

D65

Published by the Socialist Labour League,
186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

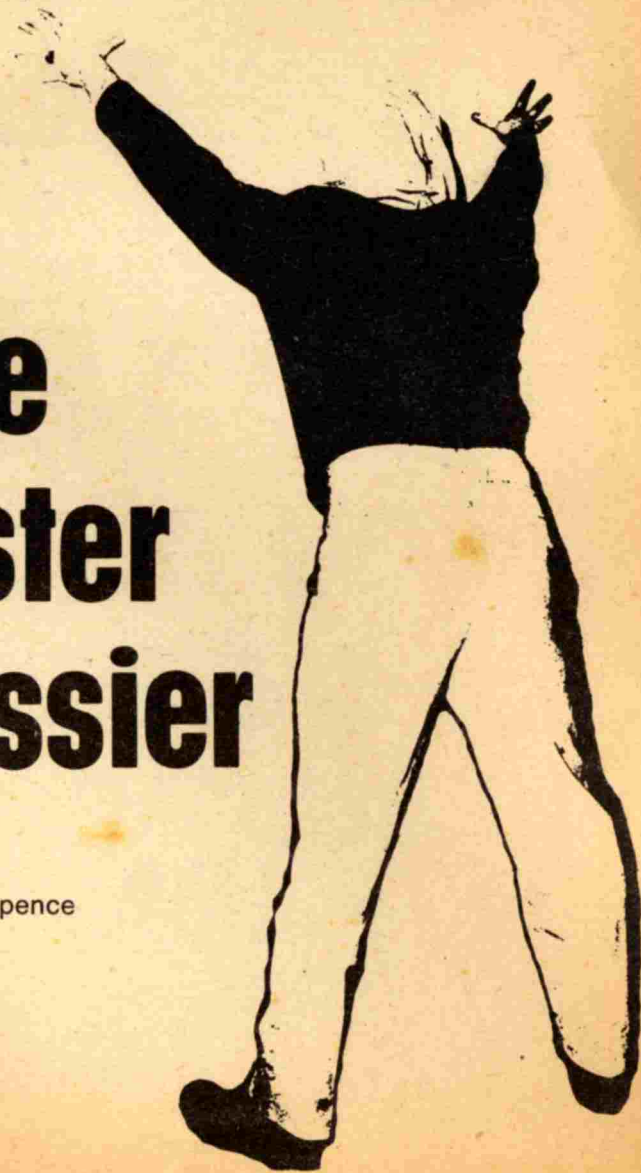
Printed by Plough Press Ltd. (TU),
r/o 180 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Torture casebook

SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE POCKET LIBRARY No. 2

The Ulster dossier

Price: five pence



Stephen Johns

*Tory torture
in Ulster*

SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE, LONDON

OCTOBER 1971

CONTENTS

An appeal to British workers	7
Torture casebook No. 1	10
Torture casebook No. 2	14
Torture casebook No. 3	18
Socialist Labour League demands	24
Charter of Basic Rights	25

An appeal to British workers

THIS IS an appeal to the British working class to understand what is going on in Ulster.

There, 240 Irish men—mainly workers—are incarcerated under the Ulster Special Powers Act. These people are deprived entirely of all Civil Rights. They have no right to trial, they are not even charged. They could be locked up for ever without appeal. Their family have no right to see them or be told of their whereabouts. No wonder the racist premier Balthazar Vorster has offered the entire S African 'constitution' for one clause of the Special Powers Act.

But the situation is even worse than this. The utterly defenceless internees have also been subject to **systematic and prolonged** torture.

In this pamphlet we detail the torture regime instituted in N Ireland by the army and the Royal Ulster Constabulary. The dossier on which this material is based was compiled from the victims by the Association for Legal Justice, a Belfast organization established to help men interned under the Act.

Remember, the men who are subjected to this hideous brutality were ordinary workers—engineers, mechanics, bricklayers and teachers — before the army swoop on August 9. Now some of them are physical and mental wrecks because of their ordeal. This is a most awful warning to all workers in Britain who believe the Irish situation is secondary to the class struggle in this country. It is not.

The crisis of British imperialism has forced it to strike back so savagely at those who resist its rule in Ulster. Does anyone imagine that the Tory barbarians, who control the army and the police, will be any less savage in dealing with the British working class when it fights for its rights? Or does any worker in Ireland imagine that men who encourage torture will somehow be persuaded to give concessions and allow Catholic workers civil rights? For this is the position of all those who do not call for the removal of the Tories from power as a solution to the savagery of Ulster.

