferred on a minority the right to frustrate the aspirations of the majority of the Irish people and then conceded to that minority a veto on any political change in the constitutional arrangement. This was not done out of any regard for the welfare of that minority but as a device to ensure continuing British domination over all of Ireland."

Secondly, how can courts, such as the Diplock Courts, of an occupying power be democratic or indeed made democratic when they include the principle of no-jury trial? They cannot, for they are entrusted in the first place with the job of carrying out the policy of Britain, the occupying power. Such is the case in all other aspects of legislation affecting the six counties, they are instruments by which the British government maintains its rule in one form or another. Long Kesh is a prison to hold political prisoners resisting British rule; Maghaberry is a prison holding women political prisoners resisting British rule; the PTA is an act to prevent Irish people campaigning for Irish freedom (and is also used against British people). Even poverty is exacerbated by the operation of the Debt Act (a piece of legislation which does not apply in Britain) making provision for deduction from Supplementary Benefit Payments in respect of debts incurred either in rents, gas or electricity bills etc or in personal debt such as hire purchase.

Lastly how can the violence of the oppressed be equated with the violence of the oppressor? Whatever the views of the reader of this pamphlet, it must be abundantly clear by now that there has been a great wrong done to Ireland - it has had its freedom and independence taken from it. The majority of the people of the whole of Ireland wish to have their freedom and if Britain is to continue to hold on to parts of Ireland by military force, killing its citizens, then it cannot complain when a section of the Irish population decide that they will fight fire with fire; the violence can only ultimately begin to come to an end when the British government announces that it intends to leave Ireland and the government of Ireland will in future be conducted by the people of Ireland.

An unfortunate feature of many on the left in Britain is their lack of understanding of, and even outright hostility towards, the Republican movement.

The Republican movement:

The Republican movement in Ireland has developed politically and organisationally over the last decade to become a dynamic and important force in the quest for the national liberation of Ireland. In both its analysis of the situation and in its actual activity, the Republican movement has made significant progress in mobilising and raising the political consciousness of hundreds of thousand of people, particularly among the working class.

A social and economic programme involving direct action and popular participation by the people in working class areas has helped to make Sinn Fein the main party of the nationalist working class in the six counties

Sinn Fein's grass-roots campaigning has involved:-

- * Education projects for the unemployed.
- * Work on housing improvements and repairs.
- * Welfare rights and advice centres.
- * Anti-vandalism and anti-crime campaigns.
- * Pensioners' transport, and much more.

This progressive development in the Republican movement is illustrated in the following extract from an Easter message from the IRA in 1982:

"We must be active Republicans in our locality, fusing together local campaigns with the unresolved national question. To concentrate on one aspect of British imperialism - the military occupation of the six counties - is insufficient, if in doing so we ignore the other issues more directly affecting our people ... Republicans must be involved with the people we profess to lead in their everyday struggles for better housing and against poverty and unemployment."

The political success of the Republicans has been demonstrated by their election triumphs, including three victories in parliamentary seats since 1981, success in the Northern Ireland Assembly elections, and in the local council elections in 1985 when 59 Sinn Fein representatives were elected to 17 councils in the

six counties. Gerry Adams' re-election to West Belfast (although he has not taken his seat in the Commons) was won in the face of a massive effort by all the other mainstream political parties (orchestrated from London) to stop him.

In relation to the local councils it is interesting to note the contrasting behaviour of Sinn Fein representatives and those of the Unionist parties. While the British media and government try to portray Sinn Fein as the enemies of democracy, in fact on the two councils which have Sinn Fein chairpersons, Unionist councillors have been given the fullest opportunity to participate democratically in the council business. In contrast on the councils in which the Unionists are in a majority, even where only of the smallest margin, they have sought to deny elected Sinn Fein representatives their democratic right to participate in council business, on occasions even using the police to expel Sinn Fein councillors from council meetings. Also compare Unionist politicians attitudes with the statement of Gerry Adams on his re-election with an increased majority during the 1987 general election. In it he renewed his 1983 general election promise to provide loyalists, "especially working-class Protestants, a constituency service "because they have more common at a working-class level with the people of the Falls than they have in disagreement."

The Irish Republican movement has come increasingly to identify itself, quite rightly, with the national liberation struggles of the oppressed peoples across the world who are fighting imperialism. It is worth noting here the contrast with some elements on the left in Britain, who while being prepared to support national liberation struggles in countries on the other side of the world are not prepared to give the same support to a national liberation struggle on their own doorstep which is fighting the imperialism of their own ruling class. It is important that the labour movement understands the nature of reporting with regard to

Ireland, in connection with political forces, for clearly in the case of Sinn Fein and the Republican Movement, the British government is intent on creating the illusion that they play no other part in Irish political life than that of the bomber; in fact only recently at the 1987 Ard Fheis, Sinn Fein overturned their historical decision not to participate in elections to the Dublin parliament. This pamphlet in giving details of Republican activity attempts to give an assessment of the real situation to counteract the lies and distortion of the British government. What people here in Britain must come to understand is that the Republican movement is an important element in Irish political life which cannot be ignored.