The battle for Ulster must begin in the British labour movement and working class; which is the only force capable of bringing this government down. It is therefore essential to examine the role of the leaders of the Labour Party on the Irish question.

When the British army rampaged through the towns and villages of Ulster on August 9, what did Labour's Home Secretary do? James Callaghan—the man who first sent troops into Ulster in August 1969—welcomed the internment drive. 'Quite obviously,' he said, 'the government must act against the gunmen shooting in the main streets of Belfast, especially as the shootings are growing.'

More recently, Reginald Paget, Labour member for Northampton, said that the information obtained under torture was 'valuable'. He added: 'So long as that sort of information continues there are some of us who are not too much concerned as to the methods used to get it. One cannot fight urban guerrillas with kid gloves and it is unfair to ask our troops to do so.'

These two statements are a shocking illustration of the depths to which British reformism has sunk. It is the duty of all Labour activists to fight to cleanse the party of such individuals.

Finally we return to our main theme. What is happening now in N Ireland could happen tomorrow in Britain. There has already been allusions by Tory MPs to similar situations developing in Britain's main industrial centres. We repeat: Imperialist oppression in N Ireland is fed through roots embedded in Westminster. Those roots must be cut at Westminster by the British working class.

If workers delay in this task they are only strengthening the Tory enemy who one day will turn on him just as he has turned on his Irish brother. Therefore it is the duty of all workers to organize and drive the Tory barbarian from power. Workers must go into their unions

and demand action to get the Tories out. Labour activists must campaign in the Party for the expulsion of the Callaghans and Pagets and all those MPs who hold their views.

This way British workers can unite with their Irish brethren—Catholic and Protestant—in one fight for a Labour administration pledged to socialist policies. The Socialist Labour League is dedicated to this task. It is the only way to a socialist Britain and a Socialist United Ireland. We ask you to join us in this historic fight.

Stephen Johns



Men driven to physical limits

TORTURE AND BRAINWASHING is routine in Ulster. The torturers are the military police (red-caps) who operate from British army camps in Ulster, the largely Protestant Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Special Branch police, controlled by Scotland Yard.

The victims are the Catholic workers arrested and interned under the N Ireland Special Powers Act, mostly in the early hours of August 9, 1971.

Evidence that supports these serious allegations has been collected by the 'Sunday Times' newspaper and particularly the Association for Legal Justice, a Belfast-based organization.

The Association has interviewed six internees—the articles we will produce over the next three days are based on these interviews.

The first case we reproduce shows:

● **TORTURE** is widespread;

● **DOCTORS** and other civilian personnel must know of it,

● **SIR EDMUND COMPTON**, leader of the 'inquiry' into army brutality, does NOT to appear to want to know of it.

Desmond Smith, 21, an electrical engineer, was taken from his home in Bessbrook, Co Armagh, at 4.30 a.m. on August 9.

He was told he was being arrested under the Special Powers Act, was hit over the head and bundled into an armoured vehicle.

After examination by Special Branch men and the Ulster Defence Regiment centre at Newry, he was handcuffed and bundled into a helicopter and flown to Ballykinlar army camp.

He and the other hooded prisoners were pushed out of the helicopter not knowing its height from the ground.

They fell six feet and were dragged through the dust to a hut and interrogated in a hut by Special Branch men.

Then they were locked in another hut.

Desmond's statement continues:

'We were then placed against a wall with our finger-tips touching the wall, our legs widespread apart and we were kept like this for a period of time.

'Then the position was changed. We were set down for a period of time with our toes touching the wall, hands behind our backs and leaning back as far as you could without actually touching the ground.'

This was repeated several times.

Several RUC men observed the process. Their only comment, says Desmond, was, 'Oh, we know far better ones'.

They proceeded to tell the red-cap guards of other tortures that were eventually carried out.

The 'red-caps' left the prisoners to the RUC who came over and kicked and hit them.

'... one man asked for a drink of water and a pail of water was brought in. But before anybody got a drink out of it the guard dogs were brought in and lapped out of it... After which the soldiers that were smoking threw butts into the water and if they were chewing gum they spat all into it...

The 'physical jerks' were continued. Men were refused the right to use the toilet and Desmond was forced to urinate in his clothes.

Eventually one man broke down and refused to move any more.

'... they tied his hands and legs together and left him lying on the floor and every few minutes they would come over and hit him a kick and asked him if he was ready to do his exercises.'

The man continued to refuse. Desmond continues:

'They got a rope and laced it through his arms and legs and hung him to the rafters all trussed up like the way you would a chicken and they kept hanging him there. After a bit they would again come and ask him "Are you ready to do your exercises?" and he would refuse. Then he would get a thump with the baton and this kept going.'

Desmond Smith says the exercises were continued for 17 hours and then he blacked-out. Other internees

told him each time he lost consciousness the red-caps began to beat him with their batons for refusing exercises.

Eventually they threw a bucket of water over him.

'By this time I was not fit to move a muscle, so they beat me again and I went into some form of convulsion or some form of epileptic fit.

'One of the red-caps, when he had seen this, went back and said to another red-cap, "Will you lend me your knife. This so-and-so calling me abusive names has taken a fit". So the red-cap gave him a knife which he took out and the other red-cap pushed it so hard into my mouth that he smashed several of my back teeth and according to witnesses in the hut the blade of the knife actually snapped in two with the force . . .

' . . . he came back carrying the knife with blood dripping off it and he had a grin on his face and he said to the other red-cap: "We had a bit of an accident with your knife with that so-and-so outside".'

A doctor was brought in and gave Desmond an injection. He told the red-caps to take him to hospital.

He was transferred to another hut where he was again beaten with batons and kicked.

'I was semi-conscious at the time and I heard the doctor distinctly saying: "What's this man still here for? I ordered him to hospital four hours ago".'

Eventually Desmond was

taken to Musgrave Park hospital, Belfast, and quartered in its military wing. There, he was guarded by soldiers carrying sub-machine guns.

He was discharged after a week and transferred to the prison ship HMS 'Maidstone'. But after another fit was rushed back to Royal Victoria Hospital.

There, he claims, a specialist named Sparrow examined him and after X-rays he was taken back again to Musgrave Park.

There, he claims, he received minimum treatment.

'I was in a little room on my own and there was a bigger ward where they mostly stayed. So at night they could be most annoying tripping over the bed when you would be sleeping and awakening you and generally annoying you with tramping about.'

He was released from jail and interned on the 'Maidstone' once again. Here a doctor obtained his release from the prison governor.

But he was long enough on the prison ship to witness the methods of the Compton inquiry into army brutality.

Most of the internees refused to give evidence in secret. Desmond Smith explains:

"We thought it should have been made public . . . so whenever Lord Compton came on board, the first man that he sent for he said to him: "Have you got a complaint to make against the brutality of the armed forces?" So the fellow said,

"I have, but I am not making it to a private inquiry. I want it made public".'

He says Lord Compton got 'very nasty' and struck the internee off his inquiry list.

Desmond himself sent word that he wished to appear before Lord Compton. But the prison authorities refused permission.

They claimed he was too ill to be moved.

The other internees volunteered to carry him before the tribunal, but this, too, was refused.

A request for Lord Compton to come down in the ship to see him was also ignored.

Every man in the boat asked to give evidence to a public inquiry and, Desmond claims, on hearing this, Compton struck them off his lists.

Mr Smith's statement has an undoubted ring of truth.

He names several doctors and nurses who attended him after his army beating and torture.

He was also interviewed by a priest called Friar Armstrong.

Prime Minister Heath has so far refused to give assurances that any moves to stop torture will be taken.

His personal secretary has dismissed the reports in the dossier as 'hypothesis'.





Build-up to collapse

THE CAPITALIST press has imposed a news black-out on information which exposes the hideous torture regime operated by the British army in Ulster.

There were no screaming headlines about Ulster internees who are tortured by police and soldiers until they collapse.

All the Fleet St papers have this evidence. But they co-operate with the regime of silence instigated by the Tory premier Heath.

Workers Press will continue to publish extracts from the torture dossier brought to England by two N Ireland MPs.

Today we tell the stories of two internees. One, Joseph Clarke, a 19-year-old motor mechanic from Belfast, gave his statement

to the Association for Legal Justice in Crumlin Rd prison.

He experienced both physical and mental torture for over a week. After his ordeal he suffers from nervousness, insomnia, bouts of dizziness and fluid on the knee.

The second case we detail concerns Patrick Joseph McClean, a 38-year-old school-teacher from Beragh, Co Tyrone. He lists 22 forms of torture used by the army police in Ulster camps.

Mr Clarke, like most internees, was picked up by the British army in the early hours on Monday, August 9.

The first two days of his internment were spent in Girdwood Park barracks.