British solidarity:
what needs to be done in this country

Most British people already want the British to leave Ireland. Public opinion polls have consistently shown this with for example:

- * A Sunday Times survey in 1981 showing 63% of British people against the six counties remaining a part of the United Kingdom;
- * a MORI poll in the Daily Star the same year showing 59% in favour of the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

Yet in spite of these feelings there has been no mass popular pressure on the British government to force it to withdraw from Ireland, nor has there been any effective opposition in this country to the British state's war there.

An effective solidarity movement with the Irish struggle therefore needs to be built in Britain, and it needs to have the organised working class, the trade unions and the Labour Party at its heart. The strength and determination of the British ruling class, demonstrated so often in the past in relation to Ireland, means that it is only the working class that has the necessary power in this country to force the ruling

class to abandon its position there. It is the organised labour movement that has the capacity in this country to transform the existing public feelings on Ireland into an effective and powerful solidarity movement, a movement with sufficient strength to force Britain to withdraw from Ireland.

The task of involving the organised labour movement in Britain in such a solidarity movement is not an easy one, and many real and significant difficulties will need to be overcome. Many trade unionists, as with so many in the British public, are victims of the media propaganda and general ignorance about the situation in Ireland. There is the added problem within the British labour movement of the influence of Unionist opinion, in the British-based unions that organise within the six counties.

At its fifth congress in November 1985 the New Communist Party (NCP) indicated in its resolution on Ireland:

"The six counties is irreformable and fundamentally undemocratic - created artificially, sustained by a combination of military and political oppression and coupled with the use of the Unionist veto. This veto worked in two ways. Firstly providing a political platform on which opposition to constitutional change can be organised and secondly the effect it has had inside the British trade union movement in blocking attempts to campaign for British withdrawal. However, the situation is changing; Irish trade unionists are beginning to raise the question of Irish unity and independence - a reflection of the fact that the majority of Irish trade unionists in Ireland as a whole are in favour of British withdrawal and Irish sovereignty over the whole of Irish territory."

But these difficulties can and must be overcome. It is intolerable that the views of an artificial minority within the trade unions in Ireland should prevent British unions from discussing such a vital issue as the continued British presence in the six counties.

As we have already stated in this pamphlet, Britain conducts policy in Ireland in our name; it spends in excess of 3.5 billion pounds per annum in Ireland in our name - we cannot be prevented from discussing these issues and formulating policy at our own trade union conferences. Clearly we are aware of the real and objective difficulties that trade union activists have to confront in the six counties - combating sectarianism, fighting for unity amongst Catholic and Protestant workers against the employers and actually living in a war situation. Nevertheless we must have the right, in the British trade union movement, to decide policy.

The issue of Ireland, and Britain's continued occupation of the six counties, must be raised at all levels in the British labour movement, at union branches, districts and regional committees, union conferences and trades councils, shop stewards' committees, and in the Labour Party. It is important for far greater contact to be established between British and Irish trade unions. Our British trade union movement prides itself on its international links with "all" trade union centres. Why not then encourage British trade unions when sending delegations to Ireland, to request discussions with unions in Dublin as well as Belfast.

This is particularly important in combating the Unionist veto. To date much of the information fed through to British trade unions has emanated from the British based unions who have to contend with the effects of the Unionist veto (to one degree or another) which prevents the issue being raised outside of demands of a general democratic character ie. an end to Diplock Courts, strip searching and PTA etc. All of these demands and many more besides are important, and all trade union activists should struggle to get these issues raised both as issues in their own right and equally as a means to get the issue of Ireland raised

in the first place. Contact with trade unions in the Republic is of special importance, for it is from this source that the majority opinion of all Irish trade unionists can be discerned.

Pressure needs to be brought on the British government to obtain a declaration of intent to withdraw from Ireland, and pressure must be maintained to ensure that this is done swiftly and completely. The movement needs to ensure that there is no question of the position of British imperialism in Ireland being maintained by using "proxy" forces, such as the UDR or the RUC to maintain partition. The RUC and UDR are as much military instruments of the British State as is the British army itself and should be disbanded.

Campaigns against the repressive measures used by the British State to maintain control in the six counties would aid the struggle within Ireland and help to educate the British people as to the true nature of the British ruling class's policy in that country. Campaigns for the rights of Irish political prisoners, particularly those held in Britain, would have similarly positive effects.

The New Communist Party therefore demands:

The ending of British rule in the six counties and the recognition of the Irish people as a whole to self-determination, and in the meantime to campaign for:

- a. the repeal of the Emergency Powers Act and the Prevention of Terrorism Act.
- b. the ending of the Diplock Courts and the release of political prisoners.
- c. the ending of strip searching prisoners as a means of harassment.
- d. the banning of plastic bullets.

Ending British imperialism in Ireland; a victory for Irish and British workers

Although the oppression of Ireland has gone on for 800 years examples of genuine solidarity with the struggles of the Irish people by progressive forces in Britain also have a long history, from the Levellers in the 17th century, through the Chartists in the 19th century, to the Communist Party in the early part of this century. More recently, Tony Benn and Ken Livingstone have been among those in the British Labour movement who have taken a principled stand of opposition to Britain's continued occupation of the six counties. The miners' experiences in the strike of 1985-85 both on the picket line here and in Ireland, when collecting money from Irish trade unionists in both the north and the south, convinced them that Britain should withdraw. The Connolly Association has, since 1938, continuously campaigned within the labour movement for British withdrawal.

But these examples cannot conceal the general weakness of solidarity with Ireland within this country. It is a weakness which helps not only to prolong the agony of the Irish, but which also preserves the power of the British ruling class and many of the weaknesses of the British labour movement.

The link between the struggle in Ireland and the progressive struggles in this country is certainly recognised by the British ruling class. As the Tory MP John Biggs-Davidson told the Royal Institute for Defence Studies in 1973:

"What happens in Londonderry is very relevant to what can happen in Brixton or Birmingham ... what is happening in Northern Ireland is a rehearsal for urban guerrilla war more widely in Europe, particularly in Britain."

There can be little doubt that the British state accepts this view, as can be seen in the appointments of General Frank Kitson as Commander of Land Forces in

the UK, of Sir Kenneth Newman as head of the Metropolitan Police, (now retired) and Douglas Hurd as Home Secretary, all of whom have had extensive experience in the six counties since 1969. In addition there have been changes in the "public order" legislation over the last few years to strengthen police powers in Britain, which have been used already against the peace movement and the working class here.

The defeat of British imperialism in Ireland would be a victory for both Irish and British workers. For British workers the final ending of British state power in Ireland would be a tremendous defeat for their main enemy, the British ruling class. Such a defeat would signal a victory for the British workers over one of the ruling class's greatest weapons, the ignorance, prejudice and national chauvinism with which they infect the working class. Not only would the horrific cost in human and material terms be ended, but the six counties would no longer be able to be used by the British state as a training ground for repression, as it is used today.

For Irish workers the ending of British imperialism in Ireland would open the way to real progress, which is impossible while the partition of the country and the occupation of the six counties continues. British withdrawal will inevitably undermine the reactionary grip of the Orange Order and Ulster Unionism on Protestant workers in the six counties, and they will be freed to realise their true interests alongside the rest of the workers in Ireland.

The total withdrawal of the British state from Ireland will open the way for a united Irish working class to struggle for socialism. This will also be a victory for the cause of peace, since such a defeat for British imperialism will also represent a great set back to the militarism of NATO, and a united Ireland will inevitably strengthen the anti-imperialist and neutralist position of the Irish people, which has long been an effective barrier to NATO's military expansion.

Today it is in Ireland that the battle for internationalism, the battle for the most crucial principle of working class struggle, must begin for British progressives. As James Connolly wrote in 1916, "The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland. The cause of Ireland is the cause of labour."

Achieving this understanding will help liberate not only Irish workers, but British workers too.

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Recommended further reading:

Collected Works of James Connolly, in two volumes. New Books, Dublin
 The Irish Crisis by C Desmond Greaves. Lawrence and Wishart
 The Life and Times of James Connolly by C Desmond Greaves. Lawrence and Wishart
 Ireland Her Own by T A Jackson. Lawrence and Wishart
 Ireland and the Irish Question by Marx and Engels. Progress Publishers, Moscow
 Lenin on Britain. Progress Publishers, Moscow
 The Communist Party of Ireland, Congress Documents, 1979 (17th Congress),
 1982 (18th Congress), 1986 (19th Congress). New Books, Dublin
 An Outline History of the Communist Party of Ireland. New Books, Dublin
 A United Ireland—a working-class demand. Trade Unionists for Irish Unity and
 Independence. New Worker Literature Dept.
 The Longest War by Kevin Kelley. Zed Books
 Dublin 1913. Curriculum Development Dept. O'Brien Educational, 20 Victoria Rd.,
 Dublin 6
 The Informers—a chilling account of the supergrasses in Northern Ireland by
 Andrew Boyd. Mercier Press
 Beating the Terrorists by Peter Taylor. Penguin Books
 Nothing but the same old story—the roots of anti-Irish racism by Liz Curtis.
 Information on Ireland, PO Box 189, 32 Ivor Place, London

Recommended regular reading:

Irish Socialist, paper of the Communist Party of Ireland
 Unity, paper of the CPI, northern area
 An Phoblact, weekly paper of Sinn Fein
 Irish Democrat, paper of the Connolly Association

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