22 ULSTER TORTURES

1. Stood against the wall. Arms up. Legs wide apart until I fell. Refused after first time.
 2. Caught by arms and legs—bounced up and down—hitting the ground with rectum.
 3. Rolled along the ground—back and forth.
 4. Carried on back—dropped on ground.
 5. Punched with fingers in stomach.
 6. Arms screwed back.
 7. Two arms straight back—knead in the back.
 8. Legs akimbo—head between knees. Man sits on back.
 9. Flat on back—legs pressed wide. Privates kicked.
 10. Arms behind pipes.
 11. Head bumped on floor causing dizziness.
 12. Slapping face with open hand (chin and ears).
 13. Drumming behind ears with knuckles.
 14. Pulling hair on chest.
 15. Choking—holding nose, mouth and throat.
 16. Arms winded like a windmill.
 17. Thrown over a form—head down first—then foot down.
 18. Arms and hand beaten against the ground.
 19. Fingers stamped on.
 20. Shoulders on ground—legs pulled over face. Man's weight pressed down.
 21. Backs of hands marked with blue dye.
 22. Handcuffed and hung up.
-

There he was interrogated by men of the Royal Ulster Constabulary Special Branch with 90 other prisoners.

They were abused verbally and treated roughly by Special Branch men and military policemen, but not, at this point, tortured.

LEFT ALONE

The first real violence occurred on the Wednesday when Mr Clarke was left alone in a room and told to sleep.

Mr Clarke says he was continually disturbed and then:

'One particular RUC man came into the room and as he kicked the bed he said to me: "Why are you not sleeping". I replied that it was because him and people like him kept coming in and out, kicking the bed. He then said, "Clarke—I know you from the court case". As he said that he kicked my two legs apart and stuck his heel into me genitals.

He then left. MPs (military police) kept coming in and out after this saying half my district had been wiped out.'

On the same Wednesday afternoon Mr Clarke was hooded, handcuffed, and bundled into an army helicopter.

After a series of helicopter and lorry journeys during which he was beaten he arrived at a detention centre where he underwent mental and physical torture for a week.

He described his experience during this time:

'The build-up to . . . collapse was frequent numbing of the hands. When it happened, I closed my fists only to find that my hands were beaten against the wall until I opened my fingers again and put my hands back in position.

'On the other occasion I tried to rest by leaning my head against the wall, but the response to this was my head was banged on the wall and shaken about until I resumed my position.'

The authorities combined mental torture with this beating.

'All the time there was the constant whirring noise like a helicopter blade going round. From the sound of this noise I would say it was played into the room where I was cos' on the occasions that I was taken from this room, even outside the door of the room, the noise was noticeably vague almost to be inaudible.'

This treatment produced a state of continual collapse, but each time his strength gave way his arms and legs were beaten and he was placed back against the wall.

During the torture he was examined by a doctor who gave him a drink of water and then allowed him to be taken back into the main room for more ill-treatment.

Eventually he reached the point of insanity:

'Still the noise was going steady driving the mental resistance to its utmost. I thought that I was going mad. The noise was the

only noise one heard save for the groans of the other people lined up against the wall.'

During his whole ordeal, Mr Clarke was hooded. He says he estimates that the torture in this room continued for two days and nights during which the internees were not allowed any sleep.

He was then interrogated by two RUC Special Branch men and returned to the room for another beating. During the beating he was asked for information on the IRA and arms dumps.

At one stage a Special Branch man interrogated him gently for two or three hours in an attempt to get information.

TRANSFERRED

Eventually he was cleaned-up, examined by a doctor, stripped, photographed and after a series of Land-Rover and helicopter journeys, was transferred to Crumlin Rd jail via Girdwood barracks.

There he learned it was Tuesday—a week and one day since he was arrested on August 9.

Mr Clarke's statement is witnessed by Oliver J. Kelly, a university graduate.

Patrick Joseph McClean was arrested at 4.30 a.m. on August 9. Six-and-a-half hours later his mother-in-

law died, but he was not allowed to attend mass when he heard of this.

His diary of torture is briefer than Mr Clarke's, but valuable for its greater precision and recollection of dates, time and even names.

He lists 22 methods used by the police and army to extract information.

Mr McClean also experienced noise torture. The sound of compressed air was played in his room all the time. In the morning death service hymns were broadcast, followed by execution orders, protest poems and then firing squad singing.

He was denied access to the toilet during his nine-day ordeal and was forced to relieve himself into his clothes.

Again doctors witnessed his persecution. Mr McClean recalls one saying after reviving him: 'If I am needed to despatch him I can be found in the country club.'

After each session of questioning the interrogator would say: 'You have been telling us nothing but lies—back to the black hole.'

Mr McClean was questioned eight times. On two occasions he refused to answer, on two other occasions joked his way through the interrogation, but he answered questions in the final four sessions.

Torture casebook No. 3

Glad to be back in jail!

'I WAS extremely glad to see jail again . . . I never imagined that anyone could be so cruel to his fellow man. I don't think I will ever be the same again'—Sean McKenna, internee.

Many of the Ulster internees must have echoed Sean when at last they were released from that week's interrogation which followed the August 9 swoop in N Ireland.

After a week's torture which includes, beating, starvation and mental destruction you are GLAD to see jail where the only persecutors are the four walls of your cell.

The internees are now locked up in the jails and camps of Ulster, many of them suffering from perma-



nent mental and physical damage after their ordeal.

They also spend their days in the constant fear that the army and police torturers will return again to continue their hideous work.

Tory and Labour MPs have implied in the House of Commons that these brutal excesses are perhaps necessary in Ulster. The liberal 'Guardian' was very 'understanding' in a leading article which talked of incidents which occur in 'hot blood'.

These politicians and the whole of the Fleet St press are forever damned for their silence, and even support, of this bloody episode of British imperialism in Ireland.

This article continues our exposé of the British army torture regime.

The experiences of an internee recounted today follow the now familiar pattern of persecution in Ulster army camps.

Patrick Shivers, a chronic bronchitic and a plasterer from Toomebridge, was arrested at 5 a.m. on August 9. His staccato account of his week of hell makes chilling reading.

Again his account is verifiable. He names several internees who witnessed his persecution (indeed they too were subjects of torture).

After interrogation at

Ballykelly he was transferred to Magilligan camp. There, with several others, he was quartered in a corrugated iron hut. Soldiers pounded the sides of the shack with batons to keep them awake the first night in captivity.

In the morning he was hooded and flown by helicopter to an unknown destination. Then the torture started:

'Taken into a room. Noise like compressed air engine in room. Very loud, deafening.

'Hand put against wall. Legs spread apart. Head pulled back and backside pushed in. Fell down. Arms put up again. Hands hammered until circulation restored. This happened continually for 12 or 14 hours, until I eventually collapsed.'

He thought there had been a right-wing take-over and expected to be tortured to death or executed.

'Started to pray very hard. Mouth dried up. Couldn't get moisture in mouth. Pulse taken. Thought of youngster who had died at six months old, started to pray that God would give me strength that I would not go insane.

'Fell down several times more. Slapped back up again. This must have gone on for two or three days; I lost track of time. No sleep. No food. Knew I had gone unconscious several times, but did not know for

how long. One time I thought or imagined I had died. Could not see youngster's face but felt reconciled to death. Felt happy.'

It would do well to pause here in Mr Shivers' awful tale and recall the words of Labour MP Reginald Paget. He said in parliament after the torture allegations that the information extracted from the victims was valuable:

'So long as that sort of information continues there are some of us not too much concerned as to the methods to get it. One cannot fight urban guerrillas with kid gloves on and it is unfair to ask our troops to do so.'

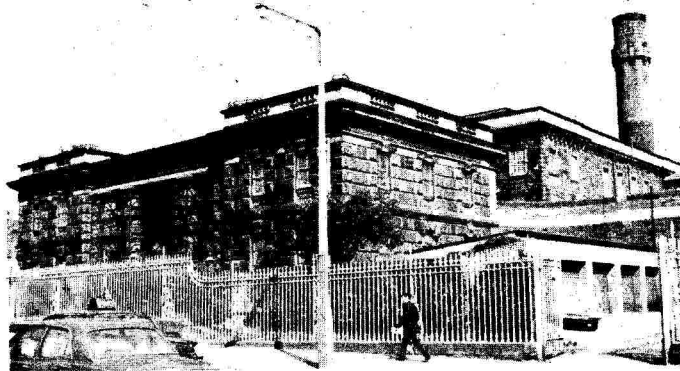
One day Paget will be called to account for this statement.

After Mr Shivers had collapsed for the final time (bag still over his head) he was dragged into another room and asked if he had anything to say.

These were the first words he heard since he left Camp Magilligan. More torture occurred in this room, then he was thrown again into a helicopter.

During the journey he heard moans beside him. The helicopter landed. He was transferred to a lorry.

Taken out of the lorry by two or three men. Hunched and made to run over something like corrugated iron. Head beaten against wall. Brought into building. Sat in chair. Bag taken off head. First thing I saw was RUC officer—Head Constable, I thought from two stars on



The Crumlin Road Jail. Tortured internees were glad to get back there.

shoulder. Might be able to recognize him again, seemed to be a plain-clothed secretary sitting behind him.

'Looked horrified when he saw me. Scum over my lips from the lack of water and thirst. Must have looked terrible. Read out paper. I know I looked terrible. Later saw it was a detention document. I tried to speak. Could only manage a whisper. "Why did you do this to me?" Man behind me holding bag, pulled my hair back said, "Speak up can't hear you. Can't hear you".'

Mr Shivers was whisked out once again, thrown into a truck and beaten and kicked until unconscious during the journey.

He was transferred back to the noisy room where he underwent more torture.

He got weaker. He was still denied drink and lost complete sense of time and place.

At his third interrogation he was allowed a drink of water and was asked questions he could not answer. Eventually he became hysterical and the interrogator sent him back for more torture.

'By this time, I was at the end of my tether. My whole body, my arms, legs, started to tremble uncon-

trollably. I passed out again. After this, doctor wrapped me up in blankets. Carried me out to what appeared to be a small surgery. I lay there shivering and shaking. Took my pulse. Felt my ankles. Got excited took some blood pressure . . .

'Put something in my mouth I thought it was a drug and spat it out. The second time he said, "Keep it in your mouth I'm only taking your temperature". He spoke with a British accent.'

After this prolonged torture Mr Shivers was interrogated several times. His treatment grew better and he was allowed food and drink.

He was transferred to Belfast prison, which he says he 'did not mind'.

His statement ends: 'Taken to reception, weighed again. Doctor saw me that night. I asked what day it was. Tuesday. I had been in custody for eight days. I am now detained in Crumlin Rd jail "O" wing.'

Mr Shivers says he could recognize two of the Special Branch interrogators again. His statement is witnessed by B. McGrath PHS MPS. There is a handwritten note added which reads—James J. Fitzpatrick will vouch for this.



Sean McKenna, 42, from Violet Cottage, Newry, was arrested 4 a.m., August 9, and taken with 30 other internees to Ashgrove School then on to Ballykinlar. They were beaten and punched on the way.

On arrival the brutality escalated:

'The soldier with me had my left arm in an arm lock grip and he was running me forward at great speed. As we approached the corner post of the compound, it was concrete with wire netting on it. He went to the side of it and rammed me into the post as hard as he could. I tried to save myself but the wrist on my right side took most of the blow and they are still very sore.

'The soldier still held onto me. The crowd of

army personnel thought this very funny. I didn't. One heard screams of the men caught and the vile un-Christian language will live with me until I die. I didn't think man could be so cruel to his fellow man.'

Mr McKenna underwent the usual tortures connected with the 'exercise'—hands out-stretched, fingertip on wall, back straight, legs apart.

He was transferred to Crumlin Rd jail.

His eyes appear to have been affected by the prolonged hooding he experienced. He writes:

'The sunlight was blinding. Since I arrived my eyes don't see light now. I attach this to the condition my head is in.

'I was photographed be-

fore I left whatever it was—the madhouse—in the nude, and I can assure you I was extremely glad to see jail and company again. That's about it, I never imagined that anyone could be so cruel to his fellow man.

'I hope to have no occasion to go through it again. I don't think I will be the same again.'

Mr McKenna signs his statement which is witnessed by Seamus Loughran.

Gerrard McKerr of Wolfisland Terrace, Derrymacash, Lurgan, a TV engineer aged 27, was arrested 4.30 a.m., August 9.

He was taken to Ballykinlar camp. There, apart from some rough treatment, he appears to have been treated comparatively well. He was interrogated five or six times during the second day of internment.

Then early Wednesday morning he was transferred by helicopter and after an additional short truck journey taken to the familiar torture room into which a constant roar—similar to steam escaping from a boiler—was played.

He goes on:

'The hood was not removed while I was examined by a doctor. I was stripped

and given army overalls which were too small. I was placed in the 'searched position' on a slippery floor in my bare feet. After a time I could not stand or hold myself any longer and I fell.

'I must have passed out and when I came round I was beaten around the kidneys. I was taken against the wall again I had no idea of the time. I kept falling was beaten and thrown back against the wall again.

'I was dazed and seemed to be dreaming. My boots were brought and I was taken in the helicopter and beaten—fists, boots and batons.'

He was taken back to the torture room by helicopter and after collapsing was placed in a chair for interrogation.

He could not speak, but was told that if he did not inform he would never see his wife and children again.

Then one of the interrogators said: 'Let him out of here. He is not co-operating.'

After more interrogation he was washed, fed and sent to Crumlin Rd jail.

Mr McKerr signs his statement, and it is witnessed by B. McGrath PHS MPS.

THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE CALLS FOR :

- The removal of the Tory government by mass industrial and political action by the Irish and British unions.
- Its replacement by a Labour government pledged to socialist policies of nationalization of industry commerce, and the land, without compensation under workers' control.
- The immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all troops from Ulster.
- The repeal of the Special Powers Act and the immediate release of all men interned.
- The removal of the Stormont Tory regime and the unification of Ireland.
- The nationalization of industry, commerce and land, N and S, without compensation under workers' control.

Charter of Basic Rights

THIS IS the full text of the Charter of Basic Rights which was voted on at the December 19 conference of the All Trades Unions Alliance last year and is part of the main discussion on November 6 this year at the ATUA's conference at the Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.

A **HANDFUL** of bankers, financiers, big businessmen and property millionaires directly represented by the Tory government has launched an onslaught on the basic rights which the **British working class** has established after centuries of struggle.

They are rushing to save themselves from the world economic crisis into which their system of society is plunging. They intend to solve this crisis at the expense of the working class. To do this they must destroy all the basic rights won by the people, which allow them to defend and improve their conditions.

We call on the working class to defend these rights:

1. The right of every worker to a job

FULL EMPLOYMENT is not a privilege, but a basic necessity of life, an elementary right. Unemployment is being deliberately created to divide the working class and weaken them.

We are not against new technology—we want to eliminate dangerous and unnecessary jobs. But every worker's right to comparable and continuous employment must be protected.

In the fight for higher wages we fight for the basic right to a living wage, for the right to improve our living standards. Only this consistent struggle establishes the right of the worker to the fruits of his labour.

Every wage settlement linked to a productivity deal means loss of jobs. We must demand:

- No Measured-Day Work, no intensification of working conditions.
- Full support for any group of workers engaged in wages struggles.
- No sackings; any firm which cannot give security to its workers must be nationalized without compensation and under workers' control.
- Women must have equal pay as a right.
- We oppose racialism. Every worker has the right to live and work in the country of his choice.

2. The democratic right to strike and organize

THE STANDARD of living and everything the working class has is based on the right to strike and organize.

No employer ever gave anything away, he sets out only to make the maximum profit. Without the right to force out of him what they are entitled to the working class have nothing.

The Tory anti-union Bill aims to destroy the unions and leave the working class defenceless. It threatens the independent trade union and political activity of the working class which is basic in their struggle.

The working class must never give up these rights, they must not allow the Tories to take the road of Hitler and Mussolini.

We must force the trade union leaders and the TUC General Council to mobilize the whole movement to defeat the anti-union laws. An Emergency Conference of the TUC must be called immediately, to organize a General Strike to defeat the laws.

3. The right of the working class to retain the gains they have made

THE TORIES are hell bent taking away the gains of the past and the improved standard of living that the working class has won in struggle.

The working class has an absolute right to maintain these gains.

The power of the working class and modern industry have the capacity of providing continuously rising standards of living.

We cannot accept that living standards can be driven down simply because the system of private ownership—capitalism—is breaking up in deep crisis and cannot harness the forces of production for the benefit of mankind. Only a socialist society can solve the crisis.

4. The right to a higher standard of living

WE CANNOT stand aside while prices, rents and fares are allowed to rocket in order to maintain luxury living for a selected few.

The trade unions were formed to win a greater share of the wealth produced in capitalist society for the working class. It is through this struggle that the living standards of all working people can be raised, including those of pensioners, the chronic sick and the poorly organized.

Wage agreements which accept the *status quo* or include productivity deals are a betrayal of this principle and lead to greater exploitation and worsened conditions for the whole working class.

We call for trade unions to confront the employers and government in their attack against our living standards with straight wage demands, without the acceptance of any restrictive strings and conditions.

Agreements must also contain clauses which increase wages automatically in line with rising prices, in order that gains once achieved are not eroded by price increases.

Trade unions must campaign for an immediate 50-per-cent increase in all pensions, and also for pensions to increase in line with any increase in the cost of living.

5. The right to welfare benefits

THE TORY government has taken the milk away from our children; they are threatening the right to a hospital bed when you are ill and the medicine you may need.

As a result of their action children will be less healthy and the working class will have to put up with ill health, bad teeth and bad eyesight, unless they can pay the price.

Any government which attacks these rights as the Tories are doing, endangering the health and life of children and bringing death to old people, must be destroyed.

The Tory government has set out to deprive workers of their right to unemployment and supplementary benefits, which they have already paid for, and to income tax rebates, in order to weaken their struggle. These rights must not be surrendered.

The attacks of the Tories on school spending, on comprehensive education and on student grants are intended to deprive the children of the working class of the right to free higher education, and must be resisted to the end.

6. The right to decent housing

PROPER HOUSING is not a luxury—it is a basic necessity. People have a right to proper housing at a reasonable rent.

Working people have fought for this and paid for it many times over. Who builds the houses anyway? Who creates all the wealth of society? The working class.

And these Tories have the audacity to take away the right to a house unless you can pay a colossal rent. The working class must not allow this to happen. The Tories must be driven out.

Every trade union, every factory, mine and building site, all workers in privately-owned or nationalized or public industries and public services must organize in a united struggle to defend these rights.

Around the organizations of the working class we must rally the housewives, the young workers and students, the pensioners, and the middle-class and professional people who are being squeezed to death by the banks and the monopolies.

The working class must drive this government out. It has the power to do so. Only the hesitation of their leaders stands in the way of this.

It is not enough to protest against this government, the working-class movement has every right to organize to force it to resign. There can be no question of leaving the Tories to run their full term, merely recording only a few protests.

We have the right to bring them down.

Every trade unionist must fight to force the unions and the Parliamentary Labour Party to mobilize the entire workers'

movement into a General Strike to defend the right for which the trade unions were founded.

The answer to unemployment is the sit-in and occupation of factories threatened with closure, leading to expropriation of the redundant employers.

Nationalization of the major industries, without compensation and under workers' control is the only answer to the crisis!

We call on all workers to campaign for this charter of rights and fight for an alternative revolutionary leadership in the trade unions.

7. The right to decide on the Common Market

FOR MILLIONS of workers, entry into the Common Market will mean even faster rising prices and even heavier unemployment. The Common Market will bring together the most reactionary sections of the ruling class in their efforts to drive down living standards and destroy working-class rights and organizations.

The Tories have no mandate for their entry into the Common Market. They are determined to rush into Europe and hide the real issues from the working class. They have no intention of allowing the working class to decide on this issue.

We demand that the TUC and Labour leaders launch an immediate campaign for a General Election at which the Common Market issue and the Tories' entire record can be voted upon.

Conclusion

EVERY SECTION of the working class, trade unionists, housewives, youth, all Labour voters, must now work for the defeat of the Tory government and its replacement by a Labour government. Only the mobilization in action of the whole working-class movement will bring down the Tories. This movement will demand of the next Labour government that it revokes every cut made by the Tories, and immediately repeals all anti-union laws.

Such a programme can be carried out only by taking the banks and major industries out of the hands of the capitalist owners. They must be nationalized without compensation and under workers' control. The Charter of Basic Rights is the programme to unite the workers' movement to bring down the Tory government. We must insist that it is the programme of the Labour government that replaces them!

Subscribe!

workers press

The daily
paper that
leads the
fight against
the Tories.

£17.12 for 12 months (312 issues)

£8.56 for 6 months (156 issues)

£4.29 for 3 months (78 issues)

If you want to take Workers Press twice a week the rates are:

£1.32 for 3 months (24 issues)

£5.28 for 12 months (96 issues)

Fill in the form below **NOW** and send to:

Circulation Dept, Workers Press, 186a Clapham High St, London, SW4.

I would like to take out a subscription to Workers Press.

Days required
(Please tick)

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

Or

Full subscription (six days) for months.

Name.....

Address.....

Amount enclosed £

I would like information about

THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

Fill in the form below and send to **NATIONAL SECRETARY,
SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE, 186a CLAPHAM HIGH ST,
LONDON, SW4.**

Name.....

Address.....

Title: Torture Casebook: The Ulster Dossier

Organisation: Socialist Labour League

Date: 1971

Downloaded from the Irish Left Archive.

Visit www.leftarchive.ie

The Irish Left Archive is provided as a non-commercial historical resource, open to all, and has reproduced this document as an accessible digital reference. Copyright remains with its original authors. If used on other sites, we would appreciate a link back and reference to the Irish Left Archive, in addition to the original creators. For re-publication, commercial, or other uses, please contact the original owners. If documents provided to the Irish Left Archive have been created for or added to other online archives, please inform us so sources can be credited